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## The Deliverance of Souls

*by T. Austin-Sparks*

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### **An Exodus Accomplished**

Reading: Luke 9:27-36; 2 Pet. 1:16-18; John 18:33-37; Col. 1:13.

*"There are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God."*

*"My kingdom is not of this world."*

*"...who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love."*

*"Behold, there talked with him two men, who were Moses and Elijah; who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem."*

It is not fresh knowledge to you that that word translated 'decease' in the Revised Version, elsewhere 'departure' or 'death', is really the word 'exodus' - "spake of his exodus which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem". So the Cross is spoken of here as an exodus, which is simply a way or a going out, and the word itself, of course, immediately carries us back to a book which goes by that name, and records the going out of the people of Israel from Egypt. What the exodus was to Israel, the Cross was to the Lord Jesus and is for us - a way and a going out, but a going out through a definitely prescribed door, and that door the door of death. That was the only way out for Israel - through the door of death. It was the only way out for the Lord Jesus, and it is the only way out for us.

But that can be put in another way. The door of death was and is the way *out!* The Apostle, in the passage in Col. 1:13 completes it and says it is also the way in. "...who delivered us out of the authority of darkness, and translated us *into* the kingdom of the Son of his love". And in that connection, the presence of Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration is particularly significant, for Moses and Elijah were two men in the Old Testament who knew, one, the way out and the other, the way in; the exodus and the translation, and they were there to speak with Him about this; that His death was the way out, but it was also the way in. It was an escape from one scene and condition, and a translation into another.

But we must give due heed to another word here - "the exodus that he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem". Another word for that is 'achieve'. It was not just a going out, that the door was opened and He went through; not at all. It was an achievement, an accomplishment; and, if we want some little idea of what that meant, look at the exodus of Israel again and see whether it was an accomplishment. Did they just walk out through a door that was opened? Not at all. There was an immense amount to be accomplished achieved, to get them out through that door.

And the type is only a very faint shadow of what the Cross of the Lord Jesus meant in the matter of something to be accomplished, a way out to be accomplished, achieved, a mighty work to be done. "Who *delivered...*" - it is upon the meaning of that word that we are going to dwell, I think, quite a lot. The deliverance of souls. "...who delivered us out of the authority of darkness". That is the one side. The other side - "and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love", - but that will await some further consideration.

### **Satan's Rights Destroyed**

"Who delivered". What a tremendous amount there is in that word, what a history! We shall see that eighty years of the life of Moses were taken up by God with the formation of one who could deliver; deliverance is such a tremendous thing. "Who delivered us out of the *authority*" - the word 'power' is in our version, but it is that word which means authority or right, and here it has a double meaning. It refers to the person. You notice that it is translated in the plural in Eph. 6:12 - "Our wrestling is... against the principalities, against the powers..." - the same word, 'authorities'. These are personal things. They are entities in a certain position. The authority of darkness is firstly a person, of whom Pharaoh is but a faint type.

And then the authority is that power which is wielded and exercised by one in a position to exercise it, who has the right to exercise it in his own realm, and whose very strength is in his right; from whom you cannot be delivered just in the direct way of snatching from his grasp, but you have to undo his right to hold, you have to take from him all ground of jurisdiction, to bring him to judgment and judge him clean out of court, so that he has not any more ground to stand upon, he has no case left. 'Hath delivered us from the very case that the devil has against us' - that is a tremendous thing, that he has no more case against us. He will forever be seeking to have a case against us, to find some ground on which he can bring up a case against us. Hence he is called "the accuser of the brethren" (Rev. 12:10), but he has had his case spoiled, his ground destroyed, his rights nullified, and in this way we are delivered out of the authority of darkness. The Cross of the Lord Jesus is that kind of exodus, that escape, that way out, that glorious achievement.

You see, this word 'authority' carries with it the idea of rights, and that great battle in Egypt, headed up to the Passover and consummated at the Red Sea, was all a question of rights. In the Passover, the rights of Pharaoh were wound up. If we understand the meaning of the virtue of the blood of the lamb, the dying of that lamb, the identification by faith of every believer with that lamb in death, and

the appropriation by faith of the blood of the lamb, then we understand the meaning of Pharaoh's rights being wound up. From that moment, he had no rights over them, and they began their exodus. He sought to re-assert his rights and he met the authority of superior rights and his hosts were destroyed in the Red Sea. He had no ground to stand upon, morally, spiritually and literally; his ground was gone.

All *that* is gathered into the Cross of the Lord Jesus. The work of the Lord Jesus in His Cross is all gathered into the Passover; and then, as He leads His people out through the offering of Himself, the shedding of His Blood, Satan's rights over them have been destroyed and they have a position which means that while Satan will be active afterward, he is only active against himself while they maintain their position in faith; he is only bringing upon himself his own destruction while we hold to the ground that the Blood of the Lord Jesus has provided. That mighty Passover can turn back upon Satan for his own undoing.

### **Deliverance from the Authority of Darkness**

You notice that the book which goes by this name - Exodus - begins with the names of the sons of Israel, the names of the elect race, and then out of Egypt God calls His son collectively as one son, the sons in the son. He leads them out - and what a rich fulness of meaning that gives to a little statement with which we are so familiar in John's Gospel - "He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out" (John 10:3). The names all mentioned, the chosen ones; He leadeth them out, He makes the exodus for His own sheep.

It says this, that those who were in Judaism, as it was in the days when our Lord was here on earth, were in something which had become bound up with the kingdoms of this world from which they had to be delivered by the death of the Lord Jesus - and it was a very religious thing. We are getting very near to the heart of things. Our deliverance from the authority of darkness may have to be wrought, not only in our separation from this world as we think of it, it may have to be wrought in a religious sense to get a people out into a heavenly place, even from Christianity, as a religion of this world, something which has become bound up with this world and its kingdom. This deliverance of the Cross is an utter thing - that is what we are getting at.

### **Complete Separation from Satan's Kingdom**

The Lord was very explicit about Israel's exodus. He wrought and wrought for His rights, so completely, that He would not compromise to the degree of a hoof. "There shall not a hoof be left behind" (Ex. 10:26). He was working for *His* rights over other rights, *His* authority, and He would not allow a fragment to remain outside of His own realm. That means that the Kingdom of the Son of His love is a Kingdom which claims all, which represents all, which means the most perfect separation from the kingdom, whatever its form and nature, over which Satan has rights and therefore power. God is not going to give His power, His glory, to any little fragment which lies within the domain of the prince of this world. The secret of spiritual power, of spiritual life, of spiritual fulness, of spiritual effectiveness, the secret of reaching God's full end, is found in the utterness of the dominion of the Lord Jesus, in His having His rights in the life. Until, in type, that was established in the case of Israel, they were a floundering people. They, although out literally from Egypt, were not out spiritually, and were weak, impersistent, unreliable, ineffective, inwardly divided. They were not really out in an inward way. God could not commit Himself to them until they were established on the other side of Jordan. Then He could; He commenced to commit Himself at Jericho, and went on.

Israel was chosen, in the sovereignty of God, to be the instrument and vessel of blessing to all nations of the earth. God intended to reach all through Israel. In them, Abraham's seed, all nations of the earth were intended to be blessed. There is a sense, of course, in which that has been fulfilled, inasmuch as Jesus Christ of the seed of Abraham has been the blessing to all nations, but Israel *as a nation* was called to be a blessing and a channel of Divine blessing to all peoples, and Israel failed. The Church has come in according to the word of the Lord Jesus - "The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21:43). And Peter says about the Church - "an elect race... a holy nation" (1 Pet. 2:9), to take the place of Israel with the same object - that the Church might be the channel of Divine blessing to all peoples.

Now, why is it that there is so much ineffectiveness, so much lack of power, so much defeat - that is, absence of victory; so much that does not count for God about us. Let us ask ourselves in all honesty whether it may not be that, as yet, we do not know in a living way, the meaning of the Cross as it is here set forth. The Cross represents that accomplishment of an utter going out from a realm where Satan has rights and therefore has power to spoil. In Egypt, Pharaoh had rights. He was king of Egypt, that was his domain, he had a right to do what he would. These people are in my domain, then they come under my rule and I can do as I like, as I will! So he oppressed, he weakened, he limited, he afflicted. And yet they are the elect, called sons of God, called sons of God even when they are there. We are sons of God by calling. But what a terrible thing to think of sons of God in a state of defeat like this, all because they are in a realm where there are rights by which they are bound. While they stay in that realm, and, mark you again, while there remains one hoof in that realm - they might have all gone out, flocks and herds and everything of their possessions might have gone out, and then just one hoof of one bullock left in Egypt - the whole thing would have been under arrest. The Lord's attitude was, I want that last hoof before I move! That is a very literal interpretation, but that is the Lord's attitude.

It means this, that our vocation cannot be fulfilled, the calling with which we are called, the power of God, cannot be realised while one fragment remains in the territory where Satan has rights. We must get on to the ground, into the realm, where all those rights are destroyed and he has no authority at all; and God has secured that realm, that position, by the Cross of the Lord Jesus, and if you and I will only come into line with the meaning of the Cross in its fullness, we have come into the way of power, fruitfulness, effectiveness.

I was asking the question, why it is that the Church is so ineffective? which is only saying, why is it that so many Christians are so spiritually weak and unfruitful and ineffective? Somewhere there is a link with the world; outwardly or inwardly, there is a link with the world - that is, the kingdom of darkness, the authority of darkness. I am not talking about our being here on the earth and having to work here in this world. You know the difference between being in it and of it, between being here and having heart relationships, voluntary relationships, choices, interests, desires, ambitions and so on; to be a part of this world in its acceptance, its recognition, and many other things. The way out and the way in is the way of death and that death, while it is all-inclusive in His own - for He has comprehended all that it means - He says for us it is a crisis and then a daily thing. "Take up his cross daily" (Luke 9:23), which means, I die daily to the call of this world, to the call of that kingdom where Satan has rights and authority, a call to my heart to be something here in this world as in itself. Oh, how subtly Satan uses that with many, seeking to argue that the realisation of an ambition would give even greater opportunity for the Lord. That is very nice to the flesh. The Cross has to be brought to all those subtle arguments of the angel of light; and while I would not say to anybody, Be careless, be slipshod, be second-rate in what you are and what you are doing on this earth, never let your Christianity make you less than the best amongst men and women and the most efficient in your job: at the same time, examine your motive, your object, your ambition. Examine your hearts in

the light of the Cross, and see whether it is self-gratification, self-glory, or any form of self as the goal that is influencing the argument. It is a deep heart matter, this matter of the Cross daily, dying to much, perhaps, that the flesh would like, dying to the cravings of this natural life, and oh, they are so strong! It is so difficult to let this self go altogether and be nothing as amongst men.

When we come to think of the deliverer of souls, we shall find that Moses and Christ started in this world with no place of acceptance. Moses came into the world and found that the door was shut to him in this world and he had to be hidden three months. His life was a prey from his birth. And Christ came into this world on exactly the same conditions. Herod's edict was at work and there was no place for Him, and it is very difficult to take up a life which is like that from the very inception. What you are as the Lord's, what you represent, you as a child of God, as a Christian man or woman, you are not wanted. If you will only just compromise a bit, you will be accepted. If only you will hide it a bit, nothing will be said, the way will be open for you. But if you are going to stand on that ground of Christ, then the door is shut to you, you are not wanted. This is what it means that the Cross stands there right at the beginning of this life. You remember Exodus 12 - "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months... they shall take to them every man a lamb". The beginning was with death, death to self, as to this kingdom.

Well now, we know that this is very practical in its application, and it does work out like this, that, inasmuch as there is anything that belongs to that realm in ourselves, inasmuch as it is here and we are actuated by it, influenced by it, governed in any way by it, spiritual weakness, spiritual defeat, spiritual paralysis, unfruitfulness is the result. Somewhere there is a bridge, a link, a connection with the realm the Lord cannot have, His rights are not ceded. Out of the *authority*, not only the realm, but the *right* of Satan, into the Kingdom of the Son of His love.

You notice the Mount of Transfiguration. "There are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:27). Then eight days afterward - a, significant number, resurrection, new ground, the old world gone, the Son of Man glorified - eight days afterward He taketh Peter, John and James up into the mountain, a heavenly position, and prayed. There came a voice out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son; hear ye Him". Peter, recounting it in his letter, says, "He received from the Father honour and glory, when there was borne such a voice to him by the Majestic Glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: and this voice we ourselves heard borne out of heaven, when we were with Him in the holy mount" (2 Pet. 1:17-18). "Into the kingdom of the son of His love". "In whom I am well pleased". That very Kingdom of the Lord's pleasure, the Lord's delight, lies on the other side of the exodus.