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value of which, as entered in the above table, was approximately half a peck—viz. (*a*) $\frac{1}{12}$, (*b*) $\frac{1}{6}$, (*c*) $\frac{1}{4}$, (*d*) $\frac{2}{3}$, (*e*) $\frac{3}{4}$, and (*f*) $\frac{5}{6}$ of an omer. Then (*g*) the measure which I identify as the omer measure itself, valued by the lecturer as 2 omers; further (*h*) $1\frac{2}{3}$ omer, which is half a seah, also called a trikab (*i.e.* 3 kabs, τρίκαβος, תרקב) in the Talmud, otherwise the dry measure equivalent to the hin for liquids (12 logs); and finally (*i*) 2 omers, (*k*) $2\frac{1}{2}$ omers, the quarter ephah, and (*l*) 4 omers.

The Assumptionist Father is probably right in his suggestion that these vessels were used for measuring out the tithes of the flour and other meal ground in the domestic mill. If this suggestion is followed out, it will be found that the smaller measures, at least, are all a tenth part of familiar larger measures. Thus the three smallest measures, *a*, *b*, *c*, represent the tithe of $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, and $\frac{3}{4}$ seah; the next highest denomination, $\frac{1}{3}$ omer, the tithe of a whole seah, is not represented in the set, but *d*, *e*, and *f* are the tithes of 2, $2\frac{1}{4}$, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ seahs respectively.

It is to be hoped that other specimens of all the measures discussed in this essay, and of others not represented, will soon to be found. Only when a sufficient number of specimens of ancient weights and measures are available to permit of an average being struck can reliable and definite results be obtained.

The Great Text Commentary.

THE GREAT TEXTS OF 1 CORINTHIANS.

1 CORINTHIANS VI. 19, 20.

Ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price.—R.V.

THE best exposition of the text is the simplest. Take the Apostle's own phrases separately. But we must change their order; for it is because we were bought with a price that we are not our own.

I.

'Ye were bought with a price.'

The words 'Ye were bought with a price' occur twice in this Epistle. The connexion in the two passages is somewhat different, but the leading idea is the same in both. We have a Master, an Owner, who has a paramount, absolute, inalienable property in us. We are His slaves, His chattels, His implements. All other rights over us are renounced, are absorbed, are annulled in His rights. He has acquired us by virtue of purchase. In the first passage, the present text, St. Paul says, 'Ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price.' In the second (1 Co 7^{23}) he says, 'Ye were bought with a price; become not bond-servants of men.' Not slaves to self, not slaves to men—this is the twofold lesson which we gather from the passages considered side by side. The ownership of self is done away. The lordship of our fellow-men is no more. One slavery alone remains, the most abject, most absolute, of all slaveries. We are the slaves of Christ.

1. *Ye were bought.*

(1) If God bought man, it shows that He *values man.* Is there anything else that God bought besides man? You say, 'The cattle upon a thousand hills,' do they not belong to God? And all the gold and all the silver, are not these all His? Yes; they are His. Not only the cattle, but the hills on which they graze, and all the trees which beautify the hills are His too. And not only the metal, but the broad earth out of which it is dug is His property. 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.' He made all these. But it is not said that He bought them. He made man too. But man unmade himself, effaced the image of God, wiped out the beautiful, the Divine, and sold himself into the slavery of sin. Then, when there was no eye to pity and no arm to save, He came to help, and bought man by the gift of Jesus Christ, thus showing to us for ever how much He valued man.

(2) If God bought man, it shows that He *wants man.* We seldom buy things we do not want. There may be times when a man may try to make a tradesman believe he does not want a certain article for which he is driving a hard bargain; but that is only to beat down the price. In our daily life we but seldom buy what we do not want. God wants man, longs for him, seeks him, strives with

him, and He has bought him by the blood of His Son, thus proving that He wants him.

2. *With a price.*

(1) How can we explain this? Not the pen of the most ready writer, nor the tongue of seraph, nor the voice of sweetest angelic singer is sufficient to describe all the depth of the price which God paid for our redemption.

There was an epidemic raging in one of the towns of France. It baffled all the skill of the medical men. They had a consultation, and came to the conclusion that the only way to arrest its progress was that some one should perform a post-mortem examination upon the body of one of the victims. But whoever undertook this task would pay for his hardihood with his life. Who would volunteer? That was the question, and for a time it remained unanswered. At length a man came forward; he put all his affairs straight, performed the operation, wrote down his observations, put the paper into prepared spirit, and died. Who can say what that man paid for the welfare of others? Who can describe the price?[1]

(2) The Cross is the supreme manifestation of God's love. The greatness of the love is measured by the greatness of the price paid; and the greatness of the price paid defies all words and transcends all thought. When we try to realize it we are overwhelmed with the mystery, and we veil our faces in awe. We summon to our aid such human analogies as experience suggests or as history and fable record. The devotion of the friend risking his life to save another life as dear to him as his own; the bravery of the captain and the crew sinking calmly and resolutely into their watery grave, without a shudder, without a regret, disdaining to survive while one weak woman or one feeble child is left in peril; the heroism of the patriot hostage condemning himself to a certain and cruel death rather than forfeit his honour on the one hand, or consent to terms disastrous to his country's welfare on the other—all these have the highest value as examples of human courage and self-devotion. But how little, after all, does any such sacrifice help us to realize the magnitude of the Great Sacrifice. The analogy fails just there, where we look for its aid. It is the infinity of the price paid for our redemption that is its essential characteristic. It is the fact that God gave not a life like our lives, not a weak, erring, sin-stricken, sorrow-laden victim like ourselves, but gave His only-begotten Son, gave His Eternal Word, to become flesh, to work and to suffer, to live and to die, for our sakes. It is the fact that the Glory of the Invisible God condescended to visit this earth, to hunger and thirst, to be despised, to be buffeted, to be racked and mangled on the Cross. The sacrifice is unique, because the Person is unique. Herein was love, not that we loved Him—did we not spurn Him, did we not hate Him, did we not defy Him?—but that He loved us.

[1] C. Leach.

'The cost of a thing,' says he, 'is *the amount of what I will call life* which is required to be exchanged for it, immediately or in the long run.'[2]

II.

'Ye are not your own.'

This is an amazing statement. Or rather the fact which the Apostle Paul suddenly thrusts before the Corinthians is an amazing fact. He does not try to prove it. In pursuance of the practical argument in which he is engaged he turns round all at once and asks those to whom he is addressing himself: Or do you not know that ye are not your own? He appeals straight to their own consciousness, to that in them which is deepest. It is quite possible that they had never before thought of not being their own; on the contrary, like most other human beings, they had simply taken for granted that they were their own; and here comes St. Paul with a sort of spiritual electrical searchlight, and all at once out of the black darkness there comes forth this really awful truth: *I am not my own.*

1. What do we mean by *ownership*? As a rule, three things are more or less consciously and distinctly implied in the word. It implies, first of all, the right to *exclusive possession*; second, the right to *exclusive enjoyment or use*; and third, the right to *do as one likes* with one's property. But a moment's reflexion is sufficient to show us that we are not 'our own' in any of these senses.

(1) *We can lay no claim to absolute possession.*—If we had created ourselves we should belong to ourselves, but we are not self-created. Is it not as though a man were to go into a carpenter's or ironworker's or some other workshop and, taking the material found there, were to make out of it some article and then claim it as entirely his own? What would the owner of the timber or iron or other material say to him? Would he not say,

[2] R. L. Stevenson, *Familiar Studies of Men and Books.*

'My good sir, do not forget that the material you have worked up is mine; the labour you have expended on it may be yours, but that constitutes only a part—perhaps a small part—of the value of the article you have produced'?

(2) *Nor can we lay any claim to the exclusive enjoyment or use of ourselves.*—We dare not become slaves of self. All the ages since Christ have been charged with an undefined but overmastering sense of obligation, a sense of something, not for self, that we must do. This not only urged Paul and Augustine and Xavier to laborious missions; it not only strengthened Hus and Latimer to die; it not only inspired Wyclif and Luther and Knox to tireless efforts for religious reformation;—it was essentially this same spirit that kept Caxton to his tools, till he had wrought out his idea into a printing press; it was this that kept Columbus worrying the Spanish court till he could get the ships to penetrate those mists which shut the old world in. It was this undefined but overmastering compulsion that set Milton writing *Paradise Lost*, though he might never get five pounds for it; it was this that forced John Hampden to refuse to pay 'ship-money,' though it would have been cheaper for him to have paid it ten times over than to have involved himself in that lifelong struggle with the Stuarts. It was this that took the Pilgrim Fathers to that bleak, wintry shore where they felt they must try to found a new and freer England; this that, when the first stern winter had killed off half their number, still kept the survivors true, so that no one of them would accept the offer to return; this that throughout these later generations has nerved the patriots and reformers who have brought the world to what is best to-day.

(3) *We cannot do as we like with ourselves.*—In the physical sphere we are limited. We can determine our own actions, but we cannot determine their results. We are in the grip of laws that nothing can resist. In the social sphere we are limited. Crusoe-like, we may regard ourselves as on a desert island, and say, 'I am my own; I can do as I like.' But that is manifestly limited by the complex social order of this twentieth century. 'I own you, or a good part of you,' says Society; 'my opinions and my customs enclose and dominate you.' This social order puts our prosperity, our comfort, our very life in the hands of others to no small degree. In the moral sphere we are limited. A young man in a bank says he can, if he choose, being in charge of the books, make false entries and embezzle money; but, so acting, he, as belonging to a certain civil order, is bound hand and foot to certain inevitable penal consequences. So our whole life is set in and belongs to a Divine moral order, more real and potent than any civil order. I can tell a lie if I like, or use foul language if I choose, but I cannot keep that foul language from defiling my nature and my soul, or that lie from deceiving my own spirit. I am my own. I can, if I like, be hard, selfish, covetous; but I cannot help that lust for gold narrowing my own life and my own soul. We are not our own. We belong to a Divine moral order, irresistible. But over and above this, above the physical and social and moral orders that hold and limit us, we belong to a great redemptive order. We are not our own, because we have been 'bought with a price.'

2. Having, then, been bought by Christ, we belong to Christ. And we belong to Christ wholly. Body, soul, spirit—we are altogether His.

(1) *Our wills are Christ's.*—He counts us His to do His will with. Imagine a soldier about to join an army on a campaign saying to himself, 'I shall always sleep on a soft bed. I shall never have to trudge till I am weary; my life must not be exposed to danger: but I shall have comfort, and shelter, and pleasure, and the prizes, and the rewards, and the honour, and dignity, and applause, when we come home again victorious.' What a surprise he would get to find his real position! A soldier! why the very essence of the thing means that he has no will of his own at all; that his very judgment is put away from him. He is never to choose or plan, but simply to go where he is bidden, to do what he is told, to face shot and shell, to think nothing of his life, to endure hardships, to fight till he is like to drop with fatigue, to go on the forlorn hope to certain death, that the army of which he is a part may march on to victory.

As for what passes in me at present, I cannot express it. I have no pain nor any doubt as to my state, because I have no will but that of God, which I endeavour to carry out in all things, and to which I am so submissive that I would not take up a straw from the ground against His order, or from any other motive but purely that of love to Him.[1]

[1] Brother Lawrence, *The Practice of the Presence of God*, 45.

O Lord, fulfil Thy Will,
Be the days few or many, good or ill:
Prolong them, to suffice
For offering up ourselves Thy sacrifice;
Shorten them if Thou wilt,
To make in righteousness an end of guilt.
Yea, they will not be long
To souls who learn to sing a patient song;
Yea, short they will not be
To souls on tiptoe to flee home to Thee.
O Lord, fulfil Thy Will:
Make Thy Will ours, and keep us patient still,
Be the days few or many, good or ill.[1]

(2) *Our activities are Christ's.*—The slave-owner could command the entire energies of the purchased possession, night and day, and in any form that he wished. Just as an Eastern Sultan to-day can make of one subject a vizier and of another a menial drudge, so our Lord can allot to us either lowly toil or lofty honour. And, rightly considered, the lowliest toil is lofty honour if done to Him. All time, ability, influence have been purchased by Him in His death for our redemption, and from henceforth it is ours to ask, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

One of our missionaries in India once had a letter addressed to him by a heathen priest, thus: 'To John Wilson, servant of the Messiah.'[2]

When slavery existed in America it often used to be said, and said truly, that a slave could not earn anything for himself; what his labour produced was never his own. Had he had the artistic genius of a Raphael or a Michael Angelo or a Beethoven; had he been a poet like Dante or Shakespeare; had he been a scientist like Newton or Darwin; could he have sung or played with the most celebrated; had he been an inventor like Edison—all in vain; not a single fruit of his genius or work could he claim as his property, for the simple reason that he himself belonged to his master. That master might give him a part of what he produced; but it was a gift, not primarily property.[3]

(3) *Our possessions are Christ's.*—The poor belongings of the slave—his hut, his meagre furniture, his little patch of garden—were not his own. He was not his owner, but his owner's. So in beneficent despotism, nothing that I possess is mine if I am Christ's; it is entrusted to me, to use for Him. Life, health, opportunity, genius, influence, money—all are to bear the broad arrow of royal possession, and in bearing it find their greatest praise and glory.

3. Being slaves of Christ, we are free and attain to *self-possession.* To be owned by a man is to be a slave; to be owned by God is to be a free man,—free in the fullest sense of that word. We are the sworn soldiers, the very bond slaves, of a perfect Lord. Our lives and every possibility that our lives contain belong absolutely to another, whose service is the only reality of our own freedom, or our own perfection.

In the old days, before Abraham Lincoln's slave emancipation, there was put up in the slave auction in New Orleans a beautiful mulatto girl. The bids rose from 500 dollars to 700, then a voice outside the crowd called 750 dollars. Higher and higher the bids went, until, at 1450 dollars, the stranger got the girl. He turned out to be a Northerner, and she hated the thought of becoming his slave. The next morning he called at the house where she was. She said sadly, 'Sir, I am ready to go with you.' 'But I do not want you to go with me. Look over this,' handing her the paper of her freedom. 'I bought you that you might be free.' She exclaimed, 'You bought me that I might be free? Am I free? Free? Can I do as I like with myself?' He answered, 'Yes, you are free.' Then she said, with sobs of joy, 'Oh, sir, I will go with you and be your servant for ever.'[4]

[1] Christina G. Rossetti, *Poems*, 140.
[2] H. O. Mackay.
[3] D. W. Simon.
[4] F. B. Cowl.

Sargon of Assyria in the Lake Region of Van and Urmia, 714 B.C.

By Theophilus G. Pinches, LL.D., London.

Sargon the Later came to the throne of Assyria 722 years before Christ, and enjoyed what might be called a glorious reign of 16 years' duration. During the period which preceded his 8th year he had overthrown the Elamites at Dêr, defeated Hanon of Gaza and Sib'e the field marshal of Muṣuru at Raphia, forcing Pir'u of Muṣuru to pay tribute. He had also crushed Yau-bi'idi the Hamathite. These successes had apparently secured to the Assyrians their suzerainty of the