Lloyd Anderson:

Good morning, friends, we're happy to be with you again today and to study the word of God with you, this time out of the Old Testament scripture, which I'm certain as we analyze it and study it together, will prove to be very, very helpful to your heart and mine. I do want to say again that I do trust you are remembering the Bible Institute in your praying and in your giving, that the Lord Himself may have His own way in the hearts of the young people who come to this institution. Now, in the Old Testament Book of Exodus chapter 13 and in the 13th verse is the scripture we'd like to use for our message to your heart today. "And every firstling of an ass, thou shalt redeem with a lamb. And if thou will not redeem it, then thou shall break his neck. And the first born of man among thy children shalt thou redeem." At the very outset, it is to be noted that the text has to do with a subject of redemption in the midst of the people of Israel. Redemption, I'm sure, is a doctrine that permeates the word of God. The Bible is the history of redemption from Genesis to the Book of Revelation. Apart from that which is written, we know nothing at all about the redemption of the soul or the redemption of the human body. I'm sure that every careful reader of the sacred word of God has noted the fact that everything upon its pages points to the subject of redemption and redemption's glorious results.

I'm reminded of the story of the little boy who was given some pudding by his mother as he ate his dinner one night. Looking at it for a moment, he wanted to know what was in it. For one thing, said his mother, there is an egg. But I don't see any egg in it at all, said the little boy. And his mother came back with a rejoinder, it's all mixed up in the pudding. And so it is my friend,
with the subject of human redemption. It is mixed up, so to speak, with everything in the grand old book that we call the Bible. All that has ever come to us from heaven is based upon the subject of redemption. The shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ upon the cross is a foundational truth. And you and I recall, I am sure, from John chapter 10 in the tenth verse, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Now this life comes through death and no other way. Jesus, you remember, referred to Himself when He spoke in the terms of a corn of wheat falling into the ground. After that corn of wheat had gone into the ground, the scripture says that it would die, and life as a result would be imparted to many. Now, the Lord Jesus Christ, of course, was talking about Himself. He would be like the corn of wheat that would be placed in the ground and die. And as a result of His death, He would be resurrected to life. And as the result of His death and His glorious resurrection, men and women would be ushered, as they believed, into everlasting life.

You remember it was the Apostle Paul who rang the changes relative to this truth when he said in Romans 5 or 6, "When we were yet without strength." In due time, Christ died for the ungodly. And then you remember in the eighth verse of the same chapter five of the Book of Romans, God commended His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Now Christ died for our sins. These and many, many portions of the word of God make it increasingly plain that everything is based upon His redeeming work. Hence, the importance of the text which we have before us for consideration. Now God has given the beautiful stories which thrilled us when we were little children as illustrative of the subject of redemption. God, leading the people of Israel, for example, out of the land of Egypt is a picture of the liberating power of God's redemption. The scarlet cord and the story of Rahab's window reveals the
protecting power of redemption against oncoming judgment. The silver sockets in the Tabernacle of Israel, upon which the gold covered boards of the walls rested, suggest that redemption is the basis of service in real worship, especially as we remember that silver in the word of God is symbolical and typical of redemption. I think we need to remember that as a rule in all of our evangelistic campaigns, which are often held in the churches around the land, that evangelists often say concerning salvation, that Jesus bought it, the Holy Spirit wrought it, and praise God, I've got it. You see, it's God's work. Our part is to believe what God has revealed about it. And in faith to receive all of its spiritual accruing benefits.

Perhaps the most surprising thing in the text before us is the fact that an animal must be redeemed. Now, that was the interesting thing about Exodus 13:13. It is interesting to remember that the Bible's filled with animals. It is a regular zoological garden, if you please. Many animals are mentioned upon its pages and none without their signification. Whether it's the lion, or the dog, or the hog, or the donkey coming into view, God is teaching us through these little animals some deeper, and spiritual, and profound truth. All four gospels in the New Testament record the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ rode into the city of Jerusalem upon a little donkey. This incident, if we have nothing more, ought to lead us to look for some very important teaching and some glorious truths in connection with this creature who is often the butt of much joking, and looked upon as the most stubborn of all of the animals of the field. The Old Testament particularly is rich in its teaching relative to the lowly ass. This little creature was the only one of all God's created beings that ever carried upon its back the Creator of the universe. May God help you and me, my friend, to catch the blessed sweep of the teaching as it is revealed in the Old Testament portion at this particular point. Now, as we face the scripture, which is before us, reminding
ourselves, of course, that, "and every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with an lamb", even the animal had to be redeemed as well as men.

It's easy to discover that if the first born in the family were to live, it had to be redeemed. If the life of another creature was sacrificed, then the little donkey would escape having its neck broken, and certainly out of this particular portion, it is apparent then, that a redeemer was desperately needed. One has said, in speaking of the animalism of man, that we carry in it the characteristics of each and every animal, qualities whether for praise on the one hand or blame on the other. The sinfulness of man is compared to the uncleanness of the dog. The fierceness of the leopard, the subtlety of the serpent, the raving of the lion, and the stupidity of the sheep, the cunning of the fox, and the poison of the viper. The cruelty of the bear is also typical of mankind, the wallowing of the swine, and the wasting of the boar, and the devouring of the wolf, and the stubbornness of the little ass. It is this last animal that demands our attention at this particular point. Now we may ask the question, what is man by nature? And the Bible speaks to us out of its own context and says that man is like a wild ass. He's like a wild donkey. For a vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass' colt. Out of the book of Job eleven and verse 12 comes that word. And according to another passage, man must be classified among the unclean. For in Leviticus eleven and verse three we read, "Whatsoever part of the hoof and is cloven-footed and cheweth the cud among the beasts, that shall ye eat." Now not being able to meet all of these conditions, the little animal we call the ass is an unclean animal and is a type of man in his sinful and wretched condition.
Now I know that there must be some animal instincts in man by the names which are given to many popular eating houses around the country. I think you and I have often gone into restaurants that bear very peculiar names. One summer, one minister mentioned that he had been in a certain place and he had found that The Purple Cow was the most popular restaurant place in town. He was invited to dine with a friend at a restaurant called the Blue Boar, and other places are designated as the Feed Trough, and the Bullpen, and the Eating Barn. Yes, after presenting man as he is declared to be in the Word of God, one man was heard to say "If preachers cannot elevate man to something higher than the level of animals, I feel that it's quite time that they stopped their preaching." And it's absolutely true. This man did not like to be brought face to face with his condition of God as described in His own Word. Too often we elevate human nature, forgetting that sin has already degraded it, and we renege when we have to face the real truth before man. Man's fall was not upward, but downward and away from God. When Adam sinned, he ran and he hid himself. And there is no quest for God in fallen man, knowing what was in man even Jesus could not even trust Himself unto man. We need to learn a little more from the Word of God, and so we turn to Proverbs 26 and verse 3, "A whip for the horse and a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back." It is apparent from this particular verse that the horse needs the urge of the whip, and it is also apparent that the little donkey needs the restraint of the bridle. And perhaps it is hard to face, and equally hard to say, that by nature man is indeed like a wild donkey as far as God is concerned.

He does not like to be divinely restrained, and like the sheep he has now turned unto his own way. In the face of the scripture before us, this little animal stands for and represents the stubbornness and uncleanliness of the natural man apart from Jesus Christ. And it clearly points
out from the typical point of man's need of redemption. Being unclean, it was unfit for service, and it was unclean and unfit for sacrifice. It was under the sentence of death. It came into the world in this particular manner. And this little poor creature that we call the ass in the word of God was under this condemnation, not because it had done anything wrong, but because of what it was by nature, stubborn and unclean, and it needed a lamb to be slain in order to bring about its redemption. Believe it or not, to keep it from being put to physical death by its owner. It needed a redeemer from judgment. And then the next thing that we notice in our scripture is that a redeemer not only was needed, but thank God, the Redeemer is provided. You see, the little donkey would live if a redeemer could ever be found. The Redeemer was designated as a lamb, and this was provided for in the little wooly beast. If men are to be spared eternally, then, my friend, a lamb must be provided. The truth is very apparent as we look at it for a moment. Possibly some owner of the ass might complain that this law was very, very unjust, and that the little donkey could not help being the first born.

However, the little donkey need not die, nor its owner lose the usefulness of his little animal, since a way had now been provided by which the animal could live. And this, of course, by-is by way of a substitute. God made this provision, and no other plan is indicated as being acceptable. God knows best, and His way is absolutely always right. There are men, you know, who say to us that it is not their fault that they were born into the world as a sinner. They could not help possessing a carnal nature, and that made it easier for them to do wrong than it did for them to do right. And since they had no choice in the matter, God would be to blame if they were ever lost, they say. But you see, a lot of people are always ready to lay the blame on God as they seek to justify their own evil, sinful living. They charge God with evil. But no one need perish since God
sent His son into the world to die, that all men might be saved. It is not His will that any should perish, but that all should come unto repentance. We read in the word of God in Exodus chapter 36 and verse 29, "I will also save you from all your uncleanliness." Now herein is our hope, because it reveals that God is able and God is willing to do what we cannot do for ourselves. No little donkey was ever able to redeem itself, according to the Old Testament Book of Genesis. God will not force that upon us. God will not make man walk in his way. Man has never been created a robot.

But my friend if you make your way back to the Old Testament Book of Genesis, it is defined, revealed, and fine-stated that man was created in the likeness of God. He was created with a possibility of living righteously, and in the moral nature of God was man created. Man is not a machine. God does not want a machine, it is not His will that any should perish, but that all men should come unto repentance. Here in this is all our hope, because it reveals that God is able and He is willing to do what man cannot do for himself. No little donkey, as I said a moment ago, could redeem itself, it had to be done from without. The work must be done by the Creator, and we can praise God that everything on our behalf has already been accomplished in order that men and women may come to know Jesus Christ. They want to work their own way to glory. And like the Old Testament Naiman the Ungodly, they're amazed to think that they're not able to do what they wanted to do. The rich young ruler you remember, of whom Jesus spoke, wanted to inherit the blessing of God by keeping the commandments of the Old Testament. We need to learn the words of the old hymn, which says "nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling." All of the merit is in the cross, and in what Jesus Christ did as He hung there between heaven and earth. He paid the last farthing of our sin debt, and having paid it, He was able to cry
out, "it is absolutely finished." We need to listen to the words of John the Baptist as he announced in John one and verse twenty nine, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

You see, Abel's offering was accepted by God, and Cain's was rejected because Abel believed what was taught him about the merits of the blood. The blood is applied as a sacrifice where there had been sin. Cain rejected the blood plan and felt that his substitute scheme was good enough. But God did not think so. And he refused to accept the sacrifice of fruit and vegetables which he brought. And you know, my friend, where there is sin, there must also be death if the sinner is going to be redeemed. The third thing that is made plain to us as we examine this text in Exodus 13 and verse 13, is that a lamb takes the place of an ass. The moment the little lamb was killed and its blood was shed, the donkey was free and allowed to live and continued to work for its master. Otherwise it must die by having its neck broken. And the only way by which this little beast was preserved was by the death of another, and upon the death of the other it lived, and it could be used without interruption. You see, by nature, every man is ranked with the unclean ass, but in grace every ass is ranked with a spotless Lamb of God, cleansed, and changed, and glorified. Christ's death is seen as the medium of divine blessing. For we must never forget the price of our spiritual redemption. The story is told that before the Boer War, President Krueger sent a message to America, which read "The republics are determined if they must belong to England, that a price will have to be paid that will stagger humanity." Now that price was paid.

This my friend is only a faint illustration of what was paid for the redemption of the human race. It is a price that staggers the imagination of man, a price that only God Himself was able to pay.
And in the payment thereof, Christ was made of a woman, He was made under the law. He was made a curse for you and for me, and even more. He was made to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Now I realize that these things are repulsive to the natural man, the unbelieving man, the non-Christian man, who in his sinful and the willful ignorance, has no use for the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Liberalism in theology spurns redemption by way of the cross in its vicarious atonement and substitutionary plan. But oh, God help us, my friend, to contend for the faith once and for all delivered. And may He enable us to be free from a contentious spirit. A bad cause is not bettered by fleshly arguments, and on the other hand, a good cause never needs that kind of help. Ours is to proclaim the truth of the living God, and to uphold the cross until men and women come to see its eternal worth. Our declaration of these things is not merely for the sake of triumph, but also for the sake of truth, which my friend, men need to know.

Then it's interesting too to notice that not only do we find here the presentation of a redeemer who was needed, and a redeemer who was accepted, but also the Redeemer, as He claims the redemption of the individual for whom the Redeemer died. And what is it that the owner of the little donkey is able to claim? Well, he may claim the service of his animal. Until it was redeemed, it was under the sentence of death, and he could not use it no matter how urgent the need might have been. If his fields needed ploughing, if he needed to carry his family to town, whatever the case may be, he could not use the little donkey until first of all, a lamb was slain for the donkey, and the donkey was liberated in order to live. Redemption had to come first, but having been redeemed by the slaying of the little lamb and the place of the ass, it was now free to do the work that was necessary. And so it is, my friend, with a child of God: having been
purchased by the blood of redemption, the Lord who purchased us now claims our devotion and our Christian service. You and I have clearly been saved to serve. There is a very interesting and suggestive passage in the Old Testament in this particular respect, he was one of the sons of Jacob, "Issachar is a strong ass, couching down between two burdens, and he saw that rest was good and the land that it was pleasant, and he bowed his shoulder to bear and became a servant unto tribute." Now in this prophetic utterance, which fell from the lips of the old patriarch in the Old Testament as he was blessing his own sons, is a picture of the service and reward. The name Issachar adds to the picture because the very name itself means "hire", like a servant is hired by the master.

All who are in the Fellowship of the Lord will know something of the two burdens as suggested at this particular point. One is the burden of the unsaved, and the other is the burden of the redeemed. As to the need of the lost, the apostle Paul felt the pressure of it when he wrote, "I am debtor, both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the wise, and to the unwise. And so as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you there in Rome also." And again, you remember in First Corinthians 9 and 16, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel." It was no light matter to this great apostle, he could not throw it off with a shrug of the shoulder, this great need of an unconverted world. And you see, Paul had still another burden, and that was the burden of the people who were saved. He wrote in Second Corinthians 11:28, "Besides those things which are on the outside, that which cometh upon me every day, which is the care of all the churches." Now with it all, there need not be discouragement my friend. When we spend an hour spent in the service of Jesus Christ. "He saw that rest was good" is one of the words we want to leave with you. You see a long rest one of these days is coming to the weary laborer, and
it'll be a good rest because it will be found forever in the presence of Christ. And again, "He saw that the land was pleasant," and because of the pleasant land and the prominent rest, it was Issachar who bowed his shoulder to become a burden bearer, and he became a servant even unto tribute. We must ever keep before us the glorious truth: that you and I have been redeemed to render, and we have been saved in order to serve.

This wonderful incident recorded for us in the Great Book of Redemption, even the Book of Gen-Exodus, makes it very plain that there is only one way of escape from death, and that is the way of redemption through the blood. And thus the redemption of the firstling of an ass was made by the Lord as a perpetual memorial sign to the children of Israel as the method of their own spiritual redemption. It is said one day that the captain of a small sailing boat was taken very ill when they were far away from land, and the ship carried no doctor at all. Realizing that death was approaching, the skipper became very troubled in his soul and he became very anxious. And so he sent for the mate, but the difficulty was beyond the mate's power to solve. He could only mutter a vague hope that the captain was not as bad as he thought. And then the captain ordered them to send down for the boatswain. And this man was even more speechless when confronted with a question as to how to get ready for death. One by one, all of the men of the crew were called to the bedside of the dying captain. But all to no avail. In despair, the cabin boy was called, and he did not know just what to say, except that he knew that if his mother were there, she would call for a Bible. And the Bible was found, and all that he could remember was that his mother had turned to what she called Isaiah 53. And this the dying man begged the boy to do. And after a long search it was found, and then they read it together.
And when they reached the fifth verse of Isaiah, chapter 53, the cabin boy said, "My mother used to put my name in that verse, and he made me read it like this, 'He was wounded for Johnny's transgression, the chastisement of Johnny's peace was upon Him, and with His stripes, Johnny is healed.' "Who is the 'He'?" cried the Captain. "Well, my friend," said the boy, "This is Jesus." "Can I put my name in that text?" Cried the dying man. "Yes." And he did, and his name was read into it, and that old hardened sea captain found the Lord and he fell asleep in Jesus Christ with perfect peace. Yes, a broken neck. And if the little donkey was to be redeemed, a little lamb had to be killed in its place. And then it would be redeemed, and it could be put to work for its master in the land of Palestine. Our Father, we thank Thee for the subject of redemption. There may be many listening to us this morning who have never been saved, never been redeemed, who have never found Christ to be the joy of their own lives. Bless, we pray, these moments together, for we pray it in Jesus' name, amen.