

First Christ, Then Faith

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There is a story of Ebedmelech; the black-moor in Jeremiah 38, who by his interest and favour with the king, got leave to go to the dungeon to Jeremiah to fetch him out; he carries ropes with him, lets them down and causeth Jeremiah to put them under his arms, and round about him; now Jeremiah by holding fast the ropes doth not pull him into the pit, but he pulls Jeremiah out of the pit to himself. I speak this by way of illustration. Christ is our Ebedmelech with the Father, the great King of Glory; His dealing prevails that He may have liberty to pluck us poor Jeremiah's out of the pit and dungeon of sin and Satan, of misery and destruction. How doth He this? He doth not first send ropes, and then come after, but goes and carries them with Him; that is, Christ doth not send faith first to believers, and then comes after as drawn by it; no, but He comes and brings it with Him, and He, being present, lets it down to them; and when they have it, they do not draw Christ down to them by it, but holding it fast, He draws them up to Himself. So here is not faith first, and then Christ; but Christ comes first and gives faith to apprehend and lay hold upon Him. Consider therefore, Christ as your Ebedmelech, who comes and reaches Himself out to draw you up, and being first present, reaches out faith to you, by which you may hold; so Christ fetches you out of the pit.

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