Paradox Of Redemption
Whale’s Topic In Chapel

By PATRICK HEATH

The Biblical narrative of God’s redemptive activity among men begins in the Old Testament. Modern theology is making us realize that in the Old Testament, we see the New Testament latent.

DR. J. S. WHALE, speaking in the Chapel last Friday evening, illustrated this fact by citing the Genesis story of Jacob’s wrestling with God. Jacob believed he had seen God “face to face.”

This personal encounter with God was a foreshadowing of the mystery of the Incarnation to come. Charles Wesley could see the story of the cross even in this ancient passage of Scripture.

The account of Jacob’s encounter with God reminds us of two things about redemption. First, faith is always encounter. God’s revelation in this encounter is dynamic self-disclosure. The face-to-face relationship is the living form of living religion.

Jacob had to wrestle with God entirely alone. The individual must meet God in the redemptive relationship with this same aloneness.

SECOND, redemption may be described only in terms of contrasts. The Biblical doctrine of redemption is tense with the antimony of no and yes. God is not “the man upstairs” who benignly overlooks our sin. God still brings his judgment upon men.

In the cross, however, man sees what separates him from God and at the same time sees that separation bridged.

Even though the “no” remains, the “yes” appears in Christ. God wrestles for us and with us on the cross. The word in Christ is not “yes” and “no”; all the promises in Christ say “yes.”