

Bought at a Price

(Pray that All would Count the Cost)

A Few Words to the Reader: This article was written with the intent to remind you my brothers and sisters in Christ, of the price that God paid for our sins. However, just like all who are in Christ Jesus, I'm a disciple who is still learning God's truths day by day. So, let's be like the Bereans, for: *"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."* (Acts 17:11)



Therefore, I encourage you to: *"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."* (2 Timothy 2:15)

He became sin for Us

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Corinthians 5:21)

God loves us and desires that none should perish, for he said: *"Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? (Ezekiel 33:11)* We see the same thing in the New Testament where we read: *"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."* (2 Peter 3:9)

So, to make this possible, Jesus Christ came to take all our sins upon himself. *"For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God."* (Hebrews 10:4-7)

For as Jonah Was

"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Matthew 12:40)

According to the passage above, Jesus said: *"For as Jonah was. ...so shall the Son of man be."* So, to see what it was like for Jesus in the heart of the earth, we need to see how it was for Jonah himself. *"Then Jonah prayed unto Jehovah his God out of the fish's belly. And he said, I called by reason of mine affliction unto Jehovah, and he answered me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice."*

(Jonah 2:1-2) So, we can see that Jonah was experiencing “affliction” and quoted it as being in “the belly of hell.” And let’s remember that Jesus called Jonah a prophet, for we read: *“An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.” (Matthew 12:39)*. And again, in the book of Hebrews we read: *“Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” (Psalm 40:7-8)*

So, from all this we should be able to conclude that Jesus was suffering affliction in the heart of the earth. And let’s remember that Jesus was pleading that his soul would not be left in hell. *“Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.” (Hebrews 5:7-10)* And we know Jesus was heard, for Peter said: *“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. (Acts 2:23-24)* So, Jesus was “loosed” from “the pains of death” which were the flames of hell itself.

Now, from the account of the “Rich man and Lazarus,” we can see that hell is a place of torment. For we read concerning the rich man: *“And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.” (Luke 16:23-24)* So, let’s consider how much Jesus suffered for us. For he took upon himself the agony and torments that was do us, for *“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” (Isaiah 53:6)*

KEY PASSAGES CONCERNING JESUS IN HELL:

- Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. (Acts 2:22-24)
- I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. ... He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." (Acts 2:25-27, 31- 32)

A Promise to a Dying Thief

“Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43)

This passage above poses a few problems for some because in most translations (as we see above), it appears as if Jesus was promising the repentant thief that they would be together in paradise that day.

But we also know that Jesus said he had to spend three days and nights in hell as well. So, how do we make sense of all this? Well, let's first keep in mind that there were no comas in these Greek manuscripts. Therefore, the translators had (and even still have) the option to place them where they wanted. So, for this passage quoted above, the translators of the King James Bible chose to put the coma before the word *"today."* However, we have other bibles where the translators chose to place the coma after the word *"today."* Thus, this same passage quoted above would read: *"Truly I say to you today: you will be with me in paradise."* This makes more sense, because now we have Jesus not promising the thief that they would be together that literal day, but at some point in the future.

E. W. Bullinger who was the commentator of the Companion Bible wrote in his notes: "I say to you, today = 'I say to thee today.' Today. Connect this with 'I say' to emphasize the solemnity of the occasion; not with "shalt thou be." Now, even though placing a coma may for the most part be just a minor thing, in this case however it becomes a major one. So, it's important that you have more than one translation within your library to help you have a better understanding of God's word. This is true especially when those red flags pop up in your head telling you that something doesn't make sense. But most importantly, we need to rely on the Holy Spirit to help us navigate through all these different bible texts. So, let's always seek God's help, even when it comes to something as simple as a coma placement.

Below are listed some of those translations that chose to place the coma after today:

- The first is from the Concordant Literal New Testament which reads - *"Verily, to you am I saying today, with me shall you be in paradise."*
- The next translation is from the Rotherham's Emphasized Bible which reads - *"Verily I say unto thee this day: with me shalt thou be with me in paradise."*
- The last one is from Andrew Gabriel Roth's Peshitta Aramaic English New Testament which reads - *"Y'shua said to him, "Truly I say to you today: You will be with me in paradise."*

Below are different passages found in the King James bible which uses the word *"today"* to help emphasize what's being said:

- I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. (Deuteronomy 30:18)
- Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. (Acts 20:26)

It is Finished

"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." (John 19:30)

According to that passage above, what was it that Jesus finished? Now, was our forgiveness and redemption totally completed at that moment? For we must remember that Jesus said *"It is finished"* before he died and rose from the dead. So, to get a better understanding of what Jesus meant, we need to consider a few scriptures. The first reads: *"Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification."* (Romans 4:25) The next reads: *"Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins."* (1 Corinthians 15:15-17) So, we can see that Christ's death and resurrection was

and still is crucial for our redemption. And wouldn't it make more sense for Jesus to say, *"it is finished"* after his death and resurrection if the completion of our redemption was in mind?

Now, let's examine another passage which may help us to understand what Jesus meant when He said *"It is finished."* For in John 17:3-4, Jesus Himself said: *"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."* So, we see that Jesus came to reveal not only who he is, but *"the only true God"* which we know is God the Father. And not only that, Jesus came to reveal God's plan of salvation for us. For in John 3:16-18 we read: *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."* So, my brothers and sisters in Christ, wouldn't *"it is finished"* be in reference to Jesus' earthly ministry instead of the completion of our redemption? I do believe so.

Now, in Luke chapter 23 we do read that Jesus committed his spirit into the hands of God his Father. For we read: *"And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, 'Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT.' Having said this, He breathed His last."* (Luke 23:46) However, this passage is not saying that Jesus spirit went directly into God's presence. For Jesus was trusting that God would not leave his soul in hell. For we read: *"I have set Jehovah always before me: Because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: My flesh also shall dwell in safety. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."* (Psalm 16:8-10) Therefore, let's not come to the wrong conclusion that this passage is indicating that Jesus went immediately to the Father after his death. For that would make portions of the gospel confusing and even contradicting, wouldn't you agree?

Just Hanging Out with the Saints?

"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Matthew 12:40)

Now, let's not come to the false notion that Jesus after his death, descended into an earthly paradise called *"Abrahams Bosom."* (Luke 16:22) For there are those who believe that Jesus was hanging out there for three days and nights with the departed saints of God (some who would have been there for over a thousand of years). However, if that was true, why was Jesus so glad that his soul was not left there? Because let's remember while praying in much agony, Jesus said: *"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."* (Matthew 26:39) So, wouldn't this agonizing prayer be not only for the cross, but his three days and nights in hell as well? I do believe so my brothers and sisters in Christ.

So, where is Paradise? *"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."* (Revelation 2:7) So, the paradise of God is where the tree of life is. So, where is the tree of life? *"And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street thereof. And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life,*

bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.” (Revelation 22:1-2)

Also, we have Paul's own testimony when he said, *“I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.” (2 Corinthians 12:2-4)* So, according to the apostle Paul, paradise is up in heaven and not in some abode inside the earth.

So, where is Abraham and all the Saints?

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Hebrews 12:1-2)

Now, let's find out where Abraham and the rest of the departed Saints of God are. First, let's notice that it says we're surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses in that passage above. And next, it says in Hebrews 11:13 that those witnesses are they who have died in faith. So, according to God's word, it sounds like they are quite alive and we're surrounded by them as well. We can see this also to be true from what we read about the rich man and Lazarus. For after he died, the rich man was conscious of his surroundings, feeling the torments of hell while Lazarus who also had died was being comforted in the arms of Abraham who was quite alive himself.

And let's remember that Moses and Elisha appeared before Peter, James and John when Jesus was transfigured before them. Also, Jesus himself said to the Sadducees: *“But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” (Matthew 22:31-32)* So, even though a person's body may be buried in the ground, their soul would still be alive. This is true whether one is in the realm of the saints above or being tormented in the flames of hell below. (Matthew 17:1-4)

Now, you may be thinking, “didn't the rich man in hell talk to Abraham afar off.” And even though this is true, that still doesn't prove that there's some chamber called “Abraham's Bosom” inside the earth. So, let's first read that passage which declares this: *“And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.” (Luke 16:22-24)* Now, we must realize that the rich man has never seen Abraham before. So, how could he have recognized and even communicated with him in the distance among a huge mass of people? That would be like you sitting in a packed stadium communicating with a well-known radio host on the other side whom you never seen nor even heard speak before.

So, on the contrary, couldn't this be a vision of some sort just as it was with Stephen who was looking up and seeing Jesus standing on the right hand of God? (Acts 7:55-56) So, that great gulf fixed between the rich man and Lazarus could have been simply the distance between hell beneath the earth, and the Sainly realm of the dead above it.

What about the Atonement?

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.” (Leviticus 17:11)

Now, we shouldn't come to the wrong conclusion that our atonement for sin has nothing to do with the shed blood of Christ? For according to that passage above, it's the blood that makes an atonement for our souls. Also in the New Testament, John the apostle said: *“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. (1 John 1:7)* So, we see that the blood of Christ is a vital part of our atonement for sin. For without it, there would be no forgiveness possible.

BELOW ARE A FEW SCRIPTURES PERTAINING TO THE BLOOD OF CHRIST:

- But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. (Ephesians 2:13)
- How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (Hebrews 9:14)
- Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. (1 Peter 1:18-21)

Now that being said, we must also realize that all sacrifices had to be done according to procedure which was written in the law. For not only was the blood of the lamb to be shed and applied for the remission of sins, but the lamb also had to go through the fire. One was not to be done without the other. And if by chance a step was missed or neglected, would God even regard it? For God said: *“They are to take some of the blood and smear it on the sides and top of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the animal. That same night they must roast the meat over a fire and eat it along with bitter salad greens and bread made without yeast. (Exodus 12:7-8)* Therefore, even though the blood of the lamb was the atonement for their sins, they still had to partake of its flesh which went through the flames of fire as well.

Now in a similar way, even though the blood of Christ does atone for our sins, we still must receive him as our Lord and Savior in order to be saved. For during communion, we receive the bread and wine which represents the body and blood of Christ. So, just as our Lord's blood was shed to cover our sins, his soul still had to endure the flames of hell on our behalf. All this Jesus did so that we could be made right before God. So, in a sense, Jesus Christ truly became our Passover Lamb.

Final Words on Hell

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah 53:6)

Now as mentioned earlier, we see that hell is the temporary abode for all who have died in their sins. (Luke ch.16) So, even though Christ's blood was a vital part of our atonement for sins, he still had to suffer the wrath of God that was do for all sinners, which is hell itself. And let's remember that God is not a respecter of persons. (Acts 10:34) So, because our Savior Jesus died a sinner's death, he had to also suffer a sinner's death: *"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."* (2 Corinthians 5:21)

So, the cross is a visible form of punishment brought on by man against those who are viewed as law breakers. Therefore, because Jesus was viewed by the religious rulers as a false prophet and a deceiver of the people (though he wasn't), they put him to death. (Zechariah 13:3-7) But on the other hand, hell is God's wrath against those who violated his laws and standards. So, because Jesus took our sins upon himself, he had to suffer our wrath in hell as well.

In Closing

"Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs." (Romans 14:1-2)

Now, let us realize that we're not all at the same level of faith. For there are some who have a limited knowledge of the word, but are yet are still saved. On the other hand, there are those who have a much deeper knowledge of the word and are saved as well. And let's remember what Paul the apostle said to the Corinthian believers: *"As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions."* (Romans 14:1) So, if one only has the knowledge that Jesus died on the cross and rose the third day for our redemption, this person still would be saved if he believes in the saving blood of Christ.

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John 14:26) So, knowing that the Holy Spirit lives in us and teaches us all things, lets dig deeper into God's word to know all His truths. (2 Timothy 2:15) For it should be our desire to truly recognize and see everything that God did for us sinner. Therefore, we must not always rely on others to teach us, but read the bible for ourselves and relying on God's Holy Spirit to teach us. For Jesus said: *"take my yoke upon you and learn of me."* (Matthew 11:29) He also said: *"It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."* (John 6:45) And let's also remember what John the apostle said: *"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."* (1 John 2:27)

So, let us be: *"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."* (Hebrews 12:2) May God bless you as you seek to do his will, amen.