

Bought at a Price

(Pray that All would Count the Cost)

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He Became Sin for Us

“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” (1 Peter 1:18-19)

God loves us and desires that none should perish, for he said: *“Say to them: As I live, says the Lord Jehovah, I have no delight in the death of the wicked, except in the turning of the wicked from his way, and so to live. Turn, turn from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?”* (Ezekiel 33:11 MKJV) 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 long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”* (2 Peter 3:9 WEB)

Now, from what we read above, couldn't we all agree that God wants us to repent and thus be saved? However, we know that the old covenant couldn't make this happen. *“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Therefore when He comes into the world, He says, ‘Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but You have prepared a body for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You have had no pleasure. Then I said, Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me) to do Your will, O God.’”* (Hebrews 10:4-7 MKJV, Psalm 40:7-8)

So, who is that one *“who knew no sin”* and was recorded *“in the volume of the book”*? Wasn't it Jesus Christ who took upon himself the sins of the world? *“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.”* (John 3:16-17)

- 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)
- But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children

which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on [him] the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. (Hebrews 2:9-18 KJV)

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)

From what we can gather from that passage above, Jesus in a sense was saying: *“For as Jonah was. ...so shall the Son of man be.”* Now, 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 ASV, KJV)

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: *“But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet: for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”* (Matthew 12:39-40 ASV). Therefore, we should be able to conclude that Jesus was suffering affliction in the heart of the earth.

Save Him from Death

Now, in Hebrew 5:7-10, we read 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)

So, according to that passage above, Jesus was pleading that God would *“save him from death.”* Also, it says that he *“was heard in that he feared.”* Now, we know that this wasn't concerning his physical death because he was crucified and put to death. Therefore, Jesus was asking that his soul would not be left in hell. For Peter said: *“Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.”* (Acts 2:23-24 NKJV) So again, Jesus was *“loosed”* (saved) from *“the pains of death.”* Now, what pains are there in death other than the fires of hell itself? Therefore, Jesus was released from the torments of hell after his three days and night there.

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) Therefore, brothers and sisters in Christ, let’s consider how much Jesus suffered for us. For he took upon himself the agony and torments that was do all of us, for *“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”* (Isaiah 53:6 ASV)

- 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 it appears as if Jesus was promising the repentant thief that they would be together in paradise that literal day. But we know that Jesus said he had to spend three days and nights in hell. So, how do we make sense of all this? Well, let’s first keep in mind that there were no commas in the original Greek manuscripts. Therefore, translators both of the past and the present placed these commas where they wanted to. So, concerning that passage above, the translators of the King James Bible chose to put the comma before the word *“today.”* Now, I do believe that these translators were gifted in what they did. And I believe the KJV bible is one of the best translations out there. However, being human like the rest of us, these translators were not immune to certain view and biases of their day. Therefore, it wouldn’t be uncommon for some of these views to show up in their work as well.

Now, I have to admit that there are many translations that follow the comma placement of the KJV bible. However, there are those few that have the comma after the word *“today.”* Thus, this same passage would read: *“Truly I say to you today, you will be with me in paradise.”* (Luke 23:43 REV) This makes more sense, because we have Jesus NOT PROMISING the thief that they would be together that literal day, but at some time in the future. E. W. Bullinger, a commentator of the Companion Bible wrote: *“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.”* So, Mr. Bullinger admits that is should read: *“Truly I say to you today.”* So, in a sense, Jesus was telling the thief to take heed to what I’m about to say to you. And that would be the assurance that they will be together in the future.

So, even though a misplaced comma would normally be a minor thing, it can become a major one when it comes to such passages as above. So, it’s important that you have more than one translation within your library. This would especially be true when those red flags pop up in your head telling you that something doesn’t make sense. Therefore, it’s important that we rely on the Holy Spirit to help us navigate throughout the scriptures. So, let’s always seek God’s help, even when it comes to something as simple as a comma placement.

Below are more translations that chose to place the comma after the word today:

- The Concordant Literal New Testament reads - *“Verily, to you am I saying today, with me shall you be in paradise.”*
- The Rotherham’s Emphasized Bible reads - *“Verily I say unto thee this day: with me shalt thou be with me in paradise.”*
- The Peshitta Aramaic English New Testament (by Andrew Gabriel Roth) reads - *“Y’shua said to him, “Truly I say to you today: You will be with me in paradise”*
- The Revised English Version reads - *“And he said to him, ‘Truly I say to you today, you will be with me in the Paradise.’*

Below are different passages found in the King James bible which uses the word “today” to help emphasize what’s being said:

- *“I announce to you today that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in and possess.”* (Deuteronomy 30:18) Note: **So, did they all perish that literal day? No, they didn’t.**
- *“Therefore I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of you all.”* (Acts 20:26) Note: **So, was Paul guilty of their blood before he mentioned this to them? No, of course he wasn’t.**

So, wouldn’t these two other passages found in the KJV bible be a witness against the translator’s own comma error in Luke 23:43? You be the judge.

It is Finished

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

According to that passage above, what was finished? 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 other bible verses as well. The first is: *“Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”* (Romans 4:25) The next is: *“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. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.* (1 Corinthians 15:15-18) So, according to apostle Paul, the death and resurrection of Jesus is crucial for our redemption.

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 we have Jesus praying to God the Father saying: *“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 said, *“: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.”* And we know from the context of that passage, Jesus came not only to reveal that he was our promised Messiah, but also to let us know who *“the only true God”* is, which we know is God the Father himself.

Therefore, *“it is finished”* is in reference to Jesus’ earthly ministry which he finally completed. However, our redemption was not completed until after our Lord’s death and resurrection as Paul the apostle said above.

I Commit My Spirit

“Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, ‘Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!’ And having said this he breathed his last.” (Luke 23:46 ESV)

Jesus knew that he must spend three days and nights in the heart of the earth (a place of torment). Therefore, Jesus was simply trusting his soul in the hands of God his Father. 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 rejoices; My flesh also shall rest in hope; For You will not leave My soul in hell; You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption.”* (Psalms 16:8-10 MKJV) So, Jesus was trusting that God the Father would not leave his soul in hell nor allow his body to decay in the grave. For Jesus knew that he had to spend three days and nights of torment in the heart of the earth. However, he committed himself into the hands of God his Father. For Jesus knew that God wouldn’t leave him there. And according to scripture, God raise Jesus up and deliver him from the pains of death.

And it’s the same for us today. For we who are in Christ have but our trust in God that he will bring us into paradise. *“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”* (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18) Yes, Jesus Christ shall return for us Christians who have put our faith and hope in him. This would be true whether we’re dead or alive. For if dead, we shall be in the company of the dead in Christ who shall be returning with him. And if we are alive, we shall be caught up with them in heaven. Either way it’s a win-win situation for us who have put our hope and faith in God’s mercy.

Just Hanging Out with the Saints?

“And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, 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)

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 with the departed saints (some who would been there for a few hundred years) for three days and nights. However, if that was true, why was Jesus so glad that his soul was not left there? (see Psalm 16:10 and Acts 2:27) Also, it says above that Jesus was praying earnestly, asking the God his Father *“if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.”* So, wouldn’t this agonizing prayer be not only for the cross, but his three days and nights in hell as well?

So, where in the bible does it mention Paradise? Well, the first is: *“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, where is the *“paradise of God?”* *“Then he showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve*

kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”
(Revelation 22:1-2 RSV)

Also, we have Paul the apostle’s own testimony saying, *“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, there is a paradise that’s in the third heaven. Therefore, these scriptures are a witness showing that paradise is not in some make-believe underworld inside the earth. For the only thing that’s inside the earth is hell itself.

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)

Okay, you may be asking: “where is Abraham and the rest of the departed Saints of God?” Well, let’s first notice that it says we’re surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses in that passage above. Also, 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, don’t you think? We can see this also to be true from the account of the rich man and Lazarus. For after the rich man died, he was aware of his surroundings, feeling the torments of hell. And while looking up, his eyes were opened to see the realm of the saints, where Lazarus was, being comforted in the arms of Abraham. Let’s also 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 up in the realm of the saints or being tormented in the flames of hell below. (Matthew 17:1-4)

A Conversation with Abraham

Now, you may be thinking, “didn’t the rich man in hell talk to Abraham afar off.” Well, 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) So, 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 God’s saints? That would be like you sitting in a packed stadium

recognizing and communicating with a well-known radio host on the other side of the field whom you never seen before.

So, on the contrary, wouldn'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 could have been simply the distance between hell inside the earth and the Sainly realm of the dead somewhere above it. Again, I encourage you to do some studying on your own my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. For we must beware of the doctrines and teaching of man that doesn't line up with scripture itself. So, from all which was just read, we should be able to conclude that those who are dead are quite alive as well.

- But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. And he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." (Acts 7:55-56 ESV)

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.

Now that being said, we must also realize that all sacrifices had to be done according to procedure. 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: "*And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.*" (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. So, in a similar way, even though the blood of Christ does atone for our sins, he still had to endure the flames of hell on our behalf as well.

During communion, don't we receive both the bread and wine which represents the body and blood of Christ which was offered as a sacrifice for our sins. So, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was offered up as a sacrificial lamb. And we know that the sacrificial lamb was both slain and brought through the fire as well. So, in a sense, Jesus Christ truly became our Passover Lamb who was sacrificed on our behalf. For his blood was shed on the cross and he endure the flames of hell. Therefore, let's thank God for his great mercy towards us sinners who are saved. Amen.

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)

In Closing

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

As mentioned earlier, Luke chapter 16 shows us that hell is a temporary abode for all who have died in their sins. 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)

Now, it’s true that we’re not all at the same level of faith. For there are some who have a limited knowledge and there are some who have a much deeper knowledge as well. However, both are saved by God’s grace poured out upon us. 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 ESV) So, if one only has the knowledge that Jesus died on the cross, was buried and then rose the third day for our redemption, this person still would be saved. For he, believing in the saving blood of Jesus Christ, would have eternal life even though he has a limited knowledge of the gospel. Therefore, it’s a daily learning process for us who are in Christ Jesus. For he said: *“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”* (John 14:26 ESV)

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 who are saved. Therefore, we must not only rely on others to teach us, but to rely on God’s Holy Spirit as well. 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 all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me.”* (John 6:45 ASV) 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)

Therefore, we must all: *“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)

May God bless you as you seek to do his will. Amen.

Note: Bible text other than the King James Bible have been abbreviated according to the version that was used. This is for you the reader to be able to read these verses for yourselves. 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)

- ASV = American Standard Version
- ESV = English Standard Version
- MKJV = Modern King James Version
- NKJV = New King James Version
- NLT = New Living Translation
- REV = Revised English Version
- RSV = Revised Standard Versi
- WEB = Webster Bible