

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

BOUGHT, SOUGHT, AND BROUGHT

For ye are bought with a price. 1Corinthians 6:20 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Luke 19:10 He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. Song of Solomon 2:4

We ever stand in amazement as we consider the unfolding of the LORD's purpose in the redemption and salvation of those whom HE has loved from the foundation of the world. Such thoughts are all the more glorious as we see HIM manifest that purpose, likening HIMSELF to that faithful SHEPHERD (see Mat. 18: 12-14) who will not allow even one of HIS sheep to perish, regardless of the effort and cost involved in rescuing them. Having provided such a great benefit for them, HE will then bring each one out of the darkness and into the LIGHT of the knowledge of the glory of GOD in the face of JESUS CHRIST.

We live in an era of time when the clear declaration of these glorious truths cannot be readily found. The doctrine of universal love (i.e.; the teaching that GOD regards all men with the same love) has caused the glory of redemption to be tarnished in the eyes of the multitude. The notion is set forth, far and wide, that CHRIST has done all that HE can do to provide a means of salvation to every person on Earth and has now left the gaining of that salvation up to men, who can attain it by deciding to do so. Thus, we find the blind leading the blind and all falling into the deep ditch of free will-ism and universal atonement.

An atonement that is available to everyone but actually takes away the sin debt of none is no atonement at all, but is a mere faltering attempt to save all men, while failing to save any. I was raised in a religious tradition which promoted a system which they called the "Cooperative Program." This was a device whereby many churches "co-operated" with one another to pool their funds together to, ostensibly, send missionaries into the world to bring about its conversion to CHRIST. Unfortunately, their "message" concerning the gospel was that it was also a "cooperative program" wherein men would "cooperate" with GOD to bring about their own salvation. If a man had the power to "cooperate" with GOD, then he wouldn't need salvation.

The very basis of the true gospel is that JESUS CHRIST has "*obtained eternal redemption*" with HIS own blood. If HE has "obtained" this redemption, then it must follow that this redemption is complete. If it is "complete", then it is sure and steadfast for all that HE has obtained it for. If HE has obtained it for every member of the human race, then all must have it. If, however, (as we read in the scriptures) there are some who perish, then it is clear that they are not those for whom HE has obtained it or redemption would be of no value.

Thus, we read in the scriptures that HE has "*bought*" a people. If they are bought and paid for, they must be HIS. HE has not made a blanket, down payment, only to have to wait to find out what it is that HE bought. Rather HE knows them that are HIS (see 2Tim. 2:19), has prayed for them alone (see John 17:9), and has purchased their redemption quite apart from any action taken by them. "*So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.*" (Rom 9:16)

The concept of “redemption” is quite a simple one, which men employ almost every day of their lives as they spend their money to buy goods and services which they expect to possess. No one goes into a store and pays their hard-earned cash, without selecting items to purchase, in blind hope that they will get some goods. Neither did the LORD JESUS CHRIST shed HIS blood apart from a knowledge of that which HE purchased. The glory of that “redemption” which CHRIST has “obtained” is that HE is buying back that possession which was HIS from the beginning. HE was given a people from the foundation of the world, by the FATHER and it is those people who were chosen in HIM. According to HIS purpose to bring glory to HIS NAME in the manifestation of HIS grace, HE created the world and subjected that possession unto the vanity of this world. They willingly sold themselves into poverty, shame, condemnation, and slavery. In HIS eternal purpose HE determined to buy them out of this impoverished state to manifest HIS glory and everlasting love. They are *“bought with a price.”*

Having bought HIS most precious possession, HE would not abandon it, nor leave the gathering of it to chance. Just as the faithful shepherd searched until HE had found the sheep that was lost, so too does the LORD JESUS seek those that are HIS. Drawing them with cords of love and overtures of kindness. *“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”* (Mat 11:28-30) By pricking their hearts by HIS SPIRIT. *“I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.”* (Acts 9:5) By convincing them of sin, righteousness and judgement. Sending HIS SPIRIT to each one with the “heavenly wind” of the new birth. *“Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”* (John 3:7) Indeed HE comes to “seek and to save that which is lost.” *“what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it?”* (Luke 15:8) The LORD’s elect are bought and sought.

Having bought them with HIS precious blood and imputed to them HIS perfect righteousness, HE does seek them out wherever they are, compelling them to come unto HIM, just like that “certain man” who made a supper. *“And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.”* (Luke 14:23) HE does not futilely attempt to bring them to HIMSELF, rather HE compels them to come by making them *“willing in the day of HIS power.”* Even as HE declared, “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” (John 6:37) *“And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.”* (John 10:16) We see this certainty demonstrated in Acts, *“And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.”* (Acts 13:48)

Thus, the sons of GOD are bought, sought, and brought to HIM according to HIS power, mercy, and grace, quite apart from their own. *“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.”* (John 10:27-29)

How foolish then is any message which relies upon the free will of men to see the fruition of salvation. I have often heard the “physicians of no value” say, you just need to take the first step and then GOD will do the rest. Such a message as this is of no use to that man who is “dead in trespasses and sins”. If a man had the power and will to “take the first step” then he could take the next one too. Lost and ruined sinners need a SAVIOR who saves, a REDEEMER who redeems, and a SHEPHERD who calls and gathers HIS sheep. CHRIST is that ONE. “There were ninety and nine who safely lay in the shelter of the fold, but one was out on the hills away far off from the gates of gold. But none of the ransomed ever knew how deep were the waters crossed; nor how dark was the night the Lord passed through ere he found his sheep that was lost.” (E.Clephane) Have you been found by HIM? mam