

"YE WERE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE."

Question. – In considering the subject of the ransom in the light of a commercial transaction, as expressed by the Apostle in the words, "Ye are not your own; ye are *bought* with a price" (I Cor. 7:23), will you kindly state in as few words as possible what was the price paid? by whom was the purchase made? when was it bought? to whom was the price paid? when will that which was purchased be delivered?

Answer. – The Scriptures most distinctly declare that the whole human family was "sold under sin," by the first Adam. The price paid him was the fruits of disobedience to God, which eventually proved to be very bitter rewards. The race thus sold under sin became subject to sin's wages; viz., death, by divine sentence. This sentence was irrevocable, and, hence, would have meant everlasting death, everlasting destruction, had not the Almighty graciously provided for us a ransom. The word "ransom" (Greek, *antilutron*), signifying corresponding price (Matt. 20:28; I Tim. 2:6), indicates to us the method by which God proposed to assist our race without compromising his own justice and its sentence of death. In order to be our ransom price it was necessary that our Lord Jesus should become "the man Christ Jesus," yet without sin, without taint, without blemish. This condition was attained through his miraculous birth, – and this purity and freedom from the death sentence upon the rest of mankind was maintained, to the end of his life, in that "he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate" from the sinner-race. In this condition he was ready, prepared thus to become our ransom-price, and this he did become by sacrificing himself, laying down his life on our behalf.

As the condemnation upon the entire race came through one man's disobedience, so the voluntary sacrifice of the man Christ Jesus who was without sin, was a complete offset to the crime and condemnation of the first man, Adam; and as the race of Adam partook of his penalty, so also his race partakes in his redemption; and thus, as by one man's

disobedience the many became sinners, so by the obedience of one the many were justified to life – freed from the condemnation of death.

Here we see Adam and his race lost under the sentence of death, needing to be purchased or redeemed. Here we see the man Christ Jesus, the Redeemer, and perceive that he gave the corresponding price for all. Here we see God, the Judge, who sentenced Adam, accepting the man Christ Jesus in his stead, as his substitute, a ransom, or corresponding price. We have additionally the words of the Apostle, assuring us that Christ "through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God" – a sacrifice well-pleasing. (Heb. 9:14). We have besides, his testimony that our Lord Jesus took upon himself our human nature, that "he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." We have, also, the testimony that this plan was such an arrangement as to preserve the honor and dignity of divine justice, and yet to bring mercy and forgiveness to the human culprit, in the words, "That he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Without the payment of Adam's penalty for him, God could not have justly released the sinner from his sentence; – to have done so would have been an injustice – a violation of justice – as surely as the original sentence was a just one.

As already indicated, the payment of this penalty began when our Lord reached perfect manhood and made his consecration to death at Jordan, symbolizing it in baptism. It was finished on Calvary. As the ransom, the man Christ Jesus must stay dead; but in harmony with the previous proposition of the Father he was granted life on a higher plane, as a partaker of the divine nature, in reward for his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. When he ascended up on high and appeared in the presence of God, he presented before him the sacrifice which he had made in the flesh, appropriating a part of it at once to those who had already believed on him – the apostles and other faithful ones of that time – and to all those who would believe on him through their word throughout this Gospel age. In evidence that this was accepted of the Father and accounted sufficient to cancel our sins, note

the fact that the Redeemer was at once granted the privilege of pouring out at Pentecost upon his faithful disciples the holy spirit of adoption, as evidencing to them the full forgiveness of their sins; and thus indirectly testifying not only that Jesus had arisen from the dead and ascended up on high, but, also, that his sacrifice for sins was full, sufficient and acceptable to justice.

As to when the thing purchased will be delivered, we reply, that in the case of the Church there is a reckoned deliverance granted at once, when we believe. We are counted free from sin – justified by faith, justified by his blood, by the grace of God; and this justification becomes to believers the ground or foundation of their consecration to the Father, as joint-sacrificers with Christ in the sufferings of this present time, and the foundation of their hope of being joint-participators with him in the glories to follow. In the case of the world in general, practically no benefit from the death of Christ comes in the present time. The world must wait until the Church of Christ, admitted by divine grace to a share in his sufferings, shall have filled up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ (Col. 1:2,4), and shall have been glorified with him. Then these, as the glorified sons of God, shall shine forth in Millennial grandeur, **[R3088 : page 303]** for the blessing of the world, by the rolling away of the clouds of ignorance, superstition, prejudice, etc., and by lifting up so many as will, out of present slavery to sin and death into the liberty of the sons of God. That Millennial day, then, will be the great day of delivering that which Christ purchased with his precious blood – delivering mankind in general (so many as shall heartily accept divine favor on the original terms proffered to Adam; viz., thorough obedience).

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