



Restoring my Soul

HE RESTORES MY SOUL, HE LEADS ME IN PATHS

PSA 23:3

SEPTEMBER 2019

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A FIVE DAY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

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Contributing Authors

Victor Hall

Peter Hay

David Baker

Compiled by

David Baker

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We wounded Christ

The thoughts and behaviours of those who live according to their own law are sin. Our sin is against the Father, who named us and prepared the works of our sonship before the heavens and earth were created. The Father laid the reproaches for these sins on the Son, when He made the Son an offering for sin. **Psa 69:7,9. Rom 15:3.** As a sin offering, the iniquities of every person were laid on Christ, and His soul was made our sin. **Isa 53:5,10. 2Co 5:21.**

The wages of sin is death. **Rom 6:23.** Paul explained that when Jesus drank the cup of the wrath of God, He tasted the judgement of death for everyone. **Mat 26:39. Heb 2:9.** The sufferings that Jesus endured because of this judgement were not simply on behalf of humanity as a collective; He tasted the suffering of death for *every individual*. This is what Paul meant by 'everyone'. The sufferings of death that Jesus experienced, as He journeyed from Gethsemane to Calvary, were for the specific sin of each person.

Every one of our sinful thoughts and actions have caused Christ's body to be wounded and His blood to be shed. For example, when we are living according to our own will, Christ is sweating clots of blood. When we are self righteous, Christ's face is being bruised. When we are being disobedient, and become angry with others, Christ is being beaten with rods. When we indulge in the lusts of the flesh, including our aberrant thoughts, Christ is being scourged. When we are proud, and deny the headship of Christ, the crown of thorns is being driven into His head. All of these sufferings, and our sin that caused them, were gathered up into the sixth wound that Christ suffered when He was nailed to the cross for our transgressions. **Isa 53:5.** This explains how we all crucified Christ, even though we were not there on the day that He died, almost 2000 years ago.

FURTHER STUDY PSALM 69

The serpent on the pole

In the sixth wounding event, Christ was nailed to the cross and was lifted up as the serpent on the pole. **Joh 3:14**. The writhing serpent pinned to a pole is a fitting illustration of the torment that is justly inflicted upon the reprobate – meaning, those reserved for judgement. This torment was inflicted by the Father on Christ, who was made our sin. **2Co 5:21**. The image of the serpent on the pole depicts our sinful condition, as well as the impact of our sin upon others, and the judgement of God upon our sin.

By abusing others, we abuse Christ, and cause His blood to flow. When we do this, we demonstrate the most significant action of reprobation that a person can commit. *We are reprobate* because we are causing the death of an innocent Man. The torment that Christ suffered as the serpent on the pole reveals the torment of everlasting death that awaits those who reject the salvation of God that is found in the fellowship of His offering. **Rev 18:6–7**.

The wonderful message of the gospel is that Christ has intervened in human history, and has become a mediator between every person and his neighbour. He came to reconcile us to God and to our neighbours, in Himself, and to make peace through the blood of His cross. **Eph 2:14–18**. Christ's ministry of reconciliation and peace is only available in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings.

The whole world was reconciled to God through the death of the Son. However, a person is only saved by receiving His life. **Rom 5:10**. The life of Yahweh is in His blood. In the fellowship of Christ's offering, His blood is given to us to become our life. **Lev 17:11**. Furthermore, our heart is being sprinkled clean from the evil of living by our self defined good. **Heb 10:22**. This happens as our self centredness, which was laid on Christ, is being removed from us in the fellowship of His circumcision. **Col 2:11–12**.

The beginning of salvation

A person in the world begins their journey of salvation with Christ when they hear the word of the cross proclaimed to them. This word began to be proclaimed to the whole world when Christ's side was pierced by the soldier's spear. This seventh wound caused blood and water, and a spirit of grace and supplication, to flow from His heart. **Joh 19:34. Zec 12:10.** The Holy Spirit bears witness to these elements by convicting those who hear and receive the gospel, of sin, righteousness and judgement. **1Jn 5:6. Joh 16:8.**

The apostle John witnessed the blood and water flowing from Christ's heart. **Joh 19:34–35.** In his first epistle, he emphasised the truth that water and blood, together, are one dimension of the word of God. **1Jn 5:6.** This word brings cleansing and life to a hearer. The blood, in particular, contains the life of Yahweh. **Lev 17:11.** This life is *the light of men*. **Joh 1:4.** As Christ's blood sprinkles a person's heart, they begin to see the specific thoughts, motivations and actions that have caused the shedding of Christ's blood. The Holy Spirit ministers grace to their heart, bringing the conviction of sin to their conscience. Then, under the influence of a spirit of grace and supplication, they begin to supplicate and mourn in repentance. **Zec 12:10.**

This was the effect that Christ's seventh wound had on the great multitude who witnessed Christ's crucifixion. The Gospel of Luke records, 'And the whole crowd who came together to that sight, *seeing what had been done*, beat their breasts and returned'. **Luk 23:48.** Under the influence of grace and supplication, the people looked at Christ and saw what they had done to Him. They went to their houses, mourning for their sin and for the death of the Firstborn. **Zec 12:10–11.** Although they did not realise it at the time, they were beginning to receive the blessing of God. Jesus Himself declared, 'Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.' **Mat 5:4.**

FURTHER STUDY 1 PETER 1

The work of the blood

When a person recognises that it was their abuse that caused the blood of Christ to be shed, and they turn to Him in repentance, the propitiatory work of Christ's blood begins to be effective for them.

First, through faith in the blood, their sins are passed over. That is, the hearer receives the forgiveness of sins. **Rom 3:25**. *Second*, the blood redeems them from their captivity to sin as they are being cut into the covenant of sonship. The apostle Peter explained that they are redeemed from the aimless, or vain, conduct of their own way, by the precious blood of Christ, the Lamb of God. **1Pe 1:18–19**. They are freed from their slavery to sin so that they are able to do the works of obedience that the Father prepared for them to do in Christ. **Rom 6:17–18**.

Third, they are born of the seed of the Father by the word of Christ's messengers. **1Pe 1:22–23**. Through this birth, they receive the divine nature that makes them a son of God. **2Pe 1:3–4**. *Fourth*, in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings, the blood cleanses them and becomes their life. They join this fellowship through baptism into Christ. The outcome of new birth and baptism into Christ is that a believer is clothed with the mandate of priesthood. **Gal 3:27**. **Rom 13:13–14**. They are then able to serve God as a son priest in Christ's church.

As they walk in the light of the word of present truth, and have fellowship with those who proclaim this word to them, the blood of Christ cleanses their conscience from the dead works of their own way. **1Jn 1:7**. **Heb 9:13–14**. This is how their garments are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. **Rev 7:14**. The word lights the pathway of their participation in Christ's offering and sufferings. **Psa 119:105**. His blood continues to sprinkle their heart, and it also becomes their life. **Gal 2:20**.

Ceasing from sin

The light of life that we receive when our heart is sprinkled by the blood of Jesus grants to us a knowledge of the truth. Even though we caused Christ's blood to be shed, we recognise that this blood is granting to us forgiveness, redemption and cleansing. However, this does not mean that we can continue to sin by living in the manner that caused Christ's blood to be shed as a sin offering. To do so, brings us back under the judgement of God.

Making this point, Paul wrote, 'For if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgement, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.' **Heb 10:26–27**. Paul was saying that a person may be illuminated concerning the wounding effect of their sin on Christ, and yet, mistakenly choose to continue to pursue the righteousness of God through their self defined works.

Paul described such behaviour as trampling the Son of God underfoot, counting the blood of the covenant as a common thing, and insulting the Spirit of grace. **Heb 10:29**. If a person does this, they are neither joined to, nor are beneficiaries of, Christ's offering for sin. This means that they are not being born from the death of sin, with Christ. The only thing that Christ's blood ministers to them is judgement. Concerning those who trample the blood of Christ in this manner, the Lord Himself says, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' and, 'The Lord will judge His people.' **Heb 10:30**.

Paul addressed this same vicarious mindset in his letter to the Romans. After outlining the amazing gift of the grace of life, which Christ made available to us through His offering, Paul asked, 'Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?' **Rom 6:1**. The answer, of course, was, 'Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?' **Rom 6:2**.

FURTHER STUDY 1 PETER 4

Baptism into His death

In his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul declared, 'Do you not know that as many of us as were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into His death?' **Rom 6:2–3**. Baptism into Christ's death is a participation in His offering and sufferings. In the fellowship of His sufferings, our relationship with sin comes to an end. This has not been well understood by many people, because baptism has been widely viewed as confirmation of a person's salvation, and as a means of inducting them into a Christian denomination.

A person who has truly been born of God will desire to be joined to the fellowship of Christ's offering. This is because they know that unless they join His death, which leads to life, they will die again in their sin. **2Ti 2:11–12**. Like the Ethiopian, to whom Philip the evangelist preached, they will be illuminated concerning Christ's offering and suffering, and will say, 'See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptised?' **Act 8:36**. Having been illuminated by a messenger regarding the true implications of baptism, they will eagerly present themselves, by faith, for this fellowship.

Baptism into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is the response of faith that a new born believer makes to the word of the cross. **Act 8:12**. Their faith is to become a member of the body of Christ, and to join the fellowship of His offering and sufferings. Baptism itself is a fellowship. In the water, the elders lay their hands on the new believer and baptise them into Christ and into the fellowship of His body. At the same time, the new believer clothes themselves with Christ by calling His name upon themselves. **Gal 3:27**. This is their declaration of faith for participation in the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ as a member of His body.

Using the name of Christ

The name of the Lord Jesus Christ is blasphemed, or taken in vain, when it is used as some kind of theological and legal fetish. A person does this when they invoke the name of Jesus as a mystical power, which they presume to exercise over some contrary condition or circumstance. **Mat 7:22–23.**

This has been a common feature of ministry within evangelical and pentecostal churches. People draw from the words of the apostle Peter, who declared, ‘Let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the “stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.” Nor is there salvation in any other, for *there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved!* **Act 4:10–12.**

Using this statement, many have reduced salvation and the forgiveness of sins to an invocation of the name of Jesus. By this, we mean that after a hearer has confessed their sins and prayed the sinner’s prayer, the preacher proclaims the respondent’s forgiveness and salvation on the basis of the name of Jesus. Other people take this principle of invocation even further. To achieve some religious goal, they presume to use the name of Jesus to claim various things, such as buildings, money, health, and even people.

Within our own stream of churches, some leaders have used baptism into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ as a means of inducting new members into the church. The outcome of this misuse of Christ’s name has been the adherent’s loyalty to the leader. This has been to the detriment of their participation in the fellowship of Christ’s offering as a member of His body.

The communion meal

Having been born again, and baptised into Christ, the communion meal is our ongoing participation in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. As we participate in the communion meal, we partake of the altar. **Heb 13:10. 1Co 10:18.** The altar is the symbol of Christ's sacrifice. To eat of the altar means that we are joined to His offering. The elements of the bread and the wine are ministered to us by Christ. The bread represents Christ's word, which is Spirit. **Joh 6:63.** We eat the bread in faith for our participation in the fellowship of His body. **1Co 10:17.** We drink the wine in faith for our participation in His offering and sufferings. In this fellowship, His life is given to us to be our life.

The bread and the wine are the elements of the word of the cross. We must not harden our heart to this word, because it proclaims both judgement and the blessing of sonship. As we eat and drink the elements of the communion by receiving the word of Christ's messengers, we are able to judge ourselves rightly. **Jas 1:21. 1Co 11:31.**

Under the influence of grace and supplication, that comes with the word that is ministered at communion, we are illuminated regarding our sonship. The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, revealing to us how we have wounded Christ through our unbelief and disobedience to the word. **Joh 16:8-9.** He convicts us of righteousness by revealing the works that belong to our sonship in Christ. **Joh 16:10.** The Spirit also convicts us of judgement, so that we are not judged with Satan, the ruler of this world. **Joh 16:11.** Instead, by the love of God that the Spirit pours into our heart, we judge ourselves to be dead with Christ, our Lord and Saviour. **2Co 5:14.** We confess that it is only in the fellowship of Christ's death and resurrection that we are able to be delivered from living for ourselves, and can live for Christ. **2Co 5:15.**

Our participation in His offering

There are many implications of our participation in the offering and sufferings of Christ that He priests to us each day. Our daily fellowship in prayer is essential to the efficacy of our participation in Christ's offering and sufferings. **Psa 55:17. Psa 119:147–148.** Prayer is our entry into the fellowship of Yahweh Himself. In this fellowship, we are being delivered from our own wilfulness, and we are being enabled to fulfil the will of the Father, in Christ.

Our conscience is cleansed when Christ sprinkles our heart with the blood that we, through our sin, have caused Him to shed. **Heb 10:22.** Christ gives to us the fruit of this sin, which is the sufferings of death, as a participation in the fellowship of His sufferings. These sufferings may be the difficulties in our life, including our relational quandaries, which have been caused by our own sin. Our sufferings may be the consequence of the sin of others. There are also many things that we suffer that are common to all men. **1Co 10:13.**

Irrespective of the cause of our sufferings, we are to receive them from Christ as a participation in His sufferings. **1Pe 4:1–2.** In this fellowship, we are being delivered from self centredness and sin, and are being made alive with Christ.

In contrast to this, if a person rejects the word of Christ by denying its relevance for their life, or by denying that the capacity for their obedience to God is found in the fellowship of Christ's death and resurrection, they will come under the judgement of the word. Paul said that for this reason, many are weak, and sick, and even die before their time. **1Co 11:30.** The sufferings that these people experience are the judgement of God because of their disobedience to the word. They are not receiving *exanastasis* in their mortal bodies, even though they may be born again and baptised.

Filling up the sufferings of Christ

Writing to the Colossians, Paul testified, 'I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church.' **Col 1:24**. Certainly, there was no lack in Christ's one offering, which was finished as a completed work for every person; it is efficacious, forever. **Heb 10:12,14**. What, then, was 'the lack' to which Paul was referring?

We can best explain this principle using the example of Paul's own conversion. The first point to note is that Christ experienced the sufferings of death that were caused by Paul's self righteous persecution of Christians. Through this offering, Christ also endured and finished the sufferings of death for Paul's salvation. Although Paul had violently persecuted Christians, his sin was injuring Christ. Jesus said to him, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' **Act 9:4**. Here is a key point. The people who were being abused by Paul were not suffering on behalf of Christ. Nor were they suffering something that Christ had not already suffered.

What was lacking was the manifestation of Christ's sufferings in the life of Christians in their day. The Christians who were persecuted by Paul were revealing the sufferings that Christ had already experienced on account of Paul's sin against others. They were joined to Christ's sufferings for Paul, in their time of history. Through these sufferings, the word of the cross was being ministered to Paul, as Christ was portrayed as crucified to him through their sufferings. **Gal 3:1**.

The same is true for us. Each day, Christians are to manifest Christ's sufferings in their flesh, for His body's sake. In this regard, a member of the body of Christ does not suffer what Christ has not already suffered for them. Instead, in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, they are filling up and revealing what He has already suffered for them, and for those who are causing their suffering.

Crucifying the Son again

It is only as we are joined to the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings, through baptism, and through an ongoing participation in the communion, that our sufferings are working for us an eternal weight of glory. **2Co 4:17–18**. Outside of this fellowship, our sufferings are signalling our condemnation, and eventual damnation. They have no merit and achieve no eternal life.

We risk losing our salvation if we harden our heart to the word of Christ, and turn away from walking according to the Spirit in the fellowship of His offering. We do this when we trust in ourselves and in our own perspectives, rather than receiving with meekness the word of Christ, which is able to save our soul. **2Co 1:9. Jas 1:21**.

Our salvation becomes tenuous when we cause harm to others in the body of Christ through our self righteous thoughts, words and actions. Often, we don't even realise that our fleshly perspectives, cynical complaints, and self defined religious endeavours, are an abuse of our brethren in Christ. The sober reality is that when we abuse others in this way, we crucify Christ again. This rebounds upon us in judgement because it is wilful sin. As we continue to resist the word, we increasingly come under the judgement of the word. Eventually, the word itself causes us to be separated from Christ and His people. **Isa 28:13**.

Paul was making this very point when he wrote, 'For it is *impossible* for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.' **Heb 6:4–6**.

Watching and praying

The betrayal and sufferings that Christ experienced as He commenced His offering journey came upon Him as a thief in the night. In the garden of Gethsemane, Judas betrayed Him with a kiss. **Luk 22:48.** Judas was a *thief*. **Joh 12:6.** He had been paid thirty pieces of silver to betray Jesus into the hands of wicked men who were seeking to kill Him. **Mat 26:15.**

Christ had prepared Himself for this ordeal by watching and praying. He obeyed God and went to the Mount of Olives, and then to Gethsemane, to pray. In His prayer to the Father on the Mount of Olives, Jesus said, 'Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.' **Joh 17:12.** Jesus was testifying that He had not been robbed in relation to His ministry on earth.

As He prayed in the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was strengthened with Eternal Spirit and became a living sacrifice. **Luk 22:43. Heb 9:14.** At the gate of Gethsemane, after He had finished praying, Jesus protected His disciples from the representatives of the nations of the world, and from Satan and the powers of darkness that had come to rob Him. Satan came against the Son and found nothing in Him that could rob Him of His reward. **Joh 14:30.**

In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus asked Peter, James and John to watch and pray with Him. **Mat 26:36–44.** Earlier, He had warned them that, because of Him, they all would be made to stumble, and would be scattered from Him as His flock. **Mat 26:31.** The only way that they could escape from being stumbled, and from denying Him, was to watch and pray with Him. As they watched and prayed with Him, they would find grace and strength from God, in the same way that He would find grace and strength.

Christ comes to search our heart

Christ often comes to us when we are not aware or are not expecting Him. He said to the church in Thyatira that He comes with eyes as a flame of fire, and with feet like fine brass as though refined in a furnace. **Rev 2:18. Rev 1:15.** The imagery of Christ's feet as fine brass that burns in a furnace, signifies that He comes in judgement to give to each person according to their works. **Rev 2:23.**

Christ uses His word as a goad to pierce our heart, exposing the thoughts of our mind and the motivations of our heart. By this means, we are provoked to give an account of ourselves to God. **Heb 4:12.** Christ confronts us, personally, by meeting us eye to eye and searching our mind and heart, which has been laid bare by His word. **Heb 4:13.**

Christ comes to search our heart and to judge our ways, in order to show us the iniquity that is in our heart. **Jer 17:10. Rev 2:23.** He asks us to watch and pray with Him as He joins us to the fellowship of His sufferings. As we pray with Him, we find grace to endure temptations and to overcome in the midst of trials. As the apostle James wrote, 'Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him'. **Jas 1:12.**

When Christ comes upon us as a thief in the night, we should not be those who are plundered because of disobedience, laziness or fear. This is because we should not be 'of the night', but 'of the day'. **1Th 5:4–7.** In fellowship with Christ, we must endure the midnight hour of His trial and testing, which He suffered on our behalf. This is called, in Scripture, 'the trial of faith', which is essential for our perfection and reward as sons of God. **1Pe 1:6–9. Jas 1:2–4.**

The sufferings of this present time

Paul, in his letter to the Romans, wrote about our sufferings, calling them ‘the sufferings of this present time.’ **Rom 8:18–30**. At a basic level, we all suffer the trial of mortality. With mortality comes, what Paul called, ‘the bondage of corruption.’ **Rom 8:21–22**. Sickness and the threat of poverty surround us. The fear of death motivates us, posing as a survival mechanism. Satan uses the fear of death as a weapon in his endeavour to control us. **Heb 2:14–15**. However, Christ subjects us to the suffering of mortality, in hope. **Rom 8:20**.

Once we are joined to the sufferings of Christ, the sufferings of mortality become for us the birth pangs that are bringing us forth as sons of God. More than this, because we have the Spirit of God dwelling within us, He sustains us with resurrection life in our mortality and weakness, even though we are still groaning within ourselves. We are buoyed up in hope by the power of the Spirit while we wait for our adoption as sons of God to be manifest; that is, the redemption of our body from its corruption, into immortality. **Rom 8:22–23**.

A person who has become poor in spirit acknowledges their spiritual weakness and accepts that they do not know how to pray as they ought. However, they are blessed because the Holy Spirit helps their weakness. **Mat 5:3–4. Rom 8:26**. He joins them, in one Spirit, to the fellowship of prayer in Gethsemane.

The Holy Spirit turns the groanings of our mortality into prayer. **Rom 8:23,26**. What a wonderful provision! At the request of the Holy Spirit, the Son comes to our aid, and teaches us to pray with Him by the power that the Holy Spirit supplies to us. **Rom 8:27**.

Fellowship with the Son

As we pray in the Spirit, the Son searches our heart and mind, exposing our motives, and revealing to us what the mind of the Spirit is for our life. **Rom 8:27. Rev 2:23.** He makes it clear to us that our sufferings are birth pangs that the Holy Spirit is turning into prayer. This is a prayer that is too deep for words, and that He is communicating to the Son on our behalf. **Rom 8:26.**

The Son completely understands the prayer of the Holy Spirit, because He is the full expression of these groanings. He was, as the prophet Isaiah declared, 'A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief ... surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.' **Isa 53:3-4.** In this fellowship of prayer, patience and endurance are ministered to us as we are assured that all things are working together for our good because we love God and have been called according to His purpose. **Rom 8:28.**

As the Son searches our heart and mind, He communicates to us God's will for our life. The Son does this so that He can reward us according to our work – whether good or bad. **Rev 2:23. Mat 13:48-49. 2Co 5:6-11.** When He comes to us in the fellowship of prayer, He rebukes or commends us during the season of visitation, through the word of the messengers whom He sends to proclaim His word to our life.

In the fellowship of His offering and prayer for us, the Son then teaches us to pray in line with the mind of the Spirit, and in relation to our need for repentance and change. Our groanings then become the Son's travail, which is enabled in us by the power of Eternal Spirit, ministered to us by the Holy Spirit. These groanings are no longer the evidence of our mortality and corruption; they are now the evidence that we are being born again as sons of God.

Two dimensions of Christ's offering

There are two dimensions of Christ's offering journey. One dimension was Christ's *ascension* from the death of sin and separation from God, in Gethsemane, back to the bosom of the Father when He committed Himself into the arms of the Father as He died on the cross. **Luk 23:46**. Jesus then ascended to His own throne after His resurrection when He had received His immortal, spiritual body. A second dimension of His offering journey was that He *descended* by emptying Himself to the lowest point of all creation. This was His death as I AM, through six conquering steps from Gethsemane until He was crucified on Calvary. This emptying, in obedience to the Father, concluded at the lowest point, which was His death on the cross. **Php 2:7–8**.

Christ's capacity to *ascend* to the highest point, and to *descend* to the lowest point, through His one offering journey, is a feature of the mystery of the cross. The outcome of these two dimensions of His offering was that Christ *filled all things*. This was Paul's point when he wrote, 'Now this expression, "He ascended," what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.' **Eph 4:9–10**.

Through the sufferings that Christ experienced in His mortal body, He was being made alive from the death of sin. His ascension through *exanastasis* reached its conclusion when He breathed His last and was received into the hands of the Father. After three days and three nights in the tomb, Christ rose through *anastasis*. He received an immortal, spiritual body. After ministering for forty days following His resurrection, He ascended back to His own throne, and to the glory that He had before. **Act 1:9. Joh 6:62. Eph 1:19–21**.

The ascending of the Son

Exanastasis is a Greek word which means 'resurrection life in mortality'. Paul identified this as the resurrection life that a person experiences in their mortal body because they are conformed to Christ's death and are joined to the fellowship of His sufferings. **Php 3:10–11**. Jesus demonstrated *exanastasis* when, from Gethsemane, He was progressively brought back from the death of sin by the blood of the Everlasting Covenant. **Heb 13:20**. This happened while He was still in a mortal body that was dying through suffering.

Amazingly, not one bone of His body was broken as He endured such extreme violence. **Joh 19:36**. This was the effect of *exanastasis* in His mortal body so that the covenant word of the Lord concerning His offering would be fulfilled. **Psa 34:20**. When Jesus declared from the cross, 'It is finished!', He had been fully made alive from the death of our sin while in mortality.

Addressing the inherent contradiction of resurrection life in a mortal and dying body, Paul explained, 'Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' **2Co 4:16–17**. When those who are joined to the fellowship of Christ's offering experience sufferings in the course of their life, they are being made alive with Christ through *exanastasis*. This is evident because they do not lose heart in the midst of their sufferings. **2Co 4:16**. Rather, they find capacity from the Lord for their participation in His offering and sufferings.

Anastasis is the Greek word which refers to 'resurrection to immortality'. This is the resurrection that Jesus experienced after He had physically died and His body had rested in the tomb for three days and three nights. If we continue in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings that He experienced *in His mortality*, we will receive an immortal, spiritual body, like His, on the day of resurrection. **1Jn 3:2–3**.

FURTHER STUDY JOHN 11

The descending of the Son

Throughout the course of His offering journey, Christ was suffering. At each wounding event, He obediently descended further as a conquering Slave, proclaiming Himself as I AM. Christ's journey was to the lowest parts of the earth. This was the manifestation of the fullness of darkness and was the lowest point of the entire universe; even lower than the Lake of Fire. The Scriptures record that as Christ hung on the cross, great darkness fell over the whole land from 12:00pm until 3:00pm. **Mar 15:33. Luk 23:44.** As He hung on the cross during this period of darkness, the final Gehenna of the Lake of Fire took hold of Him. **Psa 116:3.**

The torment and suffering that Jesus experienced on the cross was the judgement of God upon the sin of the whole world. Concerning this torment, Christ testified, 'The pains of death surrounded me, and the pangs of Sheol laid hold of me; I found trouble and sorrow.' **Psa 116:3.** This psalm reveals that Jesus did not go down into hell for three days and three nights, as some appalling heresies suggest. The eternal death and darkness of hell reached up and took hold of Him on the cross. Yet, death could not hold Him; He was not abandoned in hell. **Act 2:24,27.** As Christ's heart was broken by reproach, He cried out, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?' **Mat 27:46.** The Father heard His cry and delivered His soul from death. **Psa 116:4,8.** This was because the Father is 'near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit'. **Psa 34:18.**

The reproach that the Father laid upon the Son took Him to the end, and then beyond the eternal dimension of the Lake of Fire. By this means, Christ was the full manifestation of reproach and eternal judgement. Amazingly, He exhausted eternal judgement by the power of Eternal Spirit, bringing it to an end in less than one day!

Mercy and judgement

Before Christ said, 'It is finished!', He had accomplished all things necessary for both mercy and judgement. Jesus said that when He was lifted up on the cross, He would draw all men to Himself. **Joh 12:32**. This was not merely an evangelistic implication of Christ's death on the cross. Rather, Jesus was saying that the death that He died on the cross would become the death of every person in the world. On account of Christ's death for all, we all died. **2Co 5:14**. However, He was also proclaiming the only way to life as a new covenant.

We recall that those who believed Christ's word were scattered to their houses. **Joh 16:32**. **Luk 23:48**. These people were not damned. Nevertheless, the beginning point for their salvation was to mourn for Him whom *they had pierced*. **Zec 12:10**. Here is a key point. The salvation of every person begins when they accept that they are under the judgement of damnation for their sin that caused Christ's suffering and death. As they are illuminated and cut to the heart, and begin to mourn, they are joined to the fellowship of Christ's death. They are delivered from their slavery to sin, and become the captives of Christ, calling Him 'Lord'.

For those who remain unrepentant, Christ has personified their judgement. That is, Christ's torment in the three hours of darkness from 12:00pm to 3:00pm revealed the eternal torment of hell that those who die in their sins will endure forever. This is the fruit of their own choice. In hell, for those who have been damned, it will take an ageless age of years, countless and interminable, to show forth the vindication of divine wrath against sin. Isaiah prophesied that when the citizens of the new heavens and earth gather to worship the Lord, 'They shall go forth and look upon the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, and their fire is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.' **Isa 66:24**.

FURTHER STUDY PSALM 85

The two thieves

The deaths of the two thieves who were crucified on either side of Christ represent the possible deaths of every person on earth. Both men were dying with Jesus on crosses. And, initially, both men were abusing Christ with insults, mocking His kingship and His sonship. **Mat 27:44. Mar 15:32.**

However, at some point nearing 12:00pm, one of the thieves began to receive illumination as he looked on Jesus, who was suffering for his sin. The blood of Christ, which the thief was causing to be shed, was speaking to him and bearing witness to the love of God. **Heb 12:24.** In repentance, the thief began to fear the Lord and to accept that he was dying under judgement, having been justly condemned for his sin. **Luk 23:40–41.** In repentance, and in the obvious travail of recognising that his sufferings were just, he cried out to Jesus, saying, ‘Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.’ **Luk 23:42.** By calling Jesus ‘Lord’, the thief was demonstrating that he had become the captive of Christ the Shepherd King, and was a recipient of salvation. Jesus said to him, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.’ **Luk 23:43.**

Significantly, salvation did not deliver this thief from suffering. Instead, his sufferings were now being given to him by Christ, as a fellowship in Christ’s offering. In the fellowship of Christ’s offering and sufferings, the thief was receiving the same resurrection life (*exanastasis*) that Christ was receiving as He endured the sufferings of the cross. He was coming back from the death of sin with Christ! **Php 3:10–11.** His sufferings were now the birth pangs of immortality, as he died in peace, with Christ. **Rom 8:23–25.**

The unrepentant thief also continued to suffer the death of the cross. However, his sufferings *were not achieving salvation*. He was not experiencing *exanastasis*. His sufferings were a foretaste of the eternal burnings that awaited him once he breathed his last breath.



Restoring
my Soul