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John 19 - Part II

Two Thieves

John 19:17-20: *And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: 18. Where they crucified him, and two other with him, one on either side, and Jesus in the midst. 19. And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. 20. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.*

Golgotha: The title Pilate put on the cross was written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. The place of the skull where Jesus was crucified is referenced in the Bible in three languages: Hebrew - Golgotha; Greek - kranion; Latin - Calvary, translators having substituted Latin for the Greek word *kranion* in Luke 23:33. Golgotha was located outside the city wall on the west side, as capital punishment was not administered inside the city (Num 15:35; 1Ki 21:13). **Hebrews 13:11-12:** *11. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for [on account of] sin, are burned without the camp (Lv 4:12, 21; 16:27). 12. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify [purify] the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.*

Animals are symbols of earthly thoughts, which are consumed by fire outside the city. **Revelation 21:27:** *And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defiles, neither whatsoever works abomination, or makes a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.* It is by applying the understanding of the cross we are purified from our sins (1Jn 1:7). The 10th day of the 7th month is called Day of Atonement (Lv 23:27), literally in Hebrew - Day of Covering; and would be better rendered as the Day of Reconciliation. Blood was sprinkled on the solid gold lid between the cherubim - i.e. blood covered the ark.

Consider the symbols: The ark is the heart; the solid gold lid is the faith of Christ which covers the heart; sprinkling of blood is the teaching of the cross; and the two cherubim represent our understanding of Christ before and after the cross. Gold and blood covered the ark, or the heart: **Proverbs 10:12:** *...love covers all sins.* **2Corinthians 5:19:** *To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.* **1Peter 4:8:** *and above all things having fervent love to yourselves, "because love will cover a multitude of sins."* (LITV)

Two thieves: **Luke 23:32, 39-43:** *32. And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death.39. And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If you be the Christ, save thyself and us. 40. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Do not you fear God, seeing you are in the same condemnation? 41. And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man has done nothing amiss. 42. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when you come into thy kingdom. 43. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today* thou shall be with me in paradise ^(g3857).*

The thief that railed on Jesus said, *If thou be Christ, save thyself and us*, indicating the Jewish belief in a Messiah who would establish Israel as ruler of the world, and destroy her enemies. This thief held to his belief, whereas

the other saw the innocence of Christ, and also recognized his own sinful condition. The two thieves represent all humanity, the sheep and the goats; those who refuse to let go of their own idea God, versus those who see the love of God by allowing the innocent to die for the guilty.

The second thief asked to be remembered by Jesus when he came into his kingdom. Jesus responded with a figure, apparently using a word from the Persian language which means “a garden^(g3857).” This word appears in the Greek version of the Old Testament (LXX, Septuagint) in Genesis 2:8. Instead of saying *garden of Eden*, it states *garden of paradise*. The Bible uses “garden” as a symbol for the mind of man (Jer 31:12), or the mind of God (Eze 28:13): **Ezekiel 36:35**: *And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden...* The desolate land (mind, Mk 4:3-5, 14-16) of a person becomes like Eden because God sprinkles clean water in it and gives the person a new heart and a new spirit (Eze 36:25-26).

*The meaning of John 19:43 can be changed simple by placing the comma before or after the word “today.” There is no punctuation in the original writings. To me, the evidence of the Bible shows that in general, when a person dies, they remain in the state of death until the resurrection. Therefore in English, the verse should read: *Verily I say unto thee today, Thou shall be with me in paradise*. That is, after his resurrection the man would enter the garden of Eden, or the way God understands.

John 19:23-24: *23. Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. 24. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.*

Psalms 22:18: *They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture*. Clothing is a symbol for a person’s faith and works, or their thinking which we can see manifested. Lots in the O.T. were small stones used for making decisions. Allegorically, a soldier is a person who wars for a God of vengeance, killing the innocent with his earthly understanding (earthly pebbles) of the cross and the reasons for the sacrifice.

John 19:25-27: *25. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. 26. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! 27. Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.*

The woman who gave Jesus birth, raised him and taught him as a child, he now tenderly provides for in his final moments. Look also at the spiritual lesson here: a woman is a symbol for a way of thinking; the mother of Jesus, being a symbol for the mind of the Father which perfected His Son. And now, in figure, this mind-set is passed from Jesus Christ to man (Phil 2:5). **Proverbs 1:8**: *8. My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: 9. For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.*

Revelation 12:1-2: *1. And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: 2. And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.* **Galatians 4:19**: *My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you. Amen.*