

The Death of Christ

Ephesians 1:20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

This now brings us to the historical drama of Jesus leaving earth.

There were two other people in history who departed earth alive. They were Enoch and Elijah. However, Jesus Christ was the only one to be seated at the right hand of God in heaven. Every believer who is alive during the end of the period of the Church Age, departs from earth, without dying, to be raptured from earth to heaven. But again, Jesus is the only person to be seated at the right hand of God. He was the only person to be promoted above all angels.

The death of Jesus Christ on the cross is the center of Christian faith.

More and more people are denying or forgetting the death of Christ on the cross which results in people denying life after death. Our life after death depends on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. If we can just deny or forget the death of Jesus Christ, all the importance of what happens after we die is forgotten. If we know and believe in the death of Christ, life now and in eternity becomes predominant. The more we grasp of His death, the higher and deeper becomes the importance of human life. Atonement for our sins is paid for by His sacrifice and victory. The more, and more often, we grasp of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, the more meaningful our life becomes.

Ephesians 1:19...These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might

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Ephesians 1:20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places

We studied the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. But of course before His Resurrection came His death.

What is mankind? What is mankind's death?

Who is Christ? What is Christ's death?

What is your life? What is your death?

What is Christ's death to Him?

If we start with you and your death, Christ death becomes very personal and vitally important to us.

If we start with mankind, we then can talk about mankind's death. From The Complete Biblical Library in writing of a Roman's death, it was 'simply the termination of physical existence. The fact that one should die was never questioned. Rather, **how** one died was the critical issue.' 'The issue was the fact of dying well. Dying courageously or dying of some purpose, or to die in the service of one's city-state was highly regarded. Philosophers regarded death as liberation. At death the soul (later held to be immortal and hence the only true life) became freed from the prison of the body. Thus to die was not necessarily bad; even suicide was justified as a sign that fear of death had been conquered.'

Simply, mankind's death can be said that it is 'immortality.' That mankind's immortality is the unending of man's existence beyond death. Death is not the end of man's existence. Death is simply a change of existence and conditions. The great issue for every one of you, is where you will spend eternity. Every human being will be somewhere for all

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eternity. It is up to you as to where you will spend eternity: in life with Jesus Christ or in the darkness in eternal suffering away from Jesus Christ.

Understanding from Scripture, death is the result of punishment of sin. “The wages of sin is death.” We will look at one of the results of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, the abolishment of death. If we look carefully at the Scriptures we will find that nowhere is mankind created to live forever on this earth. In fact if we study Enoch and Elijah both pass into another place of existence, out from this earth.

In Genesis 2:17 Adam was forewarned of disobedience to the command of not to eat ‘of the Tree of knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that you eat from it dying you shall die.’ Please bear in mind that **he did not know about ‘death.’** But in disobeying God, that is in sin, he would learn of spiritual death and physical death. The first thing he learned about sin and death in disobedience to God was separation from God. This was passed on to every human being, that they came into the world, dead in sin. This is why it is so important for us to study the death of Jesus Christ.

By the way, the judgment of physical death is not to be thought of unreasonably. Physical death is part of the punishment for sin. Physical death is the power of death. This is another reason we must study the death of Jesus Christ, because by His death He rendered powerless the devil. The death of Jesus Christ gives victory over death to everyone who believes on Jesus Christ as Savior. Physical death may not be punishment, or it may be, as under ‘the sin unto death’ but everyone will die physically except for the Rapture generation. But those who are physically born into spiritual death can be blessed to spiritual life by faith in Jesus Christ, because He died for everyone on the cross.

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Because of the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ no one needs to have any fear of death knowing that we also will experience resurrection with Christ. And that the moment we die, we are face to face with Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:8)

To study of the death of Jesus Christ is vitally important to us. Let's begin our study of the importance of the death of Jesus Christ.

Importance of the Death of Jesus Christ

1. The History of the death of Jesus Christ

The fundamental conviction of Christianity is the death of Jesus Christ. Every doctrine about Jesus is about the birth of Jesus Christ, dramatized with the Christmas Story. But, when it comes to thinking of salvation, of being saved, Christians are centered on the death of Jesus. If it were not due to the importance of His death and Resurrection the death of Jesus would be but another among the list of many deaths. The day of His death would not be any more important than the days of death of other important people in history: like the date of Martin Luther, George Washington and oh yes, Jesus.

The death of Jesus would be but another death in history. But the death of Jesus is the center of Christian Salvation.

His death exalts the name and person of the glory of God.

Philippians 2:9 For this reason also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,

Philippians 2:10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

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A multitude of religious Jews are still waiting for their Messiah. The way we think of the death of Jesus Christ so often determines our thinking of salvation.

2. The historical truthfulness of Jesus' execution and crucifixion is what we study in the Holy Scriptures. Matthew 26-27; Mark 14-15; Luke 22-23; and John 18-19.

Jesus Christ was charged as a criminal and crucified on the cross. He was charged by His own people as clearly presented in

1 Thessalonians 2:14 For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you also endured the same sufferings at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they did from the Jews,

1 Thessalonians 2:15 who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out. They are not pleasing to God, but hostile to all people,

Acts 2:23 this man delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. (Romans)

We must understand that Jews and Gentiles crucified Jesus Christ at the hands of God.

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Acts 3:14 But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, (Barabbas)

Acts 3:15 but put to death the Prince of life, (Jesus) whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses.

Acts 4:10 let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by this name this man stands here before you in good health (the resurrection)

Throughout the history of the Church Age, Jews are attacked in Anti-Semitism. The followers of Jesus are simply attacked for following Jesus.

A Roman court judged Jesus as a Zealot, a political subversive and a terrorist. In America and many other places, people who follow Jesus are attacked as ‘trouble makers,’ ‘subversives’ even terrorists because they are not fully followers of the government and believers in Jesus. One of the strongest accusations against Rome, against Him, was as being a Zealot, who until AD 70 Jews who were strongly attacked by Rome. So, again, Jesus was condemned by the Romans as a Zealot.

What is so interesting throughout His three years of service, He was always talked about as a peaceful, helpful Jew.

John 11:47 Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council meeting, and

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they were saying, “What are we doing in regard to the fact that this man is performing many signs?

John 11:48 If we let Him go on like this, all the people will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take over both our place and our nation.”

The chief priests and Pharisees were the ones who first started calling Jesus a ‘trouble maker’ and ‘misleader’ because many Jews began to follow Jesus.

These Jewish leaders began attacking Jesus to the Romans:

Luke 23:2 And they began to bring charges against Him, saying, “We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that He Himself is Christ, a King.” (He did not teach to forbid paying taxes, but He was the Messiah)

Mark 12:13 Then they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Him in order to trap Him in a statement.

Mark 12:14 They came and said to Him, “Teacher, we know that You are truthful and do not care what anyone thinks; for You are not partial to anyone, but You teach the way of God in truth. Is it permissible to pay a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?”

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Mark 12:15 Are we to pay, or not pay?” But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, “Why are you testing Me? Bring Me a denarius to look at.”

Mark 12:16 And they brought one. And He said to them, “Whose image and inscription is this?” And they said to Him, “Caesar’s.”

Mark 12:17 And Jesus said to them, “Pay to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” And they were utterly amazed at Him.

He was a trouble maker, a terrorist, therefore He was to be taken out. This is what is happening to Christians throughout the world today. This was enough for the Romans, and it is becoming enough throughout the world against Christians.

Now you might ask, what are the Christians doing throughout the world to be considered trouble makers? They are not trying to govern the nations, they are not causing trouble against other people, so what is the trouble? In simple, clear words, they believe and follow Jesus. Let’s ask what Jesus Christ was doing at His time that caused trouble to the Priest and Pharisees? Nothing!

Nothing but doing good, and speaking good things to people. And like the Jewish leaders who were so angry, it was because people were beginning to follow this Jesus.

Now, let’s make this clear, **Jesus was not a Zealot!**

Reza Aslan wrote a popular book in 2013 that Jesus was a Zealot. But a look at the book makes it clear that Jesus was not a Zealot.

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The writer Judith Shulevitz describes Reza Aslan's book as a Zealot in the following words. "a passionate Jew, a violent revolutionary, a fanatical ideologue, an odd and scary and extraordinary interesting man.' This is not a picture of Jesus from the Bible. In simple terms, Jesus is a peace loving, forgiving, Son of God.

But most likely many of His followers were Zealots, as was Peter.

Luke 6:15 and Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot;

Mark 8:31 And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise from the dead.

Mark 8:32 And He was stating the matter plainly. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him.

Mark 8:33 But turning around and seeing His disciples, He rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind Me, Satan; for you are not setting your mind on God's purposes, but on man's.

Historically, the date of the crucifixion cannot be determined with certainty. It can be exactly known that He was buried and rose from the grave in three days and three nights.

3. The foretelling of His Death in the Old Testament.

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- A. With most people in history their death is not that of great importance but with Jesus His death is of supreme importance. His death is dramatized throughout the Scriptures.

The history of mankind begins with the death of Jesus Christ.

Genesis 3:15 And I will make enemies Of you and the woman, And of your offspring and her Descendant; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise Him on the heel.”

- B. The first death of the animal was to supply clothing to the first man and woman.

Genesis 3:21 The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

God Himself caused the death of the animal, who was killed for the first couple. And as Isaiah 53:10 tells us, God was pleased to ‘crush’ Jesus to provide atonement to mankind.

Then in Genesis 4:4 Abel brings to God the firstling of his flock to please God.

The first killing of a ram was to be a substitute for the death of mankind.

Gen. 22:13 Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram caught in the thicket by its horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering in the place of his son.

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So this is yet another offering offered to God to suffer in place of mankind. A study of each of these is but a teaching of the death of Jesus Christ.

Then the new earth with Noah started off with the suffering of the first of animals as an offering to God which represented the word of the Messiah on behalf of man. Genesis 8:20. Then in the promised land, Abram offered an animal as blessing to God. Genesis 12:7-8. Then again in remembrance of blessing from God there was an offering of an animal. Then the Lord came before them at the promised land at Beersheba. Genesis 26:24-25. He took that name 'God, the God of Israel' Genesis 33:20.

- C. Then God revealed His Son before Israel as the Passover Lamb. Exodus 12:1-28. Also in Leviticus chapters 1-7 the sacrifices will be a teaching of the sacrifice of the lamb. Then coming to Judges, in chapter 13 the Lord comes as the 'angel of the Lord' and told them to offer the offering of the goat to the Lord.

Samuel offered to the Lord for the glory of the Lord. 1 Samuel chapter 7. And in 1 Samuel chapter 16 Samuel offered to God the glory of the offering. David offered sacrifices to the people in glory of the Messiah 2 Samuel chapter 6. Then another great servant of God, Elijah came and brought the Lord to the people through an offering. 1 King chapter 18.

- D. Throughout the Scriptures there were prophecies concerning Jesus Christ.

(1) **the betrayal** of Jesus Christ at the last supper. Psalm 41:9-11 and Acts 1:16.

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(2) **the Crucifixion** of Jesus Christ. Psalm 22: primarily at

Psalm 22:1 My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?

Psalm 22:7 All who see me deride me; They sneer, they shake their heads, saying,

Psalm 22:8 “Turn him over to the Lord; let Him save him; Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him.”

Psalm 22:18 “They divide my garments among them, And they cast lots for my clothing.

Then you compare these in Psalm 22 with various passages in the New Testament Matthew 27:39-41, 45-46; Mark 15:34; and John 19:23-24

(3) **The Resurrection** of Christ

Psalm 16:8 I have set the Lord continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

Psalm 16:9 Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will dwell securely.

Psalm 16:10 For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; You will not allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

In His Resurrection!

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This is reinforced in

Acts 2:22 Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a Man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know

Acts 2:3 this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men (Romans) and put Him to death.

Acts 2:24 But God raised Him from the dead, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

Acts 2:25 For David says of Him, 'I saw the Lord continually before me, Because He is at my right hand, so that I will not be shaken.

Acts 2:26 Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue was overjoyed; Moreover my flesh also will live in hope;

Acts 2:27 For You will not abandon my soul to Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

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Acts 2:28 You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of gladness with Your presence.'

E. The Major Prophets in Old Testament

(1) From Isaiah, we are told of the suffering of Jesus Christ

Isaiah 53:4 However, it was our sicknesses that He Himself bore, And our pains that He carried; Yet we ourselves assumed that He had been afflicted, Struck down by God, and humiliated.

Isaiah 53:5 But He was pierced for our offenses, He was crushed; for our iniquities; The punishment for our well-being was laid upon Him, And by His wounds we are healed.

Isaiah 53:6 All of us, like sheep, have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.

(2) Daniel teaches us of the time of the crucifixion

Daniel 9:26 Then after the sixty-two weeks, the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.

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To grasp this: go from verse 25, Jesus Christ the Messiah will come in seven weeks and 62 weeks (483 years) Jesus Christ knew exactly when He was to come and then at 70 AD the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire, known as the Anti-Christ Jerusalem will be destroyed. All these things were known by Jesus Christ.

- (3) Zechariah tells us of the selling of Jesus Christ for thirty pieces of silver.

Zechariah 11:12 And I said to them, “If it is good in your sight, give me my wages; but if not, never mind!” So they weighed out thirty shekels of silver as my wages.

Zechariah 11:13 Then the Lord said to me, “Throw it to the potter, that magnificent price at which I was valued by them.” So I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the Lord.

- (4) Zechariah also tells us the striking of the Shepherd

Zechariah 13:7 “Awake, sword, against My Shepherd, And against the Man, My Associate,” Declares the Lord of armies. “Strike the Shepherd and the sheep will be scattered; And I will turn My hand against the little ones.

Next we have to look at the teaching of His Crucifixion in the New Testament