

Inside the Lines
P.O. Box 1261
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JESUS
His Death Lesson 5
return pages 4 & 5 only

Something for You to Study

The death of the Lord Jesus Christ makes the Christian faith different from all religions. Christianity is not a system of ethics or one of many good religions. It is the only way of salvation. It is the death of the Lord Jesus that provides salvation. This is the distinctive element in Christianity. As has been said, Christianity is *Christ*.

The Lord Jesus knew from the beginning of time, from "before the foundation of the world" as 1 Peter 1:18-20 and Revelation 13:8 indicate, that He would come to the world for the specific purpose of dying for man's sin. Other religions are remembered for the teaching of their founders. While what Jesus said was important, it is His death and resurrection that prove what He taught.

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES

The Old Testament prophets were themselves puzzled by the apparent contradictions in their prophecies of the "sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Peter 1:11). Two of the outstanding prophecies of the death of Christ are found in Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53. The former has been called the psalm of the cross. It begins with the words spoken by the Lord Jesus on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). The psalm, containing many details which were fulfilled in the crucifixion, was written about a thousand years before the crucifixion took place.

The book of Isaiah is referred to many times in the New Testament. Acts 8:32-35 connects the prophecy of Isaiah 53 with Christ. All the New Testament references to Christ as the Lamb are either directly or indirectly connected with this passage in Isaiah.

OLD TESTAMENT TYPES

A type is a God-given symbol which would be fulfilled at a later time. There are many types of Christ in the Old Testament, some of which refer to His death. Hebrews in the New Testament shows that the sacrifices of the Old Testament were types of Christ. Hebrews 10 refers to the major offerings of the book of Leviticus and shows Christ as the fulfillment of them. The Passover (Exodus 12) is a type or picture of the death of Christ. First Corinthians 5:7 specifically calls Him "Our Passover."

NEW TESTAMENT REFERENCES

1. In the gospels the importance of the events connected with Christ's death is seen in the amount of space given to them. Out of twenty-eight chapters of Matthew, eight are about the last week of His earthly life; six out of sixteen

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chapters of Mark; five and one-half out of twenty-four chapters of Luke; nine out of twenty-one chapters of John. This material forms the historical background for the doctrinal teaching of the epistles.

2. In the book of Acts, the early believers emphasize the death of Christ.
3. The epistles give the doctrinal meaning of His death.
4. The book of Revelation presents Christ in glory as the "Lamb as it had been slain" (Revelation 5:6). His death will be remembered throughout eternity as the basis for our salvation.

REASONS FOR CHRIST'S DEATH

Man's sinfulness There was no other way the sin problem of the human race could be settled. Romans 3:23, Galatians 3:21-24, and Hebrews 9:22 make this clear. No man is good enough in himself to meet a holy God.

God's character. God's most important characteristic is holiness, which makes it impossible for Him to tolerate sin. Because of His righteous character, He cannot overlook sin or excuse it. But God is also love, and so He sent the Lord Jesus to take the punishment men deserved. The sovereign ruler of the universe showed His love to sinful humanity by the death of His Son. It was a divine work of God the Father. It is important to remember that Christ's death was *voluntary*. Some will claim that God was unfair to judge the innocent for the guilty. But Christ was not an unwilling victim. He was not a martyr dragged to the cross but a substitute giving Himself willingly. The one who fixed the penalty for sin also paid the penalty. Galatians 1:4 says that He "gave himself for our sins."

Christ's death was also *vicarious*. He did not die for Himself. Scripture makes it clear that God "made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin" (2 Corinthians 5:21). The reality of this is seen in Christ's cry on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" God turned from His Son because His eyes are too pure to behold evil (Habakkuk 1:13).

RESULTS OF CHRIST'S DEATH

Redemption. A redeemer is one who buys back something which already belongs to him. So God, to whom man belonged by right of creation, had to buy him back from slavery to sin. This is what Jesus did by His death (1 Corinthians 7:23; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; 2 Peter 2:1). Hebrews 9:12 calls it an eternal redemption. Accepting Christ frees the believer from slavery to sin and enters him into a relationship with Christ which carries with it an obligation to serve Christ (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

Propitiation. This may be explained by the word *satisfaction*. The death of Christ fully satisfied the demands of a righteous God that sin be punished. Christ's death is the basis on which a righteous God can justify sinners

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without compromising His holiness. Now when the holy God looks at sinful men, He sees their sin covered by the death of Christ. Romans 3:24-26 is the answer to the problem of how sinful men may be accepted by a holy God. The cross of Christ is the absolute essential in God's plan of redemption.

Propitiation does not mean the satisfying of a vengeful, wrathful God. There are many examples in the Bible of God's wrath, but it is always directed against sin. His wrath is divine indignation against sin, not implacable anger against the sinner. Propitiation is the willing satisfaction of a holy, righteous God who Himself provided the means by which He could be satisfied. It is a once-for-all satisfaction (Hebrews 9:24-28).

Reconciliation. This is Christ's work for man which reconciles him to God. Man can never do this for himself, for he is by nature the enemy of God (Romans 5:10; 2 Corinthians 5:18). It is true that the death of Christ was for the whole world (2 Corinthians 5:14-19). The familiar John 3:16 reminds that God loves the world. But even though Christ died for all, everyone will not automatically be saved. The reconciliation becomes actual only for those who accept Christ as personal Saviour (Romans 5:10-11; 2 Corinthians 5:20). Reconciliation is provided for all, but it is applied only to those who believe.

Christ's death affects the physical universe also. Romans 8:21-23 indicates that because of Christ's reconciling work, the entire universe will one day be renewed.

All of this—redemption, propitiation, reconciliation—is freely provided to all men by the death of Christ, but it must be accepted personally to be effective.

A Further Word

No event of time or eternity compares with the transcending significance of the death of Christ on the cross. Other important undertakings of God such as the creation of the world, the incarnation of Christ, His resurrection, the second coming, and the creation of the new heavens and the new earth become meaningless if Christ did not die. ... In His death Christ supremely revealed the holiness and righteousness of God as well as the love of God which prompted the sacrifice. In a similar way the infinite wisdom of God is revealed as no human mind would ever have devised such a way of salvation, and only an infinite God would be willing to sacrifice His Son.

notes

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Find Out for Yourself

Name _____

1. How does Galatians 4:4-5 show that Christ's death was not an accident?
2. Read Exodus 12:3-13. Why does the New Testament speak of Christ as "Our Passover"?
3. Read John 10:17-18. How did Christ prove the truth of this claim?
4. On the basis of all the previous lessons, give evidence to show that Christ did not die for His own sins.
5. Explain the fallacy of this statement: Since Christ died for all men so all men will be saved.

Check Your Memory

1. Christianity is _____.
2. Two important prophecies of the death of Christ are ?
 - a.
 - b.
3. A type is a _____.
4. One example of a type is the _____.
5. Two reasons for Christ's death are _____ and God's _____.
6. The epistles give the _____ meaning of Christ's death.
7. Christ's death was _____ and _____.
8. Propitiation means _____.
9. Reconciliation means _____.
10. Redemption means _____.

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Scripture Memorization
(write on the back page three times)

Isa 53:5-6

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

(KJV)