



Why Did Jesus Die?

To this all important question there are a number of answers, some of which are:

- 1) To fulfill the Old Testament prophecies: “He was numbered with the transgressors and bare the sins of many.” (Isa. 53:12)
- 2) To break the power of the devil: “To destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.” (Heb. 2:14)
- 3) To manifest the love of God: “For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (Jn. 3:16)
- 4) To glorify God: “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” (2 Cor. 4:6)

However, when we become more personal we realize He died for us! It is a grievous mistake to put a medical reason on the death of Christ. He was never made a sinner, neither was He ever satanized, but he was a Holy offering for sin in which He experienced the horror of being forsaken by God. (Lev. 6:17; 2 Cor. 5:21)

This was more than entering an experience. The dreadfulness of it went down deep into His innermost being. Isaiah wrote: “He hath poured out His soul unto death” (Isa. 53:12). Praise God, we who are redeemed can say like Paul: “The Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Gal. 2:20). Another has written: “He took the guilty sinners stead, and suffered in my place”. Putting in colloquial terms, He swapped places with me. As the song writer put it: “Jesus died for me, sin had left a crimson stain, He washed me white as snow.”

Summarizing, the death of Christ is the only one that is an accomplishment, the only one that is the theme of God’s grace in heaven to sinful men (Rev. 5:12-14) and was the focus of the law and the prophets. On the mount of transfiguration there were two men with our Lord, Moses and Elias. Moses was the great lawgiver, and Elias the great prophet. (Matt. 16:14)

Christ Was Buried

There was, in the early days of the church’s history, those who taught that Jesus was not a real man, and as the Son of God, had not come in the flesh, and that He was a phantom. The burial of our Lord provides the evidence that He was a real man for a phantom cannot die, neither can a strictly spirit being. Angels never die. God goes to great lengths to prophetically tell us of the cleanliness of the place the Lord was buried, and those who buried Him. In Lev. 6:10-11 the ashes of the offering had to be carried away by a clean man, and put in a clean place.

The Holy Spirit records that the Lord’s body was put in a “clean place”.

- 1) It was “a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.” (Jn. 19:41)
- 2) “Laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.” (Lk. 23:53)

3) Clean men buried Him. (Mk. 15:43; Lk. 23:50; Matt. 27:57-61)

When a baby was born, or an individual died, their body was washed. When it came to the Lord, we never read of His body being washed, either as a baby or His dead body. It is an indication of the purity of that body.

The duration of the burial is something there is a lot of debate about. Was the Lord crucified on a Wednesday, Thursday or Friday? The fact is that it is an incidental for, had it been important to know what day, the Lord would have told us. That which it emphasizes is His body was in the tomb three days and three nights, and He arose on Sunday morning.

We are inclined to judge the importance of a person by the number of mourners. Yet, the Lord had very few. There was Joseph of Arimathaea (Mk. 15:43); Nicodemus (Jn. 19:39); and the women stood afar off (Mk. 15:40); "They beheld" (Mk. 15:47), that is, they looked with steady and careful contemplation.

Christ Is Risen

Oftentimes people speak and write about the empty tomb, and we know what they mean, but I thank God the tomb was not empty, for there were left in it the grave clothes. It was a vacated tomb, and the grave clothes showed He had risen. Christianity is the only religion the foundation of which is built on a vacated tomb. Christ the Lord is risen on high, Hallelujah! God raised Him from the dead by the "spirit of holiness" (Rom. 1:4). God provided salvation righteously, and raised Christ which was becoming to His holiness.

The death, burial and resurrection of Christ are indissolubly united in the scriptures. The crucified One to rise (Jn. 10:17), and the risen One lives forever as the crucified One (1 Cor. 2:2; Rev. 5:6)

Each was necessary for:

- 1) The unveiling of the purpose, power, and love of the Father: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again" (Jn. 10:17).
- 2) The message of the gospel to be complete. (1 Cor. 15:3-4)
 - a) The proof of experience (vv. 1-2)
 - b) The proof from the scriptures (vv. 3-4)
 - c) The proof from witnesses (vv. 5-12)
- 3) The reconciliation of humanity: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life". (Rom. 5:10)
- 4) The model and power of the believer: "For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God". (Rom 6:10)
- 5) The functioning of His Heavenly priesthood: "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again". (Rom. 8:34)
- 6) The unilateral Lordship of Christ: "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living". (Rom. 14:9)
- 7) The coming union of the church: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again . . . For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout." (1 Thess. 4:14-16)
- 8) The future prospect of those who die in the Lord: "Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." (1 Thess. 5:10)

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Front Page - 2012 04
Easter

