

THE MYSTERY OF GOD

God's Testimony of Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified

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PUBLISHED May 2008

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JESUS CHRIST, AND HIM CRUCIFIED

“And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God” (1 Corinthians 2:1-5).

First, some background; Corinth was utterly destroyed by the Romans in 146 B.C. It was rebuilt and colonized 100 years later by Julius Caesar. By the time the apostle Paul planted the church there, in approximately 52 A.D., the city had grown tremendously with a population estimated between 600,000 and 700,000. The harbors, and its location, attracted merchant ships from all over the civilized world, making Corinth commercially prosperous. The very diverse population also filled the city with all manner of villainy and wickedness: fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals, sodomites, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, and extortionists.¹ Even within the pagan world of the Greco-Roman cultures, “to behave as a Corinthian” became an expression synonymous with debased living and shameless immorality.

During Paul’s second missionary journey, he arrived in Corinth after leaving Athens.² There, he stayed and ministered to the Corinthian believers for 18 months before moving on.³ While on his third missionary journey, using Ephesus as a base of operations, news came to Paul from some of Corinth’s leadership about the church’s difficulties,

¹ **1 Corinthians 6:9-10.** In his first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul may have been addressing the kind of behavior Corinth was quite well known for.

² **Acts 18:1**

³ **Acts 18:11**

divisiveness, disputes in open court, derision toward Paul, deviant sexual behavior, disobedience at the Lord's Table, and etc. Hence, a letter of correction came forth.

Yet, in the midst of the reproofs and corrections, there are some amazing doctrinal truths and instructions in righteousness. Many theologians and Bible scholars would call this first letter to the Corinthians one of the "four great epistles" or "four principle epistles," the other three being Romans, Galatians, and 2 Corinthians. As much as could be said of this first epistle to the Corinthians, we'll just take a look at a few things from this very awesome passage in chapter two.

First, Paul admits that he isn't an eloquent orator like Apollos⁴—*"I came to you... not with excellency of speech or of wisdom."* Instead, he came to them proclaiming publicly *"the testimony of God."*

This word, "testimony", is not translated from the Greek words μαρτυς (*martus*) or μαρτυρια (*marturia*), words that are often translated "testimony" and convey the meaning, "record," "report," "witness," or "evidence." Here, however, "testimony" is translated from the Greek word μυστηριον (*musteerion*). It is where we get our English word, mystery.

Our modern definition of a mystery is something that cannot be explained or something that is beyond human power to understand. Yet, *musteerion* means something, though it may be difficult to fully comprehend, and although it may be difficult to explain, it is something that was once hidden or veiled in secrecy, but has now been revealed. Therefore, we may also translate Paul's words, *"I came to you... declaring the mystery of God."*

What is the mystery of God that Paul declared? He answered that in his very next sentence: *"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."*

This mystery, this truth that was hidden within the Hebrew Scriptures, the mystery of Christ's incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection was Paul's passion because it was the central, essential, and most holy truth in the entire universe for all eternity. He saw the Cross of Christ

⁴ See **Acts 18:24**

everywhere, and most especially in Scripture. It was the one thing that mattered to him. He wrote to the Christians in Galatia saying,

“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world” (Galatians 6:14).

THE MYSTERY OF GOD

It is often said that the New Testament is in the Old Testament concealed; and the Old Testament is in the New Testament revealed. The reason this mystery of God was something hidden, something to be revealed is because throughout time, it was an unfolding of God’s eternal plan. It is written,

“But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you” (1 Peter 1:19-20).

“...the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8).

Everything in Scripture was written about Jesus. The Lord Himself said,

“Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me” (John 5:39).

God became a man, born as a baby, and led a sinless, Spirit-filled, Law-keeping, prophecy-fulfilling, God-pleasing life, totally obedient to the heavenly Father’s will, to do one thing: suffer the wrath of God upon a Tree of wood as the curse for sin. It is written,

“Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art Thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I

should bear witness unto the Truth. Every one that is of the Truth heareth My voice” (John 18:37).

Let’s take a look at some of the examples of the hidden truth, the *musteerion* of Christ crucified from the beginning.

the protoevangelicum...

The first pronouncement of the crucifixion of Christ was made by God in the Garden of Eden. Theologians call this the *protoevangelicum*:

“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel” (Genesis 3:15).

Now, this one has some obvious points upon the surface, to those of us taught by the Holy Spirit.⁵ The virgin birth of Christ is announced here because, in procreation, the man carries a seed, not a woman. The promised Seed will bruise, or crush, the authority of the devil,⁶ and in doing so His heel shall be bruised.

For a truly hidden meaning, the Hebrew actually lends itself to a slightly more insightful truth; in the last part of this verse, that says, *“it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel”*:

הוּא יְשׁוּפֵךְ רֹאשׁ וְאַתָּה תְּשׁוּפְנוּ עֵקֶב
Hoo Y’shufka Rosh, V’Atah T’shufnu Aqev

הוּא (*Hoo*) can be translated “it,” but it is also the singular pronoun for “he.” Additionally, in conversational Hebrew, as well as Biblical Hebrew, the subject verb uses the same gender and person as the subject noun, and the subject noun will show the possessive form; however, in this case, the verb has the possessive form. This indicates that, although happening as a very true reality in the spiritual realm, is only figurative in the sense of the sentence. What is most interesting is that the

⁵ **John 14:26**

⁶ ראש (*Rosh*), meaning “head,” is a symbol of authority.

first “bruise” is translated in the masculine third person singular, and future tense (יִשׁוּפֶכֶּה, *Y’shufka*); and the second “bruise” is translated in the masculine first person plural, and future tense (תִּשׁוּפְנוּ, *T’shufnu*). Therefore, this last portion of Scripture, expressing the Trinity, may be more correctly translated in this way:

“...He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise Our heal.”

the gospel in Genesis 5...

<u>Genesis 5</u>	<u>Hebrew</u>	<u>English Meaning</u>
Adam	אדם	Man (Earth)
Seth	שה	Appointed
Enos	אנוש	Mortal
Cainan	קנין	Sorrow;
Mahalalel	מהללאל	The Blessed God
Jared	ירד	Shall come down
Enoch	חנוך	Teaching
Methuselah	מהושלח	His death shall bring
Lamech	למך	Despairing
Noah	נח	Comfort; Rest; Repentance

“Man (is) appointed mortal sorrow; (but) the Blessed God shall come down teaching (that) His death shall bring (the) despairing comfort (rest, and repentance).”

a prophetic look at faith, hope, and love...

“And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And He said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his

young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him” (Genesis 22:1-3).

Isaac may have been 33 years old, the same age as Jesus when He went to the Cross. Isaac is sometimes thought to be a child at this point because the Hebrew word נער (*Na'ar*) is used and translated “lad” and “young men.” Although it is true that *Na'ar* is a word used to describe an adolescent, it is also used to describe strong young men and servants. The same word is used to describe the two servants that Abraham took with him. Now why would he take three children to Moriah with him? Because they weren't children, they were strong young men. Isaac, at 33, would still be considered a child to Abraham's 133 years.

Abraham took a donkey (**Genesis 22:3**) because Jesus would fulfill Scripture in entering Jerusalem riding upon a donkey (**John 12:14-15**).⁷

Abraham laid the wood for the offering upon Isaac's back (**Genesis 22:6**) just as Jesus was made to bear the patibulum⁸ of His cross on the road to Golgatha (**John 19:17**).

Mount Moriah, where God brought Abraham and Isaac (**Genesis 22:2**), was the very same ridge where the Temple was built, as well as where our Lord was condemned by Caiaphas, questioned by Pilate, and crucified at Calvary:

“Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the LORD appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite” (2 Chronicles 3:1).

Whereas Isaac was a type of Christ and Abraham was a type of God the Father, when Abraham raised the knife to slay his only son, the Angel of LORD intervened and the typology

⁷ **Zechariah 9:9**

⁸ The patibulum is the top section of the Roman cross that runs parallel with the ground and perpendicular to the stipes, the standing section of wood that is planted in the ground.

changes. As Isaac is what he truly is in the spiritual scheme of things, an imperfect sinner as an unworthy sacrifice, God provides a ram caught in a thicket:

“And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son” (Genesis 22:13).

The ram is a type of Jesus Christ, as He is *“the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29)*. The ram had his horns caught in a thicket, just as Christ wore a twisted crown of thorns upon His head (**Mark 15:17; John 19:2-5**). This crown represented the curse of sin (**Genesis 3:17-19**) as Jesus was made a curse and sin for us:

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree” (Galatians 3:13).

“For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

There are so many more things that we could say about these Scriptures in **Genesis 22**; nevertheless, we will conclude portion of Scripture with this prophetic look at faith, hope, and love. First, Abraham was a prophet⁹ acting out prophecy at this very site, because some 2000 years later it would be seen that the heavenly Father would offer His only begotten Son as an offering:

“And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen” (Genesis 22:14).

Faith. Upon hearing the Word of God, Abraham obediently followed the LORD’s command. Here is an incredible example of Biblical faith. Biblical faith is not

⁹ **Genesis 20:7**

merely a mental ascent to believe. It is the supernatural power of God within the believer, not only to believe what God has said and also believe that God has said it, but that since that life has been so transformed by the resurrection power of the Holy Spirit to regenerate a vile, wretched sinner into a new creature in Christ, such a person is moved to desire to obey God, whatever the command:

“By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went” (Hebrews 11:8).

Hope. Although this particular command seemed to be in conflict with, even contradict, God’s Word to fulfill His promise through Isaac,¹⁰ Abraham believed that God would somehow fulfill His Word and keep His promise:

“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure” (Hebrews 11:17-19).

Love. This passage, in **Genesis 22:2** specifically, is the first place where the word “love” is mentioned in the Bible;¹¹ whereas a father is commanded to offer unto God his one and only son, whom he loves. Our minds should immediately be brought to these well-known passages:

“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” (John 3:16).

“But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

¹⁰ **Genesis 21:12**

¹¹ Love is the Hebrew word אהב (Ahav).

“We love Him, because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19).

he dwelt among us...

“And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau’s heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them. And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents” (Genesis 25:24-27).

Esau was the firstborn. He came out red all over (כלו, אדמוני, *Admoniy Klu*) and hairy like a garment (כאדרה שער, *Ka’aderet Se’ar*). *Se’ar* means hair, so they called his name עשו (*Esav*). As Esau came out hairy and red all over, the Hebrew word for red is אדם (*Adam*) and reddish is אדמוני (*Admoniy*). Later, when Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of red stew, he was called אדם (*Adom*), which means ruddy. Red, dirt, blood, and Adam all come from the same Hebrew root word. As the firstborn son, Esau was a type of Adam because he sold his birthright for something to eat (Genesis 3:6; 25:29-34).

Jacob came out second with his hand upon Esau’s heel. The Hebrew word for heel, as we saw earlier in Genesis 3:15, is עקב (*Aqev*); so they named him יעקב (*Ya’aqov*).

Esau grew up to be a cunning hunter (איש ידע ציד, *Iysh Yode’a Tza’iyd*) and a man of the field (איש שדה, *Iysh Sadeh*). His life as a type or a parable, being “a man of the field,” Esau was a man of the world. In explaining the parable of the Wheat and the Tares, Jesus tells us outright what the field represents:

“The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one” (Matthew 13:38).

Jacob, on the other hand, was a plain man (איש חם, *Iysh*

Tam), dwelling in tents (יֵשֵׁב אֹהֶלִים, *Iysh Ohaliym*). As “a plain man” the Scripture tells us that Jacob was perfect (תָּם, *Tam*). *Tam* is the same Hebrew root word that is used to describe Noah, and it means “perfect” or “without blemish” (as in a sacrifice offered to God):

“These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God” (Genesis 6:9).¹²

As one who dwelt in tents, Jacob was a type of the incarnation of Jesus Christ because the Holy Spirit tells us,

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

The word translated “dwelt” above is the Greek word, ἐσκήνωσεν (*eskeenoosen*). This Greek word is very closely related to the Aramaic word שִׁכַן (*Shekan*) and the Hebrew word שָׁכַן (*Shakan*), which means dwell or habitation.¹³ Additionally, one of the Hebrew words used as a name for the Tabernacle that God had Moses build is מִשְׁכַּן (*Mishkan*), which means “tent” or “place to dwell.”¹⁴

So the lives of Esau and Jacob in Scripture present prophetic types of Adam and Jesus:

“And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that

¹² תָּם (*Tamiym*) comes from the root word תָּם (*Tam*). As *Tam* is used for the first time in **Genesis 25:27** in reference to Jacob, *Tamiym* is used first in **Genesis 6:9** in reference to Noah. *Tamiym* is also of God’s command to Abraham in **Genesis 17:1**, of the Passover Lamb in **Exodus 12:5**, and translated “without blemish” 21 times in the book of **Leviticus** when referring to the sacrifices offered to God.

¹³ See **Ezra 6:12** for the Aramaic (Chaldean) שִׁכַן and **Genesis 9:7** for the Hebrew שָׁכַן.

¹⁴ **Exodus 25:9**

which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second Man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly” (1 Corinthians 15:45-48).

But that’s not all there is to these two brothers...

“And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold, here am I. And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death: now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison; and make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die. And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it. And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying, Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before the LORD before my death. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth: and thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death. And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man: my father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing. And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice, and go fetch me them. And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother: and his mother made savoury meat, such as his father loved. And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son: and she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck: and she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob. And

he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I; who art thou, my son? And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy firstborn; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the LORD thy God brought it to me” (**Genesis 27:1-20**).

Two kids of the goats were slaughtered (sacrificed) to be used as skins to cover Jacob so that he may appear as Esau. This parallels the two goats that are brought forth on the Day of Atonement, the goat sacrificed to the LORD and the scapegoat (**Leviticus 16:8-10**). Kid hair is quite different from adult goats; it's soft. Esau wasn't like the wolfman in some horror movie.

“And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not. And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him” (**Genesis 27:21-23**).

Although Jesus was clothed like Esau, and had mortal hair and flesh like Edom (אֲדוֹם), that is, like Adam (אָדָם), His voice was perfect and without blemish (תָּמִי, Tam) as He spoke heavenly words... He was God in human flesh, but Israel was blind to the truth that Jesus and the Father were one (**John 10:30**):

“Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from My Father; for which of those works do ye stone Me? The Jews answered Him, saying, For a good work we stone Thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God” (**John 10:31-33**).

the suffering servant...

“So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the

trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him. And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants. And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them” (Genesis 50:17-21).

One of the Jewish names for the Christ was משיח בן דוד (*Mashiach Ben David*) meaning, “Messiah, Son of David.” Another name for the Christ was משיח בן יוסף (*Mashiach Ben Yosef*) meaning, “Messiah, Son of Joseph.” In other words, the Messiah would be a reigning King but He would also be a suffering Servant. How could these be reconciled? The gospel of Jesus Christ explains that the Messiah would come twice.

Additionally, Joseph’s story recognizes this....

JOSEPH	JESUS
Coat of many colors (Genesis 37:3)	Seamless garment (John 19:23)
Initial rejection by brothers (Genesis 37:20)	Initial rejection by brothers (John 1:11; 7:5)
Betrayed by Judah (Genesis 37:26-27)	Betrayed by Judah (Matthew 27:3)
Sold for 20 silver pieces (Genesis 37:28)	Sold for 30 silver pieces (Matthew 27:9)
Reuben finds an empty pit (Genesis 37:30)	Peter finds an empty tomb (John 20:4-8)
Coat dipped in blood (Genesis 37:31)	Vesture dipped in blood (Revelation 19:3)
Goodly & well favored (Genesis 39:6)	Grew in wisdom & favor (Luke 2:52)
Began ruling at 30 (Genesis 41:46)	Began ministry at 30 (Luke 3:23)
Marries an Egyptian (Genesis 41:45)	Marries a gentile bride (Ruth; 2 Corinthians 11:12)

All buy grain from him (Genesis 41:57)	“Buy of Me gold tried...” (Revelation 3:18)
Not recognized by brothers (Genesis 42:8)	Not recognized by disciples (Luke 24:16)
Later honored by brothers (Genesis 42:6)	Later honored by brothers (Acts 1:14)
Is a fruitful bough (Genesis 49:22)	Is the Abiding Vine (John 15:1-6)
Mission misunderstood (Genesis 50:15-20)	Mission misunderstood (Acts 1:6-8)
Saved a nation (Genesis 50:20)	Saved the world (John 3:16)

In Christ’s sufferings upon the Cross, what has slipped into the church today is the utterly heinous idea that the sins of fallen man were paid for by the cruel physical torture suffered by Jesus of Nazareth at the hands of the Jews and the Romans.

I certainly don’t want to diminish the horror that was inflicted upon our Lord physically at His arrest, trials, and crucifixion. Scripture tells us that He was beaten beyond human recognition:¹⁵

“As many were astonished at Thee; His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men” (Isaiah 52:14).

“He is despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not” (Isaiah 53:3).

More than the physical sufferings that the righteous Lamb of God suffered at the hands of sinful men, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, drank down the furious wrath of almighty God against sin when He hung upon that Cross, satisfying His Father’s holy justice:

“Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:

¹⁵ כאשר שממו עליך רבים כן משחת מאיש מראהו והארו מבני אדם

yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 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” (Isaiah 53:4-5).

The Lord Jesus was “smitten of God.” “Smitten” is the from the Hebrew root word נָכַח, *nakah*. This same root was used of God when He spoke through the prophet in

Zechariah 13:7.¹⁶

“Bruised” (**Isaiah 53:5**) is the Hebrew word דָּכָא (*daka*), which means “crushed,” “broken to pieces,” more accurately, “pulverized,” or “turned to powder” beneath or between millstones. Well, how do we know that it was God that “bruised” Him? Because we are told a few verses later:

“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand” (Isaiah 53:10).

It pleased Jehovah God, YHVH, the LORD, “to bruise Him.” “Bruise” is the same Hebrew word, דָּכָא. That’s not all. That verse also says that God makes the soul of Jesus “an offering for sin.”

The sin of mankind is so utterly wicked that God had to become a man and take the punishment of His own holy wrath, pouring it out upon His one and only Son so that His holy, righteous justice could be reconciled with His holy and compassionate mercy. As cited earlier, Jesus became the curse for sin when He hung upon the Cross (**Galatians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21**).

How could one man hanging upon a Cross for only a few hours pay for the sins of fallen man? As a man, Jesus never stopped being God. He was completely God and completely man, having two natures, yet, one divine Person. As a man, Jesus was the only righteous man who ever lived sinlessly; He was the only Jew who ever kept the entire Law of Moses

¹⁶ See also **Matthew 26:31**

flawlessly; He was the only Prophet who ever spoke the Word of God perfectly; He was the only Son who ever obeyed His Father earnestly, completely, passionately, and immediately. His uniqueness as God and Man made His atoning sacrifice and His redeeming substitution of infinite value and worth.

In the person of the Son, and in His human nature thus united to the divine, the Lord Jesus was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit above measure, having in Him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. It pleased the Father that all the fullness of God should dwell in Him, so that being holy, harmless, undefiled, and full of grace and truth, He might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of Mediator and Surety; a position and duty that He did not take upon Himself, but was called to perform by His Father, who also put all power and judgment in His hand, and gave Him commandment to carry out the same.¹⁷

By His perfect obedience and sacrifice of Himself, which the Lord Jesus offered up unto God through the eternal Spirit, He has fully satisfied the justice of God, obtain reconciliation, and has purchased an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven for all those whom the Father has given unto Him.¹⁸

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to shew unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass...” (Revelation 1:1).

One of the most overlooked truths (or perhaps forgotten truths because the book of **Revelation** is not studied or taught in some churches at all) concerning the book of **Revelation** is that it is the revealing, the unveiling, the disclosure of Jesus Christ. The writings within this book tell us who Jesus Christ is. It speaks all about the majesty and excellency of His Person. It reveals the glory and infinite grace of His work upon the Cross. Here are just a few verses:

¹⁷ **Psalm 45:7; Matthew 28:18; John 1:14; 3:34; 5:22, 27; Acts 2:36; 10:38; Colossians 1:9; 2:3; Hebrews 5:5; 7:22, 26**

¹⁸ **John 17:2; Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:14, 15; 10:14**

“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation” (**Revelation 5:9**).

“Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing” (**Revelation 5:12**).

“And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb” (**Revelation 6:16**).

“For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes” (**Revelation 7:17**).

“And they overcame Him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death” (**Revelation 12:11**).

“And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof” (**Revelation 21:23**).

People have come to me and said, “I want to go to heaven when I die.”

My response: “The devil wants to go to heaven, too. The only thing that makes heaven what it is is Jesus Christ. If you don’t want Jesus Christ, then you don’t want heaven.”

People have come to me and said, “I don’t want to go to hell.”

My response: “The devil doesn’t want to go to hell, either. If Jesus Christ isn’t your heart’s desire, if you don’t want Him above all else, you’ll perish in the very eternal flames that you’re trying to escape.”

Heaven is the joyful, constant, and eternal discovery of the infinite glories of Christ’s attributes and work upon the

Cross. Christ's work upon the Cross expresses His superlative excellencies in His humanity, as well His glorious majesties in His deity.

When the apostle Paul said that his speech and preaching did not come through the enticing words of man's wisdom, but came instead through a demonstration of the Holy Spirit's power (**1 Corinthians 2:4**), he brought forth a very humbling truth. He was telling the Corinthians, and tell us today, that the incredible truth of preaching the Cross of Christ and teaching of God's Word to reveal Jesus Christ in every page of Scripture had so supernaturally transformed him by the power of the Holy Spirit, that we dwelt constantly in that truth. Paul was so clothed with that truth that the power of the Spirit abiding with him, dwelling in him, and resting upon him, manifested the power of that truth; that simply by preaching that truth, the Holy Spirit called the elect by God's efficacious grace; that the Spirit of the crucified, resurrected, ascended, and returning Christ regenerated vile, wretched, totally depraved sinners and made them new creations in Christ; that the Spirit of the absent-present Christ sanctified that recreated individual with ever increasing glory to walk in brokenness and contrition in the Lord's ever-present holiness, to continue to grow with ever increasing love, faith, and trust in Him, and to rejoice continually in the hope of His imminent return.

Has the sovereign work of God in the Cross of Jesus Christ performed a supernatural work in your life to desire Him and Him alone? Is Christ and His Cross your passion now? If it is not now, it will not be in the age to come; and it may just be proof that you may not be saved. When the saint is glorified in the age to come, our true spiritual worship will be the eternal, joyful exaltation of the truth of the Person and work of Christ upon the Cross.

The Cross of Jesus Christ is not what grants us eternal life. The Cross of Jesus Christ is eternal life. When we have been supernaturally changed by the sovereign grace of God, Christ is our only desire and His sacrifice is the only work worth exalting.

“Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever” (Psalm 73:25-26).

“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world” (Galatians 6:14).

