

# THAT YOU MAY HAVE LIFE

## (A Study of the Gospel of John)

### What Happened On the Cross?

#### SCRIPTURE TO OPEN SERVICE:

The cross is the center point of history.

- Everything before it led to it.
- Everything after it is impacted by it.
- The eternal destiny of every person born upon the face of the earth is determined by what happened upon it.

In Revelation 13, Jesus is called the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

In Genesis 3, even as God expels Adam and Eve for their sin against Him, He gives the first promise of the cross, where Satan would be allowed to bruise the heel of God's Son, but the head of the Serpent would be crushed by the Savior.

In Genesis 12, God called a man named Abraham to march off the map to a land God would show and give to him, and in which, God would make Abraham's descendant to be a blessing to every family of the earth. Jesus made that promise come true when He died upon the cross, purchasing salvation, to be offered as a gift to anyone and everyone who was willing to receive it.

God let Moses see that the Passover, the blood sacrifices, the Day of Atonement were all foreshadowing what God would do when Messiah was hung upon a cross.

David, the Shepherd/King of Israel and the nation's greatest psalmist described God's Son nailed to a cross in such detail and with such accuracy that you would think God must have transported David through time and allowed him to stand unnoticed on Golgotha's hill.

In Psalm 22, 1,000 years before Jesus was impaled upon the cross, David wrote

<sup>1</sup> **My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? ...**

<sup>6</sup> **But I *am* a worm, and no man;**

**A reproach of men, and despised by the people.**

- 7 All those who see Me ridicule Me;  
They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*,
- 8 “He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him;  
Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!”
- 16 For dogs have surrounded Me;  
The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.  
**They pierced My hands and My feet;**
- 17 I can count all My bones.  
They look *and* stare at Me.
- 18 **They divide My garments among them,  
And for My clothing they cast lots.**

But of all the ancients, God allowed Isaiah to see the cross most clearly from afar. He wrote in Isaiah 53

- 3 **He is despised and rejected by men,  
A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. ..**
- 4 Surely He has borne our griefs  
And carried our sorrows;  
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,  
Smitten by God, and afflicted.
- 5 But **He was wounded for our transgressions,  
He was bruised for our iniquities;**  
The chastisement for our peace was upon Him,  
And by 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 has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.**
- 7 ... He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,  
And as a sheep before its shearers is silent,

So He opened not His mouth.

<sup>8</sup> ... **He was cut off from the land of the living;**

**For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.**

<sup>11</sup> ... My righteous Servant shall justify many,

For He shall bear their iniquities.

INTRODUCTION: What happened on the cross?

John 19:17–30 And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called *the Place of a Skull*, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha, <sup>18</sup> where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, one on either side, and Jesus in the center. <sup>19</sup> Now Pilate wrote a title and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was:

JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

<sup>20</sup> Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, *and* Latin.

<sup>21</sup> Therefore the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but, ‘He said, “I am the King of the Jews.” ’ ”

<sup>22</sup> Pilate answered, “What I have written, I have written.”

<sup>23</sup> Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. <sup>24</sup> They said therefore among themselves, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be,” that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says:

“They divided My garments among them,

*And for My clothing they cast lots.”*

Therefore the soldiers did these things.

<sup>25</sup> Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother’s sister, Mary the *wife* of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup> When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, “Woman, behold your son!” <sup>27</sup> Then He said to the disciple, “Behold your mother!” And from that hour that disciple took her to his own *home*.

<sup>28</sup> After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, “I thirst!” <sup>29</sup> Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put *it* on hyssop, and put *it* to His mouth. <sup>30</sup> So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

What happened on the cross?

## I. JESUS SET AN EXAMPLE FOR US.

John 19:17 And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called *the Place of a Skull*, which is called in Hebrew, *Golgotha*,

Listen carefully here, so that I can be very clear and careful.

There is a theology called **Example Atonement**.

It means that **Christ saves us by giving us the example to be self-sacrificing** in our living as He was.

- This theology is heresy. I do not use that word lightly, and you do not hear me use it often.
- Example Atonement is a salvation by works. It says we get saved if we follow Jesus' example well enough.
- That is an error with eternal consequences.
- **Ephesians 2:8–9 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.**

However, this error should not keep us from taking note of an important thing that Jesus did. The Scripture says that Jesus, bearing His cross, went to Golgotha.

**A. Jesus did give us an example of bearing His cross.**

**B. Jesus commanded us to bear our own crosses.**

- **We are not saved by our cross-bearing.**
- **His grace and our faith make our cross-bearing possible.**
  - **The essence of cross-bearing is self-denial.**
    - It means doing what the Father wants instead of what we want.
    - It means living for what is eternally significant rather than momentarily expedient.
  - **Cross-bearing means following Christ.**
    - Declaring the gospel
    - Making disciples
  - **Cross-bearing is daily.**
    - Not a once in a life time event
    - Not “a few times makes my testimony” story
    - How have I taken up my cross today?
  - **Cross-bearing is the key to making our lives count.**
    - Every believer shall stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ.
    - What we have done with our lives since our salvation will be judged – not to determine salvation, but reward or loss.
    - Only those who have borne their cross and followed Him will hear the Master say, “Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a few things; I will make you ruler over much.”

## II. GOD DECLARED JESUS TO BE THE KING.

I love this part.

John 19:19-22 Now Pilate wrote a title and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was:

JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

<sup>20</sup> Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, *and* Latin.

<sup>21</sup> Therefore the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but, ‘He said, “I am the King of the Jews.” ’ ”

<sup>22</sup> Pilate answered, “What I have written, I have written.”

You may be thinking, “God did not write that Jesus was king, Pilate did.” Pilate wrote it, but Who do you think put it in Pilate’s mind to write it?

God specializes in causing pagan officials to do His bidding.

- He caused wicked Nebuchadnezzar to declare that Daniel’s God was the God of gods and the Lord of kings.
- He made King Cyrus of Persia allow the remnant to return to Jerusalem.
- He moved King Artaxerxes to take pity on his servant Nehemiah and allow him to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
- Who kept King Ahasuerus awake at night and prompted his servants to read the pages of the chronicles to him that told how Mordecai had saved his life and thus spoiled wicked Haman’s plot to kill God’s righteous servant?
- And it was God who even put the words in the mouth of hard-hearted Caiaphas to say, “It is better that one man should die than that the whole nation should perish.”
- And thus I am convinced that it was the provident purpose of God to have weak-kneed, lily-livered, jelly-bellied Pilate dictate a placard to be nailed above the head of Jesus as He hung upon the cross declaring in three languages, no less, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

### III. GOD CERTIFIED JESUS AS MESSIAH, PROMISED SAVIOR, AND ISAIAH’S SUFFERING SERVANT.

John 19:23–24 <sup>23</sup> Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. <sup>24</sup> They said therefore among themselves, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be,” that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says:

“They divided My garments among them,

*And for My clothing they cast lots.”*

Therefore the soldiers did these things.

God saw to it that the Scripture He put in the heart of David in Psalm 22 was fulfilled in exact detail. Why?

Because people knew that Psalm 22 was about the coming Messiah. It was telling of the Savior God had promised to send and whom Isaiah had described as the Suffering Servant.

By causing those men to do exactly what David declared in the Psalm, God was certifying that this Jesus of Nazareth was and is

- The Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One of God
- The Promised Savior of the world
- The Suffering Servant of Isaiah who is the Son of God, born of a virgin, entering the world as a child, but who would be wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities.

What happened on the cross was God's signature of authentication. John's writing about it in his gospel was the stamp of the Notary Public.

And most important of all: what happened on the cross was that

#### **IV. SALVATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE FOR ALL.**

John 19:28–30 28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!" 29 Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put *it* on hyssop, and put *it* to His mouth. 30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

As Jesus hung upon the cross, somewhere around noon, the prophesy of Isaiah about Him was quietly fulfilled.

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray;

We have turned, every one, to his own way;

And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

In accordance with the decision of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit before the earth itself was formed,

- God the Father reached around the globe to gather up evil deeds of all mankind, the wicked words of all humanity, the evil thoughts everyone believed were forever hidden,
- He also reached across time for Adam in the Garden of Eden to the last man standing on earth's future shores before the elements melt with fervent heat and God creates a New Heaven and a New Earth,

- And the Almighty God of Heaven took all of those vile, filthy, hideous sins and placed them on His own dear, pure, sinless Son.

The LORD laid on Jesus the iniquity of us all.

The brilliance of the noonday sun was suddenly overwhelmed by unexplained darkness.

The earth began to violently shake.

And for three long hours, the perfect Son of God, Who had forever been in perfect relationship, fellowship, and harmony with the Father,

- Became sin in our place
- Suffered the anguish of separation from God the Father
- And cried out with a loud voice, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

And then, John tells us, Jesus spoke His final words before His death. “It is Finished.”

We might think it was a quiet resignation that the end had finally come. “It is Finished.”

We might think that it was an almost breathless sigh because the physical agony and the spiritual pain were almost over. “It is Finished.”

But if that is what we think, we are wrong.

We are wrong because we do not understand the word Jesus spoke translated into English as, “It is Finished.”

### **The Greek word is Tetélestai.**

It does mean it is finished, but in the sense **“It is completed!”** The plan of Father, Son, and Spirit to make a way for sinful man to be reconciled to Holy God was now realized. The sins of people who would trust in God’s one and only Son could be forgiven. Man and women estranged from God, enemies of God, at war with God, could now be made a part of the family and Kingdom of God. Tetélestai! “It is Finished!”

But Tetélestai has another meaning as well. In those days, when a man incurred a debt, the debt was recorded on a parchment and kept by the lender, much as we would do with a promissory note. But when the borrower repaid the lender, the lender would write upon the parchment Tetélestai, and it meant **“The debt is paid!”**

All have sinned ... Rom. 3:23

The wages of sin is death ... Rom. 6:23

The Lord laid on Him (Jesus) the iniquity of us all. Isa. 53:6

Now, the sin debt is paid. All you have to do is to believe it and respond to it by trusting Jesus as the Lord, Master, and Savior of your life.