

BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH

THE PIONEER BAPTIST

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“Preaching the same truth since before Kentucky was a state”

VOLUME 37, NO. 8

MAY, 2006

THE DEATH OF CHRIST

By: C. D. Cole

Introduction: The Old Testament predicts the coming of a unique person into this world. Genesis 3:15. He is called the seed of the woman; Isaiah 7:14, *“...the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”* Isaiah 9:6, *“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”* Job spoke of Him as his Redeemer. Job 19:25, *“For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.”* In the Song of Solomon 2:1, He is spoken of, *“I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.”*

The four gospels of the New Testament give us the inspired record of His birth, life, and death. Acts give us the activities of His immediate followers in making Him known to this world after His departure. And the church epistles explain the meaning and purpose of His death. In the book of Revelation we see a

redeemed people in a redeemed earth giving expression of gratitude to this person who redeemed them.

The life and death of a person named Jesus the Christ is an undeniable fact of human history. Both Roman and Jewish historians understand his contemporaries, speaking of a person named Jesus whose followers called Christ.

The death of Christ does not mean the same to everybody who knows about it. To most of the Jews, his own race, his death has no saving value. They considered it a scandal. And among those who claim to be His followers there is a wide difference of opinion as to the meaning of His death. The death of Christ does not mean to the Christian Scientists, Russellites, or Roman Catholics what it does to us Baptist and some others.

1. The death of Christ was even foreordained or predestinated. It was no accident. Acts 4:27-28, *“For of a truth against*

thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.” Acts 2:23, *“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:”* John 12:27, *“Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.”* Luke 12:50, *“But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!”* John 10:17-18, *“...I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again...”* I Peter 1:19-20, *“But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foun-*

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dation of the world...”

2. The death of Christ was predicted; it was a subject of many prophecies. Mark 15:27-28, *“And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.”* John 19:24, *“They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.”* John 19:32-37, *“Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.”* Acts 1:16, *“Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.”* Acts 8:32, *“The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth.”* How often do we read in the New Testament that such and such a thing

was done to Him that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. The where and when and how of his death were all fixed and predicted.

THE NATURE OF HIS DEATH

There are many theories of the atonement but I will not befog your minds with an account of all these false views. From the human side exhibition of human depravity:

His death was divine punishment for sin. Isaiah 53:6, *“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.”* Two kinds of hands were at work at the cross; human hands and divine hands; visible and invisible hands. Of human hands they were wicked; divine hands were hands of justice. Men put Christ to death because they were haters of good; God put Him to death because He was a lover of justice.

But consider scriptures that speak of God’s hand in his death: Isaiah 53:4,6,10, *“Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted...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... 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.”*

WHY PUNISHED BY GOD?

1. Not for His own personal sins. He was holy and separate

from sinners. He was punished for our sins.

For sins not His own He died to atone. Therefore:

2. His death was a substitutionary death; he died in the room and place of others. II Corinthians 5:21, *“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.”* II Corinthians 5:14, *“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:”*

3. His death was satisfaction rendered to the law of God, or to divine justice, for my guilt. Matthew 20:28, *“...to give his life a ransom for many.”* I was surprised to read these words from William Evans: *“To whom this ransom is paid is a debatable question: Whether to Satan for his captives or to eternal and necessary holiness, to the divine law, to the claim of God who is by nature the holy lawgiver.”* Ransom makes us think of kidnappers. A kidnapped person is held for ransom. As a matter of expediency ransom money is often paid. Not as a matter of justice; nothing due kidnappers but punishment. Ransom is paid because it is impossible to secure release of the victim without it. If the family of the victim had the power to effect release without ransom they would not pay it. Now the sinner is a captive of Satan, but Satan is not exactly a kidnapper. When a man’s wife runs off with another man, that man is not a kidnapper. She may be under his influence; under the spell of what to her is a charming personality, but he did not take her off bodily against her will.

Satan has possession of lost men, but he does not hold them

for ransom; he does not want to let them go at any price. And God is not so weak that He has to resort to any expediency to save sinners. God is able of his own power to take sinners away from Satan. Genesis 3:15, *“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed;”* II Timothy 2:24-25, *“And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;”*

The redemptive price is paid to Divine Justice. The sin-debt is due the Justice of God, not the devil. God satisfied His own justice by inflicting punishment upon his Son, and on the basis of this the Holy Spirit takes the sinner out of the hands of Satan in His work of regeneration.

There is a very plausible theory of the atonement known in theology as the Moral Influence Theory. It goes something like this: There was nothing in God to be satisfied in order to the salvation of sinners. God did not predestinate the death of His Son, but merely permitted man to put Him to death, and by so doing God gave an exhibition of suffering of His Son so as to soften and melt human hearts by which the sinner would be filled with sympathy for Jesus Christ and follow Him. And the appeal that the cross makes is an appeal for sympathy.

There are so many things wrong with this that it would take a long time to point all of it out.

1. In the cross there was an exhibition of suffering but it was not to create sympathy with Christ. If this theory were true we

could have little hope of the salvation of our soldier boys who have been in the thick of this war. They have seen so much suffering that they can look upon the most terrible suffering without emotion. They have seen suffering, physically, about as much as Christ suffered.

2. Men are not saved by sympathy. On the way to the cross, Luke 23:27-28, *“And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.”* I believe many have shed tears in listening to the story of the cross who have never been saved.

3. We are not saved by sympathy for Christ; we are saved by faith in Him. The cross in its saving power appeals not to our sympathy but to our faith. And faith is not sympathy; it is trust.

I Corinthians 15:1-4, *“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:”*

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*I knelt to pray when day was done,
And prayed: “Oh, Lord, bless everyone;
Lift from each saddened heart the pain
And let the sick be well again.”
And then I awoke another day
And carelessly went on my way.*

*The whole day long I did not try
To wipe a tear from any eye;
I did not try to share the load
Of any brother on the road;
I did not even go to see
The sick man just next door to me.*

*Yet once again when day was done,
I prayed: “O, Lord, bless everyone.”
But as I prayed, into my ear
There came a voice that whispered
clear,
“Pause, hypocrite, before you pray;
Whom have you tried to bless today?”*

*“God's sweetest blessings always go
By hands that serve him here below.”
And then I hid my face and cried,
“Forgive me, God, for I have lied;
Let me but live another day,
And I will live the way I pray.”*

—Author Unknown

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