

Even the Death of the Cross

Review

1. In one of our previous studies on the priesthood of Jesus Christ, we discovered that the primary mission of Jesus when He came to earth was to satisfy the two vital requirements of the priesthood (**Heb 5:1-2; Heb 8:3-4**)
 - a. Assume human nature (priests were taken from among men)
 - b. Lay down His life as an atoning sacrifice (He needed somewhat also something to offer)
2. It was extremely important for Jesus to validate His priesthood, as it is the only means of guaranteeing the fulfillment of the promises contained in the new covenant for the salvation for men
3. Without Christ's priesthood, there can be no forgiveness for sin, no adoption, no justification and sanctification, no growth in grace, nothing!
4. We discovered that Jesus had to endure great suffering, humble Himself, and face difficult challenges in order to satisfy the requirements that would validate His priesthood
5. For instance, with regards to satisfying the **first** requirement of the priesthood, which was assuming the nature of man, Jesus could not just assume sinless nature such as possessed by unfallen angels, because that nature cannot sympathize with weak, fallen men in their struggles against temptations,
 - a. Even taking man's nature in its sinless condition would have caused infinite humiliation to Jesus, but He took that nature after 4,000 years of sin (DA 48)
 - b. He had to come in the same fallen nature as Abraham (**Heb 2:14-17; DA 48**)
6. This step in taking man's nature in its fallen condition
 - c. Required great condescension and self-denial on the part of Jesus (**Phil 2:5-7**)
7. Those who teach that Jesus took Adam's sinless nature during the incarnation do not realize that this would have disqualified Him from the priesthood
8. With regards to the satisfying the **second** requirement of His priesthood, which was laying down His life as atoning sacrifice and spilling His precious blood so that He will have something to offer for sin as required of priests, we discovered that that too, involved tremendous challenges, difficulties and unimaginable risks!
9. Simply laying down His life would have been an infinite sacrificial act on the part of Christ, but Jesus went beyond the call of duty and allowed Himself to be nailed on a Roman cross
10. Consider the following the following important facts regarding the crucifixion of Christ:
 - a. **FACT #1: It was not necessary for Jesus to be crucified to become atoning sacrifice and Savior of the world**

- i. Jesus **walked the extra mile** by allowing Himself to be dragged to Calvary and nailed to a cross as a common criminal
 - ii. He **went above and beyond** the call of duty, by allowing Himself to be strung naked and crucified
- b. **FACT #2:** The cross was the place of His death, but not the means of His dying
 - i. Jesus did not die because of the Roman cross and the Roman nails; Jesus voluntarily laid down His life (**John 19:31-32; John 10:17**)
 - ii. no man-made crosses can take His life away from Him (**John 10:18**)
 - iii. On the cross, he had the power to “withstand the advances of death and refuse to come under its dominion” (**DA 484**)
 - iv. He would never have died on the cross, unless He laid down His life, by choice, by a conscious act of the will
- c. **FACT #3:** If Jesus died because of the cross,
 - i. Then Satan becomes a partner of Jesus in the plan of salvation for planting the Roman cross in front of Jesus
 - ii. Then man’s redemption was accomplished with the help of Judas, Caiaphas, Annas and Pilate and they cannot be condemned in the judgment for conniving together to bring about the crucifixion of Jesus; rather, they get medals for assisting Him in carrying out the plan of salvation; same with the mob who cried out “crucify Him”
 - iii. The death of Jesus on the death, only saved us from the first death, not the second death because this is all what death on the cross can do (**Matt 10:28**)
 - iv. The life Jesus laid down was not just His body but His human soul (**Matt 26:38; Isa 53:10, 12; Matt 10:28**); Jesus died the 2nd death; the death of the wicked in the lake of fire!
- d. **FACT #4:** Jesus would have died even before being marched to Calvary if only the Father had not intervened
 - i. At the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus exclaimed that He was extremely sorrowful unto death, in Gethsemane (**Matt 26:36-39**)

Having made the decision, He fell **dying** to the ground from which He had partially risen. **DA 693.**

The divine Son of God was fainting, **dying**. The Father sent a messenger from His presence to strengthen the divine Sufferer and brace Him to tread His bloodstained path. **2T 206.**

- ii. If Jesus died at Gethsemane, there would be not cross!

Why God Allowed His Son to Be Crucified

11. The big question now is, why did God allow Jesus to go all the way to Calvary to be crucified when it had nothing to add to the work of atonement and salvation of men? Not even required to validate His priesthood
12. **REASON #1: God The Father allowed Jesus to be crucified on the cross**—to give human beings like us with dull senses a better idea of the **pain and the agony** Jesus had to go through in consenting to die as atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world
 - a. That pain and agony did not primarily come from the torture of the physical body resulting from being slapped, scourged, crowned with thorns and being nailed to a tree
 - b. This pain consisted of mental, emotional and spiritual torture because of the sins of the whole world being laid on Him, leading to hopelessness and despair
 - c. To be an offering for sin, Jesus had to take upon Himself the sins of the world and suffer the extreme unmitigated penalty for those offenses—
 - d. Bearing our sins, Jesus understood how offensive sin was, and feared that He would eternally be separated from His Father and never see Him again
 - e. This helps us understand why Jesus cried out “Father, why have you forsaken Me?”
13. When Jesus exclaimed, “Father, if this cup cannot pass from me except I drink it, let your will be done,” He made the ultimate conscious choice to give all the pleasures and glories of heaven up, including His eternal life for man’s salvation

Even doubts assailed the dying Son of God. He could not see through the portals of the tomb. Bright hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the tomb a conqueror and His Father's acceptance of His sacrifice. The sin of the world, with all its terribleness, was felt to the utmost by the Son of God. The displeasure of the Father for sin, and its penalty, which is death, were all that He could realize through this amazing darkness. He was tempted to fear that sin was so offensive in the sight of His Father that He could not be reconciled to His Son. The fierce temptation that His own Father had forever left Him caused that piercing cry from the cross: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

Christ felt much as sinners will feel when the vials of God's wrath shall be poured out upon them. Black despair, like the pall of death, will gather about their guilty souls, and then they will realize to the fullest extent the sinfulness of sin. Salvation has been purchased for them by the suffering and death of the Son of God. It might be theirs, if they would accept of it willingly, gladly; but none are compelled to yield obedience to the law of God. If they refuse the heavenly benefit and choose the pleasures and deceitfulness of sin, they have their choice, and at the end receive their wages, which is the wrath of God and eternal death. They will be forever separated from the presence of Jesus, whose sacrifice they had despised. They will have lost a life of happiness and sacrificed eternal glory for the pleasures of sin for a season.

Faith and hope trembled in the expiring agonies of Christ because God had removed the assurance He had heretofore given His beloved Son of His approbation and acceptance. The Redeemer of the world then relied upon the evidences which had hitherto strengthened Him, that His Father accepted His labors and was pleased with His work. In His dying agony, as He yields up His precious life, He has by faith alone to trust in Him whom it has ever been His joy to obey. He is not cheered with clear, bright rays of hope on the right hand nor on the left. All is enshrouded in oppressive gloom. Amid the awful darkness which is felt by sympathizing nature, the Redeemer drains the mysterious cup even to its dregs. Denied even bright hope and confidence in the triumph which will be His in the future, He cries with a loud voice: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." He is acquainted with the character of His Father, with His justice, His mercy, and His great love, and in submission He drops into His hands. Amid the convulsions of nature are heard by the amazed spectators the dying words of the Man of Calvary. **2T 209-211**

14. **1 Cor 1:18**—this realization is what compelled Paul and the early Christians to service; this should compel us today too, to self-denial and service
15. **REASON #2:** God allowed His Son to be crucified that men will have a better idea of the kind of death Jesus died automatically be drawn to Him when His self-emptying love that knows no bound is more perfectly revealed and demonstrated (**John 12:32-33**)

If I Be Lifted Up. . .

1. **John 3:14-16**—the imagery of a serpent being lifted up on the pole is a revelation of the supreme regard Jesus has for fallen man
2. The serpent a most fitting emblem or symbol of the kind of death Jesus died, a cursed death!
3. **Gen 3:14-16**—the serpent as symbol of the curse of sin
4. **Gal 3:3:13**—our curse Christ took upon Himself
5. **Deut 21:22-23**—death by crucifixion, a most hopeless death because it signified God's curse rested upon the individual;
 - a. The pain of Christ's death consisted in experiencing firsthand the eternally hopeless death of the wicked—
6. **Heb 12:2**—says that Jesus sat at the right hand of the Father after enduring all the shame and suffering on the cross
7. **Heb 7:27; Heb 9:28**—Jesus was only offered once!
8. So, all the pain and agony of the cross are all behind Him now, correct? They are nothing but harrowing memories of a distant past?
9. What then did Ellen White mean when she said Jesus dies continually to sin in the heavenly sanctuary?

Christ as high priest within the veil so immortalized Calvary that though He liveth unto God, He **dies continually** to sin, and thus if any man sin, he has an advocate with the Father. **1SM 343**

10. Constant commission of sin requires the constant death to sin of an atoning sacrifice

The typical shadows of the Jewish tabernacle no longer possess any virtue. A daily and yearly typical atonement is no longer to be made, but the atoning sacrifice through a mediator is essential because of the constant commission of sin. Jesus is officiating in the presence of God, offering up His shed blood, as it had been a lamb slain. Jesus presents the oblation offered for every offense and every shortcoming of the sinner. **1SM 343**

11. **Rev 5:6**—John is shown in symbols, what the high priestly intercession of Christ's involves

12. **Heb 5:6-7**—Paul here describes what the work of Jesus as High Priest and Intercessor involves—strong crying and tears

13. And in the words of Ellen White. . .

His intercession is that of a pierced and broken body, of a spotless life. The wounded hands, the pierced side, the marred feet, plead for fallen man, whose redemption was purchased at such infinite cost. **GC 416**

14. Great suffering is involved in the work of Intercession---Why?

15. That the Father may show pity for undeserving people like us (**Eph 4:32; 1 John 2:12; EW 280**)

16. It is the privilege of those who follow Jesus by faith in the heavenly sanctuary to more fully understand the nature of Christ's high priestly work—not just what it means to them in terms of the benefits they get from that work, but also what it cost Jesus to provide those benefits

The intercession of Christ in man's behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross. By His death He began that work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete in heaven. We must by faith enter within the veil, "whither the forerunner is for us entered." Hebrews 6:20. **There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected. There we may gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of redemption. GC 489**

Thou Knowest Not

17. Let us no longer be Laodiceans who know nothing and are self-deceived but our sad spiritual state, but also know nothing about what Jesus is accomplishing in our behalf in the heavenly sanctuary to place us on vantage ground

18. Let us no longer be counted among those who know nothing of the pain and sorrow that work of the high priest in the heavenly sanctuary involves