

# CHRISTADELPHIAN BIBLE POSTAL COURSE



Tutor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Ref No.: \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON 18 • The Cross

WEEKLY READINGS  
READING FOR STUDY PAPER

Exodus 15-20, Malachi 3-4  
Psalm 22, Isaiah 53

A prophecy of the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ

We can read about the sufferings of the Lord Jesus in the Gospels. But we have a fuller picture if we read some of the prophecies of the Old Testament as well.

Turn to Psalm 22. This Psalm helps us to understand how Jesus felt during the crucifixion, "But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, 'He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him'" (verses 6-8).

Not only the pain, but also the shame of being crucified weighed heavily upon Him. Read this Psalm very carefully. Perhaps more than any other words in the Bible, these words help us to appreciate what Jesus went through for us. Look again at verses 15-16, "My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and My tongue cleaveth to My jaws; and Thou hast brought Me into the dust of death. "For dogs have compassed Me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed Me: they pierced My hands and My feet."

Why did Jesus have to suffer so much?

As we think of Jesus hanging on that cross, and remember that He never sinned, but always did those things that pleased God, we ask ourselves, "Why did this have to happen to Jesus?"

One thing is certain: it was the only way by which men could be saved from sin. Jesus had prayed three times to His Father, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." (Though He was careful to add, "Nevertheless not My will, but Thine be done".) If it had been possible, we can be sure that God would have spared His son the agony. But it was the only way.

A fight against sin

But still, we ask, why the suffering and disgrace of the cross? One answer is that as we look at Jesus hanging there, we see what human nature is really worth.

Let us try to explain. Jesus was a human being, just like us; and, just like us, He was constantly tempted to do and say wrong things. We read that He was "...in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews, chapter 4, verse 15) Like us, He was tempted - but, unlike us, He never gave way to temptation. He never gave in to Himself, but always did what God wanted Him to.

Yet He still possessed a nature like ours - a nature that would have led Him into sin if He had not continually fought against it.

By pronouncing the death sentence upon Adam, God showed that - "...the wages of sin is death" (Romans, chapter 6, verse 23).

And by requiring the crucifixion of Jesus, this sinless child of Adam, God demonstrated that human nature at its best is only fit for shame and crucifixion.

Yet the character of Jesus had been faultless. He had never sinned in thought or deed. Because of this, God was able to raise Him to life without breaking the law that said that the wages of sin was death. And so God gave Jesus a new nature - a nature that could never be tempted to sin, and that would never die.

## CHRISTADELPHIAN BIBLE POSTAL COURSE

### The lessons of the cross

Through the death of Jesus on the cross, God showed us how evil we really are by nature. And we must know this before we can even begin to live a life that is pleasing to God.

But there are other impressive lessons. We do well to ponder the fact that the Lord Jesus was an acceptable sacrifice. He was like a lamb without blemish; and God was willing to accept this perfect sacrifice as the offering of all those who believe in Jesus as "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John, chapter 1, verse 29).

Another important lesson is this: the cross of Christ shows the extent to which God's love for us can go. Paul puts it like this: "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Romans, chapter 8, verse 32).

The cross is our way of life, as Paul says in I Corinthians, chapter 1, verse 18, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

### A new life

We are the children of Adam and, like Adam, we prefer our own ways to the ways of God.

But Jesus, when He gave Himself as a sacrifice for sin, made it possible for us to become the children of God.

Jesus said, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke, chapter 9, verse 23).

### We must be crucified with Jesus

We have to crucify our sinful self. Instead of walking in our own sinful ways, we must die to sin, and walk with Christ in newness of life, always preferring God's way to our own. The apostle Paul tells us, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Galatians, chapter 5, verses 24-25).

### Summary

1. Wicked men put Jesus to death by a slow torture called "crucifixion". He was nailed to a cross and left to die.
2. God allowed this to happen, because it was the only way to save us from our sins.
3. It was the only way to make us realise how utterly wicked and deserving of death we are.
4. The Bible tells us to be "crucified with Jesus". This means that our own sinful tendencies must be destroyed.
5. The crucifixion of Jesus also teaches us that, like Jesus, we must try to obey God always, however much it hurts.