

Why Did Jesus Have to Die?

Isaiah 53:4-9

All Stand and Read Scripture

Isaiah 53:4-9

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁴ Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. ⁵ But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. ⁶ All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.

⁷ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth. ⁸ By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered? That He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due? ⁹ His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

The prophets foretold Jesus' death.

From Adam to Jesus, God sent prophets to mankind, warning them of sin's punishment and foretelling of the coming Messiah. Isaiah in this scripture foretold of Christ's death. **He likened the coming Sacrifice to a lamb, slaughtered for the sins of others.**

Hundreds of years later, Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled in the perfect Lord Jesus, born of the virgin Mary. Crowds thronged Him for healing and teaching, but the religious leaders scorned Him. Mobs cried out, "Crucify Him!" Soldiers scourged, beat, mocked, and crucified Him. As Isaiah foretold, Jesus was crucified in between two criminals but was buried in a rich man's tomb. But He didn't remain in the grave. Because God accepted His Lamb's sacrifice, He fulfilled another prophecy by raising Jesus from the dead ([Psalm 16:10](#); [Isaiah 26:19](#)).

Prayer

INTRODUCTION:

Today is Palm Sunday. It is the day that Jesus Christ was on his way to Jerusalem, knowing full well that in one week this trip would end in his sacrificial death for the sin of humanity. He sent two disciples and told them to look for a donkey tied by a house, with its unbroken colt next to it. Jesus instructed the disciples to tell the owners of the animal that "The Lord has need of it."

The men found the donkey, brought it and its colt to Jesus, and placed their cloaks on the colt. Jesus sat on the young donkey and slowly, humbly, made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. In his path, people threw their cloaks on the ground and put palm branches on the road before him. Others waved palm branches in the air.

As we reflect on this "resurrection season" we may ponder, "**Why did Jesus have to die?**" No leader of any other religion ended up getting killed because of his beliefs. Why wouldn't it have been possible for Jesus to spread his message and gain followers like Mohamed and Buddha? Does Christianity only make sense by God deciding that Jesus had to be crucified?" This incredibly important question involves a matter central to Christianity; yet effectively answering it is often difficult for Christians. We will take a careful look at the question and lay out the answers offered in Scripture.

When we ask a question such as this, we must be careful that we are not calling God into question. To wonder why God couldn't find "another way" to do something is to imply that the way He has chosen is not the best course of action and that some other method would be better. Usually what we perceive as a "better" method is one that seems right to us. Before we can come to grips with anything God does, we have to first acknowledge...

Isaiah 55:8-9

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. 9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Also, before we answer the question, "**Why did Jesus have to die?**" it's also important to understand that Jesus clearly understood his mission on earth, and that it involved laying down his life as a sacrifice. In other words, **Jesus knew it was his Father's will for him to die.**

He proves his foreknowledge and understanding of his death in many passages from Scripture:

Mark 10:32-34

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

³² They were on the road going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking on ahead of them; and they were amazed, and those who followed were fearful. And again He took the twelve aside and began to tell them what was going to happen to Him, ³³ saying, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and will hand Him over to the Gentiles. ³⁴ They will mock Him and spit on Him, and scourge Him and kill Him, and three days later He will rise again."

John 10:17-18

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹⁷ For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. ¹⁸ No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

This last verse also explains why it is pointless to blame the Jews or the Romans—or anyone else for that matter, for "**killing**" Jesus. Jesus, having the power to "lay it down" or "take it again," freely gave up his life. It truly doesn't matter "**who**" killed Jesus. The ones who nailed the nails only helped carry out the destiny he came to fulfill by laying down his life on the cross.

Now, on to answering the question, "**Why did Jesus have to die?**"

BODY:

I. Christ had to Die Because Man Sinned.

When God created Adam and Eve, they were perfect in every way and lived in a virtual paradise, the Garden of Eden. God created man in His image, meaning they also had the freedom to make decisions and choices of their own free will. **Genesis 3** goes on to describe how Adam and Eve succumbed to Satan's temptations and lies.

Genesis 3:1-6

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3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not

eat from any tree of the garden?”² The woman said to the serpent, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; ³ but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.’” ⁴ The serpent said to the woman, “You surely will not die! ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶ When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make *one* wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

In doing so, they disobeyed the will of God by eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil from which they were forbidden. This was the first sin committed by man and, as a result, all mankind is subject to both physical and eternal death by virtue of our sinful nature inherited from Adam.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God’s commands, He had to punish them. A judge who pardons law-breakers isn’t a righteous judge. Likewise, overlooking sin would make the holy God unjust. Death is God’s just consequence for sin.

Romans 6:23

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Even good works cannot make up for wrongs against the holy God. When we compare our goodness to God’s righteousness, Isaiah says...

Isaiah 64:6

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁶ For all of us have become like one who is unclean,

And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment;

Ever since Adam’s sin, every human has been guilty of disobeying God’s righteous laws.

Romans 3:23

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

God is Holy

Although God is all merciful, all powerful, and all forgiving, God is also holy, righteous, and just.

Sin and Holiness are Incompatible

Sin entered the world through Adam's disobedience and now all of us are born into this "**sin nature.**"

Romans 5:12

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—

Sin Separates Us from God

God does not sin. Sin cannot exist around Him. Therefore if we have not been forgiven of our sins the punishment is Eternal Death.

Sin's Punishment is Eternal Death

God's holiness and justice demand that sin and rebellion be punished. The only penalty or payment for sin is eternal death.

Romans 5:21

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

²¹ so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

God loves people—but he hates sin, because sin hurts people. God wants everyone to change.

2 Peter 3:9

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁹ The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

II. Christ had to Die Because God Loved Man

Christ's passionate love for us caused him to leave the glory of heaven to take human form and live an obedient life of self-sacrifice required by the holiness of God. Only such a selfless life could produce the pure and innocent blood sacrifice required to cover the sins of those who put their faith in him.

John 3:16

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

16 “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Ephesians 1:4-8

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. **In love** **5** He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, **6** to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. **7** In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace **8** which He lavished on us.

Paul tells us the God, **because of His love for us**, was willing to send His son to earth. Christ was willing to suffer because of His love for us. Christ's time on earth was **directed by the purpose of God** and was **lived in dependence on the presence of God**. Jesus declared that every word that he said was given to him by the Father who commanded him what to say and how to say it.

John 12:49

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

49 For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment *as to what to say and what to speak*.

Every thought, word and action of Jesus was given to him by the Father.

The Father's will resulted in a life whose purpose was the cross. Jesus was dedicated to accomplish the requirements foretold by prophecies and the will of the Father. In **Matthew 4:8-9**, the devil offered Jesus the kingdoms of the world in exchange for his worship. This offer represented a way for Jesus to establish his kingdom on earth without the cross. It may have seemed like an easy short cut, but Jesus was passionate to accomplish the exact plan of the Father and so rejected it.

III. Christ had to Die Because Man Needed Atonement for Sin

God declared that all who sin will die, both physically and spiritually. This is the fate of all mankind.

Although God banished Adam and Eve from the garden, He didn't leave them without hope of heaven.

The Law of Moses provided a way for the people to be considered "sinless" or "right" in God's eyes—the offering of animals sacrificed for every sin they committed. These sacrifices were only temporary, though, and were really a foreshadowing of the perfect, once-for-all sacrifice of Christ on the cross.

The Day of Atonement (or Yom Kippur) was the only time during the year when the high priest would enter the Holy of Holies in the innermost chamber of the Temple (or Tabernacle) to make atonement for the sins of all Israel. Atonement literally means "covering." The purpose of the sacrifice was to bring reconciliation between man and God (or "at-onement" with God) by covering the sins of the people.

The observance of the Day of Atonement is recorded in the Old Testament book of [Leviticus 16:8-34; 23:27-32](#).

The Tabernacle and the Temple gave a clear picture of how sin separates us from the holiness of God. In Bible times, only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies by passing through the heavy veil that hung from ceiling to floor, creating a barrier between the people and the presence of God. Once a year on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest would enter and offer a blood sacrifice to cover the sins of the people. However, at the very moment when Jesus died on the cross, [Matthew 27:51](#) says,

[Matthew 27:51](#)

[New American Standard Bible \(NASB\)](#)

[51 And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split.](#)

When the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D., the Jewish people could no longer present the required sacrifices on the Day of Atonement, so it came to be observed as a day of repentance, self-denial, charitable works, prayer and fasting.

[Hebrews chapters 8 and 9](#) beautifully explain how Jesus Christ became our High Priest and entered heaven (the Holy of Holies), once and for all, not by the blood of sacrificial animals, but by his own precious blood on the cross. Christ himself was the atoning sacrifice for our sins; thus, he obtained for us eternal redemption! As believers we accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of the Day of Atonement, the final atonement for sin.

This is why Jesus came and why He died, to become the ultimate and the final sacrifice, the perfect (without blemish) sacrifice for our sins.

Hebrews 7:26-27

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

²⁶ For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; ²⁷ who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the *sins* of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered

Remember, the holy God cannot let sin go unpunished. To bear our own sins would be to suffer God's judgment apart from Him for eternity. Praise God, He kept His promise to send and sacrifice the perfect Lamb to bear the sins of those who trust in Him. Jesus had to die because He is the only one who can pay the penalty for our sins.

IV. Christ had to Die to Reconcile Us to God

When mankind sinned we were separated from God. Christ died on the cross to reconcile us back to God. **Reconcile means to repair a broken relationship.** Through Him, the promise of life eternal with God becomes effective through faith to those who believe in Jesus.

God's people in the Old Testament looked forward to the Messiah that would save them from their sin. Although he did not come in the form they expected, still, their faith, which looked **forward** to his salvation, saved them. Our faith, which looks **backward** to his act of salvation, saves us.

Surrender Yourself to God

But, reconciliation comes with a cost. You must surrender yourself to Christ. Let Him be your Lord and Master.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? ²⁰ For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

Christ has set an example on how to live for him. When we accept Christ as our Lord and Savior we experience a spiritual birth that results in the indwelling

presence of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, believers have everything needed to live a dedicated life for Christ.

Mark 10:43-45

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁴³ But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; ⁴⁴ and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

A Love Relationship

First and foundational to everything else is the importance of building a love relationship with Christ.

Deuteronomy 6:5

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

Philippians 4:8

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

The more God is experienced, the more your mind will dwell on him and with him. This produces ever increasing praise, worship and thoughts of God that translate into actions that express love and seek to honor him.

CONCLUSION:

Question: "Why Did Jesus Have to Die?"

In Summary:

- I. Man sinned and separated himself from God.
- II. God loved us and wanted to provide a way back to Him.
- III. God offered His Son on the cross to die for our sins.
- IV. We are reconciled to God by His grace when we surrender our lives to Him.

What Isaiah wrote, Jesus fulfilled. He laid down his life for his sheep. In his death, he carried our sins and suffered for our sins; he was punished so that we might have a restored relationship with God. Through his suffering and death, our spiritual illness is healed; we are justified, accepted by God.

When we are "in Christ Jesus" we are covered by his blood through his sacrificial death, our sins are paid for, and we no longer have to die an eternal death. We receive eternal life though Jesus Christ. And this is **why Jesus had to die.**

Jesus Himself said:

John 14:6

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁶ Jesus *said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

In this statement, Jesus declares the reason for His birth, death and resurrection—to provide the way to heaven for sinful mankind, who could never get there on their own.

If you do not know Christ as your personal Savior, the window of opportunity is open for you now. God wants to come into your life. If you have not been baptized into Christ, won't you come forward this morning and let God know that you are ready to turn your life around for Him and start obeying His commands?

If you have wandered away from the Lord and the Holy Spirit is convicting you this morning to come back home, the invitation is open to you to rededicate your life to Christ by stepping forward.

We are also here with open arms, if you would like to identify yourself as part of this family of God in the Greenwood Christian church.

The Family of God

I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God.
I've been washed in the fountain, cleansed by His blood!
Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod,
For I'm part of the family, the family of God.