

He Poured Out His Soul Unto Death



By RT Nusbaum

“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. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”
(Isaiah 53:10-12)

It seems that the writer of the above passage is seeking to bring forth two main aspects. One of them is in relationship to crucifixion and the sufferings that will be experienced through this cruel tool. For the believer, this suffering involves what people will put you through if Christ is your life. It is remarkable how those sufferings will line up with the similarities of what actual crucifixion is like as described in Isaiah and in the Gospels. Action taken against the believer will follow along the lines of what Jesus experienced when He was crucified.

The second main aspect our passage of scripture brings out is in relation to how the soul is to react to crucifixion. Human reaction is very different to that of the Son of God. Of Him Isaiah said that *“he hath poured out his soul unto death”*. During the crisis of the Cross the soul will either be poured out or it will be freaked out and disturbed. Only by close scrutiny of the scriptures will we find the answers during the trial of rejection because of ones embrace of the Cross.

The prophet Isaiah, in the 53rd chapter of his book, begins to describe the fact that Jesus Christ was going to suffer and die for mankind. So much of this chapter is very descriptive of what actual crucifixion did to the Lamb of God. Many who delve in to the events surrounding the crucifixion are deeply impressed with the length and depth of suffering Jesus went through in terms of physical brutality.

However, in the verses presented above, the writer opens to us a new area pertaining to crucifixion about which little is spoken. It involves the sufferings in relation to the soul. In those verses Isaiah makes three statements concerning the soul as it pertained to crucifixion. First he stated, *“thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin”*. There is an awakening that begins to emerge concerning the soul being involved in the offering for sin. The next statement says, *“He shall see of the travail of his soul”*. The word “travail” is a very powerful word. It denotes deep pains from within that are uncontrolled and come with much pressure. And finally it is said, *“he hath poured out his soul unto death”*. Here we find the definitive statement. Jesus’ death was not simply measured in terms of the physical realm. As we shall see, crucifixion has built into it a tremendous measure of suffering to the soul.

To discover how it was that Jesus poured out His soul, we must examine the events of the crucifixion. However, the concept of crucifixion, as seen in this booklet, is not restricted to the acts that took place on and around the day Christ was crucified. What we want to specifically take into consideration are the sufferings that involve a death on the part of the one crucified concerning human reactions, both internally and externally. It is here that we will discover the reality of the soul being poured out unto death. As one might imagine, this aspect of death might be more excruciating than the physical aspects.

One reason for this is because it involves giving up our rights to the will of “unreasonable men”. At the same moment, it also involves the lack of retaliation against those who do the crucifying. It was in the process of crucifixion that Jesus was falsely accused, insulted, mocked, humiliated, spurned, and had His rights trampled upon. All gain in the earth in terms of friendships, honor, reputation, and acceptance were shattered as Christ was “numbered with the transgressors”. So, to find the true meaning of pouring the soul out unto death, we must take a new look at crucifixion and its effect on the one slain by it.

Crucifixion And Its Effect On The Soul

Because the use of crucifixion as a means of punishment has been so long removed from mankind as a method of dealing with criminals, I fear much of its true meaning and effects have also left us. Therefore, when Paul himself says, “*I am crucified with Christ*” we again fail to grasp the implications. The approach that I would like to take in this material concerning crucifixion pertains to two different areas. One is the mental and emotional effect it would have on one who is being crucified and the other is the benefit it has for all those who are enemies to the one being crucified. We may feel that a study of the effects of crucifixion are an exercise in futility for today since there is no fear of actually facing an actual crucifixion. While we may never face actual crucifixion we may experience its effects in the realm of experiencing the sufferings of Christ. Jesus tells us to take up the Cross daily. In other words, the spiritual implications of crucifixion have a bearing upon us today as we partake of the sufferings of Christ.

When some people think of the Cross they get very sentimental as they meditate on the love-produced suffering of our Lord for us. It is from this warm feeling toward the Cross that great hymns and songs have sprung such as: “The Old Rugged Cross”, etc. Therefore, when someone talks about the “offense of the Cross” sometimes we are confused. Why would the Cross be an offense? Or we may read scriptures that speak of fellowshiping in Jesus’ sufferings but I wonder if the true meaning of those sufferings is realized. The scriptures also talk about our being crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20). But have we ever considered the implications of that beyond just doctrinally accepting the fact of that or

reckoning on it? There is an old saying that fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

In Galatians 5:11 Paul writes, *“And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? Then is the offence of the cross ceased”*. When Paul wrote these words he was under attack. His message was being criticized. One reason the Cross is offensive is because of the manner of the death of the Cross. Sadly, familiarity with the subject of the crucifixion can dull us to the horror and offense of the death of Christ. Because the Cross of Jesus sounds so familiar to our ears, we are in danger of forgetting just how dreadful it was. This is because we make crosses as ornaments and as jewelry. Perhaps we should wear an emblem such as a hangman's noose - for that is what the Cross is a symbol of - shameful execution.

Crucifixion Was A Criminal's Death

In Jesus' day, death by crucifixion had a terrible stigma to it. This form of punishment was reserved for the worst criminals. The victim was totally degraded in his naked, vulnerable shame. It was an offensive thing, not just to the one crucified but to the public. This gives you some small idea of how offensive to the Jewish leaders was the idea that the Messiah would suffer crucifixion instead of being offered on some honorable altar in the Temple.

The very notion that the Messiah of God would be asked to carry such a stigma was unacceptable. To some, such teaching would seem blasphemous. The Messiah would never be allowed to undergo such indignity and suffering. God would never allow it. Some modern day believers think that God is against anything that would bring pain. God is powerful enough to stop such actions against His Son but would not do so if crucifixion was all part of the plan.

But God using crucifixion as His means causes some unusual problems. This method of death has no honor or beauty connected with it. Death by the cross is designed for one purpose and that is to remove from society the worst human scum! Therefore it is very difficult to look at the act of people rising up and putting away a perverse deceiver as anything other than what it appears. If that were to happen to Jesus, no one would see a sinner; no one would see a Lamb. Consider this in light of Paul stating that, of his own self, “I am crucified with Christ”. If this same spirit of crucifixion was at work in Paul then he too would be considered as if he were a criminal and a transgressor. Any circumstances where people accused Paul and rose up to put him away would easily miss the fact that the Lamb Himself may be laying down His life within the body of Paul. Of himself, Paul stated, “I bear about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus.” The advantage of having your opponent hung on a cross is that a mob could easily appear righteous while the person hanging there

was seen as a punished criminal.

Benefits To His Enemies

So we can see that, just the act of being one chosen for crucifixion puts that person in a bad light. However, that is not the only fact that comes to light. Crucifixion also works in the favor of those doing the crucifying. In the case of Jesus, His enemies were long trying to disprove His teaching and disavow His Messiahship and Sonship. It was a very difficult task. Every time they would try to present Him in a bad light to the people, God would do something on His behalf that drew the people's hearts back to Jesus. Every miracle and act of kindness became a tremendous obstacle that Satan, the Pharisees, and the enemies of Jesus had to overcome. After much consideration the Jewish council decided that crucifixion would be the perfect answer to their dilemma. The first benefit would be that it would remove Jesus by putting Him to death. But, maybe just as importantly, it would display Him as a reprobate and vile person for, crucifixion was a criminal's death. What I mean is, crucifixion would not only kill Jesus but would make Him appear as a malefactor that had to be put away for the good of society.

Remember that crucifixion was not just a horrible death -- it was a criminal's death. Crucifixion would be their proof that Jesus was not who He said He was. By one act of crucifixion, all questions are brought home to one conclusion: No matter what He has said or done in the past, He is seen openly as the shameful person and vile criminal that He is and death will shortly remove any remembrance of his existence from us. With His crucifixion all questions as to if there was any validity to His ministry are answered. Let the fact of crucifixion speak loud and clear and let all men acknowledge its message concerning the criminal that has died here.

Crucifixion Hides The Meaning And The Beauty

How powerful is the tool of crucifixion as a means of persuading the people concerning who Jesus really was. If Jesus had died on the holy altar within the Temple, Israel might have considered that He was a lamb and His death had holy significance. But He died on a Roman cross. He appeared as a criminal among criminals. The Cross was a brilliant stroke for the enemies of Jesus. Hanging on a Roman cross at Golgotha, no one sees a sinner.

The spirit of crucifixion has been used by the enemies of the people of God for centuries. And during that same time God also has continued to require that, those who are truly His will pour out their soul unto death also. There is a shame that must be borne. If you search in the Book of Ezekiel you will find that the prophet Ezekiel was required to bear the shame of

the situation in place of the people who deserved to be shamed. This same pattern can be found throughout the Bible. It is part of the process. How else would the people ever be drawn to the true and living God?

The Bible tells us that if Jesus is lifted up on the Cross then all men will be drawn (John 12:32). The shame that should be exposed concerning them is put upon the one being “crucified”. The one who is being crucified with Christ is not just dying for his own failure but suffering to hide the secret motives and all the sins that the crucifier’s want hidden about themselves.

Crucifixion Works To Discredit The Crucified And Benefit the Crucifiers

As has been already stated, the Cross is a stroke of genius on the part of the enemies of God. It greatly benefits those doing the crucifying in many ways. As we shall see below, crucifixion not only fully discredits the one being crucified but it provides a platform for the enemies of the Lamb to release their venom and hatred. The shame heaped upon the one being crucified is unparalleled. To be humbled is one thing but there is humiliation by crucifixion that is unmatched. Let us examine some of the benefits crucifixion has to the enemies of Christ and to what degree the soul must be poured out.

(1.) Loss Of All Spiritual Credibility

On the Cross, those who might have thought they were raised up of God to establish something glorious, lost all hope as they are seen to be a seducer. All spiritual credibility is removed. Jesus was publicly led around bound while those who truly deserved such treatment were allowed to go free. The Lord’s face was bruised, bloody, and so marred so as if to say, “This is the true face of the man you followed; now you see the beast for what He is.” If you looked, there was no beauty and nothing to draw you out to Him.

If there was ever anything seen in that face that could illicit compassion or love -- it was now gone. His appearance was such that people turned their face away to avoid the sight of Him. Those who walk by sight might say, “How could I have been so blind and easily deceived as to follow THIS man?”

Even heaven seems to confirm your guilt and God's displeasure toward you. This is seen in the fact that the earth goes dark and that there is no sign given from God concerning His true state before Him. There is only silence. Jesus Himself seems to confirm to all the people by His words that He is a reprobate when He cries, *“My God, my God. Why hast thou forsaken me?”*

(2.) Old Institutions Appear Credible

All of the religious leaders had declared Jesus to be a deceiver. The tribunal met and death was decided for Him. All was legal. Who would question that they were not working for the sincere good of all? If they commanded that He be beaten with stripes, who would not suppose that something came out in the trial of which are not privy but clearly declares His guilt. We can trust their desire to “not make all the details known”. After all, they were a long and trusted institution and Jesus’ ministry was short lived.

He appeared for three years and was gone but the established institutions that had been around for ages would continue right along. Crucifixion seemed to show all men that which was lasting and permanent as opposed to that which was here for a short time but soon faded away.

(3.) Hands And Feet Are Nailed Down

One major advantage for the enemies of the Crucified One is that the hands and feet are nailed down. It can appear to the public that this is necessary in order to limit the vicious attacks, which might have come from them if they were not secured. The Pharisees worked long and hard in order to get Jesus on that cross. They probably knew that His hands did not need to be secured for He had never struck anyone during His ministry.

But with His hands nailed, they no longer have to concern themselves with any healings that may tend to persuade others of His innocence or prove that God was His source. They are grateful that those hands will no more be outstretched to the needy and hurting. The nails ensured that the victim would not escape so that this would truly be the end of the matter.

Jesus had been such a problem for them that you would assume that they would have opted for some form of death that killed Jesus instantly. In this way it would all be over with quickly and they could get back to their religious lives. If there was the thought of escape, instantaneous death would be preferred so as to end it without fear of the ordeal continuing. But, as long as they know there is no possibility of escape then the nails bring much peace and allow for the enjoyment of putting the one being crucified through a slow death. They could smite the one being crucified with no fear but with full confidence that the hands and feet were secure and that they were free from retribution.

(4.) Crucifixion Makes You More Vulnerable

For the one being crucified, death is eminent; the hands and feet are secured and the body is weakened as thirst gnaws at the mouth and throat. Who better to attack than one

that is reduced to such a state? Who would fear to lash out at Him? The soldier with full armor and spear can appear brave and bold before the people as he shoves a spear into the side of such a beast (one chosen for crucifixion). Because of the manner of crucifixion, the soldier does not appear as a coward attacking a harmless Lamb, but as a defender of the peace and well-being of the nation. The spear thrust into the side can be met with applause and approval by on-lookers who later pat him on the back for his stand against the vile element that would infect their happy community.

Another advantage is that the victim is hung high so that nothing is hidden. The situation concerning Jesus' trial is open and made public, not just to those who were closely involved over the issues but so all of the city may be made aware. Their conclusions concerning the issues will fall along the lines of the fact that Jesus was crucified and therefore must have been one who pawned Himself off as someone sent from God. News will be spread far and wide and people who never met Jesus will be informed that He was a fraud and a man worthy of crucifixion.

Crucifixion, as opposed to other means of death, becomes a public spectacle. People who know nothing of the real issues surrounding the event can join in and act as if they are in "the know". Part of the joy of this kind of death is that, not just the immediate enemies, but even those who are simply passing by can laugh, mock, and feel a part of a great event whereby mankind is putting out of society more riff-raff. Because crucifixion was reserved for only the worst criminals, all automatically assume that the one being slain is an element that is best removed from society. The whole community can be drawn closer and feel more righteous concerning themselves. The thought is: "There hangs the lowest of the low and at least we have not fallen to such depths. We can rejoice that by means of this crucifixion, a little more evil is removed from our world and we are drawn in accord (compare Luke 23:12 about Pilate and Herod), a little more together."

(5.) Ongoing Shame Instead Of A Quick End

The Cross employs an opportunity for those who are enemies to gloat, berate, and satisfy their desire for vengeance and malice. It was not just an execution but it allowed for the enemies of the one crucified to unleash their desire for revenge and show their disgust for the victim.

Crucifixion also involves bearing open shame before all people in that area for a period of time before final death is achieved. While in the process of dying, the one crucified is exposed to mocking and railing from others. While in your most vulnerable state, you are made an object of ridicule. This is a feature left out of most other kinds of death. It just never seems to be over with. You are a dying man but there is no dignity in this death for you are made a laughing stock.

The lingering, defenseless death was a delight to scorners and mockers in particular. Shame could be heaped upon another while you witnessed not only the pain of death but of the cruel arrows being hurled. This "kind" of people greatly appreciated crucifixion as the chosen tool and its prolonged agony. Death is not enough for them. That could leave one unsatisfied. Crucifixion almost seems a god-send, for it releases and relieves its accusers in wondrous ways. Oh the joy of nails, crown of thorns, lashes, and a spear wound! It affords one the opportunity to watch, drop by drop, as the life of its victim slowly drains out toward death. It gives one the pleasure of enjoying the death.

In Jesus' case, the shame was not just on Himself but spread across to His own mother, who is required to view all of this with no explanation while she weeps before Him, hearing the derision and mockery. Crucifixion is cruel and those who resort to it should know that many innocent people will be pierced through and hurt in ways that the crucifiers cannot imagine.

(6.) Restricts Justification And Retaliation

We have already seen how, for the victim, crucifixion was an excruciating death that was not instantaneous but drug out. This allowed for ample time to be given to mockery and derision. The advantage that crucifixion brings is that your wind is restricted so that utterances from the Cross are few. Other means might have allowed the one dying to verbally retaliate or even give persuasive justifications.

On the Cross, all air is needed for breathing with little strength left for conversations. If things are going to be said from the Cross they had better be words of spiritual importance and not wasted on defending itself.

On the Cross accusations could be hurled at you and your silence on the matter could easily be read by the multitudes as guilt. You were not in a court where you could answer your accusers. You were weak and defenseless. For most in Israel, determination of guilt had already been settled by the fact that they put you on a cross. There would be no time given for personal explanations of the issues for now was the time for open scorn by anyone with malice in their heart while the one crucified simply must take it.

This is beyond being made of no reputation -- this is allowing the very worst reputation to be put on you with no defense. That's what "obedient unto death" means for it is "even the death of the Cross." It was not just being obedient enough to physically die (Philippians 2:8). Never forget that one who was exalted on high and worshiped as equal with God, by His own choice, exposed Himself to a death that was without retaliation and with no hint to His persecutors of His former status and true identity in heaven. On the Cross Jesus

relinquished all vestiges of something honorable and of God. This is the mind that we are to "let" be in us (Philippians 2:5).

(7.) Releases Rage Over Betrayal

We know that the Pharisees and leaders did not believe in Jesus as the Messiah. The Romans clearly were not convinced that Jesus was God's Son. In one sense, all of these had a right to spit out cursing toward Jesus on the Cross. But there was another group who was deeply affected by the events of crucifixion – the multitudes that had followed Him. The picture that the crucifixion painted for them was that of a rogue minister who had perpetrated a great deception upon them. To them, it appeared that every credible person in Israel had identified Jesus as a malefactor. Their reaction, when they saw Jesus hanging on the Cross, was one of rage and anger which broke out into spitting upon Him. They were enraged that they had put their trust in one who had betrayed that trust. They were angry at Him for carrying them along FOR SO LONG in this grand illusion. They responded with every reaction a person normally would respond with pertaining to betrayal and feelings of being used. Jesus' soul deeply suffered as He saw person after person turn on Him and listened to their hurt reactions to what they assumed He had done to them. Yet, He poured out His soul unto death.

What View Of Crucifixion Are We Presenting?

Though the picture we have painted above concerning crucifixion is horrible, yet this is the Christ or Messiah that Paul preached -- Christ crucified. Who would choose such a way? Who would follow One who is so exposed to open ridicule? Who would even want to listen to such a message -- much less give your life to it? This was the dilemma the first century disciples faced when telling the people that their Messiah died on a Cross. To avoid the stigma of the crucifixion many preachers and pastors ignore presenting **the means of death** (the Cross) and only focus on **the fact of death**. In so doing, they dwell on the more noble things of death such as Jesus giving His life that others might live. The vile realities of crucifixion could be eradicated so that more of the congregation might embrace the concept. But Paul would not preach simply the fact that Christ died for us, but he preached Christ crucified.

Think about this! Christ crucified is not just sharing the message of a crucified Christ but speaks of the Lamb nature that would bear such offense without retaliation. It also alludes to the fact that this same spirit of self-giving would be reproduced in us. For Paul to openly declare that He preached such a Christ would associate him with the same shame and offense that the Cross of that time period represented. It was commonly known that to be in relationship with a criminal who was put away in such manner would immediately cause

people to turn away. But Paul saw the deep significance of embracing being crucified with Christ. He also saw the wisdom behind God presenting this gospel veiled within such a shroud as a crucifixion.

To that generation who first heard the gospel, there immediately would be an understanding that to receive this Christ and this Gospel would also involve receiving the rejection, shame, and offence that was so commonly associated with crucifixion. In today's modern preaching, that emphasis has been ignored. A noble martyrdom with dignity is a greater rallying point than the specter of a shame-filled and mob-controlled death. In appearance, the death of the Cross is not a death for a great cause but the carrying out of the punishment on one on whom it is obviously deserved.

The Cross hangs between heaven and earth. John quoted Jesus as saying, *"If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me"*. Our interpretation of His words is very important. Are we simply lifting Jesus up in a glorious worship service by raising our hands and singing to Him? No, Jesus gives His own meaning: *"This spake he of the manner of death he should die"*. According to Jesus, the only radical drawing method is one of open shame and defenseless death. How many ministers care THIS MUCH for drawing of the masses? In the eyes of the masses, it is a place of total rejection and of confirmed and assured guilt of the Crucified One.

How easy it is to avoid the more problematic aspects of the gospel. If the goal of the modern minister is to receive the honor of men and the promotion of the masses then he might well avoid the way of the Lamb, who was crucified in weakness and raised by the Father.

To truly draw men to Jesus will require us to bear about in our own bodies the dying of the Lord and through this means we will find the path to fruitfulness is bound up in the way of the Cross. As His death works in us we should be prepared to experience the same offense that crucifixion represented from the very beginning.

The Hope Of The Holy Spirit

For the Crucified the only hope now lay with the Holy Spirit. The only hope is found in the arrival of the invisible Person of the Holy Spirit. He would establish all again, but on a higher basis than personal work and reputation among men based on earth events. Somehow, out of the presentation of THIS Lamb, God confirms that drawing will happen. It does not happen as a result of becoming more credible but when considered a malefactor. This is when the Holy Spirit does His deepest work among mankind. It is not just a matter of presenting the crucifixion in the right light; it is a matter of the Holy Spirit joining us unto

this same Lamb by union (Revelation 21:9). In other words, the Holy Spirit does not just want to reveal the spirit of the Lamb through His Cross, but impart into us through union that same nature.

We are not just privileged to believe on the Lamb of God but to suffer with Him in like manner. Christ is not just given as our life in order to live victoriously but so that we might exhibit His same spirit when we encounter situations of crucifixion. In this way we can understand more clearly the spiritual reality of crucifixion and our place to bear His nature when situations of offense and shame come to us.

Peter says that this too is our calling: *“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously”* (I Peter 2:21-23).

“Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing” (I Peter 3:8-9).

Will We Suffer Outside the Camp With Him?

Jesus clearly declares that the servant is not greater than His lord. There is an identification with the Lamb that brings us into a fellowship with what He suffered. Israel, when in Egypt, was intimately involved with preparing the lamb of sacrifice (Exodus 12:3-10). Of necessity, there had to be a lamb prepared for each household. It was in the preparations that each family saw exactly what befell the lamb. Jesus is the Lamb of God. Just as the Israelites in Egypt, He tells us to eat His flesh and drink His blood. For Israel, salvation in the land of Egypt was by blood, but departure from that land was obtained by eating the Lamb. The Lamb eaten would provide the inward strength necessary to make the journey. However, the requirement of eating the Lamb had certain stipulations. The Lamb could not be eaten raw or “sodden” which meant boiled or watered down. It had to be roasted with fire. By taking THIS Lamb within, they were not just finding Him as strength for the tasks ahead but were assimilating the nature of the Crucified One into their being.

Many only want the Lamb to deliver them from what ails them. They don’t mind the death of the Lamb as long as they don’t have to eat it. It is considered eating the Lamb raw or watered down when one identifies with the death but avoids identifying with being roasted. Some will accept a certain degree of suffering for Jesus but they run from the fire of

crucifixion and the pouring out of the soul unto death. To eat the lamb watered down may still be lamb but it is not the prescribed crucified Lamb. We don't mind being the flesh or Body of the Lamb as long as that means that we get to live victoriously. Yes, that Lamb was chosen of God but then it was killed and finally it was roasted. Fire speaks of the lingering death involved in crucifixion. We have seen how crucifixion doesn't just allow for the killing of the person but allows them to live long enough to be roasted also.

There is another factor. The Lamb of crucifixion was eaten but it was eaten at night, which represents the darkest hour on earth. Believers are all too ready to celebrate resurrection morning but how many will go with Him through crucifixion night?

How deep does this death go? Consider that the whole Lamb was to be eaten but if something remained, it was to be burned up. This speaks, not just of death, but of a complete and thorough end. What was roasted is now taken beyond that and is now burned up. The fires of reviling and rejection burn to the core of the sacrifice. It is THIS LAMB that we have eaten and become one with. What He was outwardly FOR US, He now becomes inwardly IN US. If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him.

Experiencing The Fire Of Reproach

Those who have eaten and become one with the Lamb can expect to be rejected by fellow-believers. The Gospel of John begins with the fact that, "*He came unto His own but His own received Him not*" (John 1:11). As far as His motivations, Jesus came as the Prince of Peace and yet this was the One they didn't receive. There have been Christians who have been honored with the Nobel Peace Prize but this would never be offered to Jesus. This Lamb must be roasted.

David also knew what it was like to be hated, reviled, and hunted by his own. Saul, instead of ridding Israel of the dreaded Philistines, spent all his time and energy trying to destroy David. Likewise, Joseph was not only rejected by his brothers but they beat him, took what was precious to him, threw him into a pit, and then sold him to foreigners to advance their own financial status. All those who have partaken of His life have also partaken of His sufferings.

One thing we can be sure of today, the world is just the same as it was back then. When Christ is identified in any vessel, all hell will come against Him. Back then it was said of Jesus that he was demon possessed or was "beside himself", meaning that He was a lunatic. If the Lamb is your life, you too will be roasted.

However, there is a way to avoid all of this. Instead of identifying with the Lamb, you

can identify with the world. The goal of worldly Christians is to find wide acceptance. Jesus said, *“Woe unto you when all men speak well of you”* (Luke 6:26). If your goal is to please men and to gain reputation then you will not *“follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth”* (Revelation 14: 4). Jesus had words to say to those who proceeded this way. He said, *“How can you have faith who receive honor from one another and do not seek the honor that comes from God”* (John 5:44).

Closeness With The Lamb

Many people want to get close to Jesus. What they fail to realize fully is that Jesus is the Lamb of God. Before we will ever really get close to Him we will have to become one with Him. Most have no perception of the pain and rejection that will be entered into if they pursue closeness with Him. The early stages of wanting to “get close to Jesus” are usually filled with romantic concepts of lying in His arms and hearing things from His heart that He would tell no one else. Their desire for greater closeness to Him is based on the beauty of what they believe will be attained for themselves.

There are many that read the gospels but hardly realize the suffering Jesus is enduring. They think He is so spiritual that nothing really hurt Him. He deeply felt hurt, pain and rejection or else He would not have been called *“a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief”* (Isaiah 53:3). Many times all we become aware of, in terms of suffering, is that of tiredness and thirst and miss all the things the first part of this book presented. Our eyes become more open to such things when we become hunted by those who claim they are God’s people and vicious slander is spread with the goal of destroying your life.

So what specifically does it mean to get close to the Lamb? Jesus tells us to count the cost but in order to do so we must be aware of what it is that we will face. To understand what “pouring out the soul unto death” will result in, we must take another look at Jesus’ life, but this time in light of how it will affect us when put in similar circumstances.

In His walk on this earth Jesus was constantly being misread and misunderstood by people. With those misunderstandings came rejection and a sense of being alone. The following scriptures give you examples of this division being a regular part of Jesus’ life here on earth (Matthew 13:53-58; Mark 3:1-6; Luke 4:14-30). People’s reaction to Him at times resulted in belittling Him with insulting comments (Matthew 27:39-44; Matthew 26:27-31). However, misunderstandings not only happened with the world at large but also with those who should have known Him, including family and friends (Mark 3:13-35; Mark 8:13-39; Luke 2:41-52; Luke 22:14-38).

With His heart full of love, Jesus reached out to men only to have His love rejected (Luke

14:1-6,16-24; Matthew 23:37-39). He had to continue when there seemed to be little lack of emotional support (Luke 22:39-46 and 54-62). We have examples over and over of people not believing Him and openly resisting what He said (Mark 5:35-43). Some people assumed evil or would not stand by Him in the hard times therefore they deserted Him (Matthew 26:55,56; John 6:63-66). It even resulted in betrayal by Jesus' so called "friend" (Luke 22:47,48; Luke 23:13-25).

The Key Is Found In How We Handle Suffering

What is necessary for you to get close to the Lamb? What would it take for you to be labeled as "a man of sorrows" as Jesus was? To fully answer these questions it might be good to read through this booklet again but this time projecting yourself into the situations. They involve horrendous times that are filled with spiritual nightmares. But the highest question involved here is not whether we will go through such things "for Jesus". The real key is found in how we handle "*the hour and power of darkness*" by means of the spirit of the Lamb. In other words, it is a question of our willingness to remain in oneness with the Lamb through the hour and power of darkness. We should be dedicated not just to suffer for Him, but as His Body to bear and express His dying in order that once again life might work in others. Then, all that we experience will come as the result of union with Christ and our decision to abide in Him even through deep trials.

Jesus not only went through terrible roasting by fire but also handled His grief and hurt in a manner that glorified God and didn't violate His nature. It is one thing to consider what Jesus went through at crucifixion but it is another thing to respond to those things the way Jesus did. His responses are held in even higher esteem when we realize that Jesus had the power, as the Son of God, to destroy His enemies. He had all the power of heaven at His disposal.

If revenge had of been an issue with Him then His enemies should have stood in fear and trembling instead of spitting on Him and mocking. He did not let bitterness, pain or grief dictate His words. He stated, "*Father forgive them for they know not what they do*" while in the greatest moment of rejection and shame.

Jesus returned love for hatred, blessing for cursing and kindness for harshness. We can preach to others concerning how Jesus responded but what God would really want is for us to express that same nature when we are being "roasted". To respond this way will require more than believing in the Lamb; it will require becoming a partaker of the divine nature (II Peter 1:4).

Crucifixion Requires Having The Right Nature

We have discussed the terrible nature of what crucifixion entails. We have seen how deeply Christ suffered, not just in terms of the physical but in the soul. Jesus poured out His soul unto death. Then we noted that those who were one with Him would also experience fellowship in His sufferings. At times we may pour out our souls, but is it in the spirit of His death? Because of oneness with the Lamb there can be a uniting into the very spirit of His sufferings. Those who do partake of His death through union will handle those sufferings in a right spirit, which is what makes this sacrifice so different. We have just noted that handling those sufferings in the right spirit is what makes this sacrifice so different. Now we must see that only His nature in us will be able to rightly traverse through such a painful process.

Obviously this kind of lifestyle runs contrary to human nature. It is natural for man to fight back and to resist all attempts to place blame back on self for things it might not had done. But the new birth has replaced our natural human nature with that of Christ. He who was this way during the Incarnation is yet this way within His new Body, which is us. If you accept the way of the Cross, it means that you must be willing to let the Holy Spirit tie your tongue (Isaiah 53:7). If you do speak, it will not be in the same tone as the accusers. In your pain, your mind will not want to accept the humiliation, and will not desire to let the other people get away with the insults and gossip. But to accept crucifixion in this way means that we can not be content with the usual response for, what we want is to manifest our union with the Lamb. The way of crucifixion involves accepting criticism gracefully even though our humanity may want to react with retaliation. Jesus in us responds with the same words that He did long ago under similar circumstances: *"Not my will but thine be done"*. Your dependence is no longer upon yourself but upon the Lamb nature inside.

Death Is Required Of You

A person may wonder how he can move from his normal human reactions unto the spirit of the Lamb. A man who is pretending to be dead will eventually rise up and react. His nature will not automatically come forth as long as we are reacting to injustice and maltreatment. Death is required of you. The answer lies in the fact that physical death moves a person from this world to the next. In the same manner, true union in His death and resurrection will transport you from the realm of your nature to the realm of Jesus' nature.

Once you begin to function with Christ as your life then His viewpoints concerning the situation begin to overtake you. The things that seemed so important before concerning religious reputation, worldly goods, and relationships not founded on eternal principles are

no longer ripped from your hands but are laid down to the glory of God. The things of the earth realm go through death, not one day when you die but now as you are made conformable unto His death.

There is no way to express in words how that, what once was your worst nightmare has become the highest and brightest point in your life. The circumstances have not changed but how you view them has. You comprehend that your place is to die and to do it graciously. Paul said, *“Death works in me but life in you”*. As you bear the death of the situation by the life of Christ within, others will eventually experience the resurrection benefits. The spirit of that death has allowed for a greater release of the life of Christ in the earth. Whatever glory you might have sought to bring to God before the time of crucifixion is as nothing compared to what is now to be released. But God’s greatest glory is not found in the resurrection and all its benefits but His greatest glory comes in that you poured out your soul unto death. He will see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. ***

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