

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

WHY ?

MEL GIBSON'S FILM ¹

Millions throughout the east and west have seen the film "The Passion of the Christ." ^a It depicts events leading up to the execution of the Messiah. ^b Shaken to the core by what he endured, the question uppermost in their minds is: after suffering all that horrendous abuse, how could he ask God to forgive them' ?

There we see the Messiah's love - his stupendous heart rending love.

But the real question is **WHY** did he suffer and die like a criminal?

PALESTINE WAS UNDER ROMAN OCCUPATION

The chief priests saw him as a threat to the cosy arrangement they had with the Romans. The teachers of religion regarded him to be a pretender and blasphemer. Both accused him to the Romans of claiming to be king. So he was executed under the charge of treason. The crowd expected a Messiah who would rid them of the Romans. **All** demanded his execution. "Crucify Him!"

But these are the simple and inadequate answers to our question, since the Messiah could have stopped it. ² Also he had said that he himself would lay his life down **and** take it up again. ³

Hundreds of years before the Lord Jesus came to earth prophets had predicted his suffering, death and resurrection. So he would not have been the Messiah had he not fulfilled those prophesies. ⁴

But **WHY?**

The Book* which is called the Bible, tells us that God loves you and me so much that he did it so that if we put our trust in the Messiah we would not perish in hell but have eternal life. ⁵ [*Arabic: *Al Kitab*]

But **WHY?**

THERE IS A BARRIER BETWEEN US AND GOD

Whilst that barrier is there, there is no way we can spend eternity with the holy God.

Sin is the barrier. It is our sins that are the barrier between us and The Creator.

We are responsible for what we do. We do the sinning. We put the barrier there – not God.

700 years before Jesus came to earth, Israel was steeped in sin, the prophet Isaiah said:

'your iniquities have made a barrier between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you' ⁶

Sins, our sins, form the barrier between us and our creator. It is as though we have become strangers to Almighty God. It is the height of audacity to think that when we fail to do what we should and do what we should not we can go to God as though nothing is wrong. There cannot be any reconciliation between us and God if we do not regret what we have done and decide to change. We **must** repent !

LOOK AT THE MESSIAH ON THE CROSS !

HIS ANGUISH AND SUFFERING SAYS TO US:

- SEE THE HORROR OF SIN -

HIS ANGUISH AND DEATH APPEALS TO US:

- BE RECONCILED TO GOD -

WHAT CAN WE DO ?

We cannot turn the clock back and re-live those moments of sin. We cannot remove from the past the harm it caused. True - if we are really sorry we will try to repair what damage we can, ⁷ but we cannot wipe it out. The barrier between us and God is eternal unless it is removed. God is the God of Justice. He will judge the world. If that barrier is still there on the day of judgement, imagine spending eternity cut-off from God along with Satan and his companions. ⁸

GOD HAS ALREADY PROVIDED A WAY ⁹

Praise God - there is a way for the barrier to be removed. The Lord Jesus said he is **The Way** - the way back to God. ¹⁰

HE IS THE SACRIFICE FOR OUR SINS ¹¹

THE INNOCENT KILLED FOR THE GUILTY

THE MESSIAH - THE INNOCENT ONE

YOU AND ME - THE GUILTY.

WE MAKE THE BARRIER GOD BREAKS THE BARRIER.

When we see the Lord Jesus nailed to the cross we do not see God leaving him alone.

WE SEE GOD IN THE MESSIAH RECONCILING THE WORLD TO HIMSELF

God is in the Lord Jesus God revealing his love to us. ¹² He is the Word of God [Arabic: *Kalimat Ulah*]. The Word of God was revealed to mankind in Jesus' physical body and we see his glory like the glory of an only Son full of grace and truth. ¹³

WE APPEAL TO YOU, BE RECONCILED TO GOD ¹²

There is no need to be separated from God. We can have peace with God through Jesus our Lord. Believe in the Lord Jesus. Be baptised in water burying your past in the waters of baptism. Rise from the waters to live a new life at peace with God through the Messiah, Jesus. ¹⁴

Down the centuries many millions of people have been drawn by his love as seen in his sacrifice on the cross and become his followers. How about you?

SOME RELEVANT BIBLE PASSAGES:-

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Matthew chapters 21 to 28, Mark chapters 11 to 16, Luke chapters 19 to 24, John chapters 11 to 21 | 8 2 Thessalonians 1:8, 1.Peter 4:17, Matthew 25:41 |
| 2 Matthew 26:51-54 | 9 Romans 6:6-8 |
| 3 John 10:18 | 10 John 14:6 |
| 4 Isaiah 54:13-15 and chapter 53 | 11 John 1:29 & 36 |
| 5 John 3:16 | 12 2 Corinthians 5:18-20 |
| 6 Isaiah 59:2 | 13 John 1:14 & 18 |
| 7 Luke 19:8 | 14 Colossians 1:20, Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16, Acts 2:38, Romans 6:1-4 |
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NOTES:-

- "The Messiah" means the same as "the Christ". A follower of the Christ is a "Christian"..
- In AD 112 the Roman historian, Cornelius Tacitus, in "Annals" XV:44 where he refers to the Christ as "Christus" wrote " ... Christus, the founder of the name (i.e. the name "Christian" EDITOR), was put to death by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea in the reign of Tiberius: ... "

SEE ALSO OUR LEAFLET: "THEY SAY THEY SLEW THE MESSIAH. THEY SLEW HIM NOT."

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