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Why is the Cross a Stumbling Block for the Jews?

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Shalom, everybody. This is going to be a very short message. I am not even trying to go to the depth of the problem of the Jews with the cross, because it's going to be as long as, I guess, the entire history of the last 2,000 years. But I will try

to touch three major topics: the problem of the first century Jews with a cross; the problem of the Jews in general with the *message* of the cross; and the problem of the Jews with the *bearers* of the cross.

First of all, I'd like to start with **Luke 24:44–49**, **“⁴⁴ Then He said to them, ‘These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things...’”** Can you say that? **“All things,” “⁴⁴ must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.’ ⁴⁵ And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.”** In other words, Jesus didn't have to open the Scriptures because the Scriptures were there. He opened their *understanding* so they can understand the already-written Scriptures that were there, read to them every Shabbat. **“⁴⁶ Then He said to them, ‘Thus it is written,’”** Listen to me, this is the resurrected Jesus who is already about to depart and leave the band of disciples alone so the book of Acts will begin. This is Jesus who is telling them, who understands that they've got a problem with a concept of the suffering-Messiah, and He says, **“⁴⁶ ... ‘Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,...’”** Jesus is telling the disciples, “Listen it's not something that could have been done differently. It's not a circumstance that could have been different. It's not a mistake. It's not

an accident. The suffering of the Messiah was necessary.” Do you understand what He’s telling them? He’s basically telling them: “You are not watching Plan B. This has been determined.” “⁴⁶...



‘it was necessary for Christ to suffer to rise from the dead... ⁴⁷ and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ And you are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem....’” He says to the disciples, “Listen, I want you to stay here. Stay here in

Jerusalem until you are endowed with power from on high.” Jesus is clearly telling the disciples that the crucifixion—which by the way was the most terrible death penalty that was there in the Roman period. You have to understand that people on the cross wished they were dead. The cross was a long torture. But Jesus said, “Look, don’t think this is Plan B. Don’t think it could have been different. It actually was necessary.” And if you remember the verse before, He said, “All things must be fulfilled.”

So, I want to take you through eight points of how the crucifixion was the fulfillment of the Old Testament, and then we’re going to look into the three main questions we talked about. First of all, the prophecy from **Isaiah 53:3** says, “³**He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.**” And of course, in **John 1:10-11**, “¹⁰**He was in the world and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. ¹¹ He came to His own,**” To his own, to the Jewish people, “**and his own did not receive Him.**” Or received Him not. When the prophecy of Isaiah was definitely fulfilled even as He first came and started His ministry. [Number Two] **Psalms 41:9** says, “⁹**Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted,**

who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.” Of course, in **Mark 14:10**, “¹⁰ Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Him to them.” If you remember, Jesus at the Last Supper knew, and He said, “To whom I have given the bread after I dipped it, he is the person that will betray Me.” The bread that which Psalm 41 speaks of, “Who ate my bread.” It was Judas. [Number Three] **Zechariah 11:12** says, “¹² Then I said to them, ‘If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain.’ So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver.” Interestingly enough **Matthew 26:14–16** during that crucifixion scene, “¹⁴ Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵ and said, ‘What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?’ And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. ¹⁶ So from that time he sought the opportunity to betray Him.” It could’ve been 50, but it was 30 because it was, I use the word, necessary. It was necessary. All things must be fulfilled.

Number Four. Bible Prophecy says in **Isaiah 53:7**, “⁷ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not his mouth.” And the fulfillment of course, in **Mark 15:5**, “But Jesus still answered nothing, so that Pilate marveled.” As a lamb to the slaughter, He opened not his mouth. [Number] Five: Bible prophecy says in **Psalms 22:1–2**, “¹ My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, and from the words of my groaning?” And in **Matthew 27:46** the fulfillment is, “⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, saying, ‘Eli, Eli,’” Which is, “My God, My God” “‘lama sabachthani?...’” Which means why have You forsaken Me? “‘...that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”’” Of course.

Number Six. **Psalm 22:7–8** says, **“⁷ All those who see Me ridicule Me; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, ⁸ He trusted in the LORD; let Him rescue Him;”** Let Him rescue Him, **“⁹ let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him.”** What a mockery. And then of course **Mark 15:31:** **“³¹ Likewise the chief priests also, mocking among themselves with the scribes, said, ‘He saved others; Himself He cannot save. ³² Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe.’ Even those who were crucified with Him reviled Him.”** By the way, trust me, even if He went down from the cross, they would not have believed Him. Then of course, **Matthew 27:43–44,** **“⁴³ ‘He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, “I am the Son of God.”’ ⁴⁴ Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing.”** Isn’t that interesting, almost word for word. The words of the prophecy in the Old were fulfilled in the New.

Number Seven: **Psalm 22:15** says, **“¹⁵ My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death.”** In **Matthew 27:48,** **“⁴⁸ Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink.”** [Number Eight] **Psalm 22:17–18,** **“¹⁷ I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. ¹⁸ They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing, they cast lots.”** What an amazing prophesy in the Psalms! **John 19:23,** **“²³ Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece.”** Do you understand? There is nothing in the story of the crucifixion of Jesus that is out of the control of God, that is something that God lost control, God needed Plan B, Jesus could have had some better solution, I mean it was one big mistake and we’re paying for it... Do you know what the one big mistake is? What is the one big mistake that we’re paying for it up until today, in a way? It is

not the crucifixion. The crucifixion was *necessary*. The one big mistake is in Genesis 3. That's the one big mistake, and from Genesis 3, it was *necessary* for Him to do that.

Now, what is the cross and who started using it? It's very interesting that while accounts of crucifixions are recorded by several ancient civilizations and cultures, some say that the Persians



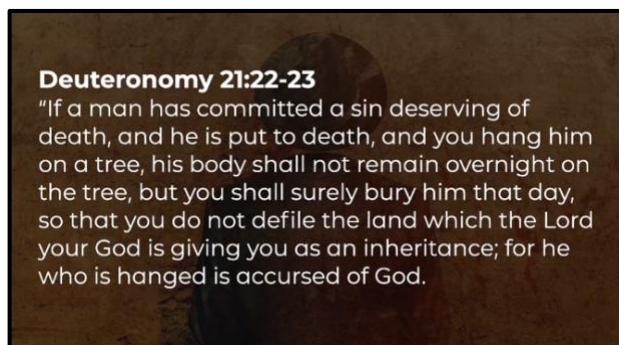
are the most often credited by historians as having invented that practice. The oldest record comes from Herodotus who noted that Darius crucified 3,000 inhabitants of Babylon. Honestly, I thought it was

Alexander the Great, but after I read so much on it, I realized it was even before that. So, originating in Persia, crucifixion then spread to the Assyrians, Scythians, Taurians, Thracians, the people of India, the Germans, Celts, Britons, Numidians, and of course, Carthaginians of Carthage. The Greeks and the Macedonians are also believed to have learned the practice of crucifixion from the Persians. That's what I thought, I always thought Alexander the Great started it, but of course, I realized he actually learned it from the Persians. The Roman philosopher, Seneca, who lived from 4 BC – 65 AD, wrote this: "Can anyone be found who would prefer wasting away in pain dying limb by limb, or letting out his life drop by drop, rather than expiring once for all?" In other words, don't you prefer to die at once over a horrific, slow death? "Can any man be found willing to be fastened to the accursed tree, long sickly, already deformed, swelling with ugly weals on shoulders and chest, and drawing the breath of life amid a long-drawn-out agony? He would have many excuses for dying even before mounting the cross."

Listen, crucifixion is not just the actual hanging on it, it started with something else. They used to flagellate you. They used to beat you up, then they used to tie some beam behind your neck and tie your hands all around it. And then they would lead you to a place where they will nail that

beam and your feet and your hands to a standing tree at that time. Ancient Greeks would secure their victims to a flat board, sometimes only to shame and punish them. While fastened to wooden planks for a period of time, they endured torture. Later, victims would be released or executed in another manner. But Plato made reference to the Greeks employing death by crucifixion as a form of capital punishment. History affirms that crucifixion became common under the rule of Alexander the Great who executed 2,000 Tyrians after conquering their city, the city of Tyre, in Lebanon today. Crucifixion by the Romans most likely adopted it from the Carthaginians, from Carthago (Latin: *Carthāgō*). The practice increased in both extent and severity. During the Roman Empire, crucifixion was primarily reserved—look, to whom, to what? —traitors, deserters, foreigners, despised enemies, captive armies, slaves, the most violent offenders, and those guilty of high treason.

Think about it, the Roman form of crucifixion was not employed in the Old Testament by Jewish people, not at all, as they saw crucifixion as one of the most horrific or horrible, cursed forms of death. How do I know that? Because Deuteronomy is even mentioning it. **Deuteronomy 21:22–23** says, “²² If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, ²³ his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the LORD your God is



giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged is accursed of God.”

So, in the mind-set of the Jewish people, the blessed Messiah, the Anointed One, can He ever be a fulfillment, or part of Deuteronomy 21,

about the Jewish problem with the cross? That’s the verse, I mean, think about it! If the law is

talking about someone on a tree as accursed, would it even occur, would it even come to the mind of a Jew, that the Messiah the King will have to go through such a thing? Of course, not. I mean I'm thinking about the disciples during that time, seeing the one who committed no sin, ever in His life; the one most humble, most generous, most tender, most loving, most amazing they've ever seen in their own life, hanging on a tree like the last murderer, thief, traitor, or accursed of God. They wouldn't even start to understand that. This is why Jesus when we started this message, had to say, "Listen guys I understand. Look, I'm alive, I'm resurrected. But you need to understand something. It was necessary. All things must be fulfilled."

So the Jewish problem with a cross begins with Deuteronomy 21. For them the understanding that the Messiah will be on a cross, which is a standing stem of a tree, to which attached is a beam [forming] the shape of a cross, they cannot understand that. In **Matthew 16:13-23**, **"¹³ When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, 'Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?' ¹⁴ So they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' ¹⁵ He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' ..."** You understand, Peter never went to any Bible school, Bible college, he's not a rabbi, nothing; he's actually a very uneducated Jew. Peter is the first one to jump and say, **"¹⁶... 'You are the Christ,'"** the Messiah, **"the Son of the living God."** He probably was thinking, what have I just said? **"¹⁷ Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you,...'"** "Don't worry, I know you feel weird because you never learned that. Nobody ever taught you that. Obviously, no one teaches that, that the Son of God can be a man, that God can come as a man in the flesh. But you are right, so you are blessed." [Matthew 16:17-23 paraphrased] "This is My Father who is in heaven that revealed this to you. And I also say to you that you are Petros, you are a small rock. On this rock,..."

and He's showing him Caesarea Philippi, "the big rock over there, 'Petra.' I will build..." This is where they used to worship all the other pagan gods. He says, "On this pagan world, I will build My church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." That's it. My church does not belong to Hades. They're not going to be in Hades; they're not going to enter into Hades. They are not going to await the judgment of the world over there. That's it! It's over!

Matthew 16, "And I will give you the keys..." And then he goes on. Isn't that interesting that from that time, verse 21, Jesus began to show to His disciples that He, what? What? Jesus began, verses 13–23, Jesus began to show to His disciples that... No, I'm talking about verse 21, **(Matthew 16:21), "21 From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He..."** What? **"must..."** Say that again. [Audience: "Must"] Say that louder! [Audience: "Must!"] He must! It's not He may, maybe, could be, possibly, **"21 ...He must go to Jerusalem,"** He must, **"...suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes,"** He must, **"...be killed,"** He must, **"...be raised the third day."** So here it is, Jesus, was just acknowledged by Peter to be the Messiah, the Son of the living God, and Peter thinks, "Oh, I know. You know, God spoke to me directly. I don't know about you guys, me and God are..." Peter is like, "Okay, guys, I'm the chief apostle. Do you want to talk to Him? Through me. So, okay, Jesus, You can talk. Go ahead." So, Jesus is not standing there and saying, "I am the King of kings, the Lord of lords. I'm going to sit on the throne of David and Peter, you're My deputy." He didn't say that. He says, "Just so you know, yes, I am the Son of the Living God; I'm the Messiah. I'm the Anointed One; I'm the one you've been waiting for. I'm going to be delivered into the hands of the Scribes and the Romans, and I'm going to suffer, I'm going to die, I'm going to be crucified, and I'm going to be buried." Peter's like, "What?" Then Peter took Jesus aside and says, "You cannot talk like that." Peter rebuked Jesus. Do you understand what I'm saying? A second ago, he acknowledged that he was the Son of the

living God, he's now taking the Son of the living God in the flesh, and he is rebuking God! ²²... **'Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!'**" This type of death is for whom? Traitors, murderers, and cursed is him hanging on the tree. "That's not for you! You are the Messiah! You are the King! Stay here! We'll take care of you!" By the way, that was the mindset of the Jewish people in those days. "God, we're going to help You." So, God said, "No, no, no. I'm going to help you." "No, no, no! We will help You. Stay there; we'll help You."

I can prove it to you. When you come to Israel to Capernaum, there is a synagogue, and the synagogue is built the other way around. In other words, the entrance is in the wrong place. And when you ask, "What? You didn't know where Jerusalem is? How come the synagogue faces the opposite [way]?" They said, "No, no, no. The synagogue is facing Jerusalem. It's just that the door is in the wrong place." "But the door has to be in one place, and then the direction of the prayer is exactly the opposite." They said, "No. We had to build it this way because if the door would be towards the mountains, and the gods of the Gentiles are on the mountains, they might sneak into the synagogue. Stay there, we will protect you. We're going to turn this synagogue around and nobody can enter and harm you." You see, when people think that they help God, and God comes and extends help to them, that's why Capernaum was likened to Sodom and Gomorrah. It says that, if Sodom and Gomorrah would have heard or would have seen the things that I did here in Capernaum, they would have believed.

So Peter, in the way he reacted to what Jesus just said, exposed the entire Jewish embarrassment with a cross. He exposed the fact that the Jewish mindset cannot fathom the fact that God and His messenger, His Anointed One—let's say now I (Peter) even acknowledge He is the Son of God—he cannot fathom the fact that the Messiah can ever be hanging on a tree. So how did Peter deal with that? He took Jesus and rebuked Him. And what did Jesus answer? Get behind

Me, what? [Audience: Satan] And Peter said, “Oh You just called me blessed. I heard from God. We’re friends. Satan?” Yes, because only Satan doesn’t want Me to die. Only Satan doesn’t want Me to fulfill the necessary things. Only Satan wants Me to bail out of this mission. **Matthew 16:23** “²³... ‘Get behind Me, Satan! ... you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.’” Jesus basically said, “The things of God are that I have to suffer, I have to be crucified, and I have to be dead, first. How can someone resurrect unless he’s dead first?” The things of men are that Messiah should not even come for all of this, and He should just sit on the throne and rule, defeat the enemies, bring peace and prosperity, and that’s it. Right here, you see it.

And if that’s not enough the next time, the next chapter, Jesus takes him to the Mount of the Transfiguration, of course. **Matthew 17:2–9** “²... and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. ³ And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. ⁴ Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, ‘Lord, it is good for us to be here;’” Peter was like, “Oh look at this. I’m next to Elijah, Moses, Jesus. I’m back in the game. Yeah, baby! Let’s build for you huts and...” Jesus said, “No.” “⁵ While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!’” In other words, Peter, keep quiet; hear Him. “⁶ And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and they were greatly afraid.” This is what I call an “Emanuel moment.” God is with us. “⁷ But Jesus came and touched them and said, ‘Arise. Do not be afraid.’ ⁸ When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.” Moses and Elijah are gone; Jesus is there. “⁹ Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, ‘Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is...’” What? “‘risen from the dead.’” He said, “Guys, I have to die and until I’m dead, you’re not telling anyone about this. Because if you tell people

now, guess what? They're going to put Me on their shoulders and bring Me to Jerusalem to reign because they will not understand that I'm not supposed to reign first before I have to offer the ultimate sacrifice for all of you."

Acts 5:29-30: "29 But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: 'We ought to obey God rather than men. 30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree.'" See they always keep going back to hanging on a tree because this was a traumatic experience for them. Romans 9:33: "33 As it is written: 'Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense,'" "You're going to be offended by Me hanging on the tree "33 ... 'and whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.'"

Now we understand first that the Jewish people in the first century had a problem with a cross itself. It was a shameful thing completely unrelated to what they know and think about Messiah. They understand it is a horrific thing. They never practiced it themselves, it was so bad, but in their wildest dreams, they never thought the Messiah will have to go through that. But if you remember, in **1 Corinthians 1:20–25** it says, **"20 Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. 22 For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ..."** What? Christ, **"crucified, to the Jews..."** If you're not a believer, if you're still keeping that Jewish mindset, it's what? **"... a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."**

Now we understand, folks, that we have a problem here. The people have a problem also with the message. The Jewish people have a problem with the concept that they have a problem that can only be solved by the death of someone else. Up until today, the Jews believe that it's up



to them: to fast, to pray, to teach, to sing, all of those things. What do you think Yom Kippur is all about, the Day of Atonement, is all about? We're fasting for 25 hours, "Yea! We did it." It's all about us: good deeds, mitzvah, commandment. We do a good

deed and if you cannot fulfill the law, at least God will look at your heart if you're trying. Trying, it also counts. It's about do's, and don't-do's, and it's all about themselves. The concept that their salvation is actually not through anything they will ever do, is foreign to them. They have a problem not only with the cross as a death penalty, but a problem with the concept of the message of the cross. I preach to you Christ, and Him crucified; the Messiah is crucified for you. He died for you. He suffered for you, and by His stripes, you are healed. It's something that they have a problem with, by the way, up until today.

It's very interesting because I can tell you... I'm going back to Luke 9, and Mark 8, and Luke 14, and you see a common thread; let me read it to you. **Mark 8:34** ³⁴ **"When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, 'Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.'"** By the way, that's before Jesus was crucified. So He's mentioning something here about "cross," but He's not talking about dying on the cross. Look what He's saying, listen to this. He says in **Luke 9:23**, ²³ **"... 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.'"** Listen, I had a problem with this. "Am I supposed to crucify myself and walk with a cross

behind Jesus? Is Jesus asking me to be crucified? What's this request? **Luke 14:27, “²⁷ And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”** What do you mean, bear his cross? Then I went to look at the Greek. I said, I have to find out what exactly Jesus meant when He said those things because He's not yet crucified. This is not about this, it's about something else. He's not even talking about His cross. He's talking about *my* cross. He is actually



saying if you are not carrying your cross and follow Me, then you cannot belong to Me. And I was like, “What in the world are you talking about?” So I went to Luke 9:23 and I read it in the Greek. I found out

that the word cross, is *staurós* actually, in this way. It's in the third row, one before the end, *staurós*. New Testament Greek uses four verbs, three of them based upon *staurós*, usually translated “cross”. The most common term is *stauroo*, “to crucify,” occurring 43 times. Then *sustauroó*, it's “to crucify with” or “alongside.”; it occurs five times. Then *anastauroó* which is “to crucify again” occurs only once in the Epistle to the Hebrews 6:6. *Prospégnumi* is “to fix or fasten to, impale, crucify”; it occurs only once in Acts 2:23. The English term “cross” derives from the Latin word, *crux*. The Latin term *crux* classically referred to a tree, or any construction of wood used to hang criminals as a form of execution. The term later came to refer specifically to a cross. The English term crucifix derives from the Latin *crucifixus* or *cruci fixus*, past participle passive of *crucifigere* or *cruci figere*, meaning “to crucify” or “to fasten to a cross.”

Now comes the point. I want you to take a look at this. Let's move on. *Staurós* is a crosspiece of a Roman cross. It's actually the crossbeam. In Latin, it was called, *patibulum* and it was placed at the top of the vertical member to form a capital “T.” This transverse beam was the

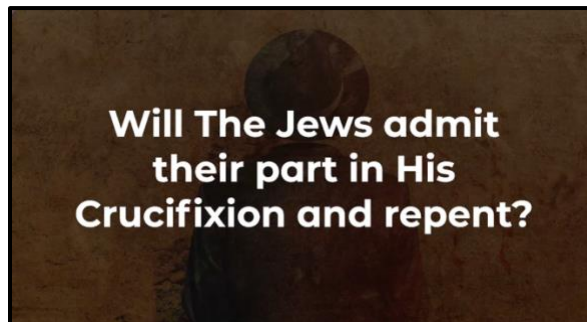


one carried by the criminal. “Beam” in Latin is *patibulum*, placed at the top of the vertical member to form a capital “T.” Okay, so now we understand that. Now, this is what we’re talking about. What are you seeing here? You see, *that’s* the word and

the term Jesus referred to about yourself. If anyone wants to follow Me, let him carry his *stauroos* which is that beam that is right there. It’s heavy; it’s uncomfortable. And it’s something that is against our flesh in a sense. Ladies and gentlemen, I was struggling with this. “Jesus, what are you trying to tell me? Do I need to really, literally, physically, tie myself to a beam like that and just follow You?” Of course not. What Jesus meant is that you must deny yourself. That’s what He said. If anyone wants to follow Me, he must, what? Deny himself. That’s a heavy burden. That’s contrary to the mindset of the people and to the flesh of the people. This is a heavy thing: to remind yourself that it’s not about you, it’s about Him; to remind yourself that there’s nothing in you, that it’s all about Him.

Look, I’ll give you an example. In the Bible, it says to the Jewish people on Yom Kippur to *afflict* their souls. The word, fasting, is not even mentioned there. Literally, God never asked the Jews to fast on Yom Kippur. He asked them what? To afflict their souls. What is it to afflict your soul? To afflict your soul is to understand that it’s not about you. It’s against your flesh, it’s against your will, it’s against yourself, it’s against your ego; it’s not about you. You cannot save yourself. You have no power to save yourself. You have no capacity to save yourself. Your salvation has all to do with what God is doing with Jesus, and not with you. You can try to crucify yourself if you want. It won’t save you. But if you believe in Him and Him crucified, that He had to be crucified because the death, the curse of God was hanging on a tree, that death was necessary

in order for Him to be the perfect atonement and the perfect sacrificial animal, *then* you will be saved.



And by the way, the Jewish people eventually are going to repent for rejecting Christ and wanting Him to be crucified. In fact both the book of Revelation and the book of John, and, of course, Zechariah speak of those who have pierced

Him. In **Revelation 1:7**, **“⁷ Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”** Zechariah 12:10: **“¹⁰ And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.”** The Jewish people upon the return of Jesus back to Earth at the end of the Tribulation will repent, will mourn, will cry when they see Him whom they have pierced.

In the last four minutes that is left for us, I will tell you that today most of the problems of the Jews are actually not with the message or with the actual crucifixion, but most of the problem of the Jews today is with what the cross was used for and those who were bearing it along the history. I’m talking about the Byzantines, and the Crusaders and those who performed pogroms against the Jews, and the Nazis, and the white supremacists. All of these people are using crosses; they’re all wearing crosses. They are all, in the name of the cross, doing terrible atrocities. I can tell you that when the Crusaders, those Catholic knights from Western Europe, predominately from France in the very beginning, when they came across Europe they killed most of the Jews in Germany, at least 10,000 of them, on their way to the Holy Land. Upon entrance into the Holy

Land, as they entered Jerusalem—and at that time Jews and Muslims lived in peace in Jerusalem. Muslims controlled, but Jews were there—they locked all the Jews in the synagogue in Jerusalem, burned them alive while raising their crosses high and saying, “To you, Christ, we bring all glory.” Thousands of Jews were being burned alive, crosses were being used to be raised, and Christ is being supposedly praised for all of this.

The same thing, by the way, was done to Muslims. This is why throughout the last 20 years, Osama bin Laden when he was still alive and then, of course, Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi when he was still alive, they never called Christians, “Christians.” They called Christians, “Crusaders,” because they want to remind you how cruel you are and how much you, the “Crusaders,” butchered us in the name of your cross, in the name of your Christ.

The Nazis had crosses all over their uniforms. May I say, in the Hebrew language, in the Hebrew language *swastika* is called [Hebrew pronunciation] “a cross with a hook.” In other words, the word “cross” is to describe “swastika.” That’s how much the cross, beyond being a terrible death penalty, beyond being a message they have a hard time to comprehend, the cross itself was used by so many terrible people, that the Jewish people have a problem with it, and of course, white supremacists and all of that. **John 16:1–3** says, “¹ **These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. ² They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. ³ And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.**” Jesus is saying that they are going to do things in the name of Jesus! Godly things! But they don’t even know the Father! They don’t know even Me! They’ll take you out of the synagogues, they’ll butcher you, they’ll kill you, all together.

The last thing I will tell you before we're done: Do not turn the shadow into substance. The cross is a message. The cross is the message that God gave His only begotten Son to first die for us, and then to defeat death to give us eternal life. The price for our salvation has been fully paid on the cross. The cross is a message. Unfortunately, today it has become a lucky charm. Today it has become a symbol that we are willing to kill for as a symbol. We took the message and we turned it into a symbol; we took the shadow, and we turned it into the substance.

By the way, the Jews are the same. God told them to keep his Word and He gave them an illustration. Keep My Word between your eyes. Keep My Word on your arm. Keep My Word when you go in and you come out. What do they do? They prepare boxes, put it here [gestures putting one down]; another box and put it here, another box and put it on the doorpost. They took the message and the shadow and turned *it* to a substance. It's a very slippery slope, I would say.

Deuteronomy 6:4–9: “⁴ Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. ⁶ And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart, ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as a frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.” And they *literally* did that, and it becomes an idol for them. When they walk in they have to kiss it; when they walk out they have to kiss it. They have to kiss; they have to kiss; they have to kiss; they have to kiss... It's all about these things.

Is the cross a lucky charm or a message, to you, Christians? Let's not forget the message of the cross. It is still a stumbling block, but now you at least understand the mindset of the Jews,

the history that followed it, and the disdain that they have from what used to be a message and turned into an idol.

Father, we thank You for the plan that You have for Israel. For now, the message of the cross and the cross are an offense to them. And Father, in many ways, we contributed to that by turning that cross into an idol and a lucky charm rather than a message of Your salvation. Father, we ask that until You return, and they see He whom they pierced, help us to explain the message, and not to stumble and be a hindrance to reach the heart of Your people. We thank You and we bless You. We pray for the salvation of the Jewish people that as few will only go through that Great Tribulation. But until then, Father, we know that Your will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. We bless Your name, and we ask it in the name of the Holy One of Israel, who unfortunately because of Genesis 3 had to suffer, had to die and be buried, because it was necessary. Then, of course, He resurrected on the third day because death could not keep Him there. We thank You for the resurrected Lord and we thank You for the power of the resurrection that we can all glean from as we walk in the Spirit. We bless You in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

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** Scripture is taken from the New King James Version unless noted otherwise.*

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