

THE DEATH MOST REMEMBERED

"Twenty centuries have rolled by and yet... that one death is the most remembered by most people even today. It all happened to a young Man Who was just thirty-three. He had to His credit several miracles. He made the blind to see and the lame to walk. He walked on water, stilled the storm by a mere word and even raised the dead to life on three separate occasions. Yet His generation hung Him on a wooden cross. The crown of thorns, which punctured the head, marred that face with blood. The lacerated body through merciless whipping was suspended -partly through the nails driven through His hands and feet. He hung there as a spectacle before that sadistic crowd that watched and mocked. He was JESUS. The whole Bible, particularly the New Testament, is woven around this central event -the CROSS.

Why did Jesus die? Why should His death be remembered? Dear reader, the answer is twofold. Firstly, you and I had apart in that death. Secondly, Jesus' death alone has the solution for all our problems. You would soon discover that this twofold answer is the very reason why most people world-wide remember His death even today.

Beneath the masks of religion, region, culture and language, we are basically human, -finite but the most wonderful creatures upon earth. We can smile with justified pride that animals, plants and the material universe can nowhere be compared to our intelligence. We are special. Yet... mankind is the only species that is restless. We have no peace. Hatred, violence, bloodshed, lust, greed are our hallmarks. Even our crimes are high-tech. We are the most frightened lot, looking at people and events with suspicion. Diseases and hospitals, police, courts and jails exist at great cost just to keep humanity going without self-extinction. World Health Organization reported a few years ago that every forty seconds, someone somewhere commits suicide and the tragic, added comment was that only one out of ten cases come to the notice of the authorities. We are a directionless, depressed lot. What a tragedy!

God cares and the Bible names this tragedy as SIN. Sin originates in the heart of man and so the Bible says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer.17:9). God's Word asks us, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil" (Jer. 13:23).

The heart of the problem is the problem of the heart. We are not talking about the flesh and blood heart which any leading cardiac surgeon could rectify. We do talk instead of the heart that is the birthplace of deception, pride, hatred, lust, jealousy and selfishness. The Bible states emphatically three truths about sin. Firstly, we are born in sin. This is genetically inherited. Secondly, we cannot save ourselves from sin. Religions including Christianity and good works cannot save us from sins. We need a Savior. Thirdly, God has provided a Savior in Jesus. He died on the cross to legally settle the problem of sin. Jesus was made sin for us. That is the story of the cross.

Sin brings guilt and guilt brings unrest. SIN is a power that rules us and eventually ruins us. Guilt and power of sin are the two problems humanity in general faces and the ONLY person who found a solution is JESUS.

In the cross, the demands of God's justice and God's love were fully met. The Lord Jesus Christ! Look upon Himself the wrath of God which should have justly fallen upon you and me. He died in our place and the only reason He did so was LOVE. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, CHRIST died for US" (Rom. 5:8). In God's court of justice the rulebook said, "...without shedding of blood is no remission" (forgiveness of sins) (Heb. 9:22). God now forgives any man or woman on the basis of Jesus' blood. "...the blood of JESUS CHRIST... cleanseth (purifies) us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

Did God accept Jesus' sacrifice? Yes, He did. On the third day Jesus rose again. His bodily resurrection, the stunning fact of history, attested by the open tomb in Jerusalem today, is a mute testimony that Jesus is alive. He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25). 'Justification' is a term where God removes legally the guilt of a sinner to offer him righteousness. A sinner is MADE RIGHTEOUS at the cross. This is the essence of the Gospel.

Un-dealt and unforgiving sin eventually leads a sinner after death to an eternal hell - a place of unending torment. Jesus paid the price and now the sinner is set free.

Forgiveness, freedom and fellowship with God are now offered at the cross. If there could be any other way man could save himself, then the death of Jesus is the 'biggest blunder' God ever committed. My friend, there was no other way and hence Jesus had to die.

The Lord Jesus, though the POTENTIAL Savior for the whole world, becomes the PRACTICAL Savior to those who are willing to repent and believe this good news. The God of love sent Jesus, to die for you and me. Our sin demanded His death. Our deliverance is provided through His death.

Jesus died for you. Believe it to experience the joy of forgiveness, freedom and fellowship with God.