

WAS THE MESSIAH EXECUTED ?

The Qur'an says:

"And because of their saying: We slew the Messiah Jesus son of Mary, ... They slew him not nor crucified, but it appeared so unto them;..."^a

Surah 4:157

Most Muslims believe that the Lord Jesus was not crucified. Many think that another man was slain mistakenly for the Lord Jesus. Some say that it was Judas Iscariot, the man who betrayed him to the Jewish religious authorities.

There is no historic evidence for these ideas. Whereas the historical evidence for the life and execution of the Lord Jesus Christ at the hands of the Romans far exceeds that for any other ancient personality. In the world's libraries are manuscripts containing this information, dating from the early second century.

The Qur'an asserts that the Jews did not crucify the Lord - and it is true that the Jews did not carry out the execution, but their religious leaders certainly contrived it.

At that time the Roman's ruled Palestine and even though they delegated some judicial authority to the Jews, they would not allow them to execute anyone. The Jewish religious authority despised the Lord Jesus so much they wanted him dead at any cost. So, even though they did not recognise Caesar as their king, to have the Lord executed by the

Romans, they hypocritically accused him of treason against Caesar to the Roman Governor - Pontius Pilate.

Pilate was reluctant to condemn the Lord Jesus. So they put pressure on Pilate saying that if he did not have the Lord Jesus executed he was no friend of Caesar. So the Lord Jesus was executed on a charge of treason against Caesar. That is why it was actually the Roman soldiers who carried out the execution.

A notice in Latin (the official language), Greek (the international language) and in the local language where relevant, detailing the crime for which the victim was being executed, was usually affixed above his head. This was intended to deter others from committing the same crime. That is why the notice above Jesus' head included the words "King of the Jews" in Latin, Greek and Hebrew.

All the evidence shows that:-

The Romans knew that they put to death none other than Jesus Christ^b. Before his body was released for burial a soldier drove a spear into his side ensuring that he was really dead. The Jews knew that he was slain. His close companions knew it was their Lord and his mother knew that it was her son that was killed.

To the Jewish religious leaders the Messiah was a charlatan, but the equally valid historical fact of his resurrection on the third day proves beyond doubt all the Lord Jesus' claims.

Immediately, from that time on, all down the centuries:-

Converts to his cause have been baptised in water to portray his death, burial and resurrection, and "death" to their old way of life to rise from the water to a new Christlike life. Faithful Christians have been meeting together each week, on the day he rose from the dead, the day after the Jewish Sabbath, to commemorate the life on earth and the death of the Lord Jesus, by eating unleavened bread representing the body in which he walked this earth and drinking grape juice representing his shed blood.

None of those of his followers who saw him alive after his resurrection were ever known to renege, not even under severe persecution or when faced with torturous death.

All this testifies to the truth of the historic records. Yet over five centuries after the event, despite all the evidence, it was claimed that the Messiah was not slain - that he did not die.

For two thousand years the world has known that the Roman authorities slew the Lord Jesus. The death of the Lord Jesus at the hands of the Roman soldiers is an indisputable historical fact.

BUT WHY?

The real question is why did God allow the Messiah to be killed?

The crucifixion was not the end, nor was it defeat - he arose victorious over death and is now ascended to heaven. He is the only one who has brought himself back to life and out of the grave.

The Lord Jesus said: "... *I lay down this life of mine, so that I might take it again. No one takes it away from me, but I myself lay it down. I have the right to lay it down, and I have the right to take it up again ...*" (John 10:17-18 - DIRECT TRANSLATION)

If he had not died he would not have been the Messiah because prophetic predictions were made centuries earlier that the Messiah would die.

Seven hundred years previously it was predicted that - "... *when he made himself an offering for sin, ... he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*" (Isaiah 53:10,12)

His death was the perfect sacrifice (*kurbani*) making it possible for our sins to be forgiven. His resurrection is the faithful followers assurance of resurrection to eternal life in heaven.

YOU CAN BE FORGIVEN AND HAVE THAT ASSURANCE TOO !

- Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Repent of your sins.
- Be baptised in water for your sins to be forgiven.

- Each first day of the week meet with others who have also been baptised into Christ to remember him and worship God.
- Live a Christlike life of service to God

Many millions of people have been drawn by his love as seen on the cross and become his followers. How about you?

NOTES:-

- a "The Messiah" means the same as "the Christ". A follower of the Christ is a "Christian"..
- b 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: ... "

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THEY SAY THEY SLEW THE MESSIAH



THEY SLEW HIM NOT

Qur'an