

## A Suffering Savior God's Plan for Our Salvation

Hebrews 2:9-18  
Sunday, April 7, 2019

### Introduction

It's Easter season, which means over the next several weeks we are going to hear a lot about the cross. But while this is the time of year when we most emphasize the cross, the death of Jesus is something we talk about year-round. Weekly we gather to read, sing, preach and teach the cross. As we witness baptisms and share the Lord's Table we are proclaiming the realities of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

But, with all of the focus on the cross, one thing that we may forget is the brutality and the bloody nature of this core part of our faith. At the heart of our faith is the death of the Son of God. And perhaps this should prompt the question: Why the cross? Why was this the means by which God chose to make salvation possible? Could there have been another way?

### Context of Hebrews: The Unbelieving Jews and the Cross

As we consider the purpose and necessity of the cross Hebrews is a helpful place to turn. The book was written to a group of Jewish believers. They had believed but many Jews found the notion of a crucified Messiah to be unthinkable. In First Corinthians Paul points out that to the Jews the cross was a stumbling block and the height of foolishness.

With that in mind we can better understand why the writer of Hebrews goes to such great lengths to describe the purpose and necessity of the cross and of a suffering Savior. Jesus is the only means of salvation.

### The Cross as the Fitting Plan of God for Our Salvation (2:9-10)

In vs. 9 we have the book's first explicit reference to the death of Christ. Perhaps because of the skepticism of so many Jews, the writer begins to explain the plan of God in the death of Jesus. In the process he underscores the fitting nature of the plan.

- **For it was fitting** – In vs. 10 we have a phrase that lays the foundation for the rest of the passage. He says it was fitting that God would choose to accomplish salvation through the suffering of Jesus. It was fitting. It was the proper. It was appropriate. It was the right thing.
- **God as God** – While the rest of the passage unpacks several reasons why Jesus had to suffer and what was accomplished through the cross, in vs. 10 we also have this reminder: God made all and is over all things. He is God. Without any other explanation this should be sufficient: God's plan is fitting because God is God.

**Thesis Statement:** The cross and the suffering of Christ are fitting because they are consistent with the character of God and because they provide God's people with the Savior we need.

### Jesus, the Suffering Savior, and the Cross as the Perfect Plan of God

- **Jesus: Our Perfect Representative and Substitute (2:14a, 17)** – *He partook of the same things.* The Scriptures are clear that in order for us to be saved we need someone who is perfect to stand for us and in our place – Jesus does both. In this passage we are reminded that Jesus became fully man. He took on flesh and blood and lived under the law without sin. This enables Him to help 'the offspring of Abraham' who need a High Priest and a perfect sacrifice. Jesus became our perfect representative and substitute (Rom 5:18-19; Gal 4:4-5; 1 Tim 2:3-6).
- **Jesus: Our Conqueror over our Enemies (2:14-15)** - Through His death on the cross Jesus conquered our enemies of death and the Devil. Our nature is to fear death, and on our own this is an appropriate fear. But through the cross Jesus defeated death for all those who trust in Him and He also secures victory over the purveyor of death, Satan himself (1 John 3:8; 1 Corinthians 15:21-23; 54-57).
- **Jesus: Our Wrath Bearer (2:17)** – At the cross Jesus defeated our enemies, but He also took the punishment for our sin. The Scriptures are clear that because of our sin we deserve the wrath of God, but at the cross Jesus bore God's wrath – making God both just and the justifier for all who believe. God's wrath is satisfied and we are saved through Jesus's death on the cross (Romans 3:23-26; 1 John 4:10).
- **Jesus: Our Sympathetic High Priest (2:17-18)** – While we may be tempted to view God as disconnected from our lives, this thought is shortsighted. In the incarnation Jesus was tempted in every way as we are making Him our sympathetic High Priest. He has walked this road; He has suffered and been tempted just as we are (Heb. 4:14-16).

**Conclusion: John MacArthur** - *The cross was a masterpiece of wisdom. God solved the problem which no human mind could have solved. What He did was also consistent with His holiness, for God showed on the cross His hatred for sin. It was consistent with His power, being the greatest display of power ever manifested. Christ endured for a few hours what will take an eternity for unrepentant sinners to endure. It was consistent with His love, in that He loved the world so much that He gave His only Son for its redemption. Finally, what He did was consistent with His grace, because Christ's sacrifice was substitutionary. The work of salvation [at the cross] was totally consistent with God's nature. It was entirely fitting for Him to have done what He did.*