

Was Jesus Christ Crucified on a "Cross"?

Where did the custom of crucifixes, crosses, and wearing jewellery of crosses originate? Does it trace back to early Christians and the stake upon which Christ was crucified? Or does its origin go much further back into ancient pagan customs of the heathen? The true origin of the "cross" is shocking, and stunning, in actual fact! The actual history of this ancient pagan symbol will amaze you!



Was Christ nailed to a cross? The vast majority of Christians believe that He was. Tradition suggests that a "cross" composed of two pieces of timber were used to crucify the Messiah. But is there really any real evidence to support this traditional belief?

The Facts of the Matter

The New Testament uses the words *stauros* ("stake") and *stauroo* ("crucify") 74 times. However, in five places it uses the word *xylon*, meaning "tree" ([Acts 5:30](#); [10:39](#); [13:29](#), [Gal 3:13](#), [1Pe 2:24](#)).

Says the Companion Bible, by Bullinger, "The word *stauros* denotes an upright pale or stake, to which the criminals were nailed for execution" (appendix 162, page 186). "The word *xulon* .denotes a piece of a dead log of wood, or timber, for fuel or for any other purpose." "The verb *stauroo* means to drive stakes."

Bullinger goes on, "Our English word 'cross' is the translation of the Latin *cruz*; but the Greek *stauros* no more means a *cruz* than the word 'stick' means a

`crutch.' Homer uses the word *stauros* of an ordinary pole or stake, or a single piece of timber. And this is the meaning and usage of the word throughout the Greek classics.

"It never means two pieces of timber placed across one another at any angle, but always of one piece alone. Hence the usage of the word *xulon* in connection with the manner of our Lord's death and rendered 'tree' in [Acts 5:39; 10:39; 13:29](#); [Gal 3:13](#); [1Pe 2:24](#). This is preserved in our old English name *rood*, or *rod*. . . There is nothing in the Greek of the N.T. even to imply two pieces of timber. "

Bullinger points out that the symbol of crosses "were used as symbols of the Babylonian sun-god," and a cross with four equal arms, vertical and horizontal, was "especially venerated as the 'Solar Wheel.'" He goes on:

"The Catacombs in Rome bear the same testimony: 'Christ' is never represented there as 'hanging on a cross,' and the cross itself is only portrayed in a veiled and hesitating manner. In the Egyptian churches the cross was a PAGAN SYMBOL OF LIFE, borrowed by the Christians, and interpreted in the pagan manner. In his Letters from Rome Dean Burgon says: 'I question whether a cross occurs on any Christian monument of the first four centuries.' In Mrs. Jameson's famous History of Our Lord as Exemplified in Works of Art, she says (vol.2, page 315): 'It must be owned that ancient objects of art, as hitherto known, afford no corroboration of the use of the cross in the simple transverse form familiar to us, at any period preceding, or even closely succeeding, the time of Chrysostom'; and Chrysostom wrote half a century after Constantine!" (p.186).

Concludes Bullinger, "The evidence is thus complete, that the Lord was put to death upon an UPRIGHT STAKE, and not on two pieces of timber placed at any angle."

Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words provides telling insight into the "cross." It declares:

"*stauros* denotes primarily, 'an upright pale or stake.' On such malefactors were nailed for execution. Both the noun and the verb *stauroo*, 'to fasten to a stake or pale,' are originally to be DISTINGUISHED FROM the ecclesiastical form of a two beamed 'cross.' The shape of the latter had its origin in ancient Chaldea, and was used as the symbol of the god Tammuz (being in the shape of the mystic Tau, the initial of his name) in that country and in adjacent lands, including Egypt. By the middle of the third century A.D. had either departed from, or had travestied, certain doctrines of the Christian faith. In order to increase the prestige of the apostate ecclesiastical system pagans were received into the church apart from regeneration by faith, and were permitted largely to retain their pagan signs and symbols. Hence the Tau, or T, in its most frequent form, with the cross-piece lowered, was adopted to stand for the 'cross' of Christ" ("cross," page 138).

Standard Roman practice was to use a stake for crucifixion. However, in later Roman times a cross-bar was sometimes added.

Says Unger's Bible Dictionary, on the cross:

"The cross which was used as an instrument of death was either a plain vertical stake to which the victim was fastened, with the hands tied or nailed above the

head, or such a stake provided with a crossbar, to which the victim was fastened with the arms outstretched" (p.227).

Says the New Bible Dictionary:

"Apart from the single upright post (crux simplex) on which the victim was tied or impaled, there were three types of crosses. The crux commissa (St. Anthony's cross) was shaped like a capital T, thought by some to be derived from. . . the letter tau; the crux decussata (St. Andrew's cross) was shaped like the letter X; the crux immissa was the familiar two beams." (p.279).

Some have suggested that Christ was literally nailed to a living tree, but the evidence to support this idea consists mostly of speculation and circumstantial facts which are not completely convincing. In Old Testament times, execution in Israel was often by stoning. Sometimes the dead bodies were hung on a literal tree as a warning to others ([Deu 21:22-23](#); [Jos 10:26](#)). Such a body was regarded as accursed. In Galatians, Paul the apostle writes that Christ was "made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" ([Gal 3:13](#)). In this case, the fact that Christ hung on a stake, made from a tree, in shame and horror, is representative of the actual "tree" itself used in the time of Moses. Bodies hung on a tree had to be buried before night time came ([John 19:31](#); [Deu 21:22-23](#)). Says The New Bible Dictionary, "This practice accounts for the New Testament reference to Christ's cross as a 'tree' ([Acts 5:30](#); [10:39](#); [13:29](#); [1Pe 2:24](#)), a symbol of humiliation" (p.279).

The Inscription

When we look at the evidence, it becomes obvious that the implement of execution used by the Romans to slay the Messiah was the stauros, or upright stake, just as the Bible states in most passages. There was no cross-piece or second beam or timber. Christ's hands were nailed to the beam over His head, contrary to the traditional depiction on crucifixes or in motion pictures.

However, Pilate had an inscription which was "set up over his head" – at the top of the beam or stake – which stated, "This Is Jesus the King of the Jews" ([Mat 27:37](#)). Mark's account says the inscription read, "The King of the Jews" ([Mark 15:26](#)). Luke declares the inscription was "written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, 'This Is the King of the Jews'" ([Luke 23:38](#)). John's account asserts, "And Pilate wrote a TITLE, and put it on the cross [stauros, or stake]. And the writing was, 'Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews.' This TITLE then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city" ([John 19:19-20](#)).

Clearly, the crucifixion occurred on a "stake" or "beam" of timber. But the inscription, written on a separate piece of wood, in three languages, was like a SIGN OR TITLE placed over His head, or at the top of the beam, most likely. It probably had three lines, one in each language. This was not a "cross-beam," therefore, but a flat piece of wood, like a plank, with the given inscriptions. If we add up all the words used by the apostles, this complete inscription read: "This Is Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews" (see [Mat 27:37](#), [Mark 15:26](#), [Lk.23:38](#), [John 19:19](#)). The exact words may be understood by putting together all the gospel accounts, as different authors emphasized key words rather than the whole phrase. Or, since this inscription was written in three languages – Hebrew or Aramaic, Greek, and Latin – the exact words may have varied between the translations somewhat.

Since Jesus was clearly NOT nailed to a "cross," as tradition suggests, where did the idea of a "cross" being the implement of crucifixion come from? Why so even professing "Christians" today venerate the "cross"? Here is the shocking, dumfounding truth!

The Pagan Origin of the "Cross"

The history of the cross, and its worship and use as a religious symbol by pagan nations long before the time of Christ, shows us plainly that it is not a symbol that Christians should attach any reverence toward.

Says Unger's Bible Dictionary:

"That the cross was widely known in pre-Christian times as an emblem has been clearly shown by independent investigators. Indeed, it was a well-known HEATHEN SIGN. The vestments of the priests of HORUS, the Egyptian god of light, are marked +. At Thebes, in the tombs of the kings, royal cows are represented plowing a calf playing in front. Each animal has an + marked in several places on it. Rassam found buildings at Nineveh marked with the Maltese cross. Osiris, as well as Jupiter Ammon, had for a monogram an +. The cross is found marked on Phoenician monuments at an early date" (p.227).

In his fascinating historical book *The Two Babylons*, Alexander Hislop tells us a great deal about the history of the "cross." Notice what he says about this ancient object of worship:

"There is yet one more symbol of the Romish worship to be noticed, and that is the sign of the cross. In the Papal system, as is well known, the sign of the CROSS and the image of the CROSS are all in all. No prayer can be said, no worship engaged in, no step almost can be taken, without the frequent use of the sign of the cross. The cross is looked upon as the GRAND CHARM, as the GREAT REFUGE in every season of danger, in every hour of temptation as the infallible preservation from all the powers of darkness. The cross is adored with all the homage due ONLY TO THE MOST HIGH; and for any to call it, in the hearing of a genuine Romanist, by the Scriptural term 'the accursed tree' is a mortal offence. To say that such superstitious feeling for the sign of the cross, such worship as Rome pays to a WOODEN or a metal CROSS, ever grew out of a saying of Paul, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ' --that is, in the doctrine of Christ crucified -- is a mere absurdity, a shallow subterfuge and pretence. The magic virtues attributed to the so-called sign of the cross, the worship bestowed on it, never came from such a source. THE SAME SIGN OF THE CROSS that Rome now worships was used in the BABYLONIAN MYSTERIES, was applied by PAGANISM to the same magic purposes was honored with the same honors. THAT WHICH IS NOW CALLED THE CHRISTIAN CROSS WAS ORIGINALLY NO CHRISTIAN EMBLEM AT ALL" (*The Two Babylons*, p.197).

Notice! The cross that is so adored by Joseph Tkach, and others, dates back to ancient pagan worship --the "mystery religions" stemming out of ancient BABYLON! Thus Joseph Tkach is once again retracing his steps and going BACK TO BABYLON in his worship system of the doctrines of the Worldwide Church of God!

As David Whitaker points out in his article, "The Mark of the Beast and the Christian. Cross," the pagan/so-called Christian "cross" is a perversion of the mystic "Tau," the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The "Christian" cross has no

direct connection with the "Tau," which was in the form of a capital "T" in English, but puts the cross-beam down the stem of the letter, as a small "t" shape. The Jews refer to it as cherev, or the "sword." It is an ancient pagan phallic symbol of the male penis, a symbol of pagan sex worship and the abominable rites of Baalism and the pagan temple prostitution carried out in worship of Astarte ("Easter") !

The major "crosses" of history, such as the Latin, Greek, and Maltese crosses, all have the cross-bar in the middle or upper part of the upright pole. The archaeologist Layard found the Maltese cross as a sacred symbol in ancient Nineveh of the Assyrians, close kin to the Babylonians (see Gen.10:8-12). Layard identified the cross symbol he found with the sun, thus showing it was a sign of SUN WORSHIP!

The pagan cross was worn suspended from the necklaces of the Vestal virgins of Pagan Rome, even as Roman Catholic nuns wear it now, seemingly in imitation of their predecessors. The pagan Egyptians did the very same thing. Wilkinson, who studied the ancient Egyptians and nations of Africa, found that the people of many tribes "frequently had a small cross suspended to a necklace, or to the collar of their dress. . . showing that it was already in use as EARLY AS THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY BEFORE THE CHRISTIAN ERA" (Wilkinson's Egyptians, vol. L, p.376).

Says Alexander Hislop, in Two Babylons, regarding the early history of the "cross," and its widespread use as a religious symbol in antiquity:

"There is hardly a Pagan tribe where the cross has not been found. The cross was worshiped by the Pagan Celts long before the incarnation and death of Christ. ...It was worshiped in Mexico for ages before the Roman Catholic missionaries set foot there, large stone crosses being erected, probably to the 'god of rain.' The cross thus widely worshiped, or regarded as a sacred emblem, was the unequivocal SYMBOL OF BACCHUS, THE BABYLONIAN MESSIAH, for he was represented with a head-band COVERED WITH CROSSES.

This symbol of the Babylonian god is revered at this day in all the wide wastes of Tartary, where Buddhism prevails, and the way in which it is represented among them forms a striking commentary on the language applied by Rome to the Cross" (The Two Babylons, p.199).

The cross was anciently used by the Chinese on their pagodas, painted on lanterns to illuminate the recesses of their sacred temples. In India the cross was used to mark the jars of sacred water taken from the Indus and Ganges rivers. In southern India it was used as an emblem of disembodied saints. The Hindus regarded the cross as sacred to their god Agni. Buddhists and other sects in India mark the heads of their devotees with the sign of the "cross."

In 46 B.C., Roman coins depict the god Jupiter or Zeus as holding a long sceptre which ended in a cross. This was the symbol of Jupiter, the chief of the gods. In ancient Egypt, the goddess Isis (Ishtar, Semiramis, or "Easter") was shown with a cross on her forehead. Her priests carried processional crosses as they worshiped her.

Monuments show that ancient Assyrian kings wore a cross suspended on a necklace or attached to their collar. Of course, their descendants, the modern

Germans, are identified with the famous "German cross," and the Nazis in the Third Reich used the Swastika –a form of the cross -- as their symbol of power and might!

Cross Worship in Ancient Mexico

William H. Prescott, in *The Conquest of Mexico*, describes the wonder and amazement of the Spanish Catholic priests and missionaries when they encountered the "cross" as an emblem of worship among the Aztec Indians!

This noted historian writes:

"Yet we should have charity for the missionaries who first landed in this world of wonders; where. . . they were astonished by occasional glimpses of rites and ceremonies. . . In their amazement. . . They did not inquire, whether the SAME THINGS WERE NOT PRACTICED BY OTHER IDOLATROUS PEOPLE. They could not suppress their wonder, as they behold the Cross, the sacred emblem of their own faith, raised as an OBJECT OF WORSHIP in the temple of Anahuac. They met with it in various places; and the IMAGE OF A CROSS may be seen at this day, sculpted in bas-relief, on the walls of one of the buildings of Palenque, while a figure bearing some resemblance to that of a child is held up to it, as if in adoration" (p.695).

In Palenque, Mexico, founded by Votan in the 9th century before the present era, is a pagan temple known as "the temple of the cross." Inscribed on an altar there is a cross six and one half by eleven feet in size. As these Indians had no contact with the Spanish until the sixteenth century of the present era, some 2,300 years later, obviously their "cross" predates the time of Christ by some eight centuries, and could not have been "Christian" in origin!

The early Mexicans worshiped the cross as "our Father," or "Tota." The Scriptures condemn the practice of addressing a piece of wood, or a "stock," as "Our father." God says through Jeremiah, the prophet, "As the thief is ashamed when he is found, so is the house of Israel ashamed; they, their kings, their princes, and their priests, and their prophets, saying TO A STOCK [Hebrew ets, meaning "stick, wood, timber, stake, post, log], Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth: for they have turned their back unto me, and not their face" ([Jer 2:26-27](#)).

Is this prophecy and condemnation of a pagan custom or rite, which had crept in amongst the people of Israel, not a description of ANCIENT PAGAN PHALLIC CROSS WORSHIP?!!

Cross Worship Condemned in Scripture

[Jeremiah 10](#) also speaks of this pagan custom. Notice! God Almighty declares, concerning the customs and practices of the heathen nations around Israel, the ancient pagans:

"Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the CUSTOMS of the people are VAIN: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. They are UPRIGHT AS THE PALM TREE, but speak not: they must needs be BORNE, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in

them to do good. But they are altogether BRUTISH AND FOOLISH: THE STOCK IS A DOCTRINE OF VANITIES" (Jer.10:2-8).

We have often referred to this passage of Scripture in the past to refer to the pagan custom of the Christmas "tree," which pagans used to deck with silver and gold, and place in their homes every year at the winter solstice. However, this passage could also refer just as easily to the pagan CROSS, the "STOCK," made out of WOOD, and "carried about" by pagan priests at the head of pilgrimages, parades, and processions.

Notice the similarity! Jeremiah clearly is speaking of an object made of wood, which is often adorned, and carried about in processions. Normally, decorated trees are put in one place and left there for the duration of the holidays. However, the pagan objects which are carried about in processions were WOODEN CROSSES! Roman Catholic priests still do this ancient custom, today! Says Unger's Bible Dictionary, "It was only after superstition took the place of true spiritual devotion that the figure of the cross was used or borne about as a sacred charm" (p.227).

Clearly, the "cross" so adored by Joseph W. Tkach, of the Worldwide Church of God, "mainstream Christian churches, and the Roman Catholic Church, is PAGAN through and through! It is the veritable SIGN OF BABYLON!

As an instrument of death, of crucifixion, the cross is also very ancient-- and very pagan. In *The Cross in Tradition, History and Art*, we read:

"The cross was used in ancient times as a punishment for flagrant crimes in Egypt, Assyria, Persia, Palestine, Carthage, Greece, and Rome. . . Tradition ascribes the invention of the punishment of the cross to a WOMAN, THE QUEEN SEMIRAMIS" (p.64).

How did this ancient PAGAN symbol creep into and become a part of the established Christian Church? How did it become a part of mainstream Catholic and Protestant religious orthodoxy?

How a Pagan Symbol Became "Christian"

Wilkinson points out how the early Christians in Egypt used the "Tau" symbol, which was the "sign of life," in lieu of the cross, or in place of it. Says this authority,

"A still more curious fact may be mentioned respecting this hieroglyphic character [the Tau], that the EARLY CHRISTIANS OF EGYPT ADOPTED IT IN LIEU OF [INSTEAD OF] THE CROSS, which was afterwards substituted for it, prefixing it to inscriptions in the same manner as the CROSS IN LATER TIMES" (Wilkinson, vol.5, p.283-284).

Says Ralph Woodrow in *Babylon Mystery Religion*, about the cross:

"It was not until Christianity began to be PAGANIZED that the cross came to be thought of as a Christian symbol. It was in 431 A.D. that crosses in churches and chambers were introduced, while the use of crosses on steeples did not come until about 586 A.D. In the 6th Century, the crucifix image was introduced and its worship sanctioned by the church of Rome. It was not until the second council at Ephesus that private homes were required to possess a cross. Such use of the

cross then was obviously not a doctrine of the early true church. It was not a part of the faith that was once delivered to the saints" (p.50).

Both Hislop and Woodrow point out that the ancient cross was associated with the worship of the pagan Saviour Tammuz, whose death was lamented in the spring by many ancient nations -- a practice which God condemns in His Word ([Ezekiel 8:13-14](#)). Sadly, Woodrow has since he wrote those words, returned to nominal "Christian" practices and teachings, and no longer thinks the pagan origin of these things is meaningful or important. But what he wrote in the preceding paragraph is the TRUTH!

The so-called "Christian cross," then, is PAGAN TO THE CORE! As true worshippers of Jesus Christ, we should have nothing whatever to do with this vile symbol. We should repudiate it, abhor it, and put it far away from us !

Just because Jesus Christ, the Messiah, was hung and crucified on a stake, or stauros, in no means suggests that we should venerate or worship the implement of His torture and death! How obscene! How despicable a thought! How blasphemous and iniquitous! How cleverly Satan the devil is to get people to focus their attention on the pagan cross, calling it "Christian," instead of focusing their attention on Christ Jesus, the Saviour Himself!

If Jesus Christ, the Messiah, were killed by a bullet, would you carry a bullet around, to worship, venerate, and continually strive to "Remember the bullet"? If He had been killed by a shot-gun blast, would you carry around a shotgun shell? How ridiculous! Even so, a true Christian has no business carrying around or identifying with the "cross," a pagan relic, or to believe in the superstition of the "power" or good luck charm of the cross !

Remember the Cross?

Regardless of these matters, however, in the May 1993 "Plain Truth" magazine, Joseph Tkach in his "Personal" claims repeatedly that the "Christian Battle Cry" is and ought to be the phrase, "Remember the cross!" By analogy, he cites the Texans who died at the Alamo fort in San Antonio, after withstanding a siege by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna with 5,000 men, from February 23 till March 5, 1836. At the Alamo were about 150 Texans, including such American heroes as Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, and William Travis. Every single man died in the ensuing battle. Their valiant stand was remembered by other Texans with the battle cry, "Remember the Alamo!"

Says Tkach in his editorial:

"For the Christian 'army ' however, there is only one battle cry, one fundamental reference point providing the courage, strength and morale to endure to the end in the good fight of faith. That battle cry is: Remember the cross!"

Tkach continues, in this vein:

"The cross of Christ, therefore, becomes the central reference point for every Christian. ...the unparalleled reality of all that the cross symbolizes equips us with the power of God through Jesus Christ --the power that enables us to walk in the steps of Jesus, who gave himself for us.

"With the CROSS OF CHRIST as the central reference point of our lives, we can 'live a life of love.

"When you need spiritual strength to carry on, remember the proof positive of God's unsearchable love -- THE CROSS of Jesus Christ. ...

"In simpler terms, if you're having trouble forgiving your spouse, remember the cross. If you're struggling with sexual sins, remember the cross. If you're involved in dishonest business tactics, REMEMBER THE CROSS! " (May 1993 "Plain Truth," p.1, emphasis mine mostly).

Why the sudden and emotional attachment to the "cross," the emblem of Christ's sufferings and death, on the part of the leadership of the Worldwide Church of God? This distinctive "about-face" in theology to the embracing of the "Christian cross" and commandment to "remember the cross" itself, whenever troubles come, or whenever sins overpower you or threaten you, instead of emphasis on thinking on CHRIST HIMSELF, AND KEEPING OUR EYES FIGURATIVELY ON HIM, smacks of traditional Catholic doctrine and "cross worship" !

Nowhere in the New Testament do the apostles ever tell us, "Remember the cross!" The apostle Paul himself says rather we should be "Looking unto JESUS, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the SHAME, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For CONSIDER HIM [not the "cross"!] that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" [Hebrews 12:2-3](#)).

To remember the CROSS, and to think on it, instead of Christ -- is nothing less than the worship of the lifeless item itself -- in other words, NOTHING LESS THAN MODERN IDOLATRY!

What Must We Remember?

In the first and second commandments, Almighty God commands, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee ANY GRAVEN IMAGE, or any LIKENESS OF ANY THING that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not BOW DOWN thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me . . ." ([Exodus 20:3-5](#)).

Notice! God condemns the creation of any "graven image" of "anything" as an item of WORSHIP! To use the cross, therefore, as an item of worship, to lovingly finger it, hold it, to use it in worship, to spend time thinking of it INSTEAD OF JESUS CHRIST OR GOD ALMIGHTY HIMSELF, is an act of blatant IDOLATRY and a clear breaking of the commandments of GOD!

Rather than remember a lifeless object like the "cross," which has no power at all to deliver anybody from anything, but is an act of IDOLATRY, God tells us in His Word the things we should REALLY "remember," and keep in our minds!

Notice! God says,

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of THEM when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a SIGN upon thine

hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates" ([Deu 6:4-9](#)).

God commands us to "REMEMBER all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a WHORING: that ye REMEMBER, and do all my commandments, and be holy to your God" ([Numbers 15:39-40](#)).

Instead of "remember the cross," which is a form of idolatry, God commands us to "REMEMBER ALL THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD"! God also commands us to remember how He delivered our ancestors out of Egypt, the first Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread, and how He intervened and rescued and provided for our forefathers in the wilderness (Exodus [Exo 13:3](#); [Deu 5:15](#); [7:18](#); [8:2](#)).

God warns us not to forget these things -- they are crucial to our salvation and overcoming!

In the book of Deuteronomy, God thunders in warning to each and every one of us :

"And thou shalt REMEMBER the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live" ([Deu 8:2-3](#)).

"But thou shalt REMEMBER the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant." ([Deu 8:18](#)).

The prophet Malachi, in the last book of the Old Testament, also tells us what we should remember -- and it most certainly is NOT the "cross"! God says through this prophet,

"REMEMBER YE THE LAW of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the STATUTES AND JUDGEMENTS" ([Malachi 4:4](#)).

The central theme throughout the Bible of what we are to remember, and keep in mind, is the LAW OF GOD, and GOD HIMSELF and what He has done for us! Nowhere does God tell us to "remember the cross." That is a pagan, heathen idea that has somehow wormed its way into the professing worldwide "Christian" church, including now the Worldwide Church of God!

When the apostle Paul, in the New Testament, tells us what to "remember," he says, further, "REMEMBER THAT JESUS CHRIST of the seed of David was RAISED FROM THE DEAD according to my gospel" ([2Ti 2:8](#)).

We should also, therefore, REMEMBER CHRIST, and what He accomplished for us, paying the penalty for our sins, and remember that He now sits at the right hand of God in heaven, as our eternal High Priest who ever lives to make intercession for us! ([Hebrews 4:14-16](#); [Heb 7:24-25](#)).

But the cross, on the other hand, has a distinctly pagan origin and history, and certainly is NOTHING that a true Christian and servant of the living God would want to be associated with, love, adore, worship, remember, or keep in mind, as an object! It is an IDOL! It is an object of SHAME, derision, and horror --not something we are to focus our attention on, or "remember" in times of crises, trial, or trouble! In the New Testament, the cross is nowhere regarded as an instrument or emblem of worship or adoration, nor does it have any power in itself to do good or evil. Theologically, the word stauros, "stake," or "cross," simply was used on occasion as a summary description of the gospel of the Kingdom of God, and salvation, made possible by Jesus' death on the stake for us and for all mankind. We don't focus on human words of wisdom, "lest the cross [stauros] of Christ should be made of none effect" ([1Co 1:17](#)).

When Paul speaks of "the preaching of the cross" (verse 18), he is referring to the preaching of the entire Gospel, summarized by the "stake," as it is central to the theme of salvation, Christ's death being pivotal in the process. When Paul preached the "cross," he explained what he meant: "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" ([1Co 1:23-24](#)).

It was in this vein, then, that Paul told the Galatians, after rebuking them for being led astray by false teachers, who taught that they must earn their salvation through human works of righteousness, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross [stauros] of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" ([Galatians 6:14](#)).

"Saved By His LIFE"

Salvation can only come to us through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, or stake, in payment for our sins. There is no other way. There is no other means of entrance into the Kingdom of God for any of us! Certainly, therefore, in that sense, the "stake" or stauros, is a vital key to our salvation! However, it is the beginning point -- not the ending point! As Paul wrote to the Romans, "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved BY HIS LIFE" ([Romans 5:9-10](#)).

Christ died for our sins; but now He lives at the right hand of God, to intercede for us, and He sends the Holy Spirit to dwell in us and to empower us to keep the commandments of God ([Rom 8:1-2](#); [Heb 7:24](#); [4:16](#)). Therefore the apostle Paul could say, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ LIVETH IN me: and the life which I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" ([Gal 2:20](#)).

Our emphasis, therefore, should be ON CHRIST HIMSELF, and what He DID and still DOES for us -- and not on the physical sign of the "cross" itself! Let us not remember or focus on the cross itself, the object of shame and contempt ([Hebrews 12:2](#)), which Christ endured for us, but let us focus our minds and hearts on and remember CHRIST, who is "the author and finisher of our faith" ([Heb 12:2](#)).

Let us have nothing whatsoever to do with PAGAN customs!

May God help us all to "earnestly contend for the faith which was ONCE delivered unto the saints" ([Jude 1:3](#)).

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