

The Lifting Up of the Lord Jesus Christ

- I. Three times in the Gospel of John Christ prophesied of the manner of His death as being lifted up.
- A. In **JOH 3:14**, Christ drew a parallel to Moses' lifting up of the serpent in the wilderness. c/w **NUM 21:8-9**.
 - 1. The lifted up serpent was by the order of God, as was the death of Christ.
 - 2. Inasmuch as the serpent speaks of the curse of death from sin, so Christ would die under the curse of sin. **2CO 5:21**.
 - B. In **JOH 8:28**, Christ said to the Pharisees, "...When ye have lifted up the Son of man..." This forecast their culpability in fulfilment of **PSA 2:2**.
 - C. In **JOH 12:32-34**, the Spirit plainly equates the lifting up with the manner of Christ's death and the people understood it as such.
 - D. That the lifting up of Jesus alluded to a Roman crucifixion is plain from **JOH 18:31-32**.
 - 1. This was an effort in legal orchestration, *framing mischief by law*. **PSA 94:20**.
 - 2. Rome had stripped the Jews of the power of capital punishment and the Jewish leaders feared the people (**LUK 22:2**) so they framed Jesus to Pilate as an enemy of the state. **LUK 23:2-5; JOH 19:12**.
 - 3. NOTE: The will and number of the people is a formidable counterpoint to tyranny and injustice (**MAR 12:12; ACT 4:21; 5:26**) but also may be manipulated to evil ends. **MAT 27:20-25**.
 - E. Sometimes Christ plainly stated that He would be crucified. **MAT 20:19; 26:2**.
 - F. Christ's exhortations to complete fidelity were with a view to that particular manner of death which He must suffer. **LUK 9:23; 14:27**.
 - G. It is noteworthy that Simeon's melancholy prophecy to Mary of her grief years before described it as a sword through her soul (**LUK 2:35**), the sword having the form of a cross.
- II. The wicked had tried to kill Jesus by various means other than crucifixion but were thwarted.
- A. Herod slaughtered infants to get to Him. **MAT 2:16**.
 - B. Satan invited Christ to attempt suicide. **MAT 4:6**.
 - C. Offended Jews tried to cast Him down a hill. **LUK 4:28-29**.
 - D. They sought to stone Him. **JOH 8:59; 10:31**.
 - E. God had ordained a specific death for Messiah.
 - 1. He must die at the hands of Gentiles. **MAR 10:33-34**.
 - 2. He must hang on a tree. **GAL 3:13**.
 - 3. His feet and hands must be pierced. **ZEC 12:10; 13:6; PSA 22:16; JOH 19:37**.
 - F. Among the methods of capital punishment authorized by Moses's Law were stoning, burning, and being shot through. **LEV 20:2, 14; EXO 19:13**.
 - 1. There was also a "hanging on a tree" in **DEU 21:22-23**.
 - 2. The language there, though, lends itself to the conclusion that the hanging was a post-mortem exhibition. c/w **JOS 10:26; 2SAM 4:12**.
 - 3. Christ's death on the cross was NOT a post-mortem event.
 - G. All of this shows that God was eliminating any means of Christ's death other than a Roman crucifixion in order to fulfil prophecy and His will. **ACT 4:26-28**.
- III. The Jewish leaders may have through their crowd manipulation and legal tactics saved their own skin and washed their hands of the death of Christ but the Holy Ghost exposed them as guilty. **ACT 2:23, 36; 3:14-15; 4:10; 5:30; 1TH 2:14-15**.
- A. Both Jews and Gentiles *bore* guilt for Christ's crucifixion. Pilate subverted Roman justice for political expediency. **ACT 4:27; MAT 27:24**.

- B. Both Jews and Gentiles *bear* guilt for Christ's crucifixion. Christ suffered the death of the cross for the sins of men in general. **1JO 2:1-2.**
 - C. The elect especially bear guilt for Christ's crucifixion since it was expressly for their sins that He died. **JOH 10:11; GAL 2:20.**
 - D. There is plenty of guilt to be shared in Christ's crucifixion so let us not be given over to the folly of class hatred, etc.
- IV. In suffering and dying as He did, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law. **GAL 3:13.**
- A. The tree/cross was the emblem of the curse but as God had done with Balaam many years before, He "...turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because the LORD thy God loved thee" (**DEU 23:5**) and made the tree of death into a tree of life.
 - B. The crux of the matter is that none of us has anything to glory in but the cross. **GAL 6:14.**