

The purpose of this article is to shed light on the symbolic meanings of the Cross.

The Cross, upon which the Savior Jesus Christ was crucified, has significant symbolic meanings. The majority of the professing Christians does not fully understand the symbolic nature of the Cross.

## *The Love of God*

### *John 3:16 – The love of God revealed to humankind*

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

## *The Love of Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God*

### *John 14:31 – The love of Jesus Christ for God the Father*

But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do.

### *John 15:13 – The love of Jesus Christ for His brothers and sisters – to humankind*

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

## *The Commandment of God – God’s Will: The significance of the Cross*

### *3 Nephi 27:14; Moses 7:55; 1 Nephi 11:33; Ephesians 2:16;*

And my Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross; and after that I had been lifted up upon the cross, that I might draw all men unto me, that as I have been lifted up by men even so should men be lifted up by the Father, to stand before me, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil.

Many prophets of God prophesied of the crucifixion of the Savior Jesus the Christ:

- Enoch saw the Son of Man lifted upon the cross. *Moses 7:55*
- ...even so he shall be led, crucified, and slain... the will of the Son being swallowed up in the will of the Father. *Mosiah 15:7*
- Zenock saw in a vision the coming of the Son of God and His crucifixion. *Lehi 1:52-61*
- Nephi testified of the crucifixion of the Savior Jesus Christ. *1 Nephi 11:27-33*

## *The Symbolic Nature of the Cross: the Love of Jesus Christ*

Traveling backward through time, picture yourself on the hill of Golgotha during the crucifixion of the Savior Jesus Christ: with our imperfect vision, we can only understand glimpses of this event that has eternal significance to the salvation of humankind.

The cross, being fully secured – erected upon the ground, we can see (*visibly above the ground*) that the cross points upward (vertically) in one direction, and spans horizontally (left-to-right or right-to-left) in another direction. So, how many wooden beams the cross is constructed with? The cross, is indeed, constructed with 2 wooden beams (one vertical beam and one horizontal beam).

Upward – **Vertical wooden Beam** – shows Christ’s love toward God the Father – points upward to God the Father in heaven. Christ’s obedience to Heavenly Father’s will.

Crossway – **Horizontal wooden Beam** – left to right or right to left ... shows Christ’s love for all his brothers and sisters – the Savior’s love for humanity; the all Embracing (with wide open arms) love of the Great Redeemer to all creatures. He sacrificed His life for His friends-siblings.

## *The Stain of Christ’s Blood on the Cross*

The cross is stained with the Savior’s blood: His blood oozed out from His nailed feet upon the wooden beam; His blood oozed out from His nailed wrists/hands upon the wooden beam; His blood oozed out from His side wounded by the iron-spear; His blood oozed out from His head crowned with thorns; His blood oozed out from other parts of His lashed-beaten

body. His blood oozed out from His mouth, eyes-sockets, ears, nose, and pores due to the agony of pain associated with the sins of the world; His blood oozed out from His broken heart. The precious blood of the Savior spilt in the garden of Gethsemane, and upon the torturous-hands of the Roman soldiers prior to the crucifixion, and finally on the cross, is a testament of His payment for the sins of humankind – the sins of mortals upon this world: past, present, and future.

- Which suffering caused myself (Christ Jesus) ... the greatest of all, to tremble of pain...to suffer both body and spirit. *Doctrine & Covenants 19:18*
- In whom we have redemption through Christ's blood, even forgiveness of sins... *Colossians 1:14,20; 1 Peter 1:2-3; Hebrews 9:14-15; Leviticus 17:11; 1 John 1:7; Mosiah 3:16*
- ...he was wounded for our transgressions... *Isaiah 53:5, 50:6; Daniel 9:24;*
- ...no unclean thing can enter into his kingdom... save those who have washed their garments in my (Christ) blood *3 Nephi 27:19*

## *The Similitude of God's Sacrifice*

The practice of sacrificial lambs foreshadowed the Crucifixion of the Savior Jesus Christ: points to God's sacrifice of the Lamb of God.

- ...the Lamb of God, which should take away the sins of the world. *2 Nephi 31:4; Doctrine & Covenants 138:35*
- Adam was commanded by God to offer the firstlings of their flocks (sheep) as sacrifices unto God through the shedding of the blood of the sacrificial lambs. *Moses 5:5-9*  
...an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam, saying: Why dost thou offer sacrifices unto the land? And Adam said unto him: I know not, save the Lord commanded me.

Thereupon, the angel replied: This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, which is full of grace and truth.

- Abraham was commanded by God to offer up his Son, Isaac, as a sacrifice unto God. *Genesis 22:2-18*

It should be noted, prior to the command of offering his son Isaac as a sacrifice, Abraham was faithfully practicing the command of sacrificing the firstlings of his flock of sheep unto God by way of a burnt offering.

- The passage to freedom of the Israel people from the Egyptian captivity was initiated by the offering of the blood of the firstlings of the flocks of sheep – even the unblemished lambs' blood. The unblemished lambs' blood was brushed on the main door's left and right posts and its lintel for every Jewish house.

The slaying of the Unblemished Lamb is a symbolic figure that points to God's sacrifice of His only Begotten Son in the flesh: Jesus the Christ. This God's sacrifice has eternal significance, and is universally applicable to the entire human race, for the entire world.

## *The Cross is intertwined with the Law of Justice & the Law of Mercy*

The Cross, which is the main symbol of God's sacrifice of His only Begotten Son (the Lamb of God) in the flesh, is directly connected to the Law of Justice & the Law of Mercy.

Heavenly Father provided the Plan of Salvation-Redemption before Earth's foundation was framed (before the Earth was created). Jesus the Christ, our Eldest Brother, is The Savior - The Messiah - The Redeemer. He volunteered and was chosen to reconcile His 'fallen siblings (sinners)' back to the presence of Heavenly Father.

Indeed, the Savior Jesus the Christ fulfilled His mortal life's mission – He fulfilled the requirements for the Plan of Salvation-Redemption to reconcile sinners to God, through His redemptive atonement and resurrection. Thus, the Law of Mercy can be applied upon every repentant person, satisfying the Law of Justice through the atoning sacrifice made by the

Redeemer Jesus the Christ. Without the Law of Mercy, which became effective through the atoning sacrifice of the Savior, the Law of Justice, with its affixed penalty, will claim every unrepentant-defiled-unclean individual, and be consigned to suffer till justice is fully satisfied, and may be subject to spiritual death - unable to return to God's presence.

For God hath made Christ Jesus to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. *2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 2:9-10*

Being born again in Christ the Lord is living a repentant life:

- ...surely every man must repent or suffer... *Doctrine & Covenants 19:4,13-19; 18:11-13; John 3:3-5*
- Be ye therefore followers of God... walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us... arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. *Ephesians 5:1-20*
- ...no unclean thing can inherit the kingdom of God... *3 Nephi 27:19; 1 Nephi 10:21; Alma 11:37; Alma 40:26;*

## *A Personal Cross in Every Mortal*

The Savior Jesus commands that each of us must take-up a cross (though a virtual wooden cross), and testify of our love for God & Christ (vertical beam) and our love for humankind (horizontal beam). Each of us must bear a divine cross, daily. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God... And... Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thy self... no other commandment is greater than these. (The Higher Law–The very Eternal Law of Heaven – the focus of Christ New Covenant) *Mark 12:29-31*

Every person that will not take-up his/her cross, and follow Christ the Lord, and keep His commandments shall not be saved. *Doctrine & Covenants 56:2*

**Question:** Since Christ the Lord does not require us (individually) to be carrying a wooden cross daily, what cross each of us must carry or take-up in a daily basis?

**True Answer:** Stand in front of the mirror daily: while standing upright, keeping your feet together, spread your arms-hands wide-open, horizontally – you will then clearly see the very cross you need to take-up daily. This is your personal cross! And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me (Christ), is not worthy of me. *Matthew 10:38; Luke 9:23*

As the Savior Jesus Christ was nailed on the Cross for a period of time, taking upon Him the sins of the world, we too, symbolically, are 'nailed' unto this mortal life (for a time) to experience (and bear) the sins of the world, and assist in carrying one another's burden of this probationary life.

However, since we mortals are unable to cleanse ourselves of the stains of sin we committed in mortal life, we rely upon the grace and mercy of God for our salvation-redemption-resurrection, even eternal life in Christ Jesus. *1 Nephi 10:5-6*

## *Concluding Remarks*

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. *Romans 4:7*

In order for one to receive forgiveness of one's sins, the person must extend forgiveness upon all those who trespassed against him/her (*Ephesians 4:32*), and whose life is a living testament of a life born again in Christ the Lord.

What is the reasonable sacrifice a mortal can offer, acceptable to God? It is **NOT** by offering the sacrifice of animals nor performing temple ordinances in physical temples as in *Isaiah 1:13-17*. The **only temple** that God requires to be kept holy is one's personal temple – one's personal being – one's personal cross (look in the mirror). *Romans 12:1*

The Lord requires a broken heart and a contrite spirit, living the True Gospel of Jesus Christ – The Christ New Covenant. Live the Pure Gospel Law: Love God and others as oneself. Be a true, wise virgin who follows/lives the very words of Christ Jesus. Those who are of the fold of the True Shepherd hear His voice and follow him, and will receive eternal life. *Acts 3:22-23; Acts 7:37; 1 Nephi 22:20-21; 1 Nephi 19:8-22; 1 Peter 1:16; Matthew 5:48; 3 Nephi 12:48; 3 Nephi 12:19-20; John 10:27-28*. Therefore, take-up thy cross daily, and follow me (Christ the Lord). *Luke 9:23-24*