

Jesus was crucified for exactly this reason. He was sinless; therefore He was the only person who could be the perfect sacrifice to repair the relationship between God and man. Jesus willingly went to the cross and became the final *Great Sacrifice* for the sins of mankind, that began with Adam and Eve. The Quran says that Allah redeemed Abraham's son with a *Great Sacrifice*. Great cannot be a definition for a sheep or a goat in the Quran. Greatness is only used to describe God. This *Great Sacrifice* that would not only redeem Abraham's son, but all of mankind came from God in the person of Jesus Christ, who is the eternal Word of God. *"And We ransomed him with a great sacrifice,"* Quran 37:107. No ordinary man, not even a prophet, could have died on that cross to save us from an eternal life in hell. Only Jesus could die and rise again as the atonement, the substitute, and the ransom for our sins.

*"And He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again."* 2 Corinthians 5:15

#### THE CROSS WAS NECESSARY

God is merciful, but He is also just, and He is love. The cross was necessary to satisfy the demands of God's attributes of justice and love. Justice asks for punishment, separation from God, and eternal death to pay for our sins. Love requires forgiveness of the sinner. If we accept God's way of dealing with our sin and shame we must believe in Jesus by trusting what He did for us and following what He taught. Only then can we receive God's mercy, His assurance of forgiveness and eternal life. Allow Jesus to fill your heart with joy instead of sadness, peace instead of fear, and selfless love instead of hatred.

#### EXAMINE THE TRUTH FOR YOURSELF

My Muslim friend, without the crucifixion and the resurrection, Jesus would be like any other prophet who came before Him or after Him. We encourage you to read about the life of Jesus in the Gospel (Ingil), where you can learn more about why it was important for Jesus to die on the cross and then after three days rise from the dead victoriously. We encourage you to speak to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Call out to Him and ask Him to show you the True Way and to reveal Himself to you.

Jesus said: *"I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies."* John 11:25

*Have a Question?*

*Need a copy of the Holy Bible?*

**Let us hear from you.**



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# WAS JESUS CRUCIFIED?

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*Quran references are exact quotes from the Shakir, Pickthall, and Ali translations of the Quran.*

## Dear Muslim Friend,

You may have wondered why Christians believe that Jesus (Isa) was crucified. As a Muslim, you may possibly believe in one of the following three primary Quranic teachings about Jesus' death and resurrection from the dead.

### THE IMAGE ON THE CROSS

*"And their saying: Surely we have killed the Messiah, Isa son of Maryam, the messenger of Allah; and they did not kill him nor did they crucify him, but it appeared to them so (like Isa) and most surely those who differ therein are only in a doubt about it; they have no knowledge respecting it, but only follow a conjecture, and they killed him not for sure. Nay! Allah took him up to Himself; and Allah is Mighty, Wise."* Quran 4:157–158

You might quote this reference and say that Jesus was not the one who was crucified by the Jews. Rather, Allah put the image of Isa on someone else (probably Judas Iscariot) at the time of crucifixion. Then Allah took Isa up to paradise and saved Him from the hands of the Jews. This means that Allah deceived the Jews in order to save Jesus.

### NATURAL DEATH

*"Isa said: 'So peace is on me the day I was born, the day that I die, and the day that I shall be raised up to life.'" Quran 19:33*

Like some Muslims, you might interpret this verse to mean that Isa died naturally at some point, and that Allah raised him up and took him to paradise.

### ASCENSION

*"Behold! Allah said: 'O Jesus! I will take thee and raise thee to Myself and clear thee (of the falsehoods) of those who blaspheme; I will make those who follow thee superior to those who reject faith, to the Day of Resurrection: Then shall ye all return unto me, and I will judge between you of the matters wherein ye dispute.'" Quran 3:55*

You might hold to the belief that Isa did not see death but was raised to the heavens so that the blasphemers would realize that he was truly sent by Allah.

From the verses above and others, you might claim that the crucifixion did not actually happen; but that it was a story fabricated by Christians after Isa's death. Or, you might claim that Isa was crucified but did not die. He fainted on the cross and later recovered. The fact is that the Quran does not validate any of the multiple theories it offers, therefore the reader is left to question: Was Isa crucified? Did he die? Did someone replace him on the cross, or did God raise him to heaven to avoid death? Which one is true historically?

## Historic Proof

There are at least 17 ancient texts written by *non-Christian* historians and witnesses that record the various aspects of Jesus' earthly ministry. Most of these writings originated in the first to the mid-second century, and are consistent with information presented in the Bible. These secular texts all confirm that Jesus was crucified and that He rose again. Here are some of these trusted sources from history:

- **Flavius Josephus** (AD 38–100+), a Jewish historian, wrote about Jesus in his *Jewish Antiquities*: "...we learn that Jesus was a wise man who did surprising feats, taught many, won over followers among the Jews and the Greeks, was believed to be the Messiah, was accused by the Jewish leaders, was condemned to be crucified by Pilate, and was considered by the author to have been resurrected" (Wilkins, Michael J. *Jesus Under Fire*, Zondervan 1995). The same historian, in his book *The Jewish War* (volume eight, chapter three), reports in detail about Jesus and his crucifixion under Pilate.
- **Cornelius Tacitus** (AD 55–120), a citizen of first-century Rome, is considered one of the most accurate historians of the ancient world. An excerpt from Tacitus tells us that the Roman emperor Nero, "inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class ... called Christians ... Christos [Christ], from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty [the cross] during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus..." (Tacitus, A 15.44)
- The **Jewish Talmud**, a source decidedly not biased toward Jesus, agrees with the Bible about the major events of His life. From the Talmud: "On the eve of Passover they hanged Yeshu... Anyone who knows anything in his favor let him come and plead in his behalf. But, not having found anything in his favor, they hanged him on the eve of the Passover." (Sanhedrin 43a)

This is remarkable historical information considering that most ancient historians focused on the lives of political and military leaders, not on obscure rabbis (teachers of the Torah) from distant humble provinces of the Roman Empire. These ancient historians (Jews, Greeks, and Romans), though not Christians themselves, confirm the crucifixion event presented in the New Testament.

## Valid Sources

In addition to historic sources, the New Testament of the Bible, where Jesus' life is related in detail, is a valid source of information about Jesus. As a literary document, it provides better material about the words and deeds of Christ than any other ancient classical writing. The New Testament has far more manuscript portions than any other ancient text concerning the life of Jesus. In contrast to other classical works that have large pieces missing from their original manuscripts, no portion of the New Testament books is missing!

As for the Old Testament, there are 300 references, including 60 major prophecies, about a promised redeemer who was to die on the cross and then rise again. In the 1960's, Peter W. Stoner and Robert C. Newman wrote a book entitled *Science Speaks* concerning these prophecies and the laws of probability. In it, Newman and Stoner proved using only 8 of these 60 prophecies, that the probability of one man fulfilling all eight is equal to 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. Jesus did not fulfill just eight of these prophecies. He fulfilled *all* the Old Testament prophecies that foretold His coming!

*If you would like to read the list of the prophecies regarding Jesus, the Messiah, contact us with your request and we will provide you with a copy.*

## Why Was Jesus Crucified?

You may ask: "Why was Jesus crucified when both the Bible and the Quran confirm that He was sinless?"

*"He said: I am only a messenger of thy Lord that I may bestow on thee a faultless son."* Quran 19:19

*"He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."*  
1 Peter 2:22