

Dear God | Why Did Jesus Have to Die? | Discussion Guide - *Isaiah 53:3-12*

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Certainly the coming year will be filled with celebrations and joys. But, it is also likely that challenges will come. Some might face money concerns. Others might experience family turmoil. While others could endure new health challenges. We really have no way of knowing what is to come. But this is certain, the challenges we could face will pale in comparison to the *Gift* we have been given. So, with that in mind, we should start remembering Christ's Crucifixion. Here are some Scriptures that will help your recall. **Matthew 26-27; Luke 22-23; John 18-19; Isaiah 53:3-12.** Such a brutal story might pose the question, "*Why Did Jesus Have to Die?*"

Jesus had to die because we are not perfect...

Romans 3:23 (NLT) *For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard.*

Romans 3:10 (NLT) *As the Scriptures say, "No one is righteous—not even one."*

We often make the declaration, "Well, I'm not perfect." We use the phrase like an excuse or as a joke, but it is neither. It is the root of our deepest problem. We were created as God's perfect masterpiece and that work has been ruined. How has that work been ruined?

We were created to depend on God, but we do what we want. *We were created to LIVE* while God determined right and wrong. Now we judge everything and live very little. *We were created for vulnerable, intimate relationship* with God and others. But, we isolate ourselves.

Of course, it gets worse because we also break God's law. Consider the Ten Commandments. #1 Worship God only. #2 Don't make idols to replace Him. #3 Don't use His name as a profanity. #4 Rest and worship on the Lord's day. #5 Honor your parents. #7 Don't cheat on your spouse. #8 Don't steal. #9 Don't lie. #10 Don't desire other people's things. And, oh yeah, I missed one #6 don't murder anyone. Don't these commands seem reasonable? Except...

"Did you see that pic?" "OMG" - Shoot #3 is broken. What did you do Sunday? Oops, there's #4. Did you notice that Hot Guy? Oh my, that's #7 (Matt 5:27-28). Did you say you hate the new guy, isn't that #6 (Matt 5:21-22)?

The New Testament refers to this as the Law - not the Laws - because it is ONE thing. If you were hanging from a cliff clinging only to a ten link chain, which link is it okay to break?

James 2:10 (NLT) *For the person who keeps all of the laws except one is as guilty as a person who has broken all of God's laws.*

Jesus had to die because we are condemned...

John 3:36 (NLT) *And anyone who believes in God's Son has eternal life. Anyone who doesn't obey the Son will never experience eternal life but remains under God's angry judgment."*

Death is the price of our imperfection. There are three ways we experience death. There is Physical Death. We are probably familiar with death in this capacity, but it is not the only way we die. There is also Spiritual Death. Paul once wrote, "**We were dead in trespasses and sins.**" Eph 2:1. He was speaking of our Spiritual awareness. Often we sense that there is so much more to our world,

but we have no way of comprehending it. The part of us created to connect with that world is dead. And, lastly there is Eternal Death. This occurs after our physical death and establishes the terrifying reality that physical death is not the end of consciousness or existence.

Revelation 20:14 (NLT) *Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire is the second death.*

John the Apostle's record of John the Baptist's statement in **John 3:36** presents the truth that we are not waiting to be judged by God for our sins (imperfections). But, that we have already been condemned. This leaves all of mankind in a terrible state and should help us understand why Jesus' death on our behalf was necessary even though it was extreme.

Jesus had to die because God is Just...

This is not a matter that can be hidden and forgotten. God could not just overlook the problem. He is a Good God and by extension a Good Judge. A good judge does not just let people off. A good judge requires that punishment be fairly administered. Paul wrote this regarding God's requirement that Jesus die in our place.

Romans 3:26 (NLT)... *God did this to demonstrate his righteousness, for he himself is fair and just,...*

Jesus had to die because God is LOVE...

So Jesus became Sin and those who believe become Righteous. God's answer for our tragedy was to receive our punishment. This act should erase any doubt regarding His Love and Goodness.

1 John 4:9-10 (NLT) *God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. 10 This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.*

So, Why Did Jesus Have to Die? Because you needed Him to, therefore *He died for you*. Now the question is, "What will you do about it?"

Hebrews 2:3 (NLT) *So what makes us think we can escape if we ignore this great salvation that was first announced by the Lord Jesus himself and then delivered to us by those who heard him speak?*

Discussion:

- Review **Matthew 26-27; Luke 22-23; John 18-19; Isaiah 53:3-12**. Discuss the Crucifixion. Do you think God putting Jesus through this is extreme? Why?
- Read **Romans 3:23**. If perfect is the standard to get into heaven, how are we doing?
- Read **Matt 5:21-22; 27-28**. Discuss Jesus' take on the Law regarding adultery and murder.
- Read **John 3:36** and **Rev 20:14**. Discuss John's wording- "already condemned".
- Discuss **Romans 3:26**. How does a "Just" God create problems for the "less than perfect"?
- Read **1 John 4:9-10**. Why do people struggle with God's Love for them?
- Read **Heb 2:3** and **John 14:6**. How many ways are there to God? Discuss.
- Did anything stand out in your reading today that you could share with someone else?