

# alive magazine

March '20

# The Future Begins Now!

# Letter from Andrew Roebert

What a joy it is to be able to write to you and bring you up to speed on all that has been happening - The Lord is good!

The last few months have been a turning point for me and my family. After the passing of my wife and the mother of my children, and the co-founder of this ministry, we have found ourselves in a type of 'survival mode'. I believe that we have done well, and the Lord has certainly helped and sustained us. But, at the same time, I was aware that it was not a sustainable way of living.

As I began to wait on the Lord, He graciously began to lead me about the future. It was not easy at first, but over a period of time, He began to reveal His plan.

It started with a scripture that I felt the Lord was giving me:

***Isaiah 62:10-11 Go out! Go out! Prepare the roadway for my people to return! Build the roads, pull out the boulders, raise the flag... See, the Lord has sent His messengers to every land and said. 'Tell my people, I, the Lord your God, am coming to save you and will bring you many gifts!'***

I began to realise that I would not be able to continue juggling all the balls that I was carrying. Something would have to be laid down.

Up until this time, I had been involved in several aspects of different ministries. I always thought that I would sit on multiple chairs, but the Lord was saying: 'No, no, no! You are becoming my messenger!'

The upshot of all of this was the decision to step back from my employed involvement in my local church and pursue, with a full-time passion, what God is doing here, at ALIVE TO GOD.

The Lord spoke to me through a prophetic word and said: 'I want to use you to tell the nations of me, to take My name to the nations. I (the Lord) am taking over what I have planned for many years! Take My Name to the furthest corners of the earth. I want you to take ME wherever I tell you! I am opening doors for you... do not hesitate!'

It dawned on me, that ALIVE TO GOD was the ideal vehicle to fulfill these instructions.

So, with effect from the 1st of March 2020, I have stepped back from my role in my local church and I have stepped up and into the calling and purposes of God, here at ALIVE TO GOD.

I look forward to the challenge and the opportunity of being HIS messenger.

My request to you is that you embrace this new development and support us, and also pray for me. I believe that what we are doing is valuable and precious, and many people are being reached through this 'electronic church' we call ALIVE TO GOD.

Let me start from today and give you a scripture, in line with God's instructions to me. It is based on Isaiah 62:11 from the Living Bible.

'Tell my people, I, the Lord your God, am coming to save you and will bring you many gifts!'

**NOTES: THE FUTURE BEGIN NOW!**
In the light of all these developments, I have written a set of notes entitled: THE FUTURE BEGINS NOW! The truth is that with each new day we have the joy and the opportunity to start again and obey the Lord afresh. Be encouraged, the Lord has plans for your good, to give you a hope and a future.

I have taken the liberty of including the banking details here, as I cannot do this alone. I look forward to how the Lord will provide, and perhaps He will use you?

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Thanks again for your time and for walking this road with us. May He give you 'rest for your soul!'

Much love and blessings,
Pastor Andrew Roebert
ALIVE TO GOD

# CONTENTS

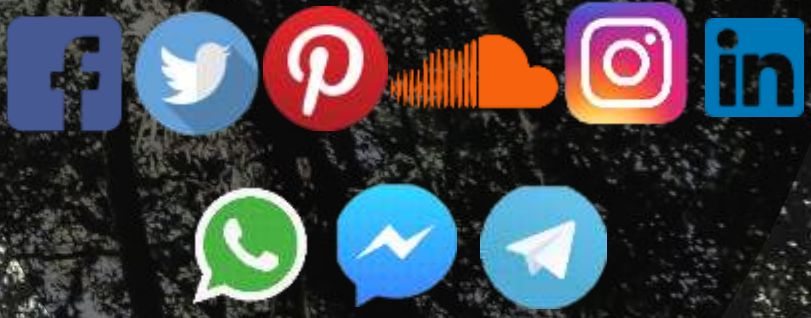
*+ featured articles*


4 **THE FUTURE BEGINS NOW!**
- Andrew Roebert –

8 **DON'T MISS WHAT GOD IS DOING IN YOUR LIFE**
- SeedTime.com –

12 **ARE YOU IN A MARITAL RUT?**
- MarriageMissions.com –

16 **WHY WAS JESUS CRUCIFIED?**
- GotGuestions.org –

# The Future Begins Now!

By: Andrew Roebert

Sometimes we can become so bogged down in life that we don't realise that with each new day comes a new start and new beginning. As a young man. I remember visiting my friend's home. His mother had an embroidered artwork that hung at the end of the passage as you walked out of the house. I can't remember the exact words, but it said something like this: 'TODAY IS THE FIRST DAY OF THE REST OF YOUR LIFE!' This left an impression on me as a young man. At the time I was young and didn't really take much notice, but yet it caught my attention, and has remained with me all of these years. How would we live if we realised that today was the first day of the rest of our lives? I am sure it would change our perspective and cause us to embrace the new day with renewed hope and strength. It would turn today into a new opportunity, and not just another day. It would make what we do today more significant, and perhaps encourage us to make a new start and to make better use of it. You see, your future begins now. This is a moment that God has given you. Grab it with both hands and make the most of it.

## GOD HAS BROUGHT YOU THIS FAR

God in His wisdom and plan has brought you to this point. Recognise His hand in your life.

*Psalm 139:16 'You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.'*

Never doubt the Lord's deep and enduring love for you, even in the tough times. Always remind yourself that it is the Lord who has carried and sustained you.

*1 Samuel 7:12 Then Samuel took a stone and set it up... He named it Ebenezer, saying, 'Thus far the LORD has helped us.'*

Perhaps you could just pause for a moment and remember what the Lord has done for you, and be thankful.



## DON'T LET YOUR PAST HOLD YOU BACK

One of the biggest hindrances to fully utilising our today, is our past! Our past comes with much baggage, and if we try to drag this baggage into the future, regardless of how precious it may be, it will hold us back. Your past is exactly that, your past. The beauty of the past is that it is over, and no one can change what happened there, but we can pause, look back for a moment, and then turn to look into the rising sunshine of today and all it promises.

*Isaiah 43:18-19 'Do not call to mind the former things or ponder things of the past. Behold, I will do something new, Now it will spring forth; Will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, rivers in the desert.'*

## TOMORROW NEVER COMES!

In our culture there is a phrase that is often used: 'Tomorrow is another day!' The implication is that we don't need to be concerned or under pressure, because there is always tomorrow. We can see tomorrow as another chance or opportunity to achieve what we did not achieve today. But the truth of the matter is that tomorrow never really comes. When tomorrow comes, it is another today, with its own tomorrow still lying ahead. Today is actually all we are sure of. Tomorrow is just another hope and another promise, of another today. For this reason, it is important to realise how important today is.

*Proverbs 27:1 'Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring.'*



## EMBRACE THE NEW – PRESS ON

*Philippians 3:12-14 'I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.'*

This 'embracing' of the new and this attitude of pressing on, should be our quality decision and the choice of our hearts. Don't resign yourself to more of the same. Don't settle of less than God's best. Say after me: 'I believe that the Lord has great things in store for me. He has a hope and future that He has prepared for me. Today, I step away from the past and I embrace His new season, His new life and His purpose and plan for me! Amen'

### WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH THE REST OF YOUR LIFE?

1. Don't waste your time on futile things.

*1 Peter 4:2 'You won't spend the rest of your lives chasing your own desires, but you will be anxious to do the will of God.'*

2. Don't depend on your own wisdom.

*Proverbs 19:20 'Get all the advice and instruction you can, so you will be wise the rest of your life.'*

3. Do not live in fear of the future.

*Matthew 6:34 'Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.'*





4. Give life your best shot.

*Colossians 3:23 'Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.'*

5. Expect the best from God.

*1 Kings 3:13 'And I will also give you what you did not ask for - riches and fame! No other king in all the world will be compared to you for the rest of your life!'*

6. On a daily basis, step into the abundant life the Lord offers you.

*John 10:10 'The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.'*

# Don't Miss What God Is Doing In Your Life

By: SeedTime.com

In 2017, I purchased a Jeep Wrangler. I had been wanting one for 20 years. I even wrote a song about wanting a Jeep Wrangler in high school. It was just something I had been longing for, for such a long time. I had honestly shopped around for Jeeps probably three times over the previous 20 years. And then for one reason or another, I just couldn't go through with the purchase at the time. I would go through this cycle over and over again. Over time, I'm praying for this car and in 2017 I finally was able to purchase a Jeep. The first day I got the Jeep Wrangler we were actually driving back from Kentucky, as I bought it out of state, so it was a little bit of a drive. And so I'm driving home, I'm on top of the world, so ecstatic that I finally have this car! Everything seems good and I'm noticing that even strangers are waving to me. I thought, "Oh, that's a fun Kentucky thing." Driving down these roads in Kentucky and everybody's waving and it's just great and it's awesome. The next day, I'm back in Nashville, I go out with the Jeep and it's a beautiful day. I have the top down and I took the doors off. It's really an amazing feeling. I feel like I'm basically on a motorcycle with four wheels. It's great. So I'm driving again, and I'm driving down this road. There's a lot of cars on this road, but I noticed this guy was waving to me and I thought, "Do I know you?" I was trying to look to see if I knew him, but I didn't know him. I then thought, "Oh, maybe he just confused me for somebody else." And then I started noticing more and more people waving at me, it was just happening more and more and more again.

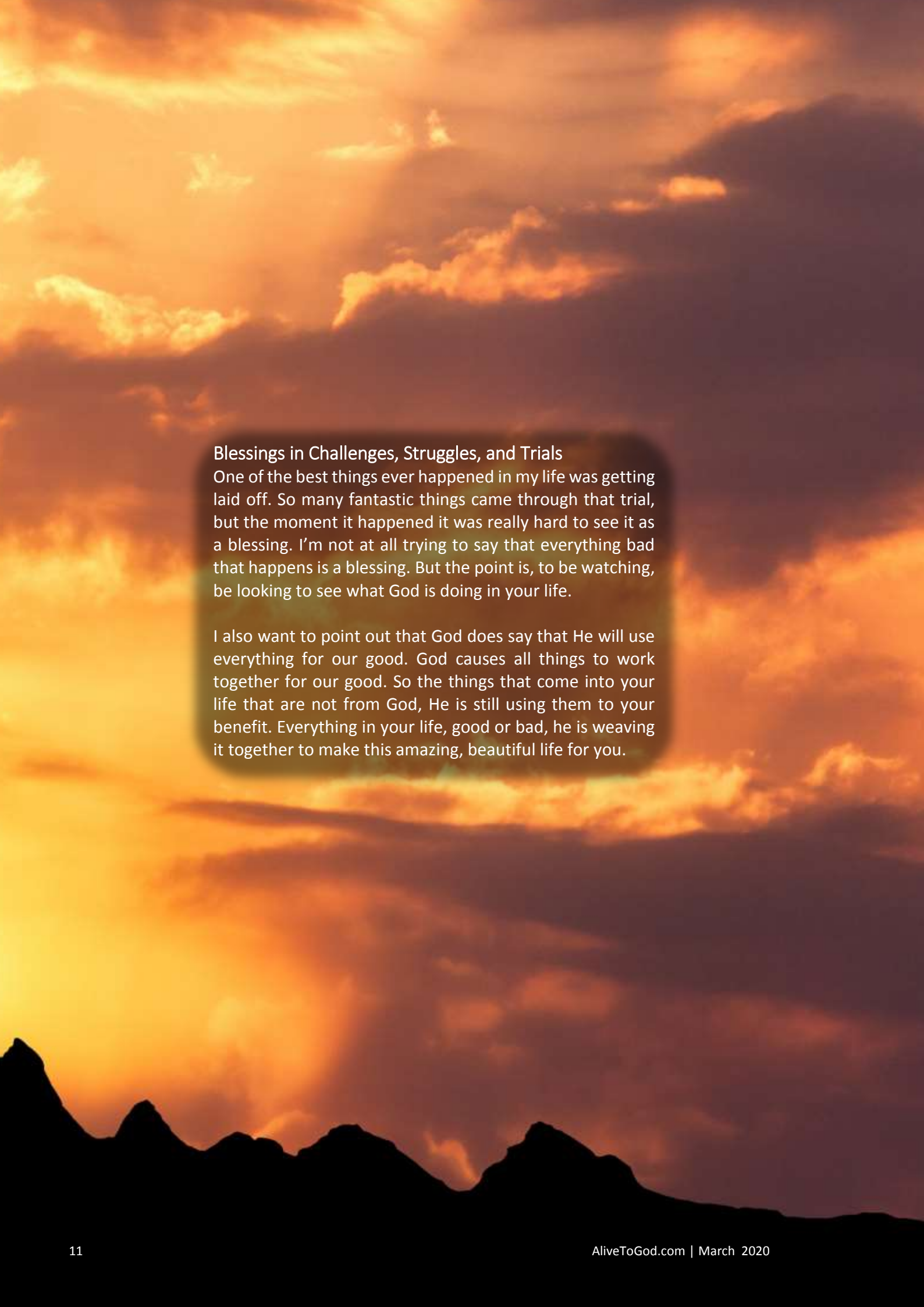
I was at a stoplight one time and this guy starts waving to me, like waving to me so much that he almost falls out of his car waving to me. I began thinking, “Well, what is going on?” I feel like all this waving started once I got this Jeep and I could not figure out what was going on. Then it just finally dawned on me, every single person who I remember who had been waving to me was also driving a Jeep.

## The Jeep Club

There’s a club here that I just joined. I didn’t know that there was a Jeep club or that I am now a part of this club. Apparently this is a thing, if you have a Jeep and you drive by somebody else in a Jeep, you wave. That’s just what you do. Once I learned of the Jeep wave, I can remember telling my wife Linda that if she’s taking the Jeep out for the day, she has to wave at other people who are driving a Jeep. She looked at me and asked “Are you serious?” I told her that yes, this is a thing. They’re all going to wave at you and you need to wave back. With the exception for girls, because sometimes girls don’t wave. If the driver is a 16-year-old girl driving her bright yellow Jeep, she doesn’t wave (like Cher from Clueless). Now that I realized I’m in this club, and this is how you behave and what you do, I didn’t want to miss any opportunity to wave at my fellow club members. I started watching really, really closely. Every time I’m driving, I’m looking around. Quickly, what I realised is there’s Jeeps everywhere. I knew there were a lot of Jeeps on the road, but once you’re really, really looking…they’re everywhere. I was participating and paying attention and looking all around for Jeeps, everywhere. Finding them and getting to do my wave to everybody was exciting. We had our two-year-old daughter getting in on the game, too. Anytime we’d be driving, she’d be looking around and she’d yell, “My Jeep. My Jeep.” It was so cute. But anyway, the point is, is that it became a family affair for all of us. And we were all just now very aware of all the Jeeps on the road and we never missed any of them because we were looking so closely.

## God's Blessings

If you're still with me, you're probably wondering why I am telling you that story and there's a reason. I'm working on a book right now and I just finished a chapter. And the chapter is about seeing God's blessings and how very often if we aren't looking, we miss God's blessings and we missed the things that He's doing in our lives. And the truth is, is that God's blessings are all around us and they're happening all the time. He is pouring them out on us. But if we're not actively looking for what God's doing in our lives and the blessings that are coming towards us, or that are already in our lives, we can miss them. One of the things that I was so guilty of for so many years was explaining away the things that God's doing. When God would do something, I didn't see it as a blessing. When I got a promotion, I would explain it as, "Well, I just worked really hard. That's why I got a promotion." Or, if you're struggling to get pregnant for a while and then you get pregnant and you happen to use a doctor, you can attribute that to the doctor or you can attribute it to God. Maybe God used that doctor, but at the end of the day, that's the blessing of the Lord. The reality is, is that God uses natural things all the time to bless us. But I think that's why it makes it tricky to see that it is actually the Lord who is doing these things. Rather than just seeing them as a coincidence and like, "Oh, well it was just because I happened to be in the right place at the right time." Well, yeah, you were there at the right place at the right time. But why were you there? You were there because of the Lord. The Lord directs your steps. And you can look at that as just serendipitous or you can see it for what it really is, which is the blessing of the Lord in your life. Linda and I just want to encourage you in this today, be looking around, be watching for what God's doing in your life. And sometimes He even does this through things that are big challenges and struggles and trials. He uses them ultimately to be a blessing. We've had this happen multiple times.



## Blessings in Challenges, Struggles, and Trials

One of the best things ever happened in my life was getting laid off. So many fantastic things came through that trial, but the moment it happened it was really hard to see it as a blessing. I'm not at all trying to say that everything bad that happens is a blessing. But the point is, to be watching, be looking to see what God is doing in your life.

I also want to point out that God does say that He will use everything for our good. God causes all things to work together for our good. So the things that come into your life that are not from God, He is still using them to your benefit. Everything in your life, good or bad, he is weaving it together to make this amazing, beautiful life for you.

# Are You in a Marital Rut?

By: MarriageMissions.com



"Marriage is a long journey, and any long journey requires occasionally getting off the road to eat, to fill up the car with gas, or simply to rest. Has your love fallen into a marital rut? Is your marriage slowly getting buried under the daily routine? What can you do differently to break out of the box and renew your love for each other?" (Gary Thomas)

Good questions, aren't they? There's hardly a relationship around that doesn't hit a time when life becomes so "daily" that those involved don't find themselves bored. We know that we've fallen into quite a few marital ruts ourselves. Who hasn't? You would be quite the unique couple if you haven't. With that said, if you're finding this in your marriage, we have a few suggestions for you that might help. First, the following insight comes from one of our favorite books by Gary Thomas. It's titled, Devotions for a Sacred Marriage. Below is portion of a devotional titled, "Marital Ruts."



## Marital Rut?

"Maybe your rut is more behavioral. You've learned to tune out your spouse's voice. Or you always make love in the same, predictable way or on the same, predictable night. Maybe you've completely stopped trying to find creative ways to demonstrate your affection and care. Perhaps you've become too ensconced in the workweek routine —the early-morning departure, the commute, and the time away from home. You come back in the evening so tired and grouchy — that you're completely missing opportunities to affirm and reconnect with each other. Never underestimate the element of occasional surprise in the delighting of your spouse and building up your marriage. It can be so simple. It's a wife going to the trouble of picking out an audio book that her husband can listen to on his morning commute.

Maybe it's a husband buying his wife a completely unexpected gift. This is unconnected to any holiday or anniversary, for no other reason than to tell her he loves her. What would it mean to your spouse if you took an afternoon off? You take time away from work or watching the kids. Perhaps you go to an early movie, take a walk around the lake, or go on a picnic. Sometimes all it takes is something out of the ordinary. It's something that says, 'I don't take you —or us —for granted. I've put some special thought into this. And I want to fight the 'murderous repetitions' and 'infernal element of boredom.'

And then Gary goes on to suggest a spiritual solution. It is to adopt a:

## New Spirit and Attitude

"Through Ezekiel, God promised Israel, 'I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.' (Ezekiel 36:26) In the same way we can become calloused toward God, so we can become calloused toward each other. Pray for a new spirit and attitude toward your spouse. Pray that your 'heart of stone' will become a 'heart of flesh.' Occasional ruts are inevitable in any long-term relationship, but they're never insurmountable. We can break out of them if we really want to."

Are you in a marital rut? And if you are, do you want to break out of it? If you do, it will take a "mental shift" to do so. Sheila Wray Gregoire talks about the "mental shift" that is involved to get out of marital ruts. She is addressing wives. But it pertains to husbands, as well. So if you're a husband, don't dismiss it. (Just change out the "boring" gripes you may have.) Sheila writes:

"Marriages tend to lose that spark, and become boring. That is because we focus on the marriage's areas of weakness. We don't communicate well. He doesn't do enough of the housework. He leaves all the childcare to me. All he thinks about is sex. Etc. Etc. And these things tend to be the things we talk about—that dominate our conversation. So the marriage becomes tense at worst, and boring at best. You can't thrive if you're always looking at all the things you each do wrong. The marriages that thrive tend to be the ones where people focus on their strengths."

## Suggestions to Break Out of Marital Rut

In Sheila's article she gives several good suggestions. Here are a few:

"When's the last time you really laughed together? Had fun together? Relaxed together? What were you doing? Maybe a few years ago you pulled out a puzzle, and realized he [she] really liked doing puzzles, and you liked it, too. But you haven't pulled one out since. Maybe you're awesome at playing Monopoly together. Instead of living in a boring marriage, ask, 'What are our strengths as a couple?' Are you sporty together? Can you lead a great Bible study together? Are you good youth leaders at church? Perhaps you both are musical. Are you good at painting a room together or fixing up the house? Figure out what you can do together that makes you feel energized, and that touches your interests and/or gifts. And then do more of it! The way to avoid marriage ruts is to do the things you're good at together. This way you can feel successful as a couple."

## More Marital Rut Suggestions?

Now, this next suggestion comes from Autumn Jones. This sure works in our marriage:

"Stay Flirty. Don't let the art of flirting die — send a sassy text to your spouse to keep the spark going. As Parenting magazine suggested, try to have at least one flirty exchange a day to counter all those that have to do with daily life stuff." (From her article, "13 Ways to Get Your Marriage Out of a Rut")

Autumn also suggests:

"Pass notes. Write each other little notes with reminders of your love. And then to add a little fun to this note-passing gesture, place it in an unexpected place to catch your partner off guard, as suggested by Parents magazine."

Stephen Kaech gives this additional tip about getting out of a marital rut:

"My wife and I have learned over the years to simply steer our relationship out of the ruts periodically, even daily to keep our relationship fresh. When one of us senses that the routine is lasting too long, we will do something crazy to steer our way out. It may be something simple like deliberately messing up the words to a song on the radio as we drive home from work. This then turns into a contest to see who can make up the craziest lyrics.

The bottom line here is to just do simple things that break up the routine to help avoid the short-term hazards." (From the Christianmingle.com article, "How to Avoid a Relationship Rut in Your Marriage")

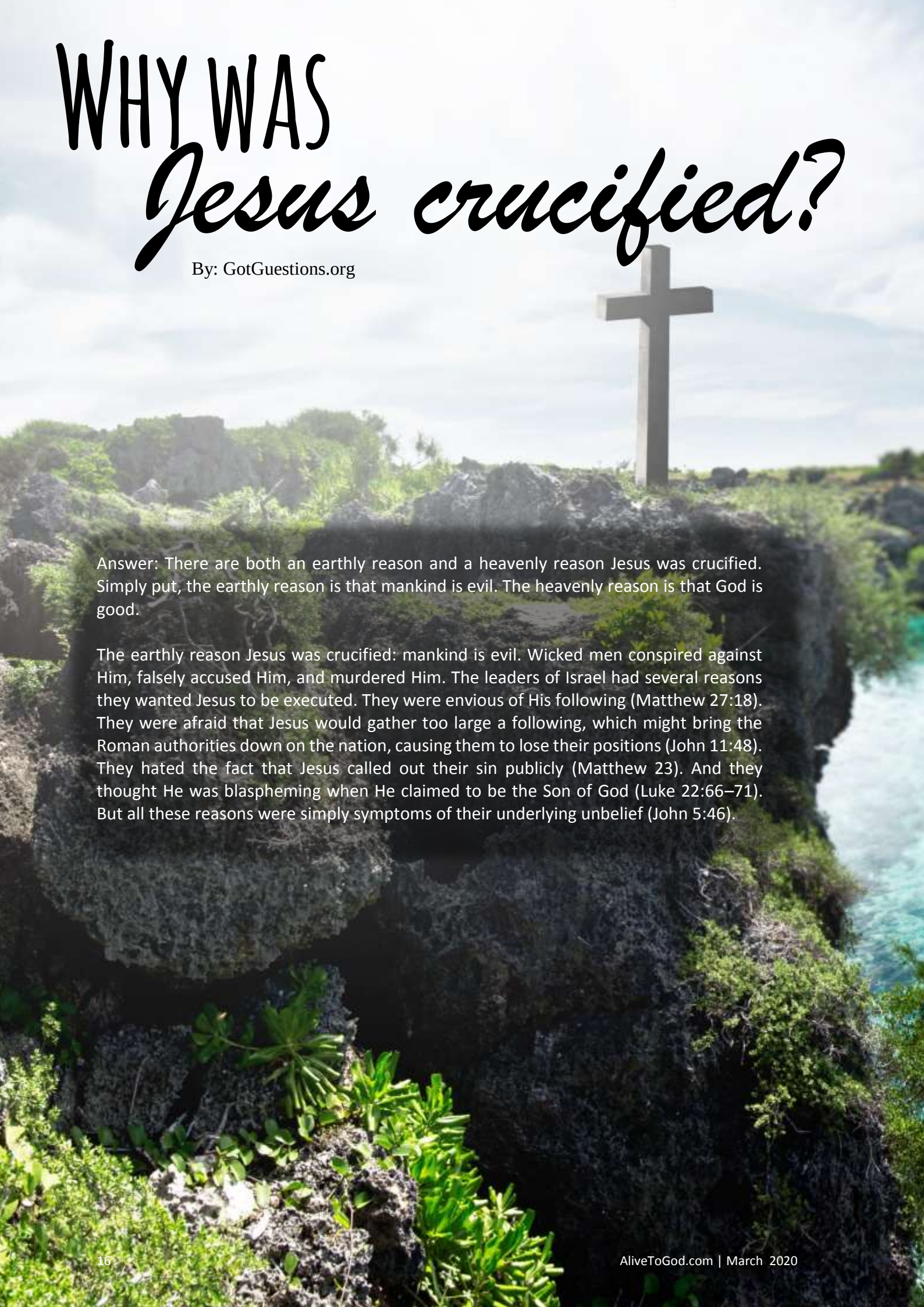
## Have Fun!

Yes, we know this last suggestion isn't the most innocent one. But come on… you're married! This is allowed. Have fun! After all, as a married couple, you have God's blessing! And then here's a suggestion from an article written for Cornerstone Marriage and Family Ministry:

"Get Playful: It's been aptly said, 'couples who play together stay together.' Participating in, various kinds of fun and playful activities with your spouse is a great way to keep you engaged, connected and interested in each other and your relationship. Maintaining your youthful spirit and childlike nature can keep things light in your relationship. Fun activities might include: having occasional game nights when you play table games together. Be humorous with one another. These activities allow you some diversion. So have fun with each other and in the process grow doing activities you would each like to try. Then create a list of places you would like to go (i.e. sporting activities to play, cities to visit, day-trips to take, museums to tour, etc.). Check out a music concert, a car show, a county fair, a play, or a dance festival. Then randomly select an event or place each week. And then go do something new and fun that loser together, rather than becoming bored and feeling disconnected from the one you love." (From their article, "5 Tips to Get Your Marriage Out of a Rut")

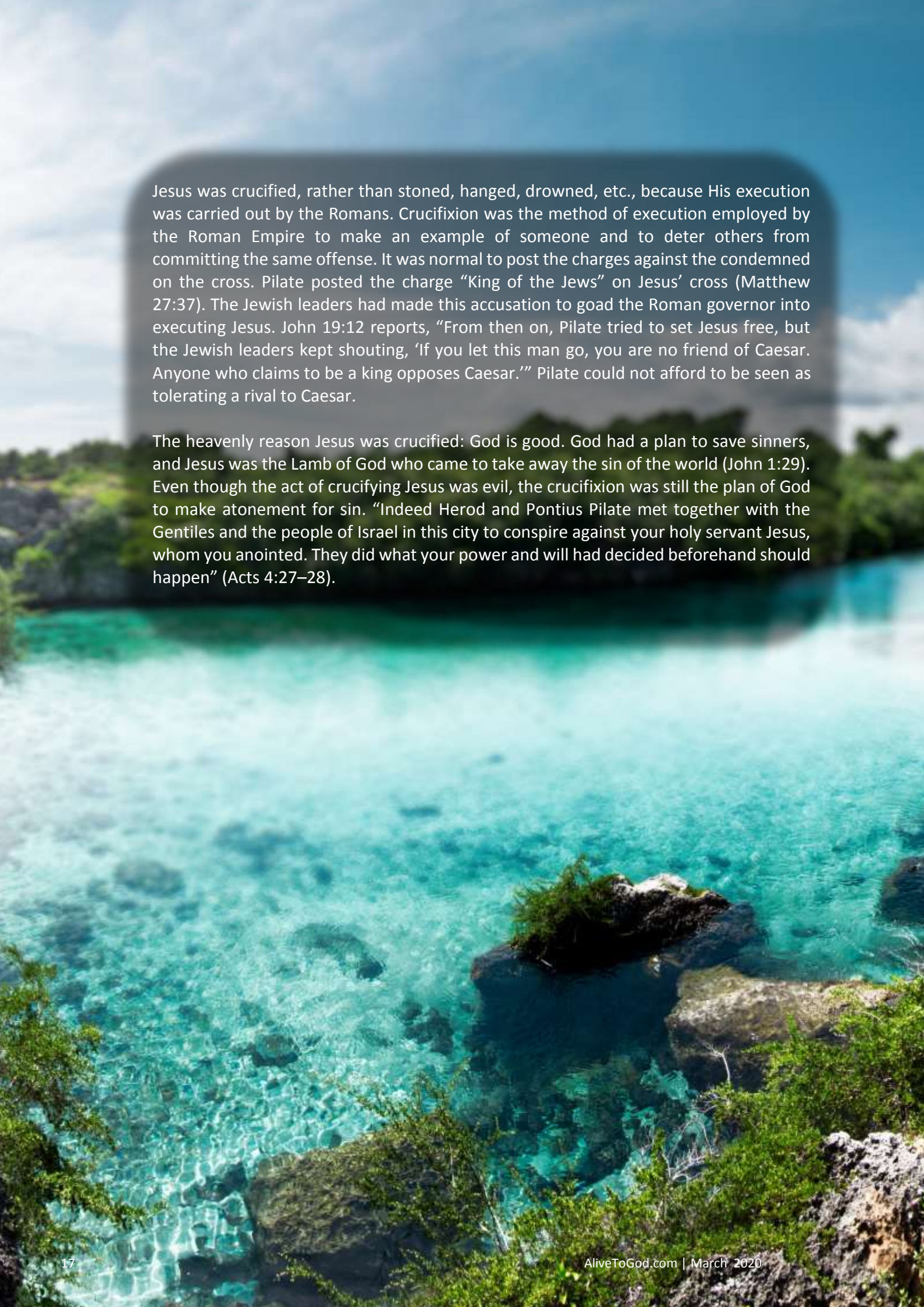
# Why was Jesus crucified?

By: GotGuestions.org



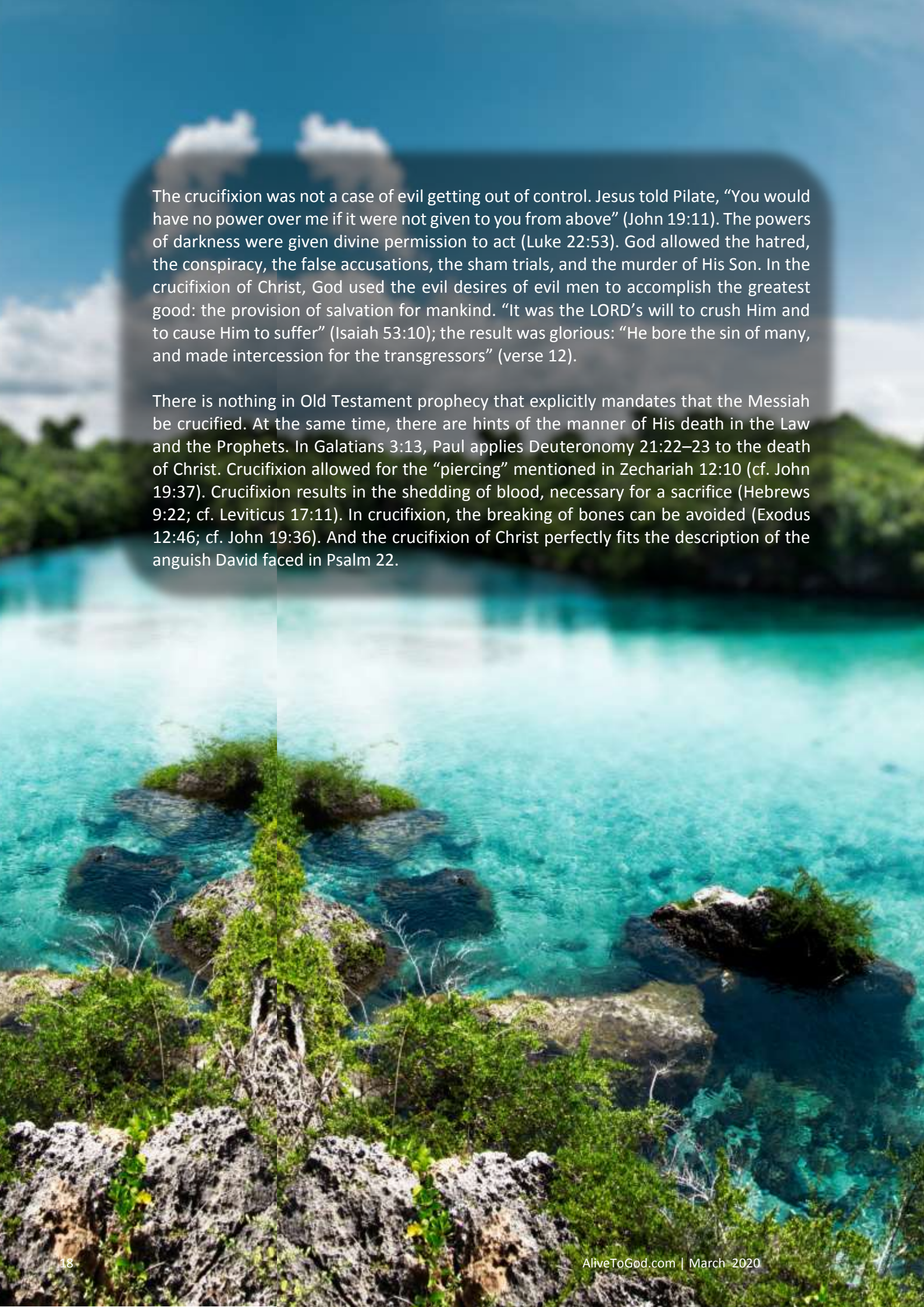
Answer: There are both an earthly reason and a heavenly reason Jesus was crucified. Simply put, the earthly reason is that mankind is evil. The heavenly reason is that God is good.

The earthly reason Jesus was crucified: mankind is evil. Wicked men conspired against Him, falsely accused Him, and murdered Him. The leaders of Israel had several reasons they wanted Jesus to be executed. They were envious of His following (Matthew 27:18). They were afraid that Jesus would gather too large a following, which might bring the Roman authorities down on the nation, causing them to lose their positions (John 11:48). They hated the fact that Jesus called out their sin publicly (Matthew 23). And they thought He was blaspheming when He claimed to be the Son of God (Luke 22:66–71). But all these reasons were simply symptoms of their underlying unbelief (John 5:46).



Jesus was crucified, rather than stoned, hanged, drowned, etc., because His execution was carried out by the Romans. Crucifixion was the method of execution employed by the Roman Empire to make an example of someone and to deter others from committing the same offense. It was normal to post the charges against the condemned on the cross. Pilate posted the charge "King of the Jews" on Jesus' cross (Matthew 27:37). The Jewish leaders had made this accusation to goad the Roman governor into executing Jesus. John 19:12 reports, "From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jewish leaders kept shouting, 'If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar.'" Pilate could not afford to be seen as tolerating a rival to Caesar.

The heavenly reason Jesus was crucified: God is good. God had a plan to save sinners, and Jesus was the Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Even though the act of crucifying Jesus was evil, the crucifixion was still the plan of God to make atonement for sin. "Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen" (Acts 4:27–28).



The crucifixion was not a case of evil getting out of control. Jesus told Pilate, “You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above” (John 19:11). The powers of darkness were given divine permission to act (Luke 22:53). God allowed the hatred, the conspiracy, the false accusations, the sham trials, and the murder of His Son. In the crucifixion of Christ, God used the evil desires of evil men to accomplish the greatest good: the provision of salvation for mankind. “It was the LORD’s will to crush Him and to cause Him to suffer” (Isaiah 53:10); the result was glorious: “He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors” (verse 12).

There is nothing in Old Testament prophecy that explicitly mandates that the Messiah be crucified. At the same time, there are hints of the manner of His death in the Law and the Prophets. In Galatians 3:13, Paul applies Deuteronomy 21:22–23 to the death of Christ. Crucifixion allowed for the “piercing” mentioned in Zechariah 12:10 (cf. John 19:37). Crucifixion results in the shedding of blood, necessary for a sacrifice (Hebrews 9:22; cf. Leviticus 17:11). In crucifixion, the breaking of bones can be avoided (Exodus 12:46; cf. John 19:36). And the crucifixion of Christ perfectly fits the description of the anguish David faced in Psalm 22.



We all have committed sins, and we are all worthy of death, but Christ took our place. He was publicly executed, and His blood was shed on our behalf, as Paul explains in Romans 3:25–26: “God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.”

In the final analysis, the reason that Jesus was crucified is the answer that each of us must come to understand and embrace by faith: Jesus was crucified to pay for my sin so that I can be forgiven and be made right with God.

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