

Glory in Yeshua's Cross, Part 1



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All scriptures are NKJV unless noted otherwise.

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Summary: You'll enjoy this video rich with illustrations and graphics. I'm sure most of you will find some thought-provoking material here in your Christian walk. Do we glory in the cross of Yeshua/Jesus? But are we focusing too much on the instrument of his sacrificial death as the Passover Lamb of God (1 Cor. 5:7) and not on what was accomplished by the shed blood: forgiveness, grace, reconciliation, penalty paid in full, etc.? DO we know if a "crucifixion" was just an upright stake or could have been a cross or tree? Find out about even Old Testament indications of the cross. In any case, do we glory and boast in the cross or stake? DO we talk about it? IS it the main thing in our lives, as Paul said?

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Introduction by Scott: Apostle Paul said he wanted to boast only about one thing: the Cross of our Savior Jesus. He also says that the Cross – or stake – is the only thing he cared to really talk about. Have we focused so much on whether it was a cross or upright stake that we've lost the focus on WHY Jesus was crucified for us, and feeling honored to be a part of him, and what His crucifixion means? This is part 1 of a 2-part series.

So welcome to Light on the Rock. WHAT was the cross? Was it always – or never - a cross, or always just a stake, or was it a tree...what was it? And was the cross and crucifixion even depicted and prophesied in numerous ways in the Old Testament? So here's Philip Shields to talk about the cross of our Savior and how we each must connect with the crucifixion.

*** **(Note:** *the following notes are not word-for word, but close. The video will have considerably more content, plus lots of illustrations and graphics.*)

Hello everyone. We usually observe the Passover in March, and sometimes April as this year 2022. Passover commemorates the day Yeshua our Savior died on the cross, by crucifixion.

Do we glory or boast in the cross-- or "the stake" – as Paul said he did – or should we turn away from it because even pagans had crosses in their religion long before Christ even lived on the earth? Paul said that the cross of Yeshua was just about the only thing he wanted to talk about, as you'll see. Do we feel and act that way?

Today I'm hoping to get our minds less focused on what was the exact instrument of Christ's death and more on what happened, and who he was, and that the crucifixion and resurrection of Yeshua is huge and momentous in the annals of history.

WHY do we need this topic? Because some believers have a serious roadblock to any discussion about "the Cross". They're so convinced the "cross" symbol comes from deep pagan origins even before Christ walked the earth, that they won't even think about the cross or discuss it. So I'll be addressing that as well as we go through this, so that we CAN discuss the cross or stake or whatever it was, **the way Paul did.**

In researching crucifixion, I find out that there still are a lot of ideas – sometimes contradictory -- on what exactly happened when a person was being crucified. We do know the Roman orator Cicero said it was "the most hideous and cruel of tortures." It was usually reserved for slaves and the worst criminals or those guilty of insurrection and later, for many Christians also.

When **Spartacus' revolt (73-71 BC)** was finally defeated, **over 6,000** gladiator soldiers and other slaves who fought with him were crucified in a long line of crosses leading up to Rome. 6,000! Spartacus himself was actually killed in battle contrary to the movie.

And thousands more of our brothers and sisters in Christ chose to be viciously Crucified in the Roman Coliseum and elsewhere – rather than turn their backs on Yeshua.

After the sermon, this link may be one you may want to watch
<https://www.theburningofrome.com/contributing/who-crucified-6000-slaves-in-rome/>

When I was growing up in the Philippines, it was common every year on Good Friday for men to actually be crucified. Their choice. I mean with nails and all. Some of them have their arms tied up on to their cross, but quite a few use nails.

Though the Philippines' health officials try to discourage it, I understand it still goes on. Now health officials urge people to get tetanus shots and health care afterwards. If you can stomach it, you can Google "Crucifixions in the Philippines" and look at additional pictures/images. These are the culmination of a long procession of flagellants having their backs whipped, ending with three being crucified on a makeshift hill to represent Calvary. They're bloody. They're awful. And that still happens.

Catholics and most Protestants certainly use **the cross symbol. Catholics also use a crucifix – a cross with an image of the dying or dead Christ on it.** I believe the crucifix crosses the line on the 2nd Commandment – no graven image of anything as part of our worship.

For years scholars even wondered **if NAILS** were ever really used. Remember, Yeshua (Jesus) showed the holes in his hands and his side (**John 20:24-29**). **But in Italy, England and Israel, archaeologists** have unearthed skeletons with a big 5-inch nails right through the heel, to the wood – and one with a nail stuck through the ankle bone near the heel with a piece of wood still on it as well.

This was found in Gavello, in northern Italy. Archaeology has also found heel bone fragments with nails still present in excavations in England and Israel from Roman days.

<https://www.thedailybeast.com/new-evidence-of-how-romans-would-have-crucified-jesus>

As you research it carefully, you'll find "scholars" are all over the map on what exactly happened at crucifixions – and whether they were all just on upright stakes, or a cross, or to a tree, or an X. Apparently, they did it all. But is that where our focus should be?

GLORY (or boast) in the Cross?

WHY am I talking about crucifixions – and especially that of Jesus Christ?

Because we'll see that Paul in particular – as well as Christ himself and Peter – SPOKE and wrote openly about crucifixion, carrying your own cross, being crucified with Christ. Does Paul's statement in Galatians 6:14 reflect YOUR feelings – whether you believe he died on an upright STAKE or on a cross? Let's read it.

Galatians 6:14 Holman

"But as for me, **I will never boast about anything except the CROSS of our Lord Jesus Christ.** The world has been **crucified** to me through the **cross**, and I to the world."

(KJV, ASV use "glory" instead of "boast").

To Paul, this horrible instrument of torture and slow death **became the symbol and reminder actually of God's LOVE for us**, for God's gracious favor for us, and the way by which all our sins are washed away in the blood of Jesus. Then in his resurrection, we are saved by his life being lived righteously again in us (**Romans 5:10**). He even said my Father and I will come and live in you (**John 14:23**).

The Death and Resurrection of Yeshua are KEY events in the history of this universe. These begin God's plan of saving mankind from sin and Satan.

I think for some groups in particular, who don't like speaking of the cross because of its associations with ancient pagan religions—let me ask you: would you, DO you at least – if you believe it was an upright stake – glory in the STAKE OF Christ and talk about it? I heard a sermon today by a sabbath keeping minister and he said "stake" for every verse that had "cross" in it. That's OK too.

Whether or not you believe in a T cross or a STAKE – my POINT IS: GLORY in the cross or stake, talk about it, BOAST about it – as Paul sets us the example!

But those who believe in the stake hardly ever preach about it unless they're reading about His Crucifixion. I hope if I'm describing you and your group – that you'll ask yourself – "do I glory in the Cross/stake" as Paul did?

Just so you know: neither my wife nor I wear any cross jewelry, necklaces, or symbols in our home or on our person at the present time. Church groups we attend don't use the cross symbol either. And neither did the very earliest Christians – all the way up to 313 AD. Believers in Yeshua identified themselves as Christian with other symbols, like the fish, sheep, shepherd and so on.

And I'll cover why I don't worship with a cross, but I do glory in it, as Paul does, as it's a symbol of what the son of God did for me because he loved ME, and loved you, and did not want me to have to be executed for my sins. See Galatians 2:20. More on this in Part 2.

Was the cross a cross, or an upright stake, or an X – or to a tree?

Truth is, without starting with a bias, best I could find is that ALL of the above were used by the Romans, whichever served their purpose best and easiest for them to do.

Romans did crucifixions as warnings on well-traveled roads as a message to all – “if you don't cooperate, this could happen to you too.” They often had a huge stake, or many stakes, already in the ground and then the one being crucified would carry his cross and that was attached to it.

I used to think it was 90% just the upright beams, but with further research, plus when you see the Old Testament examples I will use that point to it, you'll understand why I think many crucifixions were like the stake with the cross beam. For many years I believed otherwise, but recent evidence and archaeology now say “with cross beam” was more common now. So I had to re-evaluate the many books and articles I had that all insisted it was always an upright stake. And certainly many were just the upright stake. The Romans recycled the same wood pieces over and over and did whatever was easiest at that moment.

There is no unanimous description from scholars of just one-way crucifixions were done! I find those who believe in either the upright stake or the T cross use the sources that support *their* belief. But again, I believe **Romans used all the possibilities.**

Here's what *Britannica* says about crucifixion, for example, leaning to the “cross” explanation. Emphasis mine (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica)

Punishment

*“There were various methods of performing the execution. Usually, the condemned man, after being whipped, or “scourged,” dragged the crossbeam of his cross to the place of punishment, where the upright shaft was already fixed in the ground. Stripped of his clothing either then or earlier at his scourging, he was bound fast with outstretched arms to the crossbeam or nailed firmly to it **through the wrists.**”*

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/crucifixion-capital-punishment>

And here's PETER'S statement to the Jewish leaders trying to silence the 12 apostles after Jesus' resurrection. This was said before Paul started preaching. (And note: I choose to use our Savior's birth name – which was Yeshua. The name “Jesus” was never vocalized that way for hundreds of years past the first century.)

Acts 5:30-31 (Peter speaking)

“The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a TREE. 31 Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.”

The GREEK word for “Tree” in Acts 5:30 (“Xulon” pronounced ZOO-lon) could mean anything made of wood – wood, tree, stake, etc. It's all the same word.

From just that Greek word, there may have been no tree at all. Or there could have been. Peter in his original language – Hebrew or Aramaic – could just as easily said, “by hanging on a stake” – or tree, or any piece or cross-piece of WOOD. The Greek word xulon is pliable. How Acts 5:30 is translated makes my point.

Acts 5:30 “xulon” is translated “on a tree” in most translations: KJV, NKJV, Berean, Holman, American Standard Version, ESV, Aramaic Bible, etc.

Acts 5:30 xulon is translated “on a cross,” however, in 6-7 translations I found, in the NIV, NLT, NASB, Amplified, Good News Translation and Weymouth. Certainly “xulon” allows for anything of wood – tree, cross, stake, X, whatever.

The message of the cross is forgiveness of our sins by the shed blood of Yeshua when we **repent, reconciling us to Father. How beautiful is that? Peter certainly wasn't reticent about talking about the cross or stake.**

I hope today you can decide you won't be quiet any longer about the cross or stake or tree of Christ because you've heard ancient pagans had a cross symbol or the Tau symbol in their religions.

I believe – whether you go with “stake” or “cross” – speak of it more. Glory in it more. To me, it's not vital whether it was always an upright stake or was always in a cross shape. Romans did it a variety of ways! It's important to be honored by being associated with it. This is my main point so far.

Let's read more of Paul's writings and statements and you check to **see if you feel the same way about Christ's crucifixion and cross or stake:**

1 Corinthians 1:22-23

*“For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; 23 but **we preach Christ crucified**, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness,”*

1 Corinthians 2:2

*“**For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him CRUCIFIED.**”*

Read that last one again. Paul said it was his central message: **Jesus Christ crucified.** **Would you ever say that would be your central message?** The Good news is the good news that because of what Yeshua did, we can get into the Kingdom of God. There is no door, no key to the door to the kingdom without Him. HE's the door. HE is the message!

1 Corinthians 2:6 ESV

*“For Christ did not send me to baptize but to **preach the gospel**, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, **lest the CROSS of Christ be emptied of its power.**”*

1 Corinthians 15:1-8 makes it clear that Paul defined his gospel as being about Christ, the door into the kingdom of God, which clearly is also a huge part of the Good News (gospel).

Philippians 3:18

*“For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that **they are the enemies of the cross of Christ**”*

It's certainly clear that Paul and Peter and others were very OPEN and clear about the wonders of the Cross. And Romans apparently did it all – to an upright stake, a cross, an X shape, upside down, and to a tree sometimes.

Carole and I have never worn a cross necklace or have any cross symbol in our home. But I'm to the point now that I would certainly not judge or condemn someone in my heart for doing so. But IF we do DO wear a cross to identify with Yeshua, let's be sure our lives reflect Christ strongly living in us as well. That's more important and is a stronger message than any piece of jewelry.

And again, if you are among those who feel it's a pagan symbol taken into the Christian church eventually – the early Catholics – then fine, don't wear one, but do HONOR the death and resurrection of Jesus on the stake or cross and talk about it.

Cross vs. Crucifix. *A crucifix is a cross with the depiction of a crucified man – Jesus – on it. I think that's too close to being a graven image, breaking the 2nd commandment, a representation of God, so I would never personally have a crucifix in my possession. (Exodus 20:4-5).*

And I would not see a plain cross as an instrument of death, but a reminder my Messiah was resurrected! There's no body on the cross now. He lives.

But it's clear Paul and others openly spoke of this cross or stake or whatever it was and Yeshua – to which he so openly identified. Are YOU and I like that?

GREEK words translated as “cross” and “tree”

If you seek verification that a crucifixion was ALWAYS an upright stake, you'll find that scholarly support. If you want verification that scholars say was a cross, you'll find those too. Romans used all of the options.

The word for “Cross” comes from Greek word Stauros. The translation “tree” comes from Greek word “Xulon.” The primary word translated “cross” (and never translated “stake”) comes from the Greek word “stauros.” In some Bible Dictionaries, it's stated clearly a “stauros” was an upright stake or pale.

Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary:

“New Testament Strong's #4716 STAUROS (stow-ros'); from the base of NT:2476; a stake or post (as set upright), i.e. (specifically) a pole or cross (as an instrument of capital punishment); figuratively, exposure to death, i.e. self-denial; by implication, the atonement of Christ:

This is from VINE'S EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NT WORDS:

Stauros: NT:4716) denotes, primarily, "an upright pale or stake." On such malefactors were nailed for execution. Both the noun and the verb stauroo, "to fasten to a stake or pale," are originally to be distinguished from the ecclesiastical form of a two beamed "cross."

It's obvious Jesus carried "a stauros" beam of some sort, and then was either nailed right to IT, or that beam he carried became the crossbeam nailed to an existing pale/stake.

I found out also that many of the *stauros* upright beams had a big **NOTCH cut out at around the shoulder level so that a cross beam could easily be inserted, and the weight of the crucified man would hold it down. They may additionally have hammered a couple nails into the upright beam at that notch.**

We do know that what Christ carried was NOT in the shape of a cross. All scholars agree with this, that what he carried was some wood either to BE the stake, or to be a crossbeam, but not already in the shape of a cross.

This next quote from an Archaeological group dogmatically believes in the crossbeam idea.... So you can find scholars all over the map on this.

Here's what Biblical Archaeology Society says – "Bible History Daily":

"Literary sources giving insight into the history of crucifixion indicate that Roman crucifixion methods had **the condemned person carry to the execution site only the crossbar**. Wood was scarce and the vertical pole was kept stationary and used repeatedly. Below, in "New Analysis of the Crucified Man," Hershel Shanks concludes that crucifixion in antiquity involved death by asphyxiation, not death by nail piercing."

I've come to accept what an archaeologist told me his research led him to conclude: a crucifixion through time included the single upright, the X, the T, and to a tree. Romans used whatever was easiest for them at the moment. He said **they were done on busy roads** and the upright stakes were often already there, with a NOTCH near the top for a crossbeam to easily fit into if desired.

Extra: the ONLY known complete and detailed description of Roman crucifixions is written on a tablet that says the one to be crucified was brought carrying the cross piece to the upright stake. See the 1.14-1.32 time mark on this link from the Smithsonian Channel. **The one to be crucified came bearing his cross beam to the stake already ready, and in the ground.**

<https://www.ancient-origins.net/news-history-archaeology/death-jesus-0013543> This tablet is now housed in an old castle in the Bay of Naples.

To me, I now believe the strongest historical evidence therefore points to a cross-shaped crucifixion after all. A crossbeam attached to the heavier upright.

Yeshua HAD TO DIE OF SHED BLOOD, BY PIERCING, per prophecies

IMPORTANT: Christ did not die from a broken heart or asphyxiation. He is the Passover Lamb of God (**1 Cor. 5:7; John 1:29**). He is whom all the Passover lambs that were killed in Exodus 12 and beyond pointed to. **The lambs had to be killed by shed blood**. There is no forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood! (**Hebrews 9:22; Matthew 26:28**).

He died by the lance thrust into Yeshua's side by the Roman soldier. The Verse in John 19 should be translated "HAD PIERCED", according to the Greek. He had to die of shed blood.

John 19:34-37

But one of the soldiers [had] pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. 35 And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe. 36 For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones shall be broken."

37 And again another Scripture says, "**They shall look on Him whom they pierced.**" (**Zechariah 12:10**).

Dying by his blood being shed is of paramount importance. Though most who were crucified died from asphyxiation, that was NOT the case for Christ. Yeshua had TO DIE for us by being PIERCED as prophecies said, and shed his blood like the Passover Lamb of God whom he was! (Zech. 12:10; Psalm 22:16.)

Why did he have to die by crucifixion? Yeshua had to be executed by shedding his blood. It had to be by crucifixion, because sin is awful and painful and earns the death penalty.

But I hope I'm making my point that those who insist it was always either an upright stake or always a cross – can find plenty of scholars who will agree with either view. I believe the Romans did a VARIETY of crucifixions. Evidence now shows there definitely were crosses at times, maybe most of the time (not just upright stakes exclusively).

Keep in mind a crucifixion was a criminal's death. It was an execution. It was for someone condemned to die. It was shameful, degrading and excruciatingly painful as you hung there stark naked, maybe 3-4 feet off the ground. Forget the super-high crosses you see around churches today. It was much simpler than that. And soldiers didn't want it to become too complicated or difficult for them. It was for the worst kind of criminals. Shameful. Painful.

Paul describes Yeshua as being willing even to take on this shameful kind of death for us.

Philippians 2:8

"And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, **even the death of the cross.**"

This we know for sure:

- **The apostles talked about the cross.** I want to do more as well. And I don't care if it was a stake or T or whatever because Romans used them all, is the honest conclusion I've come to. Don't get bogged down in the INSTRUMENT of death.
- **MOST of my research says the early church for 200+ years did NOT use the cross symbol – but used FISH, or other symbols for Christianity like dove, shepherd, ship's anchor. The cross became more open after Constantine after 313 AD and the "official" Christian church changed a lot after that. The "little flock" was now partnered with a vicious emperor and was known as the universal (Catholic) church.**

So again, this is very important: Sometimes the one being crucified carried his "cross" or "stauros" – as it says about Yeshua carrying his cross – I now believe meaning his crossbeam. **In context with the other descriptions of what happened to Yeshua, and the Old Testament symbols pointing to it as I'll show you -- it likely was a crossbeam, I believe.** *That would be one stake of wood that would be nailed to a TREE*

or UPRIGHT STAKE at the crucifixion site, the wooden stake HE CARRIED being the horizontal crossbeam for his arms.

So again, we cannot know for sure if a tree was involved or not, or if it was an upright or a cross – as all types were used. **What is IMPORTANT is that it happened, and we should glory in it.**

SEVERAL statements about being crucified on a “TREE”

Just understand – again – that the word translated “tree” – is the Greek Xulon meaning “wood.”

1 Peter 2:23-24

“who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;
24 **who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the TREE**, that WE, having died to sins, might live for righteousness — by whose stripes you were healed.”

The Atonement azazel goat that received all the sins of the nation could NOT have been Satan. There's not a single scripture that Satan has ever borne a single one of our sins. To credit something this momentous to Satan borders on blasphemy. But there are many scriptures that clearly say Yeshua took all our sins in his own body.

Again -- **Acts 5:30-31 Peter and apostles:**

“The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom **you murdered by hanging on a TREE**. 31 Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.”

Acts 10:39

“And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, **whom they killed by hanging on a TREE (xulon).**”

Acts 13:28-29 (Paul speaking)

“And though they found no cause for death in Him, they asked Pilate that He should be put to death. 29 Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, **they took Him down from the TREE** and laid Him in a tomb.”

Romans had no problem using a tree if one was already there. If it was a tree, after all, that he was nailed to, I wouldn't be surprised if it was an OLIVE tree, which pictured Israel, and IF the crucifixion was at the base of Mt of Olives, as some believe – there are a lot of olive trees there.

**Old Testament EXAMPLES THAT POINTED
TO THE CROSS AND CRUCIFIXION**

Many Old Testament scriptures prophesied about Yeshua – how and where he would be born, and how he would die. **I will focus on 8 or so examples that show how he would die.**

**O.T. Example #1: Your Seed will crush his HEAD, and you will strike his heel.
(Genesis 3:15)**

This below, was spoken by God to Satan – the Serpent -- after he deceived Eve into taking the forbidden fruit. The word translated “bruise” can also mean “crush” according to Complete Word Study of Old Testament Words. The voice they heard was spoken by the One called “the Word,” who was also God, and who became Yeshua (**John 1:1-3, 14**) and who created Adam and Eve and all things in the universe (Col. 1:15-18; Heb. 1:2-3; Eph 3:9)

Genesis 3:15 NIV

“And I will put enmity between you [the Serpent] and the woman, and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”

The Offspring Savior of Adam and Eve would crush/bruise Satan's head, who will in turn strike their Offspring's heel. The heel is full of nerve endings and nailing into it would be beyond my ability to explain pain. But crushing the head of Satan meant Christ would deal him the death blow of having any real power over God's children.

“Crush your head”: where and when was this fulfilled? It happened at Golgotha. What does “Golgotha” mean? It means “head, skull.” It is defined as such in Matthew 27:33; Mark 15:22; John 19:17.

Mark 15:22

“And they brought Him to the place **Golgotha, which is translated, Place of the SKULL.**”

Where did The Seed of Adam and Eve (Christ) deal Satan the death blow? To his HEAD – at the place called “place of the SKULL” –Golgotha! You kill snakes by crushing its head. And it pointed to the victory over Satan at the Place of a skull – Golgotha.

Even the word “**Calvary**” –**Luke 23:33** – **actually in the original, refers to a SKULL as well.** That is where Satan's power of death over us was crushed; he was utterly defeated by our Savior who struck Satan on his head, at Golgotha, place of the skull.

Hebrews 2:14-15

“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that **through death He might DESTROY him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,**
15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”

#2 pointing to Yeshua's sacrifice -- ABRAHAM AND ISAAC, with Isaac carrying the “Wood” for the sacrifice. Gen. 22.

Another act that pointed to the crucifixion was **the near sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham**, on God's command to go to Mt Moriah and sacrifice his only true son. How do we see crucifixion here? Abraham pictures God the Father. Isaac – the only legitimate son of Abraham (**Genesis 22:1-2**) – pictured Yeshua. Remember Yeshua carried his stauros – or beam -- most of the way. What did Isaac carry?

Genesis 22:6-8

So Abraham took the WOOD of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together.

7 But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son."

Then he said, "Look, the fire, and the wood, but **where is the lamb** for a burnt offering?"

8 And Abraham said, "My son, **God will provide for Himself the lamb** for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.

And this took place **at Mt Moriah, at Jerusalem**, where the temple was later built.

2 Chronicles 3:1

Now Solomon began to build the house of YHVH at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where YHVH had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

#3 example: Splashing Lamb's Blood on sides and top of the door Ex. 12:7 at the first Passover.

Exodus 12:7

"And they shall take some of the **blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel** of the houses where they eat it."

Exodus 12:13

"Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt."

When Israel killed the Passover lambs and splashed their blood above the door and along the sides, that pointed to the cross of Christ – pointing to where Christ's head and hands would be – above and beside the door. Yeshua – of course – pictured the DOOR as well. "I am the door" – John 10:7, 9. Wow. Thank you, Lord.

Splashing the lamb's blood on lintels and side beams – pointed to Christ... across the top above the door and on the sides, where the head and arms of Christ would be. Remember, this was Passover eve, the start of Passover day – when Yeshua died for us.

#4 Example: The tree thrown into Marah's waters made bitter waters sweet.

This may or may not have pointed to the crucifixion. Note it was a tree. And notice it makes our bitterness sweet.

Exodus 15:22-25

So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And **they went three days in the wilderness and found no water**. 23 Now when they came to **Marah**, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah. 24 And the people complained against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"

25 So he cried out to YHVH, and **YHVH showed him a tree**. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet.

I believe it's possible that the TREE could have pictured the wood or tree on to which Christ was nailed. This example is not as strong as the others but was worth mentioning.

#5 -- THE CAMP OF Israel in the wilderness was shaped as a cross!

The 12 tribes were aligned into 4 groups of 3 tribes each. They camped in straight lines pointing strictly EAST, West, North and South. There was no SE, SW, NE, etc. Add the populations of each tribe and what do you see? See illustration below. The shape formed the shape of the cross.

You can read of this in Numbers 2. For example **Numbers 2:3-9** speaks of the EAST SIDE tribes led by Judah, then Issachar and Zebulun totalling 186,400 between them all. The three tribes on the West – the head of the cross – totaled 108,100. And so on. But there's no accommodation for using the land to the SE, SW, NE, NW of the tabernacle for example. Each group of 3 tribes were to line up just straight East, West, North and South.

The Tabernacle was right in the middle surrounded by the tents of the families of Levi, serving in the tabernacle.

Usually when we think of the camp of Israel around the Tabernacle, most depictions just show it as a circular bunch of tents completely surrounding the tabernacle. But is that correct? No. (More on this in the video).

What would we see if were on Mt. Sinai looking down at the camp of Israel? Read more of Numbers 2.

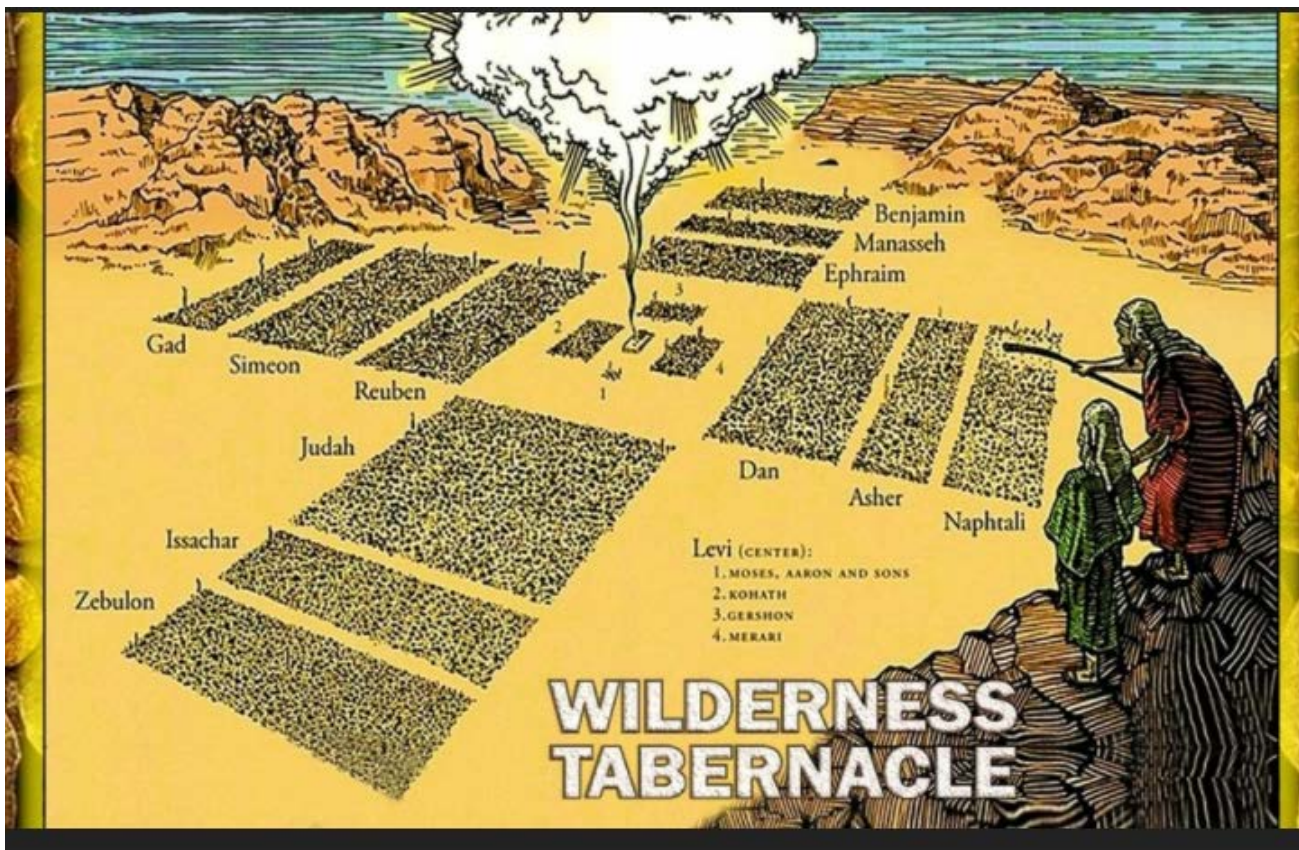
Numbers 2:1-4

And YHVH spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 2 "**Everyone of the children of Israel shall camp by his own standard**, beside the emblems of his father's house; they shall camp some distance from the tabernacle of meeting.

3 **On the EAST side, toward the rising of the sun, those of the standard of the forces with Judah shall camp** according to their armies; and Nahshon the son of Amminadab shall be the leader of the children of Judah." 4 And his army was numbered at seventy-four thousand six hundred.

Extra: it's interesting that the leading 4 tribes of the 4 groups also had symbols or emblems, ensigns of their tribe, surrounding the tabernacle. Judah was LION, Ephraim was OX, Reuben was MAN, and Dan was Eagle – an emblem also shared with Asher and Naphtali, part of that branch. (Dan was also depicted as a serpent.)

What do you think of when you read Lion, Ox, Man, Eagle? The features of the "four living creatures" around God's throne in heaven! See Revelation 4:6-7 and Ezekiel 1:10.



EXAMPLE #6 -- The king and prophet David prophesied of Yeshua's crucifixion and words and thoughts in the Messianic Psalm 22. These words were prophesied many hundreds of years before the use of crucifixions! (More in the video)

Psalms 22:1

“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?

Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning?”

Psalms 22:16-18

“For dogs have surrounded Me;
The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.

They pierced My hands and My feet;

17 I can count all My bones.

They look and stare at Me.

**18 They divide My garments among them,
And for My clothing they cast lots.”**

See John 19:23-24; Matthew 27:35. Amazing.

#7 – the BRONZE SERPENT in the wilderness pictured Yeshua (John 3:14-15)

There was a time when God plagued Israel with “fiery serpents.” Then YHVH told Moses to build a bronze serpent and put it on a pole and when someone got bitten by the serpent, if they looked on the pole, they were healed.

Numbers 21:7-9

Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against YHVH and against you; pray to YHVH that He take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people.

8 Then God said to Moses, "**Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole**; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live." 9 So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

Why a serpent? I think 2 Cor. 5:21 – Christ became sin for us. We normally think of a serpent as depicting Satan, the epitome of sin and evil. But when every sin that has ever been sinned by mankind – and ever will be sinned – were placed on Yeshua. HE who had no sin became a symbol of consummate evil and sin while on the cross-- and took all our sins upon himself.

The bronze serpent on a pole was kept for some reason. What did you think eventually happened? Well, it became an object of worship! Not until the days of righteous King Hezekiah of Judah -- which by then this thing had become a stumbling block for Israel.

2 Kings 18:4

"He removed the high places and broke the sacred pillars, cut down the wooden image and **broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made**; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it Nehushtan [the bronze thing]."

Now Yeshua clearly connected that pole with the bronze serpent placed on it that people had to look at – *as depicting HIM on his stake or cross*. Look what Yeshua said, finishing his conversation with Nicodemus.

John 3:12-17

"If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? 13 No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.

14 "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."

What a wonderful GOD we have, the only true living God, who forgives his people, who does not condemn his people. He came to save the world. He's the only true living God, who dies for the people, forgives them, guarantees their salvation through the Holy Spirit.

#8 example – The holy name "YHVH" in ancient Paleo Hebrew "word pictures" pointed to the Cross.

Remember I've shown in previous sermons that this name can refer to God the Father or to Yeshua. In **Hebrew**, each letter has been given **a word picture and a numeral or number as well as a musical NOTE. Hebrew is an amazing language.** They called their alphabet – the Alephbet – the first 2 letters. But Hebrew word pictures are interesting. Each letter has a word picture and when various letters are put together, the word picture created can be very inspiring – and not happenstance.

- Aleph for example, was pictured by an OX head/Bull head – for strength and was #1 in numerical meaning.
- The name YHVH would be the Hebrew letters Yod Hey Vav Hey.

Yod was pictured in ancient Hebrew by CLOSED HANDS – the finished work. HE or HEY was depicted by Open window in Paleo Hebrew – LOOK, SEE. Vav was pictured by nails and pictures “binding.”

And then Hey again – SEE. Put them together and you have --

- **YHVH = “hands, SEE. Nails, see.” Or, “Behold the hands, behold the nails.”**
- **Or, “Look at the finished work of the binding nails. Look!”**


How could that possibly be coincidental? Remember I have 3 sermons showing that the tetragrammaton YHVH was used for BOTH the one we know as Father and for the Word, depending on context. Don't just disagree with me until you examine my proof in my sermons.

Note: I recommend you Google **Dr Frank Seekins** and get his book on **Hebrew Word Pictures** to learn much more.


#9 - ALEPH TAV, the first and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Tav was shaped as a cross or 2 cross sticks.

Our first and last letters are “A to Z,” or in Greek “Alpha and Omega.” **But in Hebrew it is ALEPH-TAV.** The modern Hebrew alphabet does not look much like the original old Hebrew which was called “PALEO Hebrew.”

In the paleo Hebrew, the first letter **aleph** was drawn as an ox head, and #1. It pictures STRENGTH, and #1, often thought to picture or point to God.

Name	Pictograph	Meaning
Aleph		Ox / strength / leader

Tav – was the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. In ancient original Paleo Hebrew, it was pictured by a... are you ready? ... by a cross, or small letter t. The symbolic meaning of the word was “covenant, to seal or to mark.” The original Tav (or Tau is possible in Hebrew) was very much in the symbol of the cross. In the next generation of Hebrew letters, the upright cross seems a bit more tilted, but it's still a cross.

Name	Pictograph	Meaning
Tav		Mark / sign / covenant

So in word pictures, the plan starts with God, pictured by the first letter Aleph, depicting strength. The Hebrew for "God" is El or Elohim – meaning "Strong One" or in the plural "Strong ones" (Elohim). God's plan starts with his strength as our leader – and ends with his covenant, marking and sealing us in his family. And again, **the last letter in original Hebrew looked like a cross, or small t like this: t in original Paleo ancient Hebrew.**

God is the First and Last, the Aleph/Tav, the Alpha/Omega (in Greek). If the cross symbol was so wrong, why on earth would God have selected the TAV - the cross symbol – as his Tav, as his Aleph-Tav? But Satan would see the alphabet in Hebrew and wanted to pollute God's plan, so I believe Satan instituted the cross symbol in pagan religions to get God's children away from it!

By now I hope you're starting to realize, GOD is the one who used the cross symbol in the plan of Israel's camp around the holy tabernacle. God is the one who told Israel to splash blood on the lintel (top) and door posts. God is the one who picked the TAV letter to be his final letter – the cross, the MARK of God, the covenant of God.

To quote Dr. Seekins – "Tav" in Hebrew means "a sign, mark, covenant." It's the name of the last letter in the Hebrew alphabet—the letter of completion and fulfillment. It was written in the form of a cross!

I suggest you order the little booklet by Dr. Frank T. Seekins titled "the Ancient Tav" as it goes into this in detail. I'm just saying the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet in the original Paleo Hebrew looked like a cross.

If you've never heard about Hebrew Word Pictures, I realize this might be a bit confusing to you. Just know, that God so inspired the Bible that even the letters used in key words had so much meaning. When God put a mark on his people in Ezek 9:4, the word is actually "TAV" – "put a TAV mark on the foreheads." Again folks, that would have looked like a cross!

Ezekiel 9:4

"and the LORD said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and **put a mark ["tav" in Hebrew] on the foreheads** of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it."

The word translated as "mark" comes from the Hebrew TAV. And the way it was drawn in old Paleo Hebrew was with a cross! **Strong's # 8420 simply says the Hebrew for "mark" here is – "tav".** So it literally says, "Set a TAV on the foreheads..."

Remember the 144,000 of Revelation 7 were also marked. IN Revelation 7 it doesn't identify what the mark was or looked like. But in Hebrew, the word for "mark" is TAV – looks like a cross.

My fellow household of God: can you see why I am much more agreeable with the shape of a cross now, than I was – say – 20 years ago?

- God set a tav on his people's foreheads. Ezek 9:4
- The shape of the camp of Israel was in the shape of the cross – Numbers 2:3-9
- What archaeologists and many scholars say crucifixions were like – they used the upright stake as well as crossbeams, X, and to a tree at times. They used them all.

- The bronze serpent on a pole.
- And God is the aleph/tav – like alpha and Omega. Tav was in the shape of a cross in the original paleo Hebrew.

Satan could certainly foresee the cross, as all these points indicated to it, so it would have been a priority of his to set it up – the cross shape – in pagan religions too to make it a distraction to God's children.

So I've shown:

- How **open the apostles were** about speaking about the cross of Yeshua—and they didn't get down into the weeds of whether it was just an upright stake, or cross or x.
- **8 events or words in the Old Testament (Tanakh for Jews) that pointed to the cross specifically.** Plus in a coming sermon, in addition to these 8 points I just gave, there are so many scriptures that foretold the story of the Son of Man from conception to resurrection.

In the end, let's fix our focus on Christ himself, and the GRACE he brings to us – much more so than on the instrument of his crucifixion.

1 Peter 1:13-16

"Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and **rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;** 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

I hope we quit focusing on the design of the stake or cross or tree – and focus who was ON it, and what his death made possible – the washing away of our sins – and he ROSE from the dead, there's no dead Yeshua on the cross anymore. He has risen!

And your guilt is gone. Your death penalty has been paid in full. God would say to you, "Because of what my Son did for you, I don't sentence you to death. I sentence you to eternal life, to eternal glory. I can't wait to see you in person."

And we shall see him as He is, for we shall be just like He is -- **1 John 3:1-2.**

Praise you, Yeshua! Praise you Father.

Closing Prayer. Loving God with all our heart, soul, mind and being.

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Here are some pre-Passover sermons. Find them with a simple Search in the Search Bar.

When I see the Blood
Crucified with Christ

Emblems of Passover
Be Prepared for Passover
I am Barabbas
I am a Worm
Why God Chose you
Do this in Remembrance of Me
Wavesheaf Day. Christ is Risen!