

# The CROSS Is Pagan Idolatry **part 2**

## **THE FOUR-FOLD REJECTION OF GOD BY THE CHURCH: PART 2**

In Part 2, we will go deeper into the historical and Biblical discussion of the Cross of Jesus and its form, function, and expressions concerning it. We will even cover an historical description of it by early church historian and theologian, Tertullian. In this, we remove all doubt of its design and the intent of the many expressions concerning it in the NT. Once again, declaring that there is no need or requirement to make actual crosses. That to do so is idolatry forbidden by God. If for some reason you have come upon this study first, it is advisable to start with Part 1. As this study assumes that you have already read and understood the first study.

## **JESUS, THE CROSS, & THE IMAGE - NEBUCHADNEZZAR**

Here we find a great example of how an idol or image is not literally the person or God they say it represents. But is still an idol, much the same way while not Jesus explicitly, the cross is said to represents His sacrifice and work upon the earth.

**DANIEL 3:13-18** “Then Nebuchadnezzar in rage and fury commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought. Then these men were brought before the king. (14) Nebuchadnezzar answered them, “Is it on purpose, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you don’t serve my god, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? (15) Now if you are ready whenever you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipe, and all kinds of music to fall down and worship the image which I have made, good; but if you don’t worship, you shall be cast the same hour into the middle of a burning fiery furnace. Who is that god that will deliver you out of my hands?” (16) Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, “Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. (17) If it happens, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. (18) But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image which you have set up.”

### **Forsake The Object, The Profane Image- Seek God Upon His Throne Instead!**

**HABAKKUK 2:18-20** “What value does the engraved image have, that its maker has engraved it; the molten image, even the teacher of lies, that he who fashions its form trusts in it, to make mute idols? (19) Woe to him who says to the wood, ‘Awake!’ or to the mute stone, ‘Arise!’ Shall this teach? Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all within it. (20) **But Yahweh is in his holy temple. Let all the earth be silent before him!**”

**LEVITICUS 26:1** “You shall make for yourselves no idols, and you shall not raise up a carved image or a pillar, and you shall not place any figured stone in your land, to bow down to it; for I am Yahweh your God.”

## **THE START OF THE CROSS OF IDOLATRY IN THE CHURCH**

 **From Easton's Bible Dictionary: Cross**

The forms in which the cross is represented are these:

- (1.) The crux simplex (I), a “single piece without transom.”
- (2.) The crux decussata (X), or St. Andrew's cross.
- (3.) The crux commissa (T), or St. Anthony's cross.
- (4.) The crux immissa (†), or Latin cross, .....

After the conversion, so-called, of Constantine the Great (313 B.C.) (NOTE By Lance: He reigned 306-337 A.D,) the cross first came into use as an emblem of Christianity. He pretended at a critical moment that he saw a flaming cross in the heavens bearing the inscription, “In hoc signo vinces”, i.e., By this sign thou shalt conquer, and that on the following night Christ himself appeared and ordered him to take for his standard the sign of this cross. In this form a new standard, called the Labarum, was accordingly made, and borne by the Roman armies. It remained the standard of the Roman army till the downfall of the Western empire. It bore the embroidered monogram of Christ, i.e., the first two Greek letters of his name, X and P (chi and rho), with the Alpha and Omega. (See ALPHA.)

 **International Study Bible Encyclopedia: Cross**

“The early church historians Socrates (1, 17), Sozomen (2, 1), Rufinus (1, 7) and Theodoret (1, 18) all make mention of this tradition. The most significant thing is that Eusebius (Vit. Const., iii.26-28), who carries more weight than they all together, wholly omits it.

According to it, Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great, in 325 A.D., when she was 79 years old, discovered the true cross of Jesus by an excavation she caused to be made on the traditional spot of His grave. With the cross of the Saviour were found the two crosses of the malefactors who were crucified with Him. A miracle of healing, wrought by touching the true cross, revealed its identity. When found it was intact, even the holy nails of the crucifixion being discovered. The main part of the cross was deposited by Helena in a church erected over the spot. Of the remainder, a portion was inserted into the head of the statue of Constantine, and the balance was placed in a new church, specially erected for it at Rome and named after it Santa Croce. Small fragments of the wood of the true cross were sold, encrusted with gold and jewels, and since many among the wealthy believers were desirous of possessing such priceless relics, the miracle of the “multiplication of the cross” was devised, so that the relic suffered no diminution “et quasi intacta maneret” (Paulinus epistle 11 ad Sev).

**“Fragments of the true cross are Thus to be found in many Roman Catholic churches of many countries, all over Christendom.”**

### **On the Invention Of The Cross**

**“It is certain that the West celebrated the Invention of the Cross, on May 3, since the time of Gregory the Great in the 6th century. The finding and publication of the apocryphal “Doctrina Addaei” has made it evident that the entire legend of the discovery of the cross by Helena is but a version of the old Edessa legend, which tells of an identical discovery of the cross, under the very same circumstances, by the wife of the emperor Claudius, who had been converted to Christianity by the preaching of Peter.”**

### **(1) Extra-Scriptural**

**The sign of the cross was well known in the symbolics of various ancient nations. Among the Egyptians it is said to have been the symbol of divinity and eternal life, and to have been found in the temple of Serapis. It is known either in the form of the Greek cross or in the form of the letter “T”. The Spaniards found it to be well known, as a symbol, by the Mexicans and Peruvians, perhaps signifying the four elements, or the four seasons, or the four points of the compass.**

### **Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature: Cross**

**Among the Indians and Egyptians the cross often appears in their ceremonies, sometimes in the shape of the letter T, at others in this shape +. At Susa, Ker Porter saw a stone cut with hieroglyphics and cruciform inscriptions, on which in one corner was the figure of a cross, thus, \$. The cross, he says, is generally understood to be symbolical of the divinity or eternal life, and certainly a cross was to be seen in the temple of Serapis as the Egyptian emblem of the future life, as may be learned in Sozomen and Rufinus. Porter also states that the Egyptian priests urged its being found on the walls of their temple of Serapis as an argument with the victorious army of Theodosius to save it from destruction. From the numerous writings on this subject by La Croze, Jablonski, Zoega, Visconti, Pococke, Pluche, Petit Radel, and others, the symbol of the cross appears to have been most various in its significations. Sometimes it is the Phallus, sometimes the planet Venus, or the Nilometer, or an emblem of the four elements, or the seasons (Creuzer’s Symbolik, p. 168-9). It is therefore not surprising that ancient and even modern Christian writers should on this subject have indulged in some degree of refinement and mysticism.**

---

**“That the early Christians had a high regard for the cross is shown by the replies that Tertullian and Octavius made to the pagans who charged Christians with worshipping the cross.”**

It is not easy, however, to fix the date at which Christians commenced to have material representations of the cross. There exist no earlier preserved examples than some rings of stone, with the cross engraved on them, the style of which seems to indicate that they were made before the time of Constantine. The martyr Procopius and a Christian soldier named Orestes are said to have had crosses attached to their necks before going to their execution. A single example of the crux commissa, T, is preserved, of the date A.D. 370. On tombs, no cross of any kind is found before the same century. No crux immissa, +, or Greek cross, +, is found earlier than the fifth century. As far as yet examined, no cross is found of very early date in the Catacombs, those existing there having been traced by pilgrims centuries later. Such signs of the cross as properly belong to the monogram of Christ (q.v.) date back for their origin to the time of Constantine. Ancient texts have often spoken of this monogram under the name of cross, giving rise to many misunderstandings. In the more distant provinces of the Roman empire, as in Carthage, marbles marked by the cross have been found of the fourth century. Zeno of Verona, made bishop in 362, states that he placed a T cross on a basilica which he built. This same cross appears on the coins and medals of the emperor Valentinian I (died 375), and on bronzes struck by Constantine at Aquileia and at Treves, although many consider that these were Egyptian in origin, though adopted by the Christians. Constantine is stated to have placed a cross of gold on the tomb of St. Peter in the Vatican. Our Lord resting on a cross is seen on the tombstone of Probus and Proba (A.D. 355). Paulinus of Nola (died 432) had in his church paintings of crosses surrounded by crowns. Other similar ones are found in old mosaics, as in those of San Vitale of Ravenna (A.D. 547). Over the summit of an arch are two angels holding a crown, in the midst of which is a cross adorned with gems. Some diptychs of the fifth century also contain such crosses. The cross on tombstones was an attribute of a martyr, and on the early sarcophagi is specially used to designate St. Peter, as he died on the cross. After his vision of the cross in the heavens, Constantine (q.v.) changed the standard of the Roman empire to a cross.

**I would suggest a deeper reading found in the reference above as the depth of the subject is great.**

**As We See, It Is “Romanized Christianity” That Helped Bring About This Idolatry. Along With Many Other Heresies Brought Into The Church, Which We Will Talk About Later. Many Evil And Deceptive Practices Infiltrated The Church After 300 B.C., Much Of It Was Taken After The Example Of Ancient Pagan Practices.**

# **THE CROSS IN THE BIBLE**

## **WHAT WE ACTUALLY KNOW FROM THE BIBLE**

**What about the torture stake preached by the Jehovah Witnesses? Or, those who teach that Jesus was crucified on a literal tree?**

**Tree Old Testament Hebrew: H6086 – עץ -'êts -ates**

**From H6095; a tree (from its firmness); hence wood (plural sticks): - + carpenter, gallows, helve, + pine, plank, staff, stalk, stick, stock, timber, tree, wood.**

**Used 107 Times As Wood - 88 Times As Tree – 79 Times As Trees – 23 Times Timbers – 9 Times As Stocks – 8 Times As Gallows – 5 Times As Sticks – 3 Times As Carpenters – 3 Times As Staff - 2 Times As Stock – 2 Times As Stocks – 1 Time As Carpenter – 1 Time As Helve – 1 time As Pine – 1 Times As Planks 1 Time As Stalks**

### **Cursed Is The One Who Hangs On A Tree**

**DEUTERONOMY 21:22-23** “If a person commits a sin punishable by death and is executed, and you hang the corpse on a tree, (23) his body must not remain all night on the tree; instead you must make certain you bury him that same day, for the one who is left exposed on a tree is cursed by God. You must not defile your land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.”

**NUMBERS 35:33-34** “You must not pollute the land where you live, for blood defiles the land, and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed there, except by the blood of the person who shed it. (34) Therefore do not defile the land that you will inhabit, in which I live, for I the LORD live among the Israelites.”

**Tree New Testament Greek: G3586 – ξύλον – xulon - xoo'-lon**

**From another form of the base of G3582; timber (as fuel or material); by implication a stick, club or tree or other wooden article or substance: - staff, stocks, tree, wood.**

**Used 10 Times As Tree – 5 Times As Staves – 3 As Wood – 1 As Stock**

**ACTS 5:29-30** “But Peter and the apostles replied, “We must obey God rather than people. (30) The God of our forefathers raised up Jesus, whom you seized and killed by hanging him on a tree.”

**ACTS 10:39-40** “We are witnesses of all the things he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, (40) but God raised him up on the third day and caused him to be seen,”

**ACTS 13:28-30** “Though they found no cause for death, they still asked Pilate to have him killed. (29) When they had fulfilled all things that were written about him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a tomb. (30) But God raised him from the dead,”



**GALATIANS 3:13** “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us (because it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”)

**1 PETER 2:24** “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we may cease from sinning and live for righteousness. By his wounds you were healed.”

## What About “Cross?”

**Cross:** G4716 - Σταυρός – stauros - stow-ros'

From the base of G2476; a stake or post (as set upright), that is, (specifically) a pole or cross (as an instrument of capital punishment); figuratively exposure to death, that is, self denial; by implication the atonement of Christ: - cross.

### **Cross As Found In the New Testament 28 Times**

The Greek word for the typical cross (†) is **Crux immissa**, or **Crux**, which is not used in the Bible. Only Stauros, meaning stake or post.

## **THE DESCRIPTIONS OF THE CROSS WE HAVE**

### ***It Was An Object To Be Carried.***

**JOHN 19:16-17** “So then he delivered him to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus and led him away. (17) He went out, bearing his cross, to the place called “The Place of a Skull”, which is called in Hebrew, “Golgotha”,

### ***Until The Place Of Crucifixion The Person Was Not Attached It.***

**MATTHEW 27:32** “As they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name, and they compelled him to go with them, that he might carry his cross.” **See Also: MARK 15:21 + Luke 23:26**

### ***This Place Was Outside The City, But Near It.***

**HEBREWS 13:11-12** For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an offering for sin, are burned outside of the camp. (12) Therefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered outside of the gate.

### ***When They Arrived They Would Be Attached.***

**JOHN 19:31** “Therefore the Jews, because it was the Preparation Day, so that the bodies wouldn’t remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a special one), asked of Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.”

### ***A Person Would Be Attached And Lifted In The Air On It.***

**MATTHEW 27:40-42** “and saying, “You who destroy the temple, and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross!” (41) Likewise the chief priests also mocking, with the scribes, the Pharisees, and the elders, said, (42) “He saved others, but he can’t save himself. If he is the King of Israel, let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him.” **See Also: Mark 15:30-32**

### ***There Was Space To Attach A Sign On The Cross.***

**JOHN 19:19** "Pilate wrote a title also, and put it on the cross. There was written, "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS."

### ***This Time The Sign On The Cross Of Jesus Was Above His Head.***

**MATTHEW 27:37** "They set up over his head the accusation against him written, "THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS." **They Did Not Express How It Was Attached**

### ***The Cross Was Not Closed Off To The Public, You Can Get Near It.***

**JOHN 19:25** "But there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene."

**MARK 15:29** "Those who passed by blasphemed him, wagging their heads, and saying, "Ha! You who destroy the temple, and build it in three days,"

**MARK 15:35-36** "Some of those who stood by, when they heard it, said, "Behold, he is calling Elijah." (36) One ran, and filling a sponge full of vinegar, put it on a reed, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Let him be. Let's see whether Elijah comes to take him down."

### ***There Is Great Suffering On The Cross.***

**HEBREWS 12:2** "looking to Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising its shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

### ***Then Yes, Jesus Died On The Cross.***

**MARK 15:37-39** "Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and gave up the spirit. (38) The veil of the temple was torn in two from the top to the bottom. (39) When the centurion, who stood by opposite him, saw that he cried out like this and breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

**PHILIPPIANS 2:5-8** "Have this in your mind, which was also in Christ Jesus, (6) who, existing in the form of God, didn't consider equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men. (8) And being found in human form, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, yes, the death of the cross."

## **THE HISTORICAL FACTS**

Praise God, we have an actual record of what the cross of Jesus actually looked like. It is from early church historian and theologian, Tertullian. Tertullian Lived 155-220 A.D. He Was the Founder of Western Theology & Wrote In Latin. He often debated pagans on his understanding of Christianity. Though often influenced by the practices of those he was debating.

### Tertullian On The Actual Shape Of The Cross.

“Now the Greek letter Tau and our own letter T is the very form of the cross, which He predicted would be the sign on our foreheads in the true Catholic Jerusalem,”

Tertullian - Against Marcion Bk 3 - Ch 14-End - Chap. XXII. - The Success of the Apostles, and Their sufferings in the Cause of the Gospel, Foretold.

### Philips Davies

Recent finding by Philips Davies, Emeritus Professor Of Old Testament Studies At Sheffield University, gave the following description after finding a small lead book dating back to earliest Christianity:

“There are walls depicted on other pages of these books to and almost certainly refer to Jerusalem. It is the cross that is most telling feature, in the shape of a capital T, as the crosses used by Romans for crucifixion were. It is a Christina crucifixion taking place outside the city walls.”

## A TURN OF A PHRASE

Often people like to take poetic expression and try to turn them into literal operations, totally missing the point of the declaration in the first place. So we have grouped all the expressions concerning the cross in the NT. This way, we can see these are not reason or justification to harbor the idolatry of making actual crosses.

### Expression As A Requirement Of Being A Follower Of Jesus.

**MATTHEW 10:38-39** “He who doesn’t take his cross and follow after me, isn’t worthy of me. (39) He who seeks his life will lose it; and he who loses his life for my sake will find it.” See Also: Mark 8:34-35 + Luke 9:23-24

**Matthew 16:24-25** “Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. (25) For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, and whoever will lose his life for my sake will find it.”

**Luke 14:27** “Whoever doesn’t bear his own cross, and come after me, can’t be my disciple.”

### Expressions About A Self -Sacrificing Life.

**Mark 10:21** “Jesus looking at him loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack. Go, sell whatever you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me, taking up the cross.”

**Hebrews 13:12-13** “Therefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered outside of the gate. (13) Let’s therefore go out to him outside of the camp, bearing his reproach.”



## ■ **As A Descriptive Expression Of The Work And Sacrifice Of Jesus.**

**Colossians 1:20** “and through him to reconcile all things to himself, by him, whether things on the earth, or things in the heavens, having made peace through **the blood of his cross.**” **Does a piece of wood bleed? No. It's the Work Of The Cross Or Effect Of The Work On The Cross That It Is Pointing To.**

**Colossians 2:13-15** “You were dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh. He made you alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, (14) wiping out the handwriting in ordinances which was against us; and he has taken it out of the way, **nauling it to the cross**; (15) having stripped the principalities and the powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”

**Was It Actually Nailed To The Cross? No. It's the Work Of The Cross Or Effect Of The Work On The Cross That It Is Pointing To.**

**1 Corinthians 1:17-18** “For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Good News—not in wisdom of words, so that the cross of Christ wouldn't be made void. (18) For the **word of the cross** is foolishness to those who are dying, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” **It's the Work Of The Cross Or Effect Of The Work On The Cross That It Is Pointing To.**

**Galatians 5:11** “But I, brothers, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? Then the stumbling **block of the cross** has been removed.”

**Galatians 6:11-14** “See with what large letters I write to you with my own hand. (12) As many as desire to make a good impression in the flesh compel you to be circumcised; just so they **may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ**. (13) For even they who receive circumcision don't keep the law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may boast in your flesh. (14) **But far be it from me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ**, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”

**Ephesians 2:14-16** “For he is our peace, who made both one, and broke down the middle wall of partition, (15) having abolished in his flesh the hostility, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man of the two, making peace; (16) and **might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, having killed the hostility thereby.**”

**Philippians 3:18-19** “For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, **as the enemies of the cross of Christ**, (19) whose end is destruction, whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who think about earthly things.”

**As we can clearly see in this study of Scripture and that Bible: There is no indication of the appearance of the cross. There is no mandate to make a cross. And that all discussions and expressions are poetic-filled with deeper meaning and implication. Let us no longer be deceived by the devil and pagan idolatry.**

**In part 3 we will do a brief recap and fully unlock being the representation of Jesus upon the earth. Not letting a dried and dead piece of wood supplant our divine privilege or power.**