

When Did Jesus Christ Decide To Die For Sinners?

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Almighty God allows freedom of choice for everyone He has created. However, He does warn that there are consequences for anyone who lives contrary to His law and commandments (cf. Dt. 30:10-20). He does not force anyone to do anything they do not want to do, even if their choices are against His law and commandments ultimately resulting in their death. Because He allows freedom of choice, the spirit-being that became known as Jesus Christ was not forced or coerced into becoming a sinless sacrifice for the purpose of restoring sinners to Almighty God. Instead, Christ volunteered willingly,

As the Father knows me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep (Jn. 10:15; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted).

Therefore my Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from my Father (Jn. 10:17-18).

So Jesus Christ made a conscious decision to become a flesh and blood human being for the purpose of dying as a sacrifice for sin. He knew beforehand that becoming a physical human being would mean he would have to die at some point. He also knew ahead of time that he would suffer a great deal of physical pain combined with the deep sorrow of being rejected by the very person, or persons, he was going to die for (cf. Isa. 52:13-15; 53:1-12). If no one had ever sinned, there would be no need for Christ to lay down his life. As the first instance of sin involved another spirit-being (Satan), Jesus Christ knew the moment this sin occurred he would have to give up everything he had including his very existence. During his earthly ministry, he commented on this moment in time when the decision he had made became a reality,

And he (Christ) said to them (his disciples), 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven' (Lk. 10:18; Ed. notes in parentheses).

This sin involved only one spirit-being, but scripture reveals that other spirit-beings followed later (cf. Jude 6; Rev. 12:4, 7, 9),

You (Lucifer; cf. Isa. 14:12) were the anointed cherub who covers; I (Almighty God) established (appointed) you; you were on the holy mountain (symbol of government) of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones (symbolic of God's law and commandments; cf. Dt. 33:2). You (Satan) were perfect in your ways from the day you were created (as a Morning Star; cf. Isa. 14:12), till iniquity (sin, cf. 1Jn. 3:4) was found in you (Eze. 28:14-15; cf. Rev. 12:4; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Christ saw Satan fall from heaven after he sinned. Sometime after this occurred, it appears that Almighty God created a replacement to take over Lucifer's responsibilities. This replacement was named Adam. Had Adam obeyed the instructions God gave him, he would have qualified to take over the position vacated by Satan. Should Adam sin,

Jesus Christ's sacrifice would also cover the sins of Adam and everyone descended from him,

And so it is written, 'The first man Adam became a living being.' The last Adam (Jesus Christ) became a life-giving spirit (because he did not sin) (1Cor. 15:45; Ed. notes in parentheses).

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, 'Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!' (Jn 1:29).

Going back to the question of 'when did Christ decide to lay down his life for sin?' there are scriptures that assist in corroborating the timing of this decision,

And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of **the Lamb** (Christ) **slain from the foundation of the world** (Rev. 13:8; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

So that restoration to God would be possible for everyone, it is important to examine the period of time referred to as the "foundation of the world" in order to accurately determine when Christ made his decision,

That the blood of all the prophets which was **shed from the foundation of the world** may be required of this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple... (Lk. 11:50-51a; emphasis added).

The Greek word translated 'foundation' in the phrase, *foundation of the world*, is *katabole* (SGD 2602), meaning: to lay down as in founding or a foundation, or a casting down as to eliminate or destroy. As *katabole* carries potentially very different meanings, the appropriate application of the word is dependent upon the context in which it is used.

The Greek work translated 'world' in the phrase *foundation of the world*, is *kosmos* (SGD 2889), meaning: orderly arrangement, harmonious structure, government, system, universe, earth, world, adornment, decoration.

The context of Luke 11:50-51 deals the prophets of God, starting with Abel, whose blood had been shed *from the foundation of the world*.

As God's prophets were flesh and blood human beings and as many of these prophets were martyred beginning with righteous Abel (cf. Heb. 11:4) all the way up to the time of Zechariah, it is apparent that that the phrase "foundation of the world" applies to the world that began with Adam's sin followed shortly thereafter by the death of God's first prophet, Abel,

Then the eyes of both of them (Adam and Eve) were opened, and they knew they were naked (figurative language showing a change into a flesh and blood body had occurred because of sin; cf. Gen. 2:25); and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings (Gen. 3:7; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Since the course of man was inextricably changed due to the introduction of sin with Adam and Eve and the murder of Abel by the hand of Cain, it would be reasonable to

conclude that the phrase in question might be more accurately rendered in this text, *from the casting down of the earth* (i.e. structure or system). In other words, the original system or structure was brought down due to sin.

According to the following scriptural reference, the sacrifice that Christ might have to make on behalf of a sinner, or sinners, appears to have been known prior to the first occurrence of sin in God's creation,

Knowing that you (sinners) were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers (who in turn ultimately received it from Satan; cf. Jn. 8:44), but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He (Christ) was foreordained (foreknown as the Lamb of God in the spirit realm; cf. Jn. 1:29; Rev. 13:8) **before** the foundation of the world, but was manifest (revealed) in these last times for you (1Pet. 1:18-20; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

This next scriptural reference confirms that the sacrificial system was known since the time of Adam and Eve's sin (the foundation of the world) because an animal was killed in order to cover their sin (cf. Gen. 3:21). It also confirms that this was the moment in time when the phrase "foundation of the world" came into effect. Finally, it reveals that a spirit-being, other than Almighty God, was working with Adam and Eve to teach them about the sacrificial system because they would have seen this spirit-being during the process of having animal skins prepared and applied to them, and no human being has seen Almighty God (cf. Jn. 5:37),

Not that he (Christ) should offer himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with the blood of another – he then would have had to suffer often **since the foundation of the world**; but now, once at the end of the ages, he has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself (Heb. 9:25-26; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

The period from the foundation of the world until the time of Noah's preaching, is referred to as "the ancient world",

For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell (Gr. "tartarus" – used only once in scripture) and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; and did not spare **the ancient world**, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly (2Pet. 2:4-5; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

To summarize so far, Jesus Christ was aware of the possibility that at least one individual might choose to rebel against the law and commandments of his Father and that individual could only be restored through the sacrifice of a sinless being (Heb. 9:22). Even knowing how difficult this task would be, Christ willingly volunteered to become that flesh and blood sacrifice. Once Lucifer rebelled, Christ knew he would then have to lay down his life for one of his spirit-brethren. Before becoming a flesh and blood human being, Christ was involved with teaching Adam who had the potential to become Lucifer's replacement (cf. Heb. 13:8). Because Adam disobeyed the word of God (Gen. 2:16-17) he was sentenced to death, which meant becoming flesh and blood (cf. Gen. 3:7).

Adam's failure to obey God meant that he could not assume Lucifer's responsibilities and that Satan would continue to exist awaiting his final judgment (cf. Jn. 14:30). Satan's final judgment could not occur until Christ successfully fulfilled his responsibilities (cf. Mt. 5:17; Heb. 10:7; Jn. 16:11; Php. 2:5-11). If Adam had obeyed God's command, Satan would have been judged by Adam's conduct. Instead, Satan thwarted that possibility by deceiving Eve, while Adam stood by and did not act to save his wife's life (cf. Gen. 3:1-6). Although the repentant and obedient descendants of Adam will not be judging Satan, they will be involved in the judgment of the fallen host of heaven, who rebelled after Satan,

Do you not know that we (repentant/obedient descendants of Adam) shall judge (fallen) angels (demons)? How much more things that pertain to this life? (1Cor. 6:3; Ed. notes in parentheses).

As the angels of God existed prior to the creation of the physical universe (Job 38:4-7), and as the universe is approximately 14 billion years old, Lucifer could have obeyed Almighty God for a very long period of time. Because Adam's sin occurred in the time frame of thousands of years ago, not millions or billions, it appears that Satan's rebellion was a relatively recent occurrence. Christ's decision to become a sacrifice for sin would have been made at the same time, or perhaps earlier. It is unlikely that Adam would have been created if Lucifer had not rebelled and abdicated his responsibility in the heavenly realm (cf. Isa. 14:12). Unfortunately, Adam failed to obey the command that God gave him and due to this sin he was sentenced to death, which meant becoming a flesh and blood human being. Thankfully the last Adam, Jesus Christ, succeeded where the first Adam failed,

And so it is written, 'The **first man Adam** became a living being.' The **last Adam** became a life-giving spirit (1Cor. 15:45; emphasis added).

The conditional authority that Adam was given prior to his sin was confirmed by the chronological order of creation in Genesis 2:8-17. In this order, Adam was created before the trees in the garden and these trees symbolically represented some angelic beings (cf. Eze. 31:16-18). Also, Adam was given authority to name other created beings (cf. Gen. 2:20). However, Adam did not have authority over The Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil because these existed prior to his creation, and Adam was told not to eat of (fellowship with) the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil because it represented Satan who had rebelled before Adam was created (Gen. 2:16-17). As Eve was the last in this order of creation and as she was deceived by Satan, Paul's comment about women having their heads covered (i.e. longer hair than a man; cf. 1Cor. 11:14-15) was symbolic and refers back to the original order and authority of creation that took place just before the foundation of the world,

For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head (as a continual reminder of what happened at the time of Adam's creation), **because of the angels** (1Cor. 11:10; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

When Adam sinned, he and his wife hid amongst the other trees in the garden. This represented, through symbolic language, an agreement between the group consisting of Adam, Eve, and an unspecified number of angels. They came to a consensus that Satan's way of reasoning and living was more appealing than obeying and living by every word of Almighty God (Mt. 4:4). If the trees refused to allow Adam and Eve to hide among them, this would have confirmed that the angels had rejected Satan's reasoning (cf. 1Cor. 5:9-11). However, this did not happen and Adam and Eve, along with the angels, were punished for their sin. It appears Adam and Eve became flesh and blood due to their sin as well as the angels who were with them. This might explain why Cain was frightened of following his judgment for Abel's murder (Gen. 4:14-15), as well as the appearance of Nephilim in the ancient world,

And the angels who did not keep their proper (own) domain (spirit realm), but left their own habitation (because they sinned in the garden), he has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day (Jude 6; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God (fallen angels) saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all they chose (Gen. 6:1-2; Ed. note in parenthesis).

There were giants (Nephilim, fallen or mighty ones) on the earth in those days, and also afterward (following Noah's flood), when the sons of God (fallen angels) came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown (Gen. 6:4; Ed. notes in parentheses).

This series of events unfolded as the result of Adam and Eve's sin as well as the sin of the trees (angels) that Adam and Eve fellowshiped with. At one point these angels were obedient to God, but their attitude changed by the time Eve made her decision to disobey God's command.

Christ's decision to become a sacrifice for sin would be the means through which Adam and his descendants could be restored in their relationship with Almighty God, but repentance of sin would be a prerequisite to anyone's forgiveness (Ac. 2:38). Jesus Christ made his decision either before Satan's sin (Isa. 14:12-15; cf. 1Pet. 1:18-20), or at the time that Satan committed sin (Lk. 10:18). As God is not willing that any perish (2Pet. 3:9), Christ's sacrifice would also be the means of reconciliation for all the angels who have ever sinned as well.

This document is the collaborative work of individuals who believe God's truth should be given freely (Mt. 10:8; 1Cor. 2:12; 2Cor.11:7; Rom. 10:14-21) and the message of the one true God should be made available to all nations (Mt. 24:14) as a prerequisite to the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings (Mt. 17:10; 19:17; Mk. 9:11; Lk. 1:17; Rev. 19:11-16).

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