

The Greatest Love Story

Redemption and Regeneration

All human history – past, present and future – hinges on the cross of Jesus Christ; even our calendar is based on it. The cross is the ultimate expression of God's infinite love for us.

Before the Cross, God showed us His holiness through the Law of Moses. This law contained a repetitive sacrificial system and prescribed regulations, described in detail, administered by priests and carried out by the people.

Through His death on the cross Jesus brought in a New Covenant, the law of the Spirit of life. He became the sacrificial Lamb for all people for all time, to set us free from spiritual bondage. But why was this necessary?

The Bible begins with the creation of the world and of mankind. God wanted to share His love, so He created human beings and placed them in a perfect environment. It was all so very beautiful and pristine. The air was pure, the flowers were bright, the animals played together without fear, because there was no fighting or death. It was a joyful place with nothing to cause pain or sadness. God even gave the first man and woman opportunity to enjoy His presence in an intimate way. But then a terrible thing happened.

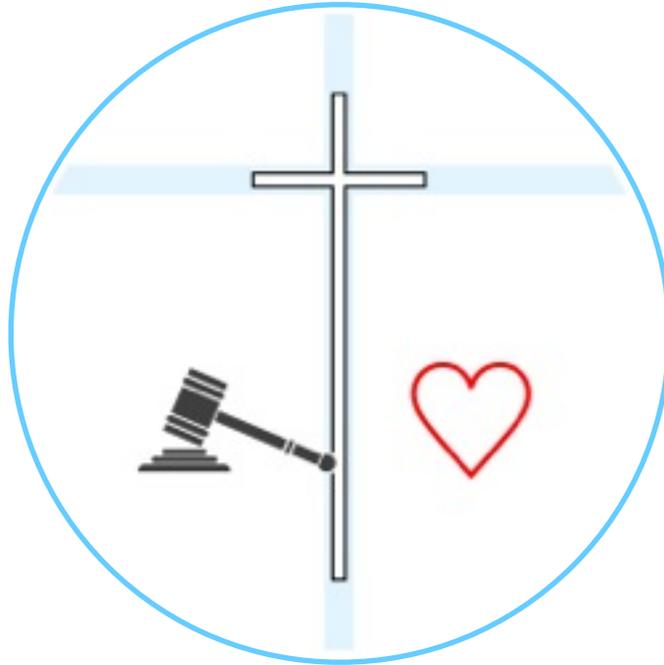
An angel who had been created to worship and serve God, rebelled and decided he wanted to be as great as God. So God had to banish him from heaven. This angel began to make trouble for the man and woman by distracting them, and convincing them to do the very thing God told them not to do. They yielded to temptation and everything changed. Sin entered the world. No longer could they have the same relationship with God.

Today, we too are separated from God by choosing our own way, and the fallen angel's way, instead of God's way. As a result we experience a deep loneliness of soul, an inner darkness that we seek to fix with many things, in many ways. But nothing can replace God's love and presence. Yet God in His passionate love for us did not let the story end there. Even in the beginning God knew He had a very big plan to bring us back into a loving relationship with Himself. It was such a huge plan that He prepared it for thousands of years. Over that time period He showed human beings His holiness, His power, His anger against evil, His mercy and His deep compassion.

From Genesis to Malachi in the Bible we see a foreshadowing of God's plan to save us. In the four Gospel accounts we see the birth, life, death and resurrection of the Lamb of God, the promised Messiah. In the book of Revelation we see Him returning as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Then when the right time came, He sent the Saviour, Jesus the Messiah, to make a way for every person to come back into His presence to enjoy His love and His light. The solution God provided was at great cost to Himself.

Justice and Mercy Meet -
mercy triumphs over judgement!



God's loving heart led Him
to sacrifice Himself for us.
He is both just and the justifier
of the one who believes in Jesus.
What a wonderful God!

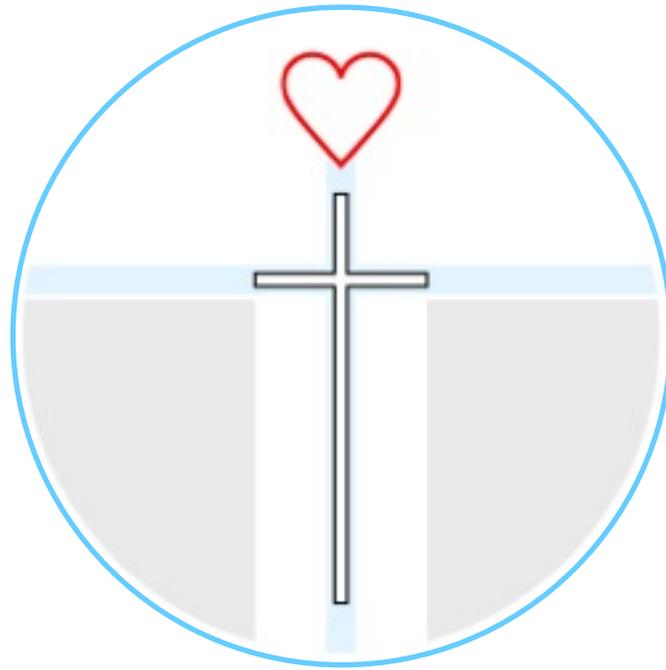
Romans 3:23-26

God knew that if He gave His life for us, the curse of separation would be broken, and both His justice and His love would be satisfied. He would be able to set people free. In the graphic above, the **gavel** shows that God as a holy Judge had to condemn sin and pronounce a death sentence. The **heart** represents His loving choice to take the death penalty for us. The **cross** was the great cost He paid for us.

At His last Passover meal with His disciples, Jesus gathered His disciples around Himself. He knew He was about to become the Passover lamb, slain for the sins of the whole world. The cross on which Jesus died was ugly and painful. It was agony. Not only did Jesus suffer physically, He was temporarily separated from God the Father, because He carried the sins of the whole world upon Himself. This would have created such utter pain, darkness and horror that we could never imagine, nor will we ever have to experience.

At the moment He gave up His spirit and died, God showed that the curse was broken – the heavy curtain in the temple was torn in two from top to bottom without human hands. The way into His presence was now open for all. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and many holy people who had died were raised to life (Matthew 27:50-53). With His cross Jesus became the bridge, so you can now cross the gap of separation and enter His beautiful Presence again.

This is the greatest love story –
God's love for you.



Jesus bridged the gap for us and made a
way for us to return to the Father.
We need to humbly accept His gift.

John 3:16; 6:40; 14:6