

Chapter 17: What does the “t” stand for?

The cross is recognized as one of the world’s most iconic symbols of religion. It represents the cornerstone of Christian faith: The crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ (note that there are two versions, one with Jesus nailed to the cross—hanging dead, and the other, without. It can be said the version with the empty cross specifically represents the resurrection of Jesus Christ). However, this wasn’t the only symbol Christianity used during its early expansion.

Since 2nd century AD, over a dozen symbols were used to represent Christianity, like the ichthys (a Greek symbol consisting of two intersecting arcs, where the ends extend past its conjunction to resemble the profile of a fish), the Chi Rho (Roman emperor Constantine the Great called it labarum), and the Alpha and Omega—the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet. With so many emerging symbols representing one religion, how did Christianity come to adopt the cross as its official logo?

The Encyclopedia Britannica states,

From its simplicity of form, the cross has been used both as a religious symbol and as an ornament, from the dawn of man’s civilization. Various objects, dating from periods long anterior to the Christian era, have been found, marked with crosses of different designs, in almost every part of the old world. India, Syria, Persia and Egypt have all yielded numberless examples, while numerous instances, dating from the later Stone Age to Christian times, have been found in nearly every part of Europe. The use of the cross as a religious symbol in pre-Christian times, and among non-Christian peoples, may probably be regarded as almost universal, and in very many cases it was connected with some form of nature worship¹.

What’s really extraordinary about this is that the words “cross” and “crucify” aren’t found anywhere in the Bible whatsoever. It’s because the words don’t exist in the original Greek text of

the New Testament. The words are mistranslations, a “later rendering,” from the Greek words *stauros* and *stauroo*. Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words states, “*Stauros* denotes, primarily, an upright pole or stake, both the noun and the verb *stauroo*, to fasten to a stake or pole, are originally to be distinguished from the ecclesiastical form of a two-beamed cross.” Greek dictionaries, lexicons, and other study books, likewise, declare the primary meaning of *stauros* to be an upright pale, pole or stake.

The secondary meaning of “cross” is also admitted by translators to be a “later” rendering. In spite of strong evidence and proof that the word *stauros* should have been translated “stake,” and the verb “*stauroo*” to have been translated “impale,” nearly all common versions of biblical texts persist with the Latin Vulgate’s *crux* (cross), a fallacious “later” rendering of the Greek *stauros*.

Additionally, the two-beamed cross—in the shape of a “t”—was already popularized by Mesopotamian religion (circa 3500 BC). It originated in ancient Chaldea, Babylon and was used as the symbol for the god Tammuz (being in the shape of the mystic Tau, the initial of his name). Interestingly enough, there’s biblical scripture that references this.

In the book of Ezekiel in the Old Testament, God supernaturally revealed to the prophet Ezekiel some of the secret sins of the nation of Israel. One of these sins was lamenting for a pagan god named Tammuz. “So, He brought me to the door of the north gate of the Lord’s house; and to my dismay, women were sitting there weeping for Tammuz” (Ezekiel 8:14).

Who was Tammuz? The New Encyclopedia Britannica offers definition, “Tammuz, in Mesopotamian religion, god of fertility embodying the powers for new life in nature in the springⁱⁱ.” Tammuz was worshipped/celebrated through sexual practices, which involved ritual prostitution. Ezekiel saw women participating in a rite in which they were mourning the death of a Mesopotamian god whose myth said he was resurrected to new life (remember that resurrection accounts were common before Jesus Christ, like the Greek Goddess of Spring, Persephone).

Circling back, why then was the word “cross” (crux) brought into Christianity? Historical evidence points to Constantine the Great as the culprit who perpetuated uniting Babylonian Sun worship and the Christian faith. Constantine’s famous vision of “the cross superimposed on the sun,” in the year 312 AD is usually cited by historians. According to historian Alexander Hislop, Tammuz was intimately associated with the Babylonian mystery religions begun by the worship of Nimrod, Semiramis and her illegitimate son, Horus. The original form of the Babylonian letter T was †, identical to the crosses used today in Christianity. This is the initial of Tammuz.

Referring to this sign of Tammuz, Hislop stated,

“The mystic Tau was marked in baptism on the foreheads of those initiated into the Mysteries. The Vestal virgins of Pagan Rome wore it suspended from their necklaces, as the nuns do now. There is hardly a Pagan tribe where the cross has not been found. The ‘X’ which in itself was not an unnatural symbol of Christ, the true Messiah, and which had once been regarded as such, was allowed to go entirely into disuse, and the Tau, “†”, the sign of the cross, the indisputable sign of Tammuz, the false Messiah, was everywhere substituted in its steadⁱⁱⁱ.”

Other experts call the cross a sun-symbol, a Babylonian sun-symbol, an astrological Babylonian-Assyrian symbol, and a heathen sun-symbol. The widely-known encircled cross is also referred to as a “solar wheel,” among many other varieties of crosses. Furthermore, the cross represents the Tree of Life—the age-old fertility symbol—combining the vertical male and the horizontal female, especially in Egyptian culture, either as an ordinary cross, or better known in the form of the crux ansata, the Egyptian ankh, which has been carried over into our modern-day symbology for the female.

It’s important to add that between the 16th and 17th centuries, Protestants (especially in England) refrained for many years from associating the cross to their faith, aware of its

“immoral” origins. Nevertheless, the unscriptural symbol has become universally accepted, endorsed and campaigned by Christianity just like the image of Jesus Christ.

Hundreds of millions of believers around the world continue to celebrate the cross despite its fallacious context...that the “t” they so proudly champion symbolizes the ancient Mesopotamian god, Tammuz.

As a bonus, do you know what symbol is of Christian origin but is perceived as satanic? The upside-down cross. Despite what believers feel or think, the upside-down cross, also called the inverted Latin cross or the Petrine Cross, is actually known as the Cross of Saint Peter. According to biblical lore, the apostle Peter requested to be crucified upside down because he believed himself unworthy to die in the same manner as Jesus Christ (Note that the Bible doesn't actually state this. Scripture never defined when or how Peter died). The revered symbol was immortalized and prominent in early Christianity, and was often used to reflect humility and unworthiness. Till this day, you can still see it used throughout Catholicism.

If you're wondering how the symbol became “satanic,” it's quite humorous. During the Satanic Panic (a period of paranoia over the occult in the 1980's where Christian fundamentalism boomed) a few musical groups liberally used the symbol as a fashion statement, or as a promotional stunt. Some horror films during the same stretch decided to also use it as a gimmick for marketing. It's uncertain whether or not the meaning of the Cross of Saint Peter was known by those who used it, but it didn't matter. The evangelical movement at the time was entirely driven by fear-mongering (Stranger Danger culture), fire-and-brimstone preaching and an obsession over devil worship. Christian leadership blindly proclaimed the Cross of Saint Peter satanic, flat-out abandoning its meaning, origin and significance in favor of their anti-occult crusade.

It reminds me how believers attack the term “X-mas,” in regards to Christmas. For some reason, Christians are under the impression the word “Christ” is being “X'd” out, eliminated in

some sort of anti-Christ statement. What they fail to realize is that the letter “X” in Greek represents the letter Chi, the first letter in the word Christós, (Χριστός). And Christós, in English, means Christ. In other words, “X-mas” is just the Greek way of saying Christmas. In fact, during the early times of the Christian church, believers used the letter X as a secret symbol to signify their association to the church.

Unfortunately, many believers today remain ignorant to these realities. And this type of religious cannibalism wouldn't be the only time Christianity would “eat” its own heritage for advantageous hyperbole either. Take for instance, reincarnation. Prior to 553 AD, reincarnation was a fundamental Christian teaching. It's worth repeating, reincarnation was one of the pillars of Christian faith.

Early scholars and theologians, like Basilides, St. Gregory and Origenes Adamantius, taught reincarnation because it was scriptural—as in—used to be written in the Bible. But all biblical references of reincarnation were entirely removed, deleted by other Christians as a ploy to establish dominance over church government during the Second Council of Constantinople in 553 AD. One hundred and sixty-five church officials from the Eastern church conspired to condemn reincarnation against the Western church of Constantinople. This occurred during the time after the fall of the Roman empire, when churches wickedly competed for doctrinal control.

If this power play reminds you of the First Council of Nicaea regarding Arianism and Trinitarianism, you're not alone. In fact, the Bible's history is riddled with numerous events like these. It would be a thousand years later, years full of treachery, manipulation, destruction, forgery, murder, extortion and assimilation, before the very first English version of the “holy” Bible (also known as the Tyndale Bible) would emerge in 1535.

ⁱ The Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th ed., vol. 7, pg. 506. (1910)

ⁱⁱ (Vol. 11, p. 532)

ⁱⁱⁱ The Two Babylons, p. 198-199, 204-205 (1959)