

Jesus' Crucifixion

In our final study in our series on the character of Christ we are going to review how He dealt with His most difficult circumstance of all and that was His crucifixion. The manner in which we are going to do it will be a little bit unique. We are going to look at it through the lens of prophecy. There are 3 reasons we are going to do it in this way:

1. There's really no greater evidence pointing to the fact that Jesus Christ was/is who He said He was then prophecy.

- **There are at least 332 distinct Old Testament predictions regarding the Messiah which Jesus fulfilled perfectly (such as His birth in Bethlehem, His healing of the sick, His death on the cross, and so forth). Collectively, the combination of this evidence together is absolutely overwhelming.**
- **Professor Peter Stoner has calculated that the probability of any one man fulfilling eight of these prophecies is one in 100,000,000,000,000,000 (10 to the 17th power Quadrillion); that many silver dollars would cover the state of Texas two feet deep. Stoner says that if you consider 48 of the prophecies, the odds become one in 10 to the 157th power. The odds against one person fulfilling that many prophecies would be beyond all mathematical possibility. It could never happen, no matter how much time was allotted. One mathematician's estimate of those impossible odds is "one chance in a trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion."**

2. If you are an unbeliever than hopefully this will help bring you to belief that Jesus is truly the Messiah. If you are a believe it will hopefully only strengthen your trust that you've placed in Him.

3. Finally, it was prophesied the the Messiah would suffer. We have been studying Jesus' character. Is there any greater revealer of someone's character than suffering?

ACTS CH 3 VERSE 18

"But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.

Announced beforehand - On the day of Jesus' crucifixion, 28 prophecies concerning His suffering were fulfilled in every detail—a lasting testimony that Jesus truly is the Messiah.

Suffer - paschō (pä'-skhō) - be in a bad plight, **to suffer sadly.**

Jesus' suffering actually began in the garden:

Mark 14:33-36 (NLT) 33 He took Peter, James, and John with him, and he became deeply troubled and distressed. 34 He told them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." 35 He went on a little farther and fell to the ground. He prayed that, if it were possible, the awful hour awaiting him might pass him by. 36 "Abba, Father," he cried out, "everything

is possible for you. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine."

Distressed - ekthambeō (ek-thām-be'-ō) - to be struck with terror

Jesus was terrified of what was to come. He knew it was to be horrific in nature.

Abba Father - *The word Abba is an Aramaic word that would most closely be translated as "Daddy." It was a common term that young children would use to address their fathers. It signifies the close, intimate relationship of a father to his child, as well as the childlike trust that a young child puts in his "daddy."*

- got questions.org

Psalms 22:1,7-8,14,16-18 (NASB) 1 A Psalm of David. My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning. 2 O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer; And by night, but I have no rest...7 All who see me sneer at me; They separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying, "Commit yourself to the LORD; let Him deliver him; Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him." 14 I am poured out like water, And all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It is melted within me...16 For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; They pierced my hands and my feet. 17 I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; 18 They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots.

PSALM 22:1

A Psalm of David. My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning.

David was prophetically crying out the words that Christ would use some 1,000 years later.

Matthew 27:46 (NASB) 46 About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" that is, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?"

With the sin of the world upon Him, Jesus suffered spiritual death (separation from the Father). The Father must turn away from His Beloved Son on the cross. For the first time, Jesus does not address God as His Father.

- **Courson**

Forsaken - egkataleipō (en-kä-tā-lā'-pō)

1. abandon, desert
2. leave in straits, leave helpless
3. totally abandoned, utterly forsaken

While the physical pain of what Christ was going through was horrific in nature. The pain of separation from His Father was probably even more tragic for Christ.

to suffer sadly - When I think of suffering sadly, the saddest type of suffering I can imagine would be to suffer alone.

Why was Jesus forsaken by His Father?

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NASB) 21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

To be sin - hamartia (hä-mär-tē'-ä) *In the verse we are looking at here it is most likely related more to the following definitions:*

- collectively, the complex or aggregate of sins committed either by a single person or by many

This is precisely why God had the following done in the OT Passover memorial:

Leviticus 16:21-22 (NASB) 21 "Then Aaron shall lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and he shall lay them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who stands in readiness 22 "The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a solitary land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness.

Isaiah 59:1-2 (NASB) 1 Behold, the LORD'S hand is not so short that it cannot save; Nor is His ear so dull that it cannot hear. 2 But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.

Jesus was to be a sin offering or better said THE sin offering for all time, *therefore God dealt with Him as He would all sin offerings.*

As the spotless lamb sacrifice as well as the scapegoat Jesus took upon Himself all of our sins. **That meant separation from the Father for the first time ever in eternity.**

The pain of this separation had to have been incredible. You and I can't quite understand the depth of this pain because we tend to vacillate back and forth in our separation from Him because of our sin...Christ never sinned and was now experiencing this pain.

PSALM 22:2

O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer; And by night, but I have no rest.

Mark 15:25 NASB 25 It was the third hour when they crucified Him.

The third hour would have been 9am or morning.

Matthew 27:45 NASB 45 Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour.

The 6th hour to the ninth hour wouldn't have typically been dark but we see that on this day it was.

PSALM 22:7-8

7 All who see me sneer at me; They separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying, 8 "Commit

yourself to the LORD; let Him deliver him; Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him."

Matthew 27:39-43 (NASB) 39 And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads 40 and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross." 41 In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking Him and saying, 42 "He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe in Him. 43 "HE TRUSTS IN GOD; LET GOD RESCUE Him now, IF HE DELIGHTS IN HIM; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'"

Isn't it amazing how incredibly close the wording here is from the OT prophecy of David to the NT account by Matthew.

PSALM 22:14

I am poured out like water, And all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It is melted within me.

I am poured out like water -

John 19:34 (NASB) 34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.

All my bones are out of joint - *When the cross was erected upright, there was tremendous strain put on the wrists, arms and shoulders, resulting in a dislocation of the shoulder and elbow joints.(Metherall) The arms, being held up and outward, held the rib cage in a fixed end inspiratory position which made it extremely difficult to exhale, and impossible to take a full breath. The victim would only be able to take very shallow breaths.(This may explain why Jesus made very short statements while on the cross). As time passed, the muscles, from the loss of blood, loss of oxygen and the fixed position of the body, would undergo severe cramps and spasmodic contractions.*

- David Terasaka, M.D. :: "Medical Aspects of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ"

My heart is like wax - one account that I have read stated that due to the heart having to work so hard but there being very little breathing, the blood in the veins and arteries would begin to harden or become wax like in substance.

PSALM 22:15

My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And my tongue cleaves to my jaws; And You lay me in the dust of death.

Potsherd - clay vessel, brittle and easily broken.

So when David says this here we are to understand that Jesus' would have had very little strength

left.

We know that He had been flogged already. What did flogging or scourging look like? For the portions of scripture that are about the crucifixion and beatings we are going to refer to a paper that was written by **David Terasaka, M.D. :: "Medical Aspects of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ"**

During a flogging, a victim was tied to a post, leaving his back entirely exposed. The Romans used a whip, called a flagrum or flagellum which consisted of small pieces of bone and metal attached to a number of leather strands. The number of strikes is not recorded in the gospels. The number of blows in Jewish law was set in Deuteronomy 25:3 at forty, but later reduced to 39 to prevent excessive blows by a counting error. (Holmans). The victim often died from the beating. (39 hits were believed to bring the criminal to "one from death".) Roman law did not put any limits on the number of blows given. (McDowell) During the flogging, the skin was stripped from the back, exposing a bloody mass of muscle and bone ("hamburger " : Metherall). Extreme blood loss occurred from this beating, weakening the victim perhaps to the point of being unconscious.

The Severity of the Beating

Isaiah 50:6 (NASB) 6 I gave My back to those who strike Me, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting.

Matthew 27:26-31 (ESV) 26 Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified. 27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. 28 And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, 29 And after twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they knelt down before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 30 They spat on Him, and took the reed and began to beat Him on the head. 31 After they had mocked Him, they took the scarlet robe off Him and put His own garments back on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him.

It has been stated that Jesus was beaten so severely that His appearance was deformed more than what a man ought to look like.

Isaiah 52:14 (NASB) 14 Just as many were astonished at you, My people, So His appearance was marred more than any man And His form more than the sons of men.

my tongue cleaves to my jaws - Jesus would have lost a tremendous amount of blood and water. He was offered **2 drinks on the cross**. The first, which He refused, was a drugged wine (mixed with myrrh).

Matthew 27:33-34 (NASB) 33 And when they came to a place called Golgotha, which means Place of a Skull, 34 they gave Him wine to drink mixed with gall; and after tasting it, He was unwilling to drink.

This was a concoction given to criminals that were going to be crucified. It was considered a merciful act as the mixture acted as an anesthesia of sorts and helped them cope with the pain. Christ would not accept it. He would face the cross without a clouded mind and accept the physical pain in full.

John 19:28-29 (ESV) After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst." 29 A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth.

Psalm 69:20-21 (NASB) 20 Reproach has broken my heart and I am so sick. And I looked for sympathy, but there was none, And for comforters, but I found none. 21 They also gave me gall for my food And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

Sour Wine - In addition, the wine vinegar is a product of fermentation, which is made from grape juice and yeast. The word literally means "that which is soured" and is related to the Hebrew term for "that which is leavened". (Holmans) Yeast or leaven, is a Biblical symbol of sin. When Jesus took this drink, (i.e. a drink which was "leavened") it is thus symbolic of His taking the sins of the world into His body.

Exodus 12:22 (NASB) 22 "You shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin, and apply some of the blood that is in the basin to the lintel and the two doorposts; and none of you shall go outside the door of his house until morning.

PSALM 22:16

For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; They pierced my hands and my feet.

They pierced my hands and my feet - We now undoubtedly come to the description of the crucifixion. Let's take a few minutes and talk about this horrific means of death.

EXCRUCIATE: Latin : **ex** : out of, from **cruciate** : cross "from the cross" = **refers to something which causes great agony or torment.**

Crucifixion was a practice that originated with the Persians and was later passed on to the Carthaginians and the Phoenicians. The Romans perfected it as a method of execution which caused maximal pain and **suffering** over a period of time. Those crucified included slaves, provincials and the lowest types of criminals. Roman citizens, except perhaps for soldiers who deserted, were not subjected to this treatment. (McDowell)

The procedure of crucifixion may be summarized as follows. The patibulum was put on the ground and the victim laid upon it. Nails, about 7 inches long and with a diameter of 1 cm (roughly 3/8 of an inch) were driven in the wrists. The points would go into the vicinity of the median nerve, causing shocks of pain to radiate through the arms. It was possible to place the nails between the bones so that no fractures (or broken bones) occurred. Studies have shown that nails were probably driven between the small bones of the wrist, since nails in the palms of the hand would not support the weight of a body. In ancient terminology, the wrist was considered to be part of the hand. (Davis) Standing at the crucifixion sites would be upright posts, called stipes, standing about 7 feet high. (Edwards) In the center of the stipes was a crude seat, called a sedile or sedulum, which served as support for the victim. The patibulum was then lifted on to the stipes. The feet were then nailed to the stipes. To allow for this, the knees had to be bent and rotated laterally, being left in a very uncomfortable position.

. "...it appears likely that the mechanism of death in crucifixion was suffocation. The chain of events which ultimately led to suffocation are as follows: With the weight of the body being supported by the sedulum, the arms were pulled upward. This caused the intercostal and pectoral muscles to be stretched. Furthermore, movement of these muscles was opposed by the weight of the body. With

the muscles of respiration thus stretched, the respiratory bellows became relatively fixed. As dyspnea developed and pain in the wrists and arms increased, the victim was forced to raise the body off the sedulum, thereby transferring the weight of the body to the feet. Respirations became easier, but with the weight of the body being exerted on the feet, pain in the feet and legs mounted. When the pain became unbearable, the victim again slumped down on the sedulum with the weight of the body pulling on the wrists and again stretching the intercostal muscles. Thus, the victim alternated between lifting his body off the sedulum in order to breathe and slumping down on the sedulum to relieve pain in the feet. Eventually, he became exhausted or lapsed into unconsciousness so that he could no longer lift his body off the sedulum. In this position, with the respiratory muscles essentially paralyzed, the victim suffocated and died. (DePasquale and Burch)

PSALM 22:18

They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots.

John 19:23-24 (NASB) 23 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His outer garments and made four parts, a part to every soldier and also the tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece. 24 So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, to decide whose it shall be"; this was to fulfill the Scripture: "THEY DIVIDED MY OUTER GARMENTS AMONG THEM, AND FOR MY CLOTHING THEY CAST LOTS."

Death by Crucifixion: HASTENED by the breaking of the legs, so that the victim could not push up to take a good breath.

Numbers 9:12 (NASB) 12 'They shall leave none of it until morning, nor break a bone of it; according to all the statute of the Passover they shall observe it.

John 19:32-33,36 (NASB) 32 So the soldiers came, and broke the legs of the first man and of the other who was crucified with Him; 33 but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs...36 For these things came to pass to fulfill the Scripture, "NOT A BONE OF HIM SHALL BE BROKEN."

Although Jesus died we must understand that it is Jesus that allowed Himself to expire, He gave up His Spirit.

John 19:30 (ESV) 30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

"It is finished" - *that word is* = **TETELESTAI** which is the **perfect tense** of the verb **teleo (te-le'-o)** to do just as commanded, and generally involves the notion of time, to perform the last act which completes a process, to accomplish, fulfill.

Also means to **pay**

Jesus was proclaiming something. He was proclaiming that He had paid our debt. You and I are now free.

Romans 5:3-4 (ESV) 3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,

If suffering ultimately produces and reveals character than what great character Jesus Christ must have!

Right before Jesus dies He has one last interaction with a person.

John 19:26-28 (NLT) 26 When Jesus saw his mother standing there beside the disciple he loved, he said to her, "Dear woman, here is your son." 27 And he said to this disciple, "Here is your mother." And from then on this disciple took her into his home. 28 Jesus knew that his mission was now finished, and to fulfill Scripture he said, "I am thirsty."

He looks with love at His mother and He honors her by ensuring she knows that she will be taken care of by His most loyal and loving Apostle."

It will be this same Apostle whom years later will be in seclusion on an island when he is caught up in the Spirit and sees His Savior once again. Only this time He will see Him as He was before time began. He sees Him as King Jesus:

Revelation 1:17-18 (NASB) 17 When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, 18 and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.

Because of His obedience, His character He did something that no man who came before Him or since could do...He beat death!

Because of Jesus' victory over death we have a new hope. **That is the hope of resurrection.** Our future has now been written into His. It is **brighter** than anything you or I can possibly imagine:

Philippians 3:21 (NLT) He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same power with which he will bring everything under his control.

If suffering ultimately produces and reveals character than what great character Jesus Christ must have! And because of that character what a hope we now have!

1 Corinthians 15:54-55,57 (NASB) 54 But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. 55 "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING...57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

