

THE SUFFERINGS OF THE CHRIST!

- **A STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURAL, MEDICAL AND HISTORICAL ASPECTS OF THE EXCRUCIATING AGONIES OF THE DEATH OF JESUS OF NAZARETH.**

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“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” – 1st Corinthians 1:18.

“But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” – 1st Corinthians 1:23 & 24.

“For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” – 1st Corinthians 2:2.

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” – Galatians 3:13.

“And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” – Philippians 2:8.

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” - Hebrews 12:2.

“Mors turpissima crucis” – Origen - Commentary on Matthew, comments on 27:22 - Latin.

“The utterly vile death of the cross” – English translation.

NOTE: - The compiler has supplied all emphasis throughout this Study Document. All English Bible texts are taken from the King James Version. All references to the Greek New Testament, are taken from the “Received Text”, from which the King James New Testament was translated from.

New Testament Greek Lexicon references will be taken from the following Greek-English New Testament Lexicon, which is acknowledged to be the “*rolls-royce*” of Greek New Testament Lexicons: -

“Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.” By Walter Bauer. Translated and adapted by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich. Revised and Augmented by F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker. Second Edition, 1979. It shall from henceforth be referred to by the initials “**BAGD**”.

As there will be a number of places within this Study Document, where I will be referring to the Greek text of certain New Testament verses, I should point out to the reader, that the compiler is a continuing student of New Testament Greek for more than 15 years now.

All English translated texts that are taken from the Jewish translated, Greek version of the Old Testament Scriptures, that is known as the Septuagint [it shall be referred to from now on as the **LXX**], have been taken from Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton’s 1851 English translation.

Rick Henwood – July, 2019.

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INTRODUCTION: -

The apostle Paul in his message to his Corinthian converts proclaimed, *“For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”* – 1st Corinthians 2:2. As I proceed in this Study Document, it should become apparent to the reader, why Paul would want to base so much of his preaching upon the crucified Saviour.

I have been a believer in the Biblical Jesus Christ, for most of my life. I have been a diligent student of the Scriptures for decades, doing my own daily Biblical research on a wide range of subjects. The one subject in all of these years of Bible study, that I have never examined in depth, is the Roman method of crucifixion, that our Saviour Jesus Christ was put to death by. That is, until the last ten weeks or so.

My wife Sarah had been doing some of her own research on this subject for the last six to eight months. From time to time, she shared snippets with me of some of her findings. What she has shared has been rather graphic at times. It came to a point within the last few months, that I was convicted by the Holy Spirit, to undertake a thorough research of this vital subject for myself.

So I have undertaken some exhaustive study in the New Testament accounts of our Saviour’s last 18 or so hours of his earthly life, starting with his agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. I have examined in detail, Jesus’ arrest, trial and condemnation by the Jewish Sanhedrin. I have also studied his Roman trial and condemnation by Pontius Pilate; his shameful scourging by the Romans; his crucifixion and death upon the cross by the Roman soldiers. This research project has necessitated in my reading through hundreds and hundreds of pages of studies and books, that deal with each one of these various aspects of Jesus’ last 18 or so hours upon earth. I have read materials from medical doctors, forensic pathologists, ancient historians and Biblical scholars.

My findings will be contained within the following pages of this Study Document.

I can truthfully say, that now having undertaken this personal study, that this is a subject that every Christian needs to undertake for themselves. This will bring them into a deeper and more meaningful understanding of what Jesus Christ actually endured and voluntarily submitted to, at the hands of wicked men upon the cross. All his excruciating¹ agonies that he endured, were so that we might all be redeemed by his precious blood.

I have also found that if a person allows the Holy Spirit to truly soften their hearts as they examine this subject carefully and prayerfully, it will give them an added incentive to turn away from the temptations which they are commonly confronted with, when a person has an intelligent understanding of what agonies and sufferings Jesus actually experienced. Both at the hands of the Jewish leaders, and also through the Roman

¹ The origin of the word “excruciating” is very interesting.

“Excruciating” is derived from Latin. As such, it can be broken down a little, into ‘ex’ – ‘cruciating’. The prefix, ‘ex’, can have several meanings. In this particular case, it means ‘intense’, as in ‘to the extreme’. The root word, cruciate, is a direct reference to cruce, meaning ‘the cross’. It is the same root that is used in “crucifixion” and it is the meaning of the “crucifix” or cross that many Christians wear. Thus, ‘excruciate’ can be literally translated to ‘the overwhelmingly intense pain of the cross.’ - <https://virily.com/culture/interesting-word-origins-excruciating>. Accessed 7/4/2019.

method of capital punishment he was executed by – CRUCIFIXION! Jesus endured all this shame and agony for my sins! For your sins! If we would daily meditate upon this truth, it will help us turn away from sin in our own daily lives.

Because there will be a number of historical and medical technical terms used throughout this Study Document, I shall provide a simple definition of such terms in brackets beside the particular term, so the reader will be able to have a better understanding of what they are reading. These definitions will be kept short and to the point.

In the very final Section of the APPENDIX, I will examine in detail the evidence for the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Although Jesus' agonizing death by crucifixion was such an amazing demonstration of selfless love for guilty sinners, we do not worship a dead Saviour who is still in Joseph's new tomb. We have a Risen Christ who lives today, because of his resurrection from the dead. This is our hope and this is where our faith is to be directed. So I will therefore examine both the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus itself, and also its vital importance to New Testament Christianity. For without a Risen Jesus we are all lost!

I pray that every person who reads this Study Document, will be truly touched by the Holy Spirit, and that their lives will be enriched. I pray that they will allow the Lord to fulfil the Apostle Paul's exhortation concerning Christ's dying for all people, which will be the motivating factor in their Christian walk.

“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.” – 2nd Corinthians 5:14 & 15.

Rick Henwood – July, 2019.

THE AGONY BEGINS – GETHSEMANE AND CHRIST SWEATS BLOOD: -

I have chosen to start tracing Jesus' dying agonies from his singular experience in the Garden of Gethsemane. The reason for this is rather simple: - it is in the Garden, that Jesus started to be overwhelmed with the crushing weight of becoming the Sin Bearer for the world. It is here that he started to take upon him the sins of the entire world.

Matthew 26:36 – 46: - "Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and **began to be sorrowful and very heavy**. Then saith he unto them, **My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death:** tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, **O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt**. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak. He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, **O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done**. And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And he left them, and went away again, and **prayed the third time, saying the same words**. Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me."

NOTE: - It was the crushing weight of bearing all, and I mean **ALL** of the guilt and the shame of every sin, that has been or ever will be committed by every human being who has or who will ever live upon this earth. It is this almost super human anguish that was crushing the very life out of Christ, that led him to crave the human companionship of his disciples as he exclaimed "*My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death*" – VS. 38. It was this crushing burden that led our blessed Lord, to earnestly beg of his Father, to have this cup of suffering which he was soon to drink to its dregs, to be removed from him, if it was his Father's will. Three times Jesus uttered this prayer to his heavenly Father. And each time, he submissively resigned his fate according to his Father's will.

It was this crushing weight of agony that wrung from Christ's body, the bloody sweat that fell to the ground, as he was wrestling in prayer with his Father. And if the heavenly angel had not come and strengthened him, Jesus may have been completely overwhelmed by this crushing burden, and not lived to see the agonies of the cross.

Luke 22:39 - 47: - "And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, saying, **Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground**. And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow, and said unto them, *Why sleep ye?* rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him."

I just want to briefly document for the reader the actual medical condition that Jesus experienced in the Garden of Gethsemane, where Luke records Christ's sweating blood. It is a rare medical condition, that is called by several different names. It is known as "**hematidrosis**"; "**hematohidrosis**", or "**hemidrosis**".

“Hematidrosis is an eccrine sweat disorder characterised by one or more episodes of spontaneous, bloody sweating from non-traumatized skin.”²

“Hematohidrosis/hematidrosis/hemidrosis is a rare clinical condition in which a human being sweats blood under condition of extreme physical or emotional stress. The capillary blood vessels that feed the sweat glands ruptures, causing them to exude blood as sweat, under stressful conditions, occurring in religious (Jesus Christ experience in Gethsemane) and non-religious (soldier sweat blood before battle) conditions. Few cases has been reported in the 21 century. It is a condition where there is a spontaneous painless bleeding through unbroken skin in any part of the body.”³

“Hematidrosis, also called **blood sweat**, is a very rare condition in which a human sweats blood. The term is from Ancient Greek *haîma/haimatos* (αἷμα/αἷματος), meaning blood, and *hīdrōs* (ἰδρώς), meaning sweat. ... Blood usually oozes from the forehead, nails, umbilicus, and other skin surfaces. In addition, oozing from mucocutaneous [that is, “made up of or involving both typical skin and mucous membrane”] surfaces causing nosebleeds, bloodstained tears, and vicarious menstruation are common. The episodes may be preceded by intense headache and abdominal pain and are usually self-limiting. In some conditions, the secreted fluid is more dilute and appears to be blood-tinged, while others may have darker bright red secretions resembling blood. ... While the extent of blood loss generally is minimal, hematidrosis also results in the skin becoming extremely tender and fragile. ... **Hematidrosis is a condition in which capillary blood vessels that feed the sweat glands rupture, causing them to exude blood, occurring under conditions of extreme physical or emotional stress. Severe mental anxiety activates the sympathetic nervous system to invoke the stress - Fight-or-flight response to such a degree as to cause hemorrhage of the vessels supplying the sweat glands. It has been suggested that acute fear and extreme stress can cause hematidrosis.**”⁴

The first recorded mention of this condition is found in Aristotle’s writings.

“Aristotle, perhaps the earliest to record such accounts, wrote around 350 B.C. stated: “Instances, indeed, are not unknown of persons who in consequence of a cachectic state [that is, “having cachexia, physical wasting with loss of weight and muscle mass due to disease”] have secreted sweat that resembled blood...” He further related that even animals have been observed to experience similar conditions. “If the blood gets exceedingly liquid, animals fall sick; for the blood then turns into something like ichor, or a liquid so thin that it at times has been known to exude through the pores like sweat.”⁵

And why did Jesus submit to such mental agony, which was crushing the very life out of him? He did it for love. The love he has for every member of his human creation. Does not that love speak to your heart dear reader?

² “Hematidrosis (bloody sweat): a review of the recent literature (1996 – 2016)”; by Nicolas Kluger. “Acta Dermatovenerologica Alpina, Pannonica et Adriatica”; Volume 27; Issue 2; 2018; p. 85. Accessed 9/04/2019.

³ “Blood Otorrhea: Sweat Blood Stained Ear Discharges: Hematohidrosis; Four Case Series (2001 – 2013).” by M. Tshifularo. [https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/42202/Tshifularo Blood 2014.pdf](https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/42202/Tshifularo%20Blood%202014.pdf) - Accessed 9/04/2019.

⁴ “Hematidrosis” - <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hematidrosis>. Accessed 9/04/2019.

⁵ “Christ sweat as great drops of blood.” By Heath Henning; November 5, 2017. truthwatchers.com/christ-sweat-great-drops-blood. Accessed 10/04/2019.

THE JEWISH LEADERS BROKE NEARLY EVERY RULE IN THE BOOK, IN THEIR ARREST, TRIAL AND CONDEMNATION OF JESUS OF NAZARETH: -

The Jewish leaders sought to kill Jesus, before the Feast of Tabernacles occurred. This was approximately six months before Jesus was eventually put to death.

John 7:1 & 2: - "After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, **because the Jews sought to kill him.** Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand."

At this Feast, Jesus publicly revealed the Jew's desire to take his life.

John 7:19: - "Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? **Why go ye about to kill me?"**

Some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem were aware of the plot to kill Jesus.

John 7:25: - "Then said some of them of Jerusalem, **Is not this he, whom they seek to kill?"**

Because many of the Jewish people believed that Jesus was the Christ, the Pharisees and Chief Priests sent officers to arrest Jesus at this Feast.

John 7:31 & 32: - "**And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?** The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; **and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.**"

The officers came back to the Jewish leaders empty handed. They were not able to arrest Jesus, because they themselves had been convicted by his spiritually powerful public teachings.

John 7:45 & 46: - "Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? **The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.**"

The first Hebrew legal principle that the Jewish religious leaders violated in their plans to arrest and put Jesus of Nazareth to death, occurred months before they eventually arrested him in the Garden of Gethsemane. The gospel of John records the truth that it was part of the Hebrew legal system, that a person was not to be judged without first giving that person a hearing and to know what he or she had actually done. The leading Jewish teacher Nicodemus, spoke up to defend this simple basic principle of justice, after the Jewish leaders had already ordered the arrest of Jesus, which attempt had been unsuccessful. [This took place during the Feast of Tabernacles.]

John 7:50 & 51: - "Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) **Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?"**

The simple principle of justice that Nicodemus stated to the Sanhedrin, is clearly stated in the following ancient Hebrew legal maxim: -

“No man may be condemned unless he is present.”⁶

After this incident at the Feast of Tabernacles, when Jesus proclaimed himself to be the “I AM”, the Jewish leaders, without going through the pretence of any type of trial, wanted to put Jesus to death on the spot by stoning him.

John 8:58 & 59: - “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. **Then took they up stones to cast at him:** but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.”

The Jewish leaders had decided that if any person confessed that Jesus was the Christ, that individual was to be excommunicated from the synagogue.

John 9:21 & 22: - “But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself. These *words* spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: **for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.**”

NOTE: - The gospel of John repeatedly records the truth, that the Jewish leaders had already reached the decision to condemn Jesus of Nazareth to death in their councils, months before he was crucified upon the cross. In this incident we find that the Jewish leaders had decided to excommunicate from the synagogue, any person who believed that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ. All these steps had been taken by the Jewish leaders, without Jesus been given any type of legal trial.

A few months later, during the Feast of the Dedication held in the Northern Hemisphere winter, the Jewish leaders wanted to stone Jesus to death, for proclaiming himself to be one with the Heavenly Father. They considered that he had been guilty of committing blasphemy. All this was to be done, without a legal trial of any kind.

John 10:22 & 30 – 36: - “And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. ... **I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.** Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? **The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.** Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; **because I said, I am the Son of God?**”

The Biblical Legal principle that was laid down by the LORD himself concerning blasphemy in the Law of Moses, is specifically associated with blaspheming the actual name of the LORD.

⁶ “The Criminal Jurisprudence of the Ancient Hebrews”; by S. Mendelsohn; 1891; p. 180.

Leviticus 24:16: - **“And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the LORD, shall be put to death.”**

NOTE: - Of course, as Jesus is truly the Divine Son of God, his claim that the Father and himself are one, is indeed truth and not blasphemy. But I also observe, that Jesus did not in any way blaspheme the actual name of the LORD, as is specified in the passage quoted from the Book of Leviticus.

After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, the Jewish leaders held a council as to what should be done about him. The High Priest Caiaphas decided that it is better for the Jewish nation, that one man, namely Jesus should die, than the whole nation perish at the hands of the Romans. From that day, the Jewish leaders took counsel to put Jesus to death. Jesus was then forced to remove himself for his own safety from Judea, and find refuge in the city of Ephraim, as the annual Passover was drawing near. The Jewish leaders also issued a command, that if any person knew where Jesus was, they should reveal his whereabouts, so Jesus could be arrested.

John 11:43 – 57: - **“And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go. Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him. But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples. And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves. Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast? Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should show it, that they might take him.”**

NOTE: - This whole council and its decision that was reached to put Jesus to death, was completely illegal. It clearly violated the previously stated principle that *“No man may be condemned unless he is present”*⁷; it also violated the clearly stated Biblical principle of God’s justice relating to the infliction of capital punishment. There had to be at least two or three witnesses to condemn anyone to death. Of course, this Jewish council produced no witnesses, yet it condemned Jesus to death. **ILLEGAL!**

Deuteronomy 17:6: - **“At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.”**

⁷ Ibid.

The Chief Priests shortly before the annual Passover [that is, about six days before], had also illegally decided to put the resurrected Lazarus to death. This was because many of the Jewish people were believing in Jesus as the Christ, because of his raising of Lazarus from the dead.

John 12:1, 9 – 11: - “Then Jesus **six days before the passover** came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. ... Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead. **But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.**”

☞ This decision by the Chief Priests was totally **ILLEGAL!** Fancy wanting to execute a totally innocent person, simply because he was the most visible proof of Jesus being the true Messiah!

After Jesus' triumphant entry into the city of Jerusalem, the Pharisees were completely exasperated, by the fact of Jesus' ever increasing popularity among the Jewish lay people. Jesus had to be removed from the scene, by being put to death as soon as possible.

John 12:19: - “The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? **behold, the world is gone after him.**”

Many of the chief rulers believed in Jesus as the Christ, but they would not confess him, because of the previous edict of the Jewish leaders, condemning anyone who confessed that Jesus was the Christ, was to be excommunicated from the synagogue.

John 12:42 & 43: - “Nevertheless **among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:** For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.”

Immediately in the days before the Passover – the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Jewish leaders were actively plotting to arrest Jesus and to put him to death, before the Feast of Unleavened Bread commenced.

Matthew 26:3 – 5: - “Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and **consulted that they might take Jesus by subtlety, and kill him.** But they said, Not on the feast *day*, lest there be an uproar among the people.”

Mark 14:1 & 2: - “**After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death.** But they said, Not on the feast *day*, lest there be an uproar of the people.”

Luke 22:1 & 2: - “**Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.** And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people.”

☞ With all this Scriptural background now laid out for the reader, it is clear to see, that the Jewish leadership had clearly determined that with the rapid approach of the Passover festival, Jesus of Nazareth was to be executed, as soon as it was practical to do so. They had already condemned him to death, without any sort of trial, and without any evidence from witnesses. They were also willing to put to death Lazarus, simply for being

the most visible witness to Jesus of Nazareth being the true Messiah. From all of this lead up to Jesus' arrest, it is clear, that Jesus of Nazareth never had any chance at all of receiving a fair and legal trial according to established Hebrew jurisprudence. He was going to be subject to a **“show trial of a kangaroo court”**, which was to be illegal in nearly every respect in regard to established Hebrew legal principles. This of course is exactly what we do find happened to Jesus after he was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus of Nazareth was the victim of **“judicial murder”**!

I think it may be easier for the reader to follow, if I put in TABLE FORMAT, some of the illegal aspects of Jesus' trial by the Jewish Sanhedrin. [I shall not list every violation of established Hebrew jurisprudence, but I shall list sufficient points of fact, that will establish the truthfulness of the above paragraph.]

<u>Established Jewish Legal Principles: -</u>	<u>Illegal Conduct of Jesus' Jewish Trials: -</u>
<p>1. The witnesses to the alleged crime were to be the prosecutors in the case, and were to be the ones who were required to bring the charges against the accused to the Sanhedrin for judgment.</p> <p>“I believe we shall not fully realize that position unless we remember that, at least in the earlier days of that law, the <i>evidence of the leading witnesses constituted the charge</i>. There was no other charge: no more formal indictment. Until they spoke, and spoke in the public assembly, the prisoner was scarcely an accused man. When they spoke, and the evidence of the two agreed together, it formed the legal charge, libel, or indictment, as well as the evidence for its truth.” – <i>“The Trial of Jesus Christ – a legal monograph”</i>; by A. Taylor Innes; 1899; p. 41.</p> <p>“The only <i>prosecutors</i> known to Talmudic criminal jurisprudence are the witnesses to the crime. Their duty it is to bring the matter to the cognizance of the court, and to bear witness against the criminal. In capital cases, they are the legal executioners also. Of an official accuser or prosecutor there is nowhere any trace in the laws of the ancient Hebrews.” - <i>“The Criminal Jurisprudence of the Ancient Hebrews”</i>; by S. Mendelsohn; 1891; pp. 110 & 111.</p>	<p>The Jewish Sanhedrin brought Jesus to trial, and sought false testimony to condemn him to death.</p> <p><u>Matthew 26:59</u>: - “Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death.”</p>
<p>2. The accused was innocent until they were proven guilty, which guilt had to be firmly based upon the direct testimony of at least two or three competent witnesses.</p> <p><u>Deuteronomy 17:6</u>: - “At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be</p>	<p>The Jewish judges had already decided that Jesus had to die, before they had even arrested him.</p> <p>This truth has been clearly established from the previous Biblical witnesses listed from the gospel of John, already quoted in this <u>Section</u> of this <u>Study</u>.</p>

<p>put to death; <i>but</i> at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.”</p> <p>“In short, the Talmud does not presume the guilt of the accused, and therefore considers him innocent, until the contrary is proved by competent witnesses upon whom the burden of proof rests.” - <i>“The Criminal Jurisprudence of the Ancient Hebrews”</i>; by S. Mendelsohn; 1891; p. 134.</p>	
<p>3. No part of a criminal case could take place at night. The Great Sanhedrin was to meet from the time of the morning sacrifice, until the time of the evening sacrifice.</p> <p>“Where they [i.e., the Great Sanhedrin] sat from the morning tamid [that is, the daily continual burnt offering - compiler] until the evening talmid.” - Babylonian Talmud; “Sanhedrin”, 88b.</p> <p>“Criminal cases can be acted upon by the various courts during day time only, by the Lesser Synhedrions from the close of the morning service till noon, and by the Great Synhedrion till evening.” - <i>“The Criminal Jurisprudence of the Ancient Hebrews”</i>; by S. Mendelsohn; 1891; p. 112.</p> <p>“Mishnah . . . but capital charges must be tried by day and concluded by day.” - <i>Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 32a.</i></p>	<p>Not only was Jesus arrested at night, but he was also examined before Annas, and then tried before Caiaphas and the whole Sanhedrin during the night.</p> <p><u>John 18:2 & 3:</u> - “And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples. Judas then, having received a band of <i>men</i> and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.”</p> <p><u>Luke 22:63 - 71:</u> - “And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote <i>him</i>. And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee? And many other things blasphemously spake they against him. And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: And if I also ask <i>you</i>, ye will not answer me, nor let <i>me</i> go. Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am. And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.”</p> <p>NOTE: - Luke’s account records the fact, that <i>as soon as it was day</i>, the whole Sanhedrin met again to go through the act of a final “mock trial” of Jesus, to formally condemn him again. Putting this account together, with Matthew’s and Mark’s accounts, Jesus had already been interrogated, condemned and physically abused by the Sanhedrin during the night, before this fiasco in Luke’s gospel took place at day break.</p>
<p>4. There was to be no examination by a single judge.</p> <p>“He would also say: Do not judge on your own, for</p>	<p>Jesus’ interrogation by Caiaphas the High Priest, was contrary to this established principle of Hebrew justice.</p> <p><u>John 18:19:</u> - “The high priest then asked Jesus of his</p>

<p>there is none qualified to judge alone, only the One.” – <i>Mishnah, Pirke Avot; Chapter 4, Section 8.</i></p>	<p>disciples, and of his doctrine.”</p>
<p>5. “No trial of a case involving capital punishment can be inaugurated on the eve of the Sabbath or of a festival, ...” - “<i>The Criminal Jurisprudence of the Ancient Hebrews</i>”; by S. Mendelsohn; 1891; p. 113.</p> <p>“In capital cases a verdict of acquittal may be reached on the same day, but a verdict of conviction not until the following day. Therefore trials may not be held on the eve of a Sabbath or on the eve of a Festival.” - <i>Mishnah; Sanhedrin; Chapter 4; Section 1.</i></p>	<p>Jesus of Nazareth was arrested, tried and condemned to death by the Sanhedrin, on the eve of the Passover – the Feast of Unleavened Bread.</p> <p><u>John 18:28</u>: - “Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.”</p> <p><u>John 18:38 & 39</u>: - “Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault <i>at all</i>. But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?”</p>
<p>6. Capital cases were required to be opened with arguments to acquit the accused, and not with arguments to convict the accused.</p> <p>“Capital charges must be opened for acquittal, but not for condemnation.” – <i>Babylonian Talmud; Sanhedrin; Chapter 4; Section 1.</i></p>	<p>All four gospels record the fact, that there was no attempt by any of the Hebrew judges and rulers, to present any evidence in favour of Jesus. The Hebrew judges and rulers from the very beginning of Jesus’ “mock trial”, were the ones who sought for false evidence to condemn Jesus to death.</p> <p><u>Matthew 26:59</u>: - “Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death.”</p>
<p>7. Any witness who perjured themselves, was to receive the same punishment for the alleged crime, that the accused would have received if they were found guilty.</p> <p><u>Deuteronomy 19:16 – 19</u>: - “If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him <i>that which is wrong</i>; Then both the men, between whom the controversy <i>is</i>, shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days; And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother; Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: so shalt thou put the evil away from among you.”</p>	<p>In the mock trials of Jesus, the gospel writers record the fact, that many false witnesses testified against Jesus. Their testimony was found to be completely inconsistent with one another.</p> <p><u>Mark 14:56</u>: - “For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.”</p> <p>NOTE: - There was no attempt on the part of the Jewish judges to impose any penalty upon these false witnesses at all. This was a clear violation of the Law of Moses!</p>
<p>8. The accused had an absolute right against self-incrimination and was not permitted to make statements harmful to himself.</p>	<p>Caiaphas repeatedly put questions to Jesus to try to entrap him in his answers. Jesus steadfastly refused to say anything and gave no kind of answer. [Jesus was acting perfectly within his legal rights under</p>

<p>“Raba said: Every man is considered a relative to himself, and no one can incriminate himself.” – <i>Babylonian Talmud; “Sanhedrin”; 9b.</i></p> <p>“No man is competent to convict himself, says the Talmud” “he is his own kin,” and we have just seen that kinfolks are not admissible as witnesses. This, however, does not apply to the defense. In his own exculpation, the accused is a competent witness.” - <i>“The Criminal Jurisprudence of the Ancient Hebrews”; by S. Mendelsohn; 1891; pp. 133 & 134.</i></p>	<p>Hebrew law, by not responding to the High Priest’s illegal questions.]</p> <p><u>Matthew 26:62 & 63:</u> - “And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what <i>is it which</i> these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace.”</p> <p><u>John 18:19 – 21:</u> - “The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.”</p> <p>NOTE: - Jesus’ refusal to answer the High Priest’s questions, were in perfect accord with Hebrew Law. He was not required to testify against himself, but rather in the last passage quoted from John’s gospel, he called upon the High Priest to produce witnesses who could testify concerning his disciples and doctrine. This was in perfect accord with Hebrew law.</p> <p>Of course, Jesus by his silence before his Jewish judges, was fulfilling the following well known prophecy from the pen of the gospel prophet Isaiah.</p> <p><u>Isaiah 53:7:</u> - “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.”</p>
<p>9. No person could be condemned upon their own testimony.</p> <p>“Not only is self-condemnation never extorted from the defendant by means of torture, but no attempt is ever made to lead him on to self-incrimination. Moreover, a voluntary confession on his part is not admitted in evidence, and therefore not competent to convict him, unless a legal number of witnesses minutely corroborate his self-accusation. ... No man convicts himself.” - <i>“The Criminal Jurisprudence of the Ancient Hebrews”; by S. Mendelsohn; 1891; pp. 133 & 179.</i></p>	<p>Jesus was condemned by the Jewish judges as being guilty of blasphemy, based only upon his own testimony, in which he spoke no blasphemy. This was clearly illegal!</p> <p><u>Matthew 26:63 – 66:</u> - “But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.”</p> <p><u>Luke 22:70 & 71:</u> - “Then said they all, Art thou then</p>

	<p>the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am. And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.”</p> <p>NOTE: - In capital cases involving blasphemy, the accused had to have been guilty of expressly uttering the name of God.</p> <p>Jesus’ answer to the direct question put to him by the High Priest, did NOT make any reference to the name of the LORD at all! To find Jesus guilty of blasphemy according to his recorded answer, was another illegality upon the part of the Sanhedrin council!</p>
<p>10. The High Priest was not allowed to rend or tear his priestly garments. If he did so, he was deserving of death.</p> <p><u>Leviticus 10:6:</u> - “And Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons, Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes; lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people: but let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled.”</p> <p><u>Leviticus 21:10:</u> - “And he that is the high priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is consecrated to put on the garments, shall not uncover his head, nor rend his clothes.”</p>	<p>Caiaphas the Jewish High Priest in the trial of Jesus, rent or tore his priestly garments, which was illegal.</p> <p><u>Matthew 26:65:</u> - “Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.”</p>
<p>11. Each judge’s verdict in capital cases was to be rendered individually and vocally, starting from the youngest to the eldest. This was so, that the younger judges who formed part of the council, would not be influenced by the older judges. The deliberation must be started with an argument for the defence. There was to be no pronouncement of judgment by popular acclamation.</p> <p>“The deliberation must be opened with an argument for the defense, and by one of the younger judges. ... Lest the chief, or any of the seniors having give his opinion, the juniors might be tempted to acquiesce, if only out of respect for seniority. ... The members of the court vote <i>viva voce</i>⁸, and the majority of votes</p>	<p>The High Priest Caiaphas called for a verdict of guilty against Jesus of Nazareth by popular acclamation. This was illegal.</p> <p><u>Matthew 26:65 & 66:</u> - “Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.”</p>

⁸ The Latin expression “*viva voce*” is defined as: -

“*Viva voce* is a Latin phrase literally meaning "with living voice" but most often translated as "by word of mouth."

“It may refer to:”

<p>determines the verdict.” <i>“The Criminal Jurisprudence of the Ancient Hebrews”</i>; by S. Mendelsohn; 1891; pp. 141 & 143.</p> <p>“If they find him not guilty, they discharge him. If not, they take a vote.” – <i>Mishnah, Sanhedrin, Chapter 5; Section 5.</i>”</p> <p>“After discussion, the youngest judge voted first in order not to be subjected to the influence of older ones; A majority of votes sufficed to convict the defendant. But one vote above a majority was required to pronounce the death sentence. In case all the judges rendered such a verdict, the defendant had to be acquitted, because then the former were considered to be biased.”</p> <p>“Each vote had to be supported by strong argument. It was not enough for a judge to refer merely to the argument presented by another colleague. A judgment without sufficient grounds was never accepted since the votes were not merely counted but also measured as to the weight adduced to the various arguments.” - <i>“Jewish Criminal Law and Legal Procedure”</i>; by Max May; 31 <i>Am. Inst. Crim. L. & Criminology</i> 438 (1940 - 1941); p. 446.</p>	
<p>12. A person could not be convicted by the unanimous condemnation of the judges. If such judicial circumstances arose, the accused was to be immediately acquitted.</p> <p>“A simultaneous and unanimous verdict of guilty acquits.” - <i>“The Criminal Jurisprudence of the Ancient Hebrews”</i>; by S. Mendelsohn; 1891; p. 177.</p> <p>“In capital cases all may argue in favor of acquittal but not all may argue in favor of conviction.” - <i>Mishnah, Sanhedrin; Chapter 4; Section 1.</i></p>	<p>The verdict against Jesus was unanimous. Therefore, according to the rules of Hebrew jurisprudence, Jesus should have been immediately acquitted.</p> <p><u>Mark 14:63 & 64:</u> - “Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.”</p>
<p>13. There was to be no mistreatment or physical abuse upon the prisoner.</p> <p>“From the time that the accusation is lodged against him, he becomes a prisoner, but he is not deprived of</p>	<p>The four gospel writers all record the fact, that Jesus was physically abused and assaulted by the Jewish officers while in their custody.</p> <p><u>Matthew 26:67 & 68:</u> - “Then did they spit in his face,</p>

- “Word of mouth”
- “A voice vote in a deliberative assembly”
- “An oral exam, especially in a thesis defense in academia”
- “Spoken evidence in law”
- “Viva Voce (band), an American indie rock band.” - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viva_voce - Accessed 19/04/2019.

<p>other personal rights and privileges. An injury inflicted on him is punishable, as if it had been inflicted on any other person; and as injury done to him is equally punishable. ... Summary punishment of a criminal is altogether foreign to the letter and the spirit of Rabbinic law. Though his guilt is sure to cause his conviction and execution at human hands, the criminal must nevertheless not be summarily dealt with.” - <i>“The Criminal Jurisprudence of the Ancient Hebrews”</i>; by S. Mendelsohn; 1891; p. 111.</p>	<p>and buffeted him; and others smote <i>him</i> with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?”</p> <p><u>Mark 14:65</u>: - “And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.”</p> <p><u>Luke 22:63 – 65</u>: - “And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote <i>him</i>. And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee? And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.”</p> <p><u>John 18:22 & 23</u>: - “And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?”</p> <p>NOTE: - This recorded physical abuse and violence inflicted upon Jesus of Nazareth, by the Jewish officers and bystanders, was prophesied to take place many hundreds of years before, by the gospel prophet Isaiah.</p> <p><u>Isaiah 50:6</u>: - “I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.”</p> <p><u>Isaiah 52:13 & 14</u> : - “Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee; his visage⁹ was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.”</p>
<p>14. In capital cases, if a sentence of death was to be pronounced, it could not be proclaimed</p>	<p>The Jewish judges pronounced their verdict of condemnation of Jesus, on the very same night as their illegal trial of Jesus. [It was certainly an illegal</p>

⁹ The word “visage” is defined as: -

“VISAGE NOUN *literary* 1. A person's face, with reference to the form or proportions of the features. 1.1 A person's facial expression. 1.2 The manifestation, image, or aspect of something.” – The Oxford English Dictionary, Online Edition. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/visage> - Accessed 19/04/2019.

“VISAGE, n. s as z. [L. visus, video.] The face; the countenance or look of a person, or of other animal; chiefly applied to human beings; as a wolfish visage. Love and beauty still that visage grace. His visage was so marred, more than any man. Isaiah 52:14.” – Noah Webster's, 1828 English Dictionary.

<p>before the following day.</p> <p>“But another humanitarian law prohibits the pronouncing of a verdict of guilty, on the day the first judiciary vote is taken. ... Here it was ordained that the announcement of a verdict of guilty be postponed to the day following its finding, in the hope of discovering in the evidence, or somewhere else, a flaw that might turn the scale of justice in favour of the accused.” - <i>“The Criminal Jurisprudence of the Ancient Hebrews”</i>; by S. Mendelsohn; 1891; pp. 113 & 114.</p> <p>“In capital cases a verdict of acquittal may be reached on the same day, but a verdict of conviction not until the following day.” - <i>Mishnah, Sanhedrin; Chapter 4; Section 1.</i></p>	<p>rush to judgment on the part of the Hebrew rulers!]</p> <p><u>Matthew 26:63 – 66:</u> - “And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.”</p>
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One other point of gross illegality on the part of the Jewish Sanhedrin is revealed in the following action which was a complete travesty of justice. The Jewish judges illegally condemned Jesus to death for **supposedly** committing blasphemy. Yet when they brought him to Pontius Pilate the Roman Governor to ratify their death sentence upon Jesus, they accused him of being guilty of stirring up political unrest and sedition against the authority of the Roman power. In other words, they had completely changed their indictment against Jesus of Nazareth.

Matthew 26:65 & 66: - “Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, **He hath spoken blasphemy**; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, **He is guilty of death.**”

Luke 23:1 & 2: - “And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. **And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King.**”

☞ With all of this documented evidence put before the reader, I believe that the Jewish Sanhedrin’s trial, treatment and condemnation of Jesus of Nazareth was completely contrary to many well established principles of Hebrew jurisprudence, and was totally illegal. Jesus was **NOT** guilty in any particular of the false testimony that the Jewish judges and rulers brought against him. According to all the basic rules of Hebrew Law and justice, Jesus should have been acquitted and set immediately free by the Sanhedrin. I believe that the Jewish Sanhedrin’s condemnation to death of Jesus of Nazareth, was the greatest miscarriage of justice in the history of the world!

As has been previously stated, Jesus was physically abused and assaulted at the hands of the Jewish officers of the Sanhedrin. The following two passages from the gospel writers make this truth plain.


Matthew 26:66 & 67: - “Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote *him* with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?”

John 18:22 & 23: - “And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?”

NOTE: - Jesus was spat upon; he was struck by one of the Jewish officers when he was being questioned by Caiaphas. Later on in his trial, he was blindfolded, buffeted and repeatedly struck in the face after being condemned to death by the Sanhedrin. We also know from the prophecies of Isaiah previously quoted [that is, [Isaiah 50:6; 52:13 & 14](#)], that Jesus had some of the hair of his beard pulled out from the roots, and that his visage or facial appearance was severely disfigured, no doubt through the repeated blows he received from the Jewish officers of the Sanhedrin.

A medical doctor has commented on the facial trauma Jesus received from this physical abuse in the following words: -

“Beatings about the face received by a blindfolded individual cause even worse trauma because the victim cannot “roll with the punches.” ... Severe disfigurement of the face would certainly have resulted from the brutal treatment. It is likely that the eyelids were swollen shut as a result of such beatings.”¹⁰

 Why did the innocent, Divine Son of God voluntarily submit to such a massive injustice, and chose to endure such physical abuse and trauma at the hands of the Jewish officers of the Sanhedrin? One word answers this question. **LOVE!** He endured all this abuse and injustice because he loved sinners! Reader, will you not meditate in your own heart upon this truth? Jesus endured such shameful abuse because he loves you!

¹⁰ “The Agony of Love – Medical Aspects of the Crucifixion”; by Dr. Mark Eastman. 1/04/1998. <https://www.khouse.org/article> - accessed 20/04/2019.

PONTIUS PILATE REPEATEDLY FOUND JESUS INNOCENT:-

After their illegal condemnation and physical abuse that was heaped upon Jesus, the Jewish leaders brought him to Pontius Pilate the Roman Governor, so that he would ratify their death sentence upon Jesus.

Matthew 27:1 & 2: - "When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: And when they had bound him, they led *him* away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor."

See also: - Mark 15:1; Luke 23:1; John 18:28.

The Jewish leaders brought a political accusation against Jesus, as being a teacher of sedition against the Roman power.

Luke 23:1 & 2: - "And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. **And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King.**"

After examining Jesus, Pilate publicly stated **repeatedly**, that Jesus was not guilty of having committed any crime against the Roman power. [Pilate also referred to the fact, that his having sent Jesus to king Herod, the king also found no crime had been committed by Jesus.¹¹]

Luke 23:13 - 15: - "And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, **I, having examined *him* before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.**"

Luke 23:22: - "And he said unto them the third time, **Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him:** I will therefore chastise him, and let *him* go."

Matthew 27:23 - 25: - "And the governor said, **Why, what evil hath he done?** But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, **I am innocent of the blood of this just person:** see ye *to it*. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood *be* on us, and on our children."

¹¹ In regards to any specific physical abuse or mistreatment king Herod and his soldiers may have inflicted upon Jesus while he was in their power, the Scriptures only give us the following simple record,

Luke 23:6 - 11: - "When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilaean. And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time. And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long *season*, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him. **And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked *him*, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe,** and sent him again to Pilate."

Mark 15:14: - “Then Pilate said unto them, **Why, what evil hath he done?** And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.”

John 18:38: - “Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, **I find in him no fault at all.**”

John 19:4: - “Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that **I find no fault in him.**”

John 19:6: - “When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify *him*. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify *him*: **for I find no fault in him.**”

Acts 3:13: - “The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in **the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *him* go.**”

☞ After all these unambiguous affirmations of Jesus’ innocence, the only reasons Pilate consented to Jesus of Nazareth’s crucifixion, was one, to avoid a riot from taking place among the Jews in Jerusalem; and two, so that he would not become suspect in the eyes of the Emperor, which would cause him to lose his position as Governor.

Matthew 27:23 – 25: - “And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. **When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to *it*.** Then answered all the people, and said, His blood *be* on us, and on our children.”

Mark 15:15: - “And so **Pilate, willing to content the people,** released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged *him*, to be crucified.”

Luke 23:23 & 24: - “And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. **And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required.**”

John 19:12 - 16: - “And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but **the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar’s friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.** When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with *him*, away with *him*, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led *him* away.”

☞ It may be helpful just to pause and to give a brief summary of Jesus’ physical condition, as he was, **just before** the Roman soldiers led him away to be scourged and crucified.

Jesus had undergone for several hours, extreme mental anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane, as he struggled in accepting the cup of shame and agony that he was about to drink from, in his becoming the Divine Sin-bearer for the entire world. An agony that reached to the point of causing him to sweat drops of blood. Jesus was then arrested, bound as a prisoner in the Garden of Gethsemane, and led to the house of Annas

first, and then transferred to Caiaphas. Here he underwent a private interrogation by Caiaphas, and then he endured the mockery of his trials before the whole Sanhedrin. He was subject to gross physical abuse and trauma at the hands of the officers of the Jewish Sanhedrin, even reaching to the point of parts of his beard being pulled out from their roots. By this stage, Jesus would have been dehydrated, hungry, exhausted from lack of sleep, he would also have been exhausted from his having experienced the severest mental anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane. He would have been battered and bruised around his head and face, after having endured the physical beating and trauma by the abuse he received at the hands of the Jews. Jesus' physical condition was rapidly deteriorating before he was led away by the Roman soldiers for them to scourge and then crucify him. **And he endured all his abuse for us sinners. What marvellous love Jesus has revealed to all of fallen humanity, in being willing to suffer such suffering and abuse for our sins!**

THE ROMAN SCOURGING – PRELUDE TO CRUCIFIXION: -

NOTE: - When a prisoner had been condemned to death by crucifixion by the Roman authorities, the scourging of the condemned prisoner, was considered to be an integral part of the process of death by crucifixion. It was a savage physical pummeling which the condemned prisoner received, and they were often flogged to “*within an inch of their life*”.

Firstly, let us never forget that Jesus forewarned his disciples that he was to be scourged and crucified to death by the Gentiles [that is, the Roman authorities], months before his arrest, trials and condemnation. Jesus had complete knowledge of what excruciating agonies awaited him, when he was to become “*the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*” – John 1:29.

Matthew 20:17 - 19: - “And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, **And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him:** and the third day he shall rise again.”

See also: - Mark 10:32 – 34 & Luke 18:31 - 33.

After Jesus had been condemned to death by Pontius Pilate, the Roman soldiers scourged, mocked and derided him; he was spat upon by them, and they fashioned a crown of thorns, and placed it upon Jesus' head, striking him upon his head with a reed. Thus driving the thorns deeper into his head, causing more bleeding and blood loss. This barbaric treatment that Jesus received at the hands of the Roman soldiers, is clearly laid out for us in the New Testament records.

Matthew 27:26 - 31: - “Then released he Barabbas unto them: **and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.** Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band *of soldiers*. **And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. And after that they had mocked him,** they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.”

Mark 15:15 - 20: - “And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified. And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Praetorium; and they call together the whole band. **And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head, And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him. And when they had mocked him,** they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.”

John 19:1 - 5: - “Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, **and scourged him. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.** Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!”

THE PHYSICAL AGONIES OF A ROMAN SCOURGING: -

The following extracts will outline for the reader, the graphic, physical effect a Roman scourging had upon the condemned prisoner. The first quotation gives a general overview of what a Roman scourging entailed; while the second quotation gives a more detailed description of what the effect of scourging would have had upon Jesus' physical condition.

"In Roman law a person condemned to death (including crucifixion) had to be scourged beforehand, with the exception of women, Roman senators or soldiers (but not in cases of desertion)."

"Scourging was a particularly brutal procedure, performed with wooden staves or a short whip (*flagellum, flagrum*) with several leather thongs into which small balls or sharp sheep bone fragments were tied. The person was stripped naked, tied to an upright post and then flogged across the back, buttocks and legs by one or two soldiers (*lictores*). Primrose suggests that scourging was applied to the front of the body as well. In Roman law there was no limit to the extent of flogging, but in Jewish law it was limited to 40 blows. The extent of the scourging therefore depended largely on the inclination of the *lictores*, was intended to weaken the victim significantly, and invariably resulted in deep wounding, severe pain and bleeding. Frequently the victim fainted during the procedure and sudden death was not uncommon."

"The victim was then usually taunted, then forced to carry the *patibulum* [that is, "the crossbar of a cross used for crucifixion"] tied across his shoulders to the place of execution. ... A set of Roman guards commanded by a centurion accompanied the condemned to the place of execution and stayed on duty until the victim had died. A herald walked ahead with the *titulus* [that is, "a sign bearing the condemned man's name and crime, attached to the top of the cross at a crucifixion"], and on the way bystanders derided and taunted the condemned."¹²

"Scourging Practices"

"Flogging was a legal preliminary to every Roman execution, and only women and Roman senators or soldiers (except in cases of desertion) were exempt. The usual instrument was a short whip (*flagellum* or *flagrum*) with several single or braided leather thongs of variable lengths, in which small iron balls or sharp pieces of sheep bones were tied at intervals (Fig 2). Occasionally, staves also were used. For scourging, the man was stripped of his clothing, and his hands were tied to an upright post (Fig 2). The back, buttocks, and legs were flogged either by two soldiers (*lictores*) or by one who alternated positions. The severity of the scourging depended on the disposition of the *lictores* and was intended to weaken the victim to a state just short of collapse or death. After the scourging, the soldiers often taunted their victim."

"Medical Aspects of Scourging"

"As the Roman soldiers repeatedly struck the victim's back with full force, the iron balls would cause deep contusions [that is, "a region of injured tissue or skin in which blood capillaries have been ruptured; a bruise"], and the leather thongs and sheep bones would cut into the skin and subcutaneous tissues. Then, as

¹² "The history and pathology of crucifixion"; by F. P. Retief and L. Cilliers. South African Medical Journal; Volume 93, Number 12, December 2003; pp. 939 & 940. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org>. Accessed 4/05/2019.

the flogging continued, the lacerations [that is, “a deep cut or tear in skin or flesh”] would tear into the underlying skeletal muscles and produce quivering ribbons of bleeding flesh. Pain and blood loss generally set the stage for circulatory shock. The extent of blood loss may well have determined how long the victim would survive on the cross.”

“Scourging of Jesus”

“At the Praetorium, Jesus was severely whipped. (Although the severity of the scourging is not discussed in the four gospel accounts, it is implied in one of the epistles [1 Peter 2:24¹³]. A detailed word study of the ancient Greek text for this verse indicates that the scourging of Jesus was particularly harsh.) It is not known whether the number of lashes was limited to 39, in accordance with Jewish law. The Roman soldiers, amused that this weakened man had claimed to be a king, began to mock him by placing a robe on his shoulders, a crown of thorns on his head, and a wooden staff as a scepter in his right hand. Next, they spat on Jesus and struck him on the head with the wooden staff. Moreover, when the soldiers tore the robe from Jesus’ back, they probably reopened the scourging wounds.”

“The severe scourging, with its intense pain and appreciable blood loss, most probably left Jesus in a pre shock state. Moreover, hematidrosis had rendered his skin particularly tender. The physical and mental abuse meted out by the Jews and the Romans, as well as the lack of food, water, and sleep, also contributed to his generally weakened state. Therefore, even before the actual crucifixion, Jesus’ physical condition was at least serious and possibly critical.”¹⁴

¹³ 1st Peter 2:24: - “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: **by whose stripes ye were healed.**”

The actual Greek text of the portion that I have highlighted above reads thus: - οὗ τῶ μώλωπι αὐτοῦ ἰάθητε – “hou tō mōlōpi autou iathēte”. The Greek word that has been translated as “**stripes**” is the word **μώλωψ** – “mōlōps” – Strong’s, Greek Number, 3468. This is its only occurrence in the New Testament. It is defined as “*welt, bruise, wound* caused by blows ... οὗ τῶ μώλωπι ἰάθητε *by his wound(s) you have been healed* 1 Pt 2:24 ... (all Is 53:5).” – BAGD., p. 531.

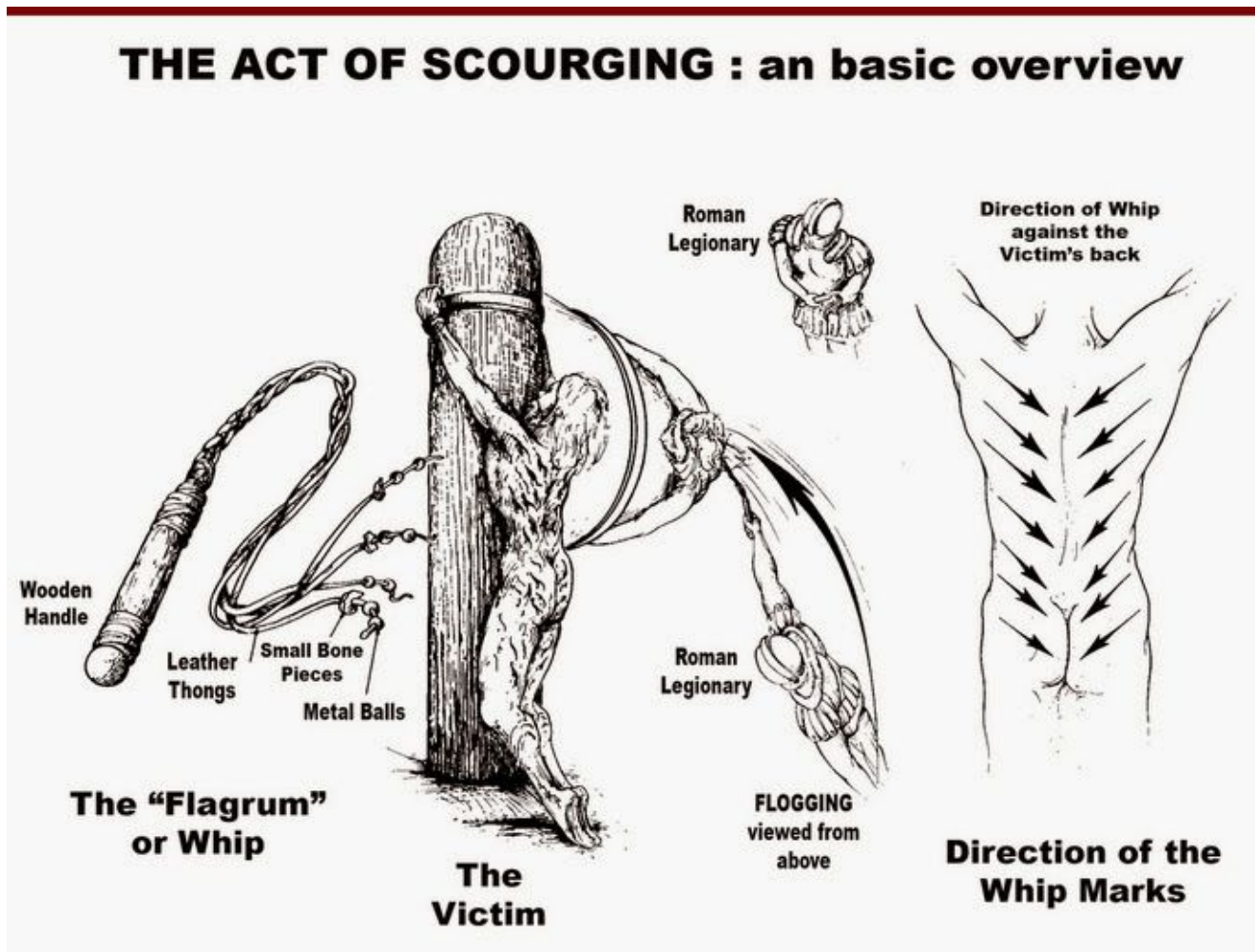
The apostle Peter is referring to the stripes that Jesus received through the Roman scourging. This becomes clear when we understand that Peter was quoting directly from the Greek text of the **LXX** of Isaiah 53:5: -

“But he was wounded on account of our sins, and was bruised because of our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; **and by his bruises we were healed** [τῶ μώλωπι αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς ἰάθημεν – “tō mōlōpi autou hēmeis iathēmen”).”

Well did Isaiah prophesy of the Christ, “I gave my back to the smiters, ...” – Isaiah 50:6.

¹⁴ “On the Physical death of Jesus Christ”; by Dr. William D. Edwards; Wesley J. Gabel & Floyd E. Hosmer; Journal of the American Medical Association; March 21, 1986; Volume 255, Number 11; pp. 1457 & 1458.

FIGURE 2 AS REFERRED TO IN THIS EXTRACT: -



“Fig 2. — Scourging. Left, Short whip (flagrum) with lead balls and sheep bones tied into leather thongs. Center left, Naked victim tied to flogging post. Deep stripelike lacerations were usually associated with considerable blood loss. Center right, View from above, showing position of lictors. Right, Inferomedial direction of wounds.”

The following quotation from the Jewish historian Josephus, gives the reader a graphic picture of how severe a Roman scourging was upon the human body. The back of the scourged prisoner was basically torn to shreds! [This incident took place near the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C. E.]

“Hereupon our rulers, supposing, as the case proved to be, that this was a sort of divine fury in the man, brought him **to the Roman procurator, where he was whipped till his bones were laid bare**; yet he did not make any supplication for himself, nor shed any tears, but turning his voice to the most lamentable tone possible, at every stroke of the whip his answer was, “Woe, woe to Jerusalem!” And when Albinus (for he was then our procurator) asked him, Who he was? and whence he came? and why he uttered such words? he made no manner of reply to what he said, but still did not leave off his melancholy ditty, till Albinus took him to be a madman, and dismissed him.”¹⁵

¹⁵ “Wars of the Jews”; Book VI, Chapter V, Section 3 – Flavius Josephus. William Whiston’s English translation.

“THE CROWN OF THORNS”: -

The following extracts give the reader a graphic description of the physical effect upon Jesus, of his being crowned with thorns by the Roman soldiers.

“THE CROWNING OF THORNS was not only a parody of Jesus' kingship but was another physical torture inflicted on Jesus. The tortuous blows on the forehead and the significant amount of blood on the head region had to have been the result of penetration of the skin by sharp thorns from a plant like those of *Ziziphus spina christi* (Syrian Christ thorn) or *Zizyphus paliuris christi* (Christ's thorn) both of the Buckthorn family (Rhamnaceae). In the opinion of leading botanists of the plants of the holy land like Evanari, Post, Hegi, Tristram, Warburger, Moldenke, Schwerin and even the great Linnaeus were of the opinion that one or the other of the Ziziphus species were the most likely candidates. None of them even considered *Gundelia tournefortii* which has recently been implicated. Whether this plant is capable of penetrating the skin and inducing sufficient bleeding must be tested. From a forensic point of view, *Ziziphus spina christi* (Syrian Christ thorn) or *Zizyphus paliuris christi* (Christ's thorn) would cause puncture-type wounds with significant bleeding when struck with the reed (“..and took the reed and struck him on the head” Mt.27:30 ...”

“It is of interest that the thorny acacia (*Acacia nilotica*) that grows profusely around the hills of Jerusalem has recently emerged as a contender. A crown of thorns made from this plant was unearthed in a sarcophagus dating to 1189 A.D. which also contained the remains of a mummified “knight of the temple” with a bashed skull and an inscription saying “this man saved the crown of thorns from the hands of the infidel”. The physical effects of the crowning with thorns using a thorn plant like *Zizyphus paluris christi* as an example with its sharp, closely spaced thorns would most likely cause **trigeminal neuralgia** (tic douloureux) [that is, “is a chronic pain condition that affects the trigeminal nerve, which carries sensation from your face to your brain”] due to irritation of the **ophthalmic** [that is, “relating to the eye and its diseases”] branch of the **trigeminal** nerve (fifth nerve) and branches of the greater **occipital** [that is, “relating to or situated in the back of the head”] nerves which supply **sensory innervation** [that is, “the distribution of nerves to an organ, muscle, or other body part conveying sensation to that area”] to the front and back of the head region, respectively. This is characterized by severe, **lancinating** [that is, “characterized by piercing or stabbing sensations”], **paroxysmal** [that is, “are a sudden recurrence or intensification of symptoms”], electric shock-like pains across the face lasting from seconds to minutes with intermittent refractory periods. Trigger zones are common in various areas of the face which trigger episodes of shooting pains across the head region if touched and is difficult to treat medically. Severe cases may not respond to medical treatment with drugs such as carbamazepine requiring nerve blocks or ablation surgery. The severe pain would be added to the depth of imminent traumatic shock now developing from the scourging.”¹⁶

“The half-fainting Jesus is then untied and allowed to slump to the stone pavement, wet with His own blood. The Roman soldiers see a great joke in this provincial Jew claiming to be king. They throw a robe across His shoulders and place a stick in His hand for a scepter. They still need a crown to make their travesty complete. **Flexible branches covered with long thorns (commonly used in bundles for firewood) are plaited into the shape of a crown and this is pressed into His scalp. Again there is copious bleeding, the scalp being one of the most vascular areas of the body.**”

¹⁶ “Forensic and Clinical Knowledge of the Practice of Crucifixion” - “A Forensic Way of the Cross”; by Frederick T. Zugibe, M.D., Ph.D. Chief Medical Examiner Rockland County, N.Y. and Adjunct Associate Professor of Pathology Columbia University College of Physician's and Surgeons, N.Y. www.crucifixion-shroud.com/Turin2000.htm - accessed 25/04/2019.

“After mocking Him and striking Him across the face, **the soldiers take the stick from His hand and strike Him across the head, driving the thorns deeper into His scalp.** Finally, they tire of their sadistic sport and the robe is torn from His back. Already having adhered to the clots of blood and serum in the wounds, its removal causes excruciating pain just as in the careless removal of a surgical bandage, and almost as though He were again being whipped the wounds once more begin to bleed.”¹⁷

The following statement gives us a summary of Jesus’ physical condition after having undergone the scourging and crowning of thorns, at the hands of the Roman soldiers.

“Pilate orders Jesus to be flogged as required by Roman law before crucifixion. Traditionally, the accused stood naked, and the flogging covered the area from the shoulders down to the upper legs. The whip consisted of several strips of leather. In the middle of the strips were metal balls that hit the skin, causing deep bruising. In addition, sheep bone was attached to the tips of each strip.”

“When the bone makes contact with Jesus’ skin, it digs into His muscles, tearing out chunks of flesh and exposing the bone beneath. The flogging leaves the skin on Jesus’ back in long ribbons. By this point, He has lost a great volume of blood which causes His blood pressure to fall and puts Him into shock. The human body attempts to remedy imbalances such as decreased blood volume, so Jesus’ thirst is His body’s natural response to His suffering (John 19:28). If He would have drunk water, His blood volume would have increased.”

“Roman soldiers place a crown of thorns on Jesus’ head and a robe on His back (Matthew 27:28 - 29). The robe helps the blood clot (similar to putting a piece of tissue on a cut from shaving) to prevent Jesus from sustaining more blood loss. As they hit Jesus in the head (Matthew 27:30), the thorns from the crown push into the skin and He begins bleeding profusely. The thorns also cause damage to the nerve that supplies the face, causing intense pain down His face and neck. As they mock Him, the soldiers also belittle Jesus by spitting on Him (Matthew 27:30). They rip the robe off Jesus’ back and the bleeding starts afresh.”

“Jesus’ physical condition becomes critical. Due to severe blood loss without replacement, Jesus is undoubtedly in shock. As such, He is unable to carry the cross and Simon of Cyrene executes this task (Matthew 27:32).”¹⁸



Jesus endured this horrific physical trauma and abuse, which would have left him near death at this point, and he has not even left the city of Jerusalem. And why did he endure all this abuse? Because of a Divine love for every sinner who has ever or, who ever will be born into this world. He was earning the right to be our Sin-Bearer, so that we might be healed from our sins, by his stripes that he received at the hands of the Roman soldiers, when they scourged him. Does not this speak to your heart dear reader? It was for love of thee, that our Saviour endured all this!

¹⁷ “The Medical Account of Christ’s Death”; by Dr. C. Truman Davis. Originally published in Arizona Medicine, March 1965, Arizona Medical Association. http://www.worcesterchurch.org/moses/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Medical_Account-Crucifixion.pdf - Accessed 27/04/2019.

¹⁸ “The Science of the Crucifixion”; by Cahleen Shrier, Ph. D.; March, 1, 2002 article. <https://www.apu.edu/articles/15657> - Accessed 27/04/2019.

THE ROMAN CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS: -

NOTE: - I shall list all four gospel accounts of Jesus' crucifixion at Calvary. I shall then list a number of Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah, which were specifically fulfilled when Jesus died upon the cross. Finally, I shall share with the reader some extracts from articles, which deal with the physical reality of what the condemned prisoner went through when they were executed by crucifixion. This will help to bring home to the reader's mind, the physical reality of the excruciating agonies that our blessed Saviour had to endure upon the cross.

THE GOSPEL ACCOUNTS OF JESUS' CRUCIFIXION: -

Matthew 27:31 - 50: - "And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify *him*. And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross. And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, they gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted *thereof*, he would not drink. And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. And sitting down they watched him there; And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left. And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking *him*, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth. Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard *that*, said, This *man* calleth for Elias. And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled *it* with vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink. The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him. Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost."

Mark 15:20 - 37: - "And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him. And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross. And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull. And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received *it* not. And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take. And it was the third hour, and they crucified him. And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS. And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors. And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him. And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being

interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And some of them that stood by, when they heard *it*, said, Behold, he calleth Elias. And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down. And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.”

Luke 23:24 - 46: - “And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will. And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear *it* after Jesus. And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed *are* the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry? And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death. And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided *him*, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, and saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise. And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.”

John 19:16 - 37: - “Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led *him* away. And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called *the place* of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: Where they crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst. And Pilate wrote a title, and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, *and* Greek, *and* Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written. Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also *his* coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own *home*. After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put *it* upon hyssop, and put *it* to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers

with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.”

SOME OF THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES THAT WERE FULFILLED WHEN JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED UPON THE CROSS: -

- The fact that Jesus was crucified with two criminals - evil doers, was a fulfilment of the following prophecy found in the Book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 53:12: - “Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: **and he was numbered with the transgressors;** and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

Mark 15:27 & 28: - “And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. **And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.**”

- When Jesus was crucified to the cross, his shoulders and elbows would have become dislocated, causing more severe pain for our Saviour.¹⁹ This also was a fulfilment of the following prophecy in the Book of Psalms.

Psalm 22:13 & 14: - “They gaped upon me *with* their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion. I am poured out like water, and **all my bones are out of joint:** my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.”

- Jesus’ agonizing plea on the cross, concerning his Father having forsaken him and his being smitten by God, was a fulfilment of the following prophecies in the Books of Psalms and Isaiah.

Psalm 22:1: - “**My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?** *why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?*”

Isaiah 53:3 & 4: - “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were *our* faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.”

Matthew 27:46: - “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, **My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?**”

- The mocking and scoffing words spoken by the Jewish rulers at the scene of Jesus’ crucifixion, was a striking fulfilment of the following prophecy in the Book of Psalms.

¹⁹ “Once the victim is secured, the guards lift the patibulum and place it on the stipes already in the ground. As it is lifted, Jesus’ full weight pulls down on His nailed wrists and His shoulders and elbows dislocate (Psalm 22:14). In this position, Jesus’ arms stretch to a minimum of six inches longer than their original length.” - Ibid; Accessed 6/05/2019.

Psalm 22:7 & 8: - "All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*, **He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.**"

Matthew 27:41 – 43: - "Likewise also the chief priests mocking *him*, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. **He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him:** for he said, I am the Son of God."

- The fact that Jesus was given gall and vinegar to drink was a fulfilment of the following prophecy in the Book of Psalms.

Psalm 69:21: - "They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."

Matthew 27:34: - "**They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall:** and when he had tasted *thereof*, he would not drink."

- The fact that Jesus was pierced in his hands, feet and side, was a fulfilment of the following prophecies in the Books of Psalms and Zechariah. The fact that the Roman soldiers cast lots over Jesus' garments was also a fulfilment of the following prophecy found in the Book of Psalms.

Psalm 22:16 – 18: - "For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: **they pierced my hands and my feet.** I may tell all my bones: they look *and* stare upon me. **They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.**"

Zechariah 12:10: - "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: **and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced**, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn."

Matthew 27:35: - "And they crucified him, **and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.**"

John 19:34 & 37: - "But **one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side**, and forthwith came there out blood and water. ... **And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.**"

- The fact that Jesus did not have any of his bones broken, was a fulfilment of the type of the Passover Lamb, whose bones were not to be broken, and also from a prophecy found in the Book of Psalms.

Exodus 12:46: - "In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; **neither shall ye break a bone thereof.**"

Numbers 9:12 : - "They shall leave none of it unto the morning, **nor break any bone of it:** according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it."

Psalm 34:20: - "He keepeth all **his bones: not one of them is broken.**"

John 19:33 & 36: - "But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, **they brake not his legs:** ... **For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.**"

- The record of the final words that Jesus spoke immediately prior to his death as recorded in Luke 23:46, was a fulfilment of the following passage found in the Book of Psalms.

Psalm 31:5: - "**Into thine hand I commit my spirit:** thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth."

☞ All of the scenes that took place when Jesus was crucified upon the cross, all of these events which he personally could not orchestrate or arrange in any way, were a direct fulfilment of Bible prophecy. They all testify to the truth that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah. Well may we repeat the words spoken by the Roman centurion and those who were with him, just after Jesus had died upon the cross, **“Truly this was the Son of God”** – Matthew 27:54.

THE PHYSICAL REALITY OF THE AGONIZING DEATH OF ROMAN CRUCIFIXION: -

NOTE: - The simplest way to outline the graphic reality of what a condemned prisoner experienced when they underwent death by Roman crucifixion, is to share the following extracts of articles written by scholars and medical doctors, which document the horrible realities of this method of capital punishment.

The following extract gives the reader, a general overview of how a Roman crucifixion was carried out.

“In Jerusalem, according to custom, women offered the victim an analgesic drink consisting of wine and myrrh or incense. If not already naked, he was then stripped and made to lie on his back with his arms *extended along the patibulum* [that is, “the crossbar of a cross used for crucifixion”]. The arms were tied to the beam, or fixed by means of iron nails driven through the wrists, rather than the hands which sometimes could not carry the body weight without tearing loose. There is also evidence that these square nails (13 - 18 cm long, 1 cm thick) were occasionally driven through the upper forearms. On occasion the victim was crucified upside down.”

“The *patibulum* and victim were now lifted and fixed onto the stipes [that is, “the upright, called the stipes, was permanently fixed in the ground, to which the patibulum was attached”] and the feet tied or nailed to the upright post. This could happen in a variety of ways - either the feet were nailed to the sides of the stipes, or atop each other to the front of the stipes. In the latter case a single nail was usually driven through the metatarsal bones of both feet, with the soles nearly horizontal to the stipes's surface, and the knees flexed. Archaeological evidence shows that the feet were sometimes encased in a small wooden box-like structure before being nailed to the post. In that case the flexed knees and feet were swung laterally and a nail driven through the superimposed *calcanei* (heelbones). The *titulus* [that is, “a sign bearing the condemned person's name and crime, attached to the top of the cross at a crucifixion”] was then affixed.”

“The soldiers divided the victim's clothes among themselves, and awaited death, which on average would take from 3 - 4 hours to 3 - 4 days. If there was reason to expedite death or to ensure that death had set in, the legs (one or both) were broken beneath the knees (*crurifragium*) with a blunt implement, although axes and even toothed metal implements were sometimes used. Death could also be ensured by way of a club blow to the sternal [that is, “relating to the sternum”] region or a spear stab to the heart through the upper abdomen or chest. Occasionally a smoking fire was lit at the foot of the cross to smother the victim.”

“After death Roman law allowed the family of the deceased to remove the body for burial, after obtaining permission from a judge. Otherwise it was customary to leave the corpse on the cross to be devoured by predatory animals and birds.”²⁰

²⁰ “The history and pathology of crucifixion”; by F. P. Retief and L. Cillers. South African Medical Journal; Volume 93, Number 12, December 2003; p. 940. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org>. Accessed 4/05/2019.

“Crucifixion was invented by the Persians between 300 - 400 B.C. It is quite possibly the most painful death ever invented by humankind. The English language derives the word “excruciating” from crucifixion, acknowledging it as a form of slow, painful suffering. Its punishment was reserved for slaves, foreigners, revolutionaries, and the vilest of criminals. Victims were nailed to a cross; however, Jesus’ cross was probably not the Latin cross, but rather a Tau cross (T). The vertical piece (the stipes) remains in the ground permanently. The accused carries only the horizontal piece (the patibulum) up the hill. Atop the patibulum lies a sign (the titulus), indicating that a formal trial occurred for a violation of the law. In Jesus’ case, this reads “This is the King of the Jews” (Luke 23:38).”

“The accused needed to be nailed to the patibulum while lying down, so Jesus is thrown to the ground, reopening His wounds, grinding in dirt, and causing bleeding. They nail His “hands” to the patibulum. The Greek meaning of “hands” includes the wrist. It is more likely that the nails went through Jesus’ wrists. If the nails were driven into the hand, the weight of the arms would cause the nail to rip through the soft flesh.”

“Therefore, the upper body would not be held to the cross. If placed in the wrist, the bones in the lower portion of the hand support the weight of the arms and the body remains nailed to the cross. The huge nail (seven to nine inches long) damages or severs the major nerve to the hand (the median nerve) upon impact. This causes continuous agonizing pain up both of Jesus’ arms.”

“Once the victim is secured, the guards lift the patibulum and place it on the stipes already in the ground. As it is lifted, Jesus’ full weight pulls down on His nailed wrists and His shoulders and elbows dislocate (Psalm 22:14). In this position, Jesus’ arms stretch to a minimum of six inches longer than their original length.”

“It is highly likely that Jesus’ feet were nailed through the tops as often pictured. In this position (with the knees flexed at approximately 90 degrees), the weight of the body pushes down on the nails and the ankles support the weight. The nails would not rip through the soft tissue as would have occurred with the hands. Again, the nail would cause severe nerve damage (it severs the dorsal pedal artery of the foot) and acute pain.”

“Normally, to breathe in, the diaphragm (the large muscle that separates the chest cavity from the abdominal cavity) must move down. This enlarges the chest cavity and air automatically moves into the lungs (inhalation). To exhale, the diaphragm rises up, which compresses the air in the lungs and forces the air out (exhalation). As Jesus hangs on the cross, the weight of His body pulls down on the diaphragm and the air moves into His lungs and remains there. Jesus must push up on His nailed feet (causing more pain) to exhale.”

“In order to speak, air must pass over the vocal cords during exhalation. The Gospels note that Jesus spoke seven times from the cross. It is amazing that despite His pain, He pushes up to say “Forgive them” (Luke 23:34).”

“The difficulty surrounding exhalation leads to a slow form of suffocation. Carbon dioxide builds up in the blood, resulting in a high level of carbonic acid in the blood. The body responds instinctively, triggering the desire to breathe. At the same time, the heart beats faster to circulate available oxygen. The decreased oxygen (due to the difficulty in exhaling) causes damage to the tissues and the capillaries begin leaking watery fluid from the blood into the tissues. This results in a build-up of fluid around the heart (pericardial effusion) and lungs (pleural effusion). The collapsing lungs, failing heart, dehydration, and the inability to get sufficient oxygen to the tissues essentially suffocate the victim. The decreased oxygen also damages the heart itself (myocardial

infarction) which leads to cardiac arrest. In severe cases of cardiac stress, the heart can even burst, a process known as cardiac rupture. Jesus most likely died of a heart attack.”²¹

Roman crucifixion was also designed to humiliate the condemned prisoner as the following statement indicates.

“Crucifixion was devised and designed by the Romans with more than one thing in mind. It was designed as capital punishment, to put a criminal to death, but it aimed to do a couple of other things as well.”

“It was designed to inflict optimal physical pain. Thus the procedure was dragged out over a good number of hours and the amount of pain inflicted at any given moment was carefully calculated so as not to cause unconsciousness and thus ease the pain of the one being crucified. Indeed they sometimes even gave wine mixed with morphine to the person being crucified, not to ease his suffering, but to keep him from passing out from pain so as to have to endure it longer.”

“But crucifixion was designed with still another even more callous intent. It was designed to humiliate the person. Among other things, the person was stripped naked before being hung on a cross so that his genitals would be publicly exposed. As well, at the moment of death his bowels would loosen. Crucifixion clearly had humiliation in mind.”

“We have tended to downplay this aspect, both in our preaching and in our art. We have, as Jurgens Moltmann put it, surrounded the cross with roses, with aesthetic and antiseptic wrapping towels. But that was not the case for Jesus. His nakedness was exposed, his body publicly humiliated. That, among other reasons, is why the crucifixion was such a devastating blow to his disciples and why many of them abandoned Jesus and scattered after the crucifixion. They simply couldn’t connect this kind of humiliation with glory, divinity, and triumph.”²²

“With knowledge of both anatomy and ancient crucifixion practices, one may reconstruct the probable medical aspects of this form of slow execution. Each wound apparently was intended to produce intense agony, and the contributing causes of death were numerous.”

“The scourging prior to crucifixion served to weaken the condemned man and, if blood loss was considerable, to produce **orthostatic hypotension** [that is, “is a form of low blood pressure that happens when you stand up from sitting or lying down”] and even **hypovolemic shock** [that is, “is a life-threatening condition that results when you lose more than 20 percent (one-fifth) of your body’s blood or fluid supply. This severe fluid loss makes it impossible for the heart to pump a sufficient amount of blood to your body”]. When the victim was thrown to the ground on his back, in preparation for transfixion of the hands, his scourging wounds most likely would become torn open again and contaminated with dirt. Furthermore, with each respiration, the painful scourging wounds would be scraped against the rough wood of the stipes. As a result, blood loss from the back probably would continue throughout the crucifixion ordeal.”

“With arms outstretched but not taut, the wrists were nailed to the patibulum. It has been shown that the ligaments and bones of the wrist can support the weight of a body hanging from them, but the palms cannot. Accordingly, the iron spikes probably were driven between the **radius** [that is, “the thicker and shorter of the two

²¹ “The Science of the Crucifixion”; by Cahleen Shrier, Ph. D.; March, 1, 2002 article. <https://www.apu.edu/articles/15657> - Accessed 4/05/2019.

²² “The humiliation of crucifixion”; by Ron Rolheiser; March, 28, 2010 article. <https://ronrolheiser.com/the-humiliation-of-crucifixion>. Accessed 4/05/2019.

bones in the human forearm”] and the **carpals** [that is, “carpal bones are the eight small bones that make up the wrist (or carpus) that connects the hand to the forearm”] or between the two rows of carpal bones, either proximal to or through the strong bandlike **flexor retinaculum** [that is, “is a fibrous band on the palmar side of the hand near the wrist”] and the various **intercarpal ligaments** [that is, “are fibrous bands that extend transversely across the palmar surfaces of the carpal bones, connecting adjacent carpals”] (Fig 4). Although a nail in either location in the wrist might pass between the bony elements and thereby produce no fractures, the likelihood of painful **periosteal** [that is, “is a membrane that covers the outer surface of all bones, except at the joints of long bones”] injury would seem great. Furthermore, the driven nail would crush or sever the rather large **sensorimotor** [that is, “(of nerves or their actions) having or involving both sensory and motor functions or pathways”] **median nerve** [that is, “median nerve is the only nerve that passes through the carpal tunnel”] (Fig 4). The stimulated nerve would produce excruciating bolts of fiery pain in both arms. Although the severed median nerve would result in paralysis of a portion of the hand, **ischemic contractures** [that is, “is a permanent shortening (contracture) of forearm muscles, usually resulting from injury, that gives rise to a clawlike deformity of the hand, fingers, and wrist”] and impalement of various ligaments by the iron spike might produce a clawlike grasp.”

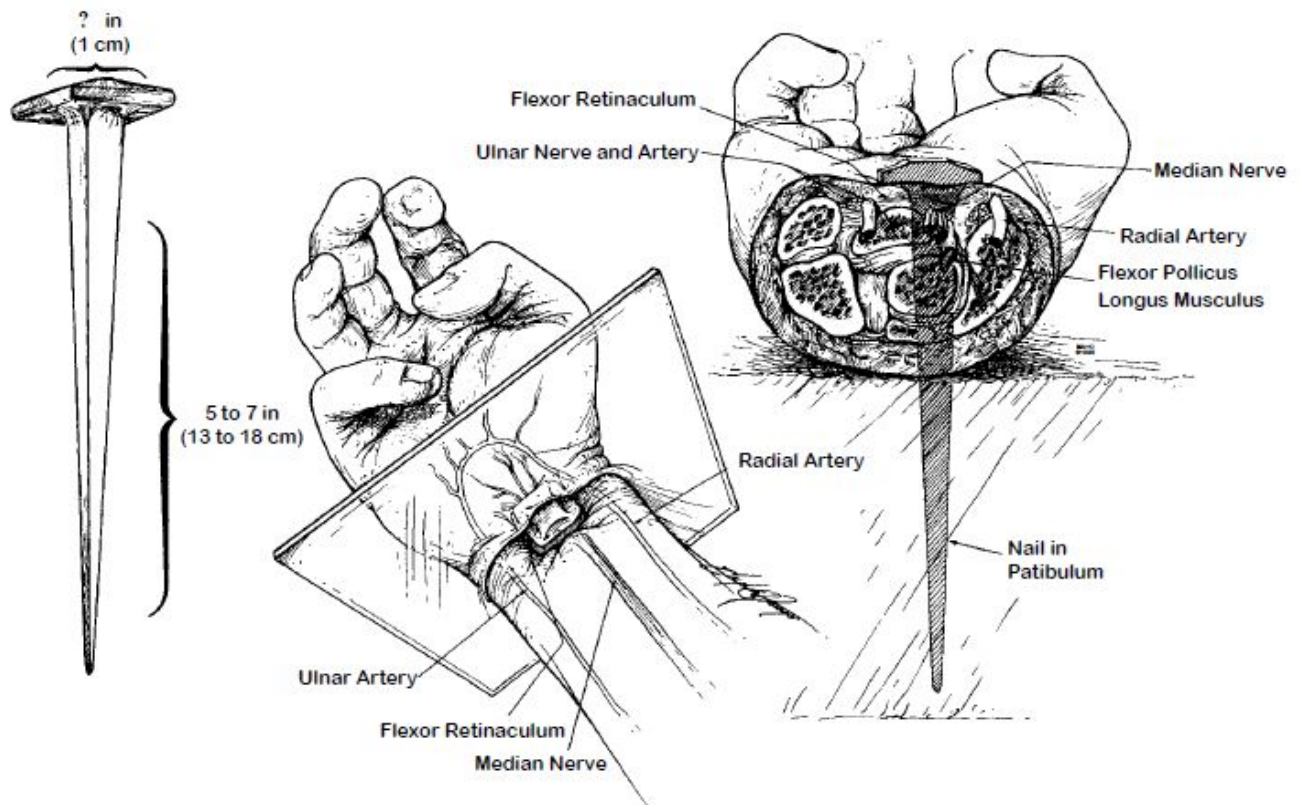
“Most commonly, the feet were fixed to the front of the stipes by means of an iron spike driven through the first or second **intermetatarsal** [that is, “between the metatarsus (= the bones of the foot between the toes and the ankle)”] space, just distal to the **tarsometatarsal joint** [that is, “arthrodial joints in the foot. The tarsometatarsal joints involve the first, second and third cuneiform bones, the cuboid bone and the metatarsal bones”]. It is likely that the deep **peroneal nerve** [that is, “the smaller of the branches into which the sciatic nerve divides passing obliquely outward and downward from the popliteal space and to the neck of the fibula where it divides into the deep peroneal nerve and the superficial peroneal nerve that supply certain muscles and skin areas of the leg and foot”] and branches of the **medial** [that is, “(internal plantar nerve) is the larger of the two terminal divisions of the tibial nerve (medial and lateral plantar nerve), which accompanies the medial plantar artery”] and **lateral plantar** [that is, “external plantar nerve) is a branch of the tibial nerve, in turn a branch of the sciatic nerve and supplies the skin of the fifth toe and lateral half of the fourth, as well as most of the deep muscles”] **nerves** would have been injured by the nails.”

“... Adequate exhalation required lifting the body by pushing up on the feet and by flexing the elbows and **adducting** the shoulders [that is, “adduction is the movement of a body part toward the body's midline. So, if a person has their arms straight out at the shoulders and brings them down to their sides, it is adduction”]. (Fig 6). However, this maneuver would place the entire weight of the body on the **tarsals** [that is, “a bone of the tarsus”] and would produce searing pain. Furthermore, flexion of the elbows would cause rotation of the wrists about the iron nails and cause fiery pain along the damaged **median nerves** [that is, “is a nerve in humans and other animals in the upper limb”]. Lifting of the body would also painfully scrape the scourged back against the rough wooden stipes. Muscle cramps and **paresthesias** [that is, “an abnormal sensation, typically tingling or pricking (‘pins and needles’), caused chiefly by pressure on or damage to peripheral nerves”] of the outstretched and uplifted arms would add to the discomfort. As a result, each respiratory effort would become agonizing and tiring and lead eventually to **asphyxia** [that is, “a condition arising when the body is deprived of oxygen, causing unconsciousness or death; suffocation”].”

“The actual cause of death by crucifixion was multifactorial and varied somewhat with each case, but the two most prominent causes probably were hypovolemic shock and exhaustion asphyxia. Other possible contributing factors included dehydration, stress-induced **arrhythmias** [that is, “a condition in which the heart beats with an irregular or abnormal rhythm”], and congestive heart failure with the rapid accumulation of **pericardial** [that is, “excess fluid between the heart and the sac surrounding the heart, known as the pericardium”] and perhaps **pleural effusions** [that is, “is a buildup of fluid in the pleural space, an area between the layers of tissue that line the lungs and the chest wall”]. Crucifracture (breaking the legs below the knees), if

performed, led to an asphyxic death within minutes. Death by crucifixion was, in every sense of the word, excruciating (Latin, *excruciat*, or “out of the cross”).”²³

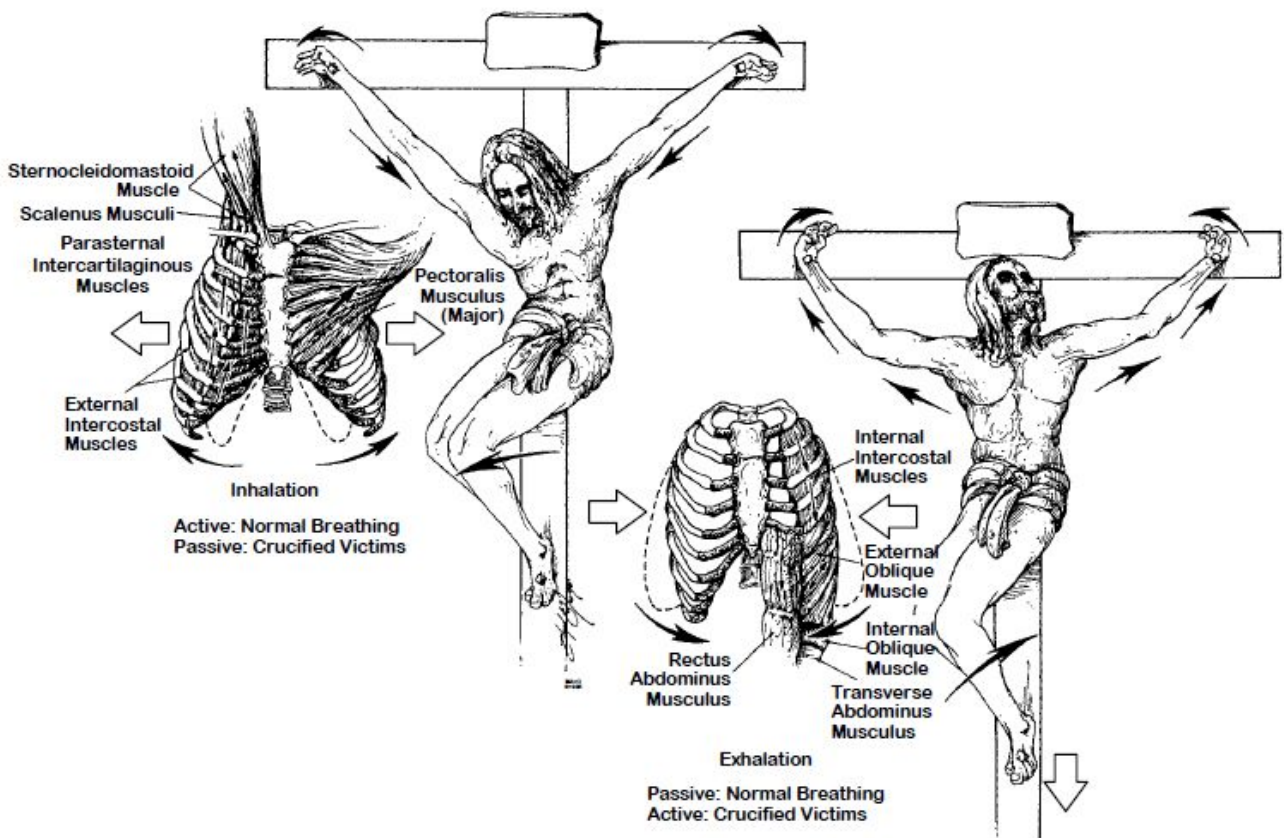
FIGURE 4 AS REFERRED TO IN THIS EXTRACT: -



“Fig 4. — Nailing of wrists. Left, Size of iron nail. Center, Location of nail in wrist, between carpals and radius. Right, Cross section of wrist, at level of plane indicated at left, showing path of nail, with probable transection of median nerve and impalement of **flexor pollicis longus** [that is, “a muscle in the forearm and hand that flexes the thumb”], but without injury to major arterial trunks and without fractures of bones.”

²³ “On the Physical death of Jesus Christ”; by Dr. William D. Edwards; Wesley J.Gabel & Floyd E. Hosmer; Journal of the America Medical Association; March 21, 1986; Volume 255, Number 11; pp. 1460 & 1461.

FIGURE 6 AS REFERRED TO IN THIS EXTRACT: -



“Fig 6 — Respirations during crucifixion. Left, Inhalation. With elbows extended and shoulders abducted, respiratory muscles of inhalation are passively stretched and thorax is expanded. Right, Exhalation. With elbows flexed and shoulders adducted and with weight of body on nailed feet, exhalation is accomplished as active, rather than passive, process. Breaking legs below knees would place burden of exhalation on shoulder and arm muscles alone and soon would result in exhaustion asphyxia.”

👋 Dear reader, when we start to get a realistic and intelligent understanding of the excruciating agonies that Jesus of Nazareth endured upon the cross, it should lead us to deep humility and conviction of the love that God has demonstrated in the most visible way possible. Only the hardest of hearts can remain unmoved by understanding what our Saviour endured upon the cross. It was truly a most horrible, painful and humiliating death that Jesus voluntarily submitted to. Why did he willingly endure all this humiliation and agonizing pain? Because of **LOVE** for a lost world of sinners!

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” – John 3:16.

THE SEVEN SAYINGS OF JESUS FROM THE CROSS: -

NOTE: - I have arranged these publicly spoken statements of Jesus, in chronological order as regards the time when he spoke these short sentences upon the cross.

It should become apparent to the reader, that each one of these recorded sentences of Christ, are consistent with the previous Section of this Study Document, concerning the physical struggle a crucified person goes through just to get each breath. They do not have any oxygen to spare, in making long statements.

The following statement explains the physical agonies that Jesus would have suffered upon the cross, that would have made it extremely difficult in speaking any long statements.

“As the arms fatigue, great waves of cramps sweep over the muscles, knotting them in deep, relentless, throbbing pain. With these cramps comes the inability to push Himself upward. Hanging by his arms, the pectoral muscles (large chest muscles) are paralyzed and the intercostal muscles (small muscles between the ribs) are unable to act. Air can be drawn into the lungs, but cannot be exhaled. ... Finally, carbon dioxide builds up in the lungs and in the blood stream and the cramps partially subside. Spasmodically, he is able to push Himself upward to exhale and bring in the life-giving oxygen. It was undoubtedly during these periods that He uttered the seven short sentences recorded.”²⁴

1. Luke 23:34: - “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”
2. Luke 23:43: - “Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”
3. John 19:26 & 27: - “Woman, behold thy son! ... Behold thy mother!”
4. Matthew 27:46: - “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?”
See also: - Mark 15:34.
5. John 19:28: - “I thirst.”
6. John 19:30: - “It is finished.”²⁵
7. Luke 23:46: - “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.”²⁶

²⁴ “The Medical Account of Christ’s Death”; by Dr. C. Truman Davis. Originally published in Arizona Medicine, March 1965, Arizona Medical Association. http://www.worcesterchurch.org/amos/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Medical_Account-Crucifixion.pdf - Accessed 4/05/2019.

²⁵ If we compare this statement with the synoptic gospels’ accounts, Jesus spoke these three triumphant words, in a loud voice, which was an astonishing thing, for a person whose death was imminent from crucifixion.

Matthew 27:50: - “Jesus, **when he had cried again with a loud voice**, yielded up the ghost.”

Mark 15:37: - “And Jesus **cried with a loud voice**, and gave up the ghost.”

Luke 23:46: - “**And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice**, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.”

²⁶ Jesus was quoting from the following Old Testament verse in his final words of his earthly life.

Psalms 31:5: - “Into thine hand I commit my spirit”.

JESUS DIES UPON THE CROSS: -

I shall list below all of the gospel accounts of Jesus' death upon the cross.

Matthew 27:50 & 51: - "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent."

Mark 15:37: - "And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost."

Luke 23:46: - "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."

John 19:30 - 37: - "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. **But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.** And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, **that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.** And again another scripture saith, **They shall look on him whom they pierced.**"

The following lengthy, detailed extract will discuss the likely medical causes of Jesus' death by crucifixion.

"Since the Jews did not want the bodies to remain on the crosses after sunset, the beginning of the Sabbath, they asked Pontius Pilate to order **crucifracture** [that is, "the deliberate breaking of the tibiae led to a rapid death, due to asphyxia within minutes"] to hasten the deaths of the three crucified men. The soldiers broke the legs of the two thieves, but when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Rather, one of the soldiers pierced his side, probably with an infantry spear, and produced a sudden flow of blood and water. Later that day, Jesus' body was taken down from the cross and placed in a tomb."

"DEATH OF JESUS"

"Two aspects of Jesus' death have been the source of great controversy, namely, the nature of the wound in his side, and the cause of his death after only several hours on the cross."

"The gospel of John describes the piercing of Jesus' side and emphasizes the sudden flow of blood and water. Some authors have interpreted the flow of water to be ascites or urine, from an abdominal midline perforation of the bladder. However, the Greek word (πλευρα, or pleura) used by John clearly denoted laterality and often implied the ribs. Therefore, it seems probable that the wound was in the **thorax** [that is, "the thorax or chest (from the Greek θώραξ thorax "breastplate, cuirass, corslet" via Latin: thorax) is a part of the anatomy of humans and various other animals located between the neck and the abdomen"] and well away from the abdominal midline."

"Although the side of the wound was not designated by John, it traditionally has been depicted on the right side. Supporting this tradition is the fact that a large flow of blood would be more likely with a perforation of the distended and thin-walled **right atrium or ventricle** [that is, "the right atrium is one of the four chambers of the heart. The heart is comprised of two atria and two ventricles"] than the thick-walled and contracted **left ventricle** [that is, "the left ventricle is one of four chambers of the heart. It is located in the bottom left portion of

the heart below the left atrium, separated by the mitral valve”]. Although the side of the wound may never be established with certainty, the right seems more probable than the left.”

“Some of the skepticism in accepting John’s description has arisen from the difficulty in explaining, with medical accuracy, the flow of both blood and water. Part of this difficulty has been based on the assumption that the blood appeared first, then the water. However, in the ancient Greek, the order of words generally denoted prominence and not necessarily a time sequence. Therefore, it seems likely that John was emphasizing the prominence of blood rather than its appearance preceding the water.”

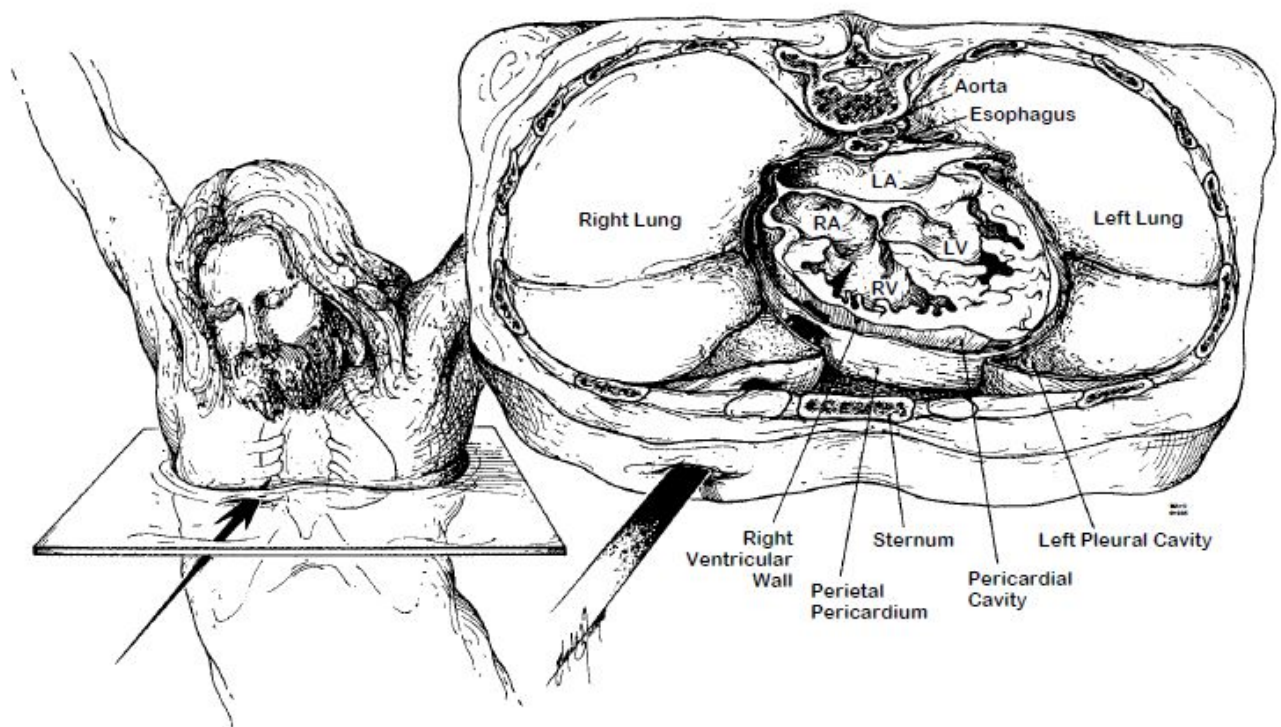
“Therefore, the water probably represented **serous** [that is, “the term serous fluid or serosal fluid (originating from the Medieval Latin word serosus, from Latin serum) is any of various body fluids resembling serum, that are typically pale yellow and transparent and of a benign nature”] **pleural** [that is, “the pleural cavity also known as the pleural space, is the thin fluid-filled space between the two pulmonary pleurae (known as visceral and parietal) of each lung”] and **pericardial** [that is, “of, relating to, or affecting the pericardium also: situated around the heart”] fluid, and would have preceded the flow of blood and been smaller in volume than the blood. Perhaps in the setting of **hypovolemia** [that is, “a decreased volume of circulating blood in the body”] and impending acute heart failure, **pleural** [that is, “a pleural effusion is excess fluid that accumulates in the pleural cavity, the fluid-filled space that surrounds the lungs”] **and pericardial effusions** [that is, “a build up of fluid in the pleural space, an area between the layers of tissue that line the lungs and the chest wall”] may have developed and would have added to the volume of apparent water. The blood, in contrast, may have originated from the right atrium or the right ventricle (Fig 7) or perhaps from a **hemopericardium** [that is, “hemopericardium refers to blood in the pericardial sac of the heart”].”

“Jesus’ death after only three to six hours on the cross surprised even Pontius Pilate. The fact that Jesus cried out in a loud voice and then bowed his head and died suggests the possibility of a catastrophic terminal event. One popular explanation has been that Jesus died of cardiac rupture. In the setting of the scourging and crucifixions with associated hypovolemia, **hypoxemia** [that is, “hypoxemia is an abnormally low level of oxygen in the blood”], and perhaps an altered **coagulable** [that is, “capable of coagulating and becoming thick”] state, **friable** [that is, “easily crumbled or pulverized”] **non-infective thrombotic vegetations** [that is, “is a form of endocarditis in which small sterile vegetations are deposited on the valve leaflets”] could have formed on the **aortic** [that is, “relating to the aorta, the main artery of the body”] or **mitral valve** [that is, “the valve between the left atrium and the left ventricle of the heart, which has two tapered cusps”]. These then could have dislodged and **embolized** [that is, “of an embolus: to lodge in and obstruct (as a blood vessel or organ)”] into the coronary circulation and thereby produced an acute **transmural myocardial infarction** [that is, “refers to a myocardial infarction that involves the full thickness of the myocardium”]. Thrombotic valvular vegetations have been reported to develop under analogous acute traumatic conditions. Rupture of the left ventricular free wall may occur, though uncommonly, in the first few hours following **infarction** [that is, “obstruction of the blood supply to an organ or region of tissue, typically by a thrombus or embolus, causing local death of the tissue”].”

“However, another explanation may be more likely. Jesus’ death may have been hastened simply by his state of exhaustion and by the severity of the scourging, with its resultant blood loss and pre-shock state. The fact that he could not carry his patibulum supports this interpretation. The actual cause of Jesus’ death, like that of other crucified victims, may have been multifactorial and related primarily to **hypovolemic shock** [that is, “is a life-threatening condition that results when you lose more than 20 percent (one-fifth) of your body’s blood or fluid supply. This severe fluid loss makes it impossible for the heart to pump a sufficient amount of blood to your body”], exhaustion asphyxia, and perhaps acute heart failure. A fatal cardiac **arrhythmia** [that is, “a condition in which the heart beats with an irregular or abnormal rhythm”] may have accounted for the apparent catastrophic terminal event.”

“Thus, it remains unsettled whether Jesus died of cardiac rupture or of cardiorespiratory failure. However, the important feature may be not how he died but rather whether he died. Clearly, the weight of historical and medical evidence indicates that Jesus was dead before the wound to his side was inflicted and supports the traditional view that the spear, thrust between his right ribs, probably perforated not only the right lung but also the pericardium and heart and thereby ensured his death (Fig 7). Accordingly, interpretations based on the assumption that Jesus did not die on the cross appear to be at odds with modern medical knowledge.”²⁷

FIGURE 7 AS REFERRED TO IN THIS EXTRACT: -



“Fig 7. — Spear wound to chest. Left, Probable path of spear. Right, Cross section of thorax, at level of plane indicated at left, showing structures perforated by spear. LA indicates left atrium; LV, left ventricle; RA, right atrium; RV, right ventricle.”

Concerning the medical significance of the blood and water that flowed out from the wound in Jesus’ side, the following extract briefly explains that this is absolute medical proof that Jesus had died **sometime before** the Roman soldier pierced his side with his spear.

“Drawing on his studies in forensic pathology, David Instone-Brewer explores the science of crucifixion.”

²⁷ “On the Physical death of Jesus Christ”; by Dr. William D. Edwards; Wesley J. Gabel & Floyd E. Hosmer; Journal of the American Medical Association; March 21, 1986; Volume 255, Number 11; pp. 1462 & 1463.

“During my first week at university, my class was taken into a large, cold room of dead bodies. Over the next two years we learned anatomy by dissecting them with scalpels and forceps. Every tiny piece had to be collected for eventual burial out of respect for these individuals and their families, who had donated such a precious gift to science. This practical process taught us how bodies work, how they go wrong and what happens when we die. Some of us learned to become surgeons, pathologists or family physicians, and I gained a sense of wonder, which eventually took me into ministry.”

“EVIDENCE FOR JESUS’ DEATH”

“One day, when we reached the heart, a Christian student exclaimed: ‘Look! It’s just like in the Bible.’”

“People crowded round in curiosity. He pointed to the blood, which had pooled in the heart. It was in two layers: red at the bottom and white at the top. The corpuscles had sedimented after the blood had stopped moving, leaving clear serum at the top.”

“‘It’s what John saw,’ my fellow student said (now a bit embarrassed by all the attention). ‘It’s the “blood and water” that flowed out separately when the spear penetrated Jesus’ heart.’ (John 19:34).”

“*HIS CORPSE WAS MUTILATED BY A SPEAR AND LEFT TO ROT IN A CAVE*”

“This spear thrust was no doubt meant to kill Jesus, just in case he wasn’t dead. It is unlikely that the author or any of his readers would have realised the significance of the separated watery fluid that he records coming out with the blood. For John, this was theologically important; see his other references to water (for example John 3:5; 4:14; 7:38). He didn’t realise he was furnishing proof that Jesus had been dead long enough for his blood to settle, but not long enough for it to coagulate. This incidental detail provides historical evidence that Jesus was dead.”²⁸

☞ The medical evidence is absolutely conclusive, in documenting the fact that Jesus of Nazareth actually died upon the cross. He was dead **before** the Roman soldiers broke the legs of the two thieves who were crucified together with Jesus. The Romans broke their legs to hasten their deaths, by causing an **asphyxic** [that is, “related to, or causing asphyxia”] death which would only take minutes to occur. The fact that the Roman soldiers did not have to break Jesus’ legs, indicates that he had already died. But just to make absolutely certain of the reality of Jesus’ death, his side being pierced by a Roman soldier, would have resulted in instant death. There is no evidence whatsoever to support the theory that Jesus merely fainted on the cross, and was later revived in the tomb. He was 100% dead when taken down from the cross, and placed in Joseph’s new tomb!

²⁸ “Autopsy of a Crucifixion”; by David Instone-Brewer; April, 2015; <https://www.premierchristianity.com/Past-Issues/2015/April-2015/Autopsy-of-a-crucifixion>. Accessed 16/05/2019.

THE SHAME AND “FOOLISHNESS” OF THE CROSS: -

I want to examine now, some of the aspects of the shame and humiliation that Jesus of Nazareth voluntarily submitted to, in being executed by crucifixion. This was the worst kind of death that a person could endure in the time of Christ. The following comment which I shared on the “TITLE PAGE” of this Study Document, I will repeat again, because it sums up in a very few words, how people viewed death by crucifixion throughout the Roman Empire.

“Mors turpissima crucis” – Origen - Commentary on Matthew, comments on 27:22 - Latin.

“The utterly vile death of the cross” – English translation.

The following passage highlights the truth, that our Lord Jesus Christ chose to endure the cross, and despised the shame that this death involved. This was so that he could obtain the joy that was set down before him. The joy of seeing an innumerable multitude of repentant sinners, who shall accept his wonderful gift of eternal life, and thus enjoy eternity together with him, in the everlasting Kingdom of Heaven.

Hebrews 12:2: - “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; **who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame**, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

What was some of the shameful and humiliating aspects of enduring death by crucifixion? The following quotations reveal some of the harsh realities of the shame of the cross that Jesus endured.

“Crucifixion was devised and designed by the Romans with more than one thing in mind. It was designed as capital punishment, to put a criminal to death, but it aimed to do a couple of other things as well.”

“It was designed to inflict optimal physical pain. Thus the procedure was dragged out over a good number of hours and the amount of pain inflicted at any given moment was carefully calculated so as not to cause unconsciousness and thus ease the pain of the one being crucified. Indeed they sometimes even gave wine mixed with morphine to the person being crucified, not to ease his suffering, but to keep him from passing out from pain so as to have to endure it longer.”

“But crucifixion was designed with still another even more callous intent. It was designed to humiliate the person. Among other things, the person was stripped naked before being hung on a cross so that his genitals would be publicly exposed. As well, at the moment of death his bowels would loosen. Crucifixion clearly had humiliation in mind.”

“We have tended to downplay this aspect, both in our preaching and in our art. We have, as Jurgens Moltmann put it, surrounded the cross with roses, with aesthetic and antiseptic wrapping towels. But that was not the case for Jesus. **His nakedness was exposed, his body publicly humiliated.** That, among other reasons, is why the crucifixion was such a devastating blow to his disciples and why many of them abandoned Jesus and scattered after the crucifixion. They simply couldn’t connect this kind of humiliation with glory, divinity, and triumph.”

“... In the crucifixion, Jesus was humiliated, shamed, brutalized. That pain stretched his heart to a great depth. But that new space did not fill in with bitterness and anger. It filled in instead with a depth of empathy and forgiveness that we have yet to fully understand.”²⁹

“Public humiliation was exacerbated by nakedness, but this was the least of the shame suffered during crucifixion. First came urination, caused by fear. Then came defecation, caused by the pain.”

“... DEPICTIONS OF JESUS’ CRUCIFIXION”

“The early Christians didn’t celebrate Jesus’ crucifixion the way we do. They understood better than we do what Jesus had suffered for them, but it was too shameful to talk about. **The earliest Christian art, which survived in the Roman catacombs, depicts Jesus as the good shepherd, or as a fisher of men. They wanted to show him as a very special member of the working classes, but depicting him on a cross would have put Jesus among the worst of all criminals.**”

“The only image of Christ on the cross dating back to the first few centuries is part of a piece of graffiti on a wall in Rome. It pictures someone looking at a cross where a man with an ass’ head is hanging. The caption, ‘Alexamenos worships his god’, reminds us **that Christians suffered ridicule and worse for following someone who had been crucified.**”³⁰

The following quotations reveal that more shame was attached to being executed by crucifixion, because it was the method of execution the Romans inflicted upon the lowest of the low [in their eyes]. It was the form of execution reserved for slaves, and other criminals.

“Romans only allowed crucifixion for slaves who betrayed their masters and for non-Romans who were guilty of particularly heinous crimes.”³¹

“Death on the cross was the penalty for slaves, as everyone knew; as such it symbolized extreme humiliation, shame and torture.”³²

This historical fact that the Romans reserved crucifixion as the method of execution for slaves, is alluded to by the apostle Paul in the following passage. He refers to Jesus humbling himself from the position of One who is equal with God, to take on the form of a servant, and thus becoming obedient unto the death of the cross. [This method of execution to the Gentile mind in Paul’s time, would be associated with the shame of slavery.]

²⁹ “The Humiliation of Crucifixion”; by Ron Rolheiser. March 28, 2010. <https://ronrolheiser.com/the-humiliation-of-crucifixion>. Accessed 18/05/2019,

³⁰ “Autopsy of a Crucifixion”; by David Instone-Brewer; April 2015; <https://www.premierchristianity.com/Past-Issues/2015/April-2015/Autopsy-of-a-crucifixion>. Accessed 18/05/2019.

³¹ Ibid.

³² “Crucifixion in the Ancient World and the Folly of the message of the Cross.” by Martin Hengel; Fortress Press; 1977; p. 62.

Philippians 2:5 - 8: - "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him **the form of a servant**, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even **the death of the cross**."

"This basic theme of the *supplicium servile* also illuminates the hymn in Philippians 2.6 - 11. Anyone who was present at the worship of the churches founded by Paul in the course of his mission, in which this hymn was sung, and indeed any reader of Philippians in ancient times, would inevitably have seen a direct connection between the 'emptied himself, taking the form of a slave' (*ἑαυτον ἐκένωσεν μορφῆν δούλου λαβών* – "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant" – KJV - compiler) and the disputed end of the first strophe: 'he humbled himself and was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross'. **Death on the cross was the penalty for slaves, as everyone knew; as such it symbolized extreme humiliation, shame and torture.** Thus the *θανάτου δε σταυροῦ* ["even the death of the cross" – KJV - compiler] is the last bitter consequence of the *μορφῆν δούλου λαβών* ["took ... the form of a servant" – KJV - compiler] and stands in the most abrupt contrast possible with the beginning of the hymn with its description of the divine essence of the pre-existence of the crucified figure, as with the exaltation surpassing anything that might be conceived (*ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν* – "God hath highly exalted him" – KJV - compiler). **The one who had died the death of a slave³³ was exalted to be Lord of the whole creation and bearer of the divine name Kyrios.**"³⁴

Not only did the innocent Son of God submit to this shame and humiliation as he hung upon the cross; the Godhead has chosen that the death of Christ upon the cross, was to be the means for the salvation of fallen humanity. In the eyes of the Gentile world, to proclaim salvation through an individual who had been condemned as a criminal, and who had been executed by crucifixion, thus **enduring the most shameful of deaths possible**, was considered to be sheer folly and madness.

The following quotations highlight this historical reality.

"In I Corinthians 1.18 Paul says that in the eyes of 'those who are perishing', the 'word of the cross' is 'folly'. He goes on to emphasize the point further in v. 23 by saying that the crucified Christ is a 'stumbling-block' for the Jews and 'folly' for the Gentiles. The Greek word *μωρία* [that is, "foolishness" – see BAGD., p. 531 - compiler] which he uses here does not denote either a purely intellectual defect nor a lack of transcendental wisdom. Something more is involved. Justin [that is Justin Martyr – compiler] puts us on the right track when he describes the offence caused by the Christian message to the ancient world as madness (*μανία*), and **sees the basis for this objection in Christian belief in the divine status of the crucified Jesus and his significance for salvation:**"

³³ Not only was Jesus executed by the method of capital punishment a slave received; he was betrayed by his own disciple Judas, for the value that was placed upon a Hebrew slave. This of course was a fulfilment of Bible prophecy.

Exodus 21:32: - "If the ox shall push a manservant or a maidservant; he shall give unto their master **thirty shekels of silver**, and the ox shall be stoned."

Zechariah 11:12: - "And I said unto them, If ye think good, give *me* my price; and if not, forbear. **So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.**"

Matthew 26:14 & 15: - "Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said *unto them*, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? **And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.**"

³⁴ Ibid., p. 62.

“They say that our madness consists in the fact that we put a crucified man in second place after the unchangeable and eternal God, the Creator of the world (Apology 1,134).”

“... Not least among the monstrosities of their faith [that is, Christians – compiler] is the fact that they worship one who has been crucified:”

“To say that their ceremonies centre on a man put to death for his crime and on the fatal wood of the cross (hominem summo supplicio pro facinore punitum et crucis ligna feralia) is to assign to these abandoned wretches sanctuaries which are appropriate to them (congruentia perditis sceleratisque tribuit altaria) and the kind of worship they deserve .”³⁵

This is exactly what the Apostle Paul is referring to, in his letter to the Corinthian believers. 1st Corinthians 1:18, 23 & 24: - “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. ... **But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;** But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”

Why does the apostle describe the preaching of Christ crucified, as being a stumbling block to the Jew? The Law of Moses teaches that an individual, who has been executed by being hanged upon a tree, was accursed of God.

Deuteronomy 21:22 & 23: - “And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; **(for he that is hanged is accursed of God;)** that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.”

The apostle Paul alludes to this curse of the Law which Christ took upon himself when he was crucified, in his epistle to the Galatians.

Galatians 3:13: - “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: **for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.**”

To proclaim to the Jew, that Jesus of Nazareth, who had been executed upon the cross [that is, he had been hanged upon a tree in the mind of a Jew], was the innocent Son of God, who was the Messiah of Old Testament prophecy, and through whom salvation is obtained, was a huge mental stumbling block for a Jew to overcome.

“Even Paul's Greek audience could hardly have approved of the *λόγος τοῦ σταθροῦ* [“the word of the cross” – compiler], much less the Jews who could see the Roman crosses erected in Palestine, especially when they could hardly forget the saying about the curse laid upon anyone hanged on a tree (Deut. 21.23). A crucified messiah, son of God or God must have seemed a contradiction in terms to anyone, Jew, Greek, Roman or barbarian, asked to believe such a claim, and it will certainly have been thought offensive and foolish.”³⁶

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 1 & 3.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 10.

Yet the apostle Paul wrote the things that the world considered to be foolishness, God has chosen to use, so that humanity may take no glory to themselves, but that all glory it to go to God.

1st Corinthians 1:25 – 29: - “Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: **That no flesh should glory in his presence.**”

This is why, the apostle Paul determined to preach nothing among the Corinthians, but the following simple message, unadorned by flowery oratory or human wisdom.

1st Corinthians 2:1 & 2: - “And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. **For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.**”


The following quotations highlight both the shame and “foolishness” of the preaching of a crucified Saviour to both the Gentile mind, and to the Jewish mind. But God has chosen this death of extreme shame and humiliation, to bring his gift of salvation and eternal life through the Crucified One, to countless, untold millions!

“All this leads to a final conclusion which it is difficult to resist. When Paul spoke in his mission preaching about the 'crucified Christ' (I Corinthians 1.23; 2.2; Galatians 3.1), every hearer in the Greek-speaking East between Jerusalem and Illyria (Romans 15.19) knew that this 'Christ' - for Paul the title was already a proper name - had suffered a particularly cruel and shameful death, which as a rule was reserved for hardened criminals, rebellious slaves and rebels against the Roman state. That this crucified Jew, Jesus Christ, could truly be a divine being sent on earth, God's Son, the Lord of all and the coming judge of the world, must inevitably have been thought by any educated man to be utter 'madness' and presumptuousness.”

“... In this context, the earliest Christian message of the crucified messiah demonstrated the 'solidarity' of the love of God with the unspeakable suffering of those who were tortured and put to death by human cruelty, as this can be seen from the ancient sources. This suffering has continued down to the present century in a 'passion story' which we cannot even begin to assess, a 'passion story' which is based on human sin, in which we all without exception participate, as beings who live under the power of death. In the person and the fate of the one man Jesus of Nazareth this saving 'solidarity' of God with us is given its historical and physical form. In him, the 'Son of God', God himself took up the 'existence of a slave' and died the 'slaves' death' on the tree of martyrdom (Philippians 2.8), given up to public shame (Hebrews 12.2) and the 'curse of the law' (Galatians 3.13), so that in the 'death of God' life might win victory over death. **In other words, in the death of Jesus of Nazareth God identified himself with the extreme of human wretchedness, which Jesus endured as a representative of us all, in order to bring us to the freedom of the children of God:**”

“He who did not spare his own Son,
but gave him up for us all,
will he not also give us all things with him?”³⁷

³⁷ Ibid., pp. 83, 88 & 89.

 Jesus of Nazareth endured such shame and humiliation so that we might be saved in his everlasting Kingdom. And he did all this, because of his love for you and me! How can we not love him in return?

CONCLUSION: -

In this Study Document, I have examined in some detail the last approximately 18 hours of Jesus' earthly life. Starting from his dying anguish of soul in the Garden of Gethsemane, where the spiritual struggle he endured was so intense, that he sweat drops of blood, as he trembled with the fearful cup of God's wrath that he was about to drink for every sinner who has ever lived. Three times he prayed to his Heavenly Father, for this cup of sorrow and mental agony to be removed from him, as he struggled in becoming the Divine Sin-Bearer for the human race. Yet he eventually chose to go through with the Plan of Salvation which was devised from the foundation of this world [see Revelation 13:8], yielding his will in submission to his Heavenly Father's will.

He was betrayed and arrested in the Garden, and having been bound by the Jewish officers, was led away to the palace of the Jewish High Priest, who was waiting to interrogate Jesus to see if he could gain some admission from him, which would ensure his condemnation. I have examined many of the aspects of his illegal trials before the Jewish leaders in Council [that is, the Sanhedrin]. The Jewish rulers repeatedly violated many legal principles of Hebrew jurisprudence, in order to achieve Jesus' condemnation. We saw that he was illegally beaten and abused at the hands of the Jewish officers and servants during his mock trials.

Jesus was then led to the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate who repeatedly declared Jesus of Nazareth to be innocent of any crime. Pilate sent Jesus to Herod, who examined Jesus, and had his soldiers mock him. But Herod too would not condemn Jesus to death. So he sent him back to Pilate the Governor. Pilate finally gave into the incessant demand of the Jewish mob, who were clamouring for the blood of Jesus of Nazareth. Pilate delivered Jesus over to his soldiers, who administered a fearful scourging of Jesus' innocent body, tearing his flesh to pieces, and who spiked his head with a crown of thorns.

The innocent Son of God would have been in a perilous physical condition by this stage of the proceedings. He would be exhausted by lack of sleep, hunger and dehydration. He would have lost a large amount of blood both from the scourging and the crown of thorns. He had also been traumatised from the physical beating he had received at the hands of the Jewish officers. His physical condition would have been approaching critical now, having deteriorated from being a fit, strong man, whose strength and fitness derived from years of working with his hands as a carpenter, and also from walking everywhere on foot before Gethsemane, to having become a complete physical wreck before he left the Governor's residence. So much so, that he was not able to carry the patibulum from the city the 650 metres to reach the place of crucifixion.

We have seen what the process of Roman crucifixion involved, and how a condemned prisoner was crucified and shamefully treated in the crucifixion process. We have also seen the excruciating agonies Jesus would have suffered upon the cross, so much so, that Jesus died within six hours of having been nailed to the cross. We have seen the short sentences Jesus spoke upon the cross, which is compatible with his struggling for oxygen and for breath, resulting from the position he was crucified in.

We have also witnessed the final death struggle of Jesus, and how after speaking words of triumph with a loud voice, he died. The Roman soldiers at the Jewish leaders' behest, broke the legs of the two thieves who were crucified with Jesus, so as to hasten their deaths by asphyxiation. But Jesus having already died, the Romans had no need to break his legs, thus fulfilling Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. A Roman soldier pierced Jesus' side and heart, which resulted in blood and water coming from the spear's wound. This piercing of Jesus' side confirmed the fact that Jesus was truly already dead.

It was a truly hideous death of shame, humiliation and excruciating agony, to be executed by crucifixion. Yet Jesus of Nazareth, the sinless, Divine Sin-Bearer, willingly submitted to this hideous, torturous death. And he did it all because of love for the sinful race. He did it so that we may have the chance of obtaining eternal life. Do not all of these Bible truths concerning Christ's sufferings move the reader's heart to repentance

and a humbling of one's self at the feet of our Suffering Saviour? These truths should soften one's heart and lead one to humble gratitude to Christ as they kneel at the foot of his cross. I would close this Conclusion, and ask everyone who reads this Study Document to allow the Holy Spirit to melt their hearts in love for Christ who suffered the excruciating agonies upon the cross, so that they will follow the inspired counsel from the Apostle Paul's pen: -

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." – 2nd Corinthians 5:14 & 15.

Let us individually live our lives for the glory of Jesus of Nazareth, as our Lord and Saviour. Let us co-operate with his wonderful saving grace, so that not one person who will read this Study Document, will say that Jesus' loving, but horrible and shameful death upon the cross, will have been in vain for them.

May each one of us be able to echo the words of the apostle Paul's pen: -

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." – Galatians 6:14.

Rick Henwood.

APPENDIX: -

THE HISTORICAL EVIDENCE THAT JESUS OF NAZARETH WAS ACTUALLY CRUCIFIED AND PUT TO DEATH UNDER THE ROMAN PROCURATOR, PONTIUS PILATE: -

NOTE: - It is often asserted with a great deal of confidence by sceptics and atheists, that Jesus of Nazareth was not a true, historical person. They also claim that the only documentary evidence which supports the existence of Jesus of Nazareth, and his death by Roman crucifixion, in Judea in the first century of the common era, is found in the New Testament itself. They believe that the New Testament witnesses concerning Jesus are biased historical documents, “palmed off” on the gullible, to help establish a new religious faith. They insist that there are no reliable, non-biblical, historical witnesses that confirm the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth.

Such confident assertions show an appalling ignorance concerning the historical, documentary evidence that does exist outside of the Christian Bible, which testifies to the historicity of the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth. In this SECTION of the Study Document, I shall share with the reader some non-Christian, historical, documentary witnesses, which establish beyond any reasonable doubt, that Jesus of Nazareth was a true historical figure, who met his death by crucifixion, at the hands of the Roman authorities, in the land of Judea, in the first century of the common era.

☞ The reader should take note, that some of the following quotations are written by those who clearly oppose Christianity. Yet even the opponents of Christianity, give a clear testimony to Jesus' historical existence and to his being put to death.

1.] The Jewish historian Josephus did give a clear testimony to the historical reality of Jesus of Nazareth's life and of his being crucified by the Roman power. This well known statement is referred to as the “Testimonium Flavianum” – [Flavian Witness], and was written around 93 – 94 C. E.

“Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive again the third day; as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him. And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day.”³⁸

NOTE: - It is often claimed that the underlined portions of the above statement, were a later Christian interpolation. Even if we omit these portions, the text still gives us a reliable testimony to the historical reality of Jesus of Nazareth's life, and of his death at the hands of the Roman power.

Here is the same statement without the underlined portions: -

³⁸ “The Antiquities of the Jews”; by Flavius Josephus; Book XVIII, Chapter III, Section 3. English translation by William Whiston.

“Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, ... for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. ... And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; ... And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day.”³⁹

2.] The Roman historian and senator Cornelius Tacitus, wrote the following statement around 115 C. E. It gives a clear testimony to Jesus of Nazareth’s existence and his death at the hands of the Roman power.

“Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. **Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus,** and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their centre and become popular.”⁴⁰

NOTE: - The expression “**suffered the extreme penalty**” which refers to Jesus’ manner of death, can only have reference to being executed by crucifixion. This was the most dreaded of all forms of capital punishment in the Roman empire.

3.] The Roman historian Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus [about 69 – died after 122 C. E.], was the chief secretary of the Emperor Hadrian. Writing about 120 of the Common Era, he refers to a wave of disturbances and riots arising among the Jewish community in Rome. These disturbances of the peace, led to the Emperor Claudius expelling the Jews from Rome. The instigator of this wave of unrest among the Jews was fixed by Suetonius, upon one “Chrestus”.

“Since the Jews constantly made disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, he expelled them from Rome.”⁴¹

NOTE: - “Chrestus” is a variant spelling of “Christ”. It is a variant of Tacitus’ spelling “Christus”, which we have just read in the previous statement. Suetonius is documenting the fact that it was Christ who caused the Jews to make the uproar in Rome, no doubt by his new teachings, that led to their expulsion from Rome.

The gospel writer Luke referred to this same expulsion in the Book of Acts.

³⁹ The following passage of this statement comes from a 10th century Arabic manuscript of Josephus, that was cited by historian Schlomo Pines of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in 1972. It is consistent with the statement quoted above.

“At this time there was a wise man who was called Jesus. And his conduct was good, and [he] was known to be virtuous. And many people from among the Jews and the other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die. And those who had become his disciples did not abandon his discipleship. They reported that he had appeared to them three days after his crucifixion and that he was alive. Accordingly, he was perhaps the Messiah concerning whom the prophets have recounted wonders.”

⁴⁰ “The Annals”; by Tacitus; Book 15; Chapter 44.

⁴¹ “The Lives of the Twelve Caesars”; by Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus; “Life of Claudius, 25:4.” https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Lives_of_the_Twelve_Caesars/Claudius#25. Accessed 11/05/19.

Acts 18:2: - "And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; **(because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:)** and came unto them."

4.] The second century Greek satirist Lucian of Samosata [115 – 200 C. E.], was a critic of Christianity. He wrote a treatise entitled, **The Death of Peregrinus** around 165 C. E., which refers to Christians worshipping the founder of Christianity, and to his death by crucifixion. [Although the names "Jesus" or "Christ" are not explicitly mentioned by Lucian, the following statement is a clear reference to Jesus, the founder of Christianity, and to his crucifixion.]

"The Christians, you know, worship a man to this day, -- the distinguished personage who introduced their novel rites, and was crucified on that account. ... You see, these misguided creatures start with the general conviction that they are immortal for all time, which explains the contempt of death and voluntary self-devotion which are so common among them; and then it was impressed on them by their original lawgiver that they are all brothers, from the moment that they are converted, and deny the gods of Greece, and worship the crucified sage, and live after his laws. All this they take quite on trust, with the result that they despise all worldly goods alike, regarding them merely as common property."⁴²

5.] The Jewish Talmud which was compiled around 200 of the Common Era, contains the following statement concerning Jesus being executed for being a sorcerer and for leading the people of Israel astray.

"On the eve of the Passover Yeshu was hanged⁴³. For forty days before the execution took place, a herald went forth and cried, "He is going forth to be stoned because he has practiced sorcery and enticed Israel to apostasy. Any one who can say anything in his favor, let him come forward and plead on his behalf." But since nothing was brought forward in his favor he was hanged on the eve of the Passover!"⁴⁴

☞ While there are quite a few other non-Christian historical sources that may refer to Christ and his death, these are the clearest references. Even those who opposed the early Christians did not doubt the historical reality of Jesus of Nazareth being a real historical person; they also did not doubt that he died by being executed. Jesus Christ and his death at the hands of the Romans are historical facts and realities!

⁴² "The Death of Peregrine"; by Lucian of Samosata; 11 – 13. <https://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/luc/wl4/wl420.htm>. Accessed 11/05/19.

⁴³ This statement from the Talmud refers to Jesus being hanged. Luke and the apostle Paul refer to Christ's being hanged.

Luke 23:39: - "And one of the malefactors **which were hanged** railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us."

Galatians 3:13: - "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, **Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.**"

⁴⁴ Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 43a. www.halakhah.com/sanhedrin/sanhedrin_43.html. Accessed 11/05/19.

THE EMPTY TOMB – WE HAVE A RISEN, LIVING SAVIOUR: -

“Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen.” – Luke 24:5 & 6.

All four of the gospels record the fact, that after Jesus was confirmed to be dead by the Roman Centurion, the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate, allowed Jesus' lifeless body to be delivered to the honourable Jewish ruler, Joseph of Arimathaea. This man quickly had Jesus' body buried in his own new tomb, before the weekly, seventh-day Sabbath commenced at sunset. A great [that is, a large] stone had been rolled against the opening of the tomb, to act as a door to close off the tomb from the outside world.

Matthew 27:57 – 60: - “When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: **and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre**, and departed.”

Mark 15:42 - 46: - “And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. **And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.** And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, **and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.**”

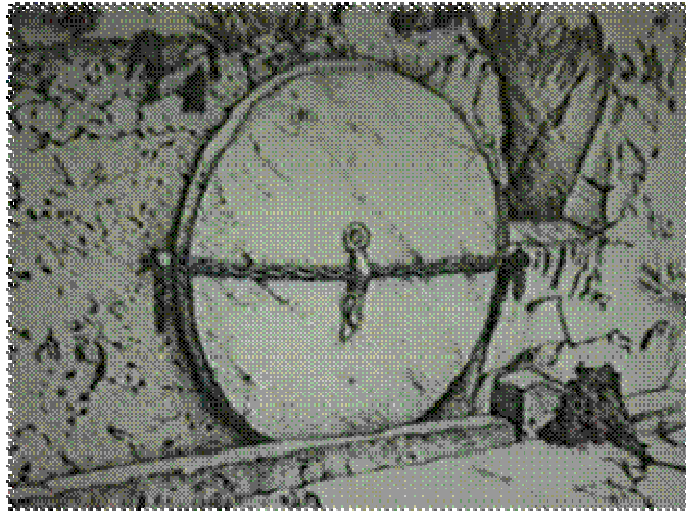
Luke 23:50 – 54: - “And, behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a counsellor; *and he was* a good man, and a just: (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) *he was* of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. This *man* went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. **And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on.**”

John 19:38 - 42: - “And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave *him* leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound *weight*. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. **There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day;** for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.”

On the day after Jesus' burial [that is, upon the Sabbath day], the Jewish leaders came to the Governor Pilate, requesting that the tomb be secured until after the third day had passed. This was to prevent Jesus' followers coming during the night so as to take away his body, and then the disciples could proclaim that Jesus had risen from the dead. Pilate agreed to the Jewish leaders' request, and stationed a company of Roman soldiers at the tomb, and he also sealed the great stone with a Roman Seal.

Matthew 27:62 - 66: - “Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. **Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make *it* as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.**”

THE ROMAN SEAL: -



NOTE: - On the left side would be metal peg, on the right side, another metal peg, and across the front, the Roman seal.

☞ With all these security precautions that had been undertaken by Pontius Pilate [that is, the detachment of Roman Soldiers and the Roman Seal], there is no earthly way any group of Jesus’ disciples could have stolen Jesus’ body from the tomb, without their being caught in the act by the Roman soldiers.

Having now set the stage for my examination of the evidence of Jesus’ resurrection, I want to approach this vital issue in three steps.

1. Jesus rested his claims to be the Messiah – the Son of God, upon his future resurrection from the dead.
2. The evidence that establishes the historical reality of Jesus’ resurrection from the dead.
3. Jesus’ resurrection from the dead is the foundational truth of the entire Christian message.

POINT 1.] JESUS RESTED HIS CLAIMS TO BE THE MESSIAH – THE SON OF GOD, UPON HIS FUTURE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD: -

Jesus repeatedly instructed his disciples, what treatment awaited him in his final journey to Jerusalem. He was to be betrayed to the Jewish rulers, condemned by them to death; they were to deliver him to the

Gentile authorities, who would mock, scourge and crucify him. He was then to rise from the dead on the third day. [I shall give the reader a passage from each one of the four gospels, where Jesus predicted his death and resurrection from the dead.]

Matthew 20:17 – 19: - “And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify *him*: **and the third day he shall rise again.**”

Mark 10:32 - 34: - “And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him, *saying*, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: **and the third day he shall rise again.**”

Luke 18:31 - 34: - “Then he took *unto him* the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, **and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.** For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge *him*, and put him to death: **and the third day he shall rise again.** And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.”

John 2:18 - 22: - “Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? **Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.** Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? **But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.**”

See also: - Matthew 16:21; 17:22 & 23; 27:63 & 64; Mark 8:31; 9:31 & 32; Luke 9:21 & 22; 24:4 – 8.⁴⁵

Jesus forewarned his disciples before the final events of his earthly life occurred, so that when these prophesied events did occur, they would believe that he was the great **I AM!**

John 13:18 & 19: - “I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. **Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am *he*.**”

NOTE: - The last word of VS. 19 “*he*” in the King James Version is in italics. This indicates that it has been supplied by the translators, and does not find a corresponding Greek word in the Greek “Received Text”. If we

⁴⁵ There is a great deal of confusion among many Christians as to when the three days prophesied by Jesus commence. Traditionally, they are understood to commence from the time when Jesus was buried in Joseph’s new tomb. But, a careful reading of all of these prophecies made by Jesus, start the three days, from the time when Jesus was betrayed into the hands of sinful men, in the Garden of Gethsemane. This understanding is plainly confirmed by the Heavenly Angels to the women who visited the tomb on the third day.

Luke 24:3 – 8: - “And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, **two men stood by them in shining garments:** And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, **The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.** And they remembered his words.”

omit this supplied word, the expression would then read as, “**ye may believe that I am**”, which is a clear reference to the Deity.

After Jesus’ resurrection from the dead, he opened his disciples’ minds to understand the Scriptures [that is, the Old Testament writings] relating to the Christ. These Scriptures prophesied of the Christ’s sufferings and also of his resurrection from the dead.

Luke 24:44 – 46: - “And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. **Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.**”



Below are some of the Old Testament prophecies that refer to the resurrection of the Christ.

- The following passage from the Book of Psalms, was fulfilled by Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. This is the inspired apostle Paul’s interpretation.

Psalm 2:7: - “I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, **Thou *art* my Son; this day have I begotten thee.**”

Acts 13:32 & 33: - “And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, **in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.**”

- The following well known passage from the Book of Psalms, according to the inspired apostle Peter, was fulfilled by Jesus’ resurrection from the dead.

Psalm 16:10 & 11: - “**For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.** Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore.”

Acts 2:25 – 31: - “For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: **Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.** Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore **being a prophet**, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would **raise up Christ** to sit on his throne; **He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.**”


- The following passage from the Book of Isaiah, was fulfilled by Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. This is the inspired apostle Paul’s interpretation.

Isaiah 55:3: - "Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, *even* **the sure mercies of David.**"

Acts 13:34: - "And as concerning that **he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.**"

Thus, could the apostle Paul testify that our Lord Jesus Christ, was declared to be the Son of God, by his resurrection from the dead.

Romans 1:1 – 4: - "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) concerning **his Son Jesus Christ our Lord**, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; **And declared to be the Son of God** with power, according to the spirit of holiness, **by the resurrection from the dead.**"

 This is why Jesus of Nazareth is no impostor or false Christ. He perfectly fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah's first advent into the world. All of which prophecies were written hundreds of years in advance.

POINT 2.] THE EVIDENCE THAT ESTABLISHES THE HISTORICAL REALITY OF JESUS' RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD: -

NOTE: - There is an abundance of different pieces of evidence contained within the pages of the New Testament, when carefully analysed, which establish the reality of the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth from the dead. When all of the various strands of this evidence are collated, we can safely conclude, that there is an overwhelming weight of evidence that unambiguously proves that Jesus of Nazareth was raised from the dead, on that historic third day. This truth is just what Jesus had repeatedly prophesied to his disciples, before his death. This evidence of fulfilled Bible prophecy, proves beyond any doubt, that Jesus of Nazareth is indeed the true Messiah – the Christ, the Son of God.

I shall share with the reader, nine pieces of conclusive evidence that establish the historic reality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, from the dead. [No doubt there are other pieces of evidence that could be put before the reader, but the evidence I shall now share, is more than sufficient to establish the faith of any honest in heart reader.]

I.] THE TESTIMONY OF THE WOMEN FOLLOWERS OF JESUS: -

The first witnesses to the fact that Jesus had been raised from the dead, and that his tomb was empty on that Sunday morning, were all to be found among the devoted women followers of Jesus. In fact, he is recorded in the gospels as having first appeared to some of his devoted women followers.

Matthew 28:1 – 10: - "In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week, **came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.** And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead *men*. **And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that**

ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.”

Mark 16:1 - 11: - **“And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the *mother* of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first *day* of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you. And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any *man*; for they were afraid. Now when *Jesus* was risen early the first *day* of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.”**

Luke 23:55 – 24:11: - **“And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment. Now upon the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain *others* with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words, and returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary *the mother* of James, and other *women that were* with them, which told these things unto the apostles. And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.”**

John 20:1, 2 & 11 - 18: - **“The first *day* of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. ... But **Mary** stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and *looked* into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? **She**, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, **Mary**. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to**

my God, and your God. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.”



Why is the fact that the first recorded witnesses to Jesus' empty tomb and his resurrection from the dead, were all women, indisputable evidence that he had truly been raised from the dead? Because in the Jewish culture and legal system of Jesus' day, women were not even considered to be competent to act as a witness in a legal trial. [This is no doubt, one of the reasons why the male disciples of Jesus are recorded in the above gospel accounts, as not believing the testimony of these female followers of Jesus. No Jewish man in the first century of the common era, would give credence to a woman's testimony.]

“To be a competent witness the party must be, like the modern juror, (*liber et legalis homo*) a free and legal person. ... **Therefore, the following persons are incompetent to be witnesses: Women, slaves, minors, demented persons, deaf or mute, and blind men; ...**”⁴⁶

“But let not the testimony of women be admitted, on account of the levity and boldness of their sex: nor let servants be admitted to give testimony, on account of the ignobility of their soul; since it is probable that they may not speak truth, either out of hope of gain, or fear of punishment.”⁴⁷

If the apostles had committed a fraud in testifying that Jesus has been resurrected from the dead, when in fact he had not, and they did this all for the purpose of starting a new and credible religious faith, the testimony of women as being the first eyewitnesses to the resurrected Christ, would **NOT** be offered at all. Their testimony would carry no credibility or weight in the Jewish culture and nation. We can conclude then, that the only reason the four gospels record the fact that the women followers of Jesus were the first witnesses to the empty tomb, and to have seen the resurrected Jesus, is **because that is in truth what had actually happened!**

II.] JOSEPH'S NEW TOMB WAS TRULY EMPTY ON THAT SUNDAY MORNING: -

The fact that Jesus' body was not to be found within Joseph's new tomb on that Sunday morning, is established by the testimony of the enemies of Christ – the Jewish rulers. They had to bribe the Roman Soldiers to testify that the disciples of Jesus had taken away his body during the night, while they slept, This is irrefutable proof that Jesus' body was **NOT** in that tomb on the third day. The tomb was empty!

Matthew 28:11 – 15: - “Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, **they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.** And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.”

⁴⁶ “The Criminal Jurisprudence of the Ancient Hebrews”; by S. Mendelsohn; 1891; pp.115 – 117.

⁴⁷ “The Antiquities of the Jews”; by Flavius Josephus; Book IV, Chapter VIII, Section 15. English translation by William Whiston.

NOTE: - For a Roman soldier to be asleep while on duty, exposed him to the death penalty.

The fact that when the apostles of Jesus were at different times arrested and investigated by the Jewish authorities as recorded in the Book of Acts, the Jewish rulers **NEVER ONCE** accused the disciples of having stolen Jesus' body from the tomb, so as to support their preaching that Jesus had been raised from the dead. Not once was this accusation made against Jesus' disciples when the Jewish rulers had them in their power! This is ample proof that the disciples did **NOT** in fact steal Jesus' body from the tomb! This undeniable truth then raises an interesting question: -

As the disciples of Jesus did **NOT** steal Jesus' body from the tomb; and the Roman Soldiers did **NOT** steal his body from the tomb, ***How did the tomb become empty by the time of that Sunday morning – the third day, just as Jesus had prophesied?*** The only way Jesus' body was not found within the tomb under these circumstances, is because Jesus Christ, the Son of God, had been raised from the dead on the third day!

III.] JOSEPH'S NEW TOMB WAS NEVER MADE INTO A SHRINE OR A PLACE OF VENERATION BY THE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS: -

There is no record of the disciples of Jesus venerating his tomb, as so often happens today to dead religious leaders. There are two reasons why this did not happen in the case of Jesus of Nazareth's tomb.

1. The tomb was empty, and both the followers of Jesus and their enemies [that is, the unbelieving Jewish leaders] knew this to be the case.
2. The followers of Jesus were too busy to be paying homage to Jesus at his empty tomb, because they were going everywhere, preaching the gospel of the crucified and resurrected Christ.

Mark 16:19 & 20: - "So then after **the Lord** had spoken unto them, **he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where**, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."

IV.] THE NUMEROUS APPEARANCES OF THE RESURRECTED JESUS TO DIFFERENT WITNESSES AFTER HIS RESURRECTION: -


The New Testament writers have recorded numerous accounts of different witnesses who had seen and spoken to the resurrected Christ, at different times and locations.

Below is a list of the ten recorded appearances that the resurrected Jesus made to different individuals and groups after his resurrection from the grave, before his final ascension into heaven.

1. To Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9; John 20:11 - 18)
2. To the other women (Matt. 28:8 - 10)
3. To Peter (Luke 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:5)
4. To the two men on the road to Emmaus (Mark 16:12; Luke 24:13 - 35)
5. To eleven of the disciples (except Thomas — Luke 24:33 - 49; John 20:19 - 24)
6. To the twelve a week later (John 20:24 - 29; 1 Cor. 15:5)
7. To seven disciples by the Sea of Tiberias (John 21:1 - 23)
8. To five hundred followers (1 Cor. 15:6)

9. To James (1 Cor. 15:7)

10. To the twelve at the ascension (Acts 1:3 - 12)⁴⁸

 All of these different appearances by the resurrected Jesus to all these different witnesses at different times and places, give solid evidence that clearly establish the reality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.⁴⁹

V.] THE APOSTLES OF JESUS WERE COMMANDED BY THE LORD TO START PREACHING THE GOSPEL OF THE RESURRECTED CHRIST AT THE CITY OF JERUSALEM: -

The fact that Jesus' disciples were commanded by the Lord to start their preaching of the gospel of Christ [which was founded upon the claim of Jesus' resurrection from dead], in the very city where he had been crucified and buried [that is, the city of Jerusalem], establishes the reality of his resurrection from the dead. How so the reader may well ask? If Jesus' resurrection from the dead was a complete fabrication and fraud originating from the disciples of Jesus, Jerusalem would be the last place in the world, you would want to start preaching his resurrection from the dead. This is because any Jew could easily verify or disprove for themselves, if Joseph's new tomb was empty, or if in fact, Jesus' body was still inside it the tomb, and the tomb was securely shut up. They would only have to walk less than a kilometre outside of the city walls, and visit the tomb to find out the truth concerning the tomb and the body of Jesus. Therefore, this is indeed evidence that Jesus had been raised from the dead, and his tomb was empty!

Luke 24:46 - 48: - "And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, **beginning at Jerusalem.** And ye are witnesses of these things."

⁴⁸ "Beyond A Reasonable Doubt: 23 Arguments for the Historical Validity of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ." - <https://www.truthortradition.com/articles/beyond-a-reasonable-doubt-23-arguments-for-the-historical-validity-of-the-resurrection-of-jesus-christ>. - Accessed 8/06/2019.

⁴⁹ If these eye-witnesses were telling lies in their claims to having seen and conversed with the resurrected Jesus, and these fraudulent accounts were created with the purpose of establishing a new religious faith, why did these apostolic Christians willingly endure opposition, persecution and even in many cases martyrdom for something that they personally knew was a lie and a fraud? There have been many people throughout history who have died for a belief which they sincerely held to be true, but which in fact has been erroneous. But no person will willingly die for something that they know is a lie, and which they have fabricated!

It is often suggested to counter all of these different appearances by the resurrected Christ to all these different individuals, that these people although sincere and innocent of any charge of deliberate deception, were all deceived by seeing hallucinations of the resurrected Christ. The following statement gives us a concise answer to this theory.

"For example, (1) hallucinations are private experiences, while clearly we have strong reasons to assert that groups of people claimed to have seen Jesus. (2) The disciples' despair indicates that they were not in the proper frame of mind to see hallucinations. (3) Perhaps the most serious problem is that there were far too many different times, places and personalities involved in the appearances. To believe that with each of these varying persons and circumstances a separate hallucination occurred borders on credulity. (4) Further, on this view, Jesus' body should still have been located safely in the tomb! (5) Hallucinations very rarely transform lives, but we have no records of any of the eyewitnesses recanting their faith. Two huge problems are the conversions of both (6) Paul and (7) James, neither of whom had a desire to see Jesus. These are just a very few of the serious questions for this alternative view. All other proposed natural hypotheses have similarly been disproven." - "The Case for Christ's Resurrection"; by Gary Habermas; 2004; p. 194. Faculty Publications and Presentations, Paper 110; Liberty University.

Acts 1:8: - “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: **and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.**”

VI.] THE APOSTLES OF JESUS WILLINGLY SUFFERED PERSECUTION AND IN MOST CASES MARTYRDOM FOR PROCLAIMING A RISEN CHRIST: -

Jesus personally warned his disciples that they were going to receive persecution and opposition for proclaiming his gospel message to the world. He even predicted that some of them would be put to death.

Matthew 10:22: - “**And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake:** but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.”

Matthew 24:9: - “Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: **and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.**”

John 15:19 & 20: - “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, **therefore the world hateth you.** Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. **If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you;** if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.”

John 16:2 & 3: - “They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, **the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.** And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.”

Yet we find it recorded in the gospels, that after Jesus' crucifixion, but before the disciples had come to believe in his resurrection, they were a discouraged, depressed and fearful group, who were in hiding because of fear of the Jews.

John 20:19: - “Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, **when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews,** came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

What made the difference to these first disciples of Jesus, so that they changed from being a dispirited and fearful group who were locked away behind closed doors for fear of being persecuted by the Jews, to soon become individuals who were filled with a faith and a holy boldness to proclaim a message that “turned the world upside down” – Acts 17:6 about Jesus Christ, the Son of God? And who now were willing to endure persecution and shame for the name of Jesus? The **only** answer to this recorded change of mindset, was that they had personally seen and spoken to the resurrected Jesus. This experience of reality set them free from their fears and discouragement which controlled them. There is no other answer available to explain this complete turnaround within the mindset of the disciples of Jesus, but their personally having an experience with the Risen Christ!

Also, the fact that nearly all of the apostles of Christ were eventually martyred for their faith in the living Jesus, is clear evidence to the reality of the resurrection of Jesus. Many people throughout history have been willing to die for a sincerely held belief, even if that belief is not actually true. But no one is willing to die a martyr's death, for a belief which they **know** is false and which they **know** is a fraud that they have originated. Nobody! So the fact that the apostles of Jesus were willing to die for their faith in the Risen Christ, is irrefutable evidence of the reality of the Jesus' resurrection from the dead!

VII.] THE CHANGE OF THE MINDSET OF JESUS' BROTHERS FROM ONE OF UNBELIEF TO ONE OF FAITH IN HIM AFTER HIS RESURRECTION: -

Before Jesus' crucifixion, his brothers did not believe in him as the Messiah.

Mark 3:21: - "And when his **friends*** heard *of it*, they went out to lay hold on him: **for they said, He is beside himself.**"

NOTE: - For the word "**friends**" the margin has "**Or, kinsmen**".

John 7:2 - 5: - "Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. For *there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, show thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him.*"

Yet we find it recorded that after Jesus' ascension into heaven, and before the Day of Pentecost, Jesus' brothers were gathered together with the little band of believers in the upper room, awaiting for the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:12 - 14: - "Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. **And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode** both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James *the son of Alphaeus*, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas *the brother of James*. **These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication**, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, **and with his brethren.**"

☞ The **only** reason that can explain such a turnaround from the unbelief of Jesus' brothers, to be one of having faith in Jesus as being the Messiah, so that they were numbered with the nucleus of believers of the apostolic church, was that they had seen the Resurrected Christ. There is no other explanation for such a complete change of mindset from before the crucifixion of Jesus until the time of the ascension of Jesus.

We know that Jesus' brother James did indeed see the Resurrected Christ, and that he became an apostle⁵⁰.

1st Corinthians 15:7: - "After that, **he was seen of James**; then of all the apostles."

Galatians 1:18 & 19: - "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But **other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.**"

⁵⁰ To be an apostle of Jesus, one had to have been a witness of the resurrected Christ.

Acts 1:21 & 22: - "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, **must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.**"

NOTE: - The fact that Jesus' brother James is described by the apostle Paul as being an apostle [See Galatians 1:19], when coupled together with this passage from Acts Chapter 1, is additional evidence that James had indeed seen the resurrected Christ. Otherwise, he could not have become an apostle.

We know that Jesus also appeared to a large group of disciples, who no doubt would have included the other brothers of Jesus.

1st Corinthians 15:6: - “After that, **he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once**; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.”

VIII.] THE CHANGE OF SAUL THE PERSECUTOR TO BECOME PAUL THE APOSTLE: -

The young Jewish scholar, Saul of Tarsus was a relentless persecutor of the first Christians. In fact, one could indeed describe him as a frenzied persecutor and destroyer of the apostolic Church.

Acts 8:3: - “**As for Saul, he made havock of the church**, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed *them* to prison.”

Acts 26:9 – 11: - “I verily thought with myself, that **I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth**. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and **many of the saints did I shut up in prison**, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against *them*. **And I punished them off in every synagogue, and compelled *them* to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted *them* even unto strange cities.**”

Galatians 1:21 – 23: - “Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ: But they had heard only, **That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.**”

1st Timothy 1:12 & 13: - “And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; **Who was before a blasphemers, and a persecutor, and injurious**: but I obtained mercy, because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief.”



Yet from a frenzied persecutor of Christians, Saul became the apostle Paul, the greatest defender and preacher of the faith in Jesus of Nazareth. What was the event that so completely turned around the course of Saul's life, so that he did an 180° U-Turn to go in the complete opposite direction for the rest of his life? We are not left to guess as to the nature of this life changing event. It was his personal experience of seeing the glorified, Risen Jesus of Nazareth on the road to Damascus.

Acts 9:3 – 6, 17 & 27: - “And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: **and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: *it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*** And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. ... And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, **Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest**, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. ... But Barnabas took him, and brought *him* to the apostles, and declared unto them how **he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him**, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.”

Acts 22:12 – 15: - “And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt *there*, Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his


will, and **see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.**"

1st Corinthians 9:1: - "Am I not an apostle? am I not free? **have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?** are not ye my work in the Lord?"

1st Corinthians 15:8: - "And last of all **he was seen of me also**, as of one born out of due time."

NOTE: - Saul the persecutor, would not have become Paul the apostle, if he had not personally seen and conversed with the glorified, Risen Jesus Christ of Nazareth. It was the Resurrected Christ that changed the entire course of Saul's life. Paul would **NOT** have become the most ardent of the apostles of Christ, if he had not seen the Resurrected Christ. And he certainly would not have endured all the opposition and persecution he did, and his eventual martyrdom for Jesus' sake⁵¹, for a belief he knew was false [that is, if and I say if, he had not seen and conversed with the Risen Christ]. Below Paul lists some of the specific persecutions and sufferings he willingly endured, for preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

2nd Corinthians 11:23 – 28: - "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I *am* more; in labours more abundant, **in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.** Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."

 Therefore, Saul's conversion and subsequent career as the greatest apostle of Jesus Christ, can **only** be explained by the reality of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, having been truly raised from the dead!

IX.] THE EARLY CREED OF 1ST CORINTHIANS 15:3 – 7: -

The following well known statement from the apostle Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, contains the original apostolic faith concerning Jesus' death for our sins; his burial; and, his resurrection on the third day. All of these events were according to the Scriptures. It then gives a list of some of the resurrected Christ's appearances to specific individuals and groups before his ascension into heaven. Paul makes it clear, that this statement of faith was delivered unto him. It was not a statement that he had personally originated, but rather one he had received.

1st Corinthians 15:3 – 7: - "**For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received**, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: **And that he was seen of Cephas**, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. **After that, he was seen of James**; then of all the apostles."

⁵¹ Saul had nothing to gain as far as this world was concerned, to become a Christian and an apostle and preacher of Jesus Christ. He did **not** gain money, worldly influence, power, or popularity. From the world's viewpoint he only gained opposition, persecution and hatred by proclaiming the message of the crucified and resurrected Saviour.

We know that the apostle Paul made a specific visit to Jerusalem three years after his conversion, to see and meet with the apostle Peter. While in Jerusalem, he also met the apostle James, the Lord's brother. Both of these apostles were specifically mentioned in the above statement of faith, as having personally seen the resurrected Christ. **[NOTE: - In 1st Corinthians 15:5, the Aramaic word "Cephas" is used for "Peter".]**

Galatians 1:18 & 19: - "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem **to see Peter**, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, **save James the Lord's brother.**"

NOTE: - In VS. 18, the English words "to see" which are contained in the **KJV's** translation of this verse, are an unfortunate translation. The Greek verb that these words have been translated from is the word **ιστορέω – "historeō" – Strong's, Greek Number, 2477.** This is the only time that this verb occurs in the New Testament. It is defined as "visit for the purpose of coming to know someone or something ... Gal 1:18."⁵²

This would indicate that Paul had a specific purpose behind this visit to Jerusalem. It was to see and meet with the apostle Peter and to inquire from him something specific. While Paul received his gospel message by direct revelation from our Lord Jesus Christ [See **Galatians 1:11 & 12**], he received additional historical details about the gospel, from investigating and discussing with some of the other key eye-witnesses to the resurrected Christ.

Here are a few reasons why this statement in **1st Corinthians 15** is indeed an original apostolic statement of faith concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

"First, Paul uses the language of "delivered" and "received." This is technical language that Pharisees used for transmitting sacred tradition. Paul was trained as a Pharisee (Phil. 3:5), and so he uses the language of Pharisaic transmission (Gal. 1:14). Michael Licona writes, "Mark and Josephus report that a zeal for tradition was standard for Pharisees, a group to which Paul had belonged." At the very least, Paul is claiming that he is passing on a message about Christ that was not unique to him. Otherwise, he never would have written this."

"Second, a number of expressions in this passage do not occur in Paul's writing. The expressions: "According to the Scriptures... (*kata tas grafas* versus Paul's typical *kathos gegraptai*)," "for our sins," "he has been raised," "the third day," and "he was seen" are all expressions not typical of Paul. Licona writes, The phrase 'according to the Scriptures' is absent elsewhere in the Pauline corpus and the New Testament, where we read ("it is written")."

"With a lone exception in Galatians 1:4 ("for our sins") is absent elsewhere in Paul (and the rest of the New Testament), who prefers the singular 'sin.'"

"On the third day' is only here in Paul. In Paul, the term 'appeared to' or 'was seen' is found only in 1 Corinthians 15:5-8 and 1 Timothy 3:16. 'The Twelve' is only here in Paul. Elsewhere he uses 'the apostles.'"

"Third, we see parallelism through this section. Paul repeats the expressions "and that..." and "according to the Scriptures..." multiple times in this short section. This might not be easy to see when it is written out in our Bibles. But, if we rewrite 1 Corinthians 15 in a stanza, it becomes clear:

⁵² BAGD., p. 383.

3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received,

that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

4 and that He was buried,

and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,

5 and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

6 After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep;

7 then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles;"

"The structure of the language implies that this was a declaration or a statement of faith for the early Christians. For a more modern example, consider the Declaration of Independence. This also has a similar literary structure, and it was written for the same purpose: to lay out the basic beliefs of the seceding colonies ("We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life..."). This short statement of faith from 1 Corinthians 15 outlined the basic beliefs and facts of the newly formed Christian faith — written in a structured stanza."

"Fourth, Paul uses Peter's Aramaic name—not his Greek name. The use of "Cephas" (instead of Peter) supports an early origin, rather than a later dating."

"Some scholars hold that this was actually the first Christian creed, which was verbally transmitted throughout the early Christian community. This stanza was short and easily committed to memory, so it would have quickly spread throughout the Christian community. However, this could just as easily have been written down, as it could have been memorized."⁵³

"This means that Paul received this information from someone else at an even earlier date. How can we know where he received it? There are three possibilities:"

1. *In Damascus from Ananias about AD 34*
2. *In Jerusalem about AD 36/37*
3. *In Antioch about AD 47"*

"One of the clues as to where Paul got his information, is that, within the creed, he calls Peter by his Aramaic name, Cephas. Hence, it seems likely that he received this information in either Galilee or Judea, one of the two places where people spoke Aramaic. Therefore, Paul possibly received the oral history of 1 Cor. 15:3 - 7 during his visit to Jerusalem."

⁵³ "(1 Cor. 15:3b-5) Was this an early Christian statement of faith?"; www.evidenceunseen.com/bible-difficulties-2/nt-difficulties/romans-2/1-cor-153b-5-was-this-an-early-christian-statement-of-faith/ Accessed 11/06/2019.

"In Galatians 1:18 Paul says, Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas, and stayed with him fifteen days. Here, "acquainted" happens to derive from a Greek word (histroesai) that means "inquire into" or "become acquainted." Interestingly enough, the word "history" also derives from the Greek word "histroesai." So, the work of the historian is to find sources of information, to evaluate their reliability, to make disciplined "inquiry" into their meaning and with imagination to reconstruct what happened. Paul's first trip to Jerusalem is usually dated about AD 35 or 36."

"Why does this matter? It seems the evidence that has just been discussed tells us that the historical content of the Gospel (Jesus' death and resurrection) was circulating very early among the Christian community. As I just said, historians look for the records that are closest to the date of event. ... Furthermore, to say the story of Jesus was something that was "made up" much later contradicts the evidence just presented."⁵⁴

☞ While there is more evidence that I could put before the reader in this final Section of the Appendix, I believe that these nine exhibits of evidence are clear, and convincing to any honest in heart reader. Christians do not worship a crucified Saviour. Christians worship a Risen and Living Saviour – Jesus of Nazareth!

POINT 3.] JESUS' RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD IS THE FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH OF THE ENTIRE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE: -

- The apostle Paul wrote to his Corinthian converts, that if Jesus has not been raised from the dead, then our Christian faith is in vain; we are still in our sins. The apostles would be guilty of being false witnesses for preaching Christ's resurrection from the dead, if in fact, he had never been raised from the dead. Therefore, those Christians who have fallen asleep [that is, who have died] are perished [that is, they have no hope of a future immortal life.]. Then, in this present life in spite of our hope in Christ, we will be most miserable.

1st Corinthians 15:13 - 19: - "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: **And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up**, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: **And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.** Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

NOTE: - This passage is the clearest one in the entire New Testament, as to how foundational is Christ's resurrection from the dead, to the whole Christian faith. If Jesus has not been raised from the dead, then the Christian message is a complete fraud.

- Jesus was raised from the dead for the justification of our sins.

Romans 4:24 & 25: - "But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him **that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.**"

⁵⁴ "Reviewing the Resurrection Creed in 1Cor.15:3 – 8"; February 4 & 8, 2019. <https://chab123.wordpress.com/2019/02/04/reviewing-the-resurrection-creed-in-1-cor-153-8-3>. Accessed 11/06/2019.

NOTE: - If Jesus has not been raised from the dead, then we have no justification before God.

- When we experience the new birth, we are to undergo Christian Baptism as a symbol of our turning away from our past sinful life, and we are to arise from the water of baptism, to live a new life in Christ. Just as Jesus was raised up from the dead. This water baptism is able to save us, by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

Romans 6:3 - 6: - "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? **Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.** For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, **we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:** Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

1st Peter 3:21 & 22: - "The like figure whereunto *even* **baptism doth also now save us** (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) **by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:** Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him."

NOTE: - If Jesus was not resurrected from the dead, there is no point in undergoing Christian baptism, from which our arising out of the watery grave is a symbol of Christ's resurrection from the dead. Baptism is then not able to save us, and Christ has not ascended up into heaven to the right hand of power.

- The apostle Paul exhorts us to believe in our hearts that God raised the Lord Jesus from the dead. If we exercise this faith, we shall be [future tense] saved.

Romans 10:8 - 10: - "But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth **the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.** For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

NOTE: - If Jesus has not been raised from the dead, there is no salvation.

- As God has raised Jesus up from the dead, so God will raise believers up from the dead.

1st Corinthians 6:14: - "And **God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us** by his own power."

2nd Corinthians 4:14: - "Knowing that **he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus,** and shall present *us* with you."

1st Thessalonians 4:13 & 14: - "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. **For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.**"

NOTE: - If God did not raise Jesus from the dead, neither will he raise up believers in Christ at Jesus' second coming.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ As Jesus proclaimed himself to be the Resurrection and the Life, those who believe in him, will have the hope of final victory over death and the grave. We can have life because he lives.

- The commission to go and preach the gospel of Christ in all the world, was given to the disciples by the resurrected Jesus.

Matthew 28:18 - 20: - “**And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying,** All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.”

Mark 16:15 - 18: - “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”

Luke 24:46 - 48: - “And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things.”

Acts 1:8: - “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

NOTE: - If Jesus has not been raised from the dead, there is no gospel commission to fulfil. Because there is no gospel or good news to preach to the world, if Christ has not been raised from the dead!

- God has given assurance or certainty to all people, that there is going to be a future Day of Righteous Judgment for the world. This assurance is found in the truth that he raised up Jesus from the dead, whom God has appointed to be the Righteous Judge.

Acts 17:30 & 31: - “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: **Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness** by *that* man whom he hath ordained; **whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.**”

NOTE: - If Jesus has not been raised from the dead, then there is not going to be a future Day of Righteous Judgment for the world.

- God the Father has begotten us again [that is, he has caused us to experience the new birth] to a living hope, **by** Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. This hope consists of an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance that is reserved in heaven.

1st Peter 1:3 – 5: - “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy **hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an**

John 11:25 & 26: - “Jesus said unto her, **I am the resurrection, and the life:** he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?”

John 14:19: - “Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: **because I live, ye shall live also.**”

inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

NOTE: - If God the Father has not resurrected Jesus from the dead, then we cannot experience the new birth, and there is no eternal inheritance reserved in heaven for us.



As I have documented in this POINT 3, if Jesus has not been raised from the dead, then the foundation of the Christian message and faith has been totally destroyed, and there is no hope of any salvation and eternal life. The Christian gospel then becomes a totally irrelevant message to the world!

But of course, as I have given ample evidence under POINT 2, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, is a historical reality, and therefore, the Christian message is the most important reality in the whole world!

I have portrayed in graphic detail the excruciating agonies that Jesus endured from the Garden of Gethsemane onwards, until he finally closed his eyes in death upon the cross. He endured all these horrors because of our sins. The sins of every human being who has lived or who will ever live, were heaped upon the Innocent Son of God, as the Divine Sin-Bearer. In death, he was laid away in Joseph’s new tomb, with his beloved followers burying him without any hope or faith in his ever coming to life again. They had buried their beloved Lord in the cold tomb, and with him, they also buried all their hopes of his reigning in his future kingdom of glory. But they were wrong! In spite of all the efforts of wicked men to secure the tomb with soldiers and a Roman Seal, Jesus was raised to life again from the grave on the third day, just as he had prophesied to his disciples. He came forth as a triumphant conqueror over death and the grave. He was seen by many different individual followers of his, at different times and places after his resurrection. Thus the reality of his resurrection was secured for all time, by the Divine intervention of the Godhead, who used a multiplicity of human witnesses to confirm what they had seen, heard and handled of the Risen Christ.

These historical facts changed the lives of his original followers from one of fear and despondency, to one of faith and a holy boldness to proclaim a Risen Christ to all the world. Their efforts under the ministration of the Holy Spirit’s power, turned the then known world upside down. The world has never been the same since Jesus Christ, the Son of God, burst the bonds of death and the grave, and came forth from Joseph’s tomb.

These are all facts that can stand the test of any thorough and unprejudiced investigation. They can change the individual reader’s life, just as they changed the lives of the first followers of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Do not let Jesus’ amazing and agonizing sacrifice for your sins, and his stunning victory over death and the grave be in vain for you. Turn to Jesus in repentance and contrition of soul for all your sins, exercise faith in him as your Lord and Saviour, and ask him to come into your heart and life, and change you into the type of person he wants you to become. If you truly do this, it will change the rest of your life for truth and righteousness; and it will give you the blessed hope of eternal life in Jesus’ future eternal kingdom of glory!

“Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” – John 6:37.