

CERTIFICATION of The Death of Jesus Christ

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Preceded by extreme abuse

ROMAN SCOURGING

“...veins were laid bare, and...the very muscles, sinews, and bowels of the were open to exposure.”—Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea

JESUS’ PHYSICAL SUFFERING

“After a sleepless night, in which He was given no food, endured the mockery of two trials, and had His back lacerated with the cruel Roman cat-o-nine-tails, He was led out to execution by crucifixion. This was an excruciatingly painful death, in which every nerve in the body cried aloud in anguish.” — Michael Green

DEATH BY CRUCIFIXION

Vividly describes the pain and horror that accompanies crucifixion.

“For indeed a death by crucifixion seems to include all that pain and death can have of horrible and ghastly—dizziness, cramp, thirst, starvation, sleeplessness, traumatic fever, tetanus, shame, publicity of shame, long continuance of torment, horror of anticipation, mortification of untended wounds—all intensified just up to the point at which they can be endured at all, but all stopping short of the point which would give to the sufferer the relief of unconsciousness. The unnatural position made every movement painful; the lacerated veins and crushed tendons throbbed with incessant anguish; the wounds, inflamed by exposure, or gradually gangrened; the arteries—especially at the head and stomach-- became swollen and oppressed with surcharged blood; and while each variety of misery went on gradually increasing, there was added to them the intolerable pang of a burning and raging thirst; and all these physical complications caused an internal excitement and anxiety, which made the prospect of death itself—of death, the unknown enemy, at whose approach man usually shudders most—bear the aspect of a delicious and exquisite release.”—Frederick W. Farrar

They were accustomed to such sights.

Reported by expert eyewitnesses (the Roman soldiers)

NOTE: Crucifixions were not uncommon for the Roman soldiers stationed in first century Palestine.

NOTE: The Roman soldiers were familiar with the evidences of death.

NOTE: The Roman soldiers were familiar with the sight of death following crucifixion.

THE FOUR EXAMINERS/SPECIALISTS

“Four executioners came to examine [H]im, before a friend, Joseph of Arimathea, was allowed to take away the body for burial....They knew a dead man when they saw one—and their commanding officer had heard the condemned man’s death cry himself and certified the death to the governor, Pontius Pilate...”—Michael Green

Required by Pontius Pilate

PILATE’S WONDERING AND QUESTIONING

“It is St. Mark who lays stress upon Pilate’s wonder at hearing that Christ was already dead, and upon his personal questioning of the centurion before he would give leave for the removal of the body from the Cross.”
—E. Hermitage Day

PILATE’S SURPRISE AND CONVINCING

“Pilate was indeed surprised that Jesus was already dead, but he was sufficiently convinced by the centurion’s assurance to give Joseph permission to remove the body from the cross.”—John R. W. Stott

Accepted by the Jews

“...the account in St. Matthew’s Gospel of the guarding of the sepulchre is clear evidence that the Jews, for their part, believed that Jesus was dead.”—(Cf., Matthew 28:64)

Analyzed by 19th and 20th Century medical scholars

In *The Physical Cause of the Death of Christ*, James Thompson demonstrates that Christ died not from physical exhaustion, but from a **cardiac rupture**. The Soldier’s spear was merely the means God used to exhibit that fact to the world.

The great physiologist from the University of Dublin.

Samuel Houghton, M.D. explains that there are five cases or possibilities when the left side is pierced by a large knife or spear. He asserts that each of these can be explained by physiological principles. Below is a summary of his explanation.

THE FIVE CASES

1. No flow of any kind, except slight trickling blood.
2. A copious flow of blood only.
3. A flow of water only, succeeded by a few drops of blood.
4. A copious flow of water, succeeded by a copious flow of blood.
5. A copious flow of blood, succeeded by a copious flow of water.

THEIR PHYSIOLOGICAL EXPLANATION

1. That which usually occurs.
2. That which occurs in drowning, by strychnia (poison), and by crucifixion (the usual case).

3. That which occurs in pleurisy, pericarditis, and cardiac rupture.
4. That which occurs in crucifixion when the person previously suffered from pleuritic effusion.
5. That which occurs in crucifixion when the person died from cardiac rupture.

Michael
Green
points out
that...

Dr. William Stroud also ably maintains that Christ died from rupture of the heart.

‘We are told on eyewitness authority that ‘blood and water’ came out of the pierced side of Jesus (John 19:34,35). The eyewitness clearly attached great importance to this. Had Jesus been alive when the spear pierced His side, strong spurts of blood would have emerged with every heart beat. Instead, the observer noticed semi-solid dark red clot seeping out, distinct and separate from the accompanying watery serum. This is evidence of massive clotting of the blood in the main arteries, and is exceptionally strong medical proof of death. It is all the more impressive because the evangelist could not possibly have realized its significance to a pathologist. The ‘blood and water’ from the spear-thrust is proof positive that Jesus was already dead.’—Michael Green

[1] All the quotes and information are from: McDowell, Josh. *Evidence That Demands a Verdict, Volume I*. Nashville [TN], Here's Life Publishers; 1979: pp.196-199.