

**Luke 24:1-12** But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "**Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.** Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise." And they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, but these words **seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them.** But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

One of the biggest issues with all other faith, is that of the resurrection! The fact the Jesus is alive and that the tomb is empty. How can this be?

**John 15:12-15** "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. **Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.** You are my friends if you do what I command you. **No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.**

Imagine how many hundred times difficult it was for our Lord, who endured all of it. For He had the power to stop at any time, yet He was obedient to the Father, even to the point of Death!

**Colossians 1:19-20** For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

**Colossians 2:13-15** And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by **canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands.** This he set aside, **nailing it to the cross.** He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.



*Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. - John 15:13*

Let us look at what Jesus of Nazareth endured on our behalf. As I read this limited account of what Jesus endured ...

### **He sweated blood.**

After He and his disciples had observed the Passover meal in an upper room in a home in southwest Jerusalem, they traveled to the Mount of Olives, northeast of the city.

There, in the garden of [Gethsemane](#), for 12 hours (from 9 PM Thursday to 9 AM Friday), He prayed. He saw all the sins of humanity — past, present, and future. The cumulative effect of what He saw was so horrific that **He sweated blood** — *hematidrosis*, or hemorrhage into the sweat glands. His skin became fragile and tender from the *hematidrosis*, and He felt chilled in the night air.

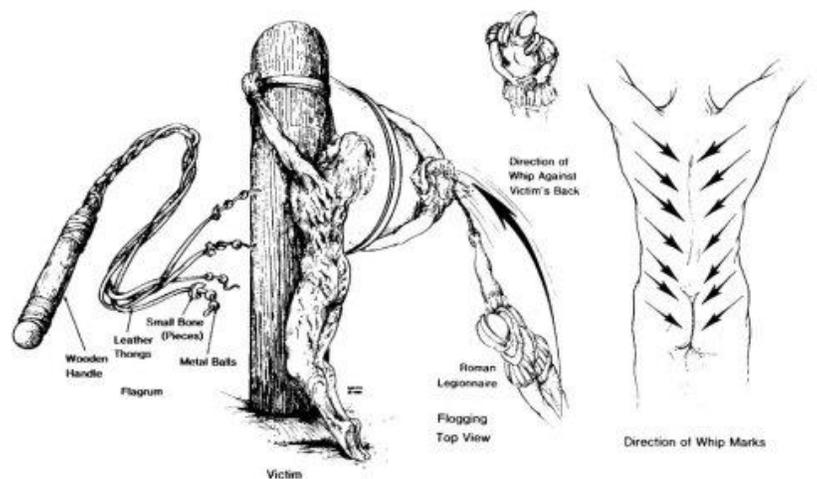
Then the Roman soldiers came to arrest Him and took Him away — He who had committed no crime and no wrong, but instead had fed the hungry, healed the sick and blind, and even raised the dead.

### **He was scourged at least 39 times.**

[Scourging](#) or flogging was a legal preliminary to every Roman execution. The usual instrument was a short whip (flagellum) with several single or braided leather cords of variable lengths, in which small iron balls or sharp pieces of sheep bones were tied at intervals. Occasionally, staves also were used.

He was stripped of his clothing, His hands tied to an upright post. His back, buttocks, and legs were flogged either by two soldiers or by one who alternated positions. The scourging was intended to weaken Him to a state just short of collapse or death.

As the Roman soldiers repeatedly struck His back with full force, the iron balls caused deep contusions, and the leather cords and sheep bones cut into His skin and subcutaneous tissues. Then, as the flogging continued, the lacerations tore into His underlying skeletal muscles and produced quivering ribbons of bleeding flesh. Pain and blood loss set the stage for circulatory shock.



### **His scalp was pierced with thorns.**

The Roman soldiers, amused that this weakened man had been acclaimed a king just days ago when He entered Jerusalem on a donkey, mocked 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 Him and struck Him on the head with the wooden staff.

The [crown of thorns](#) was not a crown at all. It was probably a bush roughly applied, and tied on with rope.

The thorns probably came from the Lote Tree, a wild bush that still grows freely all over the Holy Land. This bush had **thorns between one to two inches long**. There are **over 70 scalp wounds** visible on the man whose image is seared forever into the Shroud of Turin.

The soldiers' beating with the rods to His head covered with this crown would have caused severe bleeding. It is probable that the clump of thorns was removed before His tunic was put back onto His body, and then reapplied during the Crucifixion. The blood trickling down from the newly opened head wounds suggest that the thorns were reapplied before the Crucifixion.

**Imagine the pain you'd feel if just *one* thorn, measuring 1 to 2 inches long, were stuck into your scalp . . . .**

**He carried his own cross, weighing 125 lb.**

The severe scourging, with its intense pain and substantial blood loss, most probably left Him in a pre-shock state. Moreover, hematidrosis had rendered his skin particularly tender. The physical and mental abuse, as well as the lack of food, water, and sleep, also contributed to His generally weakened state. Therefore, even before the actual crucifixion, His physical condition was at least serious and possibly critical.

It was customary for the condemned man to carry his own cross from the flogging post to the site of crucifixion outside the city walls.

Since the weight of the entire cross was probably well over 300 lb., "only" the crossbar or patibulum — **weighing 75 to 125 lb.** — was carried. The patibulum was placed across the nape of His neck and balanced along both shoulders, His outstretched arms tied to the crossbar. The procession to the site of crucifixion was led by a complete Roman military guard, headed by a centurion.

**He was nailed to a cross to die.**

The Romans did not invent [crucifixions](#), but they perfected it as a form of torture and capital punishment designed to produce a slow death with maximum pain and suffering. It was one of the most disgraceful and cruelest methods of execution and usually was reserved only for slaves, foreigners, revolutionaries, and the vilest of criminals.

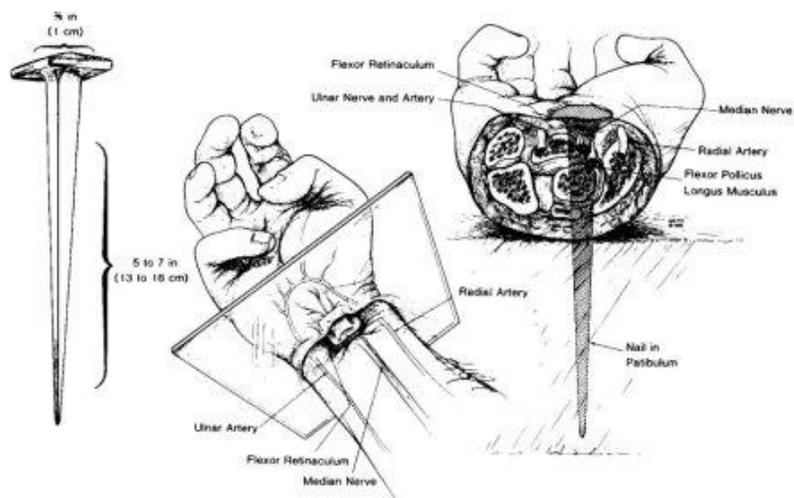
At the site of execution, by law, He was given a bitter drink of wine mixed with myrrh (gall) as a mild pain-reliever. He was then thrown to the ground on his back, with his arms outstretched along the patibulum.

His hands were nailed to the crossbar at the wrists. The nails were tapered iron spikes approximately **5 to 7 inches long** with a square shaft **3/8 in. across**.

After both arms were fixed to the crossbar, He and the patibulum, together, were lifted onto the stipes. Next, His feet were nailed to the front of the stipes.

Every breath He took was a struggle, seared with pain.

The weight of His body, pulling down on the outstretched arms and shoulders, fixed the intercostal muscles in an inhalation state and thereby hinder passive exhalation.



Accordingly, exhalation was primarily diaphragmatic, and breathing was shallow. This form of respiration would not suffice and *hypercarbia* (abnormally-elevated carbon dioxide levels in the blood) soon resulted. The onset of muscle cramps or tetanic contractions, due to fatigue and *hypercarbia*, further hindered His breathing.

Every breath He took was a struggle, shot with agonizing pain.

To exhale, He had to lift His body by pushing up on His feet, flexing His elbows and adducting His shoulders. However, this maneuver placed the entire weight of the body on His tarsals, producing searing pain. Furthermore, flexion of His elbows caused rotation of His wrists about the iron nails, causing fiery pain along the damaged median nerves. Lifting of the body also painfully scraped His scourged back against the rough wooden stipes. Muscle cramps and *paresthesias* (pins and needles) of the outstretched and uplifted arms added to the discomfort. As a result, each respiratory effort became agonizing and tiring and led eventually to *asphyxia* (depletion of oxygen to the body).

After "only" 3 to 6 hours hung on the cross, He breathed his last.

**Luke 23:44-56** It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "**Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!**" And having said this he breathed his last. Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, "Certainly this man was innocent!" And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, **returned home beating their breasts**. And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things. Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid. It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning. The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid. Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

**Colossians 2:13-15** And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by **canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands**. This he set aside, **nailing it to the cross**. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

The Commandments of God, found in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5.

**Romans 6:19-23** I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. **But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

For if Christ has not died for us, then we have yet to face the wrath of Almighty God.

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**Mark 16:1-7** When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back--it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. And he said to them, "**Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here.** See the place where they laid him. But **go, tell his disciples and Peter** that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you."

**Matthew 28:1-7** Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And behold, there was a **great earthquake**, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His **appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow**. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "**Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen**, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that **he has risen from the dead**, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, **I have told you.**"

**Revelation 1:17-18** When I saw him, **I fell at his feet as though dead**. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "**Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore**, and I have **the keys** of Death and Hades.

**Philippians 3:1-11** Finally, my brothers, **rejoice in the Lord**. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you. Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh-- though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. **But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ**. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. **For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him**, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith-- **that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.**

## **The best man!**

[\(Charles Spurgeon\)](#)

It seems to me that the best and most tender duty that Christians do for their Lord Jesus, is that which is touched with the bloodmark--which bears the stamp of the *cross*.

The best *preaching* is, "We preach Christ crucified!"

The best *living* is, "We are crucified with Christ!"

**The best man**, is a crucified man!

The more we live beholding our Lord's unutterable griefs, and understanding how He has fully put away our sin--the more holiness we shall produce.

The more we dwell where the cries of Calvary can be heard--where we can view Heaven, and earth, and Hell, all moved by His wondrous suffering--the nobler will our lives become.

Nothing puts life into men, like a dying Savior!

Come, let us slay sin--for Christ was slain.

Come, let us bury all our pride--for Christ was buried.

Come, let us rise to newness of life--for Christ has risen.

Let us be united with our crucified Lord in His one great objective. Let us live and die with Him--and then every action of our lives will be very beautiful.

## **Crucial questions for the Christian!**

Am I vitally united to Jesus Christ?

Am I crucified with Christ?

Am I consecrated to Christ?

Am I daily receiving grace from Christ?

Am I growing in conformity to Christ?

Am I a friend to all the friends of Christ?

Am I living for the glory of Christ?

Am I an honor to the name of Christ?

Am I walking in the steps of Christ?

Am I a blessing to the Church of Christ?

Am I daily, hourly, always, and in all things--aiming to please Christ?

Am I desiring to be with Christ?

Am I looking for the advent of Christ?

Am I ready for the coming of Christ?