

## COME, EXAMINE THE PIERCED HEART OF JESUS!

**John 19:32** *Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.*

**John 19:33** *But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs.*

God was manifested in flesh to die for our sins. God commissioned Roman soldiers to ensure that his body indeed was dead. Few were better trained to kill than Roman soldiers. Therefore, if anyone was competent in confirming an individual's death, it was Roman soldiers. The Sabbath began at 6 p.m. on Friday and was only 3 hours away, so the Pharisees and their accomplices requested the death of the crucified, and their bodies buried before the Sabbath rest commenced. According to one report about ancient crucifixion methods:

*The feet were nailed to the upright part of the crucifix, so that the knees were bent at around 45 degrees. To speed death, executioners would often break the legs of their victims to give no chance of using their thigh muscles as support. It was probably unnecessary, as their strength would not have lasted more than a few minutes even if they were unharmed.<sup>1</sup>*

John records that Jesus was already dead, so the soldiers did not break his legs. While the others clung to this world and earthly life, the Lord Jesus happily embraced death for our sakes. No one had more to gain from death in the history of humanity than the Lord Jesus Christ. "Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand" (Isaiah 53:10). If the "virtual death" of Isaac spawned millions of children for Abraham, how much more will the fulfilment of that real and authentic death of our Lord? Jesus' salvation has given us the best reason to welcome death when the time comes.

The soldiers could not know they were fulfilling an ancient prophecy. Jesus is the Lamb of God; God commanded the children of Israel not to break a bone of the sacrificial lamb of the Exodus. "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" (Exodus 12:46). This command was repeated in 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". In

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2004/apr/08/thisweekssciencequestions>

addition to the above, the Lord Jesus is the fulfilment of the altar of God. God explicitly forbade the use of tools in hewing and shaping altars of stone in the Old Testament.

***Exodus 20:25*** *And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.*

The altar served as a conduit or intercessor between heaven and earth. Jesus is the intercessor between heaven and earth – the only one, according to Isaiah 59:16: “And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him”. Due to the prophetic implications of the above, the Roman soldiers could not break the bones of the Lord Jesus. To strike and break his bones would render his body unfit for the work of salvation. Thank God for the preservation of his own body for our salvation! If we press further in our exploration of this subject, we will see additional and powerful revelations. Jesus is also the fulfilment of the Temple of God; Herod’s Temple was a shadow of the beautiful Word made flesh that walked among us. It was for this reason the Lord prophesied about Herod’s Temple: “And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down” (Matthew 13:2). Look around at every great building around today. Every stone will be cast down – but the true Temple of God, the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, will never be broken or disjointed! Amen!

***1Peter 1:24*** *For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:*

***1Peter 1:25*** *But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*

***2Corinthians 5:1*** *For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

“But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water” (John 19:34). The Roman soldiers decided to double-check that Jesus was indeed dead. He pierced the right side of the Lord and ruptured his heart. God permitted his enemies to tear open his heart. What did his heart reveal? Blood and water poured out. Blood and water was closest to his heart. These two holy and living elements testify to his zeal to save us. “And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one” (I John 5:8). The blood, water and Spirit agree in the one heart of the Lord Jesus. Such is the mercy of God that he permitted sinners to cut open his heart, but out of it flowed salvation. It is as if the blood in the Lord’s body found its way to his heart to declare loudly – “It has always been in my heart to save you”. Samson found

honey in a dead lion and said, “And he said unto them, Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness. And they could not in three days expound the riddle” (Judges 14:14). Jesus is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. He laid down his life for us so the meat and sweetness of salvation could be ours. We slew Christ, but in slaying him, salvation flowed toward us just as the blood and water from his heart gushed down upon the surprised soldier.

Why water? After the blood of Jesus washes our sins away, we need our old, Adamic bodies to be washed away by the cleansing waters of Jesus. Some monkeys carry the carcasses of their dead children for several days. Who would like to live with a corpse in the same house for several days or weeks? It begins to smell and carry diseases. The dead as best buried. This is called baptism in the name of Jesus, which the apostle Peter commanded on the Day of Pentecost. “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38). God employed the waters of the Flood of Noah to wash away the old world of sin and its rotting carcasses. Without water eliminating traces of the old flesh, a new world was not possible. Similarly, water is the element God utilizes to bury the old sinful creature and endow us with a new, heavenly body made genuinely after the body of Christ. “Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself” (Philippians 3:21). Praise the name of Jesus!

A little while before this, the veil of the Temple was torn in two. The veil represents the heart of God which was fulfilled in the rupturing of the heart of our Lord Jesus on the Cross. Until then, the High Priest took blood from the altar into the Holy of Holies once a year. Now, however, God himself pours out his blood of salvation from the inside of the Holy of Holies – his heart. Hallelujah!

**Hebrews 9:7** *But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people.*

**Hebrews 10:19** *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,*

**Hebrews 10:20** *By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.*

The rending of the veil signified open and unhindered access to the Holy of Holies. This prefigured the tearing open of the heart of the Lord Jesus to signify infinite access to the

innermost being of God. We have no excuse any longer to skirt around the margins of God – let us enter into the holiest place of all – the heart of Jesus! It was for this reason the Lord reappeared to the apostle Thomas, so he may receive the invitation to put his hand into the side of Jesus. “Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing” (John 20:27). The wounds of Jesus have been open for all to investigate since his death and resurrection. Modern surgical procedures stitch up and embellish cuts and gashes in order to restore the natural appearance of the skin as much as possible. Not so with the Lord Jesus! He did not stitch up or heal his wounds and cuts – he bears them proudly for us to meditate upon and affirm his great work of love and salvation.

Jesus invites us all to examine pierced heart, feet and wrists. His bones could not be touched, but we punctured his heart and out of it came love and salvation. There can only be one response to the invitation to put our hands into his side – “ And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God” (John 20:28). I pray this will be our conclusion at the end of this brief meditation! We must stop persecuting, piercing and cutting up the Lord repeatedly. This happened once and for all. We hurt him each time we refuse to acknowledge his Godhood and salvation. Indeed, we dismiss his wounds when we willfully sin against him. Let us repent again and determine to forever respect and honor his pierced heart, hands and feet. Amen!