

Monday, March 28, 2016 - The Death that Changed the World

Each first day of the week, we as Christians remember a death more important than any other. Someone who was marked for death since birth. In Matt. 1:18-2:12, we're told of the birth of Christ. Wise men came to Jerusalem asking "Where is he who has been born King of the Jews?" Herod, a foreigner and usurper, feared the one who was "born King of the Jews." He wanted to know the location of the child from the wise men. When Herod determined the wise men had betrayed him, the scriptures tell us he, "was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men."

Christ was not drafted. He came into the world to die because of his love of mankind. He knew it was intended by God that the author of our salvation would be made "perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2:10). Jesus was in no doubt what His mission was in the world (Mt. 20:17-19; Lk. 9:51; 12:50; Jn. 12:27. Mt. 16:21-23; Jn. 18:11). Jesus even spoke of the manner in which He would die (Jn. 12:32, 33; 3:14; 8:28). Whatever glories were to follow, Jesus knew they lay on the other side of the cross (Heb. 12:2).

After the scourging, which I described in my last article, we're told they utilized a crown to make their travesty complete. Small flexible branches covered with long thorns, commonly used for kindling fires were plaited into the shape of a crude crown. The crown was pressed into his scalp and again there was copious bleeding as the thorns pierced His vascular tissue. After mocking Him and striking Him across the face, the soldiers struck Him across the head, driving the thorns deeper into His scalp.

Barely able to stand, and drenched in His own blood, our Saviour was now forced to bear the weight of His own cross on the journey to the Place of the Skull, Golgotha. The end of the journey was to have a singular conclusion: the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Crucifixion was an agonizing, torturous death. Laid down on the cross which will soon hoist Him up in the air, He is affixed through "nails" in His hands and feet. The archaeological remains of a crucified body, found in an ossuary near Jerusalem and dating from the time of Christ, indicate that the nails were tapered iron spikes approximately 5 to 7 in (13 to 18 cm) long with a square shaft 3/8 in (1 cm) across. Furthermore, documented findings indicate that the nails commonly were driven through the wrists rather than the palms.

In order to breathe in, Christ must pull His body up utilizing the nails in His hands and feet. To exhale, He lowers Himself only through the support of the nails.

Six hours of being cursed at, spat upon, and being taunted about His Deity, our Lord spoke only seven times in His final hours. Finally, we are told that He cries out and breathes His last. When the soldiers saw that Christ was dead, they jam the spear deep in His side and blood and water flow mingled down to the ground. Our Saviour has given His all, that we might live.

Some may choose to only remember, only show reverence, only worship Our Lord once, maybe twice a year. That is their choice.

As for me and my house, His love will be reciprocated through a life of humble submission and complete obedience to His will. Will I be perfect? No, but I will be perfected by His Blood. And that is something I choose to never forget.