

## THE SUFFERINGS OF JESUS CHRIST

As human beings, we have a terrible time relating to the pain and suffering of others unless we have been through a similar experience. It is not because we are coldhearted but rather that our hearts and minds want to avoid grief and pain; instead, we seek after love and joy. One reason Jesus Christ had to become flesh and submit to temptation, suffering, and death was so He could truly understand them and how they afflict human beings. It is those experiences that make Him a loving and merciful High Priest, Judge, and Advocate for us before God the Father.

And even though we have not experienced the complete sufferings of Jesus Christ, God has given us a Spirit that opens our hearts to understand that tremendous sacrifice. In the remainder of this article are descriptions of many of the ways that Jesus Christ suffered. By reflecting upon what He endured, we can come to know Him in a very personal way that continues to deepen as the years go by and we bear our own burdens.

### JESUS WAS BETRAYED

[FV] MATTHEW 17:22 And while they were dwelling in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "**The Son of man is about to be betrayed into [the] hands of men,**

To be betrayed is the most terrible act that can be done to someone because the very act of it means that the love you had for that person was never reciprocated and the worst part is the person despised your love. There is no greater cause of grief in any relationship or any act more devastating.

### JESUS WAS SECRETLY ARRESTED AT NIGHT, HAVING COMMITTED NO CRIME

[FV] MATTHEW 26:50, 55 ... Then they (*the high priest and Sanhedrin*) came [and] **laid their hands on Jesus**, and arrested Him. ... 55 At that point (*some time after the Passover service*) Jesus said to the crowd, "**Have you come out to take Me with swords and clubs, as against a robber?** ...

[FV] JOHN 15:25 But this has happened so that the saying might be fulfilled which is written in their law, '**They hated Me (Jesus Christ) without [a] cause.**'

Jesus Christ experienced shame and unjust persecution. Note that the arresting party was brazenly led by the high priest and Sanhedrin who so HATED Jesus that they personally led the men. Also, His arrest was nothing like today; the words for *laid hands on* conceal a very forceful and physical act. Literally, it means *throw oneself upon to punish*. Mark 4:37 says, "the waves were **crashing** into the ship" where *crashing* is the same Greek word as *laid* in Matthew 26:50. These waves were caused by a *megastorm* which brought waves crashing into the ship. The secret arrest of an innocent Jesus was only the beginning of His beatings.

### JESUS WAS DESERTED BY EVERYONE

MATTHEW 26:56 Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

Not only was Jesus arrested but everyone abandoned Him in the worst hour of His life. He was completely at the mercy of His captors who brutally arrested Him in the middle of the night while the disciples stood and watched as He was taken to the private home of the Caiaphas, the high priest. *Forsook* is translated or can mean *desert wrongfully, disregard, neglect, abandon, leave destitute, leave behind, send away*. Jesus was abandoned by His closest friends whom He loved. This included John who, during Passover, had been leaning on Jesus.

### JESUS WAS FALSELY ACCUSED

[FV] MATTHEW 26:59, 61 Now the chief priests and the elders and the whole Sanhedrin sought false evidence against Jesus, so that they might put Him to death; ... 61 Then at [the] last, two false witnesses ...

Imagine being taken secretly before a judge and falsely accused of crimes, all the while knowing that your captors were doing all of this to murder you. As Jesus stood silently before the most powerful men in all of Judea, He saw the murderous hatred in their eyes which drove them to use whatever means to fulfill their bloodlust.

### JESUS WAS SPAT UPON AND BEAT UP

[FV] MATTHEW 26:67-68 67 Then they (the high priest and Sanhedrin) spit in His face and hit Him with their fists; and some struck [Him] with rods, 68 Saying, "Prophecy to us, Christ. Who is the one that struck You?"

These few words minimize the beating that took place. Isaiah 52:14 says, "Many were astonished at Him—for [His body was] so disfigured—even His form beyond that of the sons of men." Jesus was not hit or beaten with a rod a couple of times; He was pummeled over and over. Isaiah 50:6 adds that they literally pulled the hair of His beard out and He did not turn aside when they spit in His face. The fist-pounding, clubbing, and hair pulling went on and on because that is what it took to disfigure His face so that even the people of that time, who had witnessed many other beatings, were STUNNED. His tormentors were filled with bloodlust of hatred. (Sadly, today people are outraged when a child is spanked to instill discipline.) Remember, too, who did this: the high priest and council of elders or Sanhedrin.

### JESUS WAS REJECTED

[FV] MATTHEW 27:21-22 Then the governor answered [and] said to them, "Which of the two do you desire [that] I release to you?" And they (the high priest, Sanhedrin, and multitude of people) said, "Barabbas." 22 Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus Who is called Christ?" They all said to him, "Let [Him] be crucified!"

The high priest and Sanhedrin, out of their hatred for Jesus, gathered the multitude (literally, *rabble*) of the city together and persuaded them to support their evil plot. These people were necessary to ensure that Pilate would heed their demands out of

fear of causing a riot. Again, Jesus watched silently knowing of their deceit and that even the lowest citizens of Judea rejected Him as He was about to give His life for theirs.

### JESUS WAS SCOURGED

[FV] MATTHEW 27:26 Then he released Barabbas to them; but **after scourging Jesus**, he delivered [Him] up so that He might be crucified.

Again, the Bible doesn't provide the details to fully grasp what they did to Jesus. Roman law forbid the scourging of Roman citizens because it was so brutal. A description of a scourging in the *Ecclesiastical History (Eusebius), book 4, chapter 15, paragraph 4* reads, "**For they say that the bystanders were struck with amazement when they saw them (the martyrs) lacerated with scourges even to the innermost veins and arteries, so that the hidden inward parts of the body, both their bowels and their members, were exposed to view;**".

### JESUS WAS MOCKED AND DESPISED

[FV] MATTHEW 27:29-30 **And after plating a crown of thorns, they put [it] on His head, and a rod in His right hand; and bowing [on] their knees before Him, they mocked Him, and [kept on] saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"** 30 Then, after spitting on Him, they took the rod and struck [Him] on the head.

Such an act would be humiliating enough if it weren't for the abuse that also occurred. The wreath of thorns was not just placed upon Jesus' head as if putting a crown on a king. Again, the translation hides the cruelty behind the word by using *put* where the Greek meaning is *to impose in a hostile sense*. In other words, the wreath was shoved onto His head, driving the thorns through the flesh and down against His skull. This was further aggravated by hitting Him on the head with the rod intensifying the already terrible pain. Furthermore, the *rod* (*reed* in the KJV) was literally an instrument of torture. In Revelation 11:1, "... a REED is likened unto a ROD" where the *rod* can mean *cudgel*. Jesus was not hit with a reed or simple switch but a cudgel stick that is strong and stout so that it can be used as a weapon.

[FV] REVELATION 11:1 Then [the angel] gave me a **measuring rod** like a staff, saying, "Arise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it.

Remember, preceding all of this was the brutality of His arrest, the beating of the priests, and the flesh-tearing *flagellum* or scourging; and, still, it wasn't over. Worst of all, it says in Psalm 69:20 that it broke Jesus' heart to hear those hateful words.

[FV] PSALM 69:20 **Reproach has broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness; and I looked for sympathy, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.**

### JESUS WAS NAILED TO THE CROSS

[FV] MATTHEW 27:35 And when they crucified (impaled) Him ...

Once again, the narrative simplifies a most terrible and cruel act. Nails were driven through His wrists, just below the wrist bone, through the major nerve running to the hand. His ankles were also nailed against the cross, again penetrating major nerves. His hands and feet were about the only parts of His body that had not yet been injured and it would have been unimaginably excruciating. Crucifixion is a brutally painful way to die. (For a more complete awareness of the agony of crucifixion, you can read about it on the Internet.)

### JESUS WAS REVILED AND MOCKED

[FV] MATTHEW 27:39-43 Then those who were passing by railed at Him, shaking their heads, 40 And saying, "You Who [would] destroy the temple and rebuild [it] in three days, save Yourself. If You are [the] Son of God, come down from the cross." **41 And in the same way also the chief priests were mocking, with the scribes and elders, saying, 42 ... If He is the King of Israel, let Him come down now from the cross, and we will believe Him. 43 He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will [have] Him. For He said, 'I am [the] Son of God.'** "

Notice that, once again, the high priest and Sanhedrin led the mocking of Jesus and even arrogantly pronouncing that God had rejected Him. As the Son of the most high God, they not only blasphemed Jesus but His Father as well and amazingly, while under such agony that few have experienced, He did not revile back (1 Peter 2:23).

Incredibly, Jesus continues to be persecuted and suffer to this day. It isn't the agony of a physical body but a spiritual pain:

[FV] ACTS 9:4 And after falling to the ground, he (*Saul*) heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, **why do you persecute Me?**"

[FV] 1 CORINTHIANS 12:26-27 26 And **if one member suffers, all the members suffer with [him]**; [and] if one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with [him]. 27 Now **you are [the] body of Christ, and [you] [are all] individual members.**

When God's people are persecuted or suffer, Jesus Christ, who is the Head of the Body, feels the pain especially if the suffering is inflicted by fellow brethren. Which is worse? The sacrifice or the pain we inflict on each other? God only knows.

Most of all, understand this: all the betrayals, lies, persecutions, injustices, shame, false accusations, beatings, tortures, and agonies came upon Jesus in the space of about eighteen hours. Any one of these will cause such unimaginable pain and anguish. Jesus Christ FELT and ENDURED pain that had been perfected in a merciless world AND STILL AVOID COMMITTING SIN! Is it any wonder that He sweated blood while praying to God? It was then, AT THE TIME OF JESUS' GREATEST PHYSICAL AFFLICTION, that God laid the sins of the world, past, present, and future, upon an innocent Christ.

Jesus never committed a single sin, so imagine the torture of the transgressions of billions of people coming upon Him all at once. Some have suggested that Jesus Christ didn't suffer any more than others have in the history of the world. Truly, if we have ANY insight whatsoever into that singular Passover, there is no question that Jesus Christ endured what no man ever has and all for one reason: love for the world.

[FV] ACTS 2:36-37 Therefore, let all [the] house of Israel know with full assurance that God has made this [same] Jesus, Whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." 37 Now after hearing [this], they were cut (pierced) to the heart; and they said to Peter and the other apostles, "Men [and] brethren, what shall we do?"

Now, what are YOU going to do?

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Prophecies of Jesus' crucifixion: Gen 3:15; Psa 22:1, 6-21, 31 (*"that He hath done this" = literally, "it is finished"*); Psa 31:4-5; Psa 34:20; Psa 35:11; Psa 38:10-11; Psa 41:7, 9; Psa 69:6-9, 19-21; Psa 109:25; Isa 50:6; Isa 52:14; Isa 53; Zec 11:12-13; Zec 12:10; Zec 13:6-7.