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## The Crucifixion Revealed

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Today we are going to try and shed some light on one of the most widely known yet least understood events in the Bible: The Crucifixion of Jesus.

The first thing that is needed for a study like this is to understand what a Crucifixion actually is. Crucifixion was a method of execution practiced by the ancient Romans during (obviously) the time of Jesus Christ. It was an extremely painful and brutal way of dying. People complained about Mel Gibson's movie *The Passion of the Christ*, that it was too violent; well, Mel Gibson's movie was actually still quite tame in comparison to an actual crucifixion. The Bible states in Isaiah 52:14 that Jesus was beaten beyond recognition. The Romans prided themselves on thinking up ways to brutally torture people.

The actual process of a crucifixion involves suspending a person on a vertical surface, often a tree or post with their arms stretched out beside or above them. Forced to remain in this position, the victim is slowly killed by his/her own weight as fluid collects in the chest cavity eventually leading to suffocation. It is extremely painful and can last several days. In addition to the painful process of crucifixion itself, Jesus was also flogged (beaten) repeatedly with a device called a "Cat of Nine Tails". The Roman Cat of Nine Tails was basically a whip with nine strips, each strip having sharp objects attached to it, so that when the victim is struck with the whip, it will stick in their skin and when the whip is retracted by the user, the victims flesh will be ripped apart and torn off of his body.

Jesus also had a crown made of thorns shoved into his forehead as people spat on him, beat him and mocked him. These things were unique to Jesus' crucifixion in order to fulfill scripture:

*"He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world."* (1 John 2:2)

That Means He [Jesus] had the entire sins of the world upon Him. Now if you're like me, you've always wondered about Matthew 26:34:

*"they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it."*

Just what is the significance of this verse? I'll tell you... The word "gall" here comes from the Greek word "chole" which means poison. The idea was that some person,

having understandable but misguided pity on Jesus, was trying to administer poison to end His suffering prematurely. However Jesus, upon tasting it and recognizing the bitter taste of gall (even though they added wine to make it more sweet) refused to drink it because He knew that to cleanse us from our sins He must suffer.

You must understand that in those ancient times, there was the law of “sin and punishment”. That means, if you sinned, you had two choices:

1. Be executed for your sin (usually by being stoned to death or burned to death) or...
2. Take a spotless animal, and sacrifice it on the altar of the Lord for your sin.

Obviously, option two is better for your health. However, God is Holy (pure in spirit and deed), and as such has a zero-tolerance for sin. If a sin is committed, God’s justice must be satisfied.

The second thing that must be understood is that God does love us very much. That is why he provided the original sacrificial law, allowing the ancient people to sacrifice animals instead of us being the ones to be killed, even though it was us that committed the sin. However, animal blood couldn’t really save us; it was simply God’s mercy that spared His Holy wrath. A truly pure sacrifice had to be offered if we were to be saved.

It’s appropriate to note here that God did not have to intervene to rescue us from our well-deserved punishment whatsoever. He would have been perfectly right to let us suffer eternal damnation for our acts of sin and go create a new earth somewhere else and start over. Yet it demonstrates His unfailing love for us that He intervenes and decides to offer of Himself to be our ultimate sin sacrifice.

### **The reason for Jesus' death**

Jesus suffered the most brutal and painful death imaginable, so that we could live without the curse of sin. Everyone one day will be judged for their life on this Earth. The question will be asked “What did you do with Jesus?”, and you will have to give your answer. What will your answer be?

When Jesus died, after three days He rose again, thus signifying His victory over not only death, but also sin. There is no longer any excuse to be a slave to sinful desires anymore. If you have already accepted Jesus and made Him truly the Lord of your life, you are free from sin. If you haven’t yet accepted Jesus, but would like to, all you have to do is **sincerely** pray this prayer, confessing your sins, and turning from them:

"Lord Jesus, I know now that I am a sinner, and I thank you for dying the most painful death for me. Please forgive me of my sins. I give my life back to you. I love you; you are the Lord of my life."

If you prayed that prayer and meant it, than you have just crossed over from darkness into light. That light is the light of the Lord. You are now "Born Again", what that means is

that your spirit is clean, you are a new person. You no longer have anything to fear. Society (specifically Television) has placed a large stigma on Christians, but don't let that detour you at all Your eternal soul is worth so much more, that's why Satan works so hard to try and stop people, and he will try to stop you as well, so please be on your best mental and spiritual guard.

If you are reading this, and you don't yet have a reliable copy of the Holy Bible, I would suggest getting a copy as soon as possible. I would recommend either the NIV (New International Version) or the ESV (English Standard Version) as those two versions are in my opinion the easiest translations to read while still remaining accurate and faithful to the original text.

Stay strong and Rise to the Challenge!

James