

“The Passion Cross”

Isaiah 52:13-53:12; John 3:14-21

04/3/15

Grace, Mercy, Peace and Death, death of sin, death of the devil are yours from God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Psalmist wrote and Jesus cried out, “¹ *My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?*

Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?” (Psalm 22:1, ESV) Anguish, the pain, the suffering Jesus took upon Himself we will never understand. Simply said, “Jesus had a PASSION/LOVE for you, me, and the whole world which would stop at nothing to save us from our sins. Every cross we have looked at: Latin, Tau, Evangelists’, Mission, St. Andrew’s, and Regeneration Cross reminds us of the PASSION God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit had for the world. “⁵ ... ***He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed.***” (Isaiah 53:5, ESV)

On the other hand, every sin we related to the different crosses: **Latin Cross** - Emptying the cross of its power; **Tau Cross** – grumbling; **Evangelist’s Cross** – making another gospel when there is no other gospel; **Mission Cross** – laziness in sharing the gospel; **St. Andrew’s Cross** – lack of humility; and **Regeneration Cross** – avoiding or misusing the “Means of Grace” are a sign of our **PASSION** for “me, myself, and I”. The path to hell is lined with “good intentions”. Every sin we commit is colored with “good intentions” to satisfy one’s ego. The word “ego” comes from the Greek word “**ἐγώ**” or translated in English “I”. **Every sin** committed is a result of wanting something, good or bad, for “Me, Myself and I.” Adam and Eve brought sin into the world because **THEY** wanted to be just like God knowing good and evil (Genesis 3).

Tonight/today we look at the final cross: “The Passion Cross”. “**The Passion Cross**” has sharpened points at the end of one or more of the cross members. It is also referred to as the “**Cross of Suffering**” representing the nails that Christ suffered at his Crucifixion. I cannot do justice to what

Jesus went through on the world's behalf. The movie, "**The Passion**" does an excellent depiction of Jesus' passion.

Here's **Doctor C. Truman Davis** analysis of the Crucifixion:

In the early morning, battered and bruised, dehydrated, and worn out from a sleepless night, Jesus was taken across Jerusalem to... Pontius Pilate.... Preparations for Jesus' scourging were carried out.... The prisoner was stripped of His clothing and His hands tied to a post above His head. The Roman legionnaire stepped forward with the flagrum, or flagellum, in his hand. This was a short whip consisting of several heavy, leather thongs with two small balls of lead attached near the ends of each. The heavy whip was brought down with full force again and again across Jesus' shoulders, back, and legs. At first the weighted thongs cut through the skin only. Then, as the blows continued, they cut deeper into the subcutaneous tissues, producing first an oozing of blood from the capillaries and veins of the skin and finally spurting arterial bleeding from vessels in the underlying muscles.

The small balls of lead first produced large deep bruises that were broken open by subsequent blows. Finally, the skin of the back was hanging in long ribbons, and the entire area was an unrecognizable mass of torn, bleeding tissue. When it was determined by the centurion in charge that the prisoner was near death, the beating was finally stopped.

Mockery

The half-fainting Jesus was then untied and allowed to slump to the stone pavement, wet with his own blood. The Roman soldiers saw a great joke in this provincial Jew claiming to be a king. They threw a robe across His shoulders and placed a stick in His hand for a scepter. They still needed a crown to make their travesty complete. Small flexible branches covered with long thorns, ... The crown was pressed into his scalp and again there was copious bleeding as the thorns pierced the very vascular tissue. After mocking Him and striking Him across the face, the soldiers took the stick from His hand and struck Him across the head, driving the thorns deeper into His scalp. Finally, they tired of their sadistic sport and tore the robe from His back. The robe had already become adherent to the clots of blood and serum in the wounds, and its removal, just as in the careless removal of a surgical bandage, caused excruciating pain. The wounds again began to bleed.

Golgotha

...The heavy patibulum of the cross was tied across His shoulders. The procession of the condemned Christ, two thieves, and the execution detail of Roman soldiers headed...[headed to Golgotha].In spite of Jesus' efforts to walk erect, the weight of the heavy wooden beam, together with the shock produced by copious loss of blood, was too much. He stumbled and fell. The rough

wood of the beam gouged into the lacerated skin and muscles of the shoulders. He tried to rise, but human muscles had been pushed beyond their endurance. The centurion, anxious to proceed with the crucifixion, selected a stalwart North African onlooker, Simon of Cyrene, to carry the cross. Jesus followed, still bleeding and sweating the cold, clammy sweat of shock. The 650-yard journey from the Fortress Antonia to Golgotha was finally completed. ...

The crucifixion began. Jesus was offered wine mixed with myrrh, a mild ... pain-relieving mixture. He refused the drink. Simon was ordered to place the patibulum on the ground, and Jesus was quickly thrown backward, with His shoulders against the wood. The legionnaire felt for the depression at the front of the wrist. He drove a heavy, square wrought-iron nail through the wrist and deep into the wood. Quickly, he moved to the other side and repeated the action, being careful not to pull the arms too tightly, but to allow some flexion and movement. The patibulum was then lifted into place at the top of the stipes, and the titulus reading "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" was nailed into place.

The left foot was pressed backward against the right foot. With both feet extended, toes down, a nail was driven through the arch of each, leaving the knees moderately flexed. The victim was now crucified.

On the Cross

As Jesus slowly sagged down with more weight on the nails in the wrists, excruciating, fiery pain shot along the fingers and up the arms to explode in the brain. The nails in the wrists were putting pressure on the median nerve, large nerve trunks which traverse the mid-wrist and hand. As He pushed himself upward to avoid this stretching torment, He placed His full weight on the nail through His feet. Again there was searing agony as the nail tore through the nerves between the metatarsal bones of his feet.

At this point, another phenomenon occurred. As the arms fatigued, great waves of cramps swept over the muscles, knotting them in deep relentless, throbbing pain. With these cramps came the inability to push Himself upward. Hanging by the arm, the pectoral muscles, the large muscles of the chest, were paralyzed and the intercostal muscles, the small muscles between the ribs, were unable to act. Air could be drawn into the lungs, but could not be exhaled. Jesus fought to raise Himself in order to get even one short breath. Finally, the carbon dioxide level increased in the lungs and in the blood stream, and the cramps partially subsided.

The Last Words

Spasmodically, He was able to push Himself upward to exhale and bring in life-giving oxygen. It was undoubtedly during these periods that He uttered the seven short sentences that are recorded.

... He suffered hours of limitless pain, cycles of twisting, joint-rending cramps, intermittent partial asphyxiation, and searing pain as tissue was torn from His lacerated back from His movement up

and down against the rough timbers of the cross. Then another agony began: a deep crushing pain in the chest as the pericardium, the sac surrounding the heart, slowly filled with serum and began to compress the heart.

The prophecy in Psalm 22:14 was being fulfilled: "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint, my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels."

The end was rapidly approaching. The loss of tissue fluids had reached a critical level; the compressed heart was struggling to pump heavy, thick, sluggish blood to the tissues, and the tortured lungs were making a frantic effort to inhale small gulps of air. The markedly dehydrated tissues sent their flood of stimuli to the brain. ...

A sponge soaked in posca, the cheap, sour wine that was the staple drink of the Roman legionnaires, was lifted to Jesus' lips. His body was now in extremis, and He could feel the chill of death creeping through His tissues. This realization brought forth His sixth word, possibly little more than a tortured whisper: "It is finished." His mission of atonement had been completed. Finally, He could allow His body to die. With one last surge of strength, He once again pressed His torn feet against the nail, straightened His legs, took a deeper breath, and uttered His seventh and last cry: "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit."

Death

The common method of ending a crucifixion was ~~by crurifracture~~, the breaking of the bones of the leg. This prevented the victim from pushing himself upward; the tension could not be relieved from the muscles of the chest, and rapid suffocation occurred. The legs of the two thieves were broken, but when the soldiers approached Jesus, they saw that this was unnecessary.

And, so, Isaiah records, ¹⁴ .. *his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of mankind—*" (Isaiah 52:14, ESV)

Christ's passion for you, me, and the world brought a deathly blow upon Him and He died, but in this death He fulfilled for the world the total payment of all sins. May we never cheapen the event that took place on Calvary. Let it be so! Amen!