

**Get Ready!****It is Finished . . . And  
Just Begun!**

By: Alan Cain

**Text**

John 19:1-22; Isaiah 53:10

**Key Quest Verse**

“But the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; if he would render himself as a guilt offering . . .” (Isaiah 53:10a, NASB).

**Bible Background**

At the beginning of Jesus’ ministry, He told us that He came to preach the gospel of the coming Kingdom of God. A mere 3 years later, He was no longer just preaching it; He was paying the admission price to enter it, with His blood.

The time of Jesus’ death is around 30 A.D., and the Romans had control of Palestine and the Jewish people. It was a time of great depression and longing for the Jews; a time when they were looking for their Messiah to come and set them free from their Roman oppressors. Many of the common people hoped Jesus would be the one who would lead the rebellion and set up the Kingdom. When they realized that He had different, non-violent plans, they quickly turned on Him. The ruling party of the Jews felt that Jesus was just another one in the long line of false Messiahs, a troublemaker trying to rock their world; and rock it He did!

Jesus’ teaching was with such power and authority that the high priest felt he had no option but to kill Jesus to keep Him from ruining their control and status under the Romans.

Jesus’ claims of being both a King and the Son of God was, to their incorrect thinking, blasphemy. To the Jewish religious leaders, it was time for Jesus to die. That’s where we find ourselves in this lesson; Jesus has been arrested and is being put on trial both before the Jewish leaders and before the Romans. The Roman government was necessary because the Jews, being a people in subjection, did not have the authority to put anyone to death. They needed Rome’s help and permission.

Jesus, at this point, has willingly been taken into custody and is doing very little to defend Himself against the false accusations. Isaiah put it this way, “*Like a lamb before its shearer is dumb, so he opened not His mouth*” (Isaiah 53:7). Jesus’ position looks weak to the Romans, as He Himself seems impotent. It is here where we will begin to find the truth and power of our lesson.

*Get Ready!***Lesson Quest****What I want my students to:**

- Know:** That Jesus and the Father willingly and with great joy, paid a high price for our salvation by a deliberate and predetermined plan.
- Feel:** The sorrow and tragedy of the crucifixion, as well as feel confidence from the fact that God had control over it all for our good.
- Do:** Take responsibility for that tragedy by offering our lives back to Jesus as a living sacrifice.

**Leader's Devotion**

I remember as a young Christian teenager realizing, that I didn't realize, everything about the death of Jesus. I knew there was a weight and immensity to that drama that hadn't impacted me yet. I knew it was important, but I hadn't been moved emotionally by it the way I thought I should.

I asked God in prayer to help me to understand and experience the passion of the crucifixion. God answered that prayer one Sunday morning during a time of worship. I recall my heart breaking, and tears come to my eyes, as I understood a little more fully the love behind that gruesome scene; and not only because of the sacrifice that Jesus made, but also because of the one that the Father made, letting His Son go through what He did, when He could have put an end to it.

Today, I still need to recall and seek that passion. I need to cry again over the death of the Redeemer. I don't ever want to forget the high price of my salvation or make it a sterile, 2,000 year old event, with no feeling. So should you. We all should.

Spend some time right now in quiet meditation, asking God to break your heart anew over the death of His Son. If Jesus' death really doesn't break your heart, you won't be able to teach the depth of this lesson to your students. So, in your mind's eye, go back to the streets of Jerusalem and relive the crucifixion of Jesus as if you were there. I want you to feel the guilt of the realization that it should be you up there. You're getting away with it . . . But, at the cost of another's life. As you feel that guilt, understand He died to take that very guilt away, and He did. Take time to thank Him. Now teach this lesson with that passion. (Ahhh, don't keep reading . . . make sure you spent some quiet time in meditation.)

---

**Get Set!**

---

**Option A****CRUCIFIXION**

**Materials:** Resource Page, picture of human body (optional)

**Procedure:** This option could be used before or after reading the Bible Story. I realize this is graphic in nature and may not be suitable in some situations . . . yet it is the reality that I think students should understand. Go to <http://www.dreamstargroup.com/cm-online/ym/medical.html> and get a copy of [“Medical Account of Crucifixion”

by Dr. C. Truman Davis ‘A Physician Testifies About the Crucifixion’] or use the copy in the Resource Pages of this lesson, and read all or portions of it to the students to help them grasp the real price paid by Jesus for them.

You may want to have a picture of the human body showing the muscles and bones so the students can see what the doctor is describing.

**GO TO THE BIBLE STORY**

---

**Option B****PERSPECTIVES**

**Materials:** None

**Procedure:** Ask the students these questions: **How did New Yorkers view the September 11, 2001 events? How do Muslims, in general, view the events of 9-11-01? How did Osama and the radical Muslims view it? How did the U.S. Government view it?**

**There can be many different perspectives of the same event . . . some right, some wrong. Yet, perspective is just that, it’s a matter of who you are, what you know and what you believe. When Jesus was being crucified, everyone had a different perspective on what was happening and who was in control. In our lesson today, we will see that Pilate and the Jewish leaders felt like they were controlling not only Jesus personally, but also all the events that were taking place around them. Jesus teaches them otherwise. Let’s take a look.**

**GO TO THE BIBLE STORY**

# Get Set!



## Bible Story

**Teacher Tip:** Provide markers for students to highlight portions of the story in their Bibles

**Materials:** Bible, Resource Page

**Procedure:** Read John 19:1-22. (Try reading from NASB or NIV and for added flavor, compare with CEV and ‘The Message’.)

Lessons to emphasize for option A:

- The different types of physical abuse Jesus had to endure (crown of thorns, blows to the face, scourging, whipping and nailing to the cross).
- The mental abuse of humiliation and mocking that was directed to Him by the use of the purple robe and the taunts about Him being the King of the Jews.
- The fact that Christ suffered through all of it so that we could be freed from our sins and enter His coming Kingdom on this earth. “For the wages of sin is death, and Jesus paid that wage for us, so that instead we get the free gift of eternal life” (Romans 6:23). Have your class read and highlight this passage. It would be beneficial to have the students read all of Isaiah 53 in a variety of translations and paraphrases. You can use the activity page called “Find the Crucifixion in the Old Testament.”

Lessons to emphasize for option B:

- Focus on John 19:10, 11 and the difference between Pilate’s perception of who was in control and Jesus’ knowledge of who was in control. Even in the midst of what the world sees as defeat, God not only has control, but also is working out His plan. Show them that God planned the death of Jesus, not only after the first sin, Genesis 3:15; but also before the world was made. “. . . the lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world . . .” (Revelation 13:8, KJV best translation for this verse). It means that God created the world knowing that if He did, it would cost Him His son . . . and He did it anyway, and it ‘pleased Him!’ (Isaiah 53:10, NASB). How amazing is that?!
- Help them to understand that knowing the truth, that God had it all in control, in the life of Jesus, helps us trust God in our difficult times.
- Difficult times do not mean the absence of God’s care or concern.
- That God ‘so loved’ us that it pleased him to ‘crush’ Jesus (Isaiah 53:10). Read through Isaiah 53 and see how God planned and controlled the death of Jesus, and to what ends.

### Memory Verse

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

**Teacher Tip:** Although most of them will know this verse, have them quote it the first week using their name in place of “the world,” so as to remind them who Jesus died for. The second week, have them quote it privately in prayer, using the name of the person they like the least, in place of “the world,” to remind them that Jesus died for their enemies, and that we are to show the same love and forgiveness.

**Go!****Sympathy Card For God****ARTS AND CRAFTS**

**Materials:** 8.5 x 11 sheets of paper (enough for every student), colored pencils or markers, pens, pencils

**Quest Connection**

This will help students connect their responsibility to the death of Jesus. It will help them express their love, sorrow and gratefulness to God for allowing Jesus to pay for their sins.

**Procedure:** Fold the sheet of paper in half twice to form a card. Have the students design a sympathy card by doing artwork and by writing their thoughts, either as a poem or prose. They should include their sorrow, their responsibility and their gratefulness for the sacrifice.

**Close**

They can begin to incorporate this type of language and feelings into their daily prayer life; always keeping in mind the incredibly high price that Jesus paid so they could enter eternal life and God's glorious Kingdom on this earth!

---

**Go!**

---

**Assume His Position****OBJECT LESSON**

**Materials:** Square cut nails (wood flooring nails; they look old fashioned), a room big enough for everyone to stand with their arms outstretched, Bible

---

**Quest Connection**

This is a sensory lesson to help students, in a very small way, begin to comprehend the suffering of Jesus.

**Procedure:** Have the students take a nail in each hand. Then, have them squeeze the nails tightly while they hold their arms out to their sides and raise their heels off of the ground. Have them attempt to stand like that while you read Isaiah 53, at a normal pace (not too quick now). Most will begin to drop their arms before the reading is done. Try this ahead of time at home to get a feel for the speed at which you need to read the text. Have them describe the feelings in their bodies and have them share how that might compare to Jesus on the cross.

---

**Close**

Remind them of how long they lasted. Remind them that the crucifixion alone took over 6 hours, let alone the beatings and abuse. **Jesus paid a high price for us to enjoy forgiveness. Can we without thought “crucify Christ again” by sinning willfully? We must keep His agony in mind whenever we decide that sinning is no big deal.**

Go!



## A Cross of Nails

### ARTS AND CRAFTS

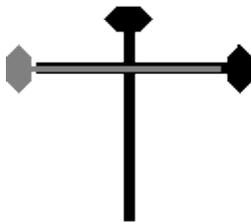
**Materials:** 3 square cut flooring nails for each student, thin wire to connect the nails together, leather cord or string for necklace

### Quest Connection

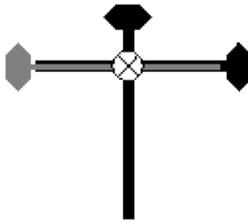
This is an activity to give the students a hands on craft to build, that they can wear as a reminder of the death of Jesus.

**Procedure:** Take two of the nails, lay them on top of each other with heads at opposite ends and the tips of the nails touching the other nails head, for the cross arms. Place the third nail behind the other two for the upright part of the cross (illus. #1). Wrap the wire around the center section where all three nails meet (illus. #2). Tie either your leather cord or your string around the head of the upright nail (illus. #3). Make sure it's long enough to go over the students' head.

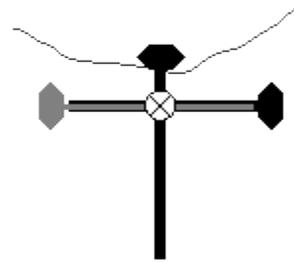
#1



#2



#3



### Close

Every time you wear this cross, remember that Jesus wore your shame, your sin.

**Go!****Read All About It****GROUP PROJECT**

**Materials:** Resource Page, pens or pencils

**Quest Connection**

**This activity is to reinforce the idea that how man sees things isn't always how God sees them. It reinforces the fact that even though things may seem out of control for us, God's hand is involved and will bring us through, if we trust Him and walk in His ways. So, what might look like a disaster and a loss to the world can actually be a victory for God.**

**Procedure:** Have students, either in groups or individually, write headlines for the upcoming crucifixion of Jesus. They'll be writing for the "Jerusalem Post" in A.D. 33. Have them write 3 separate headlines from the perspective of these three groups: the Jewish Leaders, the Roman officials and from God's perspective. Help them to think how each group viewed and felt about the death of Jesus . . . what it would have meant to them. You might want to bring in some examples of newspaper headlines to give an idea of how they are written.

Examples: Jewish leaders might write: *"Jesus is the reason for the treason."*  
Roman officials: *"King of the Jews? Then why did He lose?"*  
God might write: *"Jesus dead? Or, just sleeping in a new bed?"*

**Teacher Tip:** Only use these if students are having trouble, don't cloud their own unique creativity.

**Close**

Have students share their headlines with the rest of the class.

**Go!****Life of Christ****COMPUTER**

**Materials:** Software “Life of Christ” from [www.sundaysoftware.com](http://www.sundaysoftware.com), computer, optional: if a video projector is used, the whole class could use this software at the same time

**Teacher Tip:** Be sure to review the various lessons to confirm that they are biblically sound

**Quest Connection**

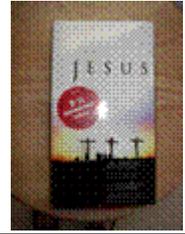
Discovery’s Life of Christ CD has 40 multimedia lessons on the Life of Jesus from His birth to His resurrection. Each presentation is about 7-8 minutes long. They are very well done, ecumenical, and presented with older elementary and youth in mind. Many can easily be used with younger elementary. It depends on the subject.

**Procedure:** Set the software to play lesson 31 and 32

**Close**

At the end of each lesson presentation, students (ages 9 to adult) are presented with a six question quiz about what they just saw and heard. Answering 5 or 6 correctly rewards the student with an answer to question from their clue book, which they are trying to fill. Some clue book answers can only be found while exploring the richly detailed 3-D MYST-like castle (*pictured on this page, MYST is the most popular secular CD game in history*). Students search castle rooms for clues. Rooms can only be opened by answering questions about Christ’s life from the presentations.

---

**Go!**

---

**His Death Caught On Tape****VIDEO**

**Materials:** Use the crucifixion scene in either the “Jesus video” or from the video series entitled “The Visual Bible, Matthew.” Both of these are good. The second one is word for word Scripture from Matthew, as actors portray the events

---

**Quest Connection**

This video will give the students a visual aid in what the crucifixion was all about. Sometimes seeing it acted out brings a broader depth to the drama.

**Procedure:** Either project or use a TV to show the sequence

---

**Close**

Seeing the pain and loss should make it easier for us to give a living sacrifice of our lives back to Jesus. You could have them read Romans 12:1, 2.

**Go!****Haiku****CREATIVE WRITING**

**Materials:** Pens or pencils, writing paper, Resource Page

**Quest Connection**

**For centuries, people have described and expressed their emotions about the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. Is anyone here familiar with a style of Japanese poem called Haiku? I am going to pass out a worksheet for you that explains it. Notice that Haikus have to be written in a very specific way!**

**Procedure:** Pass out worksheet and pens and pencils. Read over the worksheet and sample Haiku to students. Students will write at least one Haiku on the last days of Christ's life. Encourage them to use words they find in the Scripture passage to use in their poems. After they have written their poems on the worksheet, have them rewrite it on the writing paper.

**Close**

**Would anyone like to share their Haikus with the rest of us? It is important that we often reflect on what it really involved for Christ to give His life for our sins! Have the students share their poems with the rest of the congregation in the church bulletin, newsletter or read them aloud in a service!**

**Go!****And Now He Is Gone****DRAMA**

**Materials:** Characters for the skit (Narrator, Martha, Thomas, Mary of Bethany, Peter, Mary Magdalene, John, Mary, Jesus' mother), Resource Page "And Now He is Gone"

Male characters may be included, omitted, or used independently in script. If used independently, the female/male parts can be converted to fit the participating cast mix, props

**Props:** Martha – old style broom, Thomas – palm leaf, Mary of Bethany – scroll, Peter – fishing net, Mary – red rose, John – chalice type cup, Mary, Jesus' mother – Jesus' garment (white cloth)

**Set:** The only scenery used is a large cross fixed to the rear of the stage. It can be effectively draped with a purple mantle, and a crown of thorns hung from the top

**Costumes:** Dressed in Biblical attire, the cast are placed across the platform in the order of the narrator's coming introduction. They may take whatever stance appropriate to their individual temperaments. The narrator dressed in modern clothes, (or off stage) goes from one actor to the next, introducing them to the audience. At this time the characters remain in their personalities, as though unaware of the narrator's presence

**Quest Connection**

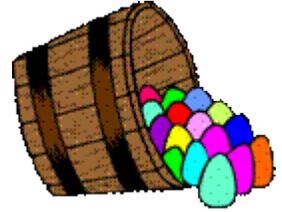
**We are going to read together a skit. This is set in the time between crucifixion and resurrection; some of the principal characters of Easter reflect on what the death of Jesus has meant to them.**

**Procedure:** Assign each student a character. Have them read their part. This skit could easily be worked on for performance.

**Close**

**Jesus meant so much to each of these characters. What would you be able to say about what Jesus means to you personally?**

---

**Go!**

---

**Story Colors****ARTS AND CRAFTS**

**Materials:** Six hard boiled eggs for each student, egg dye, needle, small pieces of cardboard or stiff paper

---

**Quest Connection**

**We know that colors can represent many different things. We are going to dye some eggs colors that will represent different parts of the story of the death of Christ.**

**Procedure:** Color each egg in the egg dye to represent the story of Easter:

**Purple** for Jesus the King.

**Red** for Jesus' blood.

**Brown** for the cross.

**Green** for the garden.

**Black** for the sins.

**Yellow** for the resurrection.

Students will take the pieces of cardboard and write what each color represents. On the other side of the cardboard, students will write the scripture reference where that word is found in the story from the Bible. Eggs could be put in a small basket with the description card.

---

**Close**

After the baskets are prepared, have students consider who they will give theirs to.

---

**Go!**

---

**Easter Cookies****FOOD**

**Materials:** Resource Page

---

**Quest Connection**

This activity is to reinforce the story of Jesus' death and Resurrection.

**Procedure:** Make copies of the Resource Page entitled, "Easter Cookies." Read it over so that you are familiar with the contents. Follow the instructions listed on the Resource Page.

---

**Close**

Prayer: **Thank You so much for Your Son and for what He went through for us. We love You. In Jesus' name. Amen.**





# Read All About It!

Write 3 different headlines about the upcoming crucifixion of Christ. Write the first headline, as the Jewish Leaders would have viewed it. Write the second headline, as the Roman Government would have viewed Jesus' death. Finally write a headline as God saw the event. Be creative and have fun!

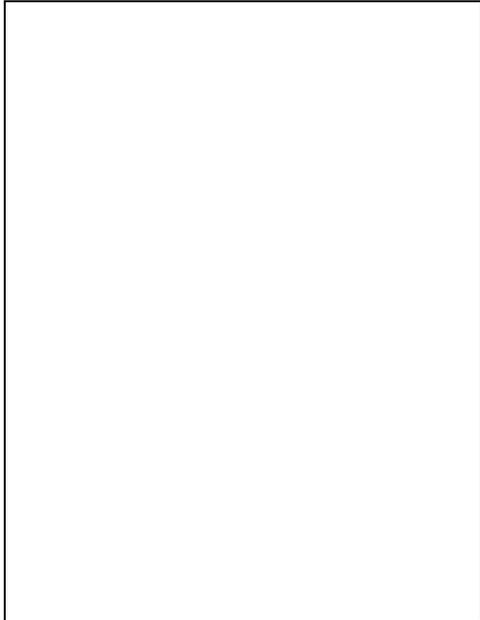
## The Jerusalem Post

April 16<sup>th</sup>, A.D. 33

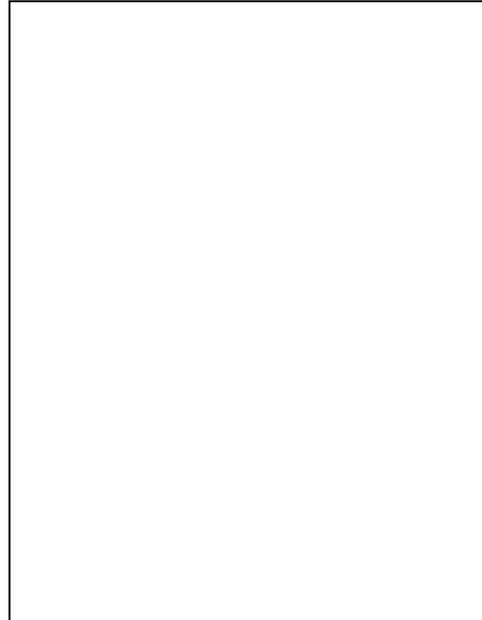
**Resource Page—Sympathy  
Card for God**

**Design a card that you might send to God after the death of His Son for you.  
Share your feelings in words and art over the sorrow and gratefulness of this  
sacrifice.**

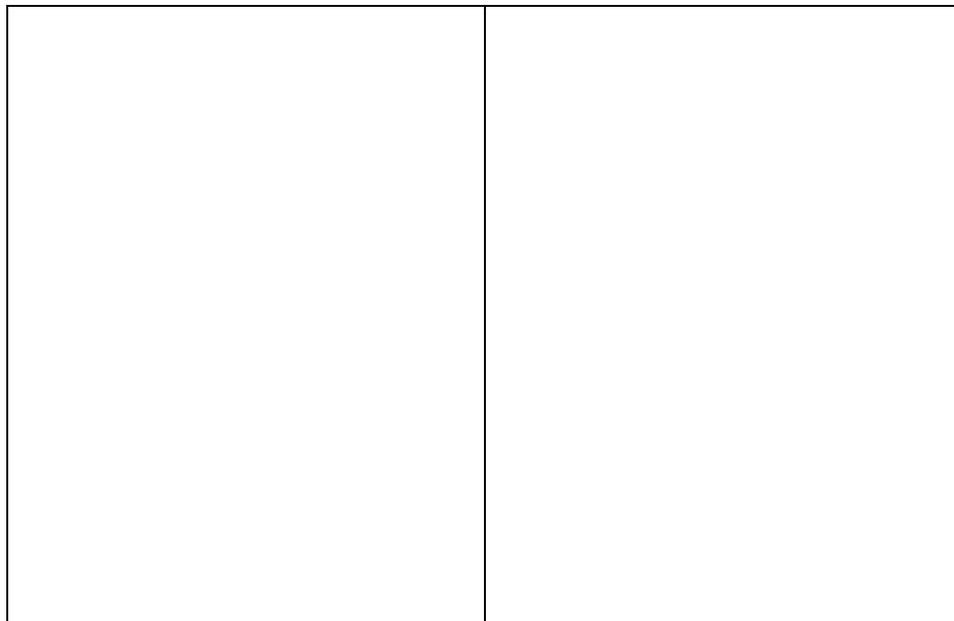
**Cover**



**Back**



**Inside**



# Finding the Crucifixion In the Old Testament

Using your Bibles, fill in the following blanks by turning to Isaiah 53 (NIV).

1. Jesus was \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ by men (v. 3).
2. What happened to him for our transgressions? \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 5).
3. Jesus did not \_\_\_\_\_ His \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 7) He kept quiet.
4. Jesus had done no \_\_\_\_\_ nor was there any \_\_\_\_\_ in His mouth (v. 9).
5. What brought us healing? \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 5).
6. What did Jesus carry for us? \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 4).
7. His punishment brings us what? \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 5).
8. Who's will was it to crush Jesus for our sins? \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 10).
9. What was prophesied would happen after Jesus death? He would \_\_\_\_\_ the light of \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 11).
10. Jesus bore our \_\_\_\_\_ and made \_\_\_\_\_ for us. (v. 12).

## Resource Page—Medical Account of Crucifixion

### Medical Account of Crucifixion

by *Dr. C. Truman Davis*

A Physician Testifies About the Crucifixion

About a decade ago, reading Jim Bishop's "*The Day Christ Died*," I realized that I had for years taken the crucifixion more or less for granted – that I had grown callous to its horror by a too easy familiarity with the grim details and a too distant friendship with our Lord. It finally occurred to me that, though a physician, I didn't even know the actual immediate cause of death. The Gospel writers don't help us much on this point, because crucifixion and scourging were so common during their lifetime that they apparently considered a detailed description unnecessary. So, we have only the concise words of the Evangelists: "Pilate, having scourged Jesus, delivered Him to them to be crucified – and they crucified Him."

I have no competence to discuss the infinite psychic and spiritual suffering of the Incarnate God atoning for the sins of fallen man. But, it seemed to me that as a physician I might pursue the physiological and anatomical aspects of our Lord's passionate some detail. What did the body of Jesus of Nazareth actually endure during those hours of torture?

This led me first to a study of the practice of crucifixion itself; that is, torture and execution by fixation to a cross. I am indebted to many who have studied this subject in the past, and especially to a contemporary colleague, Dr. Pierre Barbet, a French surgeon who has done exhaustive historical and experimental research and has written extensively on the subject.

Apparently, the first known practice of crucifixion was by the Persians. Alexander and his generals brought it back to the Mediterranean world – to Egypt and to Carthage. The Romans apparently learned the practice from the Carthaginians and (as with almost everything the Romans did) rapidly developed a very high degree of efficiency and skill at it. A number of Roman authors (Livy, Cicer, Tacitus) comment on crucifixion, and several innovations, modifications, and variations are described in the ancient literature.

For instance, the upright portion of the cross (or stripes) could have the cross-arm (or patibulum) attached two or three feet below its top in what we commonly think of as the Latin cross. The most common form used in our Lord's day, however, was the Tau cross, shaped like our T. In this cross, the patibulum was placed in a notch at the top of the stripes. There is archeological evidence that it was on this type of cross that Jesus was crucified.

Without any historical or biblical proof, Medieval and Renaissance painters have given us our picture of Christ carrying the entire cross. But, the upright post, or stripes, was generally fixed permanently in the ground at the site of execution and the condemned man was forced to carry the patibulum, weighing about 110 pounds, from the prison to the place of execution.

Many of the painters and most of the sculptors of crucifixion, also show the nails through the palms. Historical Roman accounts and experimental work have established that the nails were driven between the small bones of the wrists (radial and ulna) and not through the palms. Nails driven through the palms will strip out between the fingers when made to support the weight of the human body. The misconception may have come about through a misunderstanding of Jesus' words to Thomas, "Observe my hands." Anatomists, both modern and ancient, have always considered the wrist as part of the hand.

## Resource Page—Medical Account of Crucifixion (Cont.)

A titulus, or small sign, stating the victim's crime was usually placed on a staff, carried at the front of the procession from the prison, and later nailed to the cross so that it extended above the head. This sign with its staff nailed to the top of the cross would have given it somewhat the characteristic form of the Latin cross.

But, of course, the physical passion of the Christ began in Gethsemane. Of the many aspects of this initial suffering, the one of greatest physiological interest is the bloody sweat. It is interesting that St. Luke, the physician, is the only one to mention this. He says, "And being in Agony, He prayed the longer. And, His sweat became as drops of blood, trickling down upon the ground." Every ruse (trick) imaginable has been used by modern scholars to explain away this description, apparently under the mistaken impression that this just doesn't happen. A great deal of effort could have been saved had the doubters consulted the medical literature. Though very rare, the phenomenon of Hematidrosis, or bloody sweat, is well documented. Under great emotional stress of the kind our Lord suffered, tiny capillaries in the sweat glands can break, thus mixing blood with sweat. This process might well have produced marked weakness and possible shock.

After the arrest in the middle of the night, Jesus was next brought before the Sanhedrin and Caiphus, the High Priest; it is here that the first physical trauma was inflicted. A soldier struck Jesus across the face for remaining silent when questioned by Caiphus. The palace guards then blindfolded Him and mockingly taunted Him to identify them as they each passed by, spat upon Him, and struck Him in the face.

In the early morning, battered and bruised, dehydrated, and exhausted from a sleepless night, Jesus is taken across the Praetorium of the Fortress Antonia, the seat of government of the Procurator of Judea, Pontius Pilate. You are, of course, familiar with Pilate's action in attempting to pass responsibility to Herod Antipas, the Tetrarch of Judea. Jesus apparently suffered no physical mistreatment at the hands of Herod and was returned to Pilate. It was then, in response to the cries of the mob, that Pilate ordered Barabbas released and condemned Jesus to scourging and crucifixion.

There is much disagreement among authorities about the unusual scourging as a prelude to crucifixion. Most Roman writers from this period do not associate the two. Many scholars believe that Pilate originally ordered Jesus scourged as his full punishment and that the death sentence by crucifixion came only in response to the taunt by the mob that the Procurator was not properly defending Caesar against this pretender who allegedly claimed to be the King of the Jews.

Preparations for the scourging were carried out when the Prisoner was stripped of His clothing and His hands tied to a post above His head. It is doubtful the Romans would have made any attempt to follow the Jewish law in this matter, but the Jews had an ancient law prohibiting more than forty lashes.

The Roman legionnaire steps forward with the flagrum (or flagellum) in his hand. This is a short whip consisting of several heavy, leather thongs with two small balls of lead attached near the ends of each. The heavy whip is brought down with full force again and again across Jesus' shoulders, back, and legs. At first the thongs cut through the skin only. Then, as the blows continue, 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 produce large, deep bruises which are broken open by subsequent blows. Finally the skin of the back is hanging in long ribbons and the entire area is an unrecognizable mass of torn, bleeding tissue. When it is determined by the centurion in charge that the prisoner is near death, the beating is finally stopped.

## Resource Page—Medical Account of Crucifixion (Cont.)

The half-fainting Jesus is then untied and allowed to slump to the stone pavement, wet with His own blood. The Roman soldiers see a great joke in this provincial Jew claiming to be king. They throw a robe across His shoulders and place a stick in His hand for a scepter. They still need a crown to make their travesty complete. Flexible branch covered with long thorns (commonly used in bundles for firewood) are plaited into the shape of a crown and this is pressed into His scalp. Again there is copious bleeding, the scalp being one of the most vascular areas of the body.

After mocking Him and striking Him across the face, the soldiers take the stick from His hand and strike Him across the head, driving the thorns deeper into His scalp. Finally, they tire of their sadistic sport and the robe is torn from His back. Already having adhered to the clots of blood and serum in the wounds, its removal causes excruciating pain just as in the careless removal of a surgical bandage, and almost as though He were again being whipped, the wounds once more begin to bleed.

In deference to Jewish custom, the Romans return His garments. The heavy patibulum of the cross is tied across His shoulders, and the procession of the condemned Christ, two thieves, and the execution detail of Roman soldiers headed by a centurion begins its slow journey along the Via Dolorosa. In spite of His efforts to walk erect, the weight of the heavy wooden beam, together with the shock produced by copious blood loss, is too much. He stumbles and falls. The rough wood of the beam gouges into the lacerated skin and muscles of the shoulders. He tries to rise, but human muscles have been pushed beyond their endurance.

The centurion, anxious to get on with the crucifixion, selects a stalwart North African onlooker, Simon of Cyrene, to carry the cross. Jesus follows, still bleeding and sweating the cold, clammy sweat of shock, until the 650 yard journey from the fortress Antonia to Golgotha is finally completed.

Jesus is offered wine mixed with myrrh, a mild analgesic mixture. He refuses to drink. Simon is ordered to place the patibulum on the ground and Jesus quickly thrown backward with His shoulders against the wood. The legionnaire feels for the depression at the front of the wrist. He drives a heavy, square, wrought-iron nail through the wrist and deep into the wood. Quickly, He moves to the other side and repeats the action being careful not to pull the arms too tightly, but to allow some flexion and movement. The patibulum is then lifted in place at the top of the stripes and the titulus reading “Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews” is nailed in place.

The left foot is now pressed backward against the right foot, and with both feet extended, toes down, a nail is driven through the arch of each, leaving the knees moderately flexed. The victim is now crucified. As He slowly sags down with more weight on the nails in the wrists excruciating pain shoots along the fingers and up the arms to explode in the brain – the nails in the wrists are putting pressure on the median nerves. As He pushes Himself upward to avoid this stretching torment, He places His full weight on the nail through His feet. Again there is the searing agony of the nail tearing through the nerves between the metatarsal bones of the feet.

At this point, as the arms fatigue, great waves of cramps sweep over the muscles, knotting them in deep, relentless, throbbing pain. With these cramps comes the inability to push Himself upward. Hanging by His arms, the pectoral muscles are paralyzed and the intercostal muscles are unable to act. Air can be drawn into the lungs, but cannot be exhaled. Jesus fights to raise Himself in order to get even one short breath. Finally, carbon dioxide builds up in the lungs and in the blood stream and the cramps partially subside. Spasmodically, He is able to push Himself upward to exhale and bring in the life-giving oxygen. It was undoubtedly during these periods that He uttered the seven short sentences recorded:

## Resource Page—Medical Account of Crucifixion (Cont.)

The first, looking down at the Roman soldiers throwing dice for His seamless garment, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.”

The second, to the penitent thief, “Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise.”

The third, looking down at the terrified, grief-stricken adolescent John – the beloved Apostle – he said, “Behold thy mother.” Then, looking to His mother Mary, “Woman behold thy son.”

The fourth cry is from the beginning of the 22nd Psalm, “My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?”

Hours of limitless pain, cycles of twisting, joint-rending cramps, intermittent partial asphyxiation, searing pain where tissue is torn from His lacerated back as He moves up and down against the rough timber. Then another agony begins . . . A terrible crushing pain deep in the chest as the pericardium slowly fills with serum and begins to compress the heart.

One remembers again the 22nd Psalm, the 14th verse: “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.”

It is now almost over. The loss of tissue fluids has reached a critical level; the compressed heart is struggling to pump heavy, thick, sluggish blood into the tissue; the tortured lungs are making a frantic effort to gasp in small gulps of air. The markedly dehydrated tissues send their flood of stimuli to the brain.

Jesus gasps His fifth cry, “I thirst.”

One remembers another verse from the prophetic 22nd Psalm: “My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou has brought me into the dust of death.”

A sponge soaked in posca, the cheap, sour wine which is the staple drink of the Roman legionaries, is lifted to His lips. He apparently doesn’t take any of the liquid. The body of Jesus is now in extremes, and He can feel the chill of death creeping through His tissues. This realization brings out His sixth words, possibly little more than a tortured whisper, “It is finished.”

His mission of atonement has completed. Finally He can allow His body to die.

With one last surge of strength, He once again presses His torn feet against the nail, straightens His legs, takes a deeper breath, and utters His seventh and last cry, "Father! Into thy hands I commit my spirit."

The rest you know. In order that the Sabbath not be profaned, the Jews asked that the condemned men be dispatched and removed from the crosses. The common method of ending a crucifixion was by crurifraction, the breaking of the bones of the legs. This prevented the victim from pushing himself upward; thus 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 came to Jesus they saw that this was unnecessary.

Apparently to make doubly sure of death, the legionnaire drove his lance through the fifth interspace between the ribs, upward through the pericardium and into the heart. The 34th verse of the 19th chapter of the Gospel according to St. John reports: “And immediately there came out blood and water.” That is, there was an escape of water fluid from the sac surrounding the heart, giving postmortem evidence that Our Lord died not the usual crucifixion death by suffocation, but of heart failure (a broken heart) due to shock and constriction of the heart by fluid in the pericardium.

# Haiku

## THROUGH THE CITY

The donkey carried  
my dear Lord through the city.  
They cried, Hosanna!

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

---

First line five syllables

---

Second line seven syllables

---

Third line five syllables

By \_\_\_\_\_

## Resource Page

To be made the evening before Easter

You need:

1 c. whole pecans

1 tsp. vinegar

3 egg whites

pinch salt

1 c. sugar

zipper baggie

wooden spoon

tape

Bible

Preheat oven to 300.

Place pecans in zipper baggie and let students beat them with the wooden spoon to break into small pieces.

Explain that after Jesus was arrested He was beaten by the Roman soldiers.

Read John 19:1-3

Let each student smell the vinegar. Put 1 tsp. vinegar into mixing bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross He was given vinegar to drink.

Read John 19:28-30

Add egg whites to vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us life.

Read John 10:10-11

Sprinkle a little salt into each student's hand. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and the bitterness of our own sin.

Read Luke 23:27

So far the ingredients are not very appetizing. Add 1 c. sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that God gave us His Son because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to Him.

Read Psalm 34:8 and John 3:16

Beat with a mixer on high speed for 12 to 15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the color white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus.

Read Isa. 1:18 and John 3:1-3

Fold in broken nuts. Drop by teaspoons onto wax paper covered cookie sheet. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid.

Read Matt. 27:57-60

Put the cookie sheet in the oven, close the door and turn the oven off. Give each student a piece of tape and seal the oven door. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed.

Read Matt. 27:65-66. GO TO BED!

Explain that they may feel sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight. Jesus' followers were in despair when the tomb was sealed.

Read John 16:20 and 22

On Easter morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! On the first Easter Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty.

Read Matt. 28:1-9