**R881\_Rumination for December 12, 2021**

The **T**heme: **The Cruelty of the Cross** [berita-bethel-ung.com](http://www.berita-bethel-ung.com/)

The **T**ext: *Then delivered he* [Pilate] *Him* [Jesus] *therefore unto them to be* ***crucified****.*  Jn. 19:16

The **T**hots:

**C**losely associated with the **C**ross is the **C**ruelty of **C**rucifixion and its ex**C**ruciating anguish and pain.

The **C**ross – The **C**rucifixion of **C**hrist:

1. **The Old Covenant Prophesied it.**
2. The **M**essiah to come would be a **M**an of **S**orrows. Isa. 53:3

*He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief:*

*and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*

1. He would be the **S**inners’ **S**ubstitute and **S**aviour as the **S**uffering **S**ervant: Isa. 53:4

*…by His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities.*

 *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:* Isa. 53:11b

1. He would be ***S****tricken,* ***S****mitten of God, and afflicted.* Isa. 53:4
2. But He would be **S**atisfied as He **S**aw the Travail of His **S**oul. Isa. 53:11a

*He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied:*

1. **The New Covenant Portrayed it.**
2. The Messiah **E**xpected the Cross – He would be **R**ejected and be killed:Matt. 16:21
*From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem,*

 *and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed…*

*And shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify Him…* Matt. 20:19

1. The Messiah would suffer **E**xcruciating pain on the Cross. See # 4 below
2. The Messiah **E**xpired on the Cross – On the Cross He **E**xperienced Suffering
3. Physically - *After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished,*

*that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.* Jn. 19:28

1. Spiritually - *And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying,*

*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?* Mt. 27:46

1. The Messiah’s **E**xperience on the Cross.
2. The **G**ory of the **C**ross for the **C**rucified **C**hrist.
3. The **T**aunt before the Cross. Matt. 27:28-32
* *They* ***S****tripped him, and put on Him a* ***S****carlet robe.* 27:28
* *They…****P****latted a crown of thorns, they* ***P****ut it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand:*

*and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!* 27:29

* *And they* ***S****pit upon Him, and took the reed, and* ***S****mote Him on the head.*  27:30
* *And after that they had mocked Him, they took the* ***R****obe off from Him,*

*and put his own* ***R****aiment on Him, and led Him away to* ***crucify Him.***27:31

* …*they came out, they found a man of* ***C****yrene, Simon by name:*

*him they* ***C****ompelled to bear His* ***C****ross.* 27:32

1. The **T**orture on the Cross. [Also see Reflections for the Week below.]
* The **T**orture of **T**hirst. Jn. 19:28

*Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished…saith, I thirst.*

* The **T**orture of the **T**hrust of the **S**oldier’s **S**pear: Jn. 19:34

*One of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.*

* The **T**orture of being **F**orsaken by the **F**ather. Mk. 15:34

*At the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*

*which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsakenMme?*

1. The **G**lory of the **C**ross or The **T**riumph of the Cross –
2. *Jesus…cried with a loud voice…Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit*… Lk. 23:46
3. *Jesus…said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.* Jn. 19:30
4. Paul’s **G**lory in the **C**ross, his **C**rucifixion with **C**hrist - Gal. 6:14

 *But* ***G****od forbid that I should* ***G****lory, save in the* ***C****ross of our Lord Jesus* ***C****hrist,*

 *by whom the world is* ***C****rucified unto me, and I unto the world.*

1. **The Christian Proclaims it.** Gal. 2:20

*I am* ***C****rucified with* ***C****hrist: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:*

*and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God,*

*who loved me, and gave Himself for me.*

*In the cross of Christ I glory, Towering o’er the wrecks of time;*

 *All the light of sacred story Gathers round its head sublime.* John Bowring

**REFLECTIONS FOR THE WEEK R. 881**

1. J. D. Watson in his Daily Devotional, “A Hebrew Word for the Day – Dec. 5” gives his readers a very graphic description of what it was for a condemned criminal to be crucified on the cross in Roman times. It sort of describes for us as well as gives us an idea of what Jesus experienced when He was crucified – the gory of the cross!

Following is an extract from his book mentioned above:

*Crucifixion was, without question, the cruelest, the most disgraceful, barbaric, and excruciating execution ever devised by a depraved mind. It was probably invented by the Persians, who used it because it would not defile the ground, which they consecrated to their god Ormuzd. Alexander the Great introduced it to Egypt and Carthage, and the Romans seem to have picked it up from the Carthaginians and "perfected" it. It was reserved for slaves, foreigners, revolutionaries, and the vilest of criminals.*

*While practices varied in specific cultures, archaeology indicates that the Romans preferred the "low Tau" cross. Unlike the traditional shape, this cross looked like a "capital T," with the upright post called the "stipes" and the crossbar called the "patibulum." The patibulum alone, which our Lord was forced to carry in his already greatly weakened state, weighed from seventy-five to one hundred pounds.*

*At the crucifixion site, the stipes was secured while the victim was thrown to the ground with his arms outstretched along the patibulum. While some cultures tied the victim, the Romans preferred to use "nails," tapered iron spikes approximately five to seven inches long and about three-eighths of an inch in diameter. History further confirms that the spikes were driven not through palms of the hands, which could not support a man's weight, but through the wrists (see hand, Dec. 24), causing unimaginable pain as the large median nerve was crushed or severed. The patibulum was then lifted onto the stipes and the feet were then nailed to it through the heels, causing the knees to bend and rotate to one side as the man's weight hung on his wrists.*

*The most fiendish aspect of all this was that the man's weight locked the intercostal muscles in the state of exhalation and paralyzed the pectoral muscles so he could not lift himself up to breathe. This brought on hypercardia, spasms, and asphyxia.*

*It is indeed significant that our English word excruciating comes from the Latin excruciatus, "out of the cross." That, and much more, is what our Savior endured for us.*

No one can ever imagine the fullest extent of the Lord’s sufferings on the cross on our behalf to bear the punishment of our sins in this cruel way. Yet, the Lord, the innocent and spotless Lamb of God, went through it all for us.

Can we say with Paul today, “*I am Crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me”?*

Meditate deeply what indeed it is to be crucified with Christ. Read Roman chap. 6 for further amplification on this important subject of being crucified with Christ. **REFLECT.**

1. Today we see the cross as a symbol decorating buildings and halls of religious buildings and also used as an ornament of jewellery by men and women. What then is the meaning and significance of the cross when used in such ways?

Does it fulfil the Lord’s command to His disciples to bear His cross –

 *And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple.*

 (Lk. 14:27)

 Are you His disciple and bearing His cross in your life? **REFLECT**

 **Points To Ponder:**

*Is the Cross a* ***S****ign of your* ***D****iscipleship or a* ***S****ymbol of* ***D****ecoration to you?*