

## MATHEW 26: 37-38

### THE SUFFERING AND DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST

*He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."*

**Mathew 26:37-38**

Words could never express what Christ experienced. Words are just inadequate, totally inadequate. Using all the descriptive words in the world would be as inadequate in describing the sufferings of Christ as using a syringe to drain an ocean.

1. There was the *mental and emotional agony*: the weight, pressure, anguish, sorrow and excessive strain such as no man has ever experienced. He was the Son of God, Maker of heaven and earth, yet images and thoughts were pressing ever so heavily in upon His spirit, the images and thoughts of...
  - the *unbelief* of all men everywhere
  - the *rejection* of His own people, the Jews
  - the *malice* of the world's leaders, both Jew and Gentile, religious and civil
  - the *betrayal* of one of His own, Judas
  - the *desertion* of all His men
  - the *denial* by the leader of His own men, Peter
  - His *trial* and unjust condemnation

- the *ridicule and pain* of being scourged, spat upon, slugged, cursed, mocked, crowned with thorns and nailed to the cross and killed

2. There was the *physical experience of death while being the Son of God*. What is it like for the Son of God to die just as all men die? If just the physical aspect of Christ's death is considered, His death is still different from all other men.
  - a. Christ as the Son of God possessed the very seed, quality, ingredient and energy of life within His being (see *Eternal Life*, Jn. 17:2-3).
  - b. Christ as the Son of God possessed no seed, quality, or ingredient of death (Jn. 14:6; 1 Tim. 6:16; 1 Jn. 1:1-2; see Jn. 1:4); but man does. Man possesses the seed of corruption and death. Man's sinful nature knows nothing and expects nothing but death, but the sinless nature of Christ knows nothing of sin and death. His sinless nature and the agony and pain of death were bound to be as different from man's death as white is different from black.

There is another point to note as well. Man suffers humiliation in death. No matter how much man struggles to live, he wastes and wastes away until he is carried into the grave to become dust of the ground. But not Christ; He was sinless and perfect even in His human nature. His sinless nature knew nothing of death. Imagine the humiliation: the Son of God - the Perfect Man, the Perfect God - having to die upon this earth! No wonder He "began to be sorrowful and troubled!" No wonder He could say, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death." In some mysterious way, God made Christ to become sin for us (2 Cor. 5: 21).

3. There was *the spiritual experience of death while being the Son of Man* (see Mt.5:17-18; see *Son of Man*, Mt. 8:20; Rom. 8:2-4). There is so much here, yet so little can ever be known.

a. First, what is it like to be without sin? Christ, made in the image of man and being fully man, was sinless. He lived as all men live facing all the trials and temptations that men face, yet He never sinned. He was without sin. He became the Perfect and Ideal Man - all that God wants man to be. He became the Pattern for all men.

**Heb 4:15** *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet was without sin. (see 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pt.2:22; 1 Jn.3:5)*

**Heb 5:8-9** *Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.*

b. Second, what is it like to bear all the sins of the world? What is it like to be perfect and sinless and then, all of a sudden, to have all the sins of the world laid upon Oneself? In some mysterious way, God took all the sins of the world and laid the whole *body of sin* upon Christ. In some mysterious way, God made Christ to become sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21). Christ, as the Ideal Man, became the Ideal Sin-Bearer. He bore all the sins and all that sin causes - all the....

- darkness
- dirt
- anxiety
- pollution
- weight
- turmoil
- filthiness
- pressure
- worry

- guilt
- strife
- enmity
- consumption
- savagery
- war
- poison
- disturbance
- conflict
- torture
- corruption

**Isa 53:6** *We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

**Rom 5:6** *You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.*

**1 Cor 15:3** *For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.*

**2 Cor 5:21** *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

**Heb 9:28** *So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.*

**1 Pet 2:24** *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*

c. Third, what is it like to bear all the judgment and condemnation of sin for all men? Christ suffered for the sins of the whole world, suffered *separation* from God. The terrifying mystery of this hellish experience is seen in His cry upon the cross, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" (see *Death of Jesus Christ*, Mt. 27:26-44; Mt. 27:46-49; see *Death of Jesus Christ*, 1 Pet. 2:21-25).

**Isa 53:5** *But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.*

**Gal 3:13** *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.”*

**Heb 2:9** *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honour because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.*

**1 Pet 3:18** *For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit. □*