

feb 6

i don't really know how to begin today. i feel the Lord has given me something He wants me to share but there might be a drawing back by some of you. i guess that puts me in good company. the word says many turned away from Jesus when the words got too hard. Lord, help me accurately share what You have laid on my heart. so let me begin.

the church and the body of Christ have accepted and even embraced or secularized so many holidays. i'm talking even about some christianized ones. what was the real passover is celebrated as easter which has it's roots in a pagan goddess and fertility and more. we play with bunnies and hunt eggs while ignoring it's true significance. (don't get me started on the fancy dresses and yearly attendance at church to show them off.)

christmas is celebrated in december which was no where near Christ's birth. that fact is unimportant. the fact it has deteriorated into a "what am I getting" and a "money-centered event" degrades the magnificence He came to bring. God consented to share our human flesh with it's limitations, suffering and to die for OUR sins.

then there's the completely satanic "halloween" which many celebrate almost as much as christmas. they not only indulge themselves, they encourage their children to revel in dressing as evil, dark entities. we say these are harmless enjoyments. these things are

spirits and only have evil intents. their desire is to accustom, influence, and if they might, even possess the most innocent and vulnerable among us.

"for I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."
matt 5:20 has our righteousness exceeded theirs?
Jesus is coming for a holy, righteous bride. God will strip away all the things that mar the beauty of His bride. even those little things we now see as insignificant.

do any of us really fully realize the price He has paid for our redemption? perhaps only mel gibson has come close to the humiliation and pain our Lord endured for us, and that only shadows it. the following is rather long, but detailed information garnered from the internet. a descriptive practice of crucifixion.

Although the Romans did not invent crucifixion, they perfected it as a form of torture and capital punishment that was designed to produce a slow death with maximum pain and suffering. It was one of the most disgraceful and cruel methods of execution and usually was reserved only for slaves, foreigners, revolutionaries, and the vilest of criminals. Roman law usually protected Roman citizens from crucifixion, except perhaps in the case of desertion by soldiers.

(The cross) was characterized by an upright post and a horizontal crossbar, and it had several variations. It was customary for the condemned man to carry his own cross from the flogging post to the site

of crucifixion outside the city walls. He was usually naked, unless this was prohibited by local customs. Since the weight of the entire cross was probably well over 300 lb. (136 kg), only the crossbar was carried. The crossbar, weighing 75 to 125 lb. (34 to 57 kg), was placed across the nape of the victim's neck and balanced along both shoulders. Usually, the outstretched arms then were tied to the crossbar. The procession to the site of crucifixion was led by a complete Roman military guard, headed by a centurion. One of the soldiers carried a sign on which the condemned man's name and crime were displayed. Later, the sign would be attached to the top of the cross. The Roman guard would not leave the victim until they were sure of his death.

Outside the city walls was permanently located the heavy upright wooden post, on which the crossbar would be secured. To prolong the crucifixion process, a horizontal wooden block or plank, serving as a crude seat, often was attached midway down the post.

At the site of execution, by law, the victim was given a bitter drink of wine mixed with myrrh (gall) as a mild pain reliever. The criminal was then thrown to the ground on his back, with his arms outstretched along the crossbar. The hands could be nailed or tied to the crossbar, but nailing apparently was preferred by the Romans. The nails were tapered iron spikes approximately 5 to 7 in (13 to 18 cm) long with a square shaft $\frac{3}{8}$ in (1 cm) across. The nails commonly were driven through the wrists rather than the palms.

After both arms were fixed to the crossbar, the

crossbar and the victim, together, were lifted onto the post. Next, the feet were fixed to the cross, either by nails or ropes. Nailing was the preferred Roman practice. Although the feet could be fixed to the sides of the post or to a wooden footrest, they usually were nailed directly to the front of the post. To accomplish this, flexion of the knees may have been quite prominent, and the bent legs may have been rotated outward.

When the nailing was completed, the sign was attached to the cross, by nails or cords, just above the victim's head. The soldiers and the civilian crowd often taunted and jeered the condemned man, and the soldiers customarily divided up his clothes among themselves. The length of survival generally ranged from three or four hours to three or four days and appears to have been inversely related to the severity of the scourging. However, even if the scourging had been relatively mild, the Roman soldiers could hasten death by breaking the legs below the knees.

Not uncommonly, insects would light upon or burrow into the open wounds or the eyes, ears, and nose of the dying and helpless victim, and birds of prey would tear at these sites. Moreover, it was customary to leave the corpse on the cross to be devoured by predatory animals. However, by Roman law, the family of the condemned could take the body for burial, after obtaining permission from the Roman judge.

Since no one was intended to survive crucifixion, the body was not released to the family until the soldiers were sure that the victim was dead. By

custom, one of the Roman guards would pierce the body with a sword or lance. Traditionally, this had been considered a spear wound to the heart through the right side of the chest – a fatal wound probably taught to most Roman soldiers. Moreover, the standard infantry spear, which was 5 to 6 ft (1.5 to 1.8 m) long could easily have reached the chest of a man crucified on the customary low cross.

perhaps you just skimmed over the previous report. maybe too long or gory. the Lord who came to redeem us suffered this humiliation and tortuous death. we always picture any representations of His crucifixion with Him wearing at least a loin cloth; for modesty sake. we are ashamed of His nakedness but not His blood?

i think that was not the case. He died naked and bloody, before His earthly mother, His disciples and the multitude who bore witness, reviling and mocking Him all the while. He bore not only our guilt, but also our shame. that is part of the redemption also.

i do not testify to the fact as to whether the shroud of turin is authentic or not. i admit the head wounds from the bleeding from His crown of thorns are unique. regardless of that, this was a man who had been crucified and he was crucified naked.

as we absorb the magnitude of our Lord's sacrifice, may we all repent of even the seemingly "little foxes" that are spoiling our vine. and may we all proudly proclaim. "for i am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for

everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek." rom 1:16 may our righteousness exceed that of the pharisees.

linda