

Was This Necessary?

Ponder: The brutality of Jesus' death

Scripture: "His appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any human being and his form marred beyond human likeness" (Isa. 52:14b, NIV).

Most, if not all, who read this devotional already understand that Jesus died for you. When we read the Old Testament prophecies, the gospels, and even the remainder of the New Testament, however, we can't help noticing the extremely brutal manner in which His enemies murdered Him. Was all of that really necessary? Wouldn't something a bit less shocking and graphic have accomplished the same goal?

Natural death has been the norm ever since sin spoiled the setting in Eden. For Jesus to have come to this earth, lived until He was old, and then died of natural causes, would have accomplished nothing as far as our redemption from sin is concerned.

And not just any means of killing Him would suffice. Theoretically, His enemies could have poisoned Him, strangled Him, or starved Him to death. But none of these would have secured our salvation. "Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission" (Heb. 9:22).

Not just any means of shedding His blood would achieve the results we need. Shooting arrows into Him or stabbing Him with a sword certainly would have involved bloodshed, but it would not have paid the price for our sins. Messiah's death was preceded by bloody scourging, the merciless lashes being so numerous and devastating that He became unrecognizable as a human being. Then He was crucified, "lifted up" from the earth (John 12:32-33), His hands and feet being pierced in keeping with Psa. 22:16. This was in keeping with the divine plan, and Jesus was "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8).

Our word excruciating is derived from "ex" (out of) and "cruciatu" (cross or crucifixion). "Crucifixion probably first began among the Persians . . . 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 a maximum of pain and suffering" (Dr. Edwards et. al., "On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ" Journal of the American Medical Association, 3/21/86, p. 1458).

For more detailed information visit <http://www.apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?article=145>

Yes it was necessary! Without the death of Jesus in just the way it occurred, we would have no hope.

Song: "He Bore It All"

Prayer: Loving Father, we are humbled that You loved us so much You sent Jesus to endure the cross so that we might be saved. Help us to understand and appreciate what You did and what He did; and help us to show our appreciation through loving service to others in Your name. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.