

## **THE DEATH OF JESUS (by Devin Spivey on May 2, 2012)**

At the age of 33, Jesus was condemned to death.

At that time, crucifixion was the worst death a person could experience. Only the worst criminals were crucified. But Jesus was innocent! And they didn't just crucify Him, they chose to nail Him to the cross by His hands and feet, rather than tie Him up was the usual practice.

But before the hammer drove nails through His wrists and feet, Jesus was whipped and beaten. The beating was so severe that it tore the flesh from His body. The beating was so horrific that His face would have been torn. His beard would have been ripped from His face. The crown of thorns (probably 2 to 3 inch thorns) cut deeply into His scalp. Most men would not have survived the torture. The raw open wounds on His back would have rubbed against the wooden cross. This would have given Him splinters and filled His wounds with wood shavings.

History tells us that the Romans chose nails between six and 8 inches long. They were driven into Jesus' wrists, not into His palms as is commonly assumed. There is actually a tendon in the wrist that extends to the shoulder. The Roman guards knew that when the nails were being hammered into the wrist, the tendon would tear and break, forcing Jesus to use His back muscles to support Himself so that he could breathe, but only by lifting His body up by His feet.

Both of His feet were also nailed together. Therefore, He was forced to support Himself on the single nail that was driven into His feet. Jesus could not support Himself with his legs for long because of the pain, so He would be forced to alternate between arching His back and using His legs. Imagine the struggle, the pain, the suffering, the courage and the work it would take just to stay alive for a few more minutes. Jesus endured this horrible reality for several hours. Can you imagine this kind of suffering?

The Bible tells us often about the blood that Jesus shed. He literally bled until there was no more blood to bleed out. The human adult body contains about 3.5 Liters (just less than a gallon) of blood. It's no wonder that His death is comparable to the Passover lamb.

A few minutes before He died, the bleeding would have slowed. He would simply be pouring water from His wounds, as the Scriptures teach us. This is evident when they pierced His side with a spear and blood and water poured out.

As if His death was not enough, do you remember what they did while He died? They mocked Him. They ridiculed Him. He cursed at Him. They spit at Him. They dressed Him up and called Him names. Then they tore His clothes and made fun of Him. They probably threw stones and insults all the way to Calvary. And, of course, they made Him carry that cross.

**Read John 3:16 with me.** Jesus Christ died...for you! This story is told so that you can have eternal life. Will you accept it? Will you be covered in the blood of Jesus? We invite you to come to Jesus, while we stand and sing together.