

Pierced for Us

John 19:31—37

Introduction

Isaiah 53:5 says: *But He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed.* Christ was wounded, chastised, pierced, and crushed on the cross for us, that we might be healed of our sins and iniquities. Tonight, we focus on the piercing.

Him Whom They Have Pierced – Zechariah 12:10

John refers to **Zechariah 12:10**, which says: *And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on Me, on Him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over Him, as one weeps over a firstborn.* Of course, the piercing may refer to the nails which pierced His hands and feet, or the thorns which pierced His head. But John puts it in the context of the spear in His side. Why did this happen?

The Breaking of Their Legs

John tells us that this was *the day of Preparation (John 19:31)*. The next day was the first Sabbath in the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Which is what made it a “high day.” That being the case, they couldn’t leave anyone on the cross after sundown. Breaking the shinbones of the criminals would hasten their death because they wouldn’t be able to push up off their legs to catch their breath.

Already Dead – Psalm 34:20

They broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with [Jesus] (v. 32). But when they came to Jesus, He was already dead. So, they didn’t break His legs, but one soldier thrust a spear into His side. John says this was to fulfill Scripture. **Psalm 34:20** says: *He keeps all His bones; not one of them is broken.* **Exodus 12** gives the regulations for the Passover. In it we read: *It shall be eaten in one house; you shall not take any of the flesh outside the house, and you shall not break any of its bones (Exodus 12:46).* Christ Himself became our Passover Lamb, *the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).*

Blood and Water

But an amazing thing happened when the spear pierced Jesus: *At once there came out blood and water (John 19:34).* There is a sac around the heart filled with fluid, called the pericardium. Puncturing this sac would let out blood and water. However, Jesus was already dead. Once a person dies, the heart is no longer pumping blood. So, there is no pressure to force blood out. Blood doesn’t flow from the dead. Some may have seeped out but not flowed. Even though He was dead, there was a divine power that caused the blood to flow.

The Sacraments

Many church fathers have speculated that this is the beginning of the Sacraments. Chrysostom said: We are regenerated by the water and nourished by flesh and blood. The piercing shows there is life in Christ, even though He is dead. We receive forgiveness of sins and life in Jesus in the waters of Baptism and His body and blood in Holy Communion. Come to the cross; receive forgiveness and life. Jesus is **PIERCED FOR US**.

*And the peace of God,
Which surpasses all understanding,
Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
