

The Atonement (Mark 15:24)

I. Christ Sufferings for us

A. Physical Pain and Death

1. We must know and understand that crucifixion was one of the most horrible forms of execution devised by man.
 - We may have troubling fully picturing and understanding crucifixion because it no longer is used as a form of execution and especially not in western civilization
 - But if any ancient world readers or the members of the first years of the church post christ, would've just read [Mark 15:24](#) “[And they crucified him](#)” and would be able to see a vivid picture of him.
2. This form of execution was used on criminals to bring about a very slow death with ultimately was death by suffocation.
 - When criminals arms were outstretched and fastened by nails to the cross, he had to support most of the weight of his body with his arms.
 - The Chest Cavity would be pulled upward and outward, making it difficult to exhale in order to draw a fresh breath.
 - When the victims longing for oxygen became unbearable, he would have to push himself up with his feet, thus allowing to receive more natural support to the weight of his body, which then released some weight that was on his arms and his chest cavity to contract more normally.
 - By doing this (pushing himself upward) the criminal could fend off suffocation, but it was extremely painful because it required putting the body weight on the nails holding the feet, and bending the elbows and pulling upward on the nails which were driven through his wrist.
 - The greek word hand (cheir: [Luke 24:39-40](#) “[see my hands and my feet, that is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones that I have. And When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.](#)” Or in [John 20:20](#) “[And when he said this, he showed them his hands and his side.](#)”) can be translated as arm, A nail through a hand would not have been unable to support the weight of the body, for the hands would have torn.
 - The criminals back, which had been torn opened repeatedly by a previous whipping or beating, would be scraping against the wooden cross which each breath.

- A Physician writing in the American medical association in 1986 explained the pain through death by crucifixion.
 - “Adequate exhalation required lifting the body by pushing up on the feet and by flexing the elbows.... However, this maneuver would place the entire weight of the body on the tarsals and would produce searing pain. Furthermore, flexion of the elbows would cause rotation of the wrists about the iron nails and cause fiery pain along the damaged median nerves... muscle cramps and paresthesia of the outstretched and uplifted arms would add to the discomfort. As a result, each respiratory effort would become agonizing and tiring and lead eventually to asphyxia (which is the extreme condition caused by lack of oxygen and excess carbon dioxide in the blood. Produced by interference with respiration or suffocation.)
- Some cases crucified men would survive for several days, nearly suffocating but not quite dying. This was why the executioners would sometimes break the legs of the criminals, so that death would come quickly
 - This is seen in John 19:31-33 “ Since it was the day of preparation, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the sabbath (For that sabbath was a high day) the Jews asked pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.”
 - We see how breaking of the legs allows for death to come more quickly, but the significance of the legs of Jesus not being broken comes to show that the sacrifice of Jesus fulfills scripture.
 - John 19:36 “For these things took place that the scriptures may be fulfilled.”
 - Exodus 12:46 “It shall be eaten in one house; you shall not take any of the flesh outside of the house, and you shall not break any of its bones.”
 - The lamb foreshadowed Jesus, Jesus is the true passover lamb

B. The Pain of bearing sin

1. More awful than the physical pain that Jesus endured was the psychological suffering that Jesus endured bearing the guilt of our sins.
 - As Christians we have all felt the anguish after knowing that we sinned , the weight of guilt is heavy on our hearts and there comes a sense of separation to that which is right. In fact the more we grow in holiness as Gods children, the more intensely we feel this instinctive revulsion against sin.
 - Now understand that Jesus was perfectly Holy. He hated sin with his entire being. The thought of evil and sin, contradicted everything in his character. Far more than we do, Jesus instinctively rebelled against evil.

- Yet in obedience to the Father, and out of love for us, Jesus took on himself all of the sins of those who would someday be saved.
 - Taking upon himself all the evil against which his soul rebelled created deep revulsion in the center of his being. All that he hated most deeply was poured out fully upon him.
2. Scripture tell us frequently that our sins were put on Christ.
- Isaiah 53:6 “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned -everyone- to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”
 - Isaiah 53:12 “ Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and he makes intercession for the transgressors.”
 - John 1:29 “The next day he saw Jesus coming towards him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.”
 - 2 Corinthians 5:21 “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”
 - Galatians 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 hanged on a tree.”
 - Hebrews 9:28 “So Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.”
 - 1 Peter 2:24 “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.
 - This all indicates that God the Father who put our sins on Christ, in the same way that the sins of Adam were imputed to us, so God imputed our sins to Jesus Christ.
 - Romans 5:12-19 “V.12 Therefore just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned— V.13 for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. V.14 Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who is to come. V.15 BUT the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one mans trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. V.16 And the free gift is not like result of that one mans sin. For the judgment following ones trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. V.17 For if, because of one mans trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will

those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. V.18 THEREFORE, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. V.19 FOR as by the one mans disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one mans obedience the many were made righteous.

- We know that sin came into the world through Adam and subjected us to death and a sinful nature and although his sin got imputed to us, Christ death or his act of righteousness in both his death and his whole life of perfect obedience grants righteousness and life to all those who believe in him.
- God himself (Father, son, and Holy Spirit) is the ultimate standard of what is just and fair, and he decreed the atonement would take place in this way, the son would die on a cross to bear the sins of the earth weighted on his shoulder, and this in fact did satisfy the demands of his own righteousness and justice.

C. Abandonment

1. The physical pain of crucifixion and the pain of taking on himself the absolute evil of our sins were aggravated by the fact that Jesus faced this pain alone.
 - In the Garden of Gethsemane, when Jesus took with him Peter, James, and John, he confided something of his agony to them. Mark 14:34 “And he said to them “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch.”
 - We are able to see the amount of distress that Jesus is in at the moment Luke 22:44 adds “And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.”
 - Now there are some who believe that using the word like Luke was saying this metaphorically, but there are modern accounts of people sweating blood, a condition known as hermatidrosis, where extreme anguish or physical strain causes one capillary blood vessels to dilate and burst, there mixing sweat and blood. Either way we are able to see the intensity of this moment the anticipation of Jesus bearing our sins in his own body.
 - This feeling that Jesus shared and the confidence he had is something that one would only disclose to a close friend, and it implies a request for support in his hour of his greatest trial. Yet the moment that Jesus was arrested Matthew 26:56 tell us “Then all the disciples left him and fled”
 - John 13:1 tell us “when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world he loved them to the end.”

- Jesus had nothing but true genuine love for them, but in return they all abandoned him and some couldn't even be there for him during his agony.
- But far worse than the abandonment of the closet human friends was the fact that Jesus was deprived of the closeness to the Father that had been the deepest joy of his heart throughout his earthly life. When Jesus cried out in [Matthew 27:46](#) “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” That is “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”
 - Jesus cry expressed the alienation from God that he endured as he bore the fathers wrath against sin.
 - Jesus almost always referred to God as father but he hear he doesn't cry out Father but “My God”
 - Jesus had to be cut off from the favor of the fellowship with the Father that had been his eternally, because he was bearing the sins of his people and therefore enduring Gods wrath.
 - Surely Jesus Knew why he was dying for he knew this was his purpose
 - [Matthew 16:21](#) “From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priest and scribes , and be killed, and on the third day be raised.”
 - And surely his cry with a lot voice is expressing a confused state, rather witness to the bystanders, and through them tot he rest of the world, that he was experiencing Gods forsakenness not for anything in himself but for the salvation of others.
 - Jesus showed that he was finally cut off from the sweet fellowship with his Heavenly Father that had been his unfailing source of his inward strength.As Jesus bore our sins on the cross, he was abandoned by his Heavenly Father who is according to Habukkuk 1:13 “of purer eyes than to behold evil”
 - Jesus faced the weight of the guilt of millions of sins alone.

D. Bearing the Wrath of God

1. More difficult than the past three aspects of Jesus pain was bearing the wrath of God upon himself.
 - As Jesus bore the guilt of our sins alone, God the Father, the mighty Creator, the Lord of the universe, poured out on Jesus the fury of his wrath: Jesus became the object of the intense hatred of sin and vengeance abasing sin which God had patiently stored up since the beginning to the world.
 - [Romans 3:25](#) “Whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sin.”

- The word propitiation - a sacrifice that bears God's wrath to the end and in doing so changes God's wrath towards us into favor.
- God had not simply forgotten about the sins of the past generations, He had forgiven sins and stored up righteous anger against those sins.
- At the cross the fury of all the stored up wrath against sin was unleashed against God's own son.
- It is important to insist on the fact that Jesus bore the wrath against sin, because it is the heart of the atonement.
 - It means that there is an eternal, unchangeable requirement in the holiness and justice of God that sin be paid for.

E. Understanding the death of Christ

1. The penalty was inflicted by the Father

- If we ask who required Christ to pay the penalty for our sins? The answer is given to us through Scripture is that the penalty was inflicted by God the Father as he represented the interest of the trinity in redemption.
 - [2 Corinthians 5:21](#)
 - [Isaiah 53:6](#)
 - [Isaiah 53:10](#)
- It was God's Justice that required that sin be paid for. It was God the Father's role to require the payment. God the son voluntarily took upon himself the role of bearing the penalty for sin.
- We know both the Love of God and the Justice of God were the causes of the atonement, but the love of God the Father and God the Son is so perfectly displayed through redemption as seen in this verse
 - [Romans 5:8](#) "but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

2. Not eternal suffering but complete payment

- If we had to pay the penalty for our own sins, we would have to suffer eternally in separation from God.
 - If we suffered for our own sin we would never be able to make ourselves right with God again. There would be no hope, because there would be no way to live again, and earn perfect righteousness before God, there would also be no way to undo our sinful nature and make it right before God.
 - BUT JESUS was able to bear the wrath of God against our sin and bear it to the end. No mere man could have ever done this, by the virtue of the union of the divine human nature of Jesus and human nature in himself, Jesus was able to bear the wrath of God and bear it to the end.
 - [Isaiah 53:11](#) "Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied."

- When Jesus knew he had paid the full penalty for our sin, he said “it is finished.”
- If Christ had not paid the full penalty there would still be condemnation left for us.
 - But since he paid the full penalty due to us Romans 8:1 says “There is therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”
- The author of Hebrews emphasizes the finished work of redemption.
 - Hebrews 9:25-28 “Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the Holy Place every year with blood not his own. For then he would have to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting.”
- The work of Christ comes to assure us that there is no more penalty for sin left for us to pay. The penalty has entirely been paid for by Christ, and we should have no remaining fear of condemnation or punishment.

F. The meaning of the blood of Jesus

1. 1 Peter 1:18-19 “Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.”
 - The blood of Christ is the clear outward evidence that his life blood was cured out when he died a sacrificial death to pay for our redemption.
 - The blood of Christ removes our guilt before God
 - The blood of Christ cleanses our consciousness
 - Hebrews 9:14 “How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.
 - The blood of Christ gives us access to God in worship and prayer
 - Hebrews 10:19 “Therefore brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Holy place by the blood of Jesus.”
 - The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin
 - 1 John 1:7 “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his son, cleanses us from all sin.”
 - Revelation 1:5 “To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood.”

- Through his blood we conquer the accuser
 - Revelation 12:10-11 “And I heard a loud voice in Heaven saying “Now the Salvation and the power and Kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimonies, for they loved not their lives even unto death.”
- The blood of Jesus rescues us from a sinful way of life.
 - (See above) 1 Peter 1:18-19
- Scripture emphasis on the blood of Christ also shows us the clear connection between Christ death and the many sacrifices of the old testament. These sacrifices we saw in the old testament all pointed forward to the date of Jesus. The redemption plan was being foreshadowed.

G. Concluding the Atonement

1. The atoning work of Christ had several effects on us and they are seen through four terms that come to satisfy or meet the following needs
 - We deserve to die as the penalty for sin
 - We deserve to bear God wrath against sin
 - We are separated from God by our sins
 - We are in bondage to sin and to the kingdom of Satan
2. These four needs are met by Christ's Death in the following ways :
 - Sacrifice : To say the penalty of death that we deserved because of our sins, Christ died as a sacrifice for us
 - Propitiation: To remove us from the wrath of God that we deserved, Christ died as a propitiation for our sin.
 - Reconciliation : To overcome our separation from God, we needed someone to provide Reconciliation and thereby bring us back into fellowship with God.
 - Redemption: Because we as sinners are in bondage to sin and to Satan, we need someone to provide redemption and thereby “redeem” us out of that bondage.
 - We were redeemed from the bondage of Satan because “The whole world is in the power of the evil one”(1 John 5:19), and when Christ came he died to “deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to a lifelong bondage”(Hebrews 2:15)
 - Paul says in Romans 6:11,14 “So you must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.... For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under Law but under Grace”
 - We have been delivered from bondage to the guilt of sin and from bondage to its ruling power in our lives.

H. Communion

Lord Jesus, I bow before you in humility and ask You to examine my heart today. Show me anything that is not pleasing to You. Reveal any secret pride, any unconfessed sin, any rebellion or unforgiveness that may be hindering my relationship with You. I know that I am Your beloved child, having received You into my heart and life and having accepted Your death as penalty for my sinfulness. The price You paid covered me for all time, and my desire is to live for You.

As I take the bread representing Your life that was broken for me, I remember and celebrate Your faithfulness to me and to all who will receive You. I can't begin to fathom the agonizing suffering of Your crucifixion. Yet You took that pain for me. You died for me! Thank You, Jesus. Thank You for Your extravagant love and unmerited favor. Thank You that Your death gave me life—abundant life now, and eternal life forever. As You instructed Your disciples, I, too, receive this bread in remembrance of You.

And in the same way, as I take this cup representing Your blood poured out from a splintered cross, I realize that You were the supreme sacrifice for all my sin: past, present, and future. Because of Your blood shed for me, and Your body broken for me, I can be free from the power and penalty of sin. Thank You for Your victory over death. You took the death that I deserved. You took my punishment. Your pain was indeed my gain. And today I remember and celebrate the precious gift of life You gave me through the blood that You spilled.