

"That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and The Fellowship Of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His Death;"
Philippians 3:10No2 KJV

Can we truly "know" the sufferings of Jesus? He is Eternity's Sovereign, who miraculously transformed Himself from infinite to finite. Anybody who has ever worn a pair of shoes too small may have the tiniest inkling of the exquisite torture God endured by assuming humanity! And as if being confined to flesh wasn't enough, Jesus also endured poverty and the torture at the hands of cruel Roman soldiers and murderous countrymen. He was falsely accused, sentenced to death, beaten with a cat-o-nine tails; a whip that had nine straps with metal hooks in the end of each. The soldiers would place bets on how much flesh could be ripped off the victim. The soldier would lash the hooks around the prisoner and yank back, viciously tearing flesh away with each stroke. They ripped the beard from His face, repeatedly pulled His clothing on and off across His bloodied back. They blindfolded Him while soldiers lined up to punch Him in the face, mock, and spit on Him! Forced to bear rough timber on His raw back, He was taken to Golgotha's hill, stripped, and fastened with spikes to a cross to die. The cross was an instrument of shameful execution designed to make death linger as long as possible. Each time the condemned had to breathe, he would have to pull up on the spikes in his hands while pushing against the spike in his feet, because the neck muscles actually strangle in that position. Tortured by his own struggle to breathe, the condemned would live to suffer more agony which is why the soldiers broke their legs to finish the other two. When they came to Jesus, He was already dead, but just to make sure they thrust a spear into His side upwards into His heart *"and forthwith came there out blood and water."* His physical suffering has no equal in recorded history, but do we even consider His other sufferings? He was hunted for death because He kept the Law perfectly. He healed the blind and diseased. The leper and cripple alike were restored. He was betrayed by His friend. In His hour of greatest need was forsaken by all! He suffered the infinite agony of complete loneliness! Even Peter, who followed afar off, denied Him. He hung alone between heaven and earth, paying a debt He did not owe for those who did not care! Would any earthly pain you have even begin to approach the suffering Christ?



His child will never know the pain,
Their Lord endured for all their gain,
But they can follow and obey,
Until the end of life's hard way. –CGP

When we are forsaken, alone, in pain, and friendless, because of our obedience to God, we can begin to know the thoughts of our Blessed Saviour who obeyed in spite of it all! The more suffering you endure for the Jesus' sake, the closer your relationship with Him, because you will then begin to understand the agony He suffered to save you from the penalty of eternal death! *"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."* Living Godly requires the persecution of the saint. If you are a companion in His obedience and suffering, you will be a partner in His resurrection!

"Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared; Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; And being made perfect, He became the Author of Eternal Salvation unto all them that obey Him;" Hebrews 5:7-9 KJV