

CHAPTER 10

SYMPATHY FOR JESUS

God works in a mysterious way. He inspires the soldiers to think that the victim is "dead already" so as not to break his legs, but at the same time inspires another to lance him on the side¹ with a spear, and . . .

". . . FORTHWITH came there out blood and watery."

(HOLY BIBLE) *John 19:34*

It is a Blessing of God that when the human body cannot endure further pain or agony, unconsciousness supervenes. But immobility, fatigue and the un-natural stance on the cross² must have slowed down the blood-circulation. The lancing came to the rescue. By "blood-letting", the circulation could regain its rhythm. We are assured in the Encyclopedia Biblica, under article "cross," column 960, that "Jesus was alive when the spear was thrust". This also confirms the statement of John that the flow of "water and blood" was instantaneous. In his own words he says: "FORTHWITH" — straight-away, immediately, which was a sure sign that Jesus was ALIVE!

But why the "Water and the Blood"? Dr. W.B. Primrose, a Senior Anaesthetist of the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, gave his expert opinion: In the "Thinkers Digest", London, Winter 1949 issue, he said that "THE WATER WAS A RESULT OF THE NERVOUS UPSET OF THE BLOOD VESSELS LOCALLY DUE TO THE OVER-STIMULATING EFFECT OF THE SCOURGING BY STAVES". This may be an extreme case, but so was his sweating, like **"great drops of blood, falling down to the ground"**, when Jesus was in agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. Medical authorities also confirm the latter phenomenon.

1. The "side" of his body and not the front.

2. See at the end of this book for illustration reproduced from "A Campus Crusade" publication where a "born-again" cultist after 1000 hours study of the cruci-FICTION is inspired to draw that caricature of Jesus.

EVANGELISTS DIFFER

CRUCIFIXION OR CRUCI-FICTION

The Gospel-writers are not unanimous regarding the time when Jesus was hoisted onto the cross. But John tells us that Jesus (pbuh) was still before Pilate in the praeto-rium at 12 noon: ". . . *and about the sixth hour (Hebrew time), he saith unto the Jews, Behold, your King!*" — (*John 19:14*). And after much wrangling he was handed over for crucifixion. Imagine the disorderly mob, the heavy cross which Jesus himself is supposed to have been loaded with. The long climb to Gol'gotha could never have been accomplished in minutes. And the saddling, the tying and the lifting must have taken some time. On TV shots, they can do it all in 30 seconds! But we know that in real life it does not happen that fast. The author of John's Gospel failed to record the time when "Jesus gave up the ghost" (*John 19:30*), but the synoptists seem to be agreed that it was around the "ninth hour", meaning 3 p.m.

Dean Farrar, in his "Life of Christ", says on page 421, that "JESUS WAS ON THE CROSS FOR ONLY THREE HOURS — WHEN TAKEN DOWN".

PONTIUS PILATE MARVELS

We are told in the Gospels, in varying terms, that between the "sixth" and the "ninth" hours, there was THUNDER, an ECLIPSE and an EARTHQUAKE! — Without purpose? No, to disperse the sadistic mob after their enjoyment of a Roman holiday. To enable the hands of mercy, his "secret" and faithful disciples, to come to his succour.

Joseph of Arimathea together with a sympathetic Roman centurion who had declared: "Truly this man was the Son of God" (*Mark 15:39*), went to Pilate to claim the body of Jesus, and:

"Pilate marvelled if he were already dead, and to him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead."

(HOLY BIBLE) *Mark 15:44*

What was the reason for Pilate's amazement? Why did he marvel? He knew from experience that normally no man would die within 3 hours on the cross, unless the "crurifragium" was resorted to, which was not done in the case of Jesus; unlike in that of his "crossmates", who were given the treatment because they were still ALIVE!

REASON FOR MARVELLING

CRUCIFIXION OR CRUCI-FICTION

It stands to reason, that if a man faces a firing squad, and shots are fired into his body, and he dies, there would be nothing to "marvel" about. If a person is taken to the gallows and is hanged, and he dies, there is nothing to "marvel" about. But should they survive, after our common knowledge expects them to die, then there is much to MARVEL about. Conversely, Pilate expects that Jesus should be ALIVE on the cross, and not dead as he is being told, therefore his marvelling is only but natural. He had no special reason for verifying whether Jesus was dead or alive. If he was ALIVE — so what? Had he not found Jesus innocent of the charges levelled against him by the Jews? Did his wife not warn him against doing any harm to "that just man"? Was he not blackmailed into surrendering to Jewish clamour? So if Jesus was alive — Good Luck to him. Pilate grants permission for Joseph to have the body.

SO HE HAD "SECRET" DISCIPLES

The so-called disciples of Jesus, whom he called "my mother and brethren!" ¹ (in preference to his own mother and his uterine brothers and sisters), were nowhere in sight when he was most in need. His "secret" disciples, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, would never have been heard of had it not been for Jesus' ordeal. And they were the only persons to handle the body of Jesus, with Mary Magdalene and the other Mary(s) ² as the only spectators.

To satisfy the religious scruples of the Jews — the burial bath, the anointing and the shrouding — would well-nigh have taken more than two hours. If there were any signs of life in the limp body, no one was foolish enough to shout to the retreating curiosity mongers: "He is ALIVE! He is ALIVE! They knew that the Jews would then make doubly sure that that life was snuffed out.

¹. Matthew 12:49.

². Mark 15:47.