

# THE INTERCONTINENTAL CHURCH OF GOD

## SPECIFIC BIBLE STUDIES - A MISSING VERSE!

from a study by Herman L. Hoeh

Now let us read the account of the death of Christ, according to the gospel Matthew wrote, from the Fenton translation. Mat.27:45,46, "Then from mid-day until three o'clock in the afternoon darkness spread over all the land; and about three o'clock Jesus called out with a loud voice, exclaiming. 'Eloi, eloi, Lima sahadhani?' that is, 'My God! My God! to what have You forsaken Me?' And some of the bystanders, on hearing that, remarked, 'He seems to call for Elijah.' And at once one from among them ran, and taking a sponge, filled it with sour wine: and placing it upon a cane, gave Him a drink. But the others called out, 'Let Him alone! Let us see whether Elijah will come and save Him!'"

Now notice carefully, verses 49 and 50: "But another taking a spear pierced His side, when blood and water came out. Jesus, however, having again called out with a loud voice, resigned His spirit."

Let me read it from the Moffatt translation, beginning at verse 48.

"One of them ran off at once and took a sponge, which he soaked in vinegar and put on the end of a stick, to give Him a drink. But the others said, 'Stop, let us see if Elijah does come to save Him!' (Seizing a lance, another pricked [it should be translated "pierced"] his side, and out came water and blood.)" We read here both from the Fenton and the Moffatt translations a vital verse that we do not find in the King James version, and certain others. How is it that this verse does not appear in the King James Version? Why haven't we been reading that the reason Christ died is that one of the soldiers that was there came with a lance or spear and pierced His side and out came water and blood? Now we know from a number of Scriptures, for instance, Zechariah 12:10 that "they shall look upon [Him] whom they have pierced." And Revelation 1:7 says that those who pierced him "shall look upon Him." We have at Ambassador College (remember this was written in 1959 - Keith Hunt) copy of the Vaticanus - a Greek New Testament manuscript written about 300's A.D. It was first published in 1859 by Angelus Maius. Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong and some of the others of the ministers have seen the original copy of this codex. In the Greek of Matthew 27:49 is this very verse:

"And another took a spear and pierced His side and there came forth water and blood." This verse is in the Greek Text in this manuscript, which, as far as modern scholars know, is the oldest complete manuscript of the New Testament (not as complete as people would have you believe - Keith Hunt).

Many of you may have in your possession the Harmony of the Gospels by Robertson from which Mr. Armstrong often has quoted over the air. We read this in the comment on Matthew 27:49 which is included in the footnote on page 234: "Many ancient authorities add 'And another took a spear and pierced his side, and there came out water and blood.'"

### IN MANY EARLY MANUSCRIPTS

We have also the New Testament in Greek published by Dr. Eberhard Nestle and translated into English from German. In the footnote of Matthew 27:49 Nestle states that this text appears in many ancient manuscripts. He lists a number in which it appears. For instance, in the Sinaiticus, the Vaticanus (these are two of the most ancient manuscripts), Codex Ephraemi and a number of others which are labelled by scholars as "I," "T," "Z," etc., and such other manuscripts as "33" "79" "892" and "1241."

Numerous other early manuscripts have this text.

I have before me also the statement written by Frederick Henry Ambrose Scrivener, in his book entitled "Criticism of the New Testament," Vol. 11, Page 302. After quoting Mat. 27:49, he says:

"Thus we read in ...." and he lists a large number of manuscripts.

He further adds on page 302 such Greek manuscripts as those labeled by scholars as "5, 48, 67, 115, 127, [and] five good manuscripts of the Vulgate," which is the Latin translation from the Greek. It is in "the margin of 1 E [and] VI, "the Jerusalem Syriac . . . and in the Echiopic."

When the Echiopic translation was made from the Greek into the Ethiopian language, this verse was still in the Greek manuscripts. It has been deleted since the time those early translations were made!

We have here at the Ambassador College library the volume entitled, "The New Testament in Greek" by Westcott and Hort, published in 1896. This volume contains the English comments on the Text in Greek. Under the subject of Matthew 27:49 in the notes, page 21 and 22 at the back of the book, we read the following surprising facts. This verse, admit Westcott and Hort, appears in the bulk of the Syrian translations, in the Egyptian, (which Dr. Meredith and I saw in Egypt in 1957), in the Armenian, in the Gothic. It is even included in Origin's work [around 200 A.17.], and, as already mentioned, it appears in the Echiopic. Then Westcott and Hort list the various Greek texts that the verse appears in. Ivan Panin carelessly neglected to include this verse in his Numeric New Testament.

### **WHY LEFT OUT OF THE TEXT?**

Westcott and Hort give us the following surprising story concerning this verse:

"In a letter partially preserved in Syriac (ap. Petr. jun. in Assemani B.O. ii 81) he [Severus] mentions the reading [of this verse which is not in the King James version] "as having been vigorously debated at Constantinople in connexion with the matter of the patriarch Macedonius, when the magnificently written (but spurious) copy of St. Matthew's Gospel said to have been discovered in Cyprus with the body of St. Barnabas in the reign of Zeno (?477) was consulted and found not to contain the sentence in question ... The 'magnificent' copy of St. Matthew, though [falsely] said to have been written by Barnabas himself ... was doubtless of quite recent origin (that is, of a very late production, written around the same time that the fraud was perpetrated), the discovery having been opportunely made by Anchemius bishop of Salamis when he was vindicating the independence of Cyprus against the patriarch of Antioch, Peter and Fuller ... In a sarcastic statement of the Chronicle of Victor Tunenensis," continue Westcott and Hort, he states that "at Constantinople the holy Gospels were by command of the emperor censored . . ." at this verse.

In other words, this verse, Matthew 27:49 - which you find in the Moffatt and the Fenton translations, and in the Vaticanus, the Ethiopic, and all of those early manuscripts, including the Sinaiticus, a copy of which we have at Ambassador - this verse was left out as a result of a controversy that developed over the finding of what obviously was nothing but a spurious copy of Matthew's gospel, planted in order to justify the political independence of the Island of Cyprus. They brought forth a text purportedly written by Barnabas himself, which was found in his supposed tomb. This was the same era in which others "discovered" the relics of Peter to justify their pretensions.

Although this important verse had heretofore been in the Greek manuscripts, as witnessed by the fact that it appears in the various translations from the Greek, from this time on it generally ceased to continue to appear. \*\*\*The bulk of Greek manuscripts has officially not included this text.\*\*\*

\*\*\*Yet God has seen to it that the Greek people, who are responsible for preserving the Bible in Greek, have themselves left us the witness that this verse originally was in Matthew! And even though they have officially not approved it in their text since that day - since around 510 to 511 A.D. - nevertheless, many Greek manuscripts that they copied still retain it.\*\*\*

\*\*\*IT WAS STILL A MARGINAL READING OF THE GREEK TEXT WHEN THE KING JAMES VERSION WAS MADE! (Walton's Polyglot, published in 1657, Volume VI, page 6 of the appendix on "Various Grecian Readings." This set of six Volumes is a recent acquisition of the College Library.) But the translators thought it better to leave it out!\*\*\*

\*\*\*Thus, by the Greeks' own admission this verse was in there till as late as 510 A.D. when they made the mistake of removing it. However, this does NOT mean they tampered with the rest of the Bible. God committed the New Testament to their care. But it does mean that when they did make this change, they were forced to leave us witness so that we might know what the true original reading of it is. No other verse has been removed by them.\*\*\*

Christ, then, according to Matthew, died because a soldier took a spear and pierced His side, and out came water and blood. As a result of that frightful wound Christ cried with a loud voice - He screamed - and then He expired. That's what caused His death!

No, Christ didn't die of a broken heart. Christ died because He shed His blood for you and for me!

### **DID JOHN CONTRADICT MATTHEW?**

The reason the King James translators did not include this verse is due to the fact that they, like many others, have misunderstood the inspired statement of John concerning the piercing of Christ's side. People have assumed all these centuries that John tells us that Christ's side was speared after Jesus died and at that time out came blood and water. They have assumed that that was the time when Jesus was speared, and they reason, "if He was speared after He was dead, then how could He have been speared before He was dead?"

Matthew's account makes it plain when He was speared before He died. The soldiers gave Jesus the sponge. Then

He was speared in the side. Out came the water and blood. He cried with a loud voice and then expired.

Jesus knew what was coming, because He said, "My God! My God! why have you forsaken me?" He knew Isaiah 53 had to be fulfilled - that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins.

John records for us the same thing! But it has been mistranslated. Let us turn to John, and see how his account ought to be rendered.

"Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was lead already, they brake not his legs" (John 19:32).

It is assumed from the next verse that the they then pierced His side to see if He were dead. Therefore the King James Version, and others read, "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knows that he saith is true, that you might believe." John says here is absolute proof that Christ died by shedding His blood.

But notice what the scripture says! "And when they {the soldiers} came to Jesus, AND SAW THAT HE WAS DEAD ALREADY, they brake not his legs."

They did not have to do anything further. They saw He was already dead. But why did Jesus die so soon. John continues: "Howbeit one of the soldiers with a spear HAD PIERCED HIS SIDE, and immediately came there out blood and water" - as properly translated.

The verb "pierced," in the Greek, is in the AORIST tense. In English we are familiar with the present, the imperfect, and the perfect tenses. The imperfect in English means that one "used to do" or "did" something. And the perfect tense, that he "has done" something.

But in the Greek, the AORIST means not time of action, but kind of action. It leaves the past indefinite. The "aorist tense" in Greek means that an action was done at a single moment, and not continuously.

The Greek has two major past tenses. One, the imperfect, and the other, the AORIST. The "imperfect" means that the action continues in the past. The "aorist" means that it happened once in the past, or from time to time - action widely spaced apart. The soldiers pierced Christ's side not as a continual action but one particular time (in the PAST - Keith Hunt), and out of His side came thereforth blood and water. The "aorist tense" John used points out the type of action, NOT the TIME of the action. The "aorist tense" of the word "pierced" does not tell you WHEN the spearing occurred - whether they then speared Him or whether He had already been speared. You can know the time only by putting John 19:34 with the rest of the Scriptures. Consider!

Instead of the soldiers breaking Christ's legs, they saw He was dead already. Now if they saw He was dead already, they didn't have any reason to pierce his side. He was 'dead already.' If they were not sure, what would they have done? They would have broken His legs! That's what they had come to do. If there was a question or doubt, they would have smashed His legs, but when they saw Him, they knew He was dead already.

So John tells us - not what they next did - but rather the reason why they didn't break His legs! He tells us the cause of Jesus' death in verse 34! One of the soldiers HAD PREVIOUSLY taken a spear and had pierced his side. That's the reason Christ died. He shed - as Isaiah said - His blood, or His soul. He poured it out unto death.

Further, notice that John tells us that there came out "blood and water." Matthew worded it "water and blood." Many have tried to claim that the verse in Matthew was added from John, but if it were just copied from John, then it would have read "blood and water." But Matthew doesn't put it in that order. He says out came "water and blood." Matthew is writing as God led him to write it. He wrote it decades before John wrote his gospel.

## **WHY BLOOD AND WATER?**

When the spear cut that gaping hole in Jesus side, it literally ripped Him up and cut His bladder open, and out poured water. The word "water" is no more than a poliTE form for urine. In other words, he had been in the hands of men all this time, ever since the previous evening. And His captors gave Him no peace. What the soldiers did was to cut Him open, and out came the water from the bladder, and the blood He shed for our sins.

Jesus' blood was thoroughly shed. It was not a little sack around the heart that dribbled some blood our when His side was pricked! You will find the proof that His blood was all drained out if you read the Book of Acts. Peter, speaking of Christ's resurrection, Acts 2:31, said: "He [David] seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul (the body) was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption."

If Christ died of a broken heart, and just the blood which collected around the heart was shed, and all of the rest of

the blood was in the body, Christ's body would have corrupted in three days' time.

Jesus Christ was buried for three days and three nights in the tomb. But the fact is, His body had no blood left! It was all shed! It is the blood that first corrupts. Flesh corrupts much more slowly. Because blood was not there, the flesh of Christ's body did not start to corrupt! That didn't mean that He had some kind of immortal flesh as some people reason. It means that, as all of the blood was gone from His body, there was no corrupting agent and over a three-day period of time, the flesh would not have begun to disintegrate into dust.

(Also we need to note that Joseph and Nicodemus used about 100 pounds of myrrh and aloes on Jesus' body - John 19:39,40, as well as "wrapping" the body as was Jewish burial custom - not a one piece "shroud" - this would have also help to prevent Jesus' body from fast de-composition - Keith Hunt).

Christ was mortal flesh. He took upon Himself the flesh of man (Hebrews 2:14). There was nothing immortal about His flesh. Whatever blood was in the lower portion of His body and His legs that didn't pour out of His side, drained out from His wounds in the feet as a result of the nails that pierced them.

Christ is our Saviour! Christ did die by SHEDDING HIS BLOOD. The Passover Season we should have re-commemorated that sad event with real feeling. And as a result of that terrible spear wound, and the complete loss of blood, the Creator was dead! Christ did shed His blood for you and for me. But He is NOW ALIVE FOREVERMORE!

Note: The article by Herman L. Hoeh, "Jesus Death, How Did It Happen?" appeared as a Plain Truth article, "Did Jesus Die of a Broken Heart?" in April of 1962. The article is on the Internet [here](#).