

This Roman officer, after some struggles betwixt a conviction of the innocence of Jesus and a dread of offending the Jews, caused Jesus to be scourged and then delivered to the fury of them who were frantic in the cry of, *crucify him, crucify him*. And then was he *led as a lamb to the slaughter*; then did he *bear our griefs and carry our sorrows*; then was he *wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities*; then he *WAS CRUCIFIED for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity*.

The Cross, this ignominious instrument of death, consisted, as its name denotes, of two large pieces of wood crossing each other. On the one which was upright, the feet of the condemned person, joined together, were fastened by nails; and on the transverse beam the arms were stretched out and the hands affixed to it by nails in the same manner—and thus the criminal hung naked until pain and faintness ended his life. To this exquisite torment, of being suspended by nails driven through the most sensitive parts of the body, was Jesus Christ, the Son of God, made subject—thus did he *bear our sins in his own body on the tree*—thus *he who knew no sin was made sin for us*; and being thus made a curse for us, *he hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law*.*

After enduring, for three hours, this exquisite pain, *Jesus cried with a loud voice, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit*; and *he gave up the Ghost*: thus evincing, at the latest expiration of the breath of life, his patient submission to the will of God; his cheerful confidence that the departed spirit would rest in peace with him. And here it is proper to observe that he was not only crucified, but DEAD also; for as the learned Bishop Pearson remarks, “*crucifixion of itself involveth not in it certain death, and he which is fastened to a cross is so leisurely to die, as that he being taken from the same may live*.” The testimony, therefore, to his actual death is valuable, contained in these words: *when they came to Jesus and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water*—because on the death of Christ depended the fulfillment of the satisfaction and atonement he made for mankind—because, according to the Scriptures, he must die for our sins; and because he could only thus accomplish the efficacy of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. And while we behold, in the manner of his death, a complete fulfillment of the predictions concerning it, and observe, in his exemption from the last torment inflicted on his fellow sufferers of *breaking their legs*, the accomplishment of the prophecy that a leg of Him should not be broken—whilst we observe, in the piercing

* It is said, Deut. xxi. 23, “He that is hanged is accursed of God:” and these words of Livy are remarkable, “*arbori infelici suspende*.” Lib. i. 26