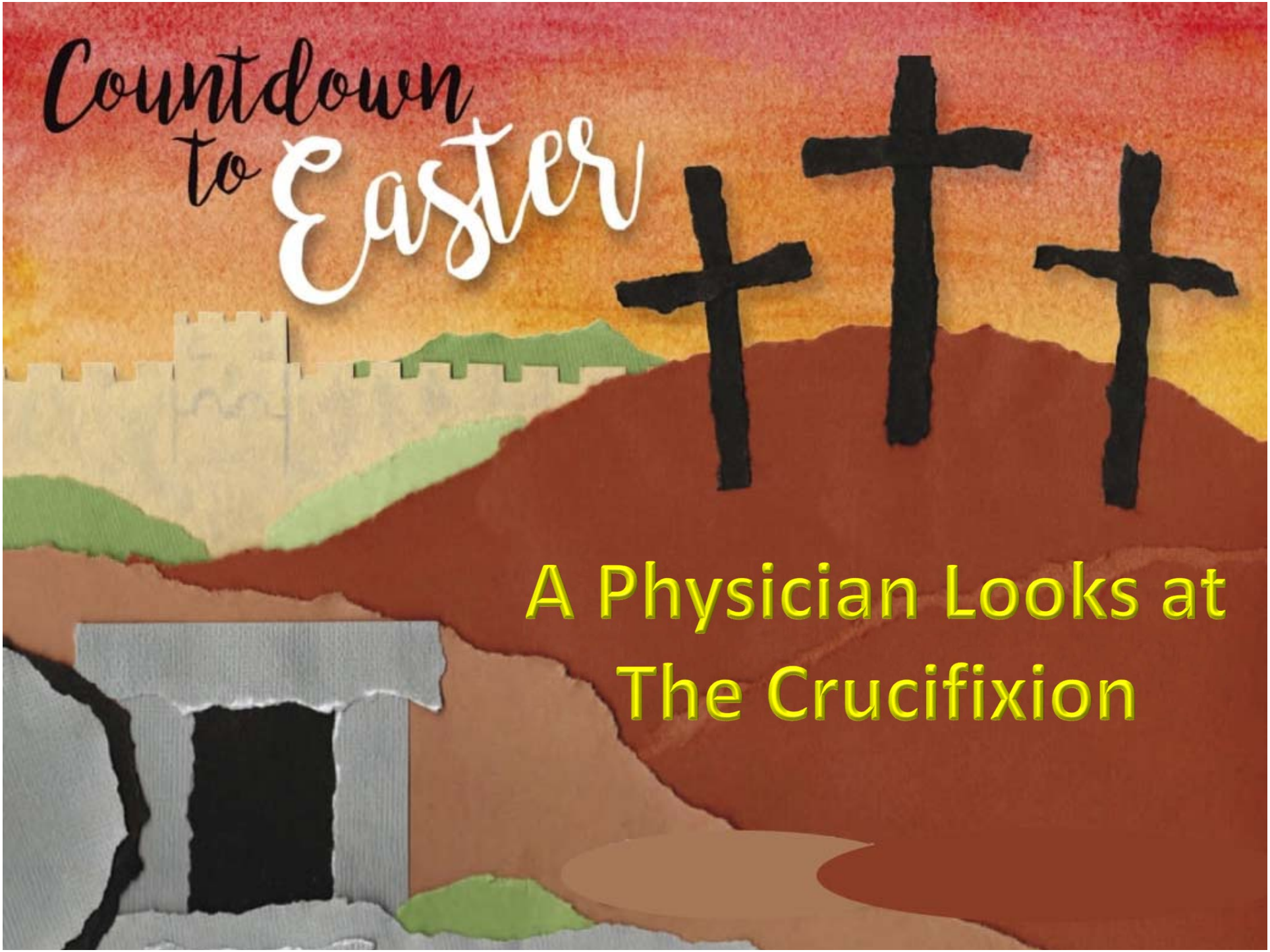

Countdown
to Easter
A Physician Looks at
The Crucifixion

"What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as freedom should not be highly rated."

- Thomas Paine, The American Crisis

“What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as salvation should not be highly rated.”

Crucifixion

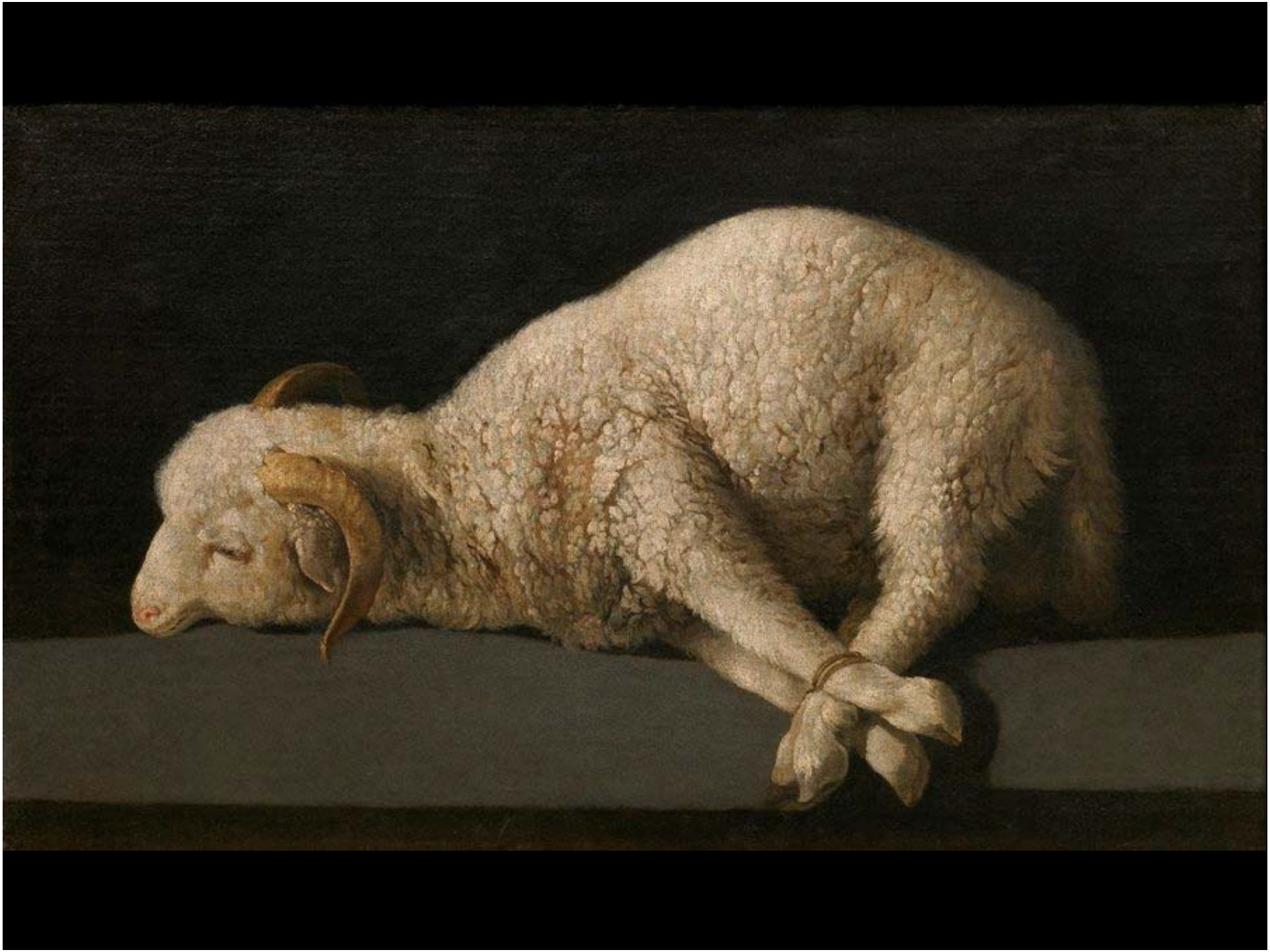
- Persians developed (Book of Ester)
- Alexander the Great:
  Egypt and Carthage
- Romans: learned from Carthaginians
- Slow death with maximal pain
- Reserved for worst criminals
  Paul was beheaded

Excruciating Pain

- Ex: out of
- Crux: cross
- Pain coming “out of” the “cross”

1 Peter 1

18 knowing that you were
not redeemed with perishable
things like silver or gold from your
futile way of life inherited from
your forefathers, 19 but with
precious blood, as of a lamb
unblemished and spotless,
the blood of Christ.



Luke 22

7 Then came the *first* day of
Unleavened Bread on which the
Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.
8 And Jesus sent Peter and John,
saying, “Go and prepare the
Passover for us, so that we
may eat it.” …

Luke 22

15 And He said to them,
"I have earnestly desired to eat this
Passover with you before I suffer;
16 for I say to you, I shall never again
eat it until it is fulfilled in the
kingdom of God."

Matthew 26

30 After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Psalm 118

6 **YEHOVAH** is for me; I will not fear;
What can man do to me?

Matthew 26

30 After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Psalm 118

24 This is the day which Yehovah has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Luke 22

44 And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground.

Sweating Drops of Blood

Hemohidrosis

- Bloody sweat
- Bleeding into the sweat glands
- May occur in highly emotional states
- Skin becomes fragile and tender

43 Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him.

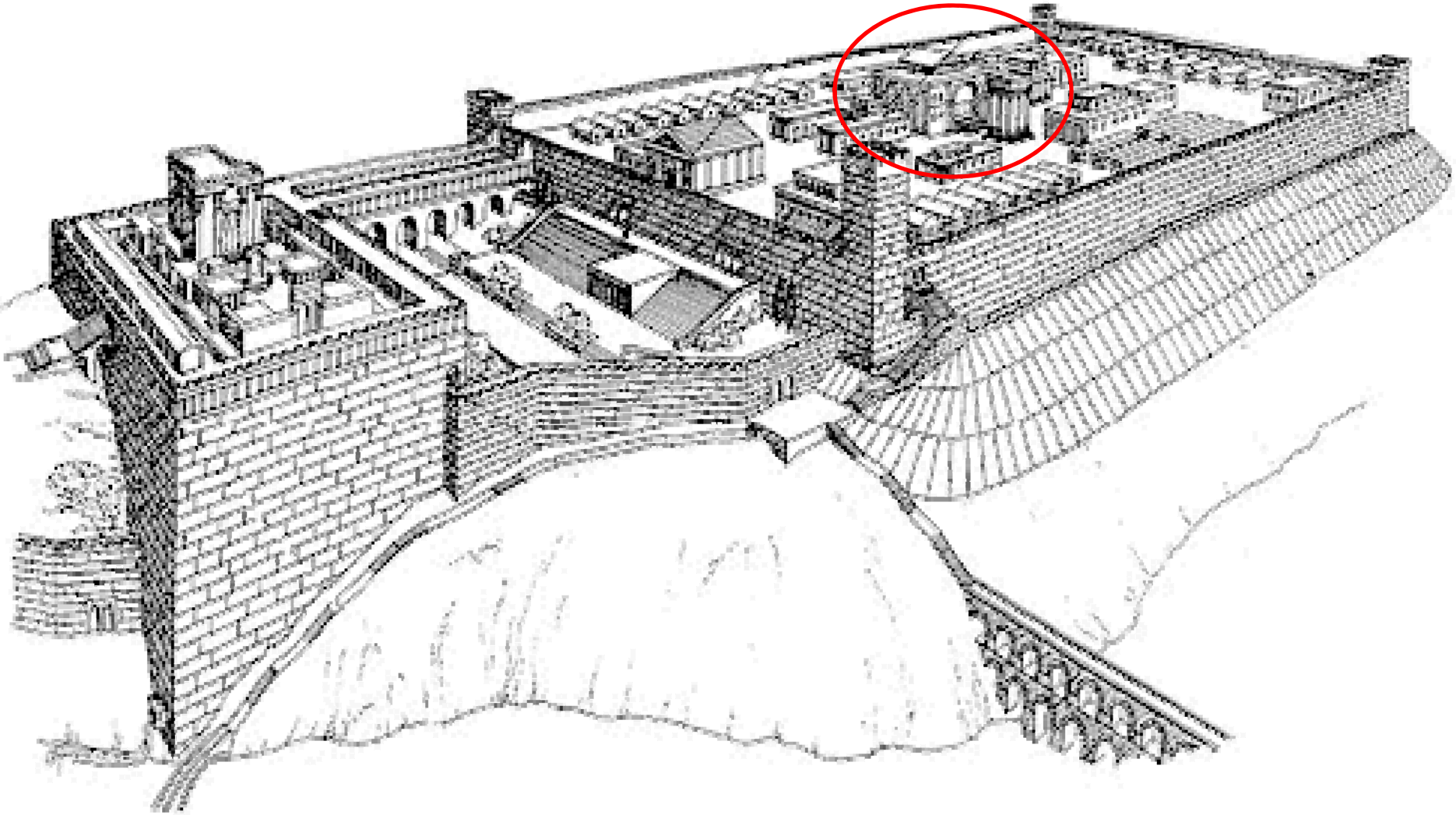
Luke 22:43

First 12-Hours

- Agony during prayer (Luke 22:44)
- Betrayed by Judas (Luke 22:48)
- Abandoned by disciples (Matthew 26:25)
- Beaten after 1st trial (Luke 22:63)
- Walked over 2.5 miles to various trials
- Traumatic, sleepless night

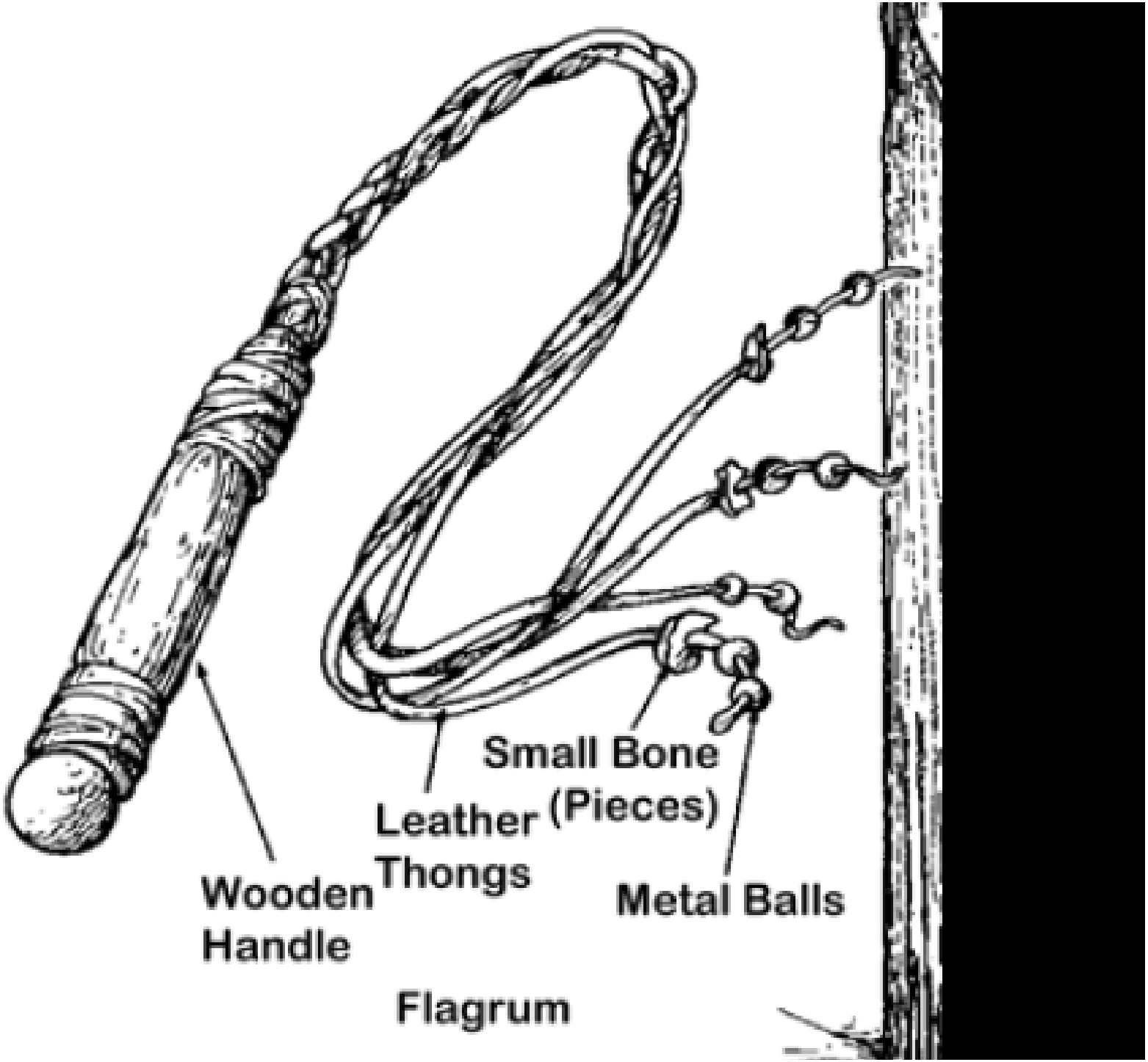
Jewish Trials

- Midnight: Arrested and taken to Annas
- Annas sent to Caiaphas
- 1 am: Trial before Caiaphas & Sanhedrin
- Found guilty of blasphemy
  and was beaten in face with fists
- Daybreak: taken to Temple
- Pharisees & Sadducees: guilty of blasphemy
- Punishable by death



Roman Trials

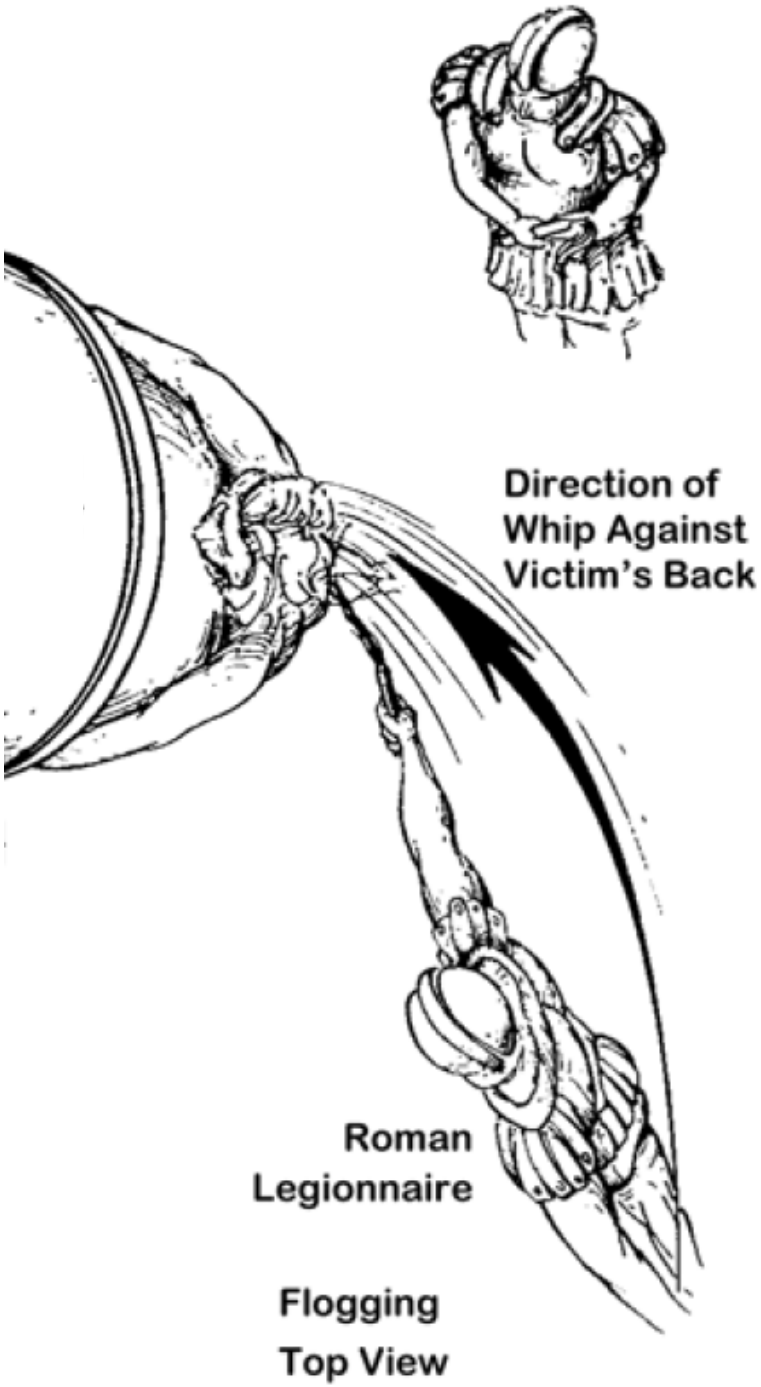
- Taken to Pilot at the Praetorium
- Trial for insurrection requested
- Pilot sent to Herod
- Herod sends back to pilot
- Pilot “washes his hands”
- Scoured: performed prior to execution
- Crucified


Small Bone
(Pieces)
Leather
Thongs
Wooden
Handle
Metal Balls

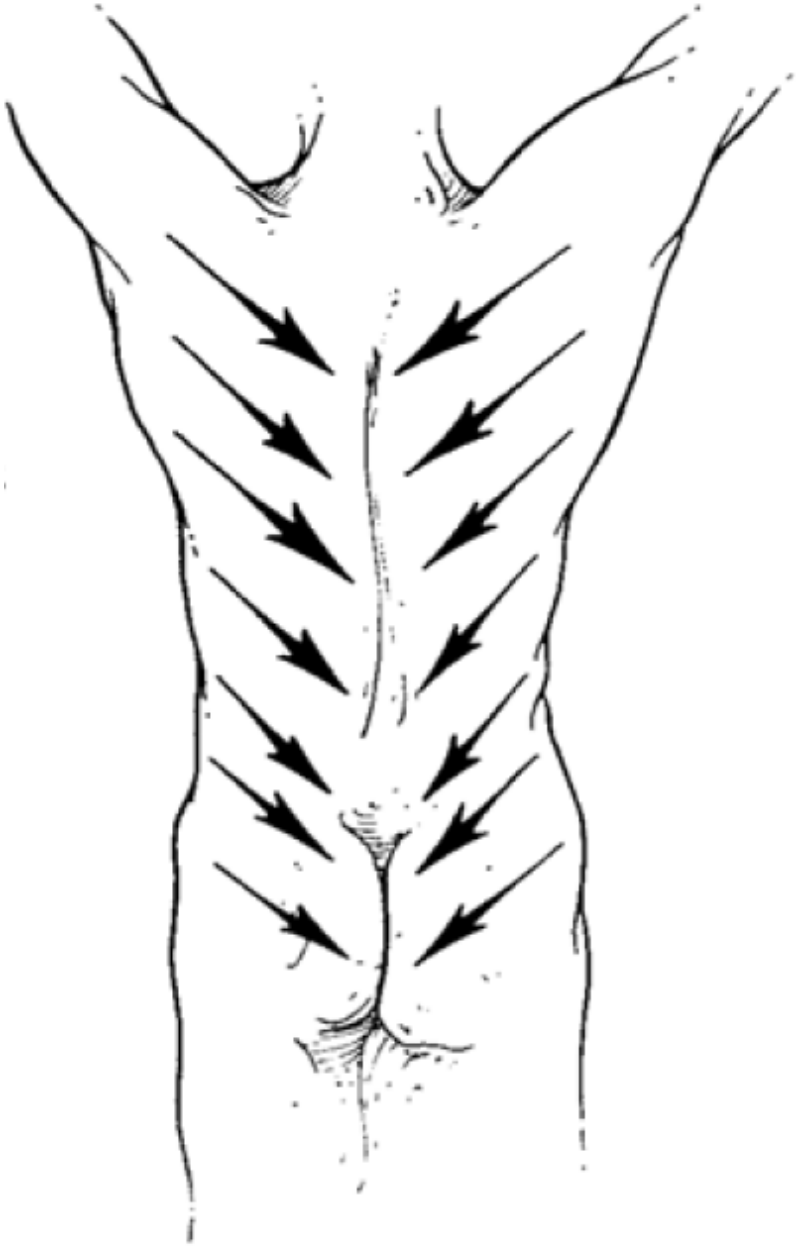
Flagrum

- Stripped
- Tied to an upright post
- Back, buttocks and legs

- Cut skin and subcutaneous tissues
- Deep bruising
- Tear underlying muscle
- “quivering ribbons of bleeding flesh”



- Circulatory shock was caused by the pain and blood loss
- Intended to weaken the victim to a state just short of collapse or death



Direction of Whip Marks

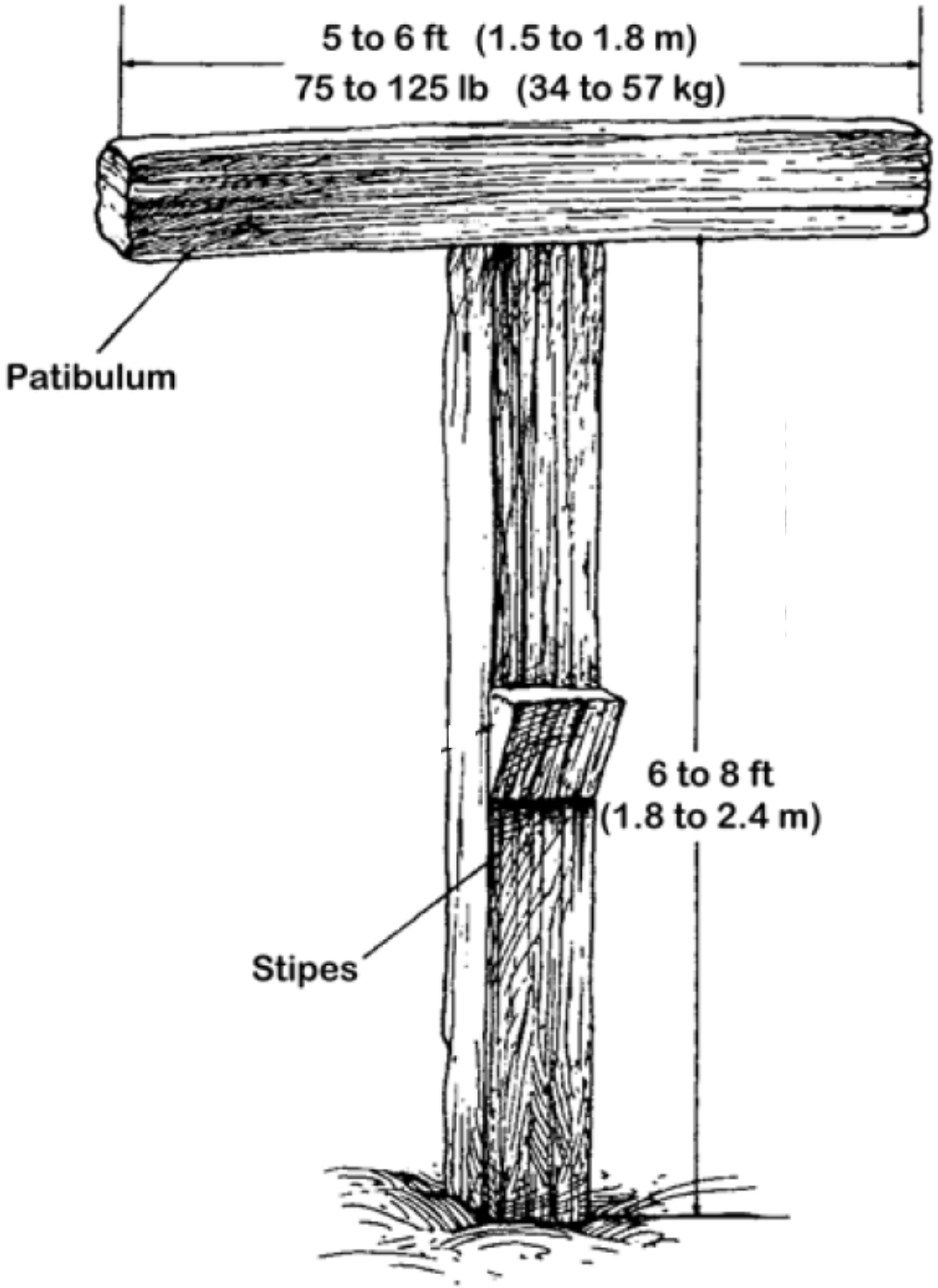
Isaiah 53:5

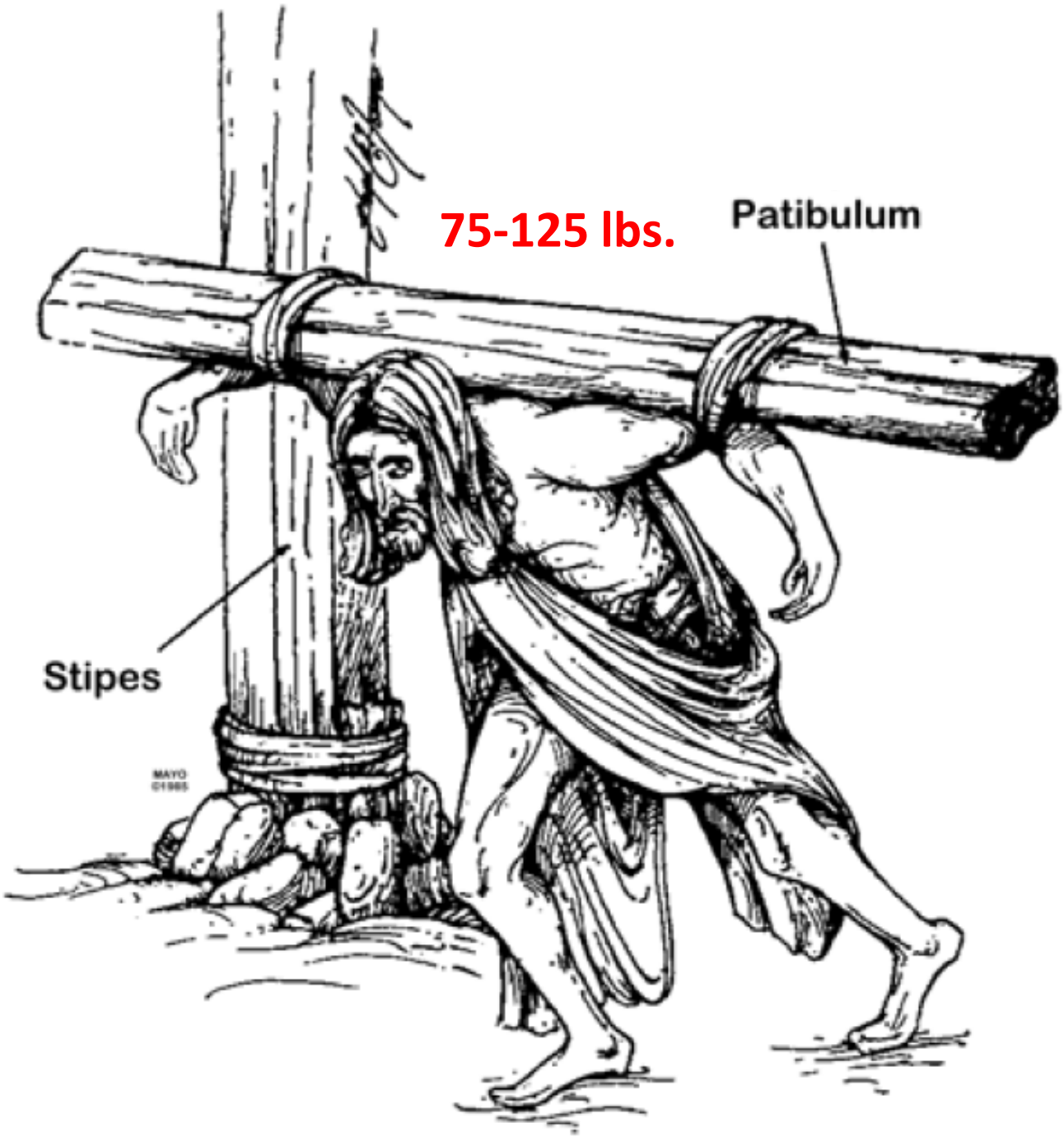
The chastening for our peace with God *was placed* upon Him,
And by His scourging healing has come to us.

(1 Peter 2:24)

Scourging

- Served to weaken the condemned man
- Blood loss produced orthostatic hypotension and hypovolemic shock
- Victim was thrown to the ground on his back; wounds torn open again
- With each respiration, the wounds would scrape against the cross
- Blood loss would continue


5 to 6 ft (1.5 to 1.8 m)
75 to 125 lb (34 to 57 kg)
Patibulum
6 to 8 ft
(1.8 to 2.4 m)
Stipes


75-125 lbs.
Patibulum
Stipes

Luke 23:26

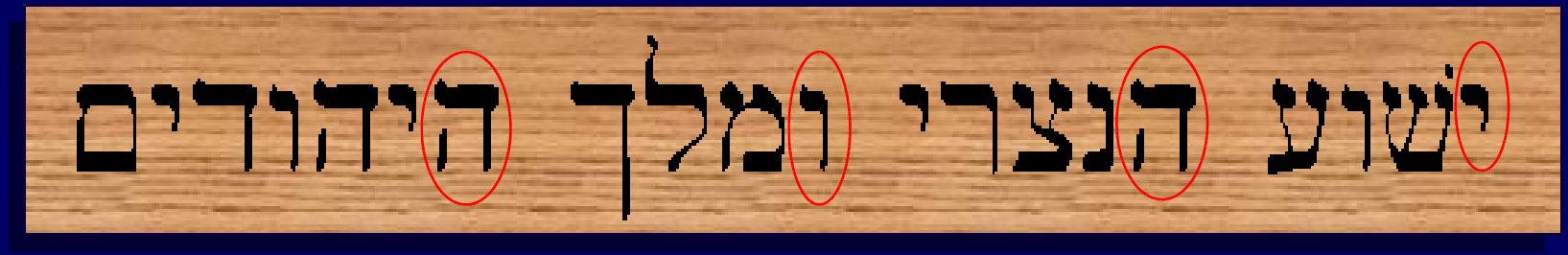
When they led Him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, coming in from the country, and placed on him the cross to carry behind Jesus.

Titulus
ישוע הנצרי מלך היהודים
IESUS NAZARENUS REX IUDAEORUM
Ιησους ο Ναζωραιος ο βασιλευς
των Ιουδαιων

Titulus

The Jews The King The Nazarene Jesus

HaYehudim v Melech HaNazarei Yeshua

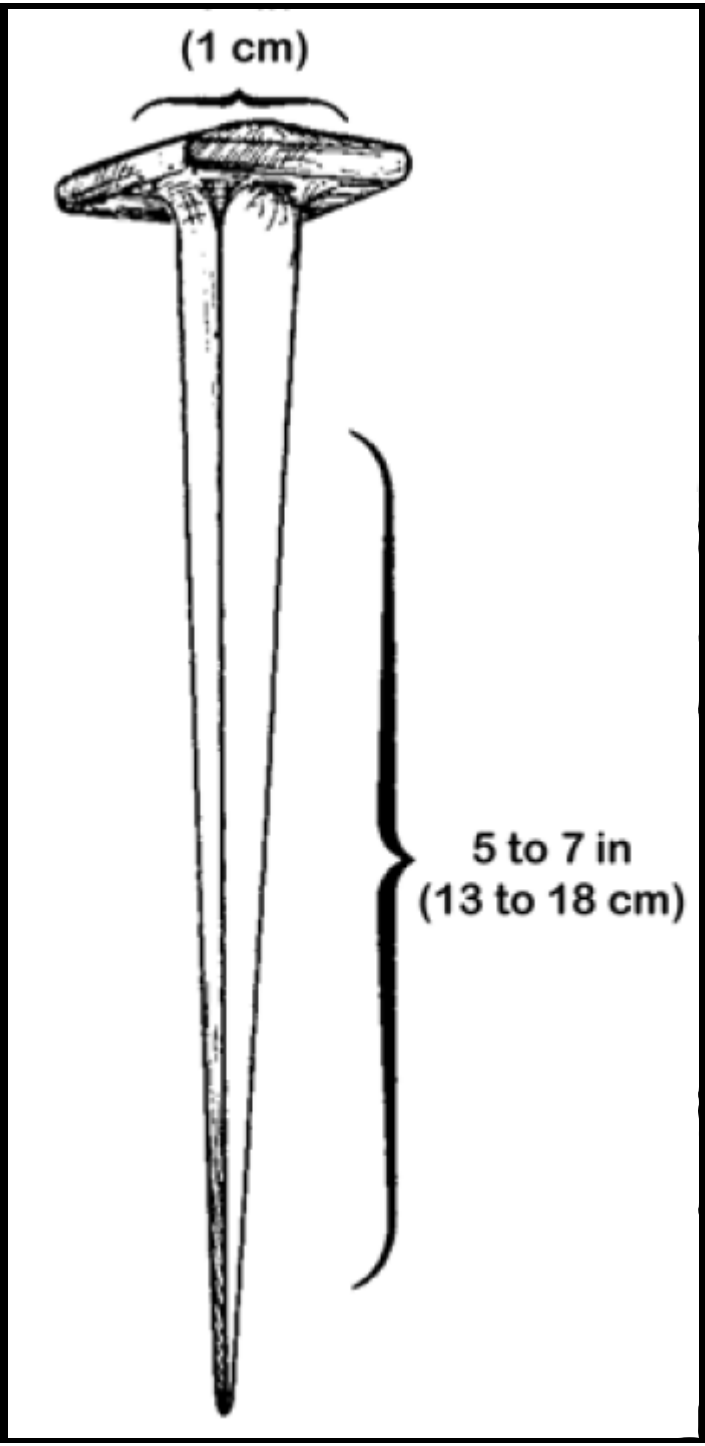


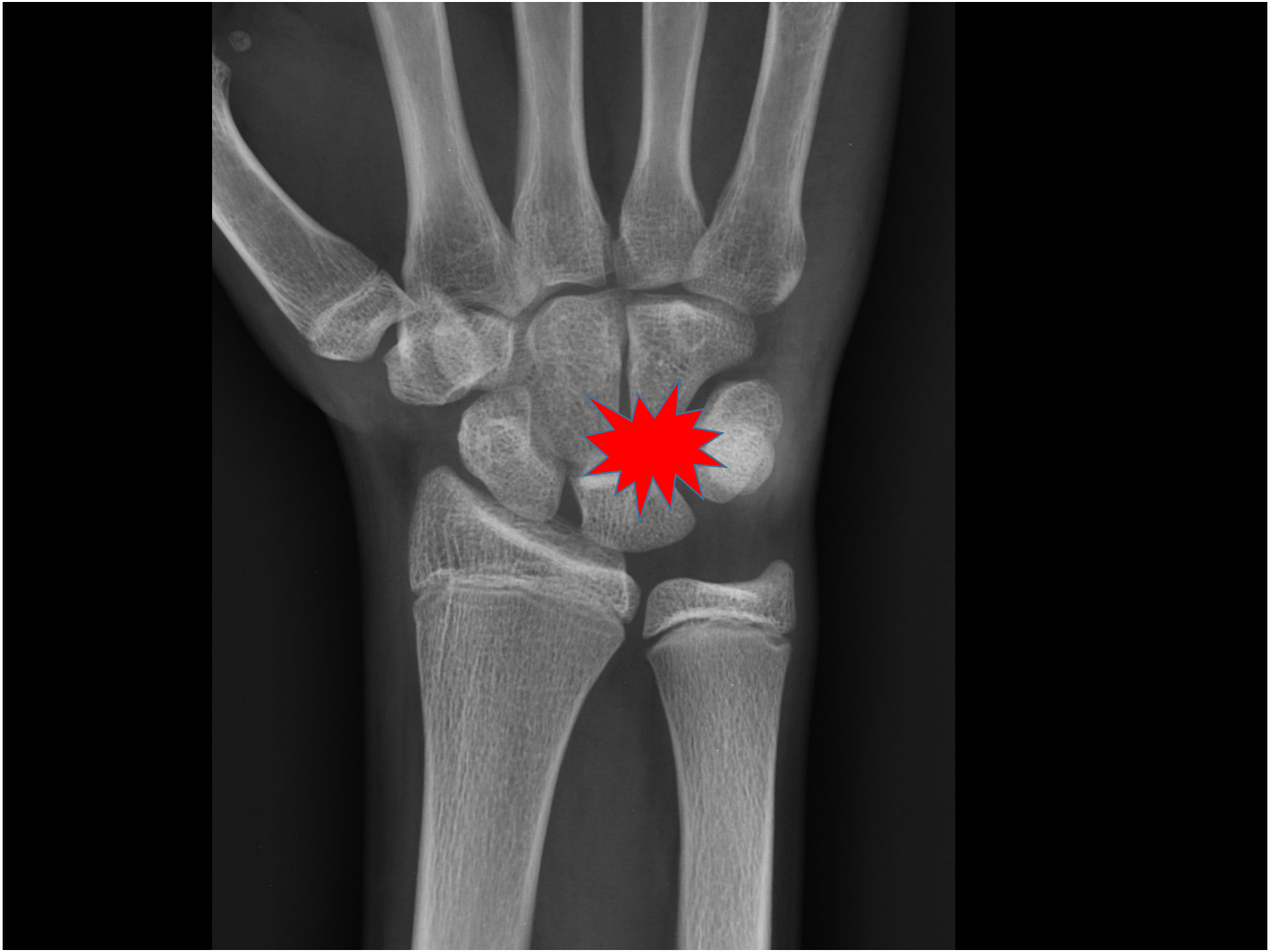
יהוה

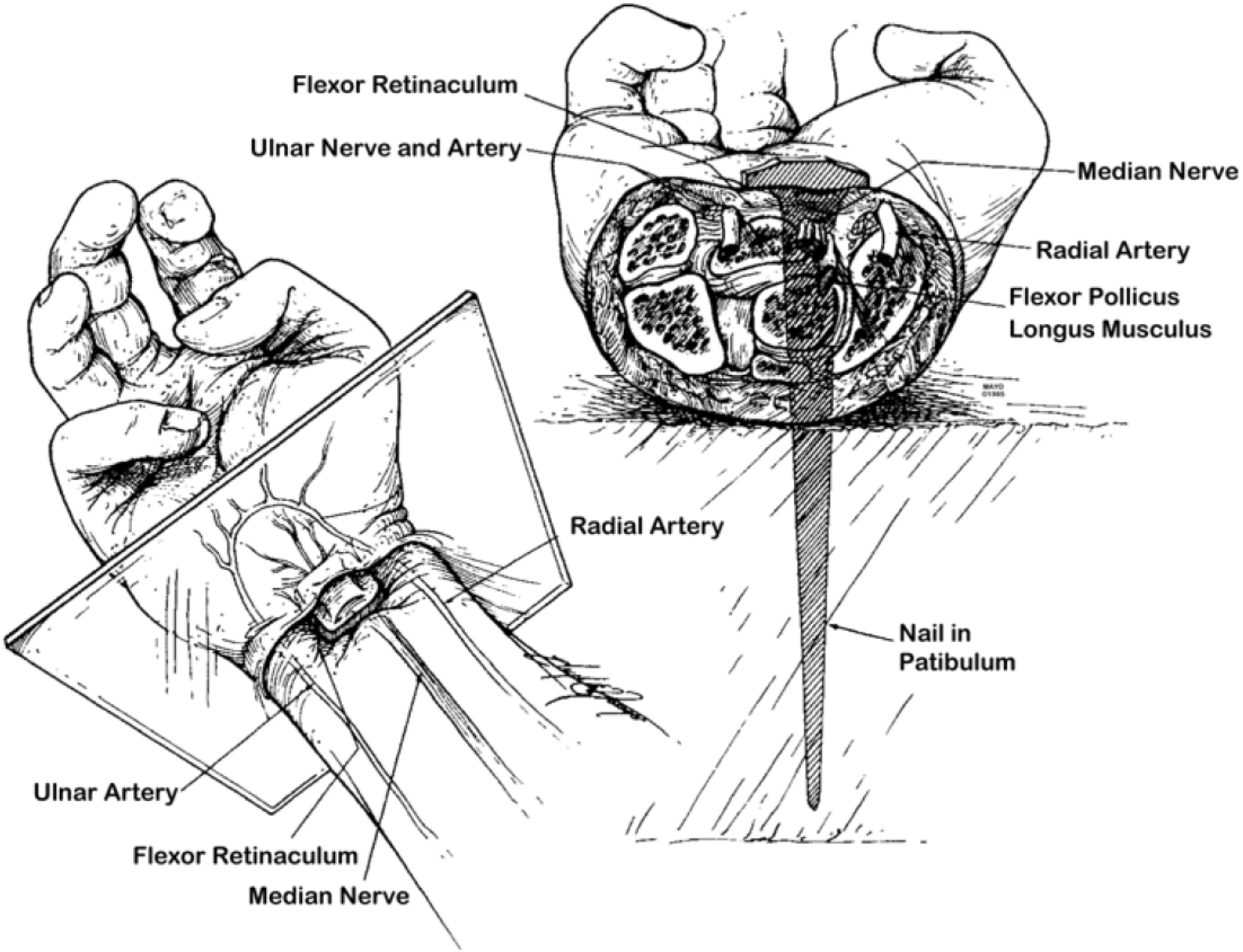
God, in the person of Jesus Christ, was dying on the cross.

Nailing Hands

- Ligaments and bones of the wrist can support the weight of a body
- Spikes were driven between the two rows of carpal bones
- Flexor retinaculum
- Periosteal injury but no fractures
- Median nerve: crushed or cut
- Ischemic contractures: claw grasp

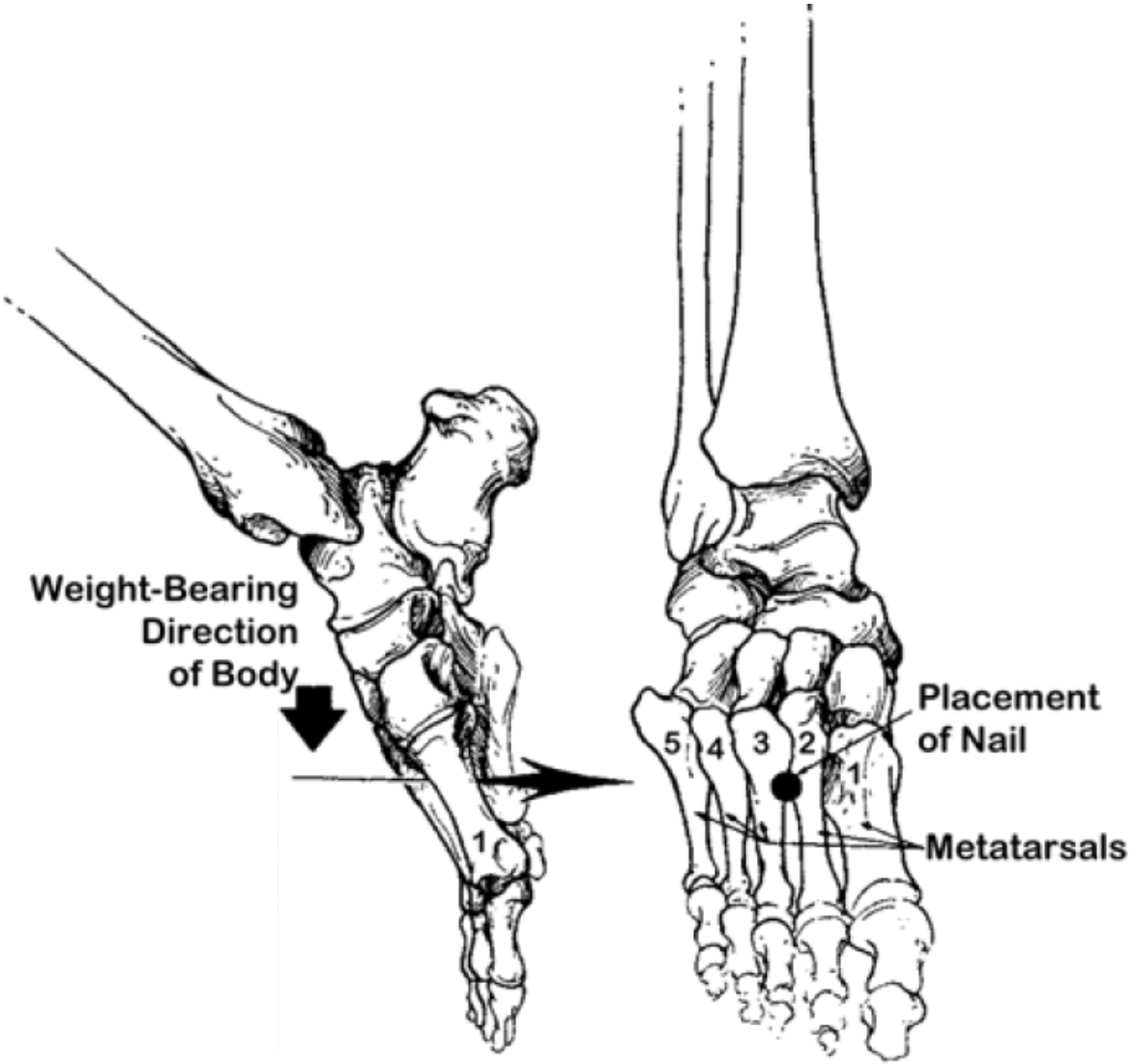

(1 cm)
5 to 7 in
(13 to 18 cm)

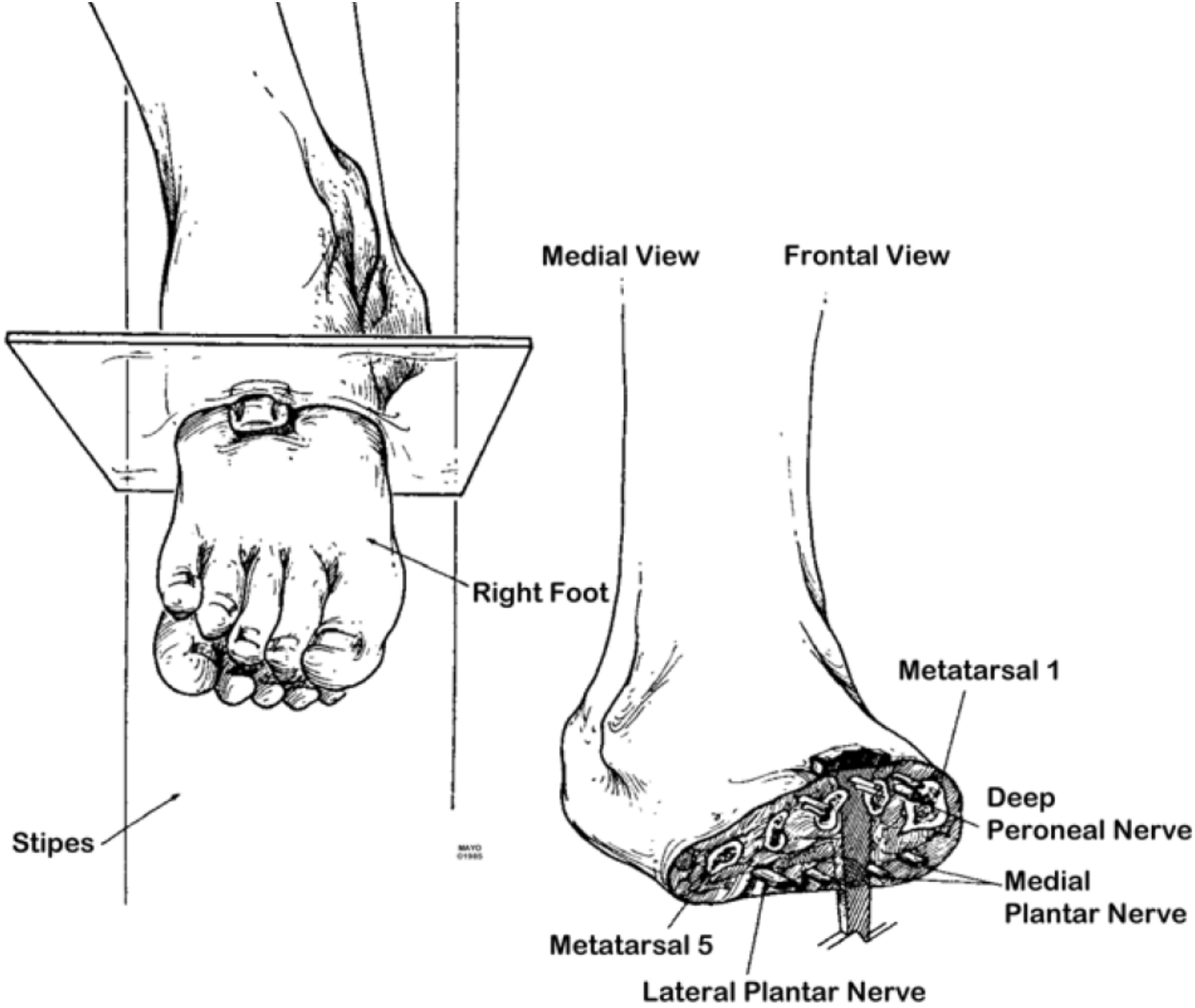



Flexor Retinaculum
Ulnar Nerve and Artery
Median Nerve
Radial Artery
Flexor Pollicus
Longus Musculus
Radial Artery
Nail in
Patibulum
Ulnar Artery
Flexor Retinaculum
Median Nerve

Nailing Feet

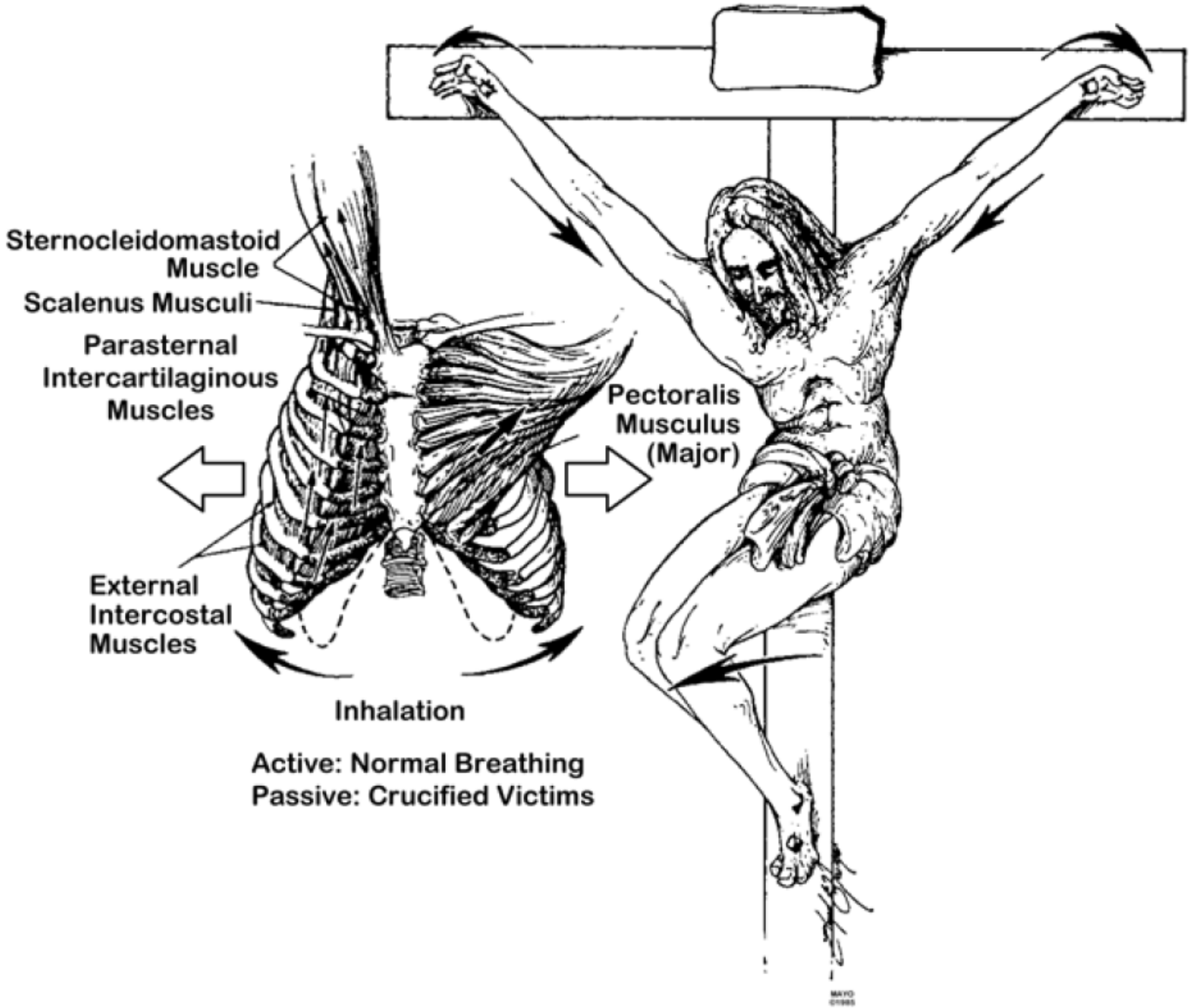
- Nailed in the 1st or 2nd intermetatarsal space
- Periosteal injury but no fractures
- Damaged: Deep peroneal and plantar nerves


Weight-Bearing
Direction
of Body
1
5
4
3
2
1
Placement
of Nail
Metatarsals


Medial View
Frontal View
Right Foot
Stipes
Metatarsal 1
Deep
Peroneal Nerve
Medial
Plantar Nerve
Metatarsal 5
Lateral Plantar Nerve

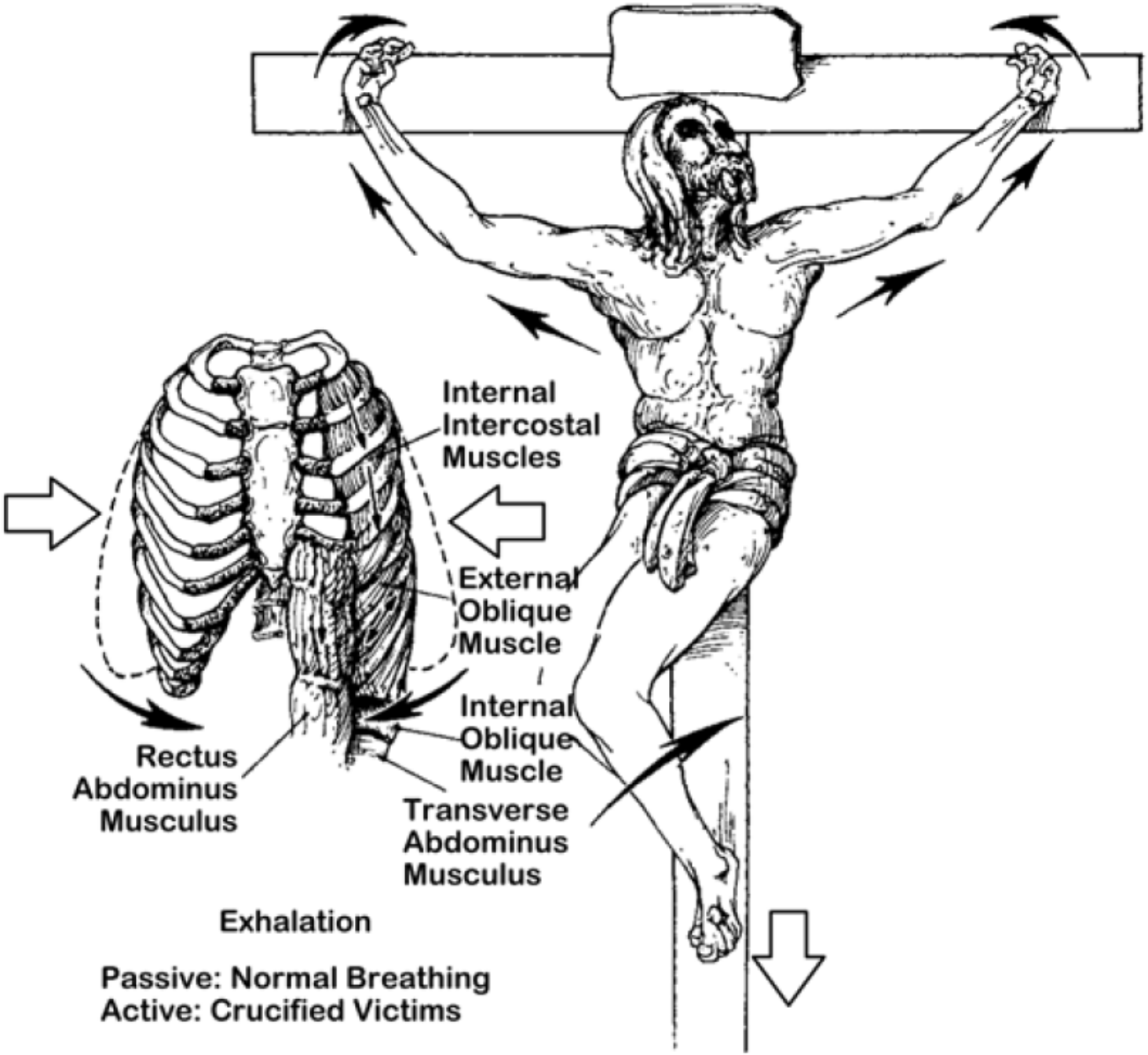
Suffocation

- Chest cavity held open by the weight of the body, pulling down on the arms and shoulders
- Hinder exhalation
- Breathing was shallow
- CO_2 increases in the blood
- Blood becomes acidic
- Muscles function decreases


Sternocleidomastoid Muscle
Scalenus Musculi
Parasternal Intercartilaginous Muscles
External Intercostal Muscles
Pectoralis Musculus (Major)
Inhalation
Active: Normal Breathing
Passive: Crucified Victims

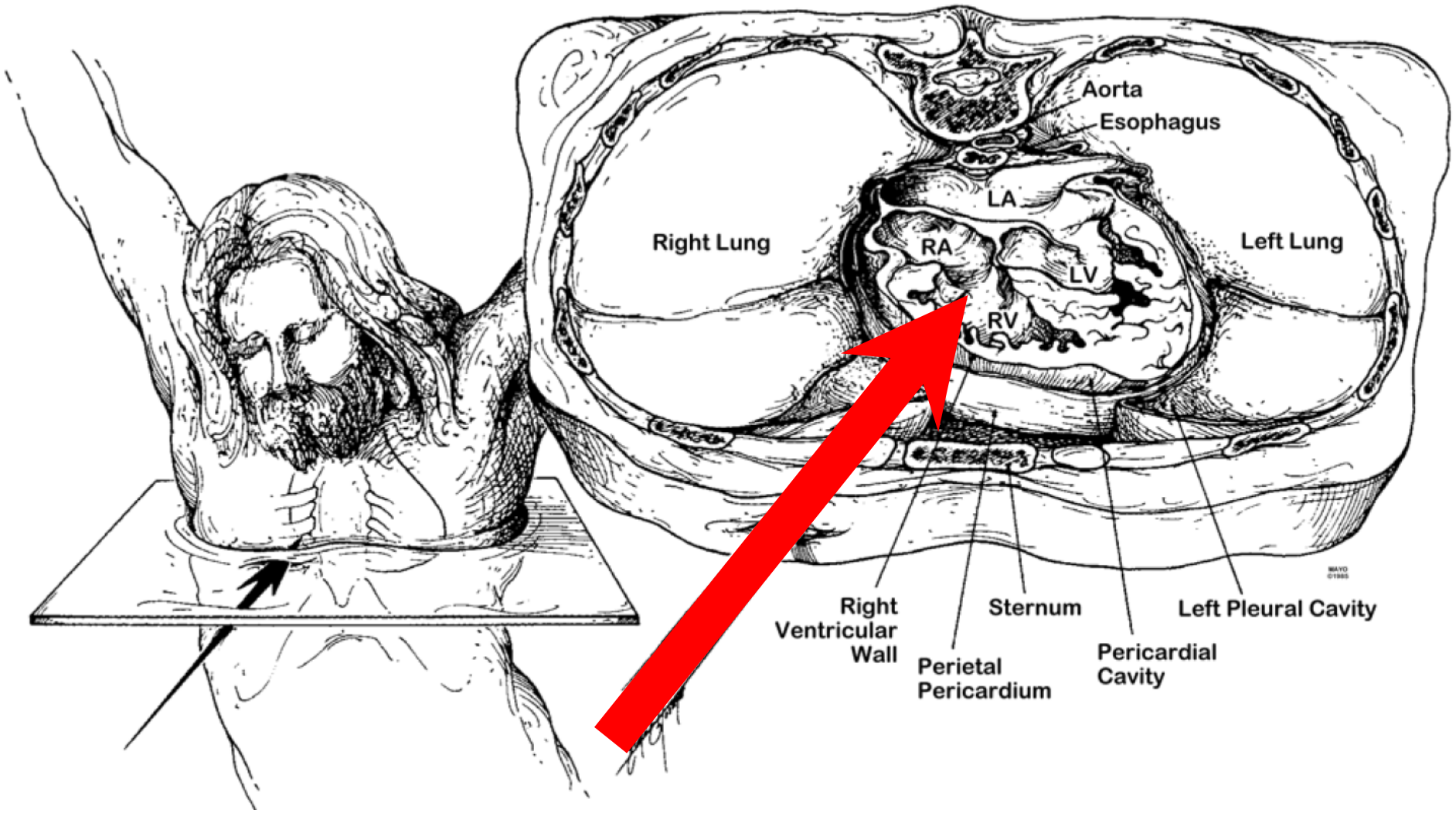
Suffocation

- Exhalation required lifting the body by pushing up on the feet and by flexing the elbows and pulling in the shoulders
- Placed the entire weight of the body on the feet producing searing pain
- Causes rotation of the wrists on the nails; causing pain in the median nerves
- Would also painfully scrape the scourged back against the rough wooden stipes


Internal
Intercostal
Muscles
External
Oblique
Muscle
Internal
Oblique
Muscle
Transverse
Abdominus
Musculus
Rectus
Abdominus
Musculus
Exhalation
Passive: Normal Breathing
Active: Crucified Victims

Crucifracture

- Breathing was agonizing, and tiring causing asphyxiation
- Breaking the legs below the knees led to death within minutes
- Roman soldier was not allowed to leave until the victim was dead

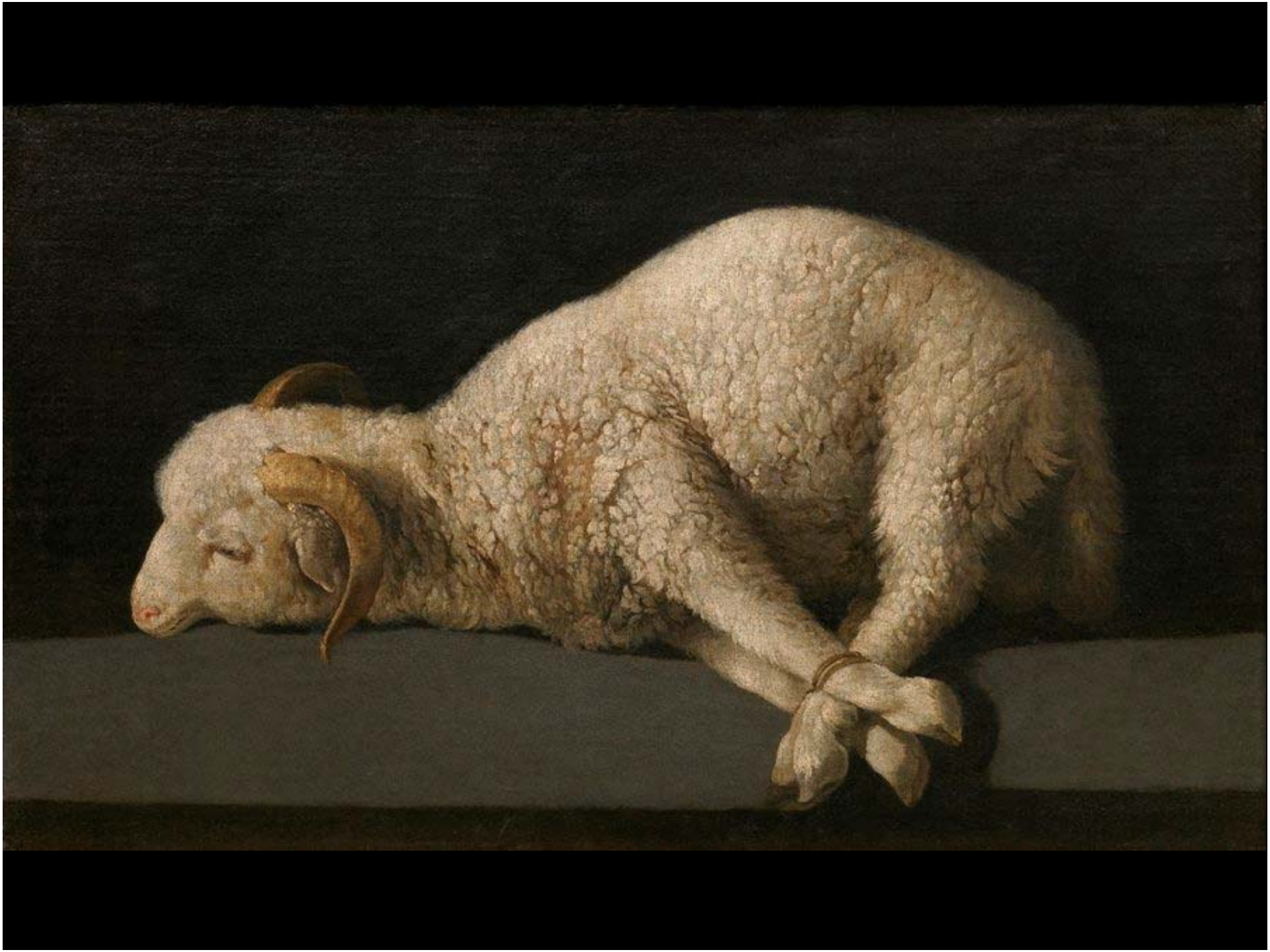


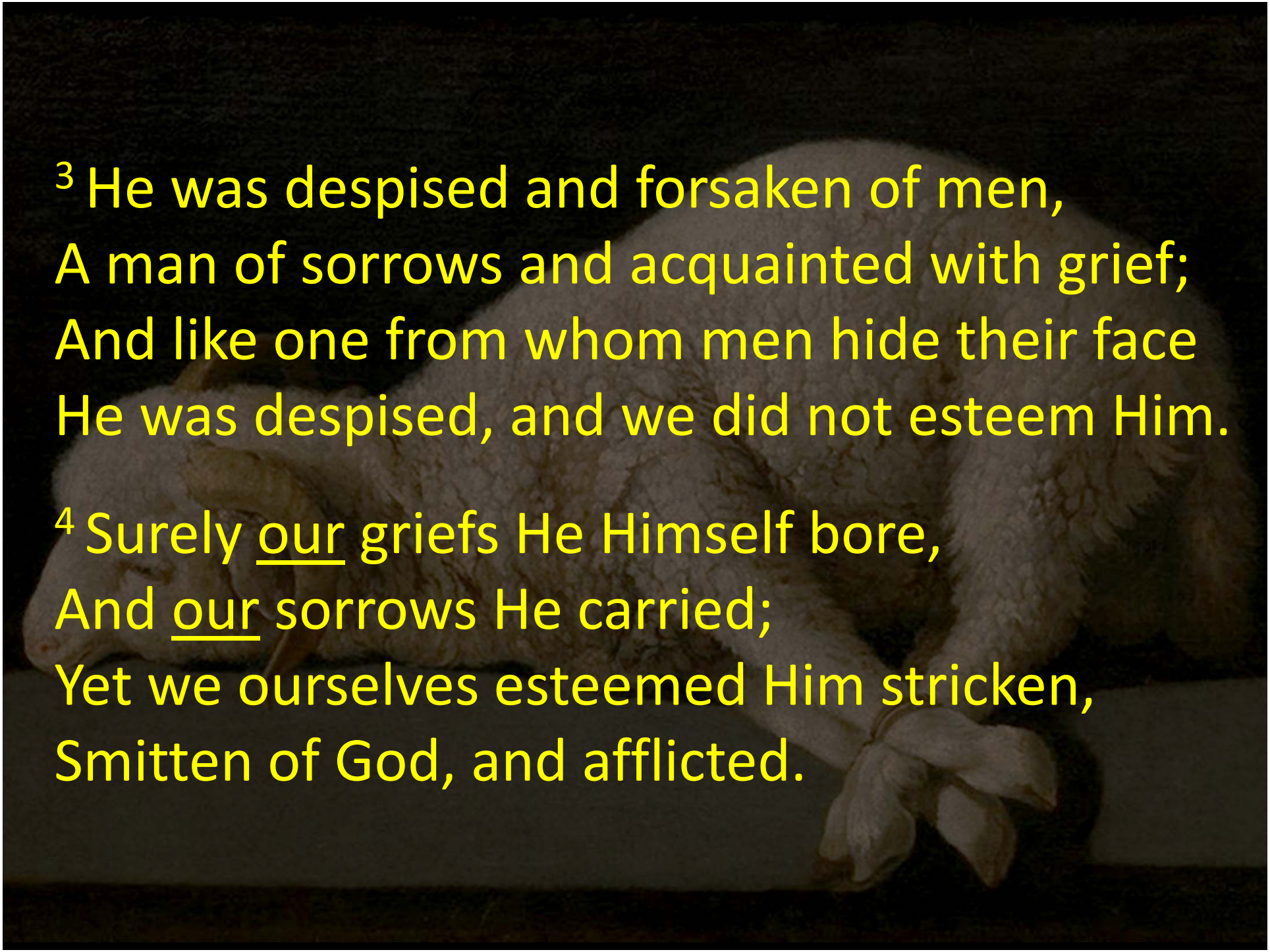
But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.

John 19:34

Cause of Death

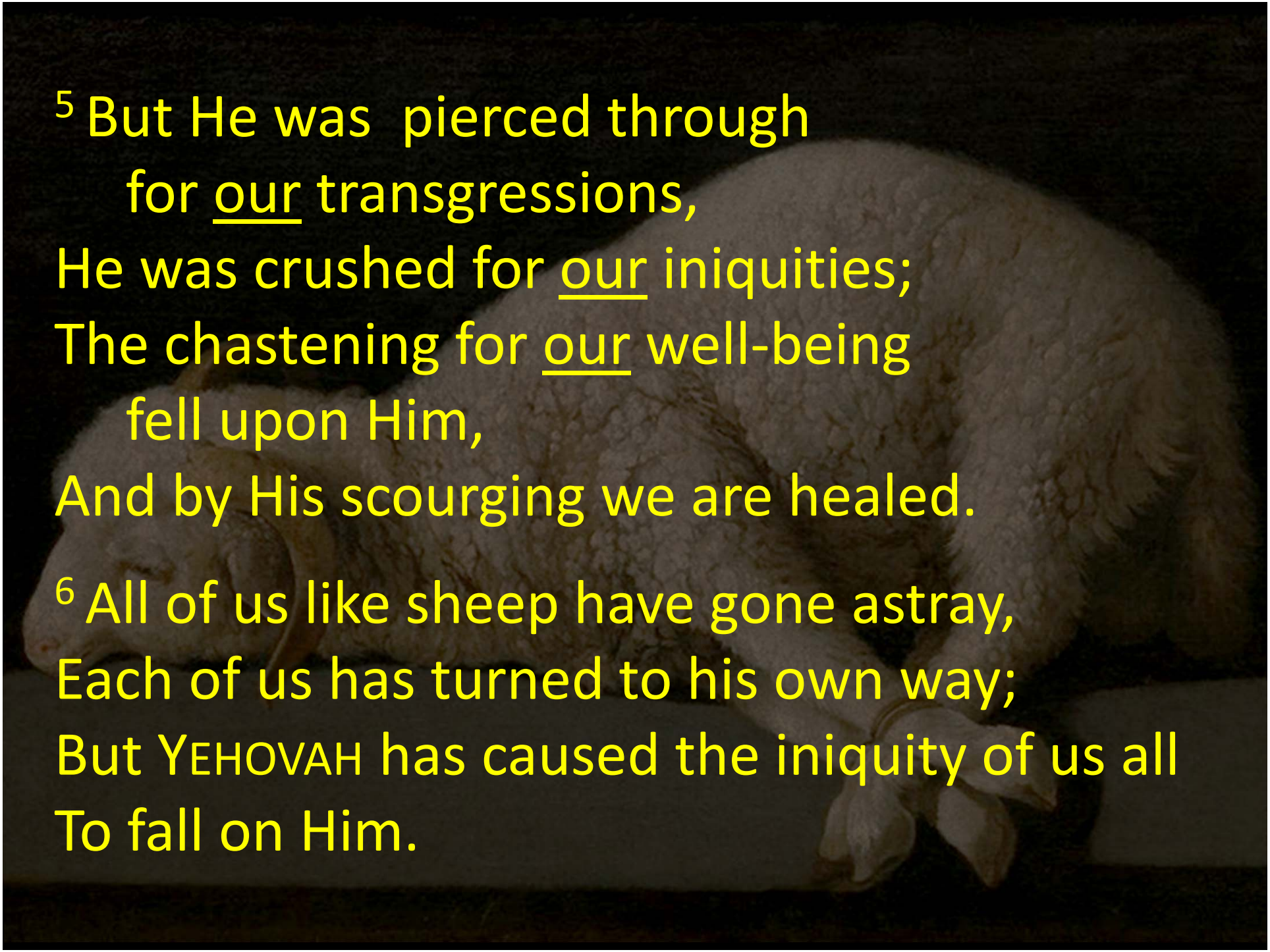
- Hypovolemic shock - blood loss
- Exhaustion asphyxia
- Dehydration
- Stress-induced arrhythmias
- Congestive heart failure with the rapid accumulation of pericardial and pleural effusions

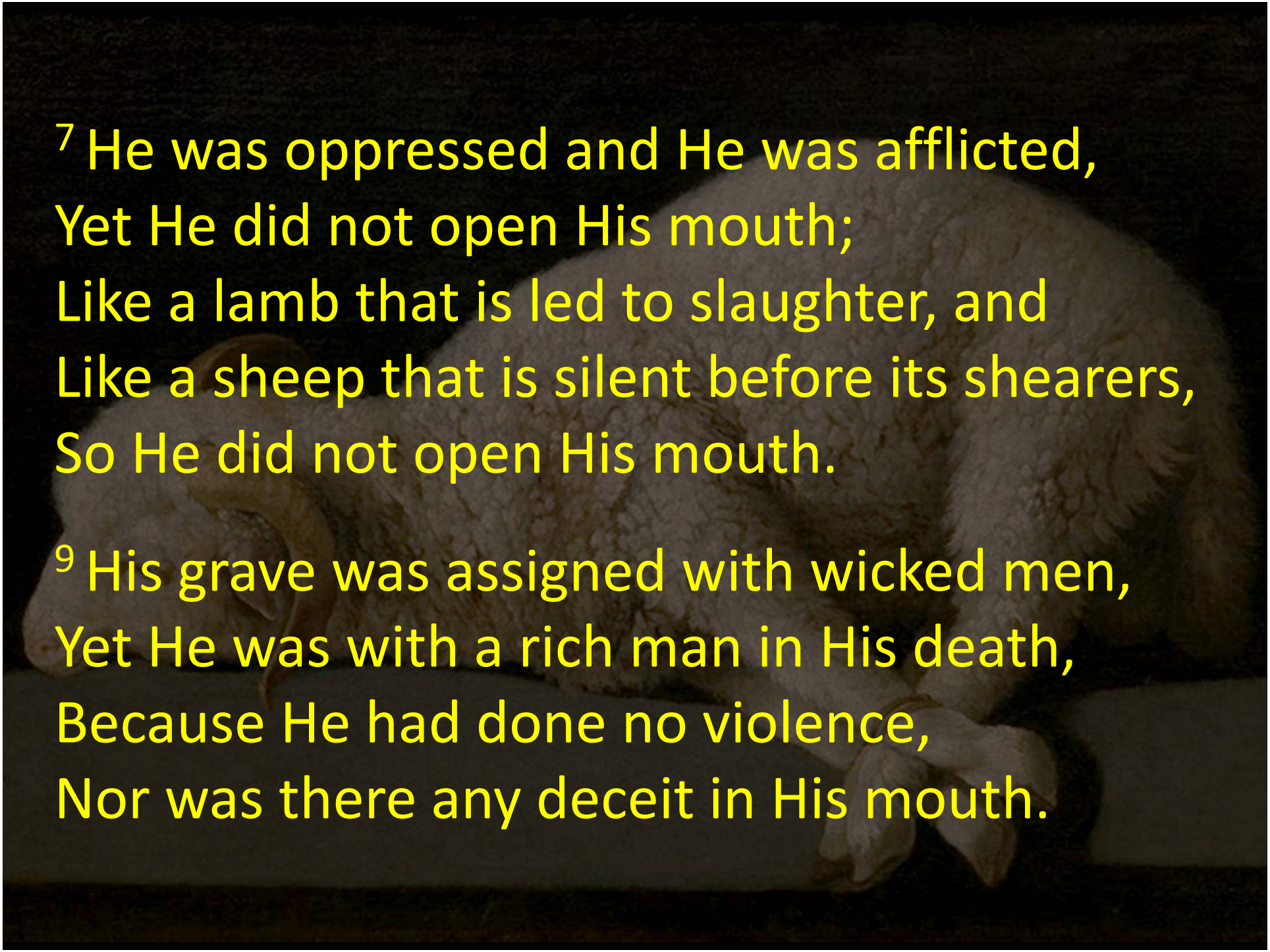


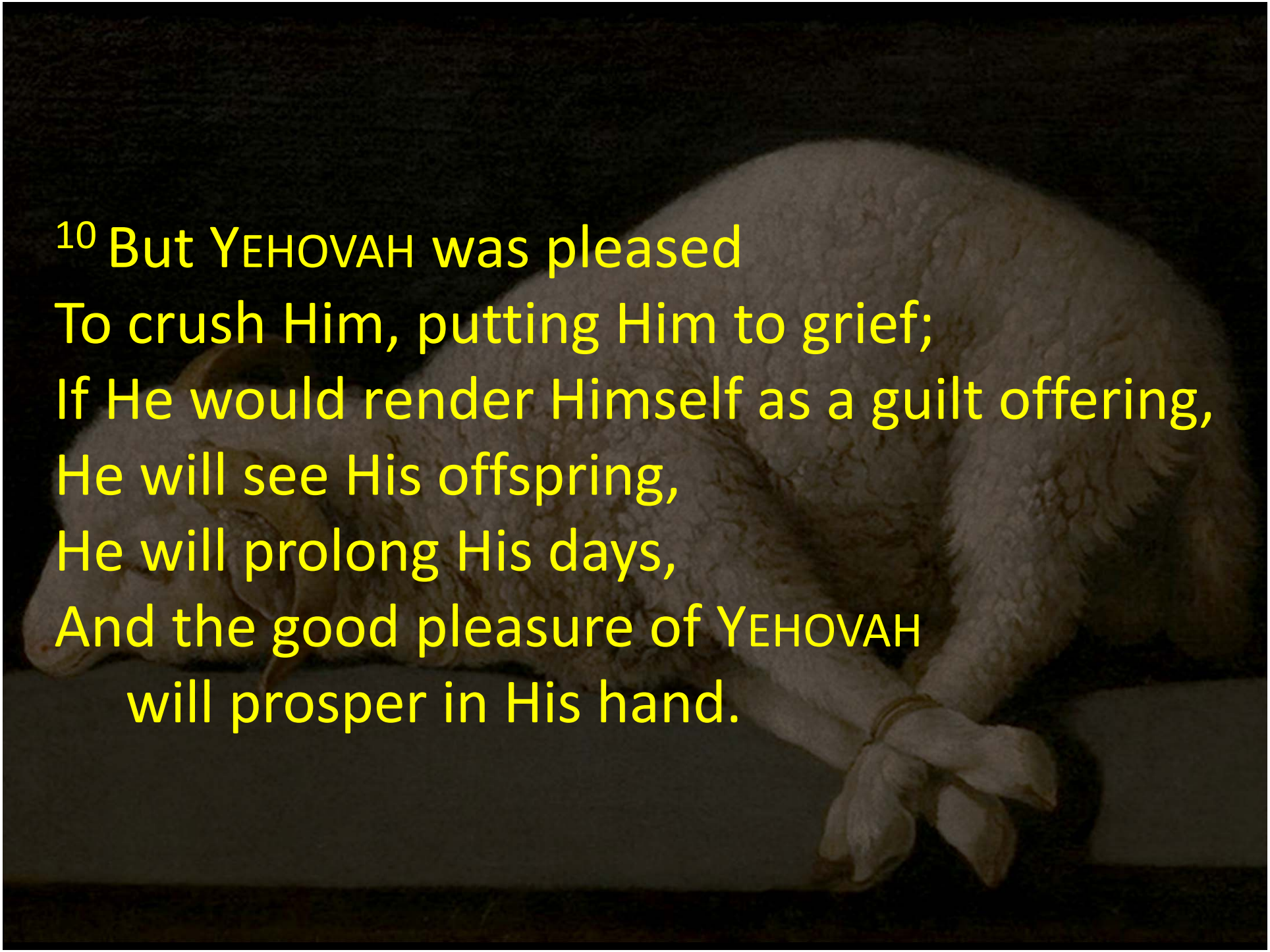


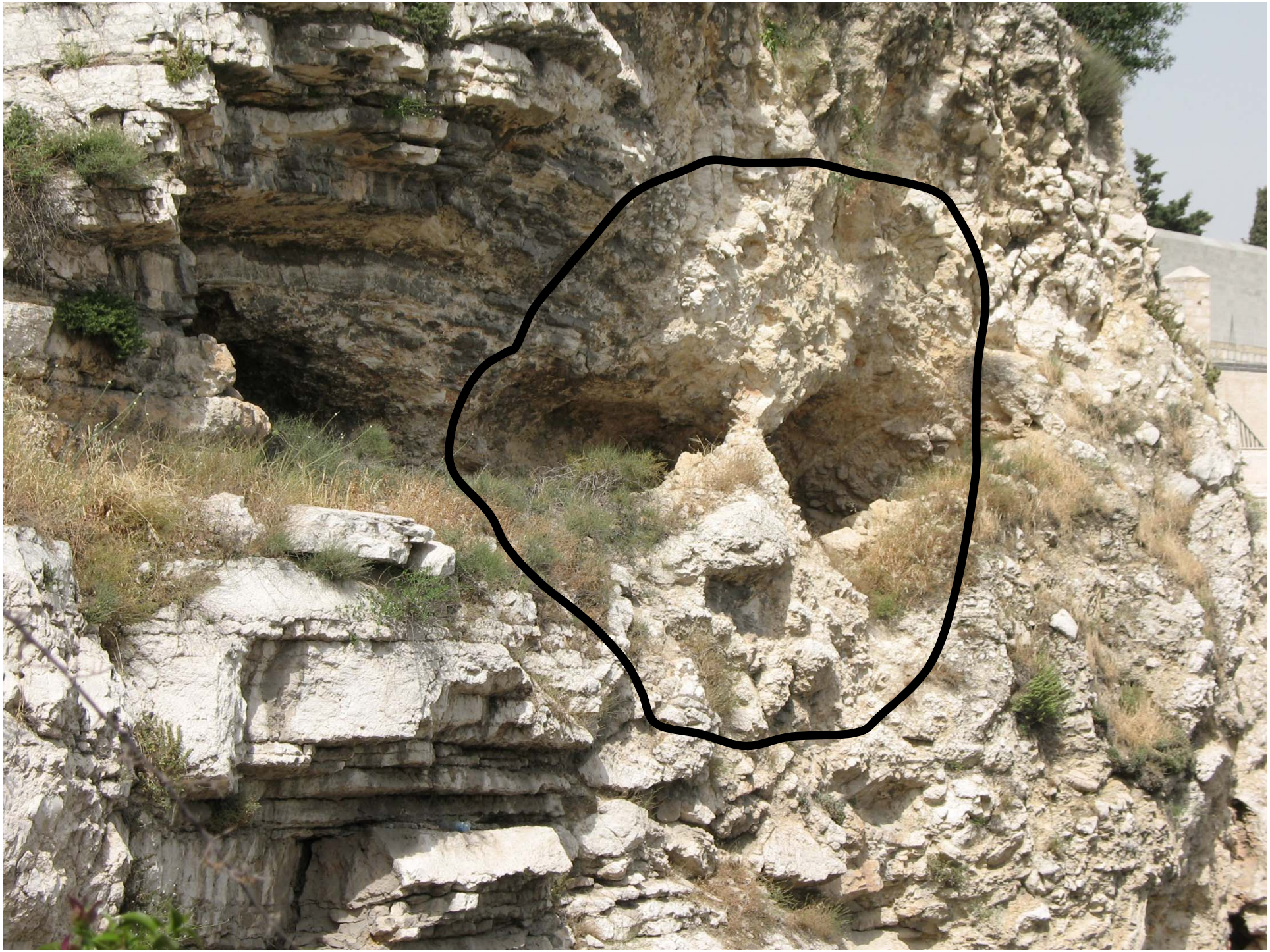
[3] He was despised and forsaken of men,
A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;
And like one from whom men hide their face
He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

[4] Surely our griefs He Himself bore,
And our sorrows He carried;
Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten of God, and afflicted.


5 But He was pierced through
for our transgressions,
He was crushed for our iniquities;
The chastening for our well-being
fell upon Him,
And by His scourging we are healed.
6 All of us like sheep have gone astray,
Each of us has turned to his own way;
But YEHOVAH has caused the iniquity of us all
To fall on Him.


7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted,
Yet He did not open His mouth;
Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and
Like a sheep that is silent before its shearers,
So He did not open His mouth.
9 His grave was assigned with wicked men,
Yet He was with a rich man in His death,
Because He had done no violence,
Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.


10 But YEHOVAH was pleased
To crush Him, putting Him to grief;
If He would render Himself as a guilt offering,
He will see His offspring,
He will prolong His days,
And the good pleasure of YEHOVAH
will prosper in His hand.



1 Peter 1

18 knowing that you were
not redeemed with perishable
things like silver or gold from your
futile way of life inherited from
your forefathers, 19 but with
precious blood, as of a lamb
unblemished and spotless,
the blood of Christ.

1 Peter 2

24 …He Himself bore our sins
in His body on the cross,
so that we might die to sin
and live to righteousness;

Ephesians 2

8 For by grace you have been
saved through faith; and that not
of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God;
9 not as a result of works,
so that no one may boast.

Ephesians 2

10 For we are His workmanship,
created in Christ Jesus
for good works,
which God prepared
beforehand so that
we would walk in them.

Jesus Christ did not die
to make your life better,

Jesus Christ died
to give you a better life.

Jesus Christ did not die
to make my life better,

Jesus Christ died
to give me a better life.

Matthew 16

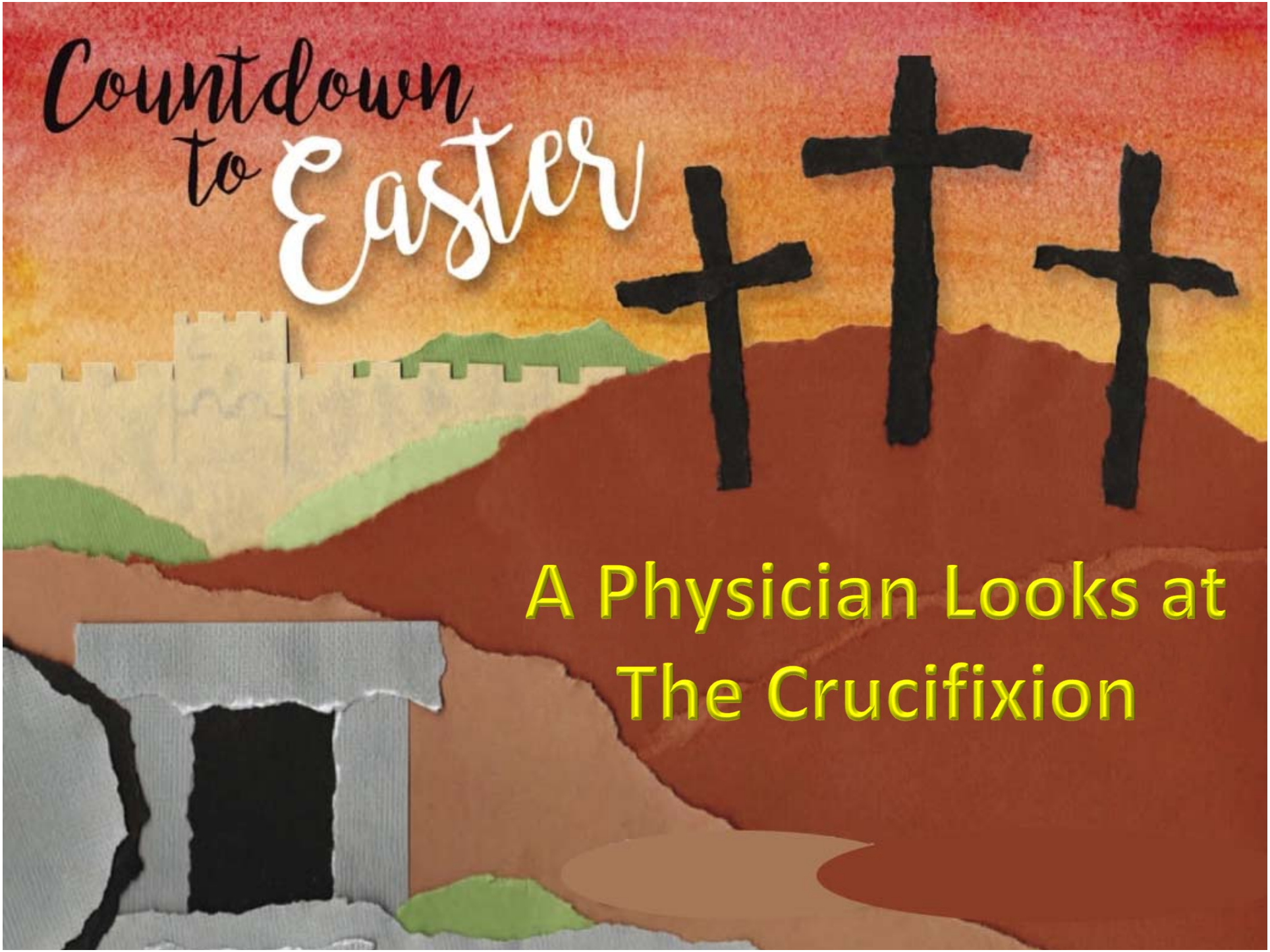
24 Then Jesus said to His disciples,
“If anyone wishes to come after
Me, he must deny himself, and
take up his cross and follow Me.

Matthew 16

25 For whoever wishes to save
his life will lose it; but whoever
loses his life for My sake will find
it. 26 For what will it profit a man if
he gains the whole world and
forfeits his soul? Or what will a
man give in exchange for his soul?

Matthew 16

27 For the Son of Man is going to
come in the glory of His Father
with His angels,
and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN
ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.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