

CRUCIFIXION AND THE IMPALING OF THE HAND

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Excerpts from: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crucifixion>

Crucifixion:

Terminology:

Crucifixion is a form of slow and painful execution in which the victim is tied or nailed to a large wooden cross and left to hang until dead. It is principally known from antiquity, but remains in occasional use in some countries.

Ancient Greek has two verbs for crucify: ana-stauro (ἀνασταυρόω), from stauros, "stake", and apo-tumpanizo (ἀποτυμπανίζω) "crucify on a plank," together with anaskolopizo (ἀνασκολοπίζω "impale"). In earlier pre-Roman Greek texts anastauro usually means "impale."

The English term cross derives from the Latin word crux. The Latin term crux literally means "in general, a tree, frame, or other wooden instruments of execution, on which criminals were impaled or hanged" and "in particular, a cross".

The English term crucifix derives from the Latin crucifixus or cruci fixus, past participle passive of crucifigere or cruci figere, meaning "to crucify" or "to fasten to a cross".

Details:

Crucifixion was often performed to terrorize and dissuade its witnesses from perpetrating particularly heinous crimes. Victims were left on display after death as warnings to others who might attempt dissent. Crucifixion was usually intended to provide a death that was particularly slow, painful (hence the term excruciating, literally "out of crucifying"), gruesome, humiliating, and public, using whatever means were most expedient for that goal. Crucifixion methods varied considerably with location and time period.

The Greek and Latin words corresponding to "crucifixion" applied to many different forms of painful execution, from impaling on a stake to affixing to a tree, to an upright pole (a crux simplex) or to a combination of an upright (in Latin, stipes) and a crossbeam (in Latin, patibulum).

In some cases, the condemned was forced to carry the crossbeam on his shoulders to the place of execution. A whole cross would weigh well over 135 kilos (300 lb), but the crossbeam would not be quite as burdensome, weighing around 45 kilos (100 lb). The Roman historian Tacitus records that the city of

Rome had a specific place for carrying out executions, situated outside the Esquiline Gate, and had a specific area reserved for the execution of slaves by crucifixion. Upright posts would presumably be fixed permanently in that place, and the crossbeam, with the condemned person perhaps already nailed to it, would then be attached to the post.

The person executed may have been attached to the cross by rope, though nails are mentioned in a passage by the Judean historian Josephus, where he states that at the Siege of Jerusalem (70 AD), "the soldiers out of rage and hatred, nailed those they caught, one after one way, and another after another, to the crosses, by way of jest." Objects used in the crucifixion of criminals, such as nails, were sought as amulets with perceived medicinal qualities.

While a crucifixion was an execution, it was also a humiliation, by making the condemned as vulnerable as possible. Artists have traditionally depicted the figure on a cross with a loin cloth or a covering of the genitals. Writings by Seneca the Younger state some victims suffered a stick forced upwards through their groin. Despite its frequent use by the Romans, the horrors of crucifixion did not escape mention by some of their eminent orators. Cicero for example, described crucifixion as "a most cruel and disgusting punishment", and suggested that "the very mention of the cross should be far removed not only from a Roman citizen's body, but from his mind, his eyes, his ears."

Frequently, the legs of the person executed were broken or shattered with an iron club, an act called *crurifragium*, which was also frequently applied without crucifixion to slaves. This act hastened the death of the person but was also meant to deter those who observed the crucifixion from committing offenses.

Nail placement

In popular depictions of the crucifixion of Jesus (possibly because in translations of John 20:25 the wounds are described as being "in his hands"), Jesus is shown with nails in his hands. But in Greek the word "χείρ", usually translated as "hand", referred to arm and hand together, and to denote the hand as distinct from the arm some other word was added, as "ἄκρην οὐτάσε χεῖρα" (he wounded the end of the χείρ, i.e., he wounded her hand).

A possibility that does not require tying is that the nails were inserted just above the wrist, between the two bones of the forearm (the radius and the ulna).

An experiment that was the subject of a documentary on the National Geographic Channel's *Quest For Truth: The Crucifixion*, showed that nailed feet provided enough support for the body, and that the hands could have been merely tied. Nailing the feet to the side of the cross relieves strain on the wrists by placing most of the weight on the lower body.

Another possibility, suggested by Frederick Zugibe, is that the nails may have been driven in at an angle, entering in the palm in the crease that delineates the bulky region at the base of the thumb, and exiting in the wrist, passing through the carpal tunnel.

A foot-rest (*suppedaneum*) attached to the cross, perhaps for the purpose of taking the person's weight off the wrists, is sometimes included in representations of the crucifixion of Jesus, but is not discussed in ancient sources. Some scholars interpret the Alexamenos graffito, the earliest surviving depiction of the

Crucifixion, as including such a foot-rest. Ancient sources also mention the sedile, a small seat attached to the front of the cross, about halfway down, which could have served a similar purpose.

In 1968, archaeologists discovered at Giv'at ha-Mivtar in northeast Jerusalem the remains of one Jehohanan, who had been crucified in the 1st century. The remains included a heel bone with a nail driven through it from the side. The tip of the nail was bent, perhaps because of striking a knot in the upright beam, which prevented it being extracted from the foot. A first inaccurate account of the length of the nail led some to believe that it had been driven through both heels, suggesting that the man had been placed in a sort of sidesaddle position, but the true length of the nail, 11.5 cm (4.53 inches), suggests instead that in this case of crucifixion the heels were nailed to opposite sides of the upright. The skeleton from Giv'at ha-Mivtar is currently the only recovered example of ancient crucifixion in the archaeological record.

Pre-Roman States:

Crucifixion (or impalement), in one form or another, was used by Persians, Carthaginians, Macedonians, and Romans. Death was often hastened. "The attending Roman guards could only leave the site after the victim had died, and were known to precipitate death by means of deliberate fracturing of the tibia and/or fibula, spear stab wounds into the heart, sharp blows to the front of the chest, or a smoking fire built at the foot of the cross to asphyxiate the victim."

The Greeks were generally opposed to performing crucifixions. However, in his *Histories*, ix.120–122, the Greek writer Herodotus describes the execution of a Persian general at the hands of Athenians in about 479 BC: "They nailed him to a plank and hung him up ... this Artayctes who suffered death by crucifixion." The *Commentary on Herodotus* by How and Wells remarks: "They crucified him with hands and feet stretched out and nailed to cross-pieces; cf. vii.33. This barbarity, unusual on the part of Greeks, may be explained by the enormity of the outrage or by Athenian deference to local feeling."

Some Christian theologians, beginning with Paul of Tarsus writing in Galatians 3:13, have interpreted an allusion to crucifixion in Deuteronomy 21:22-23. This reference is to being hanged from a tree, and may be associated with lynching or traditional hanging. However, Rabbinic law limited capital punishment to just 4 methods of execution: stoning, burning, strangulation, and decapitation, while the passage in Deuteronomy was interpreted as an obligation to hang the corpse on a tree as a form of deterrence. The fragmentary Aramaic Testament of Levi (DSS 4Q541) interprets in column 6: "God ... (partially legible)-will set ... right errors. ... (partially legible)-He will judge ... revealed sins. Investigate and seek and know how Jonah wept. Thus, you shall not destroy the weak by wasting away or by ... (partially legible)-crucifixion ... Let not the nail touch him."

Alexander the Great is reputed to have crucified 2000 survivors from his siege of the Phoenician city of Tyre, as well as the doctor who unsuccessfully treated Alexander's friend Hephaestion. Some historians have also conjectured that Alexander crucified Callisthenes, his official historian and biographer, for objecting to Alexander's adoption of the Persian ceremony of royal adoration.

In Carthage, crucifixion was an established mode of execution, which could even be imposed on generals for suffering a major defeat.

The Jewish king Alexander Jannaeus crucified 800 rebels, said to be Pharisees, in the middle of Jerusalem.

The crucifixion of Jesus:

Jesus of Nazareth's death by crucifixion by Pontius Pilate (most likely in AD 30 or 33), recounted in the four first-century canonical Gospels, is referred to repeatedly as something well known in the earlier letters of Saint Paul, for instance, five times in his First Letter to the Corinthians, written in AD 57 (1:13, 1:18, 1:23, 2:2, 2:8). Pilate was the Roman governor of Iudaea province at the time, and he is explicitly linked with the condemnation of Jesus not only by the Gospels but also by Tacitus, (see Responsibility for the death of Jesus for details). The civil charge was a claim to be King of the Jews.

The rebel slaves of the Third Servile War: Between 73 BC and 71 BC a band of slaves, eventually numbering about 120,000, under the (at least partial) leadership of Spartacus were in open revolt against the Roman republic. The rebellion was eventually crushed and, while Spartacus himself most likely died in the final battle of the revolt, approximately 6,000 of his followers were crucified along the 200 km Appian Way between Capua and Rome as a warning to any other would-be rebels.

Saint Peter, Christian apostle: according to tradition, Peter was crucified upside-down at his own request (hence the Cross of St. Peter), because he did not feel worthy enough to die the same way as Jesus.

Saint Andrew, Christian apostle and Saint Peter's brother: crucified, according to tradition, on an X-shaped cross, hence the name St. Andrew's Cross

Simeon of Jerusalem, 2nd Bishop of Jerusalem, crucified in either 106 or 107

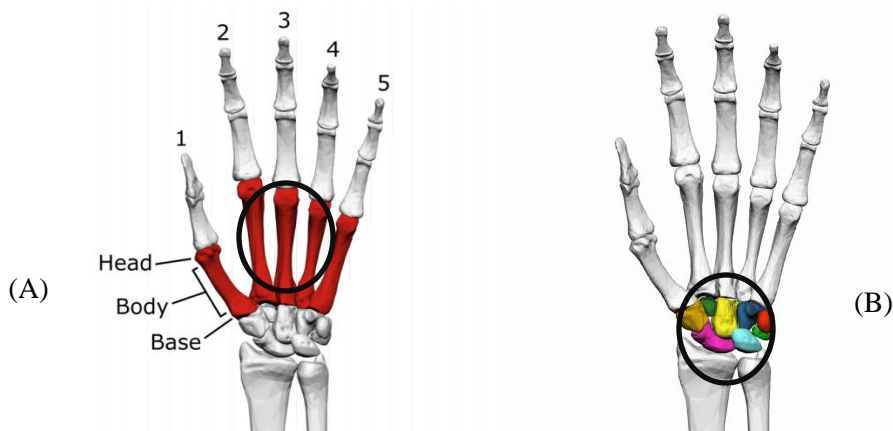
Little Saint Hugh of Lincoln was an English boy whose disappearance in 1255 prompted a blood libel against the local Jews. A Jewish man was tortured until he confessed to killing the child. The story of Little Saint Hugh became well known through medieval ballad poetry.

Mani, the founder of Manicheanism, was depicted as having died by crucifixion.

Archbishop Joachim of Nizhny Novgorod: reportedly crucified upside down, on the Royal Doors of the Cathedral in Sevastopol, Russia in 1920

Wilgefortis was venerated as a saint and represented as a crucified woman, however her legend comes from a misinterpretation of the full-clothed crucifix of Lucca.

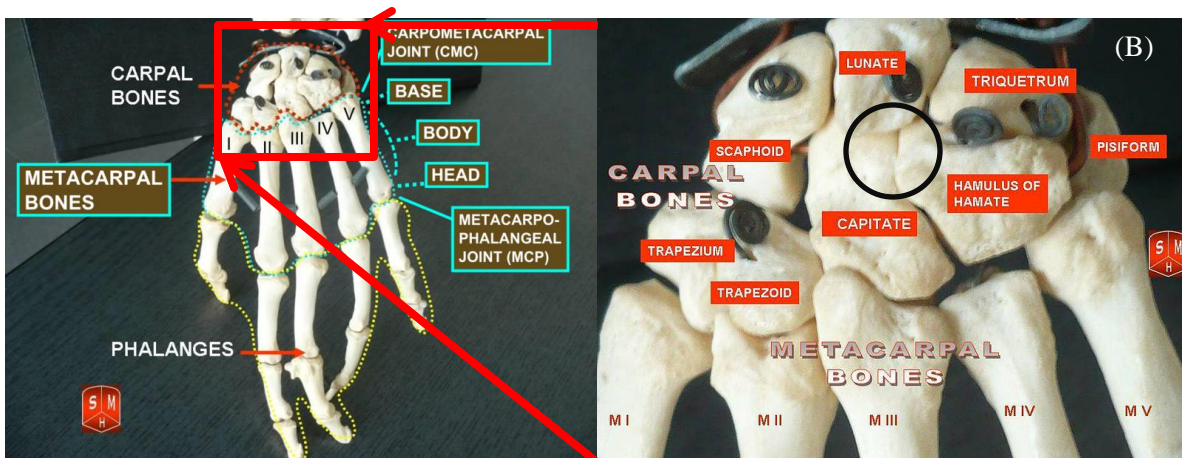
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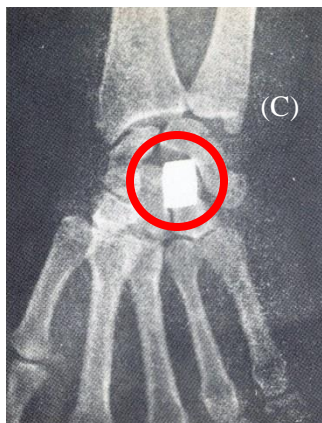
Crucifixion depicted by Roman artists between 2 & 3 or 3 & 4 of the Metacarpal bones (A) would rip out the tissue between the fingers and there would also be the potential to break the number 3 Metacarpal bone, being the center of the hand. It would be in the Carpal bone group (B) where crucifixion would separate the bones not breaking a bone because of their size, and the ligaments in that area would pull into the wound. The dead center of this area would place the impaling spike to enter between the Capitate and the Hamulus Bones towards the Lunate Bone (C). This would not break the wrist between the Carpal Bones and the two forearm bones, and would not tear out between the fingers.

The 8 bones that make up the Carpal bones are arranged and created by God for the purpose of Crucifixion with this in mind and the foreknowledge of God, He put this bone group there so a spike would be nailed in Jesus Christ's hands and not a bone would be broken and it would support his body weight along with the supporting nailed feet.

Notice the graphics here to see the total logic in this and as it also fits to the Scriptures as they say it was the hand that was nailed to a CROSS, not a beam. Moreover, no etymological explanation of the crucifixion will ever show this absolute truth. Making the wrist part of the hand is ridiculous, and making the forearm part of the hand is just preposterous.



Photos from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carpal_bones
and <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metacarpus>



The shape of these bones make it ideal location for the impaling of the Roman spikes, and to support the weight of the body as well as keep the prophecy accurate that no bone would be broken (C).

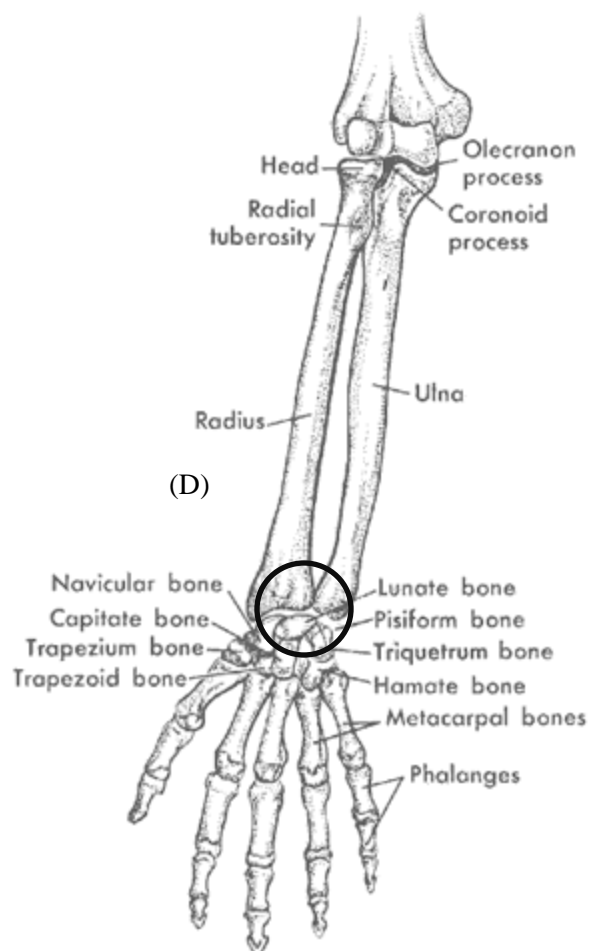
The fingers actually extend into the hand area and an impaling of this area as the Catholics do would not hold up the weight of the body and either pull out or rip the flesh between the fingers.

This location is also part of the hand, not the wrist. It is the lower part of the palm. This also lines up with prophecy where it says they pierced my HANDS and my feet. The wrist is NOT part of the hand and never was.

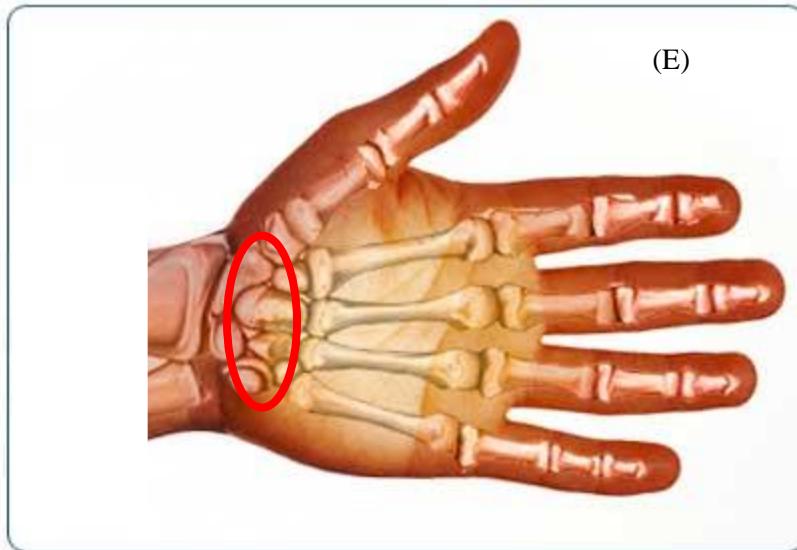
Some people want to be so anti-Catholic that they move the impaling to the wrists or even further to the lower forearms. This is totally ridiculous! They then fabricate an historic legend that Rome considered the wrist as part of the hand IN THOSE DAYS. So you can't check out back then if this is true or not. Fact is if you impale the wrist you would break the wrist bones. The wrist is considered where the Carpal bones connect to the Radius and the Ulna bones of the forearm (D).

If the Radius or Ulna bones were severed from the Carpal bones, this would constitute a broken wrist bone and would thereby falsify the prophecy relating to not a bone would be broken.

Likewise if the impaling were to be between the Radius and the Ulna, one could become dislodged from the Carpal bones and you have the same issue a broken wrist. The weight of the body would be on the Radius side and would tear from the Carpal bones thereby also breaking the wrist because of the weight of the body. The farther up the arm you go the further away from the hand you get and thus also making the prophecy a lie where it is said that they pierced my HANDS. Thus you MUST resort to the Catholic tradition between the fingers which is the worst case scenario. Thus you must adopt the only real view of this and that is the FACT that the impaling of the hand in crucifixion was in between the Carpal bones.



Thus the view of the hand would be between the Lunate, Triquetrum, the Hamulus of Hamate and the Capitate bones (E). These bones would separate but the ligaments holding them together would not be severed, and would serve to keep and hold the weight of the body.



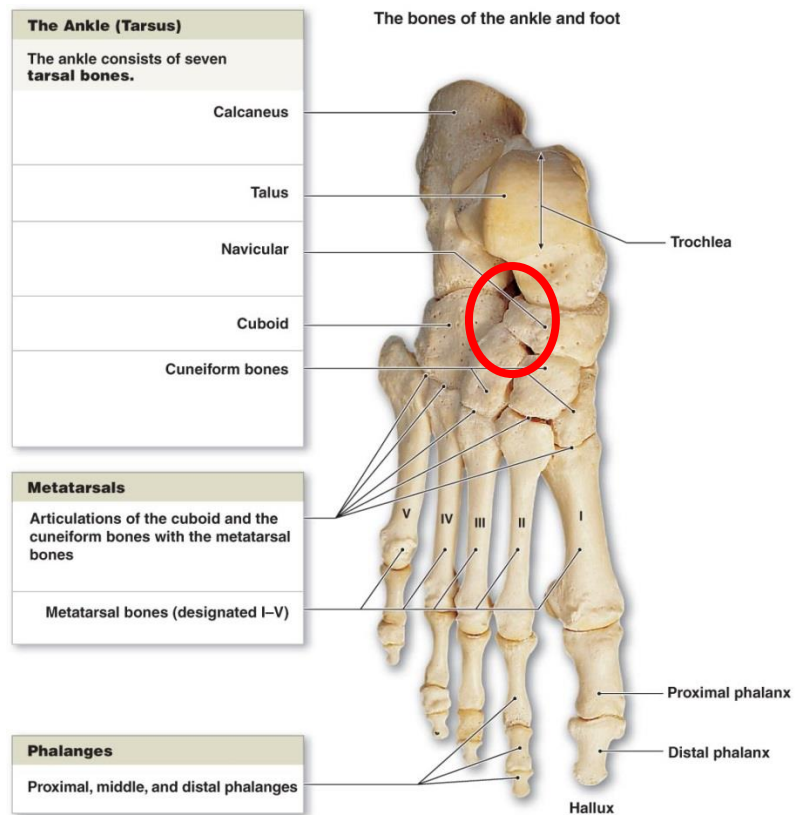
The reason for all this is to show that the Bible prophecy is true, and Jesus Christ died on the cross by crucifixion. That in FACT there is an accurate location for this tortuous execution for impaling of the hand to thereby agree with scriptures that it was the hand and not the wrist or the forearm. And that this location on both hands and feet would support the weight of the body.

Now bringing up another issue would be the impaling of the feet.

A long spike would need be used if the heel was broken, but this is not a necessity seeing that only the heel would be bruised. Therefore the impaling would have been in the same area as the hand.

The bones in the foot accommodate the impaling much better than the hands because they have larger bones in the Tarsus bone area. These seven bones area arranged so that between the Navicular, the Cuboid and the Trochlee (F) is a location on the arch that would support the weight of the body and allow for no bone to be broken. Also the same type of spike could be used with both feet overlapping at the arch, however I would maintain a difficulty in placing the underneath foot correctly, and therefore contend that the feet were impaled separately and not together.

Hope this clears up some confusion of this issue.



(F)