

# John 19:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

## Analysis

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**But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water** (ἀλλ' εἰς τῶν στρατιωτῶν λόγχῃ αὐτοῦ τὴν πλευρὰν ἔνυξεν, καὶ ἐξῆλθεν εὐθὺς αἷμα καὶ ὕδωρ, all' heis tōn stratiōtōn lonchē autou tēn pleuran enyxen, kai exēlthen euthys haima kai hydōr)—To confirm death, a soldier thrust a λόγχη (lonchē, 'lance, spear') into Jesus's πλευράν (pleuran, 'side'), producing αἷμα καὶ ὕδωρ (haima kai hydōr, 'blood and water'). Medical explanations include: pericardial effusion, pleural effusion, or separated blood clot and serum. John emphasizes εὐθὺς (euthys, 'immediately'), stressing the eyewitness detail.

Theologically, blood and water symbolize atonement and cleansing. 1 John 5:6 references this: 'This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ.' The water may symbolize the Spirit (John 7:38-39), baptism, or sanctification. The blood represents the new covenant (Matthew 26:28). Together they encompass full salvation: justification (blood) and sanctification (water).

## Historical Context

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Roman spears typically penetrated 5-6 inches. Striking the right side would pierce the right atrium or ventricle, releasing blood; the pericardial sac would release serous fluid. John's precise medical observation has led many physicians throughout history to faith, recognizing authentic eyewitness detail rather than legendary embellishment.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. How does the medical detail of 'blood and water' validate the Gospel's historical reliability as eyewitness testimony?
2. What theological significance do blood and water carry—how do they represent full salvation?
3. How should the physical reality of Christ's death and suffering shape our understanding of atonement?

## Interlinear Text

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ἀλλ' εἷς τῶν στρατιωτῶν λόγχῃ αὐτοῦ τὴν πλευρὰν  
But one G3588 of the soldiers with a spear his G3588 G4125 side

G235 G1520 G4757 G3057 G846 G4125

ἔνυξεν καὶ εὐθὺς ἐξῆλθεν αἷμα καὶ ὕδωρ

pierced and forthwith came there out blood and water

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## Additional Cross-References

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**1 John 5:6** (Blood): This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

**1 John 5:8** (Blood): And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

**Zechariah 12:10** (Parallel theme): And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

**Ezekiel 36:25** (Parallel theme): Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

**Revelation 7:14** (Blood): And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

**Zechariah 13:1** (Parallel theme): In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

**Revelation 1:5** (Blood): And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

**Hebrews 9:22** (Blood): And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

**Hebrews 9:13** (Blood): For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

**Psalms 51:7** (Parallel theme): Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.