

Jerusalem Day 6: The Crucifixion

Jesus' disciples seem very afraid. They simply scattered. But some hung around in the city, anxious to see what was going to happen to Jesus.

In the courtyard, I saw Peter, who huddle around a fire in the middle. A servant girl recognized Peter, and said "This man was with Him" (Luke 22:56). But Peter denied knowing Jesus. This sounded familiar.

Soon after, two more people recognized Peter and accused him of being one of Jesus' followers. He denied Jesus both times. Almost immediately, the rooster crowed. Peter looked terrified and ashamed, and then he went outside the city. I followed him as he wept bitterly, but again, I kept my distance.

Not privy to Jesus' "meeting" with the chief priests, I was told that they had blindfolded him and mocked him and whipped Him. They spoke very harsh things against Him, but I was told Jesus didn't say a word until they asked Him if He was the Son of God. Jesus said, "You truly say that I am" (Luke 22:70).

From what I was told, this angered the chief priests even more, and they decided to send him to Pontius Pilate, the governor. From what I have heard, Pilate is not a very forgiving man and is quick to dole out punishment. Again, I don't envy Jesus.

My source told me that when Pilate questioned Jesus, he could find no fault in Him. Instead of punishing Him then and there, Pilate sent Him to King Herod. While happy to finally see who was causing all this commotion, Herod didn't want to have anything to do with Jesus, either. He sent Him back to Pilate.

Pilate told the chief priests that Jesus had done nothing

worthy of death. Pilate said he would have Him punished. The soldiers, still mocking Him, scourged Jesus severely, including with cat o' nine tails, which rips the skin off a person. When they were finished, Jesus was barely recognizable.

They continued to laugh at Him and, after putting a robe and a crown of thorns on His head, they sarcastically labeled Him as "King of the Jews."

Once again, they sent Jesus before Pilate. The Jewish custom during this season is to release one prisoner, and Pilate asked the crowd whom they wanted released to them. They asked for Barabbas, a robber, and so he was released. But what would they do with Jesus?

"Crucify Him," many in the crowd shouted. It's a far cry from the Hosannas they were shouting when Jesus came into the city a few days earlier. I was astonished because many of them are the same people. It's unfathomable to think that Jesus, someone whom I believe in my experience to be nothing but a man of peace, would suffer one of the worst punishments every know to man—crucifixion.

The Romans even made Jesus carry His own cross, even after the horrible torture He had just suffered. They led Him up to Golgotha, which means "The Place of a Skull." Some were still mocking Jesus, while others were weeping for Him, including some of His followers and His mother.

I followed them up to Golgotha, and I cringed when I saw what was happening. They had already put two criminals up on crosses, one on the left and one on the right of where Jesus was to be punished. Then they drove huge nails into Jesus' wrists and feet. There's no way any one regular man could take this agony. But it appears that Jesus is not like any other human being.

The soldiers went even further with their mocking of Jesus by

gambling for His clothing.

I was told that standing at the foot of Jesus' cross was His mother and His mother's sister, along with another woman named Mary Magdalene.

One of the criminals crucified with Him even spoke, angrily asking Jesus to save them all. But the second one said, "Do you not fear God, seeing you are under the same sentence?" He asked Jesus to remember him when Jesus came into His kingdom. I still am not sure that that means, but Jesus said, "Truly, I tell you, today you will be with Me in paradise."

Paradise sounds like a much better place to be than this. In the sixth hour of the day, it started getting dark and people began to stir with fear. And with that, Jesus took His last breath saying, "Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit."

 There came a great shaking, and many are very afraid of what is happening. I've even been told the veil of the Temple tore in the middle.

Believe it or not, a centurion standing to the side glorified God and said, "Certainly, this was a righteous man." But the Son of God? It's so difficult to believe. He said He would rise within three days. We'll just see what happens this weekend.

But for now, it's been an unbelievable day. I don't think history will ever forget this Man.{eo}

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Editor's Note: The preceding is an account of what one person could possibly have witnessed in Jerusalem on Friday during Holy Week. It is the sixday of what happened, according to the Bible. Some of the text is editorial license.