

Title: I've Done Something Terrible!

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I've done something terrible. I didn't actually realize what I was doing, but I am afraid.

The day began as a normal one. I have overseen other executions, but I sensed that this one was different almost from the beginning. The prisoner had been scourged terribly. The men of the garrison had taken opportunity to ridicule him with a scarlet robe, a crown of thorns and a reed as a fake scepter. The soldiers bowed before him in mock worship. They even spat on him and struck him on the head with the reed.

Ridicule of the victim was not so unusual, but there were other things. For instance, criminals often plead for mercy, but this prisoner was warning others about ominous things to come while he was on the way to cross, no less! At the cross, he actually refused the mild analgesic offered to him by some compassionate women – again, an unusual thing.

The description of his crime was likewise unusual. He was identified on the signboard of the cross as the king of the Jews, but that designation obviously bothered the Jewish religious leaders. They protested to the governor, but he had already had enough of their pushiness and refused to change a thing.

It was also obvious that they disliked this man intensely. It was not sufficient that he was being crucified. Once we had put him on the cross, they continued to revile him, challenging him to come down from the cross. The strange thing is that he did not respond in kind, but actually prayed that they might be forgiven!

They claimed that he said that he was the son of God. How could this powerless Jew be deity in the flesh? How could he be, though, dying like an ordinary man?? How was I to know?

He only lasted six hours on the cross, but the last three hours were unsettling. There was darkness over the entire land!

There was also something extraordinary about his death. Crucifixion often brings men slowly to exhaustion, but this man cried out with a loud voice just before he died! As if all of this was not enough, when he died, the ground began to shake and the rocks split. It was as if heaven itself was upset at what had happened!

I saw all of these things. It was my job to see that the execution was carried out. I've done something terrible and I am afraid...I executed the Son of God.

Final note: It is freely admitted that we don't actually know what the Roman

centurion in charge of Jesus' execution thought. His exclamation about the deity of Jesus, however, speaks volumes. He must have known something of Jesus' claims or the things said about him. Apparently what he heard and saw convinced him that Jesus was indeed the Son of God. This article was drawn from the following scriptures: Matthew 27:26-31, 3654; Mark 15:6-39; Luke 23:1-47 and John 19:1-22.