



"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"
(Mark 15:34)



The Cross

Imagine what it would have been like the day that our Lord Jesus Christ died? Had you been alive that day, what would you have seen? Let's look at that terrible day through the eyes of a ten year-old girl named Miriam.

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Something woke Miriam up early that Friday. She didn't know what was going on, only that the grown ups were talking. It had to do with the Man, Jesus from Nazareth. She remembered that He was a good Man who performed many miracles. One of them happened to her friend, Hannah's brother, David. He was crippled in an accident and unable to walk. They took him to Jesus of Nazareth who touched him and said, 'Get up and walk.' Ever since then she, Hannah, and David always played together.

Now the grown-ups all looked worried.

"I heard they took Him in the middle of the night to be tried in front of the high priest," said Miriam's father.

"They said He is a blasphemer because He called Himself the Son of God," answered Hannah's dad.

"How could a man perform such great miracles and not be from God?" asked Miriam's uncle.





“It’s the Pharisees, they’re all jealous of Him. The people are leaving them and following Jesus of Nazareth,” replied another uncle.

“If that is the case, they will find a way to kill Him,” said Miriam’s father.

“Would they kill an innocent man?” asked Miriam’s mother.

“To get what they want they’ll do anything,” answered Hannah’s mother.

Miriam couldn’t believe what she heard. Why would anyone want to kill such a kind and gentle Man? She remembered that when no one wanted the children, He told them to come and some of them even sat on His lap. He touched her and blessed her and she remembered looking into such loving eyes. Surely no one would want to hurt such a good Man.

Miriam ran outside and found her friends. They too couldn’t believe what was happening.

“Come, let’s follow the crowd and see for ourselves,” said David.

The three children followed the crowd, which stopped in front of Pontius Pilate’s palace. Pontius Pilate was the governor.

“They’re going to let Him go,” said an angry voice behind them.

“That’s ridiculous!” was the reply.



“Pilate said that he found the man innocent,” said the first voice. “As a matter of fact, Jesus of Nazareth won’t even defend Himself in front of Pilate. He just stays quiet, almost like a sheep going to be sheaved.”

“That proves He’s guilty,” came the second voice.

“I don’t think so,” replied the first voice. “He may be playing a trick. He’s been tricking us for so long. After all, the Pharisees say He cast out demons by the chief of demons. He must be a demon himself.”

The children looked at each other and shook their heads; they knew that Jesus of Nazareth was a Man from God, not the devil.

“Look. Look. Something is happening,” said the second voice.

Pontius Pilate brought out a murderer named Barabas and Jesus of Nazareth.



“Oh no!” cried Miriam. “What have they done to Him?”

In front of the crowd there stood Jesus of Nazareth, His back was whipped until it was raw. The evil Roman soldiers placed a crown of thorns on His head. They had placed a purple robe on Jesus of Nazareth and you could see where they slapped Him on the face and how they must have laughed at Him. There was blood coming down on His face which was bruised everywhere.



The children cried bitter tears when they saw Him.

“I can’t see Him like this anymore,” said Hannah. “Please let’s leave and tell our parents what’s happening.”

The children ran back to their parents and told them what was happening. Their parents told them not to leave the house and then went over to Pilate’s palace.

Inside the house the children couldn’t stop crying. All they could see was His beautiful face bloodied and bruised. The eyes that looked at them with such love now had the look of pain in them.

“Why did they do this to Him?” asked Miriam. “Why does He have to suffer so much?”

No one had an answer.

A little bit later they heard the crowd yelling, “**Crucify Him! Crucify Him!**” Then a little later they heard the crowd say, “His blood be on us and on our children.”

The children began to cry again because they knew that Jesus of Nazareth would be killed on a Cross.

Now the children lived in a place that overlooked the narrow street that Jesus of Nazareth was going to pass. They looked out the window and found the crowd coming. They saw the first condemned man carrying his Cross. The soldiers were moving him forward.



Then they saw the second condemned man. He was angry and yelling at the crowd. He too was carrying his Cross.

Then there was a crowd of people all yelling and shouting. In the middle of them they saw Jesus of Nazareth. He was trying to carry the cross they had placed on His back. He walked as much as He could and then fell down. The soldiers dragged Him up and placed the Cross on His shoulder again. After a little while, He fell again.



As He was walking, a woman came up to Him. When she saw the blood flowing down His face and into His eyes, she asked if she could wipe away the blood. He allowed her. Miriam looked at the towel carefully and noticed that Jesus of Nazareth's face was imprinted on the towel. How did that happen?

The soldiers pushed Jesus to make Him start moving again. After a while, He fell a third time. That was when they found this man, Simon of Cyrene, to carry the Cross. Miriam heard his name being called out among the people in the crowd.

Simon carried the cross for Jesus of Nazareth until they went outside of the city gates to a place called Golgotha, which means the skull.

The children couldn't stay in the house any longer and defied their parents and went to Golgotha.



Before they arrived there, they heard the hammer hitting the nail into the Cross. They thought that the soldiers were going to wrap Jesus' wrist around the Cross. When they got there, they saw that they were placing the nail through His hand and nailing Him, not the rope, into the cross. This made the girls scream and turn away.

Every time the hammer hit the nail, Miriam's body shook. With her head turned away, she heard them hit the nail over and over through His flesh and into the Cross. 'What agonizing pain that must be,' she thought as hot tears streamed down her face.

Finally the hammering stopped and the Cross was lifted high up. Miriam, clutching her friends' hands turned to see Jesus of Nazareth dangling on the Cross in the middle of the air. The three friends walked closer towards the Cross; they needed to be near Him.

They could hear the crowd passing in front of Him making fun of Him and saying things like, 'He saved others but can't save Himself.'

How cruel of them that even as He is dying they are mocking Him.

Then they heard a small voice coming from the Cross. "Father forgive them because they don't understand what they are doing," He said.

"Forgive them!" said David angrily. "Why should God forgive these people? They have murdered an innocent Man. God should punish them, not forgive them."





“No,” came a soft woman’s voice from behind. “He is right to ask God to forgive them. I believe He came to teach us how to be true children of God. He is teaching us now. True children of God can love enough to forgive each other.”

“Anyway,” she said in a sad voice, “if He is able to forgive all the terrible things that are happening to Him, we should be able to forgive any wrong-doing that happens to us.”

“Who are you?” asked David.

With a sad smile to match her sad voice she said, “Just a woman whose sins were forgiven.” Then she looked at Him with tears in her eyes and walked closer to the Cross.

As they were standing there, the children noticed one of the thieves who was hung with Him begin to bother Him. He kept saying to Jesus of Nazareth, “If you are the Christ save Yourself and us.”

But the other thief defended Him and spoke to his partner saying, “Don’t you fear God? You and I deserve to die like this. But this Man did nothing wrong.”

Then talking to Jesus of Nazareth the thief said, “Lord, remember me when You reach Your Kingdom.”

Lord Remember Me When You Come Into Your Kingdom
Lord Remember Me When You Come Into Your Kingdom



Amazingly Jesus of Nazareth looked at the thief and said, “Today you will be with Me in Paradise.”

“I don’t think this is right,” whispered Hannah to Miriam. “How can a bad person go to heaven?”

“Because of what you are seeing now,” was the response from someone next to them.

“Jesus of Nazareth is paying the price of sin for all of us. That lucky, lucky thief just stole the Kingdom of Heaven by repenting, confessing his sins and believing that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God.”

Hannah wondered how the death of Jesus of Nazareth would change everyone’s thinking about God and heaven.

The children looked back to Him and noticed the pain in Jesus of Nazareth’s eyes. Every breath He took made Him scrape his wounded back on the wood of the Cross where many tiny splinters would pierce His open, wounded skin.

Then the children noticed He was talking to His mother.

“Woman,” He told her, “behold your son.”

Then He spoke to His disciple John. “Behold your mother,” He told him.



“How amazing,” thought Miriam? “In His deepest pain He is thinking of His mother. Oh how He must love her and that special disciple.”

Miriam wanted to run home and hug her own mother and tell her she loved her. As she turned to go home, the sky turned dark. All of a sudden, the sun disappeared. It was only 12 noon but it looked like night time.

For three hours the sun’s rays were hidden from them. Some people began to leave, but a lot stayed to see what will happen.

Then at 3:00 p.m., Jesus of Nazareth said in a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani?” This means, “My God, My God why have You forsaken Me?”

That is what the children were thinking also. “Why is God allowing this?” asked Hannah. “Why doesn’t God stop it?”

“I guess,” began David, “it’s like when I was sick and mom and dad took me to the doctor. He had to put this big needle inside my back. It hurt so much and dad had to hold my hands down. I looked at mom and saw her crying because she knew it was hurting, but she still allowed the doctor to do his work.

“I think it’s the same with God right now. He must be looking down at Jesus of Nazareth with tears in His eyes because of the pain Jesus is in. But there must be a good reason for God to allow this to happen.”

“What could that be?” asked Miriam.



“I don’t know,” said David.

(We know now that our Lord Jesus Christ suffered all this for our sake so that our sins can be forgiven and we can live in Heaven with God for all eternity)

The children then looked back up. They noticed that His lips were dry and that His body was sagging toward one side. It seemed to them that He had no energy left, even to lift Himself to take a breath.

The children noticed that it wouldn’t be too much longer before He dies.

Then they heard Him say, “I thirst.” Even now, those evil people are trying to make fun of Him. They dipped a sponge into vinegar and gave it to Him to drink. Couldn’t they show a little mercy and give Him some water to drink? But evil is never merciful.



“It is finished,” Jesus of Nazareth said after He drank the vinegar.

By now His voice was very weak. He had lost so much blood. He couldn’t take a breath because He didn’t have the energy. His body was completely used up. The children thought that He was just going to close His eyes and die.



It was as if God's own power came through at this moment. Then His head fell to the side and He died.

Suddenly the earth quaked and the children found out that the curtain in the temple that separated the people from the Holy of Holies was torn into two from the top to the bottom. With the death of Jesus of Nazareth, there is no longer a separation between God and men.

The women who were with Him began to wail and cry loudly. The children hugged each other in an attempt to ease their pain.

While this was happening, a man named Joseph of Arimathaea went to speak to Pontius Pilate and asked if he could take the body of Jesus to bury. He wrapped Jesus of Nazareth up in white linen and he buried Him in his own, newly-built grave. The women followed to see where they would bury Him so that after the Sabbath day they would come back and bury Him properly.

The children went home sad and crying. When they reached home they heard an incredible story. Miriam's mother was saying that she saw her brother and that he came to her. Miriam didn't understand. Her uncle had died two years ago from a very high fever. Miriam and her friends went to where the grown ups were listening to her mother's story.

"I saw him! I saw my brother!" cried her mother. "He told me that Jesus of Nazareth set him free.

"He had been chained in Hades since the time he died and today, exactly when Jesus of Nazareth died, he saw Him.



“Jesus had preached to them the Good News of salvation. He told them that the fathers, the prophets and the saints would go to Paradise. They were going back home to where they belong.”

This was too amazing to believe. Miriam thought that maybe her mother was so upset about seeing Jesus of Nazareth die in such a horrible way that she imagined that her brother came to see her.

But as the day went on, more and more people came out saying that they saw a loved one that had died. They all said the same thing, Jesus of Nazareth came and broke their chains and was going to take them to Paradise.

Could it be that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God? The Roman soldier at the foot of the Cross believed. “Yes,” thought Miriam, “He must have been the Son of God. But how could He have died? Were they to expect only a short time from the Messiah?”

Miriam wondered if this was all there was to the Messiah. But it wasn't; His suffering was not the end of the story. Three days later people were saying that they saw the Lord Jesus Christ and that He is alive, not dead.

Jesus of Nazareth rose from the dead on Sunday morning. It was the completion of the punishment and the forgiveness of sins.

We call that remarkable blessed day,
RESURRECTION SUNDAY.