

Surprised By Jesus

Description

Mark 15:42-47

Roman crucifixion was street theater of the most cruel and sadistic sort. It was all to protect the Pax Romana, the brutal way Rome kept the peace. A thief or murderer, even a purported Jewish king, would be summarily tried, flogged until nearly dead, and finally nailed to a cross in full public view. To make clear why, a placard stating the charge against the accused was displayed on the cross. It was a slow, agonizing death meant to teach any passerby, "Don't mess with Rome, or this will happen to you."

Another Roman, a centurion, perhaps leader of the crucifixion detail, actually saw Jesus die. He heard Jesus' loud cry and saw Him draw His final breath. "Surely this man was the Son of God!" he remarked (15:39). He saw something surprisingly divine in the manner of Jesus' death.

Two Roman officials, each surprised by the death of a man they scarcely knew. With Jesus the surprises just keep coming.

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