

A Scene from the Crucifixion

Bill Garrison

“**C**RUCIFY HIM!”
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A toothless, witch-like old woman pointed her crooked, bony finger at the prisoner. She was but one of a howling, jeering mob that kept screaming all the time.

“Crucify Him! Nail Him to the cross!”

A greasy Greek sailor with a long black beard shook his fist at the hated One.

“Crucify Him!” the frenzied mob clamored. “Drive the nails through his hands!”

Almost everyone wanted Him killed—the crowd outside in the courtyard, the Roman soldiers who held Him captive, and the high officials of the Jewish religion who had just found Him guilty of treason. The prisoner had claimed that He was the King of the Jews.

“Crucify Him!”

A few people had realized that they were about to kill an innocent man. Judas Iscariot, the betrayer of the prisoner, had thrown his bribery money on the floor, and had run from the temple. He was later found hanging from a tree.

The Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, tried several times to free the accused prisoner. He said, “I find nothing wrong with this man.” Finally, in view of the crowd, he washed his hand in a basin of water, signifying that he was innocent of the blood that would be shed.

It so happened on this particular day that a celebration was also taking place. On this day it was the custom to release one prisoner. One guilty man was allowed to go free. Pilate suggested two men who were eligible to be turned loose. One was a poor Jewish carpenter called Jesus; the other was a murderer called Barabbas. The mob demanded that the murderer be turned loose. They wanted Jesus crucified.

The crowd preferred a murderer to Jesus. And so Barabbas was freed, but the Christ was led away to be crucified. Again the crowd yell sounded. “Kill Him!”

They knew He had power over death. Nothing could stay dead with Jesus around. He had promised them that “whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life,” and yet they decided to kill the One Who could conquer death for them. And so the Resurrection and the Life was pushed through the blistering, stinking streets to His death.