



what if what happened then
changes everything now?



the easter experience

Encounter #1: A Criminal to went free

A man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising.

Mark 15:7

As he woke up in his jail cell he knew it was his last day on earth

The demonstration did not go well

The Roman government did not look fondly on rebellions



Encounter #1: A Criminal to went free

They have come early for him

He it being shackled and led out

He is thrust out into the sunlight he squints
as his eyes adjust to the bright light

The people are given a choice

“Which of the two do you want me to release to you?”
asked the governor. “Barabbas,” they answered.

Matthew 27:21



Judgement Comes ---- Release Barabbas

Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

Matthew 27:26

What do I do with my new found freedom

I was destined to die and now I am free to live

Who is this man, could he really be who he claims



Barabbas



Is This You?



Encounter # 2: A Casual Observer (Simon)

A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross.

Mark 15:21

He went from observing the story of Jesus unfolding to becoming part of it.

Evidently, Simon had traveled all this way to Jerusalem to participate in the Passover Feast



Encounter # 2: A Casual Observer (Simon)

The roman soldiers had the authority to force any citizen into temporary service

“You! Carry the cross!”

Now I am sure Simon didn't want any part of that humiliating, gruesome experience, but he didn't have an option. He couldn't refuse.



Encounter # 2: A Casual Observer (Simon)

This close encounter with Jesus should have transformed Simon forever and maybe it did

He looked into his innocent eyes

He felt the blood of Jesus run off the cross onto his neck

Simon literally lived out the Jesus command to pick up your cross and follow me!

Perhaps he heard Jesus whisper,
“Thank you, Simon.”



Simon



Is This You?



Encounter # 3: A Hardened Skeptic

And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and saw how he died, he said, “Surely this man was the Son of God!”

Mark 15:39

Here is a man who was changed from a hostile skeptic to a humble “believer.”



Encounter # 3: A Hardened Skeptic

**This centurion was the commander of
the Roman execution squad**

**The gospels tell us that the Roman soldiers
brutalized Jesus**

This centurion had done nothing to prevent that

Presumably, he had been part of it

**But as he watched Jesus
something happened to him**



What was it about Jesus that was so different?

Had it been the composure of Jesus as he was falsely accused and violently beaten, he kept his cool

Maybe it was the meekness of Jesus.

Maybe it was the miracles

After witnessing these things this roman soldier understood what the religious leaders missed

He believed what the crowd refused to accept



What was it about Jesus that was so different?

He is confronted with life's ultimate question and concludes, "Surely, this man is the Son of God."

James tell belief in God is not enough

You believe that there is one God. Good!
Even the demons believe that—and shudder
(James 2:19)



The Roman Centurion



Is This You?



Have You Decided?



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