

The Prep Work I Have Done: Read the Easter story
I'll be writing at: 12-1 PM CST on Wednesday.

Untitled Easter Story

By Sarah Holman

Jonathan ran to catch up with the crowd. It had been a long night, but he wanted to see what would happen next to this man who had caused so much trouble. Yahshua had claimed to be so many things, like the son of God himself that it made Jonathan's blood boil. How could anyone make such an outrageous claim?

Now the crowd had moved to stand before Pilot. They would present their case to the Roman governor why this man should die.

"Blasphemer!" Someone shouted as Yahshua was dragged out onto the stage, bloodied from the whipping he had received.

Jonathan's hands balled into fists and he felt anger surge within him. He too was angry at this man. He too wanted to see him die. He looked around and saw that his anger was mirrored on many of the faces. Somewhere in the crowd, he knew that Martha would be there with her family. He had seen them earlier, but the press of people had separated them.

The anger soothed a little as he thought of Martha. He had requested her had a few months before and he was now betrothed to her. They had celebrated the passover together, and now they stood against this threat together.

"I tell you, I find nothing wrong with this man!"

Jonathan shook his fists and yelled along with the other men in the crowd at Pilot's words. How could he find no fault with this man?

"He should be crucified," someone next to him whispered.

Jonathan had heard this spoken of before, but now, he allowed his anger to carry him away. He shouted along with the crowd, his anger burning.

"Why? What crime has he committed?" Pilot asked.

Jonathan was barely able to hear the words between his own shouts, and he only shouted louder when he did here.

Suddenly, everyone around him grew quiet. He felt much like he did when he was with his friends near the water and he plunged beneath, so sudden was the stillness.

Pilot was washing his hands.

"I am innocent, of this man's blood," Pilate said, holding up his washed hands. "He is your responsibility."

The silence ended with a wave of noise that started from the back of the crowd. The cry was picked up and repeated over and over again. Jonathan heard it and picked up the chant.

"May his blood be on us and on our children! May his blood be on us and on our children!"

The Roman's grabbed the troublemaker, Yahshua and dragged him away. Jonathan cheered and moved with the crowd, his blood pumping.

"Jonathan!"

He looked up and saw Martha in the crowd. He moved toward her, moving against the press of people. Her father and brother were with her.

“Are you going with them?” Martha shouted above the crowd.

Jonathan nodded. “This is a glorious day! Today, justice will be served. Yahweh will use the Romans to carry out His justice.”

Martha’s father put his arm around her shoulder. “I think I will take my children back to the house.”

Jonathan nodded. Martha had no doubt seen her share of crucifixions, Rome had lined roads with crosses at times. Yet, it was a sight that if a woman could avoid, she should.

Without another word, he moved along with the crowd, letting the tide of people carry him along. There were a few who sympathised with this man, Yahshua, and Jonathan was ashamed. This should be something that all jews were united against! Blasphemers like this should not be tolerated, yet there was a woman crying over Yahshua's fate.

“You do not know what you are doing!” A man shouted, looking straight into Jonathan's eyes. “He is who he claims to be and you have cried out that his blood is on you and your children.”

Jonathan grabbed the man’s arm and pulled him along. “Come and see how powerful you king is!”

While Jonathan was happy to see justice done, the blood and horror of a crucifixion was sickening. This was never what it was supposed to be like. The Jews were supposed to stone people like this, not have them die like this, exposed to the world without any clothing, struggling for each breath and blood poured forth.

“Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.” Yahshua cried out.

Johnathan winced. The hours had drained away some of his anger and those words...He found the disturbing. Jesus hadn't tried to fight the Romans as he went to nail him. He had laid down on the cross and then allowed them to nail him. His pain was great, but he did not act like the other two criminals did.

Jonathan looked away the sick feeling growing. Could it be that some terrible mistake had been made? He shook himself. This was justice. This was right. Was he not a Jew? Did he not know how such men were to be punished.

Yet, that carpenter hang there not begging to be taken down, not cursing the crowd that had called for his death, he was asking his father to forgive the people who had crucified him. There was something about this that drained away the last of his anger and left him feeling sickened.

He looked up as a loud cry of pain came from Yahshua. “My God, my God why have you forsaken me?” The pain in those words was so intense that Jonathan took a step back. He looked around, a feeling over taking him. It was the feeling of darkness without starlight, the feeling of a lightning storm without rain. The feeling of hopelessness and fear. What was happening? What was going on?

The sky was darkening and Jonathan sunk to his knees. There was something here, something so dark and terrifying. He closed his eyes, missing the words of Yahshua as an earthquake shook them.

Perhaps that was all he had felt, the terror of an oncoming earthquake. But even after the earth stopped shaking, his heart still felt heavy with fear, fear of something he could not identify.

“He said it was finished and now look, he is dead,” someone whispered next to Jonathan.

Wailing rose from a group of women and the feet of the cross and Jonathan could stand it no longer. He turned and ran toward the city, running from that feeling, and fear but he couldn't get away from it. It followed him down the hill, through the gate, and into the very house he was staying.

“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

The words rang in his ears and he sank to the floor.

“What have we done?” He whispered.

“Johnathan?” His father stood over him.

Jonathan met his father's gaze. “Something is wrong. Shouldn't I feel joy over his death?”

His father cocked his head. “Whose death? What is wrong?”

“Yeshua of Nazareth.”

His father cocked his head. “He is dead already?”

Jonathan nodded and stared at nothing. All he could see was the bloody face of Yeshua as he spoke those words.

“Crucifixion, is a horrible death to watch.”

Jonathan ran his hands through his hair. “It was not that. I have seen men die like that before but... Abba, this man did not curse the Romans as they nailed him to the cross. He did not look in anger at the men who had called for the death he...” Johnathan felt moisture on his cheek and realized he was crying.

His father sat down beside him. “What is it, my son, what did he do?”

“He asked that we be forgiven, because we didn't know what we were doing. I...I do not know why, but I cannot get away from the feeling that we have done something horribly wrong.”

His father patted his shoulder. "Sleep, everything will look better in the morning."

Jonathan wiped the tears from his eyes and nodded. He looked toward his mat and knew it would offer him no comfort this night. Inside still felt like a night without stars and a storm without rain... hopeless and empty.