



WHY DID JESUS DIE?

You have certainly seen in a museum, in a book, or in a church, a painting depicting Jesus on the cross. How did you react? The death of Jesus, what does this mean to you? What can this change in your life? These are questions to which we will answer. Pay close attention. In this story, you will find some people who understood why Jesus died on the cross.

We find the account of the crucifixion at the end of the Gospels.

THE CRUCIFIXION

Jesus has just been condemned to death. He carries a heavy cross but He is so exhausted that He walks with great difficulty. He stumbles on the path. A man walks by. He's coming back from the fields.

- Hey! You! Come here! say the soldiers. Take the cross and carry it in his place!

A large crowd follows them. Women moan and cry when they see Jesus disfigured, his



body covered with wounds and blood. Others mock and curse Him. They arrive finally to a place called Golgotha. Jesus is put on the cross. The soldiers hammer nails in His hands and in His feet. They also crucify two robbers, one to his right and the other to his left. They hang a sign above Jesus' head.

- You will write "Jesus, King of the Jews"! Pilate had ordered. People must know why He was condemned!

Jesus looks at the soldiers, these violent men with such hard hearts. With a loud voice, He says:

- Father! I beg you to forgive them. They don't know what they're doing.

Four soldiers are busy with something else.



- Let's take His clothes! They say. Let's share them among us. A piece for each !

One of them is about to rip the tunic.

- No! The others cry. It is made in one piece and in a beautiful fabric. It has value. Let's draw lots and see who will take it.

The crowd continues to curse Jesus.

- Come down, if you are the Son of God! Go on!

They arrogantly laugh.

- He who worked miracles let Him come down now and we will believe in him!

The two thieves insult him.

- If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself and save us!

But one of them pulls himself together. He now understands why Jesus is on the cross.

- Don't you fear God? He says to the other. Don't you know that we will all owe explanations to him? Today we are paying for the abominable things that we have done. We are guilty before men but also before God! But as for Jesus, He didn't do anything wrong.

He turns his head to the Lord.

- Jesus! He says. Remember me when you enter your reign!

- I assure you, Jesus says to him, today you will be with me in paradise!



At the foot of the cross, there are a few women. They are crying, crushed by pain and grief. Jesus sees Mary, His mother and beside her, John, his disciple.

- Here is your son! He says to His mother.

- There's your mother! He says to John.

John understood Jesus' message well. Mary came to live with him. He took care of her and Mary was

like a mother to him.

At the end of the morning, the sun is high in the sky. But suddenly people look at each other in fear.

- What's happening? It is noon and it is dark! What does that mean? It's night in broad daylight!



Yes! The country is plunged into darkness. The sun remains completely hidden until three o'clock in the afternoon. Jesus is still on the cross. He is dying.

With a loud voice, He cries out:

- My God, my God, why did you abandon me?

Then, He adds:

- I am thirsty!

The soldiers soak a sponge in vinegar and approach it to his mouth with a reed. Jesus takes it and says:

- Now everything is accomplished! My Father, I surrender my spirit into your hands!

He utters a loud cry. He has just died.

The Roman officer at the foot of the cross is devastated. He cries out in front of everyone:

- For sure! Jesus is truly the Son of God!

- But what's going on? Cry frightened people. The earth is shaking! We can feel it move!



Yes! It's an earthquake! The rock splits, sepulchres open. In the Temple, the large curtain that is several meters high splits from top to the bottom. An invisible hand tore it apart. A Roman soldier approaches Jesus. He pierces His side with his spear to check that he is dead. Later, a man goes to see Pilate.

- Let me take the body of Jesus, he says to him.

He prepares the body, wraps it in several layers of material and places it in a tomb carved in the rock.

A large stone is rolled to close the entrance to the sepulcher.

Night is falling on Jerusalem which is deeply moved by these events. Everything seems quite finished.

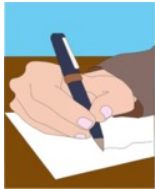
1, 2 3, 4 AND YOU AND ME!



No one can say how much Jesus loves us. He endured all this suffering in His body but also in His Spirit, in His soul for us. But why did he accept? Did you understand it? We told you that in the story a few people did understand. Can you name them? Yes, there is one of the thief and the Roman officer; maybe there were others but we don't know. Let's see what the robber understood. First of all, that he is accountable to God and that he cannot go to paradise because God is Righteous and Holy, nothing bad can stand in His presence. He also understood that Jesus is punished, condemned in his place so that God can forgive him. He believes that Jesus is the Son of God and after His death He will reign in heaven.

Jesus died on the cross so that all humans who believe in Him can go to heaven. All humans that means others but also You and me. Do you love Jesus? Do you believe in him? Do you think He was punished for you because of your disobedience?

4, 3, 2, 1 AND WE PARENTS!



The account of the crucifixion, which is very discreet about the sufferings of Jesus, is the central message of the Word of God. Without the cross, no one could be saved. It was out of love for us that Jesus endured all these sufferings. His words of love and His attitude, until His last cry, show us how much He has loved us.