



## This Was Different

By Ken Terry

Ruthless and efficient savagery hastened my occupational ascent. Calloused toughness and the keen ability to prohibit any emotional attachment with my subjects further reinforced the climb. My dream now fulfilled --- to be the unquestioned master of men in the duty of death and I determined to have no rival or equal.

For years I honed my craft with fanatical efficiency. With tightly clinched jaw I would pride myself in bearing no empathy toward my client's deafening cries of innocence. I often mused that humanity itself should fall at my feet in gratitude for my work. With one less criminal to walk the streets, Rome's grandeur was truly indebted to me.

Then, that day came. I will never forget that day. His eyes, his stare, his gait. This was different---He was different. In my daily work I always saw my subjects as less than human. Thieves and murderers needed my cleansing hand, but here before me now stood a man whose hands seemed to want to cleanse me. Confusion flooded my mind. For the first time in my life, I felt a yearning in my soul with a bent toward mercy. What was wrong with me? Was I going mad? News had come to my ears about his "crime" --- this title of King. So badly I wanted to defend Rome's honor. We HAD our king; we needed NO other. But my soul knew different, this man was different.

I somehow summed my energies to remain on task. With hollowed passion and hypocritical zeal I urged to myself be ruthless, be efficient, and finish the job. With spear in hand, how could I though? His compassionate eyes, his unyielding concern for ME amid such pain. Never had I felt such intense anguish and shame. Crucifixion's regular routine had become anything but me. This was different.

Then it happened. Then I knew. The trembling, the veil, the darkness. It was finished. Truly this man was the Son of God.

Sleep avoided me for the next three days. My mind could not erase events witnessed; events partaken in. What had I done? WHAT HAD I DONE? Could this King save my wretched soul? The oft-repeated refrain became my constant companion, truly this man was the Son of God. This was different, He was different, I was now different.

With anticipatory excitement the THIRD DAY indeed came! Death could not hold Him just as sin could not hold me. Shackles I used daily I felt fall from my heart. I saw it, I witnessed it, I was a part of it.

This was different.

