

4. THIRTY-NINE

Then Pilate took Jesus and had Him flogged. John 19:1

No one knew she was watching.
No one knew she was there.
No one cared.

All eyes were on the flogger, licking at his lips, anxious to begin.
Absent-mindedly caressing the metal balls and pieces of sharp bone woven into the leather braids of the whip, designed to bruise and tear the flesh.
The Centurion nodded.
The flogging began. The prisoner would be struck thirty-nine times.

One.
She winced and whispered, "You are the Son of God!"
Two.
"Surely they know this!"
Three.
Four.
Five.
"Don't let them do this to You! You can stop this!"
Six.
"Call on the Father to help You!"
Seven.
"Call down the angels to help You!"
Eight.
Nine.
Ten.
Eleven.
Twelve.
"Stop it! Stop it! Stop it!"
Thirteen.
"They will give You to me and I will stop the bleeding."
Fourteen.
"I will put the healing balm on Your wounds."
Fifteen.
Sixteen.
Seventeen.
"The skin will grow back."

The flogging went on.
And on.
And on.

She closed her eyes to the horror in front of her, tried to shove it from her mind.

“Think of something else.”

She remembered the day they met.

His gentle eyes.

His calming voice.

His loving heart.

She remembered the teachings.

The way He could speak to a thousand people as though they were one; the way they cherished every word, as though it were an impossible delicacy they could only dream about.

She remembered the miracles.

The blind man, tears pouring from eyes no longer dead, lovingly holding the face of his mother in his hands, whispering, “I see you, I see you, I see you.” The cripple, legs no longer useless, picking up his mat and dancing for the crowd.

The leper, kneeling within inches of Jesus, risking severe punishment from those around.

And rising.

Clean.

In body and spirit.

She remembered the way He could forgive, no matter what needed to be forgiven.

Twenty-eight.

Twenty-nine.

The way He would forgive even this.

Thirty.

She opened her eyes to the reality of what was happening.

Forced herself to watch.

Thirty-one.

“I would take Your place if I could.”

Thirty-two.

Thirty-three.

“I will remember You always.”

Thirty-four.

“I will love You always.”

Thirty-five.

Thirty-six.
Thirty-seven.
“I will follow You always.”
Thirty-eight.
Thirty-nine.

The Centurion raised his hand, signaling for the flogging to end.
“Leave something for the crucifixion,” he ordered.
Reluctantly, the flogger stepped back, surveying what was left of the man tied to the pillar. He smiled and looked to those around him for approval.
There was only silence.
Horrible silence.

No one knew she had been there.
No one saw her leave.
No one cared.

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RELATED QUIZZES

VOCABULARY

1. Flogger: person who does the whipping
2. Anxious: in a hurry
3. Caressing: rubbing gently to show affection
4. Centurion: leader
5. Flogging: whipping
6. Balm: a cream that helps heal wounds and take away the pain
7. Horror: something dreadful or shocking
8. Cherished: loved dearly
9. Delicacy: something rare and usually expensive
10. Leper: person with leprosy, which is a skin disease
11. Risking: taking a chance
12. Severe: very harsh; strict; extreme
13. Reality: a real thing or fact
14. Crucifixion: putting someone to death by hanging them on a cross
15. Reluctantly: unwillingly
16. Pillar: post

1. The _____ raised his whip, smiling as he did so.

- A. Centurion
- B. Leper
- C. Flogger

2. The _____ gave the order to start and stop the flogging.

- A. Centurion
- B. Horror
- C. Pillar

3. By coming close to Jesus, the leper was _____ severe punishment.

- A. Caressing
- B. Risking
- C. Flogging

4. The man being flogged was tied to a _____

- A. Leper
- B. Delicacy
- C. Pillar

5. They used a _____ to help heal the wounds caused by flogging.

- A. Pillar
- B. Balm
- C. Crucifixion

TRUE/FALSE:

1. The Centurion had to give the order to begin and end the flogging. True.

2. The cripple picked up his mat and limped away. False. The cripple picked up his mat and danced.

3. No one noticed the woman who was watching. True.

4. The flogger was happy to stop the flogging. False. He stopped reluctantly.

5. The Son of God was hit with the whip 20 times. False. He was hit 39 times

READING/COMPREHENSION

WHAT IS THE MAIN IDEA OF THE STORY?

- A. To show the great love this woman had for the Son of God.
- B. To show how terrible it was to be flogged.
- C. To teach you how to count.

WHAT BELONGS IN THE MIDDLE?

- 1. She remembered the teachings.
 - 2.?
 - 3. She remembered the way He could forgive.
-
- A. She remembered walking by the sea.
 - B. She remembered to take care of the sheep.
 - C. She remembered the miracles.

CAUSE AND EFFECT

- 1. The woman closed her eyes and tried to think of other things because she

- A. Didn't want to seem too interested.
 - B. Was in the mood to daydream.
 - C. Couldn't bear to watch what was happening.

- 2. When the flogger looked to the people for approval, he was met with

- A. Applause
 - B. Silence
 - C. Cheering

INFERENCES

- 1. The way the flogger was licking his lips and caressing the whip told us that

- A. He really liked his whip.
 - B. He was hungry.

C. The Son of God was going to suffer greatly.

FACTS AND DETAILS

1. The Son of God could speak to a thousand people as though they were _____.

- A. 25
- B. 250
- C. 1

2. Three things the woman remembered about the day she met the Son of God were His _____.

- A. Eyes, voice and heart.
- B. Long hair, eyes and beard.
- C. Hands, fingers and feet.

3. The crippled man was so happy to be healed that he _____.

- A. Bought everyone a glass of wine.
- B. Ran up and down the streets laughing.
- C. Danced for the crowd.

4. The leper was cleansed in body and _____.

- A. Mind
- B. Spirit
- C. Soul

DID YOU KNOW?

Jesus was flogged 39 times because 40 minus 1 was a sign of Jewish mercy.