

Matthew 27:45-50;

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. 46;

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? 47;

Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias. 48;

And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. This corresponds with the words of David, Psalms 69:21;

They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. 49;

The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him. 50;

Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

1-Here is a group of soldiers gathered about three crosses:

1-These soldiers have finished the real work of the day in that they have already nailed their victims each to his respective cross.

2-They have only to wait for these doomed men to die. Death by crucifixion is such a slow footed monster that they are getting genuinely bored.

3-Four of them amuse themselves for a little while by gambling for the seamless robe of the man they have just crucified.

2-With this done there is nothing to do but wait

1-While they are thus waiting they are startled by a wild cry that comes from the Victim on the middle cross;

Eli, Eli, lama, sabachthani.

"A Nameless Hero."

3-These soldiers were all a like in that:

- 1-They all heard this cry of agony.
- 2-They did not fully understand what was being said---Jesus was not speaking in Latin.
- 3-He seemed, to them, to be calling a man named Elijah.
- 4-They all knew that it was a cry born of suffering.
- 5-They all realized that it was a pathetic hand reaching out into the encircling gloom for help.

4-But here their likeness ends----While all heard-----and all had a partial understanding of its meaning-----they differed in this----in that they did not all make the same response.

- 1-This tragic cry divided them into two distinct groups.....
- 2-There was one who sought to help---while the others did nothing.
- 3-This one became a part of the remedy---while the others remained a part of the disease.
- 4-Today we hear this call of need whether we will it or not.
  - 1-Hearing the call is not optional----The one thing that is optional is what we do about it.

5-Let us look at these groups:

- 1-Some of these soldiers said, "Stay! let us see."
- 2-How harmless it seems.
- 3-They did not rebuke Jesus for his outcry.
- 4-They did not add to His anguish by any personal violence.
- 5-They did not say:
  - 1-Never under any circumstance are we going to help.
- 6-They simply said:
  - 1-We are not going to do anything now.

6-Why would they not help now???????

1-He was not calling on us for help; he was calling on a chap named Elijah.

2-Since that is the case helping is none of my business.

3-Suggestion:

1-When you see a need that you can help in any fashion to meet, God is then and there calling your name.

2-The call is just as genuine as if God had written your name in letters of fire across the sky.

7-But say the soldiers, we have another reason for not helping.

1-We heard the cry-----We knew the need was desperate.....

2-But we had enough confidence in our fellows to believe that somebody else would respond.

3-Sure we wanted the job done----So we say....

1-I knew the class ought to be taught.

2-I knew the gift ought to be made.

3-I knew the bill had to be paid but I thought.....

4-What did you think????

1-That some one else would teach the class.

2-That some one else would, or should give enough money to pay the bills of the church.

3-If I fumbled in my pocket long enough, I thought another would pay and I would be that much to the good.

8-The sad thing----While they did nothing Jesus died:

1-The rich man and the poor begger-Luke 16:19.

2-The Rich man:

1-He was not aggressively cruel to the begger

2-He did not drive him away from the gate.

3-He allowed him to be fed with the scraps from his own table. Given only the crumbs, we are not surprised to read the the begger died. Churches, Institutions, Men-All these die when we neglect them or feed them only upon crumbs.

3-But they are not the only ones who die:

1-The rich man also died--Crumbs have a way of killing him that gives as well as him that receives.

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9-Success or failure which?

1-Where we find men and women whose one business in life is to look after their own selfish interest, we find sad, fed-up, disillusioned souls who are not really living.

2-Some years ago:

1-Entered an office building in Fort Worth and saw upon the wall a large placard that fairly shrieked these words:

3-"57 Rules For Making a Success"

1-Here is where I tarry.

2-With fifty-seven fingers pointing the way to success, even I need not fail.

4-The sign read as follows:

1-First, deliver the goods.

2-Second, it does not matter about the other fifty-six.

3-What really counts is delivering the goods.