

The Seventh Gospel

St. Matthew 27:33-54

At that time: The soldiers brought Jesus to a place called Gol'gotha (which means the place of a skull). They offered Him wine to drink, mingled with gall; but when He tasted it, He would not drink it. And when they had crucified Him, they divided His garments among them by casting lots; Then they sat down and kept watch over Him there. And over His head they put the charge against Him, which read: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left.

And those who passed by derided Him, wagging their heads and saying: "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross." So also the chief priests with the scribes and elders, mocked Him, saying: "He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in Him. He trusts in God; let God deliver Him now, if He desires Him; for He said: "I am the Son of God." And the robbers who were crucified with Him also reviled Him in the same way.

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice: "Eli, Eli, la'ma sabach-tha'ni?" that is, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" and some of the bystanders hearing it said: "This man is calling Eli'jah." And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave it to Him to drink. But the others said: "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him."

And Jesus cried again with a loud voice and yielded up His spirit. And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom; and the earth shook, and the rocks were split; The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. And coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe, and said: "Truly this was the Son of God!"