

An Enemy is a Good Thing to Have

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“And they press into service a certain passerby coming in from the field, Simon the Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, so that he might carry his cross. And they bring him to the place Golgotha—which, being interpreted, means Skull’s Place. And they gave him wine infused with myrrh; but he did not take it. And they crucify him, and portion out his garments, casting a lot upon them regarding who would take what.

And it was the third hour and they crucified him. And the epigraph of the charge inscribed against him was: “THE KING OF THE JUDAEANS.”

And they crucify two bandits with him, one at his right and one at his left. [And the scripture was fulfilled that said, “And he was numbered with the lawless.”] And the passersby blasphemed against him, wagging their heads and saying, “Ah, the one tearing down the sanctuary and building it up in three days—Save yourself by descending from the cross.” And the chief priests likewise, sharing in the mockery with the scribes, one with another, said, “He saved others, himself he cannot save; Let the Anointed, the king of Israel, descend from the cross, so that we may see and believe.”

Those crucified along with him upbraided him also.

And, when the sixth hour came, darkness fell over all the land, until the ninth hour.

And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, saying, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?”—which, being interpreted, means, “My God, my God, why did you forsake me?” And some of those who were standing there, hearing this, said, “Look, he calls Elijah.” And one of them—having filled a sponge with vinegar and placing it around a rod—ran and gave it to him to drink, saying, “Leave off, let us see if Elijah comes to take him down.”

But Jesus, letting out a great cry, expired.

And the veil of the sanctuary was rent in two, from top to bottom. And the centurion who was standing by opposite him, seeing that he had thus expired, said, "Truly this man was a god's son."

Mark 15.21-39 (David Bentley Hart trans.)