

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Jesus on the Cross. Mark 15: 22-37. *Tuesday.* Scripture fulfilled. John 16: 16-24. *Wednesday.* The penitent thief. Luke 23: 39-49. *Thursday.* The burial. Mark 15: 39-47. *Friday.* A voluntary death. John 10: 11-18. *Saturday.* Lifted up." John 3: 11-18. *Sabbath.* He died for us. Rom. 5: 1-11. (*The I. B. R. A Selections*).

NOTES AND EXPLANATIONS.

After the soldiers had indulged their brutal mirth, and Pilate had vainly attempted to move the hearts of the pitiless mob, Jesus was reclothed with his own raiment and led forth to be crucified. Probably the crown of thorns was also removed with the insignia of mock royalty. An old tradition points out a narrow street between the castle of Antonia and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre as the *via dolorosa* ("the most sorrowful way"), along which the procession passed. But if Pilate resided in the palace of Herod the Great, and Calvary lay north of the city, it would not have gone that road. Two robbers, perhaps followers of Barabbas, were led forth with Jesus to share his doom and deepen the infamy of it (Isa. 53: 12). A condemned person was compelled to carry the cross on which he was to suffer, and Jesus was treated no better than the vilest (John 19: 17). It is not unreasonable to suppose that the experiences of the past nine hours led to physical prostration, and that Jesus fainted under the cross, as is stated in tradition. Something in his appearance moved the pity of the women who mingled with the crowd (Luke 23: 27), and made it necessary to relieve him of the burden of the cross. Simon, a Jew from Cyrene in North Africa, who was coming into the city in total ignorance of the stirring events of the night, was impressed into service, and compelled to carry the lighter end, which was dragging on the ground. The cross-beam was, as usual, bound to our Saviour's shoulders. Simon probably became a Christian, for his sons are mentioned familiarly by Mark (15: 21) and Paul (Rom. 16: 13). He was a type of many who, being made to bear Christ's cross for a little while, gladly follow him forever (Lindsay). Parallel passages Matt. 27: 31-66; Luke 23: 26-56; John 19: 16-42.

LESSON PLAN. I. Crucified. vs. 22-28. II. Mocked. vs. 29-32. III. Dying. vs. 33-37.

I. CRUCIFIED. 22. Golgotha—From a Hebrew word meaning "a skull." So called either because it was the usual place of execution, or, more probably, from its rounded appearance. The Latin word for "a skull" is "*calvaria*," hence "Calvary." The site is uncertain, it was near Jerusalem (John 19: 20), but outside the walls (Heb. 13: 12), a public road passed by (Matt. 27: 39), and a garden was at hand (John 19: 41). Unless the name implies it, we have no reason for calling it a "mount." The tendency of scholars now is to locate Calvary outside of the north wall of the city at a knoll containing a cave called the Grotto of Jeremiah.

23. Wine mingled with myrrh—This was a stupefying draught, mercifully intended to dull the sense of pain. Matthew calls it "vinegar mingled with gall." Wine medicated in some manner. It is said that a guild of wealthy ladies in Jerusalem charged themselves with the duty of furnishing this potion. He received it not—He merely tasted it (Matt. 27: 34). He did not wish to cloud his mind or escape one pang of the appointed suffering. The thieves probably partook freely of it.

24. Crucified him—He was nailed to the cross as it lay on the ground by spikes through the palm of each hand and the middle of each foot. As this was being done he uttered the first of the seven words from the cross, "*Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*" (Luke 23: 34). The cross was then slowly elevated and allowed to slide or drop into the hole dug for it. "Death by crucifixion seems to include all that pain and death can

have of the horrible and ghastly—dizziness, cramp, thirst, starvation, sleeplessness, traumatic fever, tetanus, publicity of shame, long continuance of torment, horror of anticipation, mortification of untended wounds—all intensified just up to the point which would give to the sufferer the relief of unconsciousness" (Farrar). Parted his garments—Divided them amongst the four soldiers (John 19: 23), who crucified him; these were their perquisites. "The four pieces to be distributed would be the headgear, the sandals, the girdle and the *tallith*, a square outer garment with fringes" (M. R. Vincent). Besides these there was the inner garment or tunic, and this they cast lots for. What every man should take—"Who should receive anything, and what he was to receive." The whole partition was decided by the dice. (See Ps. 22: 18). Matthew adds; "And sitting down they watched him there." They acted as a guard to prevent him being taken down by friends before he was dead.

25. The third hour—Nine o'clock in the morning, the hour of the morning sacrifice. In John 19: 14 it is stated that Jesus was still before Pilate at the sixth hour, or noon. The common explanation of this is that John used the Roman mode of calculating the hours which is the same as ours, but that would bring him too soon before Pilate. A better suggestion is that "sixth" is an error of some transcriber, and that John wrote "third."

26. Superscription of his accusation—The charge on which the sufferer was condemned was usually written on a wooden tablet smeared with gypsum. This was hung