

Matthew 27:47

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

This man calleth for Elias (Ἠλίαν φωνεῖ)—the crowd misheard Jesus' Aramaic cry 'Eli, Eli' (v. 46) as an invocation to Elijah, whose eschatological return was anticipated in Malachi 4:5-6. This tragic misunderstanding deepened Christ's isolation even in his final words of dereliction.

The confusion between Eli (My God) and Elias (Greek for Elijah) reflects the crowd's spiritual blindness—they heard a prophetic name instead of a prayer. While Jesus quoted Psalm 22:1 in fulfillment of Scripture, the mockers expected supernatural rescue by the Tishbite prophet. Their expectation would be ironically fulfilled—not through Elijah's intervention, but through Christ's own resurrection on the third day.

Historical Context

First-century Jews expected Elijah to appear before the Messiah's coming (per rabbinic interpretation of Malachi). Jesus had already identified John the Baptist as the fulfillment of this prophecy (Matthew 11:14), but the crowd missed both arrivals. Aramaic was still spoken in Judea alongside Greek and Hebrew.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does the crowd's mishearing illustrate spiritual deafness to Christ's true message?
2. In what ways do we misinterpret Jesus' words through our own expectations rather than scriptural understanding?

Interlinear Text

τινὲς	δὲ	τῶν	ἐκεῖ	ἐστώτων	ἀκούσαντες	ἔλεγον	ὅτι
Some of them	G1161	G3588	there	that stood	when they heard	that said	G3754
G5100			G1563	G2476	G191	G3004	
Ἠλίαν	φωνεῖ	οὗτος					
Elias	man calleth for	This					
G2243	G5455	G3778					

Additional Cross-References

Malachi 4:5 (Parallel theme): Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: