

Job 16:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They have gaped upon me with their mouth; they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully; they have gathered themselves together against me.

Analysis

They have gaped upon me with their mouth (פָּעָרָו עַלִּי בְּפִיכֶם, pa'aru 'alay befihem)—The verb (pa'ar) means 'to open wide, gape' like a predator's maw. This same imagery appears in Psalm 22:13 ('they gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion')—the messianic psalm Jesus quoted on the cross.

They have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully (בְּחֶרֶפֶת הַפּוֹלֵךְ, becherpa hikku lechayai)—Striking the cheek (לֶחֶם, lechi) was the ultimate insult in ancient Near Eastern culture, denying someone's dignity and honor. The servant in Isaiah 50:6 receives this same abuse: 'I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair.' Job's humiliation prefigures Christ's.

Historical Context

The 'smiting of the cheek' appears in multiple biblical contexts as supreme mockery. When the high priest's servant struck Jesus (John 18:22), and when soldiers struck Him (Mark 14:65), they enacted the same degradation Job experienced. Ancient honor-shame cultures considered this assault worse than physical harm—it destroyed social standing.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How do Job's descriptions of mockery and violence illuminate Christ's passion?
2. What forms of 'smiting the cheek' occur in modern contexts where honor and dignity are stripped?
3. Why does God allow His innocent servants to endure public humiliation and shame?

Interlinear Text

בְּ חִרְפָּה	בְּ	בְּ	בְּ	בְּ
reproachfully	upon	me	with	their
they have smitten	upon	me	with	their
me upon the cheek	themselves	together	upon	me

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 35:15 (Parallel theme): But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: yea, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not; they did tear me, and ceased not:

Psalms 22:13 (Parallel theme): They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion.

Isaiah 50:6 (Parallel theme): I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

Acts 23:2 (Parallel theme): And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth.

Lamentations 3:30 (Parallel theme): He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him: he is filled full with reproach.

Micah 5:1 (Parallel theme): Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek.

2 Corinthians 11:20 (Parallel theme): For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

1 Kings 22:24 (Parallel theme): But Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near, and smote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, Which way went the Spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee?

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