

Luke 22:63

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him.

Analysis

And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him. The abuse begins as Jesus awaits formal trial. The phrase *hoi andres hoi synechontes auton* (οἱ ἄνδρες οἱ συνέχοντες αὐτόν, 'the men holding him') refers to guards maintaining custody. They *enepaizon autō* (ἐνέπαιζον αὐτῷ, 'mocked him')—*empaizō* (ἐμπαίζω) means to ridicule, jeer, treat with contempt. The verb *derontes* (δέροντες, 'beating, striking') indicates repeated blows, physical abuse accompanying verbal mockery. This fulfills Isaiah 50:6: '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.'

The guards' cruelty reveals human depravity—they abuse a bound, defenseless prisoner. Jesus, who recently healed their colleague's ear (v. 51), now suffers their violence. The contrast exposes sin's nature: Christ shows mercy to enemies; enemies return violence for kindness. This abuse was both gratuitous sadism and calculated intimidation—breaking prisoners psychologically before trial. Yet Jesus remains silent, fulfilling Isaiah 53:7: 'as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.'

Historical Context

Roman guards were notoriously brutal, and Jewish Temple police were hardly gentler. Prisoners awaiting trial often suffered abuse—both to extract confessions and for guards' entertainment. The mockery foreshadows the Roman soldiers' later abuse (Luke 23:11, 36). Ancient prisoners had no rights; guards operated with impunity. The physical abuse prepared Jesus for crucifixion—tenderizing flesh that

would soon be flayed by scourging. That the sinless Son of God endured criminals' treatment demonstrates His identification with sinners (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. Why does Luke record this apparently minor abuse amid the larger passion narrative?
2. What does Jesus' silence during abuse teach about responding to injustice?
3. How does this scene fulfill Isaiah's prophecies about the suffering servant?

Interlinear Text

Καὶ	οἱ	ἄνδρες	οἱ	συνέχοντες	τὸν	Ἰησοῦν	ἐνέπαιζον
And	G3588	the men	G3588	that held	G3588	Jesus	mocked
G2532		G435		G4912		G2424	G1702

αὐτῷ	δέρουντες
him	and smote
G846	G1194

Additional Cross-References

John 18:22 (References Jesus): And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?

