

Matthew 26:68

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?

Analysis

Saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee? (λέγοντες, Προφήτευσον ἡμῖν, Χριστέ, τίς ἐστιν ὁ παίσας σε;)—Mark 14:65 adds they blindfolded Jesus before this mocking game. The imperative προφητεύω (prophēteuō, 'prophesy') sarcastically demands supernatural knowledge. The vocative Χριστέ (Christ) drips with contempt—'So You're the Christ? Prove it!' The question τίς ἐστιν ὁ παίσας σε; ('Who is the one who struck You?') treats prophetic calling like parlor trick. They demanded Jesus use divine gifts to serve their mockery—perverting the sacred for entertainment, like demanding Samson perform for Philistines (Judges 16:25).

The profound irony: they mocked His prophetic office while unwittingly fulfilling His prophecies. Jesus predicted His suffering (16:21; 17:22-23; 20:18-19), including mocking (20:19). Their contempt validated His prophetic authority even while denying it. Jesus remained silent (1 Peter 2:23), refusing to vindicate Himself before mockers. He would later demonstrate His knowledge by predicting Peter's denials' timing (26:34, 74-75) and His resurrection. True prophets don't perform on demand; they speak God's word in God's timing.

Historical Context

This 'blind man's bluff' game cruelly mocked Jesus's messianic claims. Prophets were expected to demonstrate supernatural knowledge (1 Samuel 9:19-20; 2 Kings 5:26). Isaiah 11:3-4 described Messiah judging with supernatural insight. They

tested whether Jesus possessed prophetic abilities, mockingly demanding proof. Their game fulfilled Micah 5:1: 'They will strike the judge of Israel with a rod on the cheek.' Later, at Herod's court (Luke 23:8-11), Jesus again faced demands for miraculous signs—He refused both times, not performing for mockers' entertainment.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 – Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does the world's demand that God prove Himself on human terms resemble this mocking game?
2. When have you been tempted to use spiritual gifts for self-vindication rather than God's glory?

Interlinear Text

λέγοντες,	Προφήτευσον	ἡμῖν,	Χριστέ,	τίς	ἐστιν	ό
Saying	Prophesy	unto us	thou Christ	Who	is he	G3588
G3004	G4395	G2254	G5547	G5101	G2076	

παίσας σε;
that smote **thee**
G3817 G4571

Additional Cross-References

Mark 14:65 (Prophecy): And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophesy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

Judges 16:25 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport: and they set him between the pillars.

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