

Matthew 27:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

Analysis

A crown of thorns (στέφανον ἐξ ἀκανθῶν, stephanon ex akanthōn)—likely fashioned from the Syrian Christ-thorn (*Ziziphus spina-christi*) with long, sharp spikes. This is the anti-crown, fulfilling Genesis 3:18's curse (**thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth**)—Jesus wears creation's curse upon his head.

A reed in his right hand (κάλαμον, kalamon)—a mock scepter. **Hail, King of the Jews!** (Χαῖρε, βασιλεῦ, Chaire, basileu)—parody of the imperial greeting Ave Caesar. Every element—crown, scepter, acclamation—mocks kingship while unwittingly declaring truth.

Historical Context

The crown of thorns may have been shaped like a radiate crown worn by Hellenistic rulers (rays projecting outward), making the mockery more pointed. Soldiers would have known imperial iconography and deliberately parodied it.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus wearing the thorns of the curse reverse what Adam's sin brought into the world?
2. What is the deeper meaning of Christ receiving mockery and false worship rather than retaliation?

Interlinear Text

καὶ πλέξαντες στέφανον ἐξ ἀκανθῶν ἐπέθηκαν ἐπὶ
And when they had platted a crown of thorns they put in
G2532 G4120 G4735 G1537 G173 G2007 G1909

τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτῷ καὶ κάλαμον ἐπὶ τὴν δεξιὰν αὐτῷ
head him And a reed in right hand him
G3588 G2776 G846 G2532 G2563 G1909 G1188 G846

καὶ γονυπετήσαντες ἐμπροσθεν αὐτῷ ἐνέπαιζον αὐτῷ
And they bowed the knee before him and mocked him
G2532 G1120 G1715 G846 G1702 G846

λέγοντες Χαῖρε ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων
saying Hail King of the Jews
G3004 G5463 G935 G3588 G2453

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 53:3 (Parallel theme): He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Matthew 20:19 (Parallel theme): And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.

Mark 15:18 (Kingdom): And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews!

Isaiah 49:7 (Kingdom): Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.

Jeremiah 20:7 (Parallel theme): O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me.

Matthew 26:49 (Parallel theme): And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him.

Matthew 27:37 (Kingdom): And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.