

Matthew 27:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.

Analysis

They spit upon him (ἐνέπτυσαν, enéptysan)—the ultimate ancient Near Eastern gesture of contempt (Numbers 12:14, Deuteronomy 25:9). Jesus receives the spittle of soldiers, fulfilling Isaiah 50:6: **I hid not my face from shame and spitting.**

Took the reed, and smote him on the head—the mock scepter becomes an instrument of torture, driving thorns deeper. The head that will be crowned with glory (Hebrews 2:9) is beaten. The irony: they strike the Judge of all the earth while he restrains twelve legions of angels (Matthew 26:53).

Historical Context

Spitting was considered deeply defiling in Jewish culture (Leviticus 15:8) and equally contemptuous in Roman culture. Striking a condemned man before execution was common practice, softening resistance and providing entertainment for soldiers.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus's acceptance of spitting and beating demonstrate the extent of his humility (Philippians 2:5-8)?
2. What does Christ's restraint of divine power in this moment teach about the voluntary nature of his sacrifice?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἐμπτύσαντες εἰς αὐτοῦ ἔλαβον τὸν κάλαμον καὶ
And they spit on him and took the reed And
G2532 G1716 G1519 G846 G2983 G3588 G2563 G2532
ἔτυπτον εἰς τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ
smote on G3588 the head him
G5180 G1519 G2776 G846

Additional Cross-References

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.

Matthew 26:67 (Parallel theme): Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands,

Isaiah 53:7 (Parallel theme): He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

Mark 15:19 (Parallel theme): And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him.