

Matthew 27:39

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,

Analysis

They that passed by reviled him (ἐβλασφήμουν, eblasphēmoun)—literally blasphemed, hurled insults at him. **Wagging their heads** (κινουῦντες τὰς κεφαλὰς, kinountes tas kephalas)—the ancient gesture of mockery and contempt, fulfilling Psalm 22:7: **All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head.**

Golgotha was near a main road; Passover crowds stream past. The Suffering Servant endures not only physical agony but public scorn. He who taught **blessed are ye, when men shall revile you** (Matthew 5:11) now experiences ultimate reviling.

Historical Context

Crucifixion sites were deliberately placed along major roads to maximize public visibility and deterrent effect. Jerusalem's population swelled during Passover from ~50,000 to over 200,000, ensuring massive crowds would witness Jesus's execution.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the public mockery of Jesus fulfill Psalm 22 and reveal the depth of his humiliation?
2. What does Jesus's silence in the face of reviling teach about responding to persecution (1 Peter 2:23)?

Interlinear Text

Οἱ δὲ παραπορευόμενοι ἐβλασφήμουν αὐτῶν κινοῦντες
G3588 **And** **they that passed by** **reviled** **him** **wagging**
G1161 G3899 G987 G846 G2795

τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν
G3588 **heads** **him**
G2776 G846

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 109:25 (Parallel theme): I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shook their heads.

Lamentations 1:12 (Parallel theme): Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.