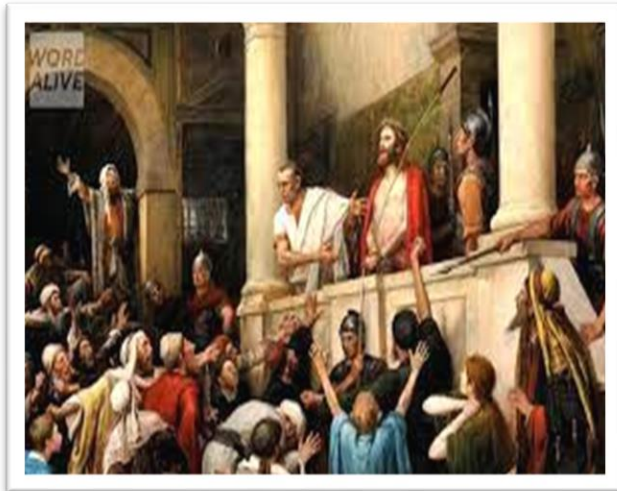


## **The Insults received by Jesus in the Court of Caiphas**

No sooner did Caiphas, with the other members of the Council, leave the tribunal than a crowd of miscreants—the very scum of the people—surrounded Jesus like a swarm of infuriated wasps, and began to heap every imaginable insult upon him. Even during the trial, whilst the witnesses were speaking, the archers and some others could not restrain their cruel inclinations, but pulled out handfuls of his hair and beard, spat upon him, struck him with their fists, wounded him with sharp-pointed sticks, and even ran needles into his body; but when Caiphas left the hall they set no bounds to their barbarity.

They first placed a crown, made of straw and the bark of trees, upon his head, and then took it off, saluting him at the same time with insulting expressions, like the following: ‘Behold the Son of David wearing the crown of his father.’ ‘A greater than Solomon is here; this is the king who is preparing a wedding feast for his son.’ Thus did they turn into ridicule those eternal truths which he had taught under the form of parables to those whom he came from heaven to save; and whilst repeating these scoffing words, they continued to strike him with their fists and sticks, and to spit in his face. Next they put a crown of reeds upon his head, took off his robe and scapular, and then threw an old torn mantle, which scarcely reached his knees, over his shoulders; around his neck they hung a long iron chain, with an iron ring at each end, studded with sharp points, which bruised and tore his knees as he walked. They again pinioned his arms, put a reed into his hand, and covered his Divine countenance with spittle. They had already thrown all sorts of filth over his hair, as well as over his chest, and upon the old mantle. They bound his eyes with a dirty rag, and struck him, crying out at the same time in loud tones, ‘Prophecy unto us, O Christ, who is he that struck thee?’ He answered not one word, but sighed, and prayed inwardly for them.



After many more insults, they seized the chain which was hanging on his neck, dragged him towards the room into which the Council had withdrawn, and with their stick forced him in, vociferating at the same time, 'March forward, thou King of Straw! Show thyself to the Council with the insignia of the regal honours we have rendered unto thee.' A large body of councillors, with Caiphas at their head, were still in the room, and they looked with both delight and approbation at the shameful scene which was enacted, beholding with pleasure the most sacred ceremonies turned into derision. The pitiless guards covered him with mud and spittle, and with mock gravity exclaimed, 'Receive the prophetic unction— the regal unction.' Then they impiously parodied the baptismal ceremonies, and the pious act of Magdalen in emptying the vase of perfume on his head. 'How canst thou presume,' they exclaimed, 'to appear before the Council in such a condition? Thou dost purify others, and thou art not pure thyself; but we will soon purify thee.' They fetched a basin of dirty water, which they poured over his face and shoulders, whilst they bent their knees before him, and exclaimed, 'Behold thy precious unction, behold the spikenard worth three hundred pence; thou hast been baptised in the pool of Bethsaida.' They intended by this to throw into ridicule the act of respect and veneration shown by Magdalen, when she poured the precious ointment over his head, at the house of the Pharisee. By their derisive words concerning his baptism in the pool of Bethsaida, they pointed out, although unintentionally, the resemblance between Jesus and the Paschal lamb, for the lambs were washed in the first place in the pond near the Probatica gate, and then brought to the pool of Bethsaida, where they underwent another purification before being taken to the Temple to be sacrificed. The enemies of Jesus likewise alluded to the man who had been infirm for thirty-eight years, and who was cured by Jesus at the pool of Bethsaida; for I saw this man either washed or baptised there; I say either washed or baptised, because I do not exactly remember the circumstances.

They then dragged Jesus round the room, before all the members of the Council, who continued to address him in reproachful and abusive language. Every countenance looked diabolical and enraged, and all around was dark, confused, and terrified. Our Lord, on the contrary, was from the moment that he declared himself to be the Son of God, generally surrounded with a halo of

**light. Many of the assembly appeared to have a confused knowledge of this fact, and to be filled with consternation at perceiving that neither outrages or ignominies could alter the majestic expression of his countenance. The halo which shone around Jesus from the moment he declared himself to be the Christ, the Son of the Living God, served but to incite his enemies to greater fury, and yet it was so resplendent that they could not look at it, and I believe their intention in throwing the dirty rag over his head was to deaden its brightness.**