

Luke 19:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

Analysis

Jesus' response to Pharisees: 'And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.' The Pharisees demanded Jesus silence the crowd (v. 39), but Jesus declares this impossible. The phrase 'if these should hold their peace' (ἐὰν οὗτοι σιωπήσωσιν, ean houtoi siōpēsōsin, a hypothetical condition) introduces the startling claim: 'the stones would immediately cry out' (οἱ λίθοι κράξουσιν, hoi lithoi kraxousin). Creation itself would testify to Christ's glory if humans remained silent. This echoes Habakkuk 2:11 where stones cry out against injustice, and anticipates Romans 8:19-22 where creation groans awaiting redemption. The universe exists to glorify Christ; when humans fulfill this purpose, all is well. When humans refuse, creation takes up the chorus. Jesus' glory cannot be suppressed.

Historical Context

This declaration has profound theological implications. Christ is not merely a great teacher or moral exemplar—He is the Creator whom all creation exists to glorify (Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 1:3). That stones would cry out if humans didn't indicates worship is built into the fabric of reality. Silencing Jesus' praise isn't possible because the cosmos itself testifies to Him. The Pharisees' attempt to quiet the crowd was doomed—they were fighting against reality itself. This teaching encourages persecuted Christians: even when human voices are silenced, God's

glory cannot be suppressed. Nature itself proclaims His majesty (Psalm 19:1-4, Romans 1:20).

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What does the claim that stones would cry out teach about Christ's glory and creation's purpose?
2. How does this truth encourage believers facing opposition or persecution?
3. In what ways does creation currently testify to Christ's glory?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι, ἐὰν
And he answered and said unto them I tell you that if
G2532 G611 G2036 G846 G3004 G5213 G3754 G1437

οὗτοι σιωπήσωσιν, οἱ λίθοι κεκράξονται
these should hold their peace the stones would immediately cry out
G3778 G4623 G3588 G3037 G2896

Additional Cross-References

Habakkuk 2:11 (Parallel theme): For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.

Isaiah 55:12 (Peace): For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Psalms 96:11 (Parallel theme): Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.

Matthew 3:9 (Parallel theme): And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

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