

Luke 19:48

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him.

Analysis

And could not find what they might do (καὶ οὐχ εὑρίσκον τὸ τί ποιήσωσιν, kai ouch heuriskon to ti poiēsōsin)—Despite murderous intent, the leaders are stymied. Heuriskō (to find) in the imperfect tense shows repeated failure. They couldn't find a strategy (ti poiēsōsin, what they might do) because public support protected Jesus. The deliberative subjunctive poiēsōsin conveys their strategic dilemma: how to eliminate Jesus without triggering popular revolt?

For all the people were very attentive to hear him (ὁ λαὸς γὰρ ἅπας ἐξεκρέματο αὐτοῦ ἀκούων, ho laos gar hapas exekremato autou akouōn)—Exkremamai (to hang upon, be intent on) is vivid: the people hung on Jesus's words, utterly captivated. The imperfect tense shows continuous state; the present participle akouōn (hearing) emphasizes ongoing attention. Hapas (all, the whole) indicates widespread support—the common people recognized authentic teaching despite elite rejection.

This creates ironic contrast: religious professionals seek to destroy Jesus while ordinary people hunger for His teaching. Eventually, the leaders will manipulate a crowd (23:18-23), but for now, popular support delays their plot.

Historical Context

Passover brought up to 200,000 pilgrims to Jerusalem, creating volatile political situation. Roman garrison was on high alert for messianic uprisings. The Jewish

leaders had to move carefully—arresting Jesus publicly could spark riot, bringing Roman crackdown. Thus they sought nighttime betrayal (22:6) and manipulated crowds during early-morning trials when supporters were absent.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does popular support for truth-tellers sometimes provide temporary protection from institutional opposition?
2. What does the people's hunger for Jesus's teaching reveal about the failure of religious leaders to feed their flock?
3. When have you witnessed the contrast between institutional religion's rejection and ordinary people's hunger for genuine spiritual teaching?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	οὐχ	εὕρισκον	τὸ	τί	ποιήσωσιν	ὁ	λαὸς	γὰρ
And	not	could	G3588	what	they might do	G3588	the people	for
G2532	G3756	G2147		G5101	G4160		G2992	G1063

ἅπας	ἐξεκρέματο	αὐτοῦ	ἀκούων
all	were very attentive	him	to hear
G537	G1582	G846	G191

Additional Cross-References

Nehemiah 8:3 (Parallel theme): And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.

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