

Mark 14:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death.

Analysis

After two days was the feast of the passover—Mark's precise temporal marker situates us on Wednesday of Passion Week, with Passover beginning Friday evening. The Greek meta duo hēmeras (μετὰ δύο ἡμέρας) creates dramatic irony: while Israel prepared to commemorate deliverance from Egypt, the ultimate Passover Lamb was about to be sacrificed.

The chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft (ἐζήτουν πῶς αὐτὸν ἐν δόλῳ κρατήσαντες)—Dolos means "treachery" or "deceit," revealing the leaders' calculated duplicity. Their caution stemmed from fear of the crowds (v. 2), who viewed Jesus favorably. The verb ezētoun (imperfect tense) suggests ongoing, deliberate plotting—not spontaneous hostility but premeditated murder of the one they knew performed undeniable signs (John 11:47-48). Judas' betrayal (vv. 10-11) would provide the "craft" they needed.

Historical Context

Mark wrote during the 60s AD to a Roman audience, explaining Jewish customs throughout his Gospel. Passover celebrated Israel's exodus from Egypt (Exodus 12), when lamb's blood on doorposts saved firstborn sons. The Sanhedrin's

conspiracy during this feast ironically fulfilled typology: Jesus, the true Passover Lamb, would die at the very hour lambs were slaughtered in the temple.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does the leaders' "craft" and "treachery" contrast with Jesus' open teaching in the temple (14:49)?
2. What does it mean for Jesus to be both the Passover Lamb and the Son who escaped death's angel?

Interlinear Text

Ἦν	δὲ	τὸ	πάσχα	καὶ	τὰ	ἄζυμα	μετὰ
was	After	G3588	the feast of the passover	and	G3588	unleavened bread	of
G2258	G1161		G3957	G2532		G106	G3326

δύο	ἡμέρας	καὶ	ἐζήτουν	οἱ	ἀρχιερεῖς	καὶ	οἱ
two	days	and	sought	G3588	the chief priests	and	G3588
G1417	G2250	G2532	G2212		G749	G2532	

γραμματεῖς	πῶς	αὐτὸν	ἐν	δόλῳ	κρατήσαντες
the scribes	how	him	by	craft	they might take
G1122	G4459	G846	G1722	G1388	G2902

ἀποκτείνωσιν·
and put him to death
G615

Additional Cross-References

John 13:1 (Parallel theme): Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

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