

Mark 14:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar of the people.

Analysis

But they said, Not on the feast day (μὴ ἐν τῇ ἑορτῇ, mē en tē heortē)—The chief priests and scribes feared a riot if they arrested Jesus during Passover, when Jerusalem swelled with pilgrims and messianic expectation ran high. Their caution reveals both political calculation and unconscious acknowledgment of Jesus's popular support. Yet God's sovereign plan overruled their timing: Christ would die as the Passover Lamb, not after it.

Lest there be an uproar of the people (θόρυβος τοῦ λαοῦ, thorybos tou laou)—The religious leaders prioritized crowd control over justice. They conspired in darkness (v. 1), hoping to execute Jesus secretly, but providence brought Judas's betrayal (v. 10-11), enabling arrest away from crowds. Their fear proved justified: after the crucifixion, God did shake Jerusalem—the temple veil tore, the earth quaked (Matthew 27:51), and within 40 years Rome destroyed the city.

Historical Context

Mark wrote during the AD 60s, likely in Rome, when persecution made secrecy a survival tactic. His first readers would recognize the irony: religious authorities plotting murder while claiming piety. Passover commemorated Israel's deliverance from Egypt, yet Israel's leaders now plotted to kill their true Deliverer during that very feast.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. When have you prioritized reputation or political expediency over doing what is right?
2. How does Jesus's death occurring *during* Passover (despite human plans) demonstrate God's sovereignty over history?

Interlinear Text

ἔλεγον	δὲ,	Μὴ	ἐν	τῇ	ἐορτῇ	μήποτε	θόρυβος	ἔσται
they said	But	Not	on	G3588	the feast	day lest	an uproar	there be
G3004	G1161	G3361	G1722		G1859	G3379	G2351	G2071
τοῦ	λαοῦ							
G3588	of the people							
	G2992							

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 21:30 (Parallel theme): There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD.

Proverbs 19:21 (Parallel theme): There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

Mark 11:32 (Parallel theme): But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.

Mark 11:18 (Parallel theme): And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.

Matthew 26:5 (Parallel theme): But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.

John 7:40 (Parallel theme): Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.

John 12:19 (Parallel theme): The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

Luke 20:6 (Parallel theme): But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet.

Lamentations 3:27 (Parallel theme): It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

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