

Mark 15:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.

Analysis

For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy (έγινωσκεν γὰρ ὅτι διὰ φθόνον παραδεδώκεισαν αὐτὸν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς, eginōsken gar hoti dia phthonon paradedōkeisan auton hoi archiereis)—The verb γινώσκω (ginōskō) means to know, perceive, understand. Pilate had discernment to see through the religious veneer to the real motive: φθόνος (phthonos, envy). This noun denotes jealousy, spite, resentment at another's advantages. The verb παραδίδωμι (paradidōmi, 'delivered/betrayed') is the same used for Judas's betrayal.

The chief priests envied Jesus's popularity (11:18, 12:12), His authority ('he taught as one having authority, not as the scribes,' 1:22), and His direct access to God threatening their mediating role. Pilate recognized this—it wasn't blasphemy or treason motivating them, but threatened power. Yet even knowing this, Pilate lacked courage to act justly. The verb παραδίδωμι creates a chain: Judas betrayed Jesus to the priests, the priests delivered Him to Pilate, Pilate would deliver Him to crucifixion (v. 15). All guilty.

Historical Context

Roman governors were trained to discern provincial politics. Pilate recognized a power struggle—the chief priests eliminating a popular rival. Josephus documents similar conflicts where Jewish leaders manipulated Roman authorities against threats to their position (Antiquities 20.9.1). Pilate's insight makes his eventual capitulation more culpable—he condemned a man he knew was innocent due to

political expediency. Later Christian tradition identifies 'envy' as the sin that killed Christ (1 Clement 4:7).

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What specifically about Jesus did the chief priests envy that drove them to murder?
2. How does Pilate's knowledge of their envy make his eventual condemnation of Jesus more culpable?
3. What does envy as the motive for Christ's death teach about the spiritual danger of comparing ourselves to others?

Interlinear Text

ἐγίνωσκεν	γὰρ	ὅτι	διὰ	φθόνον	παραδεδώκεισαν	αὐτὸν
he knew	For	that	for	envy	had delivered	him
G1097	G1063	G3754	G1223	G5355	G3860	G846

οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς
the chief priests
G3588 G749

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 27:4 (Parallel theme): Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?

Matthew 27:18 (Parallel theme): For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.

