

Mark 15:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

Analysis

Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? (ὁ δὲ Πιλάτος ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς, Τί γὰρ ἐποίησεν κακόν; ho de Pilatos elegen autois, Ti gar epoiēsen kakon?)—Pilate's question uses τί (ti, 'what?') seeking specific charges, and κακόν (kakon, 'evil') asking for actual wrongdoing. The perfect tense ἐποίησεν (epoiēsen) asks what evil Jesus has done/committed. Pilate's question is judicial—demanding legal grounds for execution. It's also testimony: the Roman governor found no fault (cf. Luke 23:22, John 18:38, 19:4, 19:6).

And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him (οἱ δὲ περισσῶς ἔκραξαν, Σταύρωσον αὐτόν, hoi de perissōs ekraخان, Staurōson auton)—The adverb περισσῶς (perissōs) means exceedingly, abundantly, all the more. Rational argument fails before mob hysteria. They answer Pilate's demand for charges not with evidence but with louder screaming. Truth cannot penetrate hearts hardened by envy (v. 10) and manipulation (v. 11). This scene fulfills the madness of Psalm 2:1-2: 'Why do the heathen rage...against the LORD, and against his anointed.'

Historical Context

Pilate's threefold declaration of innocence (here and in Luke/John) was legally significant—Roman law required formal finding of guilt for execution. His question 'What evil has he done?' sought to force the accusers to state charges. Their non-response and escalating demands put Pilate in an impossible position: uphold

justice and risk riot, or capitulate to injustice and maintain order. His choice reveals the moral cowardice of 'going along' with evil for pragmatic reasons.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. Why does Pilate continue asking for charges when he's already determined to condemn Jesus?
2. How does the crowd's escalating volume rather than reasoned response reveal the nature of mob mentality?
3. What does this verse teach about the conflict between justice and political expediency?

Interlinear Text

ὁ	δὲ	Πιλάτος	ἔλεγεν	αὐτόν	τί	γὰρ	κακόν	ἐποίησεν
G3588	And	Pilate	said	him	what	Why	evil	hath he done
	G1161	G4091	G3004	G846	G5101	G1063	G2556	G4160

οἱ	δὲ	περισσοτέρως	ἔκραξαν	Σταύρωσον	αὐτόν
G3588	And	the more exceedingly	they cried out	Crucify	him
	G1161	G4056	G2896	G4717	G846

Additional Cross-References

Luke 23:41 (Parallel theme): And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

