

Mark 15:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing.

Analysis

And the chief priests accused him of many things (καὶ κατηγόρουν αὐτῷ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς πολλά, kai katēgoroun autou hoi archiereis polla)—The verb κατηγορέω (katēgoreō) means to accuse, bring charges against (from which English 'categorize' derives). The adverb πολλά (polla, 'many things') shows volume of accusations. Luke 23:2 specifies: forbidding tribute to Caesar, claiming to be Christ a King—political charges crafted for Roman ears.

But he answered nothing (οὐδὲ οὐδὲν ἀπεκρίνατο, ho de ouden apeekrinato)—The emphatic οὐδέν (ouden, 'nothing at all') contrasts with the 'many things' of accusation. Jesus's silence fulfills Isaiah 53:7: 'he opened not his mouth.' His refusal to defend Himself baffled Pilate (v. 5) who expected defendants to plead vigorously. This silence demonstrated Jesus's sovereign control—He wasn't a helpless victim but willingly submitted to the Father's plan (John 10:18).

Historical Context

Roman legal procedure expected the accused to mount vigorous defense (Latin: *defensio*). Silence could be interpreted as admission of guilt or contempt of court. However, Pilate recognized the accusations as politically motivated—he 'knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy' (v. 10). The chief priests' 'many things' likely included charges of miracle-working interpreted as sorcery, gathering followers as sedition, and claiming authority over the Temple.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. Why did Jesus respond to Pilate's question about kingship (v. 2) but remain silent before specific accusations?
2. How does Jesus's silence before false charges model the suffering servant of Isaiah 53?
3. What does the chief priests' need to multiply accusations ('many things') reveal about the weakness of their case?

Interlinear Text

καὶ κατηγόρουν αὐτὸς οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς πολλά· αὐτὸς
And accused him the chief priests of many things him
G2532 G2723 G846 G3588 G749 G4183 G846

δὲ οὐδὲν ἀπεκρίνατο.

but nothing he answered
G1161 G3762 G611

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 53:7 (Parallel theme): He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.