

Mark 15:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing?
behold how many things they witness against thee.

Analysis

And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? (ὁ δὲ Πιλάτος πάλιν ἐπηρώτα αὐτὸν λέγων, Οὐκ ἀποκρίνη οὐδέν; ho de Pilatos palin epērōta auton legōn, Ouk apokrinē ouden?)—Pilate's repeated questioning (πάλιν, palin, 'again') shows his perplexity. The double negative (οὐκ...οὐδέν, ouk...ouden) intensifies: 'Aren't you answering anything at all?' Roman governors expected defendants to protest innocence, offer explanations, or plead for mercy.

Behold how many things they witness against thee (ἴδε πόσα σου κατηγοροῦσιν, ide posa sou katēgorousin)—The imperative ἴδε (ide, 'see, look') urges Jesus to recognize the seriousness. The interrogative πόσα (posa, 'how many') emphasizes the volume of accusations. Pilate seems almost to be coaching Jesus toward self-defense, suggesting the governor suspected the charges were false. Yet Jesus's silence spoke louder than any defense—He had come 'to give his life a ransom for many' (10:45), not to escape death.

Historical Context

Pilate's confusion is historically credible. Roman jurisprudence valued rhetoric and legal argumentation. The governor had likely never encountered a defendant who simply refused to engage with the legal process. Pilate's later actions—offering to release Jesus (v. 9), declaring 'I find no fault in him' (John 19:6), washing his hands (Matthew 27:24)—all suggest he recognized the trial as a miscarriage of justice but lacked courage to resist.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. Why does Pilate seem to want Jesus to defend Himself against the accusations?
2. How does Jesus's continued silence demonstrate His sovereignty over the situation rather than victimhood?
3. What does Pilate's perplexity teach about worldly power confronting divine purpose?

Interlinear Text

ὁ	δὲ	Πιλάτος	πάλιν	ἐπηρώτησεν	αὐτὸν	λέγων,	Οὐκ
G3588	And	Pilate	again	asked	him	saying	nothing
	G1161	G4091	G3825	G1905	G846	G3004	G3756
ἀποκρίνη	οὐδέν	ἶδε	πόσα	σου			
Answerest thou			how many things	against thee			
G611	G3762	G1492	G4214	G4675			
καταμαρτυροῦσιν							
they witness							
G2649							

Additional Cross-References

John 19:10 (Parallel theme): Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

