

Mark 15:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the multitude crying aloud began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them.

Analysis

And the multitude crying aloud began to desire him to do (καὶ ἀναβὰς ὁ ὄχλος ἤρξατο αἰτεῖσθαι καθὼς ἀεὶ ἐποίει αὐτοῖς, kai anabas ho ochlos ērxato aiteisthai kathōs aei epoiei autois)—The participle ἀναβάς (anabas, 'going up') suggests the ὄχλος (ochlos, crowd/multitude) approached the judgment seat. The verb αἰτέω (aiteō) means to ask, request, or demand. **As he had ever done unto them** (καθὼς ἀεὶ ἐποίει, kathōs aei epoiei)—the adverb ἀεί (aei, 'always, customarily') confirms this was established practice.

Initially, the crowd seems neutral, simply requesting the customary release without specifying whom. Pilate will attempt to leverage this (v. 9), but the chief priests will manipulate them (v. 11). This crowd may not have been Jesus's supporters—those likely scattered after the arrest (14:50), and the trial occurred at dawn when Jesus's followers would not yet have gathered. The crowd consisted of those sympathetic to the Temple establishment or eager for Barabbas's release.

Historical Context

The 'multitude' (ὄχλος) was likely composed of Jerusalemites rather than Galilean pilgrims who had supported Jesus (11:9-10). The chief priests could mobilize their dependents—Temple workers, merchants, those economically tied to the Temple establishment. The timing (early morning) also meant Jesus's supporters, primarily Galilean pilgrims camped outside the city, wouldn't have arrived yet. The chief priests thus controlled the crowd composition.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. Why does Mark note the crowd initially asks for the customary release without naming Barabbas?
2. How does the crowd's composition (likely Jerusalem establishment supporters vs. Galilean pilgrims) affect the outcome?
3. What does the crowd's malleability teach about mob dynamics and manipulation by authorities?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἀναβοήσας ὁ ὄχλος ἤρξατο αἰτεῖσθαι καθὼς
And crying aloud the multitude began to desire him to do as
G2532 G3588 G310 G3793 G756 G154 G2531

ἀεί ἐποίει αὐτοῖς
he had ever done unto them
G104 G4160 G846

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