

Matthew 26:66

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.

Analysis

What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death (τί ὑμῖν δοκεῖ; οἱ δὲ ἀποκριθέντες εἶπαν, Ἐνοχος θανάτου ἔστιν)—The high priest's question τί ὑμῖν δοκεῖ; ('What do you think? What is your verdict?') demanded judgment. The response was unanimous: Ἐνοχος θανάτου ἔστιν ('He is liable/guilty of death, He deserves death'). The adjective ἐνοχος (enochos) means 'held in, bound by, liable, guilty—a legal term declaring guilt worthy of capital punishment. Leviticus 24:16 prescribed stoning for blasphemy. The Sanhedrin condemned the sinless One (2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15) to death—the greatest injustice in history became the means of perfect justice (Romans 3:25-26).

The unanimous verdict fulfilled prophecy but violated procedure—Jewish law required trials to extend to a second day before capital conviction, allowing time for reconsideration. Night trials for capital crimes were illegal. The haste revealed malicious intent, not judicial care. Yet God's sovereignty turned their evil into His redemptive purpose—they meant it for evil; God meant it for good (Genesis 50:20). The unjust verdict accomplished justification for the unjust (Romans 5:18-19).

Historical Context

The Sanhedrin's verdict couldn't be executed without Roman approval—Rome reserved death-penalty authority (John 18:31). This explains Friday morning's proceedings before Pilate (27:1-2). The charge changed from religious (blasphemy) to political (claiming kingship, threatening Caesar—Luke 23:2) because Romans didn't execute for Jewish religious violations. The progression shows how religious

opposition became political maneuvering. The religious establishment's manipulation of Roman power to kill Jesus demonstrates how earthly kingdoms unknowingly serve God's kingdom purposes.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does the Sanhedrin's unanimous condemnation of the innocent One reveal the depth of corporate human depravity?
2. What comfort does the transformation of unjust condemnation into salvific justification provide when you face injustice?

Interlinear Text

τί	ὑμῖν	δοκεῖ	οἱ	δὲ	ἀποκριθέντες	εἰπον,	Ἐνοχος
What	ye	think	G3588	and	They answered	said	guilty
G5101	G5213	G1380		G1161	G611	G2036	G1777
Θανάτου ἔστιν							
of death							
G2288							
He is							
G2076							

Additional Cross-References

John 19:7 (Parallel theme): The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

