

# Matthew 27:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.

## Analysis

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**But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus** (ἐπεισαν... ἵνα αἰτήσωνται... ἀπολέσωσιν)—The Greek *epeisan* (persuaded) and *apolesōsin* (destroy) show deliberate manipulation toward murder. Religious leaders used their authority to incite judicial murder of the innocent.

This reversal from Sunday's 'Hosanna' (Matthew 21:9) to Friday's 'Crucify' demonstrates mob psychology's volatility and the power of authority figures to manipulate public opinion. The same mouths that praised now demanded death—a portrait of human fickleness and the danger of religious authority corrupted by self-interest.

## Historical Context

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The crowd was likely composed of chief priests' dependents, temple workers, and supporters—different from the Galilean pilgrims who welcomed Jesus. In the early morning, leaders could gather their faction while Jesus's supporters were absent.

## Related Passages

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**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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1. How do spiritual leaders today sometimes use their influence to persuade people away from Christ?
2. What does the crowd's manipulation teach about the importance of personal conviction versus following religious authorities?

## Interlinear Text

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Oi	δὲ	ἀρχιερεῖς	καὶ	οἱ	πρεσβύτεροι	ἔπεισαν	τοὺς
G3588	But	the chief priests	and	G3588	elders	persuaded	G3588
G1161		G749	G2532		G4245	G3982	
οὐχλους	ἵνα	αἰτήσωνται	τὸν	Βαραββᾶν	τὸν	δὲ	Ἰησοῦν
the multitude	that	they should ask	G3588	Barabbas	G3588	But	Jesus
G3793	G2443	G154		G912		G1161	G2424
ἀπολέσωσιν							
destroy							
G622							

## Additional Cross-References

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**Mark 15:11** (Parallel theme): But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.

**John 18:40** (Parallel theme): Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.