

Matthew 27:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.

Analysis

Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas (Τὸν Βαραββᾶν)—The stark, unelaborated response shows mob mentality's power. No deliberation, no debate—just the demand for the rebel. The Greek article ton (the) emphasizes decisiveness: THE Barabbas, not the Christ.

This choice epitomizes humanity's rebellion: choosing sin over salvation, death over life, the murderer over the Life-Giver (Acts 3:14-15). Every sinner who rejects Christ makes the same choice—preferring their own way over God's provision.

Historical Context

Roman crowd dynamics could quickly turn violent. Pilate faced potential riot (27:24) and couldn't risk Caesar hearing of disturbances during Passover. His prefecture was already troubled; Tiberius would not tolerate another incident.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. In what ways do you choose 'Barabbas' in daily decisions—preferring sin, rebellion, or self over Christ?
2. How does the crowd's choice reveal the depth of human depravity apart from God's grace?

Interlinear Text

ἀποκριθεὶς	δὲ	ὁ	ἡγεμὼν	εἶπον,	αὐτοῖς	Τίνα		
answered	and	G3588	The governor	They said	unto them	Whether		
G611	G1161		G2232	G2036	G846	G5101		
θέλετε	ἀπὸ	τῶν	δύο	ἀπολύσω	ὑμῖν	οἱ	δὲ	εἶπον,
will ye	of	G3588	the twain	that I release	unto you	G3588	and	They said
G2309	G575		G1417	G630	G5213		G1161	G2036
Βαραββᾶν								
Barabbas								
G912								