

John 18:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.

Analysis

That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die—John explicitly connects these legal machinations to divine purpose. The verb πληρωθῇ (plērōthē, 'might be fulfilled') indicates prophetic necessity, not mere prediction. Jesus's **saying** (λόγος, logos) refers to His repeated prophecies of being 'lifted up' (ὕψωθῆναι, hypsōthēnai, John 3:14; 8:28; 12:32-33).

Signifying what death he should die (σημαίνων ποίῳ θανάτῳ ἤμελλεν ἀποθνήσκειν, sēmainōn poiō thanatō ēmellen apothnēskein)—the verb σημαίνων (sēmainōn, 'signifying, indicating') appears in 12:33 and 21:19, marking Jesus's specific predictions. Crucifixion wasn't just execution but cosmic triumph: the cross becomes throne, shame becomes glory, curse becomes blessing (Galatians 3:13).

Historical Context

Roman crucifixion was designed for maximum humiliation and public deterrence—victims displayed naked on main roads. Yet this 'shameful' death fulfilled Deuteronomy 21:23 ('cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree'), enabling Jesus to become curse-bearer for humanity. The 'lifted up' language echoes Moses's bronze serpent (Numbers 21:9), providing healing through looking to the crucified One.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus's control over the manner of His death demonstrate His sovereignty even in apparent defeat?
2. What does the fulfillment of Christ's specific death predictions teach about trusting His other promises?
3. How does the cross transform from symbol of shame to emblem of glory—what does this teach about God's ability to redeem suffering?

Interlinear Text

ἵνα	ὁ	λόγος	τοῦ	Ἰησοῦ	πληρωθῇ	ὃν	εἶπεν
That	G3588	the saying	G3588	of Jesus	might be fulfilled	which	he spake
G2443		G3056		G2424	G4137	G3739	G2036
σημαίνων	ποίω	θανάτῳ	ἤμελλεν	ἀποθνήσκειν			
signifying	what	death	he should	die			
G4591	G4169	G2288	G3195	G599			

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 26:2 (Parallel theme): Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

Matthew 20:19 (Parallel theme): And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.

John 3:14 (Parallel theme): And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

Mark 10:33 (Parallel theme): Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles:

John 8:28 (References Jesus): Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

Deuteronomy 21:23 (Parallel theme): His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

Psalms 22:16 (Parallel theme): For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

Galatians 3:13 (Parallel theme): Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: