

Mark 14:50

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they all forsook him, and fled.

Analysis

And they all forsook him, and fled. The devastating brevity matches the moment's tragedy—πάντες (pantes, "all") and ἔφυγον (ephygon, "fled") capture total desertion. Hours earlier they vowed loyalty unto death (v. 31); now they fulfill Jesus' prediction (v. 27) rather than their promises. The verb φεύγω (pheugō) means to flee in fear, like running from battle. These future apostles became deserters.

Yet this failure serves redemptive purpose: it proves that Christianity's foundation rests not on apostolic faithfulness but on Christ's alone. Their desertion fulfilled Zechariah 13:7's prophecy, demonstrating Scripture's reliability. Moreover, their cowardice makes their later boldness (Acts 4:13) inexplicable apart from resurrection and Pentecost. The transformed deserters became Spirit-empowered martyrs, proof of grace's reality.

Historical Context

Roman crucifixion often included executing accomplices of accused criminals. The disciples' flight showed rational self-preservation in a system that could crucify Jesus' followers alongside Him. Yet their later return (John 20) and fearless preaching (Acts) demonstrated supernatural transformation. Early church tradition holds that all apostles except John died as martyrs—those who fled eventually stood firm unto death.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the disciples' total desertion demonstrate that Christianity's foundation is Christ's work, not human faithfulness?
2. What does the fulfillment of Jesus' prediction (v. 27) in this moment teach about prophetic reliability?
3. How should the disciples' transformation from deserters to martyrs encourage you when you fail Christ?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἀφέντες	αὐτὸν	πάντες	ἔφυγον
And	forsook	him	they all	and fled
G2532	G863	G846	G3956	G5343

Additional Cross-References

Mark 14:27 (Parallel theme): And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.

John 16:32 (Parallel theme): Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

Psalms 88:18 (Parallel theme): Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.

2 Timothy 4:16 (Parallel theme): At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

Psalms 38:11 (Parallel theme): My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off.

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