

Matthew 20:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,

Analysis

Behold, we go up to Jerusalem (Ἴδοὺ ἀναβαίνομεν)—The imperative *idou* (behold) demands attention for this climactic revelation. **The Son of man shall be betrayed** (παραδοθήσεται)—The divine passive *paradothēsetai* indicates God's sovereign hand behind Judas's treachery (Acts 2:23). **Unto the chief priests and unto the scribes**—The religious establishment, not Roman power, will initiate Jesus's execution, fulfilling the pattern of Israel rejecting her prophets.

They shall condemn him to death (κατακρινούσιν αὐτὸν θανάτῳ)—The future tense *katakrinousin* reveals Jesus's prophetic foreknowledge. The Sanhedrin possessed religious authority but lacked the *ius gladii* (right of the sword) under Roman occupation, necessitating the handover to Gentiles in verse 19.

Historical Context

The Sanhedrin, composed of 71 members including chief priests (Sadducees) and scribes (Pharisees), served as the supreme Jewish court. Under Roman prefect Pontius Pilate (AD 26-36), the Sanhedrin could try capital cases but required Roman approval for execution. The chief priests, controlled by the high-priestly family of Annas, had vested interests in maintaining temple commerce that Jesus threatened.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus's foreknowledge of betrayal by religious authorities expose the danger of institutionalized religion divorced from love?
2. What does the divine passive voice ('shall be betrayed') teach about God's sovereignty over human evil?
3. Why did Jesus repeatedly predict His death when the disciples consistently failed to understand?

Interlinear Text

Ἰδοὺ,	ἀναβαίνομεν	εἰς	Ἱεροσόλυμα	καὶ	ὁ	υἱὸς	τοῦ
Behold	we go up	to	Jerusalem	and	the Son		
G2400	G305	G1519	G2414	G2532	G3588	G5207	G3588
ἀνθρώπου	παραδοθήσεται	τοῖς	ἀρχιερεῦσιν	καὶ			
of man	shall be betrayed		unto the chief priests	and			
G444	G3860	G3588	G749	G2532			
γραμματεῦσιν	καὶ	κατακρινούσιν	αὐτὸν	θανάτῳ			
unto the scribes	and	they shall condemn	him	to death			
G1122	G2532	G2632	G846	G2288			

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 16:21 (References Jerusalem): From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

Matthew 27:1 (Parallel theme): When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death:

Acts 2:23 (Parallel theme): Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

Matthew 26:66 (Parallel theme): What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.

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