

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 (κατακρινοῦσιν 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

Ίδού, ἀναβαίνομεν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ
Behold we go up to Jerusalem and G3588 the Son G3588
G2400 G305 G1519 G2414 G2532 G5207

ἀνθρώπου παραδοθήσεται τοῖς ἀρχιερεῦσιν καὶ
of man shall be betrayed G3588 unto the chief priests and G2532
G444 G3860 G749 G2532

γραμματεῦσιν καὶ κατακρινοῦσιν 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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