

Matthew 21:35

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

Analysis

And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another—Israel's treatment of the prophets catalogued. The verbs escalate: ἔδειραν (beat/flay), ἀπέκτειναν (killed), ἔλιθοβόλησαν (stoned). Each verb uses different servants, showing repeated persecution patterns across generations.

Hebrews 11:36-38 describes faithful prophets who suffered mocking, imprisonment, stoning, and murder. Jeremiah was beaten and imprisoned (Jer 20:2, 37:15). Zechariah was stoned in the temple court (2 Chr 24:20-21). Stephen recounted this history before his own stoning (Acts 7:52). God's messengers of truth faced violent rejection by those claiming to serve God.

Historical Context

Jesus's audience knew their history of martyred prophets. Jewish tradition held that Isaiah was sawn in two (Heb 11:37). Jeremiah was stoned in Egypt by rebellious Jews. The Pharisees built tombs for the prophets (Matt 23:29) while preparing to kill the Prophet. Historical pattern predicted present action.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. Why do religious people often violently oppose God's messengers who call them to genuine repentance?
2. When faithful preaching makes you uncomfortable, do you examine your heart or attack the messenger?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	λαβόντες	οἱ	γεωργοὶ	τοὺς	δούλους	αὐτοῦ	οὐ
And	took	G3588	the husbandmen	G3588	servants	his	another
G2532	G2983		G1092		G1401	G846	G3739
μὲν	ἔδειραν	οὐ	δὲ	ἀπέκτειναν	οὐ	δὲ	
G3303	and beat	another	and	killed	another	and	
	G1194	G3739	G1161	G615	G3739	G1161	
ἐλιθοβόλησαν							
stoned							
G3036							

Additional Cross-References

Nehemiah 9:26 (Parallel theme): Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs, and slew thy prophets which testified against them to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocation.

Acts 7:52 (Parallel theme): Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:

Matthew 5:12 (Parallel theme): Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

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