

Matthew 23:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

Analysis

I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes (ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω πρὸς ὑμᾶς προφήτας καὶ σοφοὺς καὶ γραμματεῖς)—Jesus's "I send" reveals His divine prerogative to commission messengers. Apostello (send) is used of God sending prophets in the OT. He will send New Covenant ministers: apostles/prophets (Ephesians 4:11), wise men (teachers), and scribes (those trained in Scripture, like Matthew himself—13:52).

Some of them ye shall kill and crucify... scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city—Jesus prophesies the apostolic martyrdoms: James beheaded (Acts 12:2), Stephen stoned (Acts 7), tradition says Peter crucified, Paul beheaded. The synagogue scourgings fulfilled literally (2 Corinthians 11:24—Paul received 39 lashes five times). This proves the Pharisees are prophet-killers like their fathers—they'll do to apostles what ancestors did to prophets.

Historical Context

Jewish law permitted 39 lashes for serious offenses (Deuteronomy 25:3). Synagogue rulers administered this. Acts records repeated apostolic persecution by Jewish authorities: imprisonment, beatings, attempted stonings. Paul's letters detail his sufferings from Jewish opponents (2 Corinthians 11:23-27). The

predicted pattern fulfilled precisely—demonstrating Jesus's prophetic authority and the religious establishment's unchanged heart. The generation that killed Jesus killed His apostles, filling up the measure.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus's claim to personally send prophets, wise men, and scribes demonstrate His divine authority?
2. What does the pattern of religious persecution of God's messengers teach about the danger of institutionalized religion without regenerate hearts?
3. How do we participate in this pattern when we resist, marginalize, or silence prophetic voices that challenge our comfort?

Interlinear Text

διὰ	τοῦτο	ἰδοὺ,	ἐγὼ	ἀποστέλλω	πρὸς	ὑμᾶς	
Wherefore	G5124	behold	I	send	unto	you	
G1223		G2400	G1473	G649	G4314	G5209	
προφήτας	καὶ	σοφοὺς	καὶ	γραμματεῖς·	καὶ	ἐξ	αὐτῶν
prophets	and	wise men	and	scribes	and	some of	them
G4396	G2532	G4680	G2532	G1122	G2532	G1537	G846
ἀποκτενεῖτε	καὶ	σταυρώσετε	καὶ	ἐξ	αὐτῶν		
ye shall kill	and	crucify	and	some of	them		
G615	G2532	G4717	G2532	G1537	G846		
μαστιγώσετε	ἐν	ταῖς	συναγωγαῖς	ὑμῶν	καὶ	διώξετε	
shall ye scourge	in	G3588	synagogues	your	and	persecute	
G3146	G1722		G4864	G5216	G2532	G1377	
ἀπὸ	πόλιν·	εἰς	πόλιν·				
them from	city	to	city				
G575	G4172	G1519	G4172				

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 13:52 (Parallel theme): Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

Colossians 1:28 (Parallel theme): Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

Acts 13:1 (Prophecy): Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Matthew 10:23 (Parallel theme): But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

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