

Matthew 26:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.

Analysis

The Son of man goeth as it is written of him (ὁ μὲν υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὑπάγει καθὼς γέγραπται περὶ αὐτοῦ, ho men hyios tou anthrōpou hypagei kathōs gegraptai peri autou)—Divine sovereignty and human responsibility coexist: Jesus's death fulfills Scripture (Isaiah 53, Psalm 22, Zechariah 13:7), yet Judas bears full moral culpability. **Woe** (οὐαί, ouai) pronounces covenant curse.

Good for that man if he had not been born—This terrifying statement reveals the eternal weight of betraying the Son of God. Judas's temporal gain (30 pieces of silver) cost him eternal loss. The hypothetical non-existence would be preferable to the conscious torment awaiting covenant betrayers (Hebrews 10:29).

Historical Context

Jesus's statement reflects the Jewish theological tension between divine determinism and human free will. The Passover Haggadah itself rehearsed God's sovereign deliverance while calling for human response. First-century Judaism understood that God's foreknowledge didn't eliminate human responsibility—both truths stand.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How can God's sovereign plan for Christ's death coexist with Judas's genuine moral guilt for betrayal?
2. What does this 'woe' statement teach about the eternal consequences of rejecting Christ?

Interlinear Text

ὁ	μὲν	υἱὸς	τοῦ	ἄνθρωπος	ὑπάγει	καθὼς	γέγραπται		
G3588	G3303	The Son	G3588	he	goeth	as	it is written		
		G5207		G444	G5217	G2531	G1125		
περὶ	αὐτῷ	οὐαὶ	δὲ	τῷ	ἄνθρωπος	ἐκεῖνος	δι'	οὗ	ὁ
of	him	woe	but	G3588	he	for that	by	whom	G3588
G4012	G846	G3759	G1161		G444	G1565	G1223	G3739	
υἱὸς	τοῦ	ἄνθρωπος	παραδίδοται·			καλὸν	ἦν	αὐτῷ	
The Son	G3588	he	is betrayed			good	! it had been	him	
G5207		G444	G3860			G2570	G2258	G846	
εἰ	οὐκ	ἐγεννήθη	ὁ	ἄνθρωπος	ἐκεῖνος				
if	not	been born	G3588	he	for that				
G1487	G3756	G1080		G444	G1565				

Additional Cross-References

Luke 24:46 (Parallel theme): And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

Matthew 18:7 (Parallel theme): Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

Mark 14:21 (Good): The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.

1 Corinthians 15:3 (Parallel theme): For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

Matthew 26:54 (Parallel theme): But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

John 17:12 (Parallel theme): While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

Luke 22:22 (Parallel theme): And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!

Daniel 9:26 (Parallel theme): And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

Mark 9:12 (Parallel theme): And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.

Matthew 26:56 (Parallel theme): But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.