

Matthew 26:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

Analysis

All ye shall be offended because of me this night (πάντες ὑμεῖς σκανδαλισθήσεσθε ἐν ἐμοὶ ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ ταύτῃ, pantes hymeis skandalisthēsesthe en emoi en tē nykti tautē)—The verb skandalizō means 'to cause to stumble, fall away.' Jesus prophesies total apostasy: **all** would temporarily abandon Him, fulfilling divine necessity while indicting human weakness.

Jesus quotes Zechariah 13:7: **I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered.** God Himself strikes the shepherd (depicting Christ's death under divine wrath for sin), causing the sheep's scattering. This isn't mere persecution but the prophesied moment when God's Lamb bears iniquity, isolating Him even from His closest followers.

Historical Context

Zechariah 13:7 was recognized as messianic prophecy in first-century Judaism. The 'smitten shepherd' connected to Isaiah 53's suffering servant. Jesus's citation showed the disciples that their coming failure was both prophesied and necessary to the divine plan, though not excusing their cowardice.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus's forewarning of the disciples' failure demonstrate pastoral care even in crisis?
2. What does the fulfillment of Zechariah 13:7 teach about Christ bearing God's wrath for sin?

Interlinear Text

Τότε λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς Πάντες ὑμεῖς
Then saith unto them Jesus All ye
G5119 G3004 G846 G3588 G2424 G3956 G5210

σκανδαλισθήσεσθε ἐν ἐμοὶ ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ ταύτῃ
shall be offended because because night
G4624 G1722 G1698 G1722 G3588 G3571 G3778

γέγραπται γάρ, Πατάξω τὸν ποιμένα καὶ
it is written for I will smite the shepherd and
G1125 G1063 G3960 G3588 G4166 G2532

διασκορπισθήσεται τὰ πρόβατα τῆς ποίμνης
shall be scattered abroad the sheep of the flock
G1287 G4263 G3588 G4167

Additional Cross-References

Zechariah 13:7 (Parallel theme): Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

John 16:32 (Parallel theme): Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

Psalms 69:20 (Parallel theme): Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.

Psalms 38:11 (Parallel theme): My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off.

Isaiah 53:10 (Parallel theme): Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

Psalms 88:18 (Parallel theme): Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.

Matthew 11:6 (Parallel theme): And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

Lamentations 1:19 (Parallel theme): I called for my lovers, but they deceived me: my priests and mine elders gave up the ghost in the city, while they sought their meat to relieve their souls.

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.