

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	ὕμεῖς
Then	saith	unto them	G3588	Jesus	All	ye
G5119	G3004	G846		G2424	G3956	G5210
σκανδαλισθήσεσθε	ἐν	ἐμοὶ	ἐν	τῇ	νυκτὶ	ταύτῃ·
shall be offended	because	G1698	because	G3588	night	G3778
G4624	G1722		G1722		G3571	
γέγραπται	γάρ,	Πατάξω	τὸν	ποιμένα	καὶ	
it is written	for	I will smite	G3588	the shepherd	and	
G1125	G1063	G3960		G4166	G2532	
διασκορπισθήσεται	τὰ	πρόβατα	τῆς	ποιμνῆς		
shall be scattered abroad	G3588	the sheep	G3588	of the flock		
G1287		G4263		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.