

Matthew 8:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

Analysis

Jesus' stark statement 'the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head' reveals the voluntary poverty and homelessness He embraced in incarnation. The title 'Son of man' (from Daniel 7:13-14) ironically juxtaposes His divine identity and messianic authority with His present humiliation and rejection. This demonstrates Christ's condescension—the Lord of glory becoming poorer than animals to accomplish redemption (2 Corinthians 8:9).

Historical Context

Jesus had no permanent residence during His three-year ministry, depending on hospitality from supporters like Peter (Capernaum), Mary, Martha, and Lazarus (Bethany). This itinerant poverty fulfilled Isaiah 53's portrayal of the Suffering Servant as despised and rejected.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What does Christ's voluntary poverty and homelessness teach about the cost He paid for our redemption?
2. How should Jesus' warning about discipleship's cost inform how we present the gospel to potential converts?

Interlinear Text

καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς Αἱ ἀλώπεκες φωλεοὺς
And **saith** **unto him** G3588 **Jesus** G3588 **The foxes** **holes**
G2532 G3004 G846 G2424 G258 G5454

ἔχει καὶ τὰ πετεινὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατασκηνώσεις ὁ
hath **And** G3588 **the birds** G3588 **of the air** **have nests** G3588
G2192 G2532 G4071 G3772 G2682

δὲ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἔχει ποῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν
but **the Son** G3588 **of man** **not** **hath** **where** G3588 **his head**
G1161 G5207 G444 G3756 G2192 G4226 G2776

κλίνει
to lay
G2827

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 84:3 (Parallel theme): Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God.

Luke 2:7 (Parallel theme): And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.