

Zechariah 11:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.

Analysis

Prophetic symbol of Messiah's betrayal: 'And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.' The shepherd-prophet asks for wages; they pay thirty shekels—Exodus 21:32's price for a slave killed by an ox. This insultingly low valuation of God's shepherd becomes prophecy of Judas betraying Jesus for thirty silver pieces (Matthew 26:15, 27:9-10). Verse 13's ironic command—'Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them'—was fulfilled when Judas threw the silver into the temple and priests bought potter's field (Matthew 27:5-7). This demonstrates Scripture's prophetic precision: specific details fulfilled centuries later. Israel's rejection and contemptuous undervaluing of God's Shepherd presaged rejecting Messiah.

Historical Context

Zechariah's enacted prophecy (chapters 11-13) used shepherd imagery to depict Israel's failed leadership and coming rejection of the Good Shepherd. Thirty shekels was the compensation for a slave's accidental death—insulting wage for a shepherd. Matthew sees Judas's betrayal fulfilling this (though attributing quote to Jeremiah—possibly a scribal error or reference to scroll order where Jeremiah came first). The detail about potter's field connects to Jeremiah 18-19's potter imagery and 32:6-15's field purchase. These prophecies demonstrate divine foreknowledge and Scripture's unity. Jesus, the Good Shepherd (John 10:11), was

valued at slave-price, betrayed for petty sum, fulfilling ancient predictions with precision impossible for human contrivance.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How do I value Jesus—as precious beyond measure, or as cheap commodity to use for my purposes?
2. Does Jesus's fulfillment of detailed Old Testament prophecies strengthen my confidence in Scripture's divine inspiration?

Interlinear Text

וְאָמַרְתִּי	אֵלַיָּהּ	אִם	טוֹב	בְּעֵינֶיכֶם	הֵב	שְׂכָרִי
And I said	H413	H518	good	unto them If ye think	give	for my price
H559			H2896	H5869	H3051	H7939
וְאִם	לֹא	לֹא	וַיִּשְׁקֹל	אֶת	שְׂכָרִי	שְׁלֹשִׁים
H518	H3808	and if not forbear	So they weighed	H853	for my price	thirty
		H2308	H8254		H7939	H7970
כֶּסֶף:						
pieces of silver						
H3701						

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 26:15 (Parallel theme): And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

Exodus 21:32 (Parallel theme): If the ox shall push a manservant or a maidservant; he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

Genesis 37:28 (Parallel theme): Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org