

# Ezekiel 12:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Tell them therefore, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will make this proverb to cease, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel; but say unto them, The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision.

## Analysis

God responds to the mocking proverb: 'Tell them therefore, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will make this proverb to cease, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel; but say unto them, The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision.' God announces He will silence the mocking saying by fulfilling prophecies. When judgment comes, skeptics will stop quoting their dismissive proverb. The fulfillment will vindicate prophetic warnings.

The phrase 'days are at hand' (qarvu ha-yamim, קָרְבוּ הַיָּמִים) announces imminence—the time is near. The 'effect of every vision' (devar kol-chazon, דְּבַר כָּל־חִזּוֹן, literally 'word of every vision') indicates actual fulfillment. God's patience has limits; when exhausted, judgment swiftly follows. The contrast between 'days are prolonged' (skeptics) and 'days are at hand' (God's response) is stark.

From a Reformed perspective, this verse illustrates God's sovereignty over time and fulfillment. Human mockery doesn't delay or cancel divine purposes. When God determines the time is ripe, judgment comes regardless of skepticism. This warns against presumption and encourages patient trust—God's timing is perfect, neither too early nor too late, accomplishing His purposes optimally.

## Historical Context

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The prophecy was fulfilled within about five years—Ezekiel spoke around 591 BC; Jerusalem fell in 586 BC. The mockers' proverb indeed ceased when the city burned, the temple was destroyed, and the population was killed or exiled. Those who survived understood that prophetic visions hadn't failed but had been precisely fulfilled. Skepticism turned to desperate acknowledgment of prophetic truth, but too late to avoid judgment.

This pattern recurs throughout biblical history. Noah's contemporaries mocked until the flood came (Matthew 24:37-39). Lot's family thought he joked until Sodom's destruction (Genesis 19:14). Jesus warned Jerusalem, which largely rejected Him, then Rome destroyed the city in 70 AD. The pattern warns that scoffing at divine warnings doesn't prevent their fulfillment; it only hardens hearts until judgment.

## Related Passages

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**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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1. How does God's response to mockery demonstrate His sovereignty over human skepticism?
2. What does the transition from 'days are prolonged' to 'days are at hand' teach about God's timing?
3. In what ways should awareness of historical judgment silencing skeptics shape modern response to biblical warnings?

## Interlinear Text

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אֶת	הַשָּׁבַע	תִּי	יְהוָה	אֶדְבָר	י	אֶמַר	כֹּה	אֵלֶיָּהּ	ם	אֶמַר	לְכֹן
H853	to cease	H7673	H3068	the Lord	H136	Tell	H559	H3541	H413	Tell	H3651
וְיִמְשְׁלוּ				וְלֹא יִהְיֶה				וְיִמְשְׁלֵנִי			
H4911				H3808				H2088			
and they shall no more use it as a proverb											
קָרְבוֹ	אֵלֶיָּהּ	ם	וְדַבַּר	אִם	כִּי	בְיִשְׂרָאֵל	ל	עַד	וְ	אֶת	וְ
H7126	are at hand	H413	but say	H518	H3588	in Israel	H3478	H5750	H853		
וְכָל				וְדַבַּר				וְיָמֵינוּ			
H2377				H1697				H3117			
of every vision											
and the effect											
unto them The days											

## Additional Cross-References

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**Joel 2:1** (References Lord): Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand;

**Zephaniah 1:14** (References Lord): The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.

**Matthew 24:34** (Parallel theme): Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

**Ezekiel 18:3** (References God): As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.