

Isaiah 13:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.

Analysis

'Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.' The command to howl (lament with loud wailing) reflects the terror of impending judgment. 'The day of the LORD' is a major prophetic theme—God's intervention in history to judge sin and vindicate righteousness. Here it comes 'as a destruction from the Almighty' (Hebrew: Shaddai). The wordplay is intentional: 'shod' (destruction) from 'Shaddai' (Almighty)—devastating judgment from the all-powerful God. This day is both historical (Babylon's fall) and eschatological (final judgment).

Historical Context

The 'day of the LORD' concept runs throughout Scripture (Joel 2:1; Amos 5:18; Zephaniah 1:14; 2 Peter 3:10). It represents God's definitive intervention to judge evil and establish righteousness. For Babylon, this day came in 539 BC. Yet prophetic language often carries multiple fulfillments—historical and eschatological. The cosmic imagery in verses 10-13 suggests this prophecy points beyond Babylon's fall to final judgment. Reformed theology sees God's historical judgments as previews of final judgment at Christ's return.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How should the reality of 'the day of the LORD' affect how we live today?
2. What is the relationship between historical judgments (like Babylon's fall) and the final day of judgment?

Interlinear Text

בָּקָר וּבָכְרִים יְהִי הַיּוֹם כִּי כַּיְלָל
Howl H3588 is at hand H7138 ye for the day H3117 of the LORD H3068 as a destruction H7701

מִשְׁׁאָה מִשְׁׁאָה
from the Almighty H7706 it shall come H935

Additional Cross-References

Joel 1:15 (References Lord): Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.

Isaiah 13:9 (References Lord): Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.

Amos 5:18 (References Lord): Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you? the day of the LORD is darkness, and not light.

Zephaniah 1:7 (References Lord): Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for the day of the LORD is at hand: for the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests.

Revelation 18:10 (Parallel theme): Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.

Isaiah 2:12 (References Lord): For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low:

Isaiah 34:8 (References Lord): For it is the day of the LORD'S vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.

Jeremiah 51:8 (Parallel theme): Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed.

Joel 2:11 (References Lord): And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?

Isaiah 14:31 (Parallel theme): Howl, O gate; cry, O city; thou, whole Palestina, art dissolved: for there shall come from the north a smoke, and none shall be alone in his appointed times.

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