

Luke 11:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:

Analysis

When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace. Jesus shifts to parabolic imagery, introducing "a strong man armed" (ὁ ἰσχυρὸς καθωπλισμένος, *ho ischyros kathōplismenos*)—fully equipped with weapons and armor. This figure represents Satan, whose "palace" (αὐλή, *aulē*—courtyard, domain) is the world system under his temporary control (2 Corinthians 4:4, 1 John 5:19). His "goods" (ὑπάρχοντα, *huparchonta*—possessions) are demon-oppressed and unregenerate humanity held captive to his will.

The phrase "are in peace" (ἐν εἰρήνῃ ἐστίν, *en eirēnē estin*) contains grim irony—Satan's 'peace' is the false security of undisturbed tyranny. His captives remain 'peaceful' only because no stronger power has challenged his dominion. This describes humanity's pre-gospel state: enslaved to sin, blinded by the god of this world, yet unaware of bondage. The strong man maintains his plunder unopposed until a superior power invades his domain—which is precisely what Jesus' exorcisms accomplish.

Historical Context

The imagery of a fortified stronghold resonated with audiences familiar with military occupation and defended estates. Palestinian society knew both Roman military power and local strongmen who controlled territories. The metaphor portrays Satan's kingdom as an armed fortress requiring violent overthrow, not mere persuasion. This aligns with Jesus' statement that 'the kingdom of heaven

suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force' (Matthew 11:12)—the gospel advances through spiritual warfare, not passive coexistence with evil.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What does Satan's description as an 'armed strong man' teach about the reality and danger of spiritual opposition?
2. How does the false 'peace' of Satan's undisturbed kingdom parallel contemporary spiritual complacency among the unregenerate?
3. In what ways does this imagery challenge pietistic Christianity that underestimates the active, violent nature of spiritual warfare?

Interlinear Text

ὅταν	ὁ	ἰσχυρὸς	καθωπλισμένος	φυλάσσει	τὴν	ἐαυτοῦ
When	G3588	a strong man	armed	keepeth	G3588	palace
G3752		G2478	G2528	G5442		G1438

αὐτῆς	ἐν	εἰρήνῃ	ἐστὶν	τὰ	ὑπάρχοντα	αὐτοῦ.
his	in	peace	are	G3588	goods	his
G833	G1722	G1515	G2076		G5224	G846

Additional Cross-References

Mark 3:27 (Good): No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

Matthew 12:29 (Good): Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

