

Luke 11:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

Analysis

But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

This verse depicts Christ's victory over Satan through vivid military imagery. The phrase "a stronger than he" (ἰσχυρότερος αὐτοῦ, *ischyroteros autou*, comparative adjective) refers to Jesus, whose power infinitely exceeds Satan's. The verb "overcome" (νικήσῃ, *nikēsē*, aorist subjunctive) means to conquer, defeat utterly—complete victory, not stalemate.

The result is total despoiling: the stronger one "taketh from him all his armour" (τὴν πανοπλίαν αὐτοῦ αἶρει, *tēn panoplian autou airei*)—the full armor (πανοπλία, *panoplia*) in which Satan trusted is stripped away, leaving him defenseless. Then He "divideth his spoils" (τὰ σκῦλα αὐτοῦ διαδίδωσιν, *ta skula autou diadidōsin*)—distributes the plunder, liberating Satan's captives. This portrays redemption as conquest: Christ invades enemy territory, defeats the tyrant, and emancipates prisoners. Colossians 2:15 uses identical imagery: Christ 'spoiled principalities and powers, making a shew of them openly, triumphing over them.' Every exorcism is a foretaste of Satan's final defeat (Revelation 20:10).

Historical Context

The parable reflects ancient Near Eastern warfare where victorious armies stripped conquered enemies of weapons and distributed spoils to victors. The

imagery echoes Isaiah 49:24-25: 'Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? But thus saith the LORD, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away... and I will save thy children.' Jesus presents Himself as the fulfillment of this prophecy—the Divine Warrior who liberates captives from the 'strong man.' Early Christians understood salvation as liberation from slavery to sin and Satan (Romans 6:17-18, Hebrews 2:14-15).

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does understanding salvation as Christ's military conquest of Satan deepen appreciation for the costliness of redemption?
2. What does the 'dividing of spoils' (liberated captives) teach about evangelism and discipleship as distributing the fruits of Christ's victory?
3. In what ways does this imagery of total spoiling challenge contemporary views that Satan retains significant power over believers?

Interlinear Text

ἐπὰν	δὲ	ὁ	ἰσχυρότερος	αὐτοῦ	ἐπελθὼν	
when	But	G3588	a stronger	from him	shall come upon him	
G1875	G1161		G2478	G846	G1904	
νικήσῃ	αὐτοῦ	τὴν	πανοπλίαν	αὐτοῦ	αἴρει	ἐφ'
and overcome	from him	G3588	all his armour	from him	he taketh	wherein
G3528	G846		G3833	G846	G142	G1909
ἧ	ἐπεποίθει	καὶ	τὰ	σκῦλα	αὐτοῦ	διαδίδωσιν
G3739	he trusted	and	G3588	spoils	from him	divideth
	G3982	G2532		G4661	G846	G1239

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 53:12 (Parallel theme): Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Genesis 3:15 (Parallel theme): And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Isaiah 27:1 (Parallel theme): In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.

Colossians 2:15 (Parallel theme): And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

1 John 4:4 (Parallel theme): Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

1 John 3:8 (Parallel theme): He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.