

Luke 21:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.

Analysis

But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. Jesus shifts focus from cosmic signs to personal persecution: *pro de toutōn pantōn epibalousin eph' hymas tas cheiras autōn kai diōxousin* (πρὸ δὲ τούτων πάντων ἐπιβαλοῦσιν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς τὰς χεῖρας αὐτῶν καὶ διώξουσιν, 'but before all these things they will lay hands on you and persecute'). The phrase *pro toutōn pantōn* (πρὸ τούτων πάντων, 'before all these') indicates persecution precedes cosmic signs—disciples will suffer before eschatological events unfold.

The persecution includes *paradidontes eis tas synagōgas kai phylakas* (παραδιδόντες εἰς τὰς συναγωγὰς καὶ φυλακάς, 'delivering into synagogues and prisons') and being *apagomenous epi basileis kai hēgemonas* (ἀπαγομένους ἐπὶ βασιλεῖς καὶ ἡγεμόνας, 'led away before kings and governors'). Synagogues represent Jewish persecution; prisons, kings, and governors represent Roman persecution. The cause: *heneken tou onomatos mou* (ἕνεκεν τοῦ ὀνόματος μου, 'for my name's sake'). **Disciples suffer not for crimes but for confessing Christ.** This suffering identifies believers with their persecuted Lord.

Historical Context

This prophecy was fulfilled immediately. Acts records synagogue persecution (Acts 4:1-22, 5:17-42, 6:8-8:3). Paul suffered beatings in synagogues (2 Corinthians 11:24-25). Stephen was stoned (Acts 7). James was executed (Acts 12:1-2). Peter and John were imprisoned multiple times. Paul stood before governors Felix and Festus, King Agrippa, and ultimately Caesar (Acts 23-26). Christian persecution intensified under Nero (AD 64), Domitian (AD 81-96), and later emperors. Early Christians faced martyrdom in arenas, crucifixion, burning, and other brutality. Church history confirms the pattern: believers suffer 'for His name's sake' in every generation. Modern Christians face persecution globally—imprisonment, execution, discrimination—fulfilling Jesus' prophecy continuously.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. Why does Jesus warn that persecution will come 'before all these' cosmic signs, and what does this priority reveal?
2. What does it mean to suffer 'for my name's sake,' and how does this distinguish Christian persecution from ordinary suffering?
3. How should believers prepare spiritually for potential persecution, given Jesus' clear warning that it will come?

Interlinear Text

πρὸ	δὲ	τούτων	ἅπαντων	ἐπιβαλοῦσιν	ἐπὶ	ὕμᾱς	τὰς
before	But	these	all	they shall lay	before	you	G3588
G4253	G1161	G5130	G537	G1911	G1909	G5209	
χεῖρας	αὐτῶν	καὶ	διώξουσιν	παραδιδόντες	εἰς		
hands	G846	and	persecute	you delivering	you up		
G5495		G2532	G1377	G3860	G1519		
συναγωγὰς	καὶ	φυλακάς	ἀγομένους	ἐπὶ	βασιλεῖς	καὶ	
to the synagogues	and	into prisons	being brought	before	kings	and	
G4864	G2532	G5438	G71	G1909	G935	G2532	
ἡγεμόνας	ἕνεκεν	τοῦ	ὀνόματός	μου·			
rulers	for	G3588	name's	my			
G2232	G1752		G3686	G3450			

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org