

Luke 21:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

Analysis

For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. Jesus identifies Jerusalem's destruction as *hēmerai ekdikēseōs* (ἡμέραι ἐκδικήσεως, "days of vengeance")—divine retribution, not random tragedy. The noun *ekdikēsis* (ἐκδίκησις) means judicial punishment, God's righteous judgment executed against covenant-breaking Israel. This isn't vindictive cruelty but holy justice—God keeping His covenant warnings.

The purpose clause *tou plēsthēnai panta ta gegrammena* (τοῦ πλησθῆναι πάντα τὰ γεγραμμένα, "that all things written may be fulfilled") indicates that Jerusalem's fall fulfills Old Testament prophecies. "All things which are written" encompasses Deuteronomy's covenant curses (Deuteronomy 28:49-68—siege, starvation, cannibalism, dispersion), Daniel's prophecy of the city and sanctuary's destruction (Daniel 9:26), and Jeremiah's warnings of Jerusalem's desolation (Jeremiah 7:34). The perfect passive participle *gegrammena* (γεγραμμένα, "having been written") emphasizes Scripture's enduring authority—what God wrote centuries earlier must be fulfilled.

This statement places AD 70 within redemptive history's framework—not accident but divine appointment. Jerusalem rejected her Messiah; this generation bears the accumulated guilt of all who persecuted God's prophets (Luke 11:50-51). The city that killed prophets and stoned messengers (Luke 13:34) now faces covenant judgment. Yet even this judgment serves redemptive purposes—clearing the way for the new covenant age and demonstrating God's faithfulness to His word.

Historical Context

The term "days of vengeance" alludes to passages like Deuteronomy 32:35 ("To me belongeth vengeance") and Jeremiah 5:29 ("Shall I not visit for these things?"). Jerusalem's AD 70 destruction fulfilled specific Old Testament judgments: Moses warned that covenant-breaking would bring siege, starvation, and cannibalism (Deuteronomy 28:52-57)—exactly what Josephus describes happening in AD 70. Daniel prophesied that "the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary" (Daniel 9:26)—fulfilled by Roman legions. Jesus Himself wept over Jerusalem, declaring "your house is left unto you desolate" (Luke 13:35). This generation rejected God's final messenger (Messiah), filling up the measure of their fathers' sins (Matthew 23:31-36).

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does understanding Jerusalem's destruction as covenant judgment rather than random tragedy affect your view of God's justice and faithfulness?
2. What does the meticulous fulfillment of 'all things written' demonstrate about Scripture's reliability and God's sovereign control of history?
3. How should the sobering reality of divine vengeance against covenant-breaking inform Christian faithfulness and reverence for God?

Interlinear Text

ὅτι	ἡμέραι	ἐκδικήσεως	αὗται	εἰσιν	τὰ	πληρωθῆναι
For	the days	of vengeance	these	be	which	may be fulfilled
G3754	G2250	G1557	G3778	G1526	G3588	G4137
πάντα	τὰ	γεγραμμένα				
that all things	which	are written				
G3956	G3588	G1125				

Additional Cross-References

2 Peter 2:9 (Parallel theme): The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

Hosea 9:7 (Parallel theme): The days of visitation are come, the days of recompence are come; Israel shall know it: the prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad, for the multitude of thine iniquity, and the great hatred.

Isaiah 63:4 (Parallel theme): For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.

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

2 Peter 3:7 (Parallel theme): But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

Isaiah 61:2 (Parallel theme): To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

Jeremiah 51:6 (Parallel theme): Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the LORD'S vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence.

Romans 2:5 (Parallel theme): But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

Matthew 1:22 (Parallel theme): Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

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