

Luke 21:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Analysis

And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. Jesus prophesies three specific judgments. First, *pesountai stomati machairēs* (πεσοῦνται στόματι μαχαίρης, "they shall fall by mouth of sword")—massive casualties from military violence. Josephus records over one million Jews killed during the siege. Second, *aichmalōtisthēsontai eis ta ethnē panta* (αἰχμαλωτισθήσονται εἰς τὰ ἔθνη πάντα, "they shall be led captive into all the nations")—not merely local deportation but worldwide dispersion. Rome enslaved survivors and scattered them across the empire.

Third, *Ierousalēm estai patoumenē hypo ethnōn* (Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἔσται πατουμένη ὑπὸ ἐθνῶν, "Jerusalem shall be trampled by Gentiles")—extended Gentile domination. The present passive participle *patoumenē* (πατουμένη, "being trampled") suggests ongoing subjugation. This began with Rome and continued through Byzantine, Arab, Crusader, Mamluk, Ottoman, and British rule—Jerusalem under Gentile control for 1,878 years (AD 70 to 1948, and partially until 1967).

The time limit *achri plērōthōsin kairoi ethnōn* (ἄχρι πληρωθῶσιν καιροὶ ἐθνῶν, "until times of Gentiles be fulfilled") indicates a divinely appointed period. Paul references this in Romans 11:25—"blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the

fulness of the Gentiles be come in." The Gentile age has a terminus; God's plan for Israel isn't finished.

Historical Context

History meticulously fulfilled Jesus' threefold prophecy. Josephus records that 1.1 million Jews died in the siege and 97,000 were enslaved and dispersed throughout the Roman Empire. Jerusalem fell to Rome (AD 70), then changed hands repeatedly: Byzantine Christians controlled it (AD 324-638), Arab Muslims conquered it (638-1099), Crusaders briefly held it (1099-1187), then Mamluks and Ottoman Turks ruled for centuries (1517-1917). British Mandate followed (1917-1948). Jerusalem remained under Gentile control until Israel's 1948 independence, and the Old City wasn't in Jewish hands until the 1967 Six-Day War—a 1,897-year fulfillment of being "trodden down of the Gentiles." Reformed interpreters debate whether 1948/1967 marks the end of 'times of the Gentiles' or if this awaits Christ's return.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What does the precise historical fulfillment of Jesus' three predictions (sword, captivity, Gentile trampling) demonstrate about His prophetic authority?
2. How does the concept of 'times of the Gentiles' inform understanding of God's sovereign control over history and His faithfulness to Israel?
3. What is the relationship between Israel's restoration and the church's mission to the Gentiles in God's redemptive plan?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	πεσοῦνται	στόματι	μαχαίρας	καὶ	αἰχμαλωτισθήσονται		
And	they shall fall	by the edge	of the sword	And	shall be led away captive		
G2532	G4098	G4750	G3162	G2532	G163		
εἰς	πάντα	τὰ	ἔθνων	καὶ	Ἱερουσαλήμ	ἔσται	πατουμένη
into	all	G3588	nations	And	Jerusalem	shall be	trodden down
G1519	G3956		G1484	G2532	G2419	G2071	G3961
ὑπὸ	ἔθνων	ἄχρι	πληρωθῶσιν	καιροὶ	ἔθνων		
of	nations	until	be fulfilled	the times	nations		
G5259	G1484	G891	G4137	G2540	G1484		

Additional Cross-References

Romans 11:25 (Parallel theme): For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

Revelation 11:2 (Parallel theme): But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.

Isaiah 63:18 (Parallel theme): The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.

Daniel 12:7 (Parallel theme): And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.

Isaiah 5:5 (Parallel theme): And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down:

Daniel 9:27 (Parallel theme): And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to

cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

Daniel 8:13 (Parallel theme): Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?

Isaiah 66:19 (Parallel theme): And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.

Malachi 1:11 (Parallel theme): For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.

Lamentations 1:15 (Parallel theme): The Lord hath trodden under foot all my mighty men in the midst of me: he hath called an assembly against me to crush my young men: the Lord hath trodden the virgin, the daughter of Judah, as in a winepress.