

Mark 13:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,

Analysis

But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light—Jesus quotes Isaiah 13:10 and Joel 2:31, employing apocalyptic imagery (Greek: apokalypsis, unveiling) to describe cosmic upheaval. The phrase *meta tēn thlipsis ekeinēn* (μετὰ τὴν θλῖψιν ἐκείνην, 'after that tribulation') links this cosmic shaking to the judgment on Jerusalem described in verses 14-23. In Jewish apocalyptic literature, celestial disturbances symbolize the collapse of political powers—the 'sun' often represented ruling authority, the 'moon' subordinate powers.

While some interpreters see purely symbolic language for AD 70's destruction, others recognize a dual fulfillment: the Roman siege prefiguring Christ's final parousia (παρουσία, coming/presence). The darkening of luminaries echoes Exodus 10:21-23, where God's judgment on Egypt brought darkness—now cosmic darkness precedes the Son of Man's appearing in glory (v. 26).

Historical Context

Mark wrote circa AD 65-70, just before or during the Roman siege of Jerusalem. His Jewish-Christian audience would immediately recognize these images from Isaiah, Joel, and Ezekiel—prophets who used cosmic language to describe historical judgments. First-century apocalyptic expectation was intense; the Qumran community (Dead Sea Scrolls) anticipated similar upheavals accompanying God's intervention.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing apocalyptic language as symbolic political imagery affect your interpretation of end-times prophecy?
2. What does the dual fulfillment pattern (AD 70 and final judgment) teach about how God works in history?
3. In what ways do current political upheavals remind you that human kingdoms are temporary before Christ's eternal reign?

Interlinear Text

ἀλλ' ἐν ἐκείνην ταῖς ἡμέραις μετὰ τὴν θλῖψιν
But in that days after tribulation

G235 G1722 G1565 G3588 G2250 G3326 G3588 G2347

ἐκείνην ὁ ἥλιος σκοτισθήσεται καὶ ἡ σελήνη οὐ
that the sun shall be darkened and the moon not

G1565 G3588 G2246 G4654 G2532 G3588 G4582 G3756

δώσει τὸ φέγγος αὐτῆς
give light

G1325 G3588 G5338 G846

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 13:10 (Light): For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

2 Peter 3:10 (Parallel theme): But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the

elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

Amos 5:20 (Light): Shall not the day of the LORD be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?

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