

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 thlipsin ekeinēn* (μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν 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	θλίψιν
But G235	in G1722	that G1565	G3588	days G2250	after G3326	G3588	tribulation G2347
ἐκείνην	ὅ	ἥλιος	σκοτισθήσεται	καὶ	ἡ	σελήνη	οὐ
that G1565	G3588	the sun G2246	shall be darkened G4654	and G2532	G3588	the moon G4582	not G3756
δώσει	τὸ	φέγγος	αὐτῆς				
give G1325	G3588	light 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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