

Matthew 23:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

Analysis

Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers (πληρώσατε τὸ μέτρον τῶν πατέρων ὑμῶν)—plērōsate can be imperative ("fill up!") or predictive ("you will fill up"). Both senses apply: Jesus prophetically announces what they will do while their hardened wills make it effectively a command they'll fulfill. Metron (measure) evokes God's appointed limit of sin before judgment falls (Genesis 15:16; 1 Thessalonians 2:16).

Their ancestors murdered prophets; they will murder the Son of God—completing the full measure of covenant-breaking rebellion. Daniel 9:24 prophesied finishing transgression before Messiah's cutting off. The crucifixion would both atone for sin and complete the measure of Israel's rejection, triggering AD 70 judgment. God's patience has limits; there is a "full measure" after which judgment becomes inevitable.

Historical Context

God's "measure" of patience with Israel had been filling for centuries through repeated prophetic rejection. Northern Kingdom filled their measure by 722 BC (Assyrian exile). Southern Kingdom by 586 BC (Babylonian exile). Now the reconstituted nation would fill the final measure by crucifying Messiah. Jesus spoke Tuesday of Passion Week—by Friday they would accomplish it. AD 70 would bring the prophesied judgment—temple destruction, Jerusalem's devastation, national dispersion lasting until 1948.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does the concept of a "measure" of sin that can be "filled up" challenge presumption on God's patience?
2. What sins might you be accumulating toward a "full measure" that will eventually trigger inescapable consequences?
3. How does Jesus's prophecy that the Pharisees would complete their fathers' rebellion demonstrate both divine foreknowledge and human responsibility?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ὑμεῖς	πληρώσατε	τὸ	μέτρον	τῶν	πατέρων	ὑμῶν
then	ye		Fill	G3588	the measure	G3588	fathers
G2532	G5210		G4137		G3358		G3962
							of your
							G5216

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 15:16 (Parallel theme): But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

Numbers 32:14 (Parallel theme): And, behold, ye are risen up in your fathers' stead, an increase of sinful men, to augment yet the fierce anger of the LORD toward Israel.