

Matthew 24:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

Analysis

Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened—

This cosmic upheaval language (thlipsis, θλῖψις = tribulation/pressure) draws directly from Isaiah 13:10, 34:4, Joel 2:10, 31, and echoes throughout Jewish apocalyptic. The sun (hēlios, ἥλιος), moon (selēnē, σελήνη), and stars (asteres, ἀστέρες) represent created authorities collapsing before the Creator's glory.

The powers of the heavens shall be shaken (dynameis, δυνάμεις)—not merely celestial bodies, but spiritual powers and earthly kingdoms. This is theophanic language: God's appearing disrupts all created order. Whether literal cosmological events or apocalyptic metaphor for political collapse, the meaning is clear—human power structures dissolve when the King arrives.

Historical Context

Isaiah and Joel used identical cosmic imagery to describe historical judgments on Babylon and locust plagues. First-century Jews would recognize this as covenant lawsuit language—God vindicating His people by overthrowing oppressors. The 'tribulation' likely references both the Roman destruction of Jerusalem (AD 70) and future tribulation before Christ's final return.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does Old Testament apocalyptic language help you understand Jesus's prophecy without demanding wooden literalism?
2. What 'powers of the heavens'—cultural authorities, institutions, ideologies—do you see being shaken in our time?
3. How does the cosmic scope of Christ's return reshape your view of His sovereignty over all creation?

Interlinear Text

Εὐθέως δὲ μετὰ τὴν θλῖψιν τῶν ἡμερῶν
G2112 Immediately after the tribulation G3588 G2250 days
G1161 G3326 G2347 G3588 G2250

ἐκείνων ὁ ἥλιος σκοτισθήσεται καὶ ἡ σελήνη οὐ
of those shall the sun be darkened and the moon not
G1565 G3588 G2246 G4654 G2532 G3588 G4582 G3756

δώσει τὸ φέγγος αὐτῆς καὶ οἱ ἀστέρες πεσοῦνται
give light and the stars shall fall
G1325 G3588 G5338 G846 G2532 G3588 G792 G4098

ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανῶν καὶ αἱ δυνάμεις τῶν οὐρανῶν
from heaven and the powers heaven
G575 G3588 G3772 G2532 G1411 G3588 G3772

σαλευθήσονται
shall be shaken
G4531

Additional Cross-References

Amos 8:9 (Darkness): And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day:

Joel 3:15 (Darkness): The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.

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.

Isaiah 24:23 (Parallel theme): Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.

Isaiah 34:4 (Parallel theme): And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree.

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.

Revelation 8:12 (Darkness): And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

Joel 2:10 (Darkness): The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining:

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