

Romans 9:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness:
because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.

Analysis

For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth—the syntax is complex, quoting Isaiah 10:22-23 (LXX). Logon gar syntelōn kai syntemnōn (λόγον γὰρ συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων): 'for a word/work accomplishing and cutting short.' God's judgment is swift and decisive. En dikaiosynē (ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, 'in righteousness') emphasizes justice—God's decimation of Israel (whether Assyrian exile or AD 70 destruction) was righteous judgment on sin.

The 'short work' (suntetmēmenon, συντετμημένον) suggests sudden execution of long-threatened judgment. God's patience endures, then judgment falls swiftly. The remnant survives not by merit but by grace. This prepares for 11:5: 'at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.' God's purpose stands despite widespread unbelief—he preserves his chosen ones.

Historical Context

Isaiah's immediate context was Assyrian invasion (722 BC). Paul sees typological fulfillment in AD 70 when Rome destroyed Jerusalem—swift, decisive, righteous judgment on apostate Israel. Yet a remnant (the Christian church) survived. God's word accomplishes his purpose (Isaiah 55:11).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does God's 'cutting short' the work demonstrate both justice (swift judgment) and mercy (sparing the remnant)?
2. What does 'in righteousness' teach about God's judgment on unbelieving Israel?
3. How does the sudden execution of judgment after long patience display God's character?

Interlinear Text

λόγον	γὰρ	συντελῶν	καὶ	συντετμημένον	ἐν	δικαιοσυνῇ
the work	For	he will finish	and	a short	in	righteousness
G3056	G1063	G4931	G2532	G4932	G1722	G1343
ὅτι	λόγον	συντετμημένον	ποιήσῃ	κύριος	ἐπὶ	τῆς
because	the work	a short	make	the Lord	upon	G3588
G3754	G3056	G4932	G4160	G2962	G1909	
γῆς						
the earth						
G1093						

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 10:23 (References Lord): For the Lord GOD of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land.

Revelation 19:11 (Righteousness): And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

Acts 17:31 (Righteousness): Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

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