

Zechariah 14:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.

Analysis

Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. This apocalyptic opening summons attention with the imperative hinneh (הִנֵּה, "behold")—alertness is required for what follows. "**The day of the LORD**" (yom-Yahweh, יוֹם־יְהוָה) is Scripture's most important eschatological concept, occurring throughout the prophets (Joel 2:1, Amos 5:18, Zephaniah 1:14) to describe God's final intervention in history—a day of both judgment on the wicked and salvation for His people.

"Thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee" (ve-chullaq shelalekh be-qirbek) depicts Jerusalem plundered by invaders who arrogantly divide their spoils within the city itself. The passive voice "shall be divided" indicates God's sovereign permission—this invasion isn't merely political but theological. Yet this dark opening sets up divine reversal: though enemies plunder Jerusalem, God will intervene (verse 3) and establish His kingdom (verse 9). The pattern echoes Joel 3:1-2 and Revelation 16:14-16's Armageddon gathering.

This "day" has both near and far fulfillment. Historically, Jerusalem faced multiple sackings (Babylonian 586 BC, Roman 70 AD, 135 AD), each partial fulfillment. The ultimate fulfillment awaits Christ's return when nations gather against Jerusalem before Messiah's visible appearance (Revelation 19:19-21). The day brings terror for God's enemies but hope for His people—those who call on the name of the LORD will be saved (Joel 2:32, quoted by Peter at Pentecost, Acts 2:21).

Historical Context

Zechariah prophesied during post-exilic restoration (520-518 BC), but chapter 14 transcends his immediate context, describing end-times events. The "day of the LORD" concept developed through Israel's prophets as they saw God's interventions in history (Exodus deliverance, Assyrian/Babylonian judgments) as patterns of His final, climactic intervention. Early Christian interpretation saw Jerusalem's 70 AD destruction as typological fulfillment, but the passage's cosmic scope (Mount of Olives splitting, supernatural light, living waters) demands eschatological consummation at Christ's second advent. Jesus's Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21) draws heavily on Zechariah 14, as does Revelation's depiction of final battle and new creation.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing the 'day of the LORD' as both judgment and salvation shape your understanding of Christ's return?
2. What comfort does this passage offer when God's people face overwhelming opposition and apparent defeat?
3. How should the certainty of God's ultimate victory affect your present faithfulness during times when evil seems triumphant?

Interlinear Text

הַיּוֹם
H2009 **Behold the day**
 H3117

בְּאָמָר
H935 **cometh**

לִיהְיוֹת
H3068 **of the LORD**

וְיִחְלֹל
H2505 **shall be divided**

שְׁלָל
H7998 **and thy spoil**

בְּמִצְרָבָה:

in the midst

H7130

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 13:9 (References Lord): Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.

Isaiah 2:12 (References Lord): For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low:

Revelation 16:14 (Parallel theme): For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

Isaiah 13:6 (References Lord): Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.

Acts 2:20 (References Lord): The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

Malachi 4:1 (References Lord): For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.