

2 Timothy 4:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works:

Analysis

Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works. Paul warns about a dangerous opponent. "Alexander the coppersmith" (Alexandros ho chalkeus, Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ χαλκεύς)—chalkeus (χαλκεύς) means metalworker, possibly coppersmith, blacksmith, or bronze-worker. Paul identifies him specifically, probably same Alexander mentioned in 1 Timothy 1:20 as shipwrecked in faith and handed over to Satan. "Did me much evil" (polla moi kaka enedeixato, πολλά μοι κακὰ ἐνεδείξατο)—endeiknymi (ἐνδείκνυμι) means show, display, demonstrate. Alexander actively displayed much evil toward Paul, likely including false accusations leading to Paul's arrest and condemnation.

"The Lord reward him according to his works" (apodōsē autō ho kyrios kata ta erga autou, ἀποδώσῃ αὐτῷ ὁ κύριος κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ). This isn't vindictive curse but confident assertion of divine justice. Apodidōmi (ἀποδίδωμι) means repay, render, give what is due. Paul commits vengeance to God (Romans 12:19), trusting the righteous Judge to repay Alexander justly. This reflects Psalm 28:4 and Jeremiah 17:10. Paul doesn't seek personal revenge but warns Timothy about Alexander's danger and affirms God's justice.

Some manuscripts read "may the Lord repay" (optative mood, prayer), others "will repay" (future indicative, prediction). Either way, Paul leaves judgment to God while warning others. Naming Alexander serves protective purpose—believers must be warned about dangerous false teachers and enemies of gospel. Love

doesn't require naivety about people's character or intentions. Spiritual discernment recognizes threats and warns others while leaving ultimate judgment to God.

Historical Context

Alexander possibly testified against Paul at his trial, providing evidence leading to condemnation. As coppersmith, he may have made idols (like Demetrius in Acts 19:24-27), giving him financial and religious motivation to oppose Christianity. Whatever his specific actions, he clearly opposed Paul vigorously, causing significant harm. Ancient honor-shame culture made slander and false accusations particularly damaging. Paul's warning helps Timothy and churches recognize and avoid this dangerous man. Church history records many "Alexanders"—opponents who caused immense harm to believers and gospel advancement.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. When others harm you, do you seek personal revenge or commit vengeance to God, trusting His righteous judgment?
2. How can you balance forgiving those who harm you with warning others about genuinely dangerous people who threaten believers or gospel?
3. Who are contemporary 'Alexanders' opposing truth and harming believers that churches should recognize and avoid?

Interlinear Text

Ἀλέξανδρος	ὁ	χαλκεὺς	πολλά	μοι	κακὰ	ἐνεδείξατο·
Alexander	G3588	the coppersmith	much	me	evil	did
G223		G5471	G4183	G3427	G2556	G1731
ἀποδῶν	αὐτοῦ·	ὁ	κύριος	κατὰ	τὰ	ἔργα αὐτοῦ·
reward	him	G3588	the Lord	according to	G3588	works him
G591	G846		G2962	G2596		G2041 G846

Additional Cross-References

1 Timothy 1:20 (Parallel theme): Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

2 Thessalonians 1:6 (Parallel theme): Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;

Psalms 28:4 (Evil): Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert.

1 Samuel 24:12 (References Lord): The LORD judge between me and thee, and the LORD avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

Revelation 18:6 (Parallel theme): Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

Psalms 62:12 (References Lord): Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work.

2 Samuel 3:39 (Evil): And I am this day weak, though anointed king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah be too hard for me: the LORD shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness.

Revelation 6:10 (References Lord): And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

Revelation 18:20 (Parallel theme): Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

1 John 5:16 (Parallel theme): If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

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