

2 Timothy 4:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

Analysis

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

Paul explains the urgency behind his charge—his life is ending. "For I am now ready to be offered" (εγὼ γὰρ ἤδη σπένδομαι, ἐγὼ γὰρ ἤδη σπένδομαι). Spendō (σπένδω) means pour out as drink offering—sacrificial language from Levitical worship where wine was poured out on altar (Numbers 15:1-10). Paul views his impending martyrdom as sacrifice offered to God. Present tense with ἤδη (ἤδη, "already") indicates the pouring has begun—his life is being offered up.

"The time of my departure is at hand" (ὁ καιρὸς τῆς ἐμεῆς ἀναλύσεως ἐφέστηκεν, ὁ καιρὸς τῆς ἐμῆς ἀναλύσεως ἐφέστηκεν). Kairos (καιρός) means appointed time, decisive moment. Analusis (ἀνάλυσις) means departure, release, loosing—used of ships loosing anchor to sail, soldiers breaking camp, prisoners being released. Paul views death not as annihilation but departure to better destination. Perfect tense ephestēken (ἐφέστηκεν) means has arrived and stands ready—execution is imminent.

This verse reveals Paul's perspective on martyrdom: peaceful acceptance, not bitter resignation. He doesn't rage against injustice or lament wasted potential but embraces death as sacrificial offering and joyful departure. This peace stems from confidence in resurrection (Philippians 1:21-23). Paul models Christian dying—viewing death as enemy conquered by Christ, gateway to glory, not ultimate tragedy. His calm testimony encouraged countless martyrs throughout church history.

Historical Context

Paul writes from Roman prison circa AD 67, during Neronian persecution. Nero blamed Christians for Rome's fire (AD 64), initiating systematic persecution including torture and public executions. Paul, as Roman citizen, would face beheading rather than crucifixion or burning. Tradition places his martyrdom on Ostian Way outside Rome. The drink offering imagery resonated with readers familiar with temple sacrifices. Paul had earlier used same metaphor (Philippians 2:17), but there speculatively; here with certainty. His imminent death makes the letter's urgency understandable—final words of dying apostle.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Paul's peaceful acceptance of impending martyrdom challenge or encourage your own attitude toward suffering and death?
2. Do you view death as enemy to fear or as 'departure' to be with Christ, which is 'far better' (Philippians 1:23)?
3. How can viewing life as offering poured out to God change your daily priorities and willingness to suffer for Christ?

Interlinear Text

Ἐγὼ	γὰρ	ἡδη	σπένδομαι	καὶ	ό	καιρὸς	τῆς	ἐμῆς
I	For	now	am	and	G3588	the time	G3588	of my
G1473	G1063	G2235	G4689	G2532		G2540		G1699

ἀναλύσεώς ἐφέστηκεν

departure is at hand

G359

G2186

Additional Cross-References

Philippians 1:23 (Parallel theme): For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

Philippians 2:17 (Parallel theme): Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

Genesis 48:21 (Parallel theme): And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die: but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers.

Joshua 23:14 (Parallel theme): And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.

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