

Mark 4:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

Analysis

Jesus concludes parable: 'But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.' Mature grain demands harvesting—delay means loss. 'Immediately' ($\epsilon\beta\theta\bar{\nu}\zeta$) indicates urgent action when grain ripens. The 'sickle' ($\delta\beta\acute{e}\mu\alpha\nu$) represents judgment/gathering at kingdom consummation. This connects to Joel 3:13 and Revelation 14:15—harvest imagery for final judgment. While growth is gradual, harvest comes suddenly. The parable balances patient trust during growth with urgency at harvest. Believers can't control growth's timing but must act decisively when fruit ripens—evangelistically (gathering harvest) and eschatologically (prepared for Christ's return).

Historical Context

Palestinian harvest required quick action once grain matured—delays meant loss to weather, birds, or theft. Whole communities participated in urgent harvest work. Jesus' audience understood agricultural urgency. The Old Testament frequently uses harvest imagery for judgment (Joel 3:13; Isaiah 27:12; Jeremiah 51:33). Jesus applies this to kingdom: current age is growth period; His return brings final harvest. Early church lived with eschatological urgency—Maranatha ('Come, Lord') expressed longing. Church history alternates between healthy anticipation and unhealthy date-setting or neglect of Christ's return.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does understanding growth's gradual pace and harvest's sudden urgency shape your spiritual priorities?
2. What does this parable teach about balancing patient trust with urgent action?
3. How prepared are you for Christ's return—the final 'sickle' gathering believers?

Interlinear Text

ὅταν δὲ παραδῷ ὁ καρπός εὐθέως ἀποστέλλει
when But is brought forth the fruit immediately he putteth in
G3752 G1161 G3860 G3588 G2590 G2112 G649

τὸ δρέπανον ὅτι παρέστηκεν ὁ θερισμός
the sickle because is come the harvest
G3588 G1407 G3754 G3936 G3588 G2326

Additional Cross-References

Joel 3:13 (Parallel theme): Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great.

Matthew 13:30 (Parallel theme): Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

