

Revelation 11:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

Analysis

And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them... This verse from Revelation's vision of two witnesses and seventh trumpet - faithful testimony, Christ's kingdom proclaimed employs apocalyptic imagery rich with Old Testament allusions and symbolic meaning. The Greek text uses vivid apocalyptic language characteristic of Jewish prophetic literature, drawing heavily from Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Zechariah.

The symbolism must be interpreted within its first-century context while recognizing timeless spiritual realities. The imagery would resonate powerfully with persecuted believers facing Roman imperial cult worship, providing hope that despite present suffering, Christ reigns sovereign and will consummate His kingdom. The apocalyptic genre uses symbolic numbers (seven, twelve, 144,000), colors, beasts, and cosmic imagery to convey theological truth rather than photographic descriptions.

Christologically, Revelation consistently exalts Jesus as the victorious Lamb, the faithful witness, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Every vision ultimately points

to Christ's supremacy, His finished redemptive work, and His certain return to judge the living and dead and establish the new creation.

Historical Context

John received this revelation circa AD 95 during Domitian's persecution, exiled on Patmos for his testimony. The seven churches of Asia Minor faced increasing pressure to participate in emperor worship and pagan religious practices. Refusal meant economic hardship, social ostracism, and potential martyrdom. Understanding this context illuminates Revelation's encouragement to faithful endurance.

The apocalyptic genre was familiar to first-century Jewish and Christian readers. Rather than newspaper-style predictions, apocalyptic literature uses symbolic imagery to reveal spiritual realities behind earthly events, encourage the faithful, warn the unfaithful, and assert God's ultimate sovereignty over history. Parallels with Daniel, Ezekiel, and intertestamental apocalyptic writings would help original readers decode the symbols.

Rome's imperial cult demanded worship of Caesar as divine, placing Christians in impossible situations—compromise their faith or face persecution. Revelation identifies Rome as "Babylon" and assures believers that despite appearances, the Lamb conquered through His death and resurrection, and all earthly kingdoms will submit to His reign.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 11:18 reveal God's character, particularly His sovereignty, holiness, and justice?
2. What specific encouragement or warning does this verse offer for maintaining faithful Christian witness amid cultural pressure?
3. How does this passage point to Christ's victory and the hope of new creation, and how should that shape your present priorities?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	τὰ	ἔθνη	ώργισθησαν	καὶ	ἥλθεν	ἡ	όργη	σου
And	G3588	the nations		And	is come	G3588	wrath	thy
G2532		G1484		G2532	G2064		G3709	G4675
καὶ	ό	καιρὸς	τῶν	νεκρῶν		κριθῆναι		καὶ
And	G3588	the time	G3588	of the dead		that they should be judged		And
G2532		G2540		G3498		G2919		G2532
δοῦναι			τὸν	μισθὸν	τοῖς	δούλοις	σου	τοῖς
that thou shouldest give			G3588	reward	G3588	servants	thy	G3588
G1325				G3408		G1401	G4675	
προφήταις	καὶ	τοῖς	ἀγίοις	καὶ	τοῖς	φοβουμένοις	τὸ	
the prophets	And	G3588	to the saints	And	G3588	them that fear		G3588
G4396		G2532		G40	G2532		G5399	
ὄνομά	σου	τοῖς	μικροῖς	καὶ	τοῖς	μεγάλοις,	καὶ	
name	thy	G3588	small	And	G3588	great	And	
G3686		G4675	G3398	G2532		G3173	G2532	
διαφθείροντας	τοὺς	διαφθείροντας	τὴν	γῆν				
shouldest destroy	G3588	shouldest destroy	G3588	the earth				
G1311		G1311		G1093				

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 19:5 (Parallel theme): And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

Revelation 20:12 (Judgment): And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

Revelation 13:10 (Holy): He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

Revelation 22:12 (Parallel theme): And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

Psalms 103:11 (Parallel theme): For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

Revelation 15:7 (Judgment): And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.

Revelation 15:1 (Judgment): And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

Revelation 14:10 (Judgment): The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

Hebrews 9:27 (Judgment): And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

Psalms 2:5 (Judgment): Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.