

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 ὠργίσθησαν καὶ ἦλθεν ἡ ὀργή σου
And ^{G3588} **the nations** ^{G1484} **were angry** ^{G3710} **And** ^{G2532} **is come** ^{G2064} ^{G3588} **wrath** ^{G3709} **thy** ^{G4675}

καὶ ὁ καιρὸς τῶν νεκρῶν κριθῆναι καὶ
And ^{G3588} **the time** ^{G2540} ^{G3588} **of the dead** **that they should be judged** ^{G2919} **And** ^{G2532}

δοῦναι τὸν μισθὸν τοῖς δούλοις σου τοῖς
that thou shouldest give ^{G1325} ^{G3588} **reward** ^{G3408} ^{G3588} **servants** ^{G1401} **thy** ^{G4675} ^{G3588}

προφήταις καὶ τοῖς ἁγίοις καὶ τοῖς φοβουμένοις τὸ
the prophets ^{G4396} **And** ^{G2532} ^{G3588} **to the saints** ^{G40} **And** ^{G2532} ^{G3588} **them that fear** ^{G5399} ^{G3588}

ὄνομά σου τοῖς μικροῖς καὶ τοῖς μεγάλοις, καὶ
name ^{G3686} **thy** ^{G4675} ^{G3588} **small** ^{G3398} **And** ^{G2532} ^{G3588} **great** ^{G3173} **And** ^{G2532}

διαφθείροντας τοὺς διαφθείροντας τὴν γῆν
shouldest destroy ^{G1311} ^{G3588} **shouldest destroy** ^{G1311} ^{G3588} **the earth** ^{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.