

Revelation 14:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

Analysis

The angel from the altar who has power over fire commanding the grape harvest connects judgment to prayers of martyred saints (6:9-11). The altar represents intercession; fire symbolizes both judgment and refining. This angel's authority over fire suggests he executes the judgment that answers martyrs' prayers for vindication. The command to 'gather the clusters of the vine' represents collecting the wicked for wrath. The vine's full ripeness indicates sin reaching its measure (Genesis 15:16). Reformed theology affirms that God's justice, though patient, is certain—He will fully answer His people's prayers for vindication.

Historical Context

Altar imagery recalled both incense (prayers) and sacrifice (atonement) in temple worship. Fire from the altar destroyed Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10:1-2), showing judgment's connection to God's holiness. The grape harvest timing ('fully ripe') demonstrated that God waits until iniquity is complete before judgment—patience, not negligence, delays wrath.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does connecting judgment to the altar (prayers of saints) encourage you that God will vindicate His people?
2. What does the vineyard's full ripeness teach about why God sometimes delays judgment while allowing evil to continue?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἄλλος ἄγγελος ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου
And another angel came out from the altar

ἔχοντι ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τοῦ πυρός καὶ ἐφώνησεν
to him that had power over fire And cried

κραυγῇ μεγάλῃ τῷ ἔχοντι τὸ δρέπανον τὸ ὄξὺ
cry with a loud to him that had sickle sharp

λέγων, Πέμψον σου τὸ δρέπανον τὸ ὄξὺ καὶ
saying Thrust in thy sickle sharp And

τρύγησον τοὺς βότρυας τῆς ἀμπέλου τῆς
gather the clusters G1009 G288 G3588

γῆς, ὅτι ἥκμασαν αἱ σταφυλαὶ αὐτῆς
of the vine of the earth for are fully ripe G187 G3588 grapes her

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.

Revelation 16:8 (Parallel theme): And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.

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