

Revelation 9:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

Analysis

The announcement that one woe is past with two more coming creates dramatic tension and emphasizes escalating judgments. The Greek 'ouai' (woe) pronounces divine curse and impending calamity. This structure reveals judgment's progressive intensification—resistance to earlier warnings brings more severe consequences. Reformed theology affirms that God's judgments are both just and merciful; each stage offers opportunity for repentance before more severe judgment. The 'behold' heightens urgency, warning that worse follows for the impenitent. God's patience has limits.

Historical Context

The three-woe structure (announced in 8:13) organizes the trumpet judgments, building dramatic intensity. Ancient audiences familiar with prophetic literature recognized such pronouncements as harbingers of divine action. The progression warned that partial judgments, if ignored, would culminate in complete destruction—a pattern seen in Egypt's plagues and Jerusalem's fall.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How should the reality of escalating judgments affect your response to God's present warnings through Scripture and conscience?
2. What does the progression of woes teach about God's patience and the danger of presuming on His mercy?

Interlinear Text

Ἡ	οὐαὶ	ἡ	μία	ἀπῆλθεν·	ἰδοὺ,	ἔρχονται	ἔτι	δύο
G3588	woe	G3588	G1520	is past	and behold	there come	more	two
	G3759			G565	G2400	G2064	G2089	G1417

οὐαὶ	μετὰ	ταῦτα
woe	hereafter	G5023
G3759	G3326	

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 11:14 (Parallel theme): The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.