

The Attackers: Paul's Statement in 2 Tim 4:14b Indicates that Alexander Will Experience the Sin unto Death; God Protects Faithful Communicators, Isa 54:17; the Ramifications of Judging Others, Matt 7:1–2; the Honor Code Forbids Revenge while Vengeance Is Imposed by the Lord, Rom 12:19

8. Alexander's conspiracy against Paul has culminated in machination: the process of overthrowing authority. Paul refers to the attacks as "many categories of evil against me."
9. However, God is ready to transfer Paul into eternity and has allowed Alexander to enjoy a Pyrrhic victory: achieved at excessive cost; costly to the point of negating or outweighing expected benefits.¹
10. Once Paul is executed, Alexander entered into the final stages of the sin unto death. This is brought out by the future active indicative of the verb ἀποδίδωμι (*apodidōmi*): "To do something which one should in fulfillment of an obligation." More particularly "to repay in the form of reward or punishment": to each according to his works, 2 Timothy 4:14.²
11. In this case the Lord will repay Alexander in the form of punishment. Divine retribution to Alexander is in the decree. It did not occur historically until after he had testified before Nero's court.
12. The verb is a predictive future tense. By virtue of the fact that Paul's statement is in the canon under the direction of the Holy Spirit means that it is in effect a prophecy.
13. The active voice indicates that Jesus Christ will produce the action of the verb by initiating divine discipline against Alexander.
14. The indicative mood means that this statement takes the force of a prophecy of a future event whose certainty is confirmed by Holy Spirit.
15. PRINCIPLE: Biblical prophecy is not a look *into* the future *predicting* what will occur, but rather a look back *from* the future and *reporting* what does occur.
16. The reason for the imposition of this punishment is expressed by the noun ἔργον (*érgon*): "with reference to his deeds."

2 Timothy 4:14 - Alexander Coppersmith demonstrated many categories of evil to me. The Lord shall pay him back with reference to his deeds.

Principles:

1. Alexander Coppersmith has not only challenged a member of the royal family of God but also the greatest apostle of the Church Age.
2. Jesus Christ commissioned Ananias of Damascus to inform Paul of his selection in Acts 9:15.
3. As long as a communicator of the Word of God – apostle, prophet, pastor-teacher, or evangelist – is faithful, God will protect that man in an extraordinary way:

¹ Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed., s.v.: "Pyrrhic."

² Friedrich Büchsel, "ἀποδίδωμι," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), 2:167.

Isaiah 54:17 - "No weapon that is formed against you will prosper; and every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their vindication is from Me," declares the Lord.

4. No believer, let alone an unbeliever, has the freedom to malign or judge anyone with a communication gift. To do so invites the personal wrath of God.
5. This Epistle is written to Timothy who is the pastor-teacher in the church at Ephesus. The next verse alerts him to be on guard for Alexander's shenanigans.
6. However, verse 14 makes it clear to Timothy that neither he nor anyone in the church at Ephesus is to engage in a personal vendetta against Alexander Coppersmith.
7. Paul makes it clear that after he dies the Lord will deal with Alexander and therefore no one should take vengeance in his own hands, a principle he incorporated earlier in the royal family honor code:

Romans 12:19 - Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. (NASB)

Matthew 7:1 - Do not judge so that you will not be judged.

v. 2 - For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. (NASB)

8. PRINCIPLE: Stay out of the way of the Lord's justice. Those who lust to execute punishment upon their enemies will remove the discipline planned for them and have it redirected upon them.
9. Although Paul's warning is to those who might malign or judge men with communication gifts, the principle holds for those who abuse any member of the royal family; the discipline is just not as great.
10. In addition, Paul implores believers in Ephesus not to take out vengeance for his death on Alexander.
11. The point of reference for believers has always been and, until the Rapture of the church, will continue to be the justice of God.
12. We are not to go where even angels fear to tread. We must never assume that we have the liberty to intervene between the justice of God and a perceived adversary.
13. Paul continues by simply warning Timothy to be alert with discernment and wisdom:

2 Timothy 4:15 - Be on guard against him yourself, for he vigorously opposed our teaching. (NASB)

1. This verse opens with the present middle imperative of the verb **φυλάσσω (phulássō)**: "to be on one's guard; to be wary; recommends cunning and watchful prudence in detecting and escaping danger; to be alert."
2. The present tense is iterative describing action which recurs at successive intervals, sometimes called the present of repeated action.
3. The middle voice is indirect which indicates that Timothy is to produce the action of the verb as an agent.

4. Paul's warning is that since Alexander has treated him so spitefully, Timothy should remain in condition red alert toward him.
5. The imperative mood is a direct command to Timothy to teach doctrine to the next generation while being on guard against Alexander Coppersmith types.
6. Why Timothy is to be alert to Alexander's facilitated behavior patterns is stated next beginning with the adverb **λίαν (lian)**: "greatly; extremely."
7. This adverb is associated with the verb that precedes it. That verb is *phulássō*: "to be alert." The adverb stresses what level Timothy's alertness should reach; he should be "extremely alert."
8. The reason Timothy should be wary of Alexander is mentioned next and introduced by the explanatory use of the conjunction **γάρ (gár)**: "for."
9. This is followed by the aorist active indicative of the verb **ἀντίστημι (anthístēmi)**: "he resisted."
10. The aorist is constative which gathers up the action of Alexander's resistance in its entirety but views it as a single whole.
11. The constative aorist gathers together all of Alexander's resistance against Paul and his teachings from A.D. 54 in Ephesus to A.D. 68 in Rome, a period of 14 years of opposition.
12. Alexander produced the action of opposing Paul's teachings for 14 years and the indicative mood establishes this as an historical fact.
13. The target of Alexander's opposition is cited by the adjective **ἡμέτερος (hēméteros)**: "our own," plus the dative plural of the noun **λόγος (lógos)**: "words."
14. The plural form of *lógos* is **λόγοις (lógois)** and makes reference to the content of what Paul and Timothy have taught which Alexander consistently attacked.
15. "Our own doctrines" is the best way to translate this. Paul and Timothy have studied the Word, learned the doctrine, and communicated it to believers in Ephesus and beyond.
16. Alexander has made it his business to attack these men's message for fourteen years and Paul writes that he "has demonstrated many categories of evil to me."
17. The expanded translation of the passage reads like this:

2 Timothy 4:14 - Alexander Coppersmith demonstrated many categories of evil to me. The Lord shall pay him back with reference to his deeds.

v. 15 - You be extremely alert, for he has resisted our doctrines. (EXT)

PRINCIPLES:

1. All pastors have Alexander Coppersmith's in their lives. He attends, listens, and disagrees with one or more doctrines. Rather than having the courtesy to quietly leave and stay gone, he spreads his false doctrines to other members of the congregation.
2. You have Alexander Coppersmiths in your lives, too. You should be extremely alert to identify them and reject their false doctrines.

3. An Alexander Coppersmith can be a person that is out of fellowship, in the cosmic systems, and in certain stages of reversionism.
4. Anyone that seeks to publically assail the character or debase the policy of those in duly appointed positions of authority suffers from the Alexander Coppersmith Syndrome.
5. The attack is first on the man and then his message.
6. No matter what the area of authority – the home, the marriage, the schoolroom, the athletic field, the barracks, the local church, or the private business – Alexander Coppersmiths “prowl around seeking someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8).
7. Nothing does more harm to an organization than those that are involved in Operation *Gungázō*: Constant murmuring, bickering, and spewing.
8. People who are always negative can leach the light out of a room. However, in doing so, they reveal themselves as someone whose spiritual life is out of kilter.
9. Both for the murmurer and those who must associate with the murmurer, there is a Latin proverb: *Quae nocent docent*: Things which injure instruct.
10. If you listen to the complainer he will reveal to you what he thinks. In time, he will betray himself as a gossip, a maligner, a clique organizer, a heretic, or a blasphemer.