

Revelation 13:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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.... This verse from Revelation's vision of beast from sea and earth - antichrist's power, false prophet, mark of the beast 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

James 2:17 — Faith and works

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 13:10 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

εἰ τις αἰχμαλωσίαν συνάγει, εἰς αἰχμαλωσίαν ὑπάγει.
 G1487 G5100 **captivity** G161 **leadeth** G4863 **into** G1519 **captivity** G161 **shall go** G5217

εἰ τις ἐν μαχαίρᾳ ἀποκτανθῆναι. δεῖ αὐτὸν ἐν
 G1487 G5100 **with** **the sword** G1722 G3162 **be killed** G615 **must** G1163 **6846** **with** G1722

μαχαίρᾳ ἀποκτανθῆναι. Ὡδέ ἐστιν ἡ ὑπομονὴ καὶ ἡ
the sword **be killed** G3162 G615 **Here** G5602 **is** G2076 **the patience** G5281 **and** G2532 **G3588**

πίστις τῶν ἀγίων
the faith G3588 **of the saints** G40

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 15:2 (Word): And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the LORD; Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity.

Revelation 3:10 (Word): Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

Revelation 14:12 (Faith): Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

Isaiah 33:1 (Parallel theme): Woe to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.

Luke 21:19 (Parallel theme): In your patience possess ye your souls.

Hebrews 6:12 (Faith): That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Revelation 2:2 (Parallel theme): I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

Matthew 26:52 (Word): Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

Jeremiah 43:11 (Word): And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt, and deliver such as are for death to death; and such as are for captivity to captivity; and such as are for the sword to the sword.

Revelation 16:6 (Holy): For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.