

Revelation 19:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

Analysis

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.... This verse from Revelation's vision of hallelujah chorus, marriage supper, christ's return - final victory, word of god rides forth 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

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 19:8 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 ἐδόθη αὐτῇ ἵνα περιβάληται βύσσινον
And was granted to her that she should be arrayed in fine linen
G2532 G1325 G846 G2443 G4016 G1039

καθαρόν· καὶ λαμπρὸν τὸ γὰρ βύσσινον τὰ
clean And white for in fine linen G3588 G1063 G1039 G3588
G2513 G2532 G2986 G3588 G1063 G1039 G3588

δικαιώματα ἐστίν τῶν ἀγίων
the righteousness is of saints G3588 G40
G1345 G2076 G3588 G40

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 61:10 (Righteousness): I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.

Revelation 3:18 (Parallel theme): I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

Psalms 132:9 (Righteousness): Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy.

Mark 9:3 (Parallel theme): And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.

Romans 13:14 (Parallel theme): But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Matthew 22:12 (Parallel theme): And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.

Revelation 15:4 (Holy): Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

Ezekiel 16:10 (Parallel theme): I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk.

Acts 1:10 (Parallel theme): And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

Luke 24:4 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: