

Revelation 2:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

Analysis

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.... This verse from Revelation's vision of letters to ephesus, smyrna, pergamum, thyatira - love lost, faithful suffering, compromise 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

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 2:7 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

ὁ	ἔχων	οὗς	ἀκουσάτω	τί	τὸ	πνεῦμα	λέγει		
G3588	He that hath	an ear	let him hear	what	G3588	the Spirit	saith		
	G2192	G3775	G191	G5101		G4151	G3004		
ταῖς	ἐκκλησίαις	τῷ	νικῶντι	δώσω	αὐτῷ	φαγεῖν			
G3588	unto the churches	G3588	that overcometh	will I give	To him	to eat			
	G1577		G3528	G1325	G846	G5315			
ἐκ	τοῦ	ξύλου	τῆς	ζωῆς	ὃ	ἐστιν	ἐν	μέσῳ	τοῦ
of	G3588	the tree	G3588	of life	which	is	in	the midst	G3588
G1537		G3586		G2222	G3739	G2076	G1722	G3319	
παραδείσου	τοῦ	θεοῦ							
of the paradise	G3588	of God							
G3857		G2316							

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 2:17 (Spirit): He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

Revelation 2:11 (Spirit): He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

Matthew 11:15 (Parallel theme): He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Revelation 13:9 (Parallel theme): If any man have an ear, let him hear.

Matthew 13:9 (Parallel theme): Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Matthew 13:43 (Parallel theme): Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Proverbs 11:30 (Parallel theme): The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.

Revelation 22:14 (Parallel theme): Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

Genesis 2:9 (References God): And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Luke 23:43 (Parallel theme): And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.