

Revelation 20:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Analysis

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.... This verse from Revelation's vision of millennium, satan bound, final rebellion, great white throne - ultimate justice 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 20:6 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

μακάριος	καὶ	ἅγιος	ὁ	ἔχει	μέρος	ἐν	τῇ	ἀναστάσει
Blessed	and	holy	G3588	hath	part	in	G3588	resurrection
G3107	G2532	G40		G2192	G3313	G1722		G386
τῇ	πρώτῃ	ἐπὶ	τούτων	ὁ	θάνατος	ὁ	δεύτερος	οὐκ
G3588	the first	on	such	G3588	death	G3588	the second	no
	G4413	G1909	G5130		G2288		G1208	G3756
ἔχει	ἐξουσίαν	ἀλλ'	ἔσονται	ἱερεῖς	τοῦ	θεοῦ	καὶ	τοῦ
hath	power	but	they shall be	priests	G3588	of God	and	G3588
G2192	G1849	G235	G2071	G2409		G2316	G2532	
Χριστοῦ	καὶ	βασιλεύσουσιν	μετ'	αὐτοῦ	χίλια	ἔτη		
of Christ	and	shall reign	with him	G846	a thousand	years		
G5547	G2532	G936	G3326		G5507	G2094		

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 2:11 (Parallel theme): 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.

Revelation 1:6 (Kingdom): And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Revelation 20:14 (Parallel theme): And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Revelation 5:10 (Kingdom): And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

1 Peter 2:9 (Holy): But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Daniel 12:12 (Blessing): Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.

2 Timothy 2:12 (Kingdom): If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

Romans 8:17 (References Christ): And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Revelation 22:7 (Blessing): Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

Revelation 14:13 (Blessing): And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.