

Revelation 21:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

Analysis

And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.... This verse from Revelation's vision of new heaven, new earth, new jerusalem - eternal state, god dwelling with his people 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

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 21:24 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	τὰ	ἔθνη	τῶν	σωζομένων	ἐν	τῷ	φωτί
And	G3588	the nations	G3588	of them which are saved	in	G3588	the light
G2532		G1484		G4982		G1722	

αὐτήν	περιπατήσουσιν	καὶ	οἱ	βασιλεῖς	τῆς	γῆς
it	shall walk	And	G3588	the kings	G3588	of the earth
G846	G4043	G2532		G935		G1093

φέρουσιν	τὴν	δόξαν	καὶ	τὴν	τιμὴν	αὐτήν	εἰς	αὐτήν
do bring	G3588	glory	And	G3588	honour	it	into	it
G5342		G1391	G2532		G5092	G846	G1519	G846

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 22:2 (Parallel theme): In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

Revelation 21:26 (Glory): And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

Isaiah 60:16 (Salvation): Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

Zechariah 2:11 (Parallel theme): And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee.

Isaiah 55:5 (Glory): Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.

Isaiah 52:15 (Kingdom): So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

Isaiah 66:18 (Glory): For I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory.

Psalms 22:27 (Parallel theme): All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

Romans 15:16 (Parallel theme): That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

Isaiah 2:2 (Parallel theme): And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

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