

Revelation 21:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

Analysis

And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.... 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

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 21:6 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

καὶ	εἶπέν	μοι,	Γέγονεν.	ἐγὼ	εἰμι	τὸ	Α	καὶ	τὸ
And	he said	unto me	It is done	I	am	G3588	Alpha	And	G3588
G2532	G2036	G3427	G1096	G1473	G1510		G1	G2532	
Ω,	ἡ	ἀρχὴ	καὶ	τὸ	τέλος.	ἐγὼ	τῷ		
Omega	G3588	the beginning	And	G3588	the end	I	G3588		
G5598		G746	G2532		G5056	G1473			
διψῶντι	δώσω	ἐκ	τῆς	πηγῆς	τοῦ	ὑδατος			
unto him that is athirst	will give	of	G3588	the fountain	G3588	of the water			
G1372	G1325	G1537		G4077		G5204			
τῆς	ζωῆς	δωρεάν.							
G3588	of life	freely							
	G2222	G1432							

Additional Cross-References

John 4:10 (Parallel theme): Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

Revelation 7:17 (Parallel theme): For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

John 4:14 (Parallel theme): But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Psalms 36:9 (Parallel theme): For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

Romans 8:32 (Parallel theme): He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Revelation 1:8 (Parallel theme): I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

Revelation 22:17 (Parallel theme): And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Romans 3:24 (Parallel theme): Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

Revelation 22:13 (Parallel theme): I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Revelation 16:17 (Parallel theme): And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.