

Revelation 22:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

Analysis

And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.... This verse from Revelation's vision of river of life, invitation, warnings - eternal blessing, urgent call, maranatha 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

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 22:12 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	ἰδοῦ,	ἔρχομαι	ταχύ	καὶ	ὁ	μισθός	μου	μετ'	ἐμοῦ
And	behold	I come	quickly	And	G3588	reward	my	is with	me
G2532	G2400	G2064	G5035	G2532		G3408	G3450	G3326	G1700
ἀποδοῦναι	ἐκάστῳ	ὡς	τὸ	ἔργον	αὐτοῦ	ἔσται			
to give	every man	according as	G3588	work	his	shall be			
G591	G1538	G5613		G2041	G846	G2071			

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 16:27 (Parallel theme): For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

Isaiah 62:11 (Parallel theme): Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.

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

Isaiah 40:10 (Parallel theme): Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.

1 Corinthians 3:8 (Parallel theme): Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

1 Corinthians 3:14 (Parallel theme): If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

Romans 14:12 (Parallel theme): So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Revelation 11:18 (Parallel theme): And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou

shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

Revelation 20:12 (Parallel theme): And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

Revelation 22:20 (Parallel theme): He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

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