

Revelation 22:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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.... 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

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 22:14 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

Μακάριοι	οἱ	ποιοῦντες	τὰς	ἐντολὰς	αὐτῶν	ἵνα			
Blessed	G3588	are they that do	G3588	commandments	his	that			
G3107		G4160		G1785	G846	G2443			
ἔσται	ἡ	ἐξουσία	αὐτῶν	ἐπὶ	τὸ	ξύλον	τῆς	ζωῆς	καὶ
may have	G3588	right	his	to	G3588	the tree	G3588	of life	and
G2071		G1849	G846	G1909		G3586		G2222	G2532
τοῖς	πυλῶσιν	εἰσέλθωσιν	εἰς	τὴν	πόλιν				
G3588	in through the gates	may enter	into	G3588	the city				
	G4440		G1525	G1519	G4172				

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 21:27 (Parallel theme): And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

1 John 5:3 (Word): For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

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

1 John 3:3 (Parallel theme): And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

Revelation 2:7 (Parallel theme): 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.

1 Corinthians 7:19 (Word): Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.

John 14:15 (Word): If ye love me, keep my commandments.

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.

John 10:7 (Parallel theme): Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

John 10:9 (Parallel theme): I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

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