

Revelation 22:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

Analysis

I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.... 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

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 22:16 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

ἐγώ	Ἰησοῦς	ἔπεμψα	τὸν	ἄγγελόν	μου	μαρτυρῆσαι	ὑμῖν
I	Jesus	have sent	G3588	angel	mine	to testify	unto you
G1473	G2424	G3992		G32	G3450	G3140	G5213

ταῦτα	ἐπὶ	ταῖς	ἐκκλησίαις·	ἐγώ	εἰμι	ἡ	ῥίζα	καὶ
these things	in	G3588	the churches	I	G1473	G3588	the root	and
G5023	G1909		G1577	G1473	G1510	G4491	G2532	

τὸ	γένος	τοῦ	Δαβίδ,	ὁ	ἀστὴρ	ὁ	λαμπρὸς	καὶ
G3588	the offspring	G3588	of David	G3588	star	G3588	and the bright	and
G1085		G1138		G792		G2986		G2532

ὄρθρινός

morning

G3720

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 5:5 (References David): And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

Isaiah 11:1 (Parallel theme): And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

2 Peter 1:19 (Parallel theme): We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

Revelation 1:4 (Parallel theme): John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

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

Matthew 22:42 (References David): Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David.

Revelation 22:6 (Parallel theme): And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.

Revelation 1:1 (References Jesus): The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

Zechariah 6:12 (Parallel theme): And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD:

Matthew 2:2 (Parallel theme): Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.