

Revelation 3:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

Analysis

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem,... This verse from Revelation's vision of letters to sardis, philadelphia, laodicea - dead religion, faithful witness, lukewarmness 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

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 3:12 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

τὸ νικῶν ποιήσω αὐτὸν στῦλον ἐν τῷ ναῷ
which that overcometh will I make Him a pillar in which the temple
 G3588 G3528 G4160 G846 G4769 G1722 G3588 G3485

τὸ θεοῦ μου καὶ ἔξω οὐ μὴ ἐξέλθῃ
which God I will write upon him my and out he shall go
 G3588 G2316 G3450 G2532 G1854 G3756 G3361 G1831

ἔτι καὶ γράψω ἐπ' αὐτὸν τὸ ὄνομα τὸ θεοῦ
more and I will write upon Him which name which God
 G2089 G2532 G1125 G1909 G846 G3588 G3686 G3588 G2316

μου καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τὸ πόλεως τὸ θεοῦ
I will write upon him my and which name which of the city which God
 G3450 G2532 G3588 G3686 G3588 G4172 G3588 G2316

μου τὸ καινὸν Ἱερουσαλήμ τὸ
I will write upon him my which new Jerusalem which
 G3450 G3588 G2537 G2419 G3588

καταβαίνουσα ἐκ τὸ οὐρανοῦ ἀπὸ τὸ θεοῦ
cometh down out of which heaven from which God
 G2597 G1537 G3588 G3772 G575 G3588 G2316

μου καὶ τὸ ὄνομα μου τὸ
I will write upon him my and which name I will write upon him my which
 G3450 G2532 G3588 G3686 G3450 G3588

καινόν

new
 G2537

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 22:4 (Parallel theme): And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

Revelation 21:2 (References God): And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Revelation 14:1 (Parallel theme): And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

Revelation 2:17 (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 hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

Galatians 2:9 (Parallel theme): And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

Jeremiah 1:18 (Parallel theme): For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land.

Hebrews 12:22 (References God): But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

Psalms 48:8 (References God): As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever. Selah.

Isaiah 65:15 (References God): And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord GOD shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name:

Ezekiel 48:35 (Parallel theme): It was round about eighteen thousand measures: and the name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there.

