

Romans 5:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

Analysis

For if by one man's offence death reigned by one—the first clause summarizes humanity's tragedy: death βασιλεύω (basileuō, 'to reign as king') over Adam's descendants. The aorist ἐβασίλευσεν emphasizes death's established dominion; humanity exists under a tyrant's rule.

Much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ—the triumphant reversal: instead of death reigning over believers, believers βασιλεύσουσιν (basileusousin, 'shall reign') in life through Christ. The future tense likely emphasizes both present reality and eschatological consummation. Those receiving (οἱ λαμβάνοντες, hoi lambanontes, present participle—continuous action) grace's περισσεία (perisseia, 'abundance/overflow') don't merely escape death's tyranny but exercise royal dominion in resurrection life.

Historical Context

The reign language would resonate with Roman readers familiar with imperial authority. But Paul democratizes kingship: all believers, not merely emperors or aristocrats, reign through Christ. This fulfilled Genesis 1:26-28's creation mandate for humanity to exercise dominion, forfeited in Adam's fall, restored in Christ the Last Adam. Revelation 5:10 and 22:5 develop this: saints reign with Christ forever, fulfilling humanity's created purpose.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What does it mean practically to 'reign in life' now, not just in the eschaton— how does this differ from being defeated by sin and death?
2. How does 'receiving' grace (passive reception) relate to reigning in life (active exercise of Christ's victory)?
3. In what areas of life do you still live as if death reigns rather than claiming your authority to reign in life through Christ?

Interlinear Text

εἰ γὰρ τῷ τοῦ ἐνὸς παραπτώματι ὁ θάνατος
if For G3588 by one man's offence G3588 death G2288
G1487 G1063 G1520 G3900 G2288

βασιλεύσουσιν διὰ τοῦ ἐνὸς πολλῷ μᾶλλον οἱ τὴν
reigned by G3588 by one man's much more G3588 G3588
G936 G1223 G1520 G4183 G3123 G3588 G3588

περισσείαν τῆς χάριτος καὶ τῆς δωρεᾶς τῆς
abundance of grace and G3588 of the gift G3588
G4050 G5485 G2532 G1431 G3588 G3588

δικαιοσύνης λαμβάνοντες ἐν ζωῇ βασιλεύσουσιν διὰ
of righteousness they which receive in life reigned by
G1343 G2983 G1722 G2222 G936 G1223

τοῦ ἐνὸς Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
G3588 by one man's Jesus Christ
G1520 G2424 G5547

Additional Cross-References

Romans 5:12 (Parallel theme): Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

1 Corinthians 15:49 (Parallel theme): And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

John 10:10 (Parallel theme): The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

2 Timothy 2:12 (Kingdom): If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

Revelation 22:5 (Kingdom): And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

Genesis 3:6 (Parallel theme): And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

Revelation 20:4 (Kingdom): And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Revelation 20:6 (Kingdom): Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Revelation 3:21 (Parallel theme): To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

Isaiah 61:10 (Righteousness): I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath

covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.

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