

Revelation 1:14 in the Navajo Bible

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Hatsiits'iin áádóó hatsii' aghaałgaiigi át'éego ligai, yasígi át'éego ligai, áádóó hanáá' kọ' dah nídíno'ígúí nahalin; (Revelation 1:14)¹

His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. (Revelation 1:14)²

Discussion

There is a striking similarity between the above verse from Revelation and the following one from Isaiah.

K'ad hágo haa'ishá' díí baa nídít'ííł, ní Bóhólnúhii. Azhá nihibaahági át'éii éi t'áá úyisí lichxíí' nidi, yas nahalingo ligai dooleet; azhá diłhiłgo lichxíí' nidi, aghaałgaiigi át'éego ligai doo. (Isaiah 1:18)

These two references to whiteness – in both passages – have to do with purity. In Isaiah 1:18 this purity is ours when God forgives us; in Rev 1:14 it is Christ's. In Isaiah our sins are forgiven so completely that we stand before God in a state of perfect purity. All Christians will agree that this is the case. But what do we mean when we say so? What does it mean to be in a state of perfect purity, as described in Isaiah 1:18 and confirmed in many other passages?

It means reflecting the Source of purity, which is Christ. In all the universe Holiness resides only one place. That one place is Christ, who in turn is one with the Father. We speak of "holy" angels, but when angels separate from Christ and rebel against Him, they become demons (see Revelation 12:7-9). There is nothing in holy angels that makes them holy. Their holiness resides in Christ, just as ours does. If anyone "is holy" (Revelation 22:11), or has "holiness" (Hebrews 12:14), it is because s/he has a relationship with Christ, who – in union with the Father – is the Source of all holiness, goodness, and purity.

When we unite with Christ, by entering a faith relationship with Him, our sins are covered by His blood and our minds and hearts (our thoughts and desires, the way we think and what we love) are transformed to become as pure and white as snow, or as the whitest wool. But even though these things affect us and shape us at the innermost level, they do not reside within us. They reside in Christ. We have them because we have Him.

¹ Navajo Bible quotations are from *Diyin God Bizaad. The Holy Bible in Navajo*. Revised edition. New York: American Bible Society, 2000.

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