

Revelation 10:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

Analysis

And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.... This verse from Revelation's vision of angel with little book - mystery of god completed, prophetic commission renewed 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

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 10:3 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

καὶ	ἔκραξεν	φωνάς	μεγάλη	ὥσπερ	λέων	μυκᾷται
And	cried	voice	with a loud	as	when a lion	roareth
G2532	G2896	G5456	G3173	G5618	G3023	G3455

καὶ	ὅτε	ἔκραξεν	ἐλάλησαν	αἱ	ἐπτὰ	βρονταὶ	τὰς
And	when	cried	uttered	G3588	seven	thunders	G3588
G2532	G3753	G2896	G2980		G2033	G1027	

ἐαυτῶν	φωνάς
their	voice
G1438	G5456

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 31:4 (Parallel theme): For thus hath the LORD spoken unto me, Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, he will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the noise of them: so shall the LORD of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof.

Revelation 4:5 (Parallel theme): And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunders and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

Amos 1:2 (Parallel theme): And he said, The LORD will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither.

Joel 3:16 (Parallel theme): The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.

