

Revelation 10:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,

Analysis

And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,... 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

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 10:5 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	ό	ἄγγελος	δὲν	εἶδον	έστωτα	ἐπὶ	τῆς	θαλάσσης	
And	G3588	the angel	which	I saw	stand	upon	G3588	the sea	
G2532		G32	G3739	G1492	G2476	G1909		G2281	
καὶ	ἐπὶ	τῆς	γῆς	ἥρεν	τὴν	χεῖρα	αὐτοῦ	εἰς	τὸν
And	upon	G3588	the earth	lifted up	G3588	hand	G846	to	G3588
G2532	G1909		G1093	G142		G5495		G1519	
οὐρανὸν									
heaven									
G3772									

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 12:7 (Parallel theme): And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.

Deuteronomy 32:40 (Parallel theme): For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever.

Revelation 10:2 (Parallel theme): And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth,

Revelation 4:11 (Parallel theme): Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Revelation 16:17 (Parallel theme): And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

Revelation 14:7 (Parallel theme): Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Acts 14:15 (Parallel theme): And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:

Revelation 1:18 (Parallel theme): I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

Revelation 4:9 (Parallel theme): And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,