

Revelation 10:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.

Analysis

And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.... 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

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 10:8 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 τῆς φωνῇ ἦν ἤκουσα ἐκ τῆς οὐρανοῦ πάλιν
And which the voice which I heard from which heaven again
G2532 G3588 G5456 G3739 G191 G1537 G3588 G3772 G3825

λαλοῦσα μετ' ἐμοῦ καὶ λέγουσα, Ὑπάγε λάβε τῆς
spake unto me And said Go and take which
G2980 G3326 G1700 G2532 G3004 G5217 G2983 G3588

βιβλαρίδιον τῆς ἠνεωγμένον ἐν τῆς χειρὶ ἀγγέλου
the little book which is open in which the hand of the angel
G974 G3588 G455 G1722 G3588 G5495 G32

τῆς ἐστῶτος ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς
which standeth upon which the sea And upon which the earth
G3588 G2476 G1909 G3588 G2281 G2532 G1909 G3588 G1093

Additional Cross-References

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,