

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	φωνὴ	ἥν	ήκουσα	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'	έμοῦ	καὶ	λέγουσα,	"	Ὑπαγε	λάβε	τῆς
spake	unto	me	And	said	Go	and take	which	
G2980	G3326	G1700	G2532	G3004	G5217	G2983	G3588	
βιβλαρίδιον	τῆς	ἥνεῳμένον	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,