

Revelation 16:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

Analysis

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.... This verse from Revelation's vision of seven bowls of wrath - final judgments, battle of armageddon, babylon's fall announced 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

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 16:13 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 | εἶδον | ἐκ | τοῦ | στόματος | τοῦ | δράκοντος | καὶ |
| And | I saw | come out of | G3588 | the mouth | G3588 | of the dragon | And |
| G2532 | G1492 | G1537 | | G4750 | | G1404 | G2532 |

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-------|------------------|-------|---------------------|------------|--------------------|-------|
| ἐκ | τοῦ | στόματος | τοῦ | θηρίου | καὶ | ἐκ | τοῦ |
| come out of | G3588 | the mouth | G3588 | of the beast | And | come out of | G3588 |
| G1537 | | G4750 | | G2342 | G2532 | G1537 | |

| | | | | | |
|------------------|-------|-----------------------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|
| στόματος | τοῦ | ψευδοπροφήτου | πνεύματα | τρία | ἀκάθαρτα |
| the mouth | G3588 | of the false prophet | spirits | three | unclean |
| G4750 | | G5578 | G4151 | G5140 | G169 |

| | |
|-------------|--------------|
| ὁμοία | βατράχοις |
| like | frogs |
| G3664 | G944 |

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 19:20 (Prophecy): And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

Revelation 20:10 (Prophecy): And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Revelation 16:14 (Spirit): For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

Revelation 18:2 (Spirit): And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

Psalms 105:30 (Parallel theme): Their land brought forth frogs in abundance, in the chambers of their kings.

Psalms 78:45 (Parallel theme): He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them; and frogs, which destroyed them.

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