

Revelation 21:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

Analysis

And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.... This verse from Revelation's vision of new heaven, new earth, new jerusalem - eternal state, god dwelling with his people 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 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 21:9 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	ήλθεν	πρὸς	με	εἷς	τὴν	ἐπτὰ	ἄγγέλων	τὴν
And	there came	unto	me	one of	which	of the seven	angels	which
G2532	G2064	G4314	G3165	G1520	G3588	G2033	G32	G3588
ἐχόντων	τὴν	ἐπτὰ	φιάλας	τὴν	γεμούσας	τὴν		
had	which	of the seven	vials	which	full	which		
G2192	G3588	G2033	G5357	G3588	G1073	G3588		
ἐπτὰ	πληγῶν	τὴν	ἐσχάτων	καὶ	έλαλησεν	μετ'	ἐμοῦ	
of the seven	plagues	which	last	And	talked	with	me	
G2033	G4127	G3588	G2078	G2532	G2980	G3326	G1700	
λέγων,	Δεῦρο	δείξω	σοι	τὴν	νύμφην	τὴν	ἀρνίου	
saying	Come hither	I will shew	thee	which	the bride	which	the Lamb's	
G3004	G1204	G1166	G4671	G3588	G3565	G3588	G721	
τὴν	γυναῖκα							
which	wife							
G3588	G1135							

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 21:2 (Parallel theme): And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Revelation 19:7 (Parallel theme): Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

Revelation 17:1 (Parallel theme): And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters:

