

Revelation 9:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

Analysis

And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, a... This verse from Revelation's vision of fifth and sixth trumpets - demonic torment and massive army, unrepentant humanity 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

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 9:20 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 οἱ λοιποὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἡ οὐκ ἀπεκτάνθησαν
And G3588 the rest G3588 of the men which not killed
G2532 G3062 G444 G3739 G3756 G615

ἐν ταῖς πληγαῖς ταύταις οὔτε μετενόησαν ἐκ τῶν
by G3588 plagues G3778 neither repented of G3588
G1722 G4127 G3777 G3340 G1537

ἔργων τῶν χειρῶν αὐτῶν οὐαὶ μὴ προσκυνήσωσιν τὰ
the works G3588 hands G846 G2443 G3361 they should G3588
G2041 G5495 G4352

δαιμόνια καὶ εἴδωλα τὰ χρυσᾶ καὶ τὰ ἀργυρᾶ καὶ
devils And idols G3588 of gold And G3588 silver And
G1140 G2532 G1497 G5552 G2532 G693 G2532

τὰ χαλκᾶ καὶ τὰ λίθινα καὶ τὰ ξύλινα ἡ οὔτε
G3588 brass And G3588 stone And G3588 of wood which G3588
G5470 G2532 G3035 G2532 G3585 G3739 G3777

βλέπειν δύναται οὔτε ἀκούειν οὔτε περιπατεῖν
see can neither hear neither walk
G991 G1410 G3777 G191 G3777 G4043

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 5:23 (Worship): But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified:

Deuteronomy 31:29 (Evil): For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands.

Acts 19:26 (Parallel theme): Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands:

Revelation 9:21 (Repentance): Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

1 Timothy 4:1 (Evil): Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

Acts 7:41 (Parallel theme): And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands.

Jeremiah 1:16 (Worship): And I will utter my judgments against them touching all their wickedness, who have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands.

Acts 17:29 (Parallel theme): Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

Psalms 106:37 (Evil): Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils,

Jeremiah 5:3 (Parallel theme): O LORD, are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they

have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return.

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