

SALVATION IN SYMBOLS & SIGNS

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Corresponds to Program 47

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the NKJV and KJV.

THE THIRD WOE STUDY GUIDE

Revelation 11:14-19

The second woe is past... the third woe is coming quickly.” Revelation 11:14 tells us that we are back on track after an interlude of sorts in the sequence of the trumpets and woes. The first and second woe centered on Islam as a God-sent judgment on an apostate church, but this does not necessitate that the third woe is Islam. This is a good opportunity for us to follow the principle of allowing the context of the Bible to interpret itself and see what the text has to say. In this way we allow the Bible to be the source of our interpretation. We are safer when we ask, “what does the Word say?” not, “what does the news say?” Additionally, the third woe points to the final deliverance of God’s people, something that no earthly power can or will do. So what is the third woe? Let’s take a moment to turn off the television or broadcast news and take a look at the B-I-B-L-E:

Coming Quickly

“Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown” (Revelation 3:11).

“Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book” (Revelation 22:7).

“And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work” (Revelation 22:12).

“He who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely I am coming quickly.’ Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” (Revelation 22:20).

The third woe is described as coming quickly. When cross referencing that phrase in the book of Revelation, no less than

four references apply it to the second coming of Jesus Christ.

The third woe and the sounding of the seventh trumpet will:

- Announce the kingdoms of this world becoming “the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ”
- Declare that God has taken His great power and reigned
- Make known that the nations “were angry” (past tense)
- Pronounce that God’s wrath or the seven last plagues “has come” (present tense—which means probation has closed—Revelation 15:6-8)



Biblical evidence points to the third woe as the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ to this earth as a Bridegroom to rescue His bride from nations of the world.

- Reveal that it is time to judge the dead, which will begin after the Second Coming (judgment of the lost)
- State that it is time to reward the prophets and saints which will begin at the Second Coming
- Declare that it is time to destroy them that destroy the earth which will take place after the millennium

Does the third woe of the seventh trumpet have to be interpreted as an Islamic power because the first two woes (fifth and sixth trumpets) were Islamic powers? There is no biblical principle of prophetic interpretation that necessitates such a conclusion. Doing such would force an interpretation that does not fit

the text. The following, more Biblically contextual principle of interpretation is that the woes apply to armies that harmed all those who were not sealed with the seal of God:

First woe: Islamic army on horses – do not harm the sealed ones

Second woe: Islamic army on horses – do not harm the sealed ones

KEY SCRIPTURES

Revelation 3:11 I AM COMING QUICKLY

Matthew 24:13 HE WHO ENDURES TO THE END

Revelation 19:11 NOW I SAW HEAVEN OPENED

Revelation 19:16 KINGS OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS

Third woe: Jesus' army on horses – will not harm the sealed ones

In every age, God has allowed nations of the world to protect His faithful people. We see this with Joseph and Egypt, Jeremiah and Babylon, and the Reformers and Islam. Yet in the very end of time “all men” will hate God’s people for His “name’s sake” (Matthew 10:22, 24:13). Jesus only will rescue His people. He is symbolized as the white horse rider (as a knight coming to rescue his bride (Revelation 19:11-21)), attended by the vast army of heaven, symbolized as also riding horses. At the second coming of Christ, there are no nations left to protect God’s people. Jesus said that when the world finally comes to an end, all the nations will have rejected God and turned against His people. Yet God will have people out of every nation, kindred, and tongue who will accept Him as Savior and Lord and be rescued by the Divine Rescuer.

Summary

The third woe on the earth is the second coming of Jesus. As He returns, the anger and hatred of the nations against God’s people is swallowed up by the wrath of God in the seven last

plagues that have been released (Revelation 16). God’s people are then taken to heaven, followed by the thousand years during which the lost are judged, while God’s servants are rewarded. Each event follows in order:

- Nations angry (happening now, but past tense when the third woe begins)
- Wrath of God (happens when third woe/seventh angel sounds)
- Judgment of the dead (judgment of lost during the thousand years)
- Reward of saints (during the thousand years)
- Destroy them that destroy the earth (final execution of judgment after the thousand years)

No matter what happens on planet Earth in the future, we have a heavenly Rescuer. He longs to deliver you from anger, wrath, and judgment. Would you like to ask Him to do that right now? Pray, “Take my heart, Lord! In Jesus’ name, amen.” ★

