

SALVATION IN SYMBOLS & SIGNS

★★★★★★



Corresponds to Program 53

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

THE SEA BEAST STUDY GUIDE

We begin this study in Revelation 13 with another question from a viewer:

Question – “Does God hear our prayers when we ask for forgiveness or does He bypass our prayers because He sees we are not sincere? For example, when we keep falling into sin and are not overcoming, does He still hear us?”

Answer: God is gracious, merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness, and longs to turn away from the manifestation of His just punishment (Joel 2:13). Nineveh is a good example of how God longs to save even wicked people from the punishment for their sin. We don’t want to go by how we feel; rather we need to go to God’s Word, trusting in Him by faith that if we confess our sins (1 John 1:9), He will do what He has promised to do. God calls us to do a heart work with Him and not just have a formal, religious experience. He wants us to go deep with Him and exercise faith in His promises, and He will fulfill them.

REVELATION 13:1-10

The Lamb Slain from the Foundation of the World

The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world is front and center in Revelation 13 (verse 8). It is important to recognize that the Lamb is Jesus (John 1:29). The “Lamb slain” points to the cross where He was sacrificed for the sin of the whole world (1 Corinthians 5:7). This is Calvary. The gospel of salvation by grace, through faith in Jesus, is key to understanding Revelation 13. This reminds us that no matter what crisis we face, the slain Lamb is the source of our strength and hope. Sometimes when we study the beast and his mark, we tend to overlook the Lamb and His salvation grace.

The Sea Beast

Revelation 13:1-2 is basically Daniel chapter 7 juiced down into two verses. John is taking us back to the prophetic book of Daniel in Revelation chapter 13. Here is yet another prophetic connection between Daniel and Revelation, making them prophetic twins in respect to how they both look at the same prophecies of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Daniel covers these four basic earthly powers, and Revelation picks up where Daniel left off, giving us more detail regarding the final power of Rome, its deadly wound, the healing of the wound, and the final crisis before those of us who will be living on Earth in the very end of time.



“And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded...”

REVELATION 13:3

Papal Rome and the Deadly Wound

The papacy followed Imperial Rome, and in time it established itself as a church/state power. This unity of the church with the state can be dated back to the year 538 AD. It was predicted in Bible prophecy to continue for 1,260 prophetic days, which is 1,260 literal years (as noted in our last program). Revelation 13:3, 10, speak to the infliction of the deadly wound by Berthier, Napoleon’s general, who marched into Rome and took the pope captive in February of 1798 AD.

This was a perfect fulfillment of Revelation 13:10. The papacy that had led people into captivity was now itself going into captivity. It had killed with the sword and now it was to be killed with the sword, referring to thousands of its priests and religious affiliates who were killed by the atheism that arose in France during the French Revolution.

Healing the Wound

The wounding of the papacy separated the civil or state power that was used to persecute God’s people during the Dark

KEY SCRIPTURES

Revelation 13:1 ON HEAD BLASPHEMOUS NAME

Revelation 13:8 THE LAMB SLAIN

Revelation 13:3 ONE HEAD MORTALLY WOUNDED

Revelation 13:10 HERE’S THE PATIENCE OF THE SAINTS

Ages of church/state unity. The healing of the wound predicts a return to the persecuting nature of the beast before it was wounded. This healing will be complete when religion is once again allowed by the state to enforce the religious power and authority of Papal Rome. Following this healing, the whole world will wonder. This will take a miracle, which is exactly what the Bible predicts. In Revelation 13:14 we see miracles preceding the setting of the image of the beast and its enforced worship.

MATTHEW 24:4-27

This chapter parallels Daniel and Revelation. It is Christ's end-time prophetic chapter recorded by three of the four gospel writers (Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21). Here, Christ gives us prophetic signs that connect with the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. He begins by warning us about deception and then adds many signs like war, pestilence, and natural disasters, leading to a hatred against God's people by all nations (Matthew 24:4-9). Christ encourages us to not be troubled by these signs that will continue to increase in intensity and frequency, for they are like birth pains pointing to the final events (they are not the final events but portend them). Then Christ again warns us regarding deception specific to false christs. This is where things get even more challenging. As a final act in the drama, the devil will attempt to deceive many by claiming to be Christ. He will even appear on planet Earth in various places, both in secret and in the open (Matthew 24:23-26, 2 Corinthians 11:13-15). Christ warns His followers to have nothing to do with such reports, for His true return will be clearly distinguishable from the counterfeits.

A major element in this final conflict is deception. The Bible says: "And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name" (Revelation 13:13-17).

The Greek word for "fire" in verse 13 is "pur." The Strong's Concordance definition is: "a primary work; fire (literally or figuratively, especially lightning)."

Christ's second coming will be like lightning shining from the

east to the west (Matthew 24:27). The devil will seek to counterfeit that coming by bringing his own "fire" or "lightning" down from heaven (Revelation 13:13). The devil's counterfeit is "on the earth" both openly and in secret places. Whereas when Christ actually appears, His angels will gather His elect to meet Him in the air (Matthew 24:31; 1 Thessalonians 4:17).

Fire from Heaven also symbolizes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:3, 4). The fire brought down from Heaven by the land beast is obviously not a genuine manifestation of the Holy Spirit, for it is employed to deceive the world. Here we are warned of a great counterfeit revival that will place a great deal of emphasis on "wonders" and "miracles." A later verse in Revelation tells us that "they are the spirits of devils, working miracles" (Revelation 16:14). This is also what Jesus foretold in Matthew 24 (see verses 4, 5, 11, 24).

It is startling for many to learn from Scripture that demons have the power to perform miracles through their followers. They masquerade as Christians and deceive those who are impressed by their apparent Holy Spirit power. According to Revelation 13, we can expect to witness a major spiritual movement that will use supernatural manifestations to deceive the world.

Simultaneously, as this false revival progresses, we can expect to see churches uniting. Vital Bible truth will be laid aside in order to facilitate ecumenical alliances. And then the devil will appear in the personage of Christ, working miracles to deceive, if possible, the very elect.

Summary

The Lamb slain from Earth's foundation is the central theme of Bible prophecy. The sea beast in Revelation 13 is connected to the prophecies in the book of Daniel, leading us down the corridors of human history to Papal Rome. This church/state power succeeded Imperial Rome and persecuted God's people for 1,260 years until in 1798 AD, when it received a deadly wound. This wound separated the church from the state, but Bible prophecy predicts that this wound will be healed and religious persecution will revive, specifically in the U.S.

Matthew 24 adds important insights to Bible prophecy, specifically directing us to beware of deception on a world-wide scale preparatory to the second coming of Jesus Christ. It points to false christs and even the devil himself who will appear in various places, working miracles to deceive, if possible, the very elect. Many will be led to follow teachings that have no solid Biblical foundation. Your continued, prayerful study of the Bible and your surrender to God's revealed will are some of the best ways to protect against this deception. Amen. ★

