

SALVATION IN SYMBOLS & SIGNS

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Corresponds to Program 35

PROPHETIC REVIEW, PART 2 STUDY GUIDE

THE SECOND & THIRD TRUMPETS

Revelation 8:8-10

As we have seen, a mountain represents a nation. A burning mountain represents a nation on which the judgments of God have fallen (Jeremiah 51:25). Because of their cruelty toward those whom they conquered, and God's people in particular, in putting Jesus to death, destruction also was to fall on Rome. The idea of it being cast into the sea shows how the Western Roman Empire was swallowed up by the peoples and nations of Europe rather than conquered by another world power (Revelation 17:15).

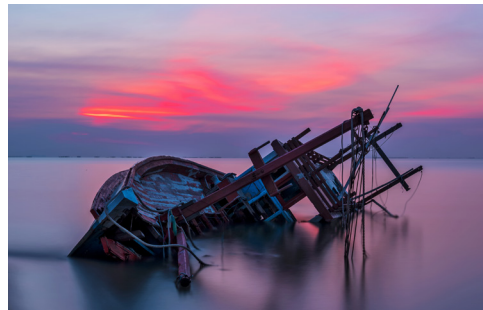
As this power, Rome, was declining, another power was rising. If we compare this to the second church and the second seal, we see that a time of bloodshed and persecution came upon God's people, not only from external political powers, but from within the church itself. The "mystery of iniquity" was creeping into the church.

We read in Revelation 8:9 these compelling words, "And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed." What does this mean? We learned in a previous lesson that the third represents apostasy, as when Satan led one third of the angels in rebellion against God in Heaven. The Bible describes creatures as people (Colossians 1:23). Living creatures are people that had received Jesus, but were now falling away, dying in a spiritual sense.

A ship is a vessel that travels among the seas (peoples) carrying spiritual goods like food (bread). The gospel was the bread of life being taken to the world. The vehicles taking

the bread, the ships, were becoming corrupt, making a shipwreck of faith. The church has often be likened to a ship, but now it was taking a false gospel, making shipwreck of faith (1 Timothy 1:19; Hebrews 6:19).

This lines up perfectly with what we learned in our study of the transition from Smyrna to Pergamos and from the red horse to the black horse. Persecution then led to compromise in the church as false doctrines began to be accepted. Those who remained faithful began to be persecuted by the church for their stand.



"And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed." **REVELATION 8:9**

Paul writes of this time in the following verses: "Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?"

And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way." 2 Thessalonians 2:1-7.

This is a prophetic history of the same time spoken of in Revelation. The phrase "son of perdition," refers to Judas, who betrayed Christ from within the church by compromising with His enemies for the sake of gain.

KEY SCRIPTURES

Revelation 8:9 THIRD PART SHIPS DESTROYED

Revelation 17:15 WATERS ARE PEOPLES

Luke 10:18 SATAN FALLS LIKE LIGHTNING

Psalms 119:105 GOD'S WORD LAMP FOR MY FEET

Revelation 8:9 – “And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.”

Third Part = 1) Deceived by Satan, or 2) Limited Judgment

“His tail drew a **third of** the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth.” Revelation 12:4.

Creatures = People who Heard the Gospel

“If indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, **which was preached to every creature under heaven**, of which I, Paul, became a minister.” Colossians 1:23.

“Then He said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you **fishers of men**.’” Matthew 4:19.

The symbolism of the “sea” and “sea creatures” or fish and ships would have been very familiar to John the apostle. He was after all a fisherman who owned a ship with his brother James when Jesus called him to be a gospel fisher of men.

Sea = Peoples, Nations, Multitudes and Tongues

“Then he said to me, **‘The waters** which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.’” Revelation 17:15.

Life = God’s Sustaining Power

“He gives to all life, breath, and all things.” Acts 17:25. “For in Him we live, and move, and have our being.” Acts 17:28.

Ships = 1) Faith/Experience Church of Christ or 2) Economics

(Proverbs 31:10, 14; Revelation 18) “Having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck.” 1 Timothy 1:19.

“This hope [in God] we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil.” Hebrews 6:19.

Summary

Those who were deceived (third part) among the nations (seas) who had heard the gospel (creatures/fish) and had been sustained by God (life) died. And many were deceived (third part) who had faith (ships) and compromised the truth making a shipwreck of faith (destroyed).

Present truth (history repeated)—Today many who have heard the gospel during this probationary time fall under the deceptions of Satan. They compromise the truth of the gospel and make shipwreck of their faith.

Revelation 8:10 – “And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters.”

Third Trumpet—Christianity Compromised/Papal Rome

Great Star from Heaven = Fallen Angel, Satan

“And He said to them, ‘I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.’” Luke 10:18 (ESV).

“His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth.” Revelation 12:4.

“How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations!” Isaiah 14:12 (NAS).

As it Were = Counterfeit

“And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.” 2 Corinthians 11:14-15.

Lamp = God’s Word

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” Psalm 119:105.

Lamp that Burns = Salvation

“For Zion’s sake I will not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burns.” Isaiah 62:1.

Fell Upon = Take Hold Of

Third Part = Deceived/Wicked —Revelation 12:4 [see above]

Rivers = Kings/Leaders

“The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.” Proverbs 21:1.

“Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, ‘Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.’” Revelation 17:1-2.

Fountains of Water = Righteous Falling Before the Wicked

“A righteous man who falters before the wicked is like a murky spring and a polluted well.” Proverbs 25:26.

“But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will nev-

er thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.” John 4:14.

Symbols Summarized:

- Great = Derogatory to God
- Star = Satan
- As it Were = Impostor, Counterfeit
- Lamp = Word of God
- Burning Lamp = Salvation
- Third Part = Deceived
- Rivers = Kings/ Leaders
- Fountains of Waters = Righteous Falling Away; Apostasy

Summary—Satan as a fallen angel (great star fell from heaven) uses the Bible/religious guise/ false salvation (burning as it were a lamp) to take hold of (fall upon) and deceive (third part) leaders (rivers) and even the righteous (fountains of waters).

Present Truth (History Repeated)—Today Satan works in a religious guise to misinterpret the Bible perverting the message of salvation and taking hold of leaders and even righteous people with his deceptions. ★

