



ClearView

Bible study guide

Background

The New Testament authors are remarkably consistent in their understanding of the prophecies. Like Jesus (see Matthew 24:9-15), Paul in his letter to the Thessalonians uses the prophetic outline in the book of Daniel: apostasy within the church will lead to tribulation by the little horn, the “man of lawlessness.” Paul also emphasises how this power in the end-time will work through “signs and false miracles.” This supplements the description in Daniel, also highlighted in Revelation (13:13).

Reflect

What characterises a “false miracle”? Are not all healings good? What is the attraction of these phenomena?

Comment

God wants the best for us in every way. Yet, eternal salvation is more important than temporary success. The false theology of progress has captured materialistic and selfish-minded Western Christians. What people need when they have broken the law of God is repentance and a renewed life in obedience to His commandments. Healing without this leads people to focus on themselves and may prevent them from obeying and following the Lamb who died for our sins.

5. Even If Not . . .



Read

Daniel 3:14-18, and Revelation 13:14, 15

Reflect

What does the answer by the three young Hebrews tell about their relationship to God? Why would they not worship the image?

Comment

Daniel 3 provides the backdrop for the end-time battle and helps us understand what is at stake in Revelation 13. God’s people do not follow the Lamb simply because its pays off. Theirs is not a success religion, but a personal, spiritual commitment to their Saviour. They follow out of love and choice, not because they are forced or seduced. They follow whatever the outcome because they would rather die than betray Jesus (see Revelation 12:11).

6. Called, Chosen and Faithful



Read

Revelation 17:14, and Matthew 22:14

Reflect

What is the meaning of the three words used to describe the followers of the Lamb?

Comment

In the New Testament context *many* refers not only to the Jews, but to Gentiles as well. God invites everyone to His wedding party. To accept the invitation is to become one of the “chosen” or “elect.” But those who follow the Lamb also need to remain “faithful.” It is a lifelong journey, not a superficial once-and-for-all commitment. Our wedding garment needs not only to be received, but also to be “washed white in the blood of the Lamb” (Revelation 7:14).

Revelation envisions the end of the world and the glorious future of Christ’s eternal reign. It employs highly symbolic language. God’s kingdom will be real, but the rich symbols help us understand its nature. This lesson summarises important themes from the last chapters of the Bible. As space does not allow us to dwell on all the details, we suggest you familiarise yourself with chapters 19-22.

1. The Victor Arrives



Read

Revelation 19:11-16

Background

In historical time, the coming of Jesus follows the outpouring of the seven plagues in chapter 16 (Revelation 17:1-19:10 is an extended explanation of the fall of Babylon). During these plagues all kings on earth make ready for war against God the Almighty (Revelation 16:12-16). Now the King of kings enters the battlefield.

Comment

The symbolic depiction of Jesus contains two parts. Verses 11-13 characterise Him with seven features as the Lord of the church. Verses 15-16 present Him with four characteristics as the King of all nations. He returns to earth to realise His visible kingdom.

2. The Millennium—a Phase of Judgment



Read

Revelation 20:1-15, and Philippians 2:9-11

Background

The period of 1000 years are only mentioned here in the Bible. Throughout history it has been the object of widespread speculation. Already at the time of the New Testament numerous calculations were in vogue. Revelation responds to this speculation by positioning the period as only one phase of the final judgment. It is a period when those who were raised in the first resurrection have their part in the judgment deliberations.

Reflect

Judgment is a very important biblical theme. The last judgment is described as having several phases and taking place over an extended period of time, containing investigation, deliverance and execution. Why would God do it this way? What role could the saved have in this judgment process?