

“Book of Revelation—Part 8”

This article is from the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website (churchofgodbigandy.com). It was posted for the weekend of Aug. 24, 2024.

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BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I continued with a nine-part series about the book of Revelation. Part 8 was about the “The Third Angel of Revelation 14.”

Third angel said

■ Revelation 14:9-11—A third angel followed them saying with a loud voice: “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hands, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever, and they have no rest day or night—who worship the beast and image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”

Earlier beasts in Daniel 7

■ Daniel 7:3-7—Daniel had a dream about four great beast (who came up from the sea)—the first like a lion, the second like a bear, the third like a leopard and the fourth was dreadful and terrible.

■ Daniel 7:17—These great beasts are four kings.

■ Daniel 7:18—The saints of the Most High possess the Kingdom.

■ Daniel 7:19-27—The truth about the fourth beast.

First beast in Revelation 13

Revelation 13 discusses two beasts. The first beast is found in Revelation 13:1-7.

■ Revelation 13:1—John saw a beast rising up out of the sea—having seven heads and 10 horns (with 10 crowns on his horns).

■ Revelation 13:2—The dragon gave the beast his power, his throne and great authority.

■ Revelation 13:3—One of the heads had been mortally wounded and the deadly wound had been healed.

- Revelation 13:4—They worshipped the dragon who gave authority to the beast.
- Revelation 13:5—The beast spoke blasphemies and was given authority to continue for 42 months.
- Revelation 13:6—The beast opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, His name, His tabernacle and those who dwell in heaven.
- Revelation 13:7—Authority was given to the beast for him to be over every tribe, tongue and nation.

Second beast in Revelation 13

- Revelation 13:11—There was another beast—who had two horns like a lamb, but spoke like a dragon.
- Revelation 13:12—This beast exercises all the authority of the first beast—and causes the earth to worship the first beast.
- Revelation 13:13—This beast performs great signs (making fire come down from heaven).
- Revelation 13:14—This beast deceives those on the earth—telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast.

Image of the beast

- Revelation 14:9—People worship the beast and his image.
- Revelation 13:15—The beast gives breath to the image of the beast—that the image will speak and will punish those who don't worship the image.

What is the image that receives breath and life?

- A person?
- A group of people?
- A system?

Mark of the beast

- Revelation 14:9—People receive a mark on their forehead (thoughts) or their hand (actions).
- Revelation 13:16-17—People receive a mark on their right hand (actions) or on their foreheads (thoughts)—affecting whether people can buy or sell.

Number of the beast

- Revelation 13:18—Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast (666).

Gregory Beale posted material about *gematria* at wts.edu (Westminster Seminary) on Feb. 11, 2015.

■ *“Gematria:* In the ancient world, letters of the alphabet often substituted for numerals (our numeral system derives from the later Arabic mathematicians). Hence, each letter stood for a number. The problem is that no clear identification can be made linking 666 with any particular ancient historical name. Attempts have been made to alter spellings and incorporate titles to try to make a multitude of names fit, but nothing conclusive has emerged. Most commonly, the number has been identified with Nero, on the basis of a Hebrew transliteration of the title ‘Nero Caesar.’ However, this option flounders on confusion concerning the exact Hebrew spelling of Caesar, and does not fit the fact that John’s readers were largely Greek-speaking, and that Nero had many titles other than Caesar . . . More than 100 names were proposed in Britain between 1560 and 1830. Last century, the names of Kaiser and Hitler, among others, have also been calculated to equal 666.”

Tormented forever

There are many Bible students who believe that unrepentant sinners are going to burn in hell (or a lake of fire) for eternity.

I sometimes surprise my friends when I mention that Bible students use the Bible to make a strong case about an ever-burning hellfire. The message of the third angel is one of their strongest scriptures.

By the way, I am not seeking to tell you what you should believe. I am merely communicating how sincere Bible students can acknowledge different points of view (and still reflect the love of God toward each other).

Let me first mention to you three verses that show the strength of their case.

- Revelation 14:10—“He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.”
- Revelation 14:11—“And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”
- Revelation 20:10—“The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”

Now, I will mention three verses why I (politely) believe differently from those wise, dedicated and sincere Bible students.

- Hebrews 9:27—“And it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.”
- Revelation 20:14—“This is the second death.
- Revelation 21:8— “All liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”