

Quarter Two: Allusions, Images, Symbols: How to Study Bible Prophecy

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Lesson 12—Precursors

Tuesday: Worshiping the Image, Again

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- **Last Week: “Ruth and Esther”**
 - Lessons drawn from the stories of Ruth & Esther & how that applies to Biblical prophecy
- **This Week: “Precursors”**
 - Lessons drawn from the Plain of Dura, as well as the NT Church / early Christians & how they apply to last-day events
 - Discover what will happen before the 2nd coming of Christ
 - Learn how to have peace of mind, in the midst of difficult times

Memory Text: “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind”
(2 Tim 1:7, NKJV)

The week in brief:

- 1. **Sunday:** Daniel Two & the Historicist Approach to Prophecy (James)
 - Dan 2 - Nebuchadnezzar’s dream / image of Daniel 2 / the rise & fall of nations & the biblical, historicist approach to Bible prophecy
- 2. **Monday:** Worshiping the Image (SQ)
 - Dan 3 – the statue on the Plain of Dura & faith in the midst of fiery trials
- 3. **Tuesday:** Worshiping the Image, Again (Jill)
 - Comparison of Dan 3 & Rev 13 - & the end-time issue of worship
- 4. **Wednesday:** Early Church Persecution (John D)
 - Acts 12 – Peter’s deliverance from prison; death penalty for NT Christians
- 5. **Thursday:** The Mark of the Beast (Daniel)
 - Issue of Sabbath vs Sunday – both from Revelation & Jesus’ ministry on this earth

Tuesday: Worshiping the Image, Again

Dan 3:15; Rev 13:11 – 17; Rev 14:9 – 12; Rev 16:2; Rev 19:20; Rev 20:4; Rom 1:18 – 25; Matt 12:30

- **7 Parallels between Dan 3 & Rev 13 & issue of worship**
 - 1. **Both feature an image**
 - Dan 3 – Image of gold, on the plain of Dura
 - Rev 13 – image to the beast
 - 3 entities in the last days:
 - Dragon = Satan
 - Sea beast = papacy (Rev 13:1 – 10)
 - Land beast = Protestant America (Rev 13:11 – 18)
 - Vs 14 – “And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who

dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the word and lived.”

- Image functions as a persecutor & an object of worship, just as the papacy did earlier

○ **2. Both involve worship**

- Dan 3 – bow down & worship
 - State (Babylonian Government) enforces worship of a god
- Rev 13:12 – “And he (land beast) exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.”
 - Land beast = Protestant America (state) enforces worship (of the Sea Beast / papacy)
- Vs 15 – “He (land beast) was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.”
 - An image to the first beast would be an organization functioning on much of the same principles as the first beast’s organization
 - 1,260 years of papal supremacy
 - Union of church & state – persecution / enforcement of the church beliefs by the secular government / state gov’t
 - Image to the beast = union of the state / political system with the religious system
 - Protestant America will repudiate her beliefs of freedom of Religion
 - First Amendment rights
 - Freedom of speech, religion, the press
 - She will speak like a dragon
 - Use force to enforce religious worship to the Roman Church system
 - Scarlet woman riding the beast in Rev 17
 - Apostate religious system connected with political power

○ 2. Both involve worship

○ **3. Both start with persuasion, then coercion & force**

- Dan 3 – music, worship; if refuse, coercion, threat of fiery furnace
- Rev 13 – signs & miracles (fire from heaven); coercion & threat of persecution if refuse to worship

○ **4. Both involve the threat of death**

- Dan 3 – death in the fiery furnace
- Rev 13 – death – Vs 15: “causes as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed”

○ **5. Both involve fire**

- Dan 3 – furnace heated 7 times hotter

- Rev 13:13 – “He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.”
- **6. Both involve choice to worship the Creator God or the beast system**
 - Dan 3 – worship of the one, true God vs the idol image
 - Could not see, nor hear, nor have any life
 - Worship of the one, true God, vs Babylon
 - Rev 14:7 – “saying with a loud voice, ‘Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.’”
 - Worship of our Creator God, Lord of heaven & earth vs Babylon / any man-made power
 - Rev 13:16 – “He causes all, both small & great, rich & poor, free & slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads”
 - Protestant America will force worship to the papacy
 - Legislate Sunday worship
- **7. Both involve a decision – and a stand**
 - Dan 3:16, 17 – “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, ‘O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in the matter. (17) If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king, (18) **But if not**, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up.’”
 - God is alive and able to deliver
 - But. If. Not.
 - Even if they weren’t delivered, they would stand for Jesus
 - Are all delivered?
 - All were delivered in Dan 3
 - All are not delivered immediately at the end time
 - Heb 11:32 – 38 – faith of both groups
 - Those who were delivered
 - Those who were not. (both still possessed faith)
 - Rev 20:4 – “...Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the Word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.”
 - Some will be killed – who refuse to worship the beast
 - They will be delivered – eventually
 - Eternity with Christ
 - It might look like the beast is winning: but Jesus wins in the end