

HEALING STREAM MINISTRIES presents...

THE UNDILUTED, FULL STRENGTH, THREE ANGELS' MESSAGES

with enough power to...

- cleanse from all sin
- set us free from all bondage
- break all the power of the enemy over us
- restore us to total spiritual health
- develop immunity to all last-day deceptions

#28 – Diagnosing Sin: The Traits of the Beast

Mr. Joe Blank (not his real name) once came to me, and with trembling voice told me what the doctors had told him a few days earlier: he had been diagnosed with a malignant form of cancer. His exact words about this were, *“This was one of the worst days of my life!”* Without trying to minimize the severity of the impact of this bad news, I later thought, Would it ever be possible for Mr. Blank to look at this diagnosis from a different perspective, such as, *“This was also one of the better days of my life...at least I found out I had cancer...what if I had not found out?”*

Is it possible that God also wants to use the traits of the beast to diagnose the deadly malignancy of sin in our lives? For years as I taught on the prophecies about the beast, I could convincingly point my finger at the traits of the beast, his blasphemies, his boastful claims, his persecution of others, etc. and feel a sense of righteous accomplishment in having exposed this antichrist power. Of course, I was not like the beast. But in probing deeper than ever before into the symbols of the Book of Revelation, I also started to see that the beast serves as a heavenly inspired caricature, not only of political and religious movements, but also of individuals who try to save themselves, i.e. trying to do Christ's work for Him.

Take a closer look at the horns, the mouths, the heads, the crowns, and the names of the beast. What do you see? Pride, self-sufficiency, arrogance, self on parade, self in charge, and self playing god? Someone who is trying to prove something and impress others? Someone whose 'body language' says, Watch out! Here I come! Don't stand in my way! and don't mess with me! Wherever these traits are present, the deadly virus of the beast is also present. *“There is nothing so offensive to God or so dangerous to the human soul as pride and self-sufficiency. Of all sins it is the most hopeless, the most incurable”* (E.G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 154).

If up till now you have believed that your most dangerous enemy is something or someone out there, then (without taking away from the his-

torical and prophetic waymarks of the beast of Revelation) look again at the beast, and let the beast cartoon serve as one of God's diagnostic tools to expose the cancer of sin as residing inside of you in the all the unconquered and unbroken areas where self reigns. "*Self is the enemy we most need to fear*" (Gospel Workers, p. 475). When you discover the depths and depravity of sin and self, it may well be one of the worst days of your life. But it may also be one of the best days of your life because at least you found out, and because you are now ready to receive the intervention of Jesus Christ, the Great Physician, and the remedy of the healing stream that flows from Calvary's mountain.

To worship the beast means to depend on the pretentious and spurious promises of an antichrist whose claims are that you can do a far better job of saving yourself than Jesus Christ. To worship the Lamb means to depend on the slain Lamb as solely sufficient for salvation. To worship the Lamb means to debunk our own "power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, and glory and blessing" in order to give these to the Lamb. He, and only He is worthy to receive these!

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