



PROPHECY ODYSSEY

8

A Woman, a Child, and a Dragon

AN AMAZING FACT:

*In 1954, a 4-year-old girl was abducted from her home in a remote Colombian mountain village. Evidently, the kidnapping plans went awry, and her captors abandoned the child deep in the jungle. Though often tormented by insects and loneliness, the hardy child miraculously survived five years with the help of a troop of capuchin monkeys. There was plenty of water in the jungle—and the monkeys, intrigued by the little girl, would often leave her scraps of fruit and seeds until she eventually learned to climb trees and find food for herself. When two hunters finally found her, she had forgotten any human language and lost all inhibition. Not remembering her birth name, she never found her family. She was later adopted, given the name Marina, became re-civilized, and moved to Britain, where she married and had a family. Her story is detailed in the book *The Girl With No Name*.*

Avivid Bible prophecy found in Revelation 12 tells of a noble woman clothed with cosmic light—a woman who is threatened and persecuted by a fierce, many-headed, red dragon. Ultimately, the woman is driven into the wilderness, where she is fed and protected by God.

The prophecy goes on to say that this woman and her offspring would become the



target of the devil's wrath in the last days. Who is this woman clothed with light and who stirs the anger of the dragon? Is she in the world today? How do we find her? The answers are in the prophecy itself ...



When you see a blank, use your Bible to look up the missing word and fill it in.



How does Revelation picture God's true church?

REVELATION 12:1, 2, 5 A _____ clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. Then being with _____, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. ... She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a _____ of iron.

NOTE: In Bible prophecy, God's church is symbolized by a pure woman (Jeremiah 6:2). In Revelation 12, this woman is clothed with the sun, moon, and stars—the natural light of God's creation. Jesus told the church, "You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). The sun represents the light of Jesus (Psalm 84:11; Malachi 4:2). The moon represents the promises and history of the Old Testament upon which the church was built (Zechariah 8:9; Ephesians 2:20). The stars above her head symbolize the leadership of the church—the 12 tribes and judges in the Old Testament and the 12 apostles in the New Testament. The one who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron is Jesus (Psalm 2:7–9; Revelation 19:13–16).



Who is the "great red dragon"—and what does he try to do?

REVELATION 12:9 The great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the _____ and _____.

REVELATION 12:4 The dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to _____ her Child as soon as it was born.

NOTE: The dragon is Satan, who, at the time of Jesus' birth, was working through the pagan Roman Empire. Satan influenced Herod, a ruler under Rome, to try to murder the infant Jesus by killing all the newborn boys in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:16).



What happens after Satan fails to destroy Jesus?

REVELATION 12:5 *And her Child was _____ to God and His throne.*

NOTE: After His resurrection, Jesus ascended to heaven and to God's throne (Acts 1:9–11), where He is now beyond the physical reach of Satan.



After Jesus was caught up to heaven, what did Satan do to the church?

REVELATION 12:3 *When the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he _____ the woman who gave birth to the male Child.*

NOTE: When Satan could no longer vent his hatred upon Jesus, he decided to hurt Jesus by turning his fury against the supreme object of Jesus' love: His church.



Where did the woman go during this terrifying period of persecution—and how long did it last?

REVELATION 12:6 *The woman fled into the _____, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.*

NOTE: The woman (God's church) fled into the wilderness (the remote places of the earth) to hide from the enemy. It is a well-known historical fact that during the Dark Ages, God's people fled to mountains, caves, and other solitary places, including the shores of America, to seek religious freedom and protection from papal persecution. The 1,260 days—also described in the Bible as 42 months or as three and a half years—refers to the terrible 1,260-year period of persecution in which millions died for their faith. During this time, God's church was very much alive but was forced underground, so it was not identifiable as an official, visible organization. (See the supplement entitled "Years of Persecution.")



What are two other identifying marks of God's true church?

REVELATION 12:17 *The dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the _____ of God and have the _____ of Jesus Christ.*

NOTE: God's remnant church, into which He is calling all His people, will keep God's Ten Commandments, including the Sabbath. It will also have the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit, or gift, of prophecy (Revelation 19:10). God calls His end-time church "the remnant" because it is identical in doctrine and characteristics to the apostolic church. A "remnant" is the last remaining portion of a bolt of cloth; it is exactly like the first piece from the same bolt.



How did Jesus say that we demonstrate our love for Him?

JOHN 14:15 *If you love Me, _____ My commandments.*

1 JOHN 5:3 *This is the love of God, that we keep His _____.*

NOTE: God's true church is easily identified by its willingness to obey all of His Ten Commandments!



What three angelic messages will God's end-time church be preaching?

A. REVELATION 14:7 *Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His _____ has come; and _____ Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.*

B. REVELATION 14:8 *And another angel followed, saying, " _____ is _____, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."*

C. REVELATION 14:9, 10 *Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the _____ and his image, and receives his _____ on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God."*

NOTE: These three angelic statements represent the three urgent messages that God's church will preach before Jesus returns.



To whom will God's church preach these messages?

REVELATION 14:6 *Having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to _____, _____, tribe, tongue, and people.*

NOTE: God's end-time church will preach this awesome three-point message to every nation on Earth.



What specifications has God given in His Word to help us identify His end-time church?

- A. *It will appear and do its visible work after it emerges from the wilderness in 1798 (Revelation 12:6, 13–17).*
- B. *It will teach the same truths the apostles taught, and all of its teachings will agree with the Bible (Ephesians 2:20).*
- C. *It will keep the Ten Commandments, including the Sabbath (Revelation 12:17).*
- D. *It will have the spirit of prophecy (Revelation 12:17; 19:10).*
- E. *It will proclaim God's three end-time messages with a loud voice (Revelation 14:6–14).*
- F. *It will be a worldwide movement (Revelation 14:6).*
- G. *It will teach the everlasting gospel, which is salvation through Christ alone (Revelation 14:6).*

NOTE: Many lovely Christians are members of churches that do not meet the above specifications. However, no such church can be God's remnant into which He is calling all His sincere children, because His end-time church must meet all seven specifications.



Jesus gives us these seven prophetic identification points and says, "Go and find My church"—what does He promise regarding your search?

LUKE 11:9 *Seek, and you will _____.*



How many church organizations in the world will fit these seven points?

EPHESIANS 4:5 *One Lord, _____, one baptism.*

NOTE: Only one church in the world fits all of these specifications—the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which is bringing you these messages. It has been preaching the great three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6–12 all over the world, and millions are responding!



Many denominations call themselves Christian—does that make them God's true church?

ISAIAH 4:1 *In that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, "We will eat our own _____ and wear our own _____; only let us be called by your _____, to take away our reproach."*

NOTE: Food (bread) is a symbol of the Word of God (John 6:35, 51, 52, 63), and apparel is a symbol of righteousness (Revelation 19:8). The seven women in this prophecy have their own bread (concept of truth) and want to keep their own clothing (righteousness). They do not want the spotless robes of Christ's righteousness. All they want is to take the name of Jesus, probably because the Bible says, "There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).



Once a person discovers God's true end-time church, is it necessary to become a member?

ACTS 2:47 *And the Lord _____ to the _____ daily those who were being saved.*

NOTE: Yes, membership in God's end-time church is imperative. Notice how clearly God answers this question about membership:

- We are all called into one body (Colossians 3:15).
- That body is the church (Colossians 1:18).
- We enter that body by baptism (1 Corinthians 12:13).

It is just as imperative to enter God's church today as it was to enter the ark in Noah's day. The Lord says to you today what He said to the people back in Noah's day: "Come into the ark, you and all your household" (Genesis 7:1).



How many ways of escape were there in Noah's day?

HEBREWS 11:7

By faith Noah ... prepared an _____ for the saving of his household.

NOTE: Jesus says that the time just before His second coming will be like Noah's day (Luke 17:26). There will be only one way of escape, just as there was only one ark in Noah's day.



Since there are many faithful Christians in other churches, and since God has only one true remnant, what will happen to these sincere Christians?

JOHN 10:16

Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will _____ My voice; and there will be _____ flock and one shepherd.

REVELATION 18:2, 4

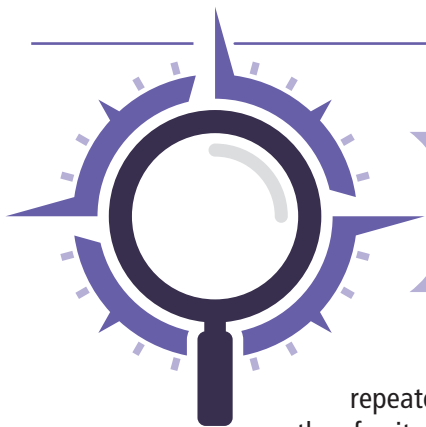
Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen. ... Come _____ of her, my _____, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.

NOTE: Jesus calls all of His faithful, honest followers to come out of Babylon. They will hear His voice, respond, and enter His one true end-time church.

» YOUR RESPONSE

Jesus is calling you today to enter the safety of His great end-time church. You are very precious to Him. Will you respond now to His call?

ANSWER: _____



FURTHER STUDY

Years of Persecution

The 1,260 years of tribulation is repeatedly mentioned in the Bible because, thus far, it was the worst persecution faced by God's people (Matthew 24:21). It is referred to as 1,260 days, 42 months, and three and a half times/years (Revelation 12:6, 14; 13:5; Daniel 7:25). Using the Jewish calendar, which has 360 days in a year, all three add up to the same amount of time—1,260 years. One prophetic day equals one literal year (Ezekiel 4:6; Numbers 14:34).



History shows that the papacy is the power that persecuted the saints for 1,260 years. The period began in AD 538, when papal power became supreme in Christendom according to the decree of Roman Emperor Justinian. In his decree, he acknowledged the bishop of Rome as the head of all churches. This letter became a part of Justinian's Code, the fundamental law of the empire. The 1,260-year period ended in 1798 when Napoleon's general, Alexander Berthier, took the pope captive. At least 50 million Christians died for their faith during this period of persecution.

THREE CRUCIAL POINTS

Three facts of utmost importance to God's people are established in Revelation 12:10–12. These facts are:

1. Jesus defeated Satan, the accuser of the brethren, at the cross.
2. All of us can overcome him through the blood of Jesus and by sharing our testimonies.
3. The devil is infuriated because he knows that his time is short. We cannot expect him to behave like a gentleman. He is our bitterest enemy.





The message is that Jesus, who has defeated Satan, offers His matchless power to us as a free gift. With Jesus' power in our lives, we cannot fail. Satan is a defeated foe. He was defeated in the war in heaven and cast out. He was defeated at the cross and lost his dominion. He will again be defeated when, attacking God's holy city, he is forever blotted from the face of the earth in the lake of fire. And most wonderful of all, Jesus promises that Satan will be defeated in his bitter fight to destroy you and me. What a tremendous message of hope from our Savior!

SUMMARY SHEET

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Please read this lesson before completing this Summary Sheet. All answers can be found in the study guide. Fill in the boxes for the correct answers. **Numbers in parentheses (1) indicate the number of correct answers.**

1. The woman clothed with the sun in Revelation 12 represents (1)

- ☐ An angel
- ☐ God's true church
- ☐ The nation of Israel
- ☐ Canada

2. Who is the "great red dragon" that influenced Herod to try to kill baby Jesus? (1)

- ☐ Satan
- ☐ Nebuchadnezzar
- ☐ Judas
- ☐ Persia

3. Where did Jesus go after Satan failed to destroy Him? (1)

- ☐ Heaven
- ☐ Fiji
- ☐ New York
- ☐ Purgatory

4. Whom did Satan persecute after Jesus was caught up to heaven? (1)

- ☐ God's church
- ☐ The angels
- ☐ The Jesuits

5. The 1,260 days of persecution in Revelation 12:6 symbolize (1)

- ☐ Three weeks
- ☐ 21 months
- ☐ 1,260 literal years
- ☐ No particular length of time

6. The testimony of Jesus is (1)

- ☐ A book written by Martin Luther
- ☐ The Spirit of Prophecy
- ☐ A new movie about Jesus
- ☐ A lost chapter of the Bible

7. Those who love Jesus will (1)

- ☐ Keep His commandments
- ☐ Prove their love by running marathons
- ☐ Hate and mistreat non-believers
- ☐ All live together in the same city

8. God's true church will preach the three angels' messages of Revelation 14. (1)

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

9. To whom will God's church preach the three angels' messages? (1)

- ☐ Only North America
- ☐ Only Africa
- ☐ Only to the Muslims
- ☐ To every nation, tribe, tongue, and people

10. Which of the following are characteristics of God's end-time church? (3)

- ☐ It has the gift of prophecy
- ☐ Its logo will be gold and red
- ☐ It will appear after 1798
- ☐ It will keep the Ten Commandments
- ☐ It will be the third of the seven churches of Revelation

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11. We can positively identify God's end-time church by using Scripture's identifying characteristics. (1)

- ☐ True
☐ False

12. The only church in the world that fits the Bible's description of God's end-time church is the Seventh-day Adventist Church. (1)

- ☐ True
☐ False

13. Although God has only one true church, there are faithful Christians among the other churches. (1)

- ☐ True
☐ False

14. What should a person do when they discover God's true last-day church? (1)

- ☐ Join the church
☐ Ignore them
☐ Ask a priest what to do

15. Would you like to join God's end-time church?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Be sure to answer all the questions above and on the reverse side!

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