



THE SCARLET HARLOT AND THE WOMAN IN WHITE

There are some 1,187 churches in the U. S. alone. This is so contrary to the prayer of Jesus, "that they may all be one." John 17:21. God's will is "that there should be no schism in the body." 1 Corinthians 12:25.

Of all the different churches, both here and around the world, God recognizes only one. Ephesians 4:4-6. Just as sure as there is only one Spirit (the Holy Spirit), one Lord (Jesus Christ), and one baptism (immersion), there is only one faith and one body. That one faith is the "faith of Jesus" and the one body is His one true church. Ephesians 1:22, 23; Colossians 1:18.

God warned, even at the time of the disciples, that there would be those who would depart from the faith and follow false teachers and devilish doctrines, rather than God and His Word. Acts 20:28-30; 1 Timothy 4:1, 2; 2 Timothy 4:3, 4

Is there any way today to tell the true church from all the false ones? Of course there is, but there is only one way to tell; that is the Word of God.

In Revelation 12:1 John beheld a "woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." In the Bible we find that a woman is used as a symbol for God's people or His church. Isaiah 54:5, 6; Jeremiah 6:2; 2 Corinthians 11:2. Therefore, we have before us here the church of God clothed with the sun, and standing upon the moon.

The church being clothed with the brilliance of the sun may be thought of as symbolizing the glory of God, especially as revealed in the gospel of Christ, whereas the moon would be a most appropriate symbol of the Mosaic period. The ceremonial law of this period was "a shadow of things to come" and was eventually fulfilled in the life and death of Jesus.

The significance of these symbols becomes more pronounced when considered with regard to the relationship of the moon to the sun. As the moon merely reflects the light of the sun, so the Old Testament period shone with the light borrowed from the gospel era. The Mosaic period was but a reflection of the light of the "Sun of righteousness." Malachi 4:2. Thus, the church is portrayed as having the moon under her feet in that the Mosaic period was about to end, and the gospel sun was just beginning to rise, clothing God's people in the full brilliance of its light. The twelve stars in the woman's crown are symbolic of the twelve apostles.

All of the other churches are portrayed as whores, or harlots. Revelation 17:1-6. This is the great "Mother Church" and all of her corrupt daughters, who have turned from the truth. Babylon means confusion and refers to the confused and rebellious state of the apostate churches of the world.

There are only two things that Babylon is in agreement on. That you do not need to keep the commandments of God; and that you are to hate, despise, and mock those who do. In verses two and five of chapter twelve we find that the woman is about to give birth to a "man child", which refers to none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, for He alone has been caught up to God and His throne (Ephesians 1:20, 21; Hebrews 8:1). Only Jesus has received the commission "to rule all nations with a rod of iron" and this He is about to do (Revelation 19:15, 16).

A "great red dragon" is portrayed as waiting to destroy Christ as soon as He is born into this world. The identity of this dragon is found in Revelation 12:9 where it is declared to be "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan."

Satan and his earthly servants sought to destroy Jesus from the very time of His birth. Throughout His life they dogged His steps, ever ready to snuff out His life, but not even the combined forces of earth and hell could overcome Him. Jesus overcame all the powers of darkness and ascended "up unto God, and to His throne" and as our High Priest "who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" His promise is "to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne" (Revelation 12:5; Hebrews 8:1; Revelation 3:21).

It was Satan who tried to destroy Jesus at birth, but through what power was he working to achieve his purpose? Anyone who is the least bit familiar with the story of the birth of Jesus is aware of the fiendish attempt of Herod to destroy Jesus by slaying all the children of Bethlehem up to two years of age. But who was Herod? He was a Roman governor who derived his power from the Roman Empire. It was this power that warred against Christ and His people during the first centuries of the Christian Era. It is also interesting to note that "during the second, third, fourth, and fifth centuries of the Christian Era, next to the eagle the dragon was the principle standard of the Roman Legions." Uriah Smith, Daniel and the Revelation, p. 553.

Satan had been unable to defeat Christ in heaven (Revelation 12:7-9), he failed to destroy Him at birth (Revelation 12:4, 5), and he was exposed, defeated and cast down by Him at Calvary (Revelation 12:10-12). Realizing that he has failed and that his time is short Satan now directs his attention to the church and begins a concentrated persecution of God's people. (Verse 13).

In Revelation 12:14 the church is said to receive eagle's wings. These wings are given to signify the great speed with which God's people had to flee for safety when Satan established his great persecuting power (Exodus 19:4). As the church makes her flight she is said to flee unto the wilderness, or a secluded, sparsely populated area. In commenting on the event that took place during this period of time, one commentator has stated "the true church was out of sight. In secret places they worshiped God. The caves and the hidden recesses of the valleys of the Piedmont may be taken as representative places, where the truth of the gospel was sacredly cherished from the rage of its foes. Here God watched over His church, and by His providence protected and nourished her." Uriah Smith, Daniel and Revelation, p. 557-558.

The church was to remain in the wilderness "for a time, and times, and a half a time" (verse 14). This period of time is identical with the "Time and times and dividing of times," (Daniel 7:25) "the time, times and an half," (Daniel 12:7) the "forty and two months," (Revelation 11:2, 13:5) and the "thousand two hundred and threescore days," (Revelation 11:3, 12:6). Each of these equal 1260 days or years and refer to the persecution the church endured during the Dark Ages, from 538 when the last of the three Arian kingdoms were destroyed, to 1798 when the antichrist power would receive its deadly wound.

Having failed to destroy the church through the "flood" of persecution, false doctrines, and cunningly devised fables, Satan, now all the more enraged sets out to destroy the remnant or

"the ones remaining." He now directs all his energies to destroying God's last-day church. It is Satan's last effort against God's last church, which is identified as those who "keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 12:17.

There are at least points in Scripture which enable one to identify God's true, remnant, church in these last days.

- 1. It will be identical to the early church. (Revelation 12:13, 14, 17)**
- 2. To have the faith of Jesus. (Revelation 14:12)**
- 3. To have the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy. (Revelation 12:17; 19:10)**
- 4. To arise after the 1260 years of persecution or after 1798. (Revelation 12:14)**
- 5. Arise after the 2300 day/year prophecy. (Daniel 8:14)**
- 6. Was to experience a great disappointment. (Revelation 10:7-11)**
- 7. To be a world-wide movement. (Revelation 14:6)**
- 8. To proclaim the "everlasting gospel." (Revelation 14:6)**
- 9. To warn that the judgement is taking place. (Revelation 14:7)**
- 10. To call the attention of the world to God as the Creator. (Revelation 14:7)**
- 11. Not an offspring of Babylon. (Revelation 12:1-17; 17:1-6)**
- 12. To declare the fall of Babylon. (Revelation 14:8)**
- 13. To identify and oppose the antichrist. (Revelation 13)**
- 14. To warn of the mark of the beast. (Revelation 14:9-11)**
- 15. To call God's people out of Babylon. (Revelation 18:4)**
- 16. Declares the seal of God. (Revelation 7:1-3)**
- 17. Rejects all false teachings. (Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; Revelation 22:18, 19)**
- 18. To base all of their beliefs upon the Bible and the Bible alone. (John 14:23, 24; Revelation 22:18, 19)**
- 19. It is to keep all of the commandments of God, including the fourth or the seventh-day Sabbath. (Revelation 12:17; 14:12)**
- 20. To proclaim the three angel's messages of righteousness by faith. (Revelation 14:6-11)**

Candid, unbiased investigation reveals there is but one church that meets all 20 of these Bible specifications. That church is the world-wide Seventh-day Adventist Church whose 15,000,000 members take very seriously the divine injunction to carry the everlasting gospel "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." (Revelation 14:6) The only church that rejects all of the false teachings of Babylon. Some of which are: 1. Angels are the spirits of dead people. 2. The antichrist is a future, unknown person. 3. The atonement is full, final and complete. 4. Babylon is not the three-fold entity of Paganism, Catholicism, and apostate Protestantism. 5. It doesn't matter how one is baptized. 6. The standards for the Christian are determined by society, rather than the word of God. 7. Jesus is not, as our High Priest, cleansing the heavenly sanctuary. 8. God did not actually create this world in six literal days. 9. The coming of Jesus will not be a literal, visible, audible event witnessed by all. 10. Faith does not have to be accompanied by works of obedience. 11. There is an eternally burning hell. 12. Jesus did not really come "in the likeness of sinful flesh." 13. Man by nature has an immortal soul. 14. All Scripture is not inspired by God. 15. Tradition is of equal importance with Scripture. 16. The judgement does not take place until after Jesus comes. 17. The law of God has been abolished. 18. The "Mark of the Beast" is some computer code. 19. The millennium occurs before Jesus comes. 20. The power of the Holy Spirit is not sufficient for us to live victorious lives. 21. The Old Testament is obsolete.

God acknowledges only two churches in the Scripture. One He calls a "chaste virgin", His "remnant" people. The other (all those that are not a part of the remnant) He calls "Babylon", a "great whore" and all of her harlot daughters. One seeks to turn people to God and the truths of His Word. The other is guilty of turning people away from God's Word to

doctrines of devils and cunningly devised fables. One the devil seeks to destroy, the other he supports and directs in her apostasy. One is the bride of Christ, the other the bride of Satan.

Only two churches - and God and Satan both have people in both of them. The devil's disciples in the remnant will be shaken out, and God's people in Babylon are called out. Revelation 18:1-4. Only two groups, which will you be in? God calls His people out of Babylon that they might receive the kingdom.

"Fear not, little flock: for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke 12:32. He calls His people out of Babylon into His "little flock", into His remnant church; His one fold. John 10:16.

Do you hear Him calling to you, "come out of her, My people"? Can you hear His voice speaking to your heart? Are you willing to listen to that voice? Remember, He asks: "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" Amos 3:3. Is your life in harmony with His Word?

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." John 10:27, 28. Won't you respond to His call?

Study Helps

Ephesians 4:4-6 ----- How many bodies does God recognize as His?
Ephesians 1:22, 23 ----- What is this body?
Revelation 12:1, 2 --- What symbol is used to portray God's church?
Jeremiah 6:2 ----- What is Zion compared to?
Isaiah 51:16 ----- Who is Zion?
Revelation 17:1-5 ----- To what are the corrupt churches compared?
Revelation 12:3, 9 ----- Who is this beast which carries Babylon?
Revelation 12:13 ----- Whom does the devil persecute?
Revelation 12:14-16 ----- How long did the church go into hiding?
Revelation 12:17 --- How is the last day, remnant church identified?
Revelation 19:10 ----- What is the testimony of Jesus?
Revelation 18:1-5 ----- What is God's last call to His people?
John 10:16 ----- Where are they to come to?
John 10:27 ----- What does Jesus say His sheep do?
John 10:28 ----- What is His promise to those who follow Him?