

17 -- THE JUDGMENT AND 1844

(God's End Time Movement)

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In lesson 13, we discovered that the judgment in heaven began in 1844. This date marked the end of the longest time prophecy in the Bible. We have also discovered that 1844 marks the beginning of the first phase of the judgment and the beginning of the final work of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary prior to His return to earth. Our attention in our last few studies has been directed to the heavenly sanctuary where Jesus is performing the final phase of His ministry. However, equally fascinating is what happened on earth in 1844. Jesus began the work of raising up a bold group of reformers to rediscover and proclaim the truth concerning the heavenly mediation of Jesus. By the very act of explaining and defending this Bible truth, these reformers will expose the counterfeit systems of the beast, and prepare a people for their soon coming Savior. This lesson will focus on this end-time movement and the end-time church that is carrying out this work.

1. What does a woman symbolize in Bible prophecy?

Jeremiah 6:2 I have likened the daughter of Zion to a lovely and delicate woman.

Note: "Zion" is an Old Testament expression for the people of God (Isaiah 51:16). God's people, His Church, is symbolized in Scripture by a woman. A pure woman represents the true church, whereas a corrupt woman represents the false or apostate church.

2. How does Revelation picture God's true church?

Revelation 12:1, 2, 5 Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. ... She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and to His throne."

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, "Ye are the light of the world." Matthew 5:14 (KJV). The sun represents the light of Jesus. (Psalm 84:11; Malachi 4:2) The moon under her feet represents the types and shadows of the Old Testament sacrificial system. As the moon reflects the light of the sun, so the sacrificial system was helpful because it reflected the light of the Messiah to come (Colossians 2:16, 17; Hebrews 10:1). The 12 stars above her head symbolize the leadership of the church--12 tribes in the Old Testament and 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).

3. Who is the "great red dragon," and what does he try to do?

Revelation 12:9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, ...

Revelation 12:4 ... And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour 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 baby Jesus by killing all the infants in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:16).

4. What happens after Satan fails to destroy Jesus?

Revelation 12:5 ... And her Child was caught up to God and His throne.

Note: After His resurrection, Jesus ascended to heaven and to God's throne (Acts 1:9-11) where He was beyond the reach of Satan.

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

Revelation 12:13 Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child.

Note: When Satan could no longer vent his hatred on Jesus, he decided to hurt Jesus by turning his fury against His church.

6. Where did the woman go during this period of persecution? How long did it last?

Revelation 12:6 Then the woman fled into the wilderness, 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 earth) to hide from her enemies. It is a well-known historical fact that during the Dark Ages, God's people fled to the caves and solitary places of earth, 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 during which millions died for their faith. During this time period, God's church was alive but was not identifiable as an official, visible organization.

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

Revelation 12:17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Note: God's remnant church, into which He is calling all His people, will keep God's Ten Commandments (including the seventh-day Sabbath). It will also have the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit, or gift, of prophecy (Revelation 19:10), which we will study further in lesson 24. 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.

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

John 14:15 If you love Me, keep My commandments.

Note: God's true church will be recognized by its sacrificial love and its willingness to obey His commandments.

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

Revelation 14:7 ... 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.

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

Revelation 14:9, 10 Then 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 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.

10. 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 every nation, tribe, tongue, and people--

Note: God's end-time church will preach this great three-point message to every nation on earth.

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

Revelation 12:17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

- 1. It will appear and do its visible work after it emerges from the wilderness in 1798** (Revelation 12:6, 13-17).
- 2. It will teach the same truths the apostles taught, and all of its teachings will agree with the Bible** (Revelation 12:17).
- 3. It will keep the Ten Commandments, including the Bible Sabbath** (Revelation 12:17).
- 4. It will have the Spirit of Prophecy** (Revelation 12:17; 19:10). **(We will study this later)**
- 5. It will proclaim God's three end-time messages with a loud voice** (Revelation 14:6-12).
- 6. It will be a worldwide movement and yet relatively small** (Revelation 14:6, 12:17).
- 7. It will teach the everlasting gospel, which is salvation through Jesus Christ alone** (Revelation 14:6).

Note: Many lovely Christians are members of churches that do not meet the above seven 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.

12. Jesus gives you these seven prophetic identification points and then says, "Go and find My church." What does He promise regarding your search?

Luke 11:9 ...seek, and you will find...

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

Ephesians 4:5 ... one Lord, one faith, one baptism;...

Note: Only one church in the entire world fits all of these specifications--the Seventh-day Adventist church, which is bringing you these seminar messages. It is right now preaching the great three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12 all over the world. Millions are responding.

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

Acts 2:47 ... And the Lord added to the church 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.

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

Hebrews 11:7 By faith Noah ... prepared an ark 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.

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

Revelation 18:2, 4 And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, ... And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues."

Note: Jesus will call 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 to Jesus

Jesus invites all people to follow the truth of His word, to enter into a knowledgeable and dynamic love relationship with Him that will enable them to keep the commandments of God through the power of the indwelling Christ. He invites all to become a part of the remnant people of Bible prophecy who are extending this final warning message into all the world. Jesus is calling you today to enter the safety of His great end-time church. Will you respond now to His call?

ANSWER: _____