

# The Bride of Christ

An angel with large, feathered white wings stands on the surface of the moon. She is wearing a long, flowing white dress and has her arms outstretched. The background is a vibrant, colorful space scene with various nebulae in shades of red, purple, and green, and numerous stars. The entire scene is framed by a dark, curved border.

Amazing Facts  
Study Guide

## Amazing Facts Study Guide 23 - The Bride of Christ

The Bible says there is but one body, or church, into which Jesus calls His end-time people - the bride of Christ. To some, this is unnerving, as there are thousands of different churches today that call themselves Christian. Virtually every one claims to be God's church, yet they each differ widely in biblical interpretation, faith, and practice. It's quite impossible for the honest seeker of truth to investigate the claims of each one. However, we can be thankful that Jesus has solved this dilemma for us by describing His church in such detail that you can easily identify it! That description, vivid and powerful, is found in Revelation 12 and 14, and it will thrill you with amazing truths that will help you in the end times. Please read Revelation 12:1-17 before beginning your journey of discovery into these transforming truths.

---

### 1. By what prophetic symbol does Jesus represent His true church?

"I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman." Jeremiah 6:2. "And say unto Zion, Thou art my people." Isaiah 51:16.

**Answer:** We learned in Study Guide 22 that Jesus symbolizes His true, pure church (Zion) as a pure woman and an apostate church as a harlot. A few other texts which also utilize this symbolism are 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:22, 23; and Revelation 19:7, 8.

---

### 2. In Revelation 12:1, Jesus symbolizes His church as a woman "clothed with the sun," with "the moon under her feet," and wearing "a crown of twelve stars." What do these symbols mean?

**Answer: A.** The sun represents Jesus, His gospel, and His righteousness. "The Lord God is a sun." Psalms 84:11. (See also Malachi 4:2.) Without Jesus there is no salvation (Acts 4:12). More than anything else, Jesus wants His church to overflow with His presence and glory.

**B.** "The moon under her feet" represents the sacrificial system of the Old Testament. As the moon reflects the light of the sun, so the sacrificial system was helpful spiritually only as it reflected light from the Messiah to come (Hebrews 10:1).

**C.** The "crown of twelve stars" represents the work of the 12 disciples, which crowned the early years of the New Testament church.

### 3. Next, the prophecy states that the woman is in labor, about to deliver a baby who would one day rule all nations with a rod of iron. She then delivered the "man child," and later He was taken up to God's throne in heaven (Revelation 12:1, 2, 5). Who was this baby?

**Answer:** The baby was Jesus. He will one day rule all nations with a rod of iron (Revelation 19:13-16; Psalms 2:7-9). Jesus, who was crucified for our sins, was raised from the dead and ascended to heaven (Acts 1:9-11). His resurrection power in our lives is one of Jesus' essential gifts to His people (Philippians 3:10).

### 4. Revelation 12:3, 4 introduces "a great red dragon" who hated the "man child" and tried to kill him at birth. You may remember this dragon from Study Guide 20. Who was the dragon?

**Answer:** The dragon represents Satan, who was cast out of heaven (Revelation 12:7-9) and who was working at the time of Jesus' birth through the pagan Roman empire. The ruler who tried to kill Jesus at birth was Herod, a king under pagan Rome. He killed all the male babies of Bethlehem, hoping that one of them would be Jesus (Matthew 2:16).

### 5. What is the meaning of the "seven heads" and "ten horns" of the dragon, and of "the third part of the stars of heaven" being cast to the earth?

**Answer: A.** The "seven heads" represent the seven hills or mountains upon which Rome was built (Revelation 17:9, 10). We have now encountered a beast with seven heads and 10 horns three times in our Study Guides (Revelation 12:3; 13:1; 17:3).

**B.** The "ten horns" represent the governments, or nations, that support the major powers in their oppression of God's people and church. During pagan Rome's tenure (Revelation 12:3, 4), they represented the 10 barbarian tribes that supported the papacy in eventually bringing down the Roman empire (Daniel 7:23, 24). These tribes later became

modern Europe. In the last days, they represent all the nations of the world united in the end-time coalition (Revelation 16:14; 17:12, 13, 16) which will support "Babylon the great" in her warfare against God's people.

The "third part of the stars" represent the rebellious angels who were cast out of heaven with Lucifer.

**C.** "The third part of the stars of heaven" are the angels who supported Lucifer in his insurrection in heaven and who were cast out with him (Revelation 12:9; Luke 10:18; Isaiah 14:12).

### A Review and Summary

Thus far, the prophecy has covered the following Bible facts:

1. God's true church appears, symbolized as a pure woman.
2. Jesus is born into the church.
3. Satan, working through King Herod of pagan Rome, tries to kill baby Jesus.
4. Satan's plan is unsuccessful.
5. Jesus' ascension is pictured.

### 6. What did Satan do after he failed in his plan to destroy baby Jesus?

"He persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child." Revelation 12:13.

**Answer:** Since he was no longer able to attack Jesus personally, he aimed his fury and persecution at God's church and His people.

### Six Identifying Points

In Revelation chapters 12 and 14, Jesus gives us six descriptive points to use in identifying His end-time church. Watch for them as you study the remainder of this Study Guide.

---

### 7. What did the woman (church) do to protect herself, and what is the "wilderness" spoken of in Revelation 12:6, 14?

**Answer: A.** Verses 6 and 14 say, "The woman fled into the wilderness," where she was protected for "a time, and times, and half a time" (or 1,260 literal years) from the wrath of Satan--who was then working through papal Rome. The "two wings" represent the protection and support God gave the church during her time in the "wilderness" (Exodus 19:4; Deuteronomy 32:11). The time spent in the wilderness is the same 1,260-year period of papal prominence and persecution (A.D. 538 to 1798) that Jesus repeatedly mentioned in prophecy. One prophetic day equals one literal year (Ezekiel 4:6).

**B.** The term "wilderness" refers to the solitary places of earth (mountains, caves, forests, etc.) where God's people could hide in seclusion and thus escape total annihilation (Hebrews 11:37, 38). And hide they did--the Waldenses, Albigenses, Huguenots, and many others. God's people (His church) would have been obliterated if they had not fled and hid in the wilderness during this devastating persecution by the papacy. (In one 40-year period, "from the beginning of the order of the Jesuits, in the year 1540, to 1580, nine hundred thousand were destroyed. One hundred fifty thousand perished in the Inquisition in 30 years." <sup>1</sup>) At least 50 million people died for their faith during this 1,260-year time period. God's church did not exist as an official organization during this 1,260-year time period. From A.D. 538 to 1798 it was alive but not identifiable as an organization. When it came out of hiding after the 1,260 years, it still had the same doctrine and characteristics as the apostolic church, which entered the "wilderness" in A.D. 538.

The 1,260 days of Revelation 12:6 refer to the 1,260 literal years of papal rule that is so often mentioned in Bible prophecy.

**Note:** We have now discovered our first two identification points for Jesus' end-time church:

1. It would not exist officially as an organization between A.D. 538 and 1798.
2. It would arise and do its end-time work after 1798.

Many fled to America to

There are many loving, genuine Christians in churches that were officially in existence before 1798. But none of these churches can be God's end-time church into which Jesus is calling all His people, because Jesus' end-time church had to arise after 1798. This means that most of the popular Protestant churches cannot be God's end-time church because they existed officially before 1798.

escape the terrible persecutions of God's people.

<sup>1</sup>Albert Barnes, *Notes on Daniel*, comment on Daniel 7:25, p. 328.

#### **8. In Revelation 12:17, God calls His end-time church the remnant. What does the word "remnant" mean?**

**Answer:** It means the last remaining portion. In reference to Jesus' church, it means His church of the very last days, which is identical in doctrine to the apostolic church.

#### **9. In Revelation 12:17, what additional two-point description did Jesus give of His end-time remnant church?**

**Answer:** It would keep all the Ten Commandments, including the seventh-day Sabbath of the fourth commandment (John 14:15; Revelation 22:14). It also would have the "testimony of Jesus", which the Bible tells us is the spirit of prophecy (Revelation 19:10). (Study Guide 24 will give a full explanation of the gift of prophecy.)

#### **So here are Jesus' next two points of identification for His end-time remnant church:**

God's remnant church will keep His commandments and will also have the gift of prophecy.

**3.** It will keep God's commandments, including His seventh-day Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

**4.** It will have the gift of prophecy.

Remember that while hosts of sincere Christian people are found in churches that do not keep the Sabbath or have the gift of prophecy, none of these churches can be God's remnant end-time church into which Jesus is calling all last-day Christians, because God's end-time church will both keep God's commandments and have the gift of prophecy.

#### **10. What final two points of identification for God's remnant does the book of Revelation provide?**

**Answer:** The final two points of the six are: (5) It will be a worldwide missionary church (Revelation 14:6), and (6) It will be preaching the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-14, which are briefly summarized below.

**A. God's judgment is in session. Worship Him!** God's end-time church must be preaching that the judgment began in 1844 (see Study Guides 18 and 19). It also calls upon people to "worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Revelation 14:7. How do we worship God as Creator? God wrote the answer in the fourth commandment. "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." Exodus 20:8, 11. So the first angel's message commands all to worship God as Creator by keeping holy His seventh-day Sabbath, which He gave to us as a memorial of Creation.

**B. Come out of the fallen churches of Babylon.**

**C. Don't worship the beast or receive his mark,** which is Sunday as a holy day. Beware of all counterfeits.

**Note:** Here are the final two identification points:

**5.** God's end-time church will be a worldwide missionary church.

**6.** It will be preaching and teaching the three-point message of Revelation 14:6-14.

#### **Now let's review the six points that Jesus gives us for identifying His end-time remnant church:**

**1.** It would not exist as an official organization between A.D. 538 and 1798.

**2.** It would arise and do its work after 1798.

**3.** It would keep the Ten Commandments, including the seventh-day Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

**4.** It would have the gift of prophecy.

**5.** It would be a worldwide missionary church.

**6.** It would be teaching and preaching Jesus' three-point message of Revelation 14:6-14.

#### **11. Now that we have established Jesus' six identification points for His end-time remnant church,**

**what does Jesus tell us to do, and with what results?**

**Answer:** "Seek, and ye shall find." Matthew 7:7. Jesus hands you these six specifications and says, "Go find my church." He promises that those who seek for heavenly things will find them.

**12. How many churches fit these six specifications?**

**Answer:**

Jesus gave such distinctive and specific specifications that they fit only one church. Jesus did not give vague generalities such as "There will be many good people in my church" and "There will also be some hypocrites." How many churches would those two points fit? All of them. Those two points also fit the corner grocery store and downtown civic clubs. They would fit everything, and thus mean nothing. Instead, Jesus gave such pointed, specific, highly descriptive points that they fit one church and only one church--the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Let's double-check the specifications.

**The Seventh-day Adventist Church:**

1. Did not exist as an official organization between A.D. 538 and 1798.
2. Arose after 1798. It began to form in the early 1840s.
3. Keeps the Ten Commandments, including the fourth--God's holy seventh-day Sabbath.
4. Has the gift of prophecy.
5. Is a worldwide missionary church, working in 208 of the 236 countries of the world.
6. Teaches and preaches Jesus' great three-point message of Revelation 14:6-14.

Jesus asks you to take these six specifications and check for yourself. It is easy. You cannot miss.

**Note:** *Please remember that there are many loving Christians in churches which these points do not fit, but no such church can be God's end-time remnant into which He is calling all His people for today.*

**13. After one of Jesus' children heeds His loving warning call and comes out of Babylon (Revelation 18:2, 4), what does Jesus ask him to do next?**

"Ye are called in one body." Colossians 3:15. "He [Jesus] is the head of the body, the church." Colossians 1:18.

**Answer:** The Bible says that God's people are called into one body, or church. Jesus asks those who leave Babylon to join the remnant church--of which He is the head. Jesus said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold." John 10:16. He also calls them "my people" in both the Old Testament (Isaiah 58:1) and the New Testament (Revelation 18:4). Of His sheep outside His fold (church), He says, "Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." "My sheep hear my voice, ... and they follow me." John 10:16, 27.

---

**14. How does one enter that body, or church?**

"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles." 1 Corinthians 12:13.

**Answer:** We enter Jesus' end-time remnant church by baptism. (See Study Guide 9 for details on baptism.)

---

**15. Does the Bible provide other evidence that Jesus has only one remnant church into which He is calling all of His people?**

**Answer:** Yes, it does. Let's review it:

**A.** The Bible says there is only one true body, or church (Ephesians 4:4; Colossians 1:18).

**B.** The Bible says our day is like Noah's day (Luke 17:26, 27). How many ways of escape were there in Noah's day? Only one--the ark. Once again, today, God has provided only one boat, or church, that will take His people safely through to His heavenly kingdom. Be sure to get on the right boat! The Bible says, "The Lord added to the church daily

such as should be saved." Acts 2:47. It was true in apostolic times; it is still true today.

**16. What is the good news regarding God's remnant church?**

**Answer:**

- A. Its central theme is "the everlasting gospel" of righteousness by faith in Jesus only (Revelation 14:6).
- B. It is built on Jesus, the Rock (1 Corinthians 3:11; 10:4), and "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matthew 16:18.
- C. Jesus died for His church (Ephesians 5:25).
- D. Jesus describes His remnant church so plainly that it's easy to identify. He also describes the fallen churches and calls His people out of them. Satan will trap only those who keep their eyes and hearts shut.
- E. Its doctrines are all true (1 Timothy 3:15).

**17. What is the good news regarding God's remnant people?**

**Answer:** They will:

- A. Be saved in His heavenly kingdom (Revelation 15:2).
- B. Overcome the devil by the "power" and "blood" of Jesus (Revelation 12:10, 11).
- C. Be patient (Revelation 14:12).
- D. Have Jesus' faith (Revelation 14:12).
- E. Find glorious freedom (John 8:31, 32).

**18. Earth's hour is very late. Jesus' second coming immediately follows the giving of the three angels' messages (Revelation 14:12-14). What is Jesus' urgent plea now to His people?**

"Come thou and all thy house into the ark." Genesis 7:1.

**Answer:** In Noah's day, only eight people (including Noah himself) heeded God's invitation. Jesus is waiting at the door of His end-time ark, or remnant church, for you.

**Note:** *This is our eighth Study Guide in the thrilling series on the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-14. The final Study Guide of the series will discuss the gift of prophecy.*

---

**19. I am willing to heed Jesus' call to come into the safety of His end-time remnant church.**

**Answer:**