

The image features a monochromatic, teal-colored Statue of Liberty against a black background. The statue is shown from the waist up, holding a flaming torch aloft in her right hand. The flame is bright yellow and orange. The statue's crown with its seven spikes is visible behind her head. The overall aesthetic is dramatic and symbolic.

Major Prophecies of

REVELATION

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Revelation

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I. The Antichrist *(Based on Revelation 13:1-10)*

Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. Rev. 13:1

In Revelation 13:1, the antichrist is identified as “a beast rising up out of the sea.” While there have been numerous speculations as to who the antichrist is, the Bible gives us clues to help us clearly identify the antichrist beast. Since the antichrist of Revelation is identified as a beast, we must find out what a beast is a symbol of in order to identify the antichrist power. The answer to this mystery is found in a parallel prophecy of Daniel 7:3, where we are told that “four great beasts came up from the sea.” These beasts are identified as a lion, a leopard, a bear, and a dragon-like beast. Daniel is then told what these beasts represent. He is told that a “beast” is a symbol of a “kingdom on earth” (Daniel 7:23).

While many have surmised that the antichrist will be an individual man, prophecy does not say that. While it will be led by a man or woman at its head, the prophecy says that it will not be a single person, but a kingdom, nation, or government that will eventually enforce the mark of the beast.

Another clue that helps us identify the antichrist is that it bears a striking resemblance to the four kingdoms of Daniel. In Revelation 13:2, John says, “the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his

feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.” Here we notice that this antichrist beast is described as a combination of the four beasts of Daniel; the lion, the leopard, the bear, and the dragon-like beast. Since Daniel’s dream was given in the time of Babylon, Bible scholars have identified Babylon as the lion, followed by Persia as the bear, Greece as the leopard, and finally Rome as the dragon, as also confirmed by a parallel prophecy in Daniel 2.

As the prophetic beasts of Daniel rise, we see one overtake another to come to power over the same territory. The fact that this antichrist beast bears a resemblance to the four beasts of Daniel means it must come to power over the same general territory, which is exactly what the prophecy tells us. The prophecy of Revelation tells us that “the dragon [of Rome] gave him his power, his throne, and great authority” (Rev. 13:2). If the same dragon of Rome gave the antichrist its power, seat, and authority, then the antichrist kingdom must have risen to power out of the fall of the Roman Empire. This is a major clue in identifying the antichrist. According to the prophecy, the antichrist was not only the kingdom that followed the Roman Empire, but it also received its power from Rome, so in order to unmask the antichrist beast, all we have to do is find out what kingdom rose up out of the Roman Empire, ordained with the authority of Rome.

Those familiar with history know that the fall of Rome gave birth to the Christian era, led by

Roman Catholicism. This courtship between the Roman Empire and Catholicism was seen as far back as 330 A.D., when the Roman Emperor Constantine moved the capital of Rome to Byzantium, donating the city of Rome to the Catholic Church (which is why the church still owns Rome). Then as the Roman Empire was falling, it tried to unite with Catholicism, but was initially unable to because three Aryan tribes opposed the union. It wasn't until the last of these tribes was destroyed in 538 A.D. that the church could rise to power, giving birth to the Christian era and fulfilling the prophecy, identifying Catholicism as the antichrist.

This explains why all the Protestant reformers once identified the Catholic Church as the antichrist. In *Newsweek's* October 31, 1999 issue, Kenneth L. Woodward wrote, "Martin Luther was the first to identify the papacy as such with the Antichrist," adding that this was "a view that was to become dogma for all Protestant churches." This conviction was so clear that "By 1641, a clergyman could be denounced to Parliament for declaring that the pope was not Antichrist" – (Eugen Weber, *Apocalypses*, Harvard University Press, p. 77).

"Wycliffe, Tyndale, Luther, Calvin, Cranmer; in the seventeenth century, Bunyan, the translators of the King James Bible... Sir Isaac Newton, Wesley, Whitfield, Jonathan Edwards; and more recently Spurgeon, Bishop J.C. Ryle and Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones; these men among countless others, all saw the office of the Papacy as the antichrist" (De Semlyen, Michael, *All Roads Lead to Rome*, p. 205. 1991).

Of course, if it is true that the Catholic Church is the antichrist, and if basically the entire Protestant movement once embraced this belief, then there must be more clues than what we have seen so far to expose her as the antichrist. So let's see if the Catholic Church continues to match the depiction of the antichrist in the Bible.

Regarding the antichrist beast, the prophecy goes on to say that "they worshipped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshipped the beast" (Rev. 13:4). Since a beast is a kingdom, the prophecy says that people will worship a kingdom, but this seems strange because worship is a religious act. In order to worship a kingdom, this would have to be a religious kingdom that came to power after the fall of Rome. Once again, this perfectly describes the rise and reign of Roman Catholicism.

Still, there are more clues. We are further told that this beast "was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies" (Rev. 13:5). In the Bible, Jesus was accused of blasphemy twice: once for claiming to have the authority of God and again for claiming to have the power to forgive sins (See Mark 2:7; John 10:33). According to the Bible, when a man claims to be God on earth, with the power to forgive sins, it is blasphemy. Of course, those familiar with the Catholic Church know that the head of the church, the pope, is considered to be infallible and is referred to as "Holy Father," claiming to have the authority of God on earth! In addition, the church claims to have the authority to forgive sins, which is why Catholics go to popes and priests for confession.

As time passed, the Bible says the antichrist would begin to divulge further into its evil practices. We are told that it would “make war with the saints and to overcome them” (Rev. 13:7). Strangely, the prophecy says that this kingdom, which claims to be a Christian kingdom, would make war with the saints, or other Christians. Again, this seems like a strange prediction to make, but those familiar with history know that this is exactly what happened under the rule of Catholicism, helping to affirm the identity of the Catholic Church as the antichrist of Revelation.

When the Catholic Church united with Rome, it used the armies of Rome to enforce its doctrines and decrees. Those who refused to obey the teachings of the church were violently persecuted and killed. During this time, it is estimated that over fifty million people were killed by the Catholic Church in the most inhumane manner, just for believing differently than what the church taught. This killing spree was magnified by the Inquisition and the Crusades, as instituted by the Catholic Church, lasting for hundreds of years throughout the Middle Ages!

To further affirm the identity of the antichrist, the prophecy even gives us the time span of this evil empire. Revelation 13:5 says that “he was given authority to continue for forty-two months.” During the time this was written, one month was exactly 30 days, so the “forty-two months” of this prophecy was the same as the “one thousand two hundred and sixty days” mentioned in a previous prophecy (Rev. 12:6). Of course, those familiar with prophecy know that this was not speaking of literal days. According to the

“day for each year” principle, the antichrist would reign for 1,260 years (Ezek. 4:6). Ironically, the Catholic Church officially came to power after the Ostrogoths were finally overthrown in the First Siege of Rome, in 538 A.D. In 1798, under the orders of Napoleon, French General Berthier marched into Rome and took the keys of the Roman Empire from the pope. Their power was removed exactly 1,260 years later, and the pope was taken into captivity, where he died in exile, perfectly fulfilling the antichrist prophecy which said, “he who leads into captivity shall go into captivity” (Rev. 13:10).

We are told that in the year 1798, the beast would receive a “deadly wound” (Rev. 13:3). Since a “beast” is a “kingdom,” that means the church would have its beast power taken away. It would no longer be a beast, or kingdom, but it would become like all the other churches. However, the prophecy adds that it would later regain power when “his deadly wound was healed” (Rev. 13:3). In the Concordat of 1929, Mussolini gave Rome back to the Catholic Church, reviving her political standing. While the deadly wound has not fully healed, prophecy tells us that just as the Catholic Church united with Rome in the past to enforce its teachings, it would once again unite with another beast, or nation, in the future, to revive her power and influence. Once this union is secured, prophecy warns that persecution will once again break out as the mark of the beast is set up. While many now view the pope and Catholicism with high regard, the Bible tells us that when the antichrist regains her power, persecution will rise again.

II. America in Prophecy *(Based on Revelation 13:11-14)*

Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. Rev. 13:11

The book of Revelation runs through a number of prophecies, but it reaches its climax in chapter 13, which tells the story of two beasts. The first beast rises up “out of the sea,” followed by “another beast coming up out of the earth” (Rev. 13:1, 11). As previously noted, Daniel 7:23 tells us that a “beast” in the Bible is a symbol of a “kingdom,” or nation, so according to prophecy, these beasts represent two kingdoms or nations. The first beast, mentioned in the previous chapter, is a persecuting beast that rises from the ruins of Rome. This represents the rise of Catholicism during the Christian era, which gave birth to the Crusades and the Inquisition. This period lasted “forty-two” prophetic months or “one thousand two hundred and sixty” years (Rev. 13:5; 12:6). It ended when French General Berthier took the pope “into captivity,” removing the keys of power from the church in 1798, as foretold in prophecy (Rev. 13:10).

As this first beast is coming to the end of her reign in the year 1798, we immediately see “another beast coming up out of the earth” (Rev. 13:11). Again, since a beast in the Bible represents a kingdom or nation, this must also be a nation, but since we are told that this is “another beast,” it must be a nation that follows the previous beast of

Revelation 13. This second beast that is just “coming up,” not like a full-grown sheep but instead “like a lamb,” represents the rise of a new nation.

Since the first beast was predicted to rise up in early Christian history and last for over one thousand years, this second beast must be a nation that rises up in the latter days of history, sometime around the year 1798, as the first beast is taken into captivity. What new nation was rising to power around the year 1798? This new nation rising up can be none other than the United States of America, as we will see.

While the prophecy speaks of the rise of two beasts or nations, it gives distinctive clues that help differentiate these nations. Prophecy tells us that the first beast, or nation, rose up “out of the sea” (Rev. 13:1). A parallel prophecy in Revelation 17 helps us unlock the water symbolism, stating, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues” (Rev. 17:15). In the Bible, water represents people. That means a beast rising up out of the water represents a nation rising in a territory that is already inhabited by people. So in order for the first beast to come to power in that territory, it had to conquer a previous nation.

In contrast, the prophecy of the second beast states, “I saw another beast coming up out of the earth” (Rev. 13:11). These beasts come up – one by land, the other by sea. Of course, the contrast shows us that the earth, or the land, is the opposite of the sea. This helps us identify the symbol. If the sea represents an already-established territory full of people, then the earth, or land, must represent an

unestablished territory with basically no people. That means the beast from the earth must represent a nation rising up in a new land, which is relatively unpopulated, sometime around the turn of the century, just as America rose up. While some Indians roamed throughout certain territories, America was basically a new land, largely unpopulated, and not established by any government, rising up just as the first beast was falling, in 1798. What better description could we find for the rise of America!

Incidentally, we find similar symbolism in a prophecy in the previous chapter of Revelation, where we are told that “the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth” (Rev. 12:15, 16). Again we see the same symbols of the “earth” and the “water,” where water represents groups of people, while earth represents an unpopulated territory. The prophecy tells us that the “dragon,” or “Satan,” spewed water out after the woman, which is a symbol of God’s church (Rev. 12:9; See Eph. 5:23; 2 Cor. 11:2). This took place in the Middle Ages when believers were persecuted by great floods of people. As the flood of persecution prepared to overtake God’s people, we are told that “the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood” of persecution, again a beautiful prophecy of the rise of America.

In order to escape persecution and find a place where they could worship in freedom, the persecuted

party of pilgrims went out in search of a new land, and America opened its mouth and swallowed the flood of people, as masses flocked to this new land. Just as the prophecy stated, a new land would rise up towards the end of time as a haven of refuge for God's persecuted people.

While the previous beast rose up like a leopard, we are again reminded that this second beast rises up "like a lamb" (Rev. 13:11). In the Bible, Jesus is repeatedly referred to as a "Lamb" (Rev. 5:6; John 1:36). Since a lamb is symbolic of Christ, this nation must rise up with the appearance of a Christian nation, founded on Christian principles, again clearly depicting the rise of America. Christianity was built into the very fabric of this nation, which is why the Pledge of Allegiance affirms that we are "one nation under God," and every piece of paper currency proclaims, "In God we trust." This is also why America is still often referred to by many as a Christian nation, as prophecy foretold long ago.

In addition, we are told that this new beast has "two horns." Daniel 8:20 says that "horns" represent "kings," or heads of government. The fact that this nation has two horns is symbolic of choice. While previous kingdoms were ruled under a monarchy by Kings or Popes, this new nation cannot be ruled by a single leader because it has two horns, nor is it a divided nation with multiple kings. The two horns represent a new form of government that offers freedom to choose and protects the rights of the people, founded on Republicanism (a nation without a king) and Protestantism (a church without a pope).

Notice also that this lamb-like beast does not merely have two horns, but it has “two horns like a lamb” (Rev. 13:11). The horns are lamb-like horns. That means the government is a lamb-like government. This is not talking about specific politicians or political parties but about the founding principles of the American government. Again, since all throughout the Bible, a lamb is a symbol of Jesus Christ, this government must be based on Christian principles. While the previous Christian era, led by Catholic principles, believed that the church should be involved in government and have the ability to institute religious laws, this new Christian nation is built on the principle of religious freedom. This is a Protestant principle, not endorsed by Catholicism. That means this new nation must be a Protestant nation, promoting the separation of church and state. That’s why America was not only referred to as a Christian nation, but has been historically recognized and referred to as Protestant America!

While prophecy identifies this nation as a baby nation that rises up towards the end of history, we are told that it “causes the earth and those who dwell in it,” and “causes all, both small and great,” to do something (Rev. 13:12, 16). Amazing! If it causes all the other nations of the earth to do something, it must be very influential. While other nations have existed for thousands of years, the prophecy says this new nation will influence the entire earth, which means this baby nation will quickly become a leading superpower on the earth! What new nation, rising from a previously unestablished land, coming up

around 1798, claiming to be a Christian nation, offering freedom of worship, has risen to such great power as to influence the entire earth? Again, this could only represent the United States of America.

Sadly, the story does not end well for this nation. It rises up calmly but ends in tragedy. The prophecy says, “he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon” (Rev. 13:11). While this nation rises like a lamb, founded on Christian principles of freedom, when it opens its mouth, it speaks like the same “dragon” that we see working with the persecuting beast (Rev. 13:2, 4). If the prophecy is right, this second beast, which we believe is the United States, built on Christian principles, will begin to let go of its Christian roots and religious freedoms.

Today some are saying that America may have once been a Christian nation, but it is no longer a Christian nation. This attitude is in direct fulfillment of prophecy. Prophecy says the Christian foundation that America was built on would eventually begin to crumble. This has been taking place for a while now, but it will get worse. As the government becomes more tyrannical, the war between the church and state will become more aggressive until the nation finally institutes a law that will violate the very constitution it was founded on. In an attempt to turn the tide of the nation, the Bible says this beast from the earth will set up a law that “causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed,” as it inflicts upon the world the mark of the beast, thrusting the world into the great tribulation (Rev. 13:12).

III. The Mark of the Beast *(Based on Revelation 13:15-18)*

...he causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Rev. 13:16, 17

Nearly two thousand years ago, the Bible warned that just before the end of the world, an event would take place as a springboard for the final conflict on earth, “the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth” (Rev. 3:10). The event is referred to as the mark of the beast. While some would like you to think it is very confusing and mysterious, the mark of the beast is not a mystery. If you just study the clues that the Bible gives, it is very simple to understand.

The prophecy of the mark of the beast tells us that “the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed” (Rev. 13:15). Many get so caught up with talk of side issues about the mark of the beast that they overlook the main issue of the prophecy. The prophecy says the “beast” will “cause” people to “worship.” If you cause something, that means you force it. The mark of the beast is forced worship. Since the way to enforce something is by making a law, the mark of the beast is clearly a law that forces some form of worship. Pretty simple! Now let’s look at the issue in more detail.

Notice that the prophecy is about the beast. That means the mark of the beast must not only come from the beast, but it must be something that is somehow related to the beast. The reason so many cannot understand the mark of the beast is because they do not first identify the beast. As we have noted, the Bible not only tells us that a “beast” is a “kingdom,” but we have already identified the two key players in the prophecy (Dan. 7:23). The Bible tells us that the second beast of Revelation 13, identified as the United States of America, “causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed” (Rev. 13:12). In a desperate attempt to save its Christian roots, prophecy says that America will seek to unite with the previous kingdom, which the Bible identifies as Roman Catholicism, in an attempt to enforce a law that involves some form of worship.

The next major clue we have in identifying the mark of the beast is the fact that this beast will speak and cause the mark. Look at the words closely. The prophecy says that the first beast “spoke” like a dragon, and he “causes” the earth to worship the first beast (Rev. 13:11, 12). We are told that he will both “speak and cause” everyone to worship the image, and he “causes all... to receive a mark” (Rev. 13:15, 16). The mark of the beast is set up when the beast speaks and causes it to happen. Since the beast is a country or nation, we must ask ourselves, “How does a nation speak and communicate what it wants with its people?” If a country wants to tell its people to drive slower or refrain from stealing, it must make

laws. When we see the beast “speaking,” that just means a country is making a law, which is confirmed by the fact that it “causes” people to act. As noted, the word “cause” implies force. That means the mark of the beast will be a law that forces people to do something. This should be no surprise to us, since nations always make laws. The thing that is so fearful is that this law goes against God’s law.

While prophecy says the mark of the beast will be a law set up by a government, it contrasts this law with God’s law. It says, “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” (Rev. 14:9, 10). After it finishes speaking of “the mark,” the prophecy says, “Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God” (Rev. 14:11, 12). Immediately after the warning, God contrasts those who keep the mark of the beast law with those who keep His law, the Ten Commandments, which means the mark of the beast must be a law that goes against one of God’s Ten Commandments. Of course, this should be obvious, since God is so firmly against the mark.

We also notice that the mark of the beast is established in direct relation to “the image of the beast” (Rev. 13:15). In essence, the mark and the image are the same things, since they both work together to accomplish the same goal, but notice the term “image.” The prophecy says that the second beast of America will approach the Catholic Church and seek its help, setting up an “image” to

Catholicism. An image is a likeness. When God created man, He said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness” (Gen. 1:26). If it is in the likeness of Catholicism, it must be a teaching regarding worship that is similar to, or taken from, the Catholic Church. Since it is a law, it must be a law that comes from Catholicism that goes against one of the Ten Commandments.

Before we address the nature of the law, we must address the fact that this law will become universal, which means it will be a law that involves something that affects the entire world, involving a global concern. We know this because we are told that the beast “causes all,” as in “causes the earth and those who dwell in it,” “to receive a mark” (Rev. 13:12, 16). All the nations will be “of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast,” and in setting up the law proposed by the beast, “all the world” will follow the beast (Rev. 17:13; 13:3). While the pope will first propose this law, America will lead the world as the first nation to institute the papal law. In return, the entire world will eventually follow the lead of America and unite with the papal beast in setting up the law, which again means it will be a law that involves a global issue that the whole world is concerned about. Climate could play a role, since the Bible warns of weather disasters in the last days involving the entire world (see Luke 21:25, 26; Rev. 7:2, 3). Whatever the issue, the mark will be a global issue that will pressure the government to make a law. While the whole world will embrace the mark, it will be a violation of religious liberty.

Finally, we find that the central theme of the prophecy is worship. The prophecy tells us that the beast will “cause as many as would not worship” to be killed (Rev. 13:15). God then warns, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark,” he will receive His wrath (Rev. 14:9). As we study the prophecy, we find two competing forms of worship in the prophecy. Just before the warning of the mark of the beast is given, God tells His faithful people to “worship Him” (Rev. 14:7). We also saw previously that the mark of the beast was in contrast with the Ten Commandments, which means it is a law in the image of Catholicism that goes against one of God’s commandments. Now we find that the mark is a form of worship that contrasts God’s institution of worship, so it must be a Catholic law regarding worship that goes against one of God’s laws. Ironically the Catholic Church admits to instituting their own law regarding worship, which goes against one of the Ten Commandments.

While the fourth commandment calls us to worship God on Saturday, “the seventh day” of the week (Gen. 2:3; Ex. 20:10), “The Catholic Church, for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday” (*Catholic Mirror*, September, 1893). Countless Catholic quotations affirm, “We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church in the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 336) transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday” (Rev. Peter Geiermann, *The Convert’s Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, p. 50).

Today, many say Jesus changed the Sabbath to Sunday in honor of the resurrection, claiming that the change is in the Bible, but the very ones who changed the day admit that they made the change without any support from the Bible. They openly boast, “Sunday is a Catholic institution...from the beginning to the end of scripture there is not a single passage that warrants the transfer of the weekly public worship from the last day of the week to the first” (*Catholic Press*, August 25, 1900).

The change of the Sabbath to Sunday occurred over one thousand years ago when the church began mingling with the pagans of Rome. Because the Romans worshipped the sun god on Sunday, “the venerable day of the sun,” in order to draw the sun-worshipping Romans into the church, they changed the Sabbath to Sunday. Since then, Sunday worship has become almost universal among Christians, but this is not the day God commanded us to worship on. This explains why, right before the warning against receiving the mark of the beast, God calls His people back to true worship, urging, “worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water,” taken almost verbatim from the fourth commandment which calls us to worship God on the Sabbath, for “in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day” (Rev. 14:7; Ex. 20:11). Since most equate worship to church, it is not hard to see how the mark could involve enforcing Sunday laws.

Ironically, one of their periodicals goes so far as to admit that Sunday is the mark of Catholicism,

stating, “Sunday is our mark of authority...The church is above the Bible, and this transference of Sabbath observance is proof of that fact.” (*Catholic Record of London, Ontario*, September 1, 1923). If Sunday is the mark of the Catholic Church, which has been historically identified as the first beast of prophecy by nearly every Protestant denomination, and the central issue regarding the mark of the beast is worship, then we must conclude that the mark of the beast will be a law enforcing Sunday worship. While some think this could never happen, America has a troubling history of Sunday laws, while many other nations currently have existing Sunday laws.

What is even more troubling is that in his environmental encyclical, the pope proposed the idea that the world should adopt Sunday as a universal day of rest for the land, stating, “Sunday, like the Jewish Sabbath, is meant to be a day which heals our relationships with God, with ourselves, with others and with the world,” using this as a suggested solution to heal the earth (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*, 237). While the pope is now proposing Sunday rest as a solution for environmental aid, when Sunday laws are initiated by the same church that enforced its laws with such violence during the Middle Ages, fearful penalties will ensue, and those Jews and Christians who worship on Saturday, “the seventh day,” will eventually be persecuted (Ex. 20:10). When they don’t comply, the government will finally enforce the law with a death decree and “cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed” (Rev. 13:15).

IV. The Fall of Babylon

(Based on Revelation 17)

And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. Rev. 17:5

Speaking of Jesus' return, Paul said, "that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed" who "sits as God in the temple," or church (2 Thess. 2:3, 4). The "falling away" is a falling away from the truth that would take place in the early Christian church, which would give rise to the man of sin, or antichrist. This would eventually culminate in the cry, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen" (Rev. 14:8). But who is Babylon? Babylon is a depiction of the final stage of the fallen church, or antichrist, and the prophecy gives us an abundance of clues to help expose her identity.

As we look at the clues given, we find that Babylon is not hard to identify. In Revelation 17:3, Babylon is referred to as "a woman sitting on a scarlet beast." We know that this woman represents a church because all throughout the Bible, women have been used symbolically to represent God's church (See Jer. 6:2; Isa. 51:16). A good woman, or wife, is used as a symbol of a good church (See Eph. 5:23; 2 Cor. 11:2; Matt. 25:1). A bad woman, or harlot, is used as a symbol of a bad church (See Ezek. 23:5; Jer. 3:1). So here we have a picture of a woman, or church, riding on a beast.

While women are symbols of the church, we have already learned what a beast represents. Daniel 7:23 tells us that a “beast” is a symbol of a “kingdom on earth.” That means this woman sitting on a beast represents a church sitting on a kingdom. The fact that the woman is sitting on the beast means that the church is controlling the kingdom, and not vice versa. This depicts the union of a religious and political power, a sort of church-state union, which would rise shortly after the apostles died off. Again, those familiar with history know that this happened in the early church. As previously noted, after the prophecy was written, Constantine accepted Christianity and Christians began to mingle with the Romans. “In the seventh and following centuries, the Church of Rome was united with the city of Rome,” and many began to see in this union “that she was fulfilling the Apocalyptic prophecies concerning Babylon” (*Union with Rome*, Wordsworth, pp. 19, 20).

This explains why Babylon is referred to as the “harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication” (Rev. 17:1, 2). We are told that the “waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues” (Rev. 17:15), depicting Catholicism’s power over the world during the Middle Ages. The spiritual “fornication” represents a union between God’s bride, the church, and “the kings of the earth,” or secular nations, which is why the church is referred to as a harlot. This spiritual harlotry was also seen in the past when Israel “committed harlotry with the Egyptians” and “Assyrians” (Ezek. 16:26, 28).

Just as Israel committed fornication by uniting with worldly nations, the early Christian church did the same thing with Rome. As a result, we are told that Babylon held “a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication” and “the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication” (Rev. 17:4, 2). This wine is symbolic of the teachings, or false doctrines, that entered the church, making them “drunk, but not with wine” (Isa. 29:9). Since the earth is made drunk as a result “of her fornication,” that means that the wine, abominations, or filthiness, are the result of her alliance with the worldly kingdom, representing the false teachings that crept into the church as a result of her union with Rome, such as purgatory, penance, prayers to saints, papal infallibility, the sale of indulgences, priestly confession, transubstantiation, clerical celibacy, the Immaculate Conception, the change of the Sabbath, and more. These and other false teachings led Protestants to protest Catholicism and flee the “fallen” church.

In the prophecy, Babylon is not only referred to as a woman, but also a “mother” (Rev. 17:5). Ironically, the Catholic Church calls herself the “mother church” because all the Protestant churches came out of her. In addition, Babylon is also referred to as “that great city” that sits on “seven mountains” or hills (Rev. 17:18, 9). That means Babylon is not only a church, but she is also a city that is distinguished by seven hills. Does the Catholic Church fulfill this prophecy? Again, as previously noted, after accepting Christianity, Constantine

donated the great capital city of Rome to the Catholic Church. That is why the Catholic Church owns the Vatican City in Rome, making her both a church and a city. Ironically, Rome is known as “the city of seven hills.” The great city that was noted for its seven hills, or mountains, which existed when this prophecy was written, could again be none other than Rome, and the woman that united with her, none other than the Catholic Church. Ironically, even the very colors of Catholicism are depicted in the prophecy, as we are told that the woman is wearing “purple and scarlet,” the colors that Catholic clergy traditionally wear during the mass and other sacred ceremonies (Rev. 17:4).

While Catholicism flirted with the Roman Empire for over two hundred years prior to their official union, it wasn't until the Roman Empire fell and Catholicism gained power during the Middle Ages that the church completely fell into apostasy, leading her to persecute any who dared to disagree with her doctrines. The prophecy goes on to say that Babylon became “drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus” (Rev. 17:6). During the Middle Ages, when the influence of the Catholic Church was felt throughout the world, those Christians who refused to follow her teachings were persecuted and violently killed by the millions, as recorded in the book *Foxes Book of Martyrs*. Of course, this should have come as no surprise, since Jesus Himself warned that “the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service” (John 16:2).

Because the clues that are given in the prophecy so clearly point to Catholicism, Martin Luther referred to the Catholic Church as “nothing else than the kingdom of Babylon and of very Antichrist...fulfilled by the papal tyranny” (Martin Luther, *First Principles of the Reformation*, pp. 196-197). Charles Wright later wrote regarding the antichrist prophecies, “In all ages of the Church, from the days of Gregory the Great down to the present, men have pointed to the Papacy as the fulfillment of the prophecy. That interpretation is set forth in the Homilies of the Church of England and by all the Reformed Churches” (Charles Wright, *Daniel and His Prophecies*, p. 168). Again, as previously noted, the view that the Catholic Church is Babylon, the antichrist, was accepted by nearly all Protestants.

In spite of the fact that Protestantism was founded on the belief that the Catholic Church is Babylon the harlot, also known as the antichrist, many Protestants today reject the teaching of the founding fathers and deny the claim that the Catholic Church is the antichrist, as depicted in prophecy. Many Protestants today are reaching out to Rome, trying to return and reunite with the mother church. As a result, prophecy tells us that these Protestant churches also become harlots, which is why Babylon is not only referred to as a “mother,” but a “mother of harlots” (Rev. 17:5). If she is the mother of harlots, she is the mother of the other bad churches that came out of her. While the Protestant churches, like all babies, began pure and innocent when they separated from Catholicism, prophecy says that they will grow

up to become harlots. This occurs when they abandon biblical truths and seek to reunite with the mother church. This is taking place now. Many Protestants are saying Christians should set aside their doctrinal differences and unite. In doing so, the Protestant churches are identified as the harlot daughters of Babylon, guilty by association, and will eventually bear her guilt and “share in her sins” (Rev. 18:4).

Protestants today have no idea what they are about to do. They are not merely following in the footsteps of Catholicism, but they are opening the door for the Catholic Church to regain her power in the United States and around the world. Prophecy tells us that by accepting her authority and instituting her proposed law on the nations, they “will give their power and authority to the beast,” leading to a global apostasy (Rev. 17:13). This represents the great tribulation – the final time of trouble that will come upon the earth just before the return of Christ.

God has left a window of time for those in the fallen churches of Babylon to escape. Now is that time. “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a habitation of demons” (Rev. 18:2). Like ancient Israel, the Protestant and Catholic churches of today have so intimately mingled with the world and embraced worldly ideology that the Bible identifies them as fallen, and in a desperate attempt to rescue His people, God is sending a final appeal to His faithful people from the fallen churches of Babylon, calling, “Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven” (Rev. 18:4, 5).

V. God's True Church *(Based on Revelation 12)*

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. Rev. 12:1

In the book of Revelation, we find two major prophecies of women. As noted in the last chapter, in the Bible, a woman is a symbol of the church. Jesus affirms this in the story of the “ten virgins,” while Paul uses the same symbolism when he tells the church at Corinth, “I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ” (Matt. 25:1; 2 Cor. 11:2). This same symbolism is used all throughout the Bible, affirming that these two women in Revelation represent churches, but as we compare these two women, or churches, we notice that one is clearly a good church, while the other is a bad church, referred to as a harlot. Since God tells His people, “Come out of” the bad church, then He must have a good church for them to go into. If this is true, then God still has a true church today. Just as in times past, today, God still has a church that teaches the Bible more accurately than others, and it is our duty to find out which church that is. In order to do this, we must investigate the parallel prophecies of these two women.

First, let's take a moment to review some of the previous points we looked at which identified the bad church, depicted as “the great harlot,” which has

already been identified as Catholicism by nearly every Protestant denomination (Rev. 17:1). Similar to a criminal investigation, when the identifying points of the prophecy were investigated, the truth was exposed, and Christians began to protest the Catholic Church, giving birth to the title, ‘Protest’-ant. The very title that Protestants hold was given as a result of protesting the Catholic Church as the antichrist harlot. In turn, many heeded the appeal of God to “Come out of her” (Rev. 18:4). The tragedy is that while many came out of Catholicism, they did not come all the way out. As a result, the Protestant churches grew up to become harlots also, following in the footsteps of their mother, and God is calling faithful Christians to come out of her.

While we have investigated the fallen church, identified as the antichrist, the Bible also describes a pure church. In Revelation 12, we see another woman, or church, described as a “woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars” (Rev. 12:1). Again, while the previous woman was a bad church, we know this woman is a good church, symbolic of God’s true church, for many different reasons. First, she is clothed with the sun, a symbol of Jesus, the “Sun of righteousness,” covering us with His “robe of righteousness” (Mal. 4:2; Isa. 61:10). Second, she is wearing a garland, which is a symbol of victory. Third, she gives birth to the Messiah. We are told that this woman “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” (Rev. 12:5).

The Messiah was to come through the lineage of Israel, giving rise to the New Testament church. Here we see the fulfillment of this. The moon under her feet shows that the old covenant, with its “New Moons” and feasts, was passing (Isa. 1:14). The old covenant was regulated by “the New Moons and the set feasts” (2 Chron. 31:3). These old covenant regulations pointed forward to the coming of Christ, but Christ came to give birth to a *new* covenant. That means the twelve stars on the woman’s garland represent both the spiritual “twelve tribes” of Israel, as well as the literal “twelve apostles” who gave rise to the new covenant church. (Rev. 21:12, 14).

Now the prophecy gets interesting. After we are told that the “dragon having seven heads and ten horns” chased the good woman “into the wilderness,” we then see the bad woman in “the wilderness” riding a beast with “seven heads and ten horns” (Rev. 12:3, 6; 17:3). While the good woman fled “into the wilderness” to escape being “persecuted,” the bad woman was later seen in “the wilderness,” “drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus,” meaning she persecuted the good woman in the wilderness (Rev. 12:14, 13; 17:3, 6).

As persecution begins, we are told that the woman flees into the wilderness “where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days” (Rev. 12:6). Again, according to the “day for each year” prophecy, this timeline perfectly corresponds with the 1,260-year reign of the Catholic Church from 538 A.D. until 1798 (Ezek. 4:6). History

confirms that during this time of persecution, God had faithful Christians who refused to accept the false teachings of Catholicism and faced persecution as a result, such as the Waldenses, Albigenes, Hussites of Bohemia, and others, who were often viewed at the time as cults by the organized religion of the day.

As God's people fled the persecution of the Catholic Church, the prophecy says that the dragon "spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood" (Rev. 12:15). Since "waters" represent "peoples" (Rev. 17:15), these waters again represent the flood of persecution against God's church during the Middle Ages, resulting in the persecution and death of millions at the hands of the fallen church.

As the time period neared an end, we are told that "the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood" (Rev. 12:16). This is the same "earth" that we see in the very next chapter, where we are told, "I saw another beast coming up out of the earth" (Rev. 13:11). As noted in a previous chapter, this beast coming up out of the earth was the United States of America, which means the part of the earth that opened its mouth and swallowed the flood of persecution was the United States. History affirms that as a flood of persecution came against God's faithful people, America opened up as a place where people could worship freely, and Christians began to flock to the new nation as a safe harbor from Papal persecution. Of course, this made Satan angry. Satan hates America and everything that she stands for, and prophecy says that when America

swallowed the flood, “the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring” (Rev. 12:17). This offspring represents the remnant, or the remaining true followers of Christ who were to rise up in America, and as America was formed, she gave birth to several new denominations.

The prophecy then goes on to identify the rest, or remnant, of the faithful, as those who “keep the commandments of God” (Rev. 12:17). Obedience to God’s law has always been the test of true Christians. John tells us, “by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, ‘I know Him’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar” (1 John 2:3, 4). While prophecy identifies God’s true church as those who keep the commandments, Revelation contrasts those in “Babylon” with those who “keep the commandments of God” (Rev. 14:8, 12), implying that those in Babylon do not keep all of the Ten Commandments.

Included in the Ten Commandments is the command to keep the Sabbath holy. In spite of the fact that the Catholic Church admits to changing the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday without any support from the Bible, many Protestants remain in denial, claiming that the change of the Sabbath *is* found in the Bible. As a result, the majority of churches continue to break the fourth commandment, which plainly states that Saturday, “the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God” (Ex. 20:10).

Today God still has a true church. The Bible has clearly identified God’s true church as a body of believers who “keep the commandments of God and

have the testimony of Jesus Christ,” adding that “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev. 12:17; 19:10). As a result of these clues, many have identified the false church as Catholicism and the true church as the Seventh-day Adventist Church, one of the last churches that faithfully keep all ten of the commandments, including the command to observe the seventh-day Sabbath. Of course, if this is true, Satan will do anything to turn people away from this church and keep them from joining it because he is “enraged with the woman” (Rev. 12:17).

To turn people away from the truth, Satan will lead people to look at the true church as a cult, even though it holds the Bible as its rule of faith, believes in the trinity, believes that Jesus is God, believes in salvation through faith alone, and upholds the Ten Commandments, including the Sabbath. The fact is, while many today remain in darkness, unaware that Sunday worship is an invention of Rome, God is shedding His light on the world in these last days. The Bible says, “Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30). God is now sending a final appeal into the Sunday churches, warning the faithful to “Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins” (Rev. 18:4). Of course, God would not call His people out of Babylon without revealing where they were to go. Fortunately, the prophecy of the two prophetic churches gives the answer to this dilemma. God still has a faithful body of believers who “keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 12:17).

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