



The Mystery of BABYLON

Kenya was so excited! Her family was going to fly in an airplane from Wichita, Kansas all the way to Montana for a fun family vacation. Kenya eagerly told all her friends about their upcoming adventure.

Then Daddy found out that he would not be able to get time off work, so the family canceled the trip. Kenya was so disappointed, she cried and cried.

A few weeks later, however, Mommy announced that she was going to take the children even if Daddy couldn't go. Kenya's keen disappointment turned into excited anticipation. True to her word, Mommy bravely took her children on the adventure of a lifetime. And Daddy was able to join them for the final few days.

In the last lesson we studied Revelation 10 and learned about a group of people called Adventists who thought Jesus was going to return on October 22, 1844. When Jesus did not come back, they were bitterly disappointed. In fact, this experience is called "the great disappointment." However, we also saw from



Revelation 10 that after their disappointment, this group of people would "prophesy again." In Revelation 14, we find the special message they are to share with the world when they "prophesy again."

We learned about the first angel's message in lesson 11.

"Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—saying with a loud voice, '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 14:6, 7



1 Do you remember what the word "angel" means?

a. prophet

b. priest

c. messenger

"Angel" means "messenger," and "flying in the midst of heaven" means this message is for everyone. It is proclaimed with a **LOUD** voice, so this is a very important message that **everyone** in the world needs to hear.

This message is the good news of salvation to the world. It also helps us learn something new about "the hour of His judgment."



2 At what hour, or time, did that judgment begin according to Daniel 8:14? (We studied this in lesson 7.)

a. 457 B.C.

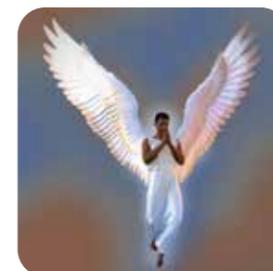
b. A.D. 31

c. A.D. 1844



As we also learned in lesson 11, the first angel's message uses words from Exodus 20:11, the Sabbath commandment. Some of the Adventists who proclaimed the first angel's message learned that the Bible clearly teaches that "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord" (Exodus 20:11). They began to keep the seventh day holy, and God blessed them for it. Because they believed in Jesus' soon coming and kept the seventh day holy, they adopted the name Seventh-day Adventists.

3 God had another message for them to share. Let's read it next. **Revelation 14:8** "And _____ angel followed, saying, _____ is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."



The city of Babylon was built where the Tower of Babel once stood. You can read in Genesis 11:1–9 how God destroyed this tower and scattered the people who were building it. However, some time later, people came back and built another city. Eventually it grew to

be a powerful city—the city of Babylon.

King Nebuchadnezzar and his father created a vast empire with the city of Babylon as its capital. The empire included the land of Palestine and the city of Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom of Babylon attacked and conquered God's people. (Daniel 1:1, 2.)

There are three characteristics of literal Babylon that we should notice:

(1) The king of Babylon was proud of his own works and thought he could save himself. (Daniel 4:30)

(2) Babylon did not fear or obey God. (Daniel 5:1–4)

(3) Babylon created confusion with a counterfeit worship in all the territory it controlled. (Daniel 3:1–6)

By the time John wrote Revelation, the literal nation of Babylon had already been destroyed. But God used it to illustrate the powerful church of the Middle Ages that would attack and overthrow God's people. (Revelation 13:7.) This church system is called the Roman Catholic Church. How is it similar to literal Babylon?

(1) It is proud of their great works and teaches that a person can save himself by buying his way to heaven with money or doing good works. (Revelation 2:14.)

(2) It teaches disobedience to God's law in several ways, including changing Sabbath to Sunday and allowing idol worship. (Daniel 7:25; Revelation 2:20; 13:6.)

(3) It brings confusion to the world with its false system of worship. (Revelation 13:7, 8.)

4 Do you remember a judgment that was proclaimed on the literal city of Babylon right before it was conquered by Medo-Persia? Who wrote the judgment message on the wall? (Daniel 5:5)

a. Daniel

c. Nebuchadnezzar

b. God

d. Jeremiah

The judgment message against literal Babylon is similar to what we are studying in the second angel's message which says, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen" (Revelation 14:8).

The night the city of Babylon was conquered by Medo-Persia, God wrote on the wall of the banquet hall where the king was enjoying his wicked feast. These are the words: "**Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.**" Translated into English, these words mean "Numbered, Numbered, Weighed, Divided."

By repeating the word twice, God emphasized a point He wants us to understand—that just as literal Babylon fell, spiritual Babylon will, most definitely, also fall.



In lesson 16, we studied Revelation 13 and learned that the Roman Catholic Church system will help to bring the last great test on God's faithful people. In Revelation 14:8, God is saying that this system is doomed, is doomed. This message prepares us for the warning of the third angel's message.

5 What is the third angel's message?

Revelation 14:9-12 "Then a _____ 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 _____, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who _____ the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.' Here is the _____ of the saints; here are those who _____ the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."



God loves everyone in the whole world, even those who are in spiritual Babylon. God does not want anyone to get the mark of the beast. This is why He calls us to share the three angels' messages of Revelation 14 with the world.

We are going to look a little more at how God describes spiritual Babylon. Let's read from Revelation 17 about a very strange vision John was given.

6 **Revelation 17:3-6** "So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a _____ sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden _____ full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. I saw the woman, _____ with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement."



Let's use some clues to figure out what this vision means. You can review lesson 15 for help.

7 A woman represents a _____, so a harlot, or unfaithful woman, represents an unfaithful or apostate _____.

On this woman's head was a name—"Babylon the Great." And she was "drunk with the blood of the saints." That means she had persecuted and killed many of God's people. She was riding on a scarlet beast. Notice that it had seven heads and ten horns like the dragon in Revelation 12 and the beast of Revelation 13.



8 Who was the dragon in Revelation 12? **Revelation 12:9** _____

Notice that this woman (unfaithful church) is riding on a beast (kingdom). This shows a close cooperation between religious and political power. And remember that Satan is the one who gives it "his power, his throne, and great authority" (Revelation 13:2).

Can you find the differences between what the two women in Revelation wear?

Revelation 12:1

Revelation 17:4, 5

Which do you think looks the most like what Peter says godly women will look like? "Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear—but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious" (1 Peter 3:3, 4, ESV).



This woman had another name on her forehead. She was also called the "Mother of Harlots." Interestingly, the Catholic church calls itself the "Mother Church" and is calling all the Protestant churches to come back to her.¹

All of the Protestant churches used to teach

that the Roman Catholic Church (the papacy) was the antichrist of Revelation. Sadly, as time has passed, many in these churches have stopped studying the prophecies with God's warnings, and are actually apologizing for the Reformation.²



God describes in detail the final destruction of Babylon in Revelation 18.

9 What special call does He give to His people who are still in Babylon? **Revelation 18:4** "And I heard another voice from heaven saying, " _____ of her, My people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.'"



God wants to save as many people as possible. In every church there are people who love and obey Him.

Now, however, God is calling those faithful people to come out of both Babylon and the daughter churches that continue to teach the errors of Babylon. He is calling those people to come out and join the remnant people who "keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12).

Why do God's loyal people keep His commandments and have the faith of Jesus? Because they love Jesus. When Jesus was on earth, He had that same close, trusting relationship with His Father.

10 How did Jesus feel about doing what His Father wanted? **Psalm 40:7, 8** "I _____ to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my _____."

Jesus wants you to delight to do His will, too. He wants to write His law on your heart.

Jesus says, "I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people" (Jeremiah 31:33). If we let Jesus do that for us, then we can face every fear with peace, knowing we are on the winning side.

11 If we are faithful to Jesus, do we need to fear anything? **Psalm 46:1, 2** "God is our _____ and strength, a very present _____ in trouble. Therefore we will _____ fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea."



Do you see that God's people have a special warning message to proclaim in the last days? He wants His people to give this message so that those who are still in Babylon can be called out of it before it is too late.



12 Are you willing to lovingly share the warning message of Revelation 14? _____

Answers

- | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. c | 5. third / hand / | drunk | 10. delight / heart |
| 2. c | worship / patience | 7. church / church | 11. refuge / help / not |
| 3. another / Babylon | / keep | 8. Satan | |
| 4. b | 6. woman / cup / | 9. Come out | |

Sources

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