God's Church

WWW.THETHIRDANGELSMESSAGE.COM STUDY GUIDE

LESSON 24

BUILT UPON THE ROCK

BIBLE STUDY SET

ESTABLISHING YOUR FAITH ON A FIRM FOUNDATION. (MATTHEW 7:24

FOR MORE STUDY GUIDES, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AND SEND US AN EMAIL.



24. God's Church

The Bible tell us that there is but one body, or church, into which Jesus calls His end-time people the bride of Christ. The biblical understanding of this issue has been often overlooked and misunderstood by most denominations today but yet is made very plain. To some, this is unnerving, as there are thousands of churches today that call themselves Christian. Virtually every one of them claims to be God's church, yet they each differ widely in biblical interpretation, faith, and practice and understanding. All who are honest seekers of truth will come to see how plain the Father has made this issue for them, however there certainly are some close counterfeits.

Note: Please read Revelation 12:1–17 before beginning this study.

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) "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." (Revelation 19:7, 8).

Answer: Jesus symbolizes His true church (daughter of Zion) as a pure woman and the false, apostate churches as a harlot as we saw in the previous study. (See also 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:22, 23; and Isaiah 51:16).

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: The sun represents the Father, His gospel, and His righteousness. "The Lord God is a sun" (Psalm 84:11). It can also symbolize Christ. (See also Malachi 4:2) Christ reflects the light of the Father to the world just as the moon reflects the sun. So also the Church is to reflect the glory or righteousness of Christ as the moon reflects the glory of the sun. (2 Cor 3:18). More than anything else, Jesus wants His

church to overflow with His presence and glory. "The moon under her feet" represents the path the woman walks on having the light of the word reflecting onto her path to guide her in the way. (Psa 119:105) The stars on the crown symbolize God's angels guiding the church while she walks on the path. (Rev 1:20) The number twelve symbolizes the number of tribes in Israel, but it also symbolized the number of apostles Christ appointed to guide the church as well.

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 "male 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 19:13–15; Psalm 2:7–9; John 1:1–3, 14). 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 "male Child" and tried to kill him at birth. Who was the dragon?

"Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem..." (Matthew 2:16)



"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed..." (Revelation 12:17)

"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan" (Revelation 12:9)



Answer: The dragon represents Satan, who was cast out of heaven (Revelation 12:7–9) and who was working through the pagan Roman Empire at the time of Jesus' birth. 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 "a third of the stars of heaven" being cast to the earth?

"And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains..." (Revelation 17:9)

"And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings..." (Revelation

17:12)

Answer: 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 Studies (Revelation 12:3; 13:1; 17:3). 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) that will support "Babylon the great" in her warfare against

God's people. "A third 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 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 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. The Bride of Christ.

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

4 | P a g e

"And *the woman fled into the wilderness*, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there *a thousand two hundred and threescore days*...And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might *fly into the wilderness*, into her place, where she is nourished *for a time, and times, and half a time*, from the face of the serpent." (Revelation 12:6, 14)

Answer: 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 working through papal Rome. The "two wings" represent the protection and support God gave the church during her time in the "wilderness" (See Exodus 19:4; Deuteronomy 32:11). The time spent in the wilderness is the same 1,260-year period of papal prominence and persecution (AD 538 to 1798) that is repeatedly mentioned in Bible prophecy. Remember, one prophetic day equals one literal year (Ezekiel 4:6).

The term "wilderness" refers to the solitary places of earth (mountains, caves, forests, etc.) where God's people could hide and 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. At least 50 million people died for their faith during this 1,260-year time period.

God's Church was alive during these ages, however to the world it was barely visible. As we are told regarding Christ that "the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." (1 John 3:1)

In order to see and know who the Church is, we must have spiritual eyes. "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3)

8. God calls His end-time church the remnant. What does the word "remnant" mean?

"Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:" (Romans 9:27)

"Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and



they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." (Romans 11:2-5)

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." (Revelation 12:17)

"...the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (Rev 19:10)

Answer: It means the last remaining portion. In all instances where God refers to the remnant, he is talking about those who have received the spirit into the heart and are born again. (Gal 4:29) We are told that the woman is "Jerusalem, the mother of us all" (Gal 4:26) We are her "remnant...seed" or her offspring, her children. We become offspring by the process of birth. The remnant really will be the last remaining portion of God's born again church.

9. But isn't God's Church a Building?

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual

sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:5)

"Ye are God's building...Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." (1 Corinthians 3:9, 16, 17)



Here we have found the building of God. But how can we see it? In order to see the kingdom of God we must be born again. (John 3:3, 5) Spiritual things are only seen with spiritual eyes. (1 Cor 2:11-14) The body of Christ cannot be seen unless we have the Holy Spirit. (John 14:17-19) You



cannot say to one without spiritual eyes "Here is the church" because they could not see it.

10. How Do We Find the Church?

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also

are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:19-22) "This is the Stone that was set at nought of **you builders."** (Acts 4:11) "Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands;" (Acts 7:48)

The Apostles were correcting the misconception concerning God's Church. That it was not the building made by men with hammers, nails, bricks and mortar. This building didn't even have God dwelling in it. (Acts 7:48) The Church only consists of the people who are filled with God inside of them. This alone makes up God's Church. (Eph 1:22, 23)

11. But isn't God's Church the Building Where People Gather at Each Week?

Colossians 4:15 " and the church which is in his house." Philemon 1:2 ", and to the church in thy house:" 1 Corinthians 16:19 " the church that is in their house." Romans 16:5 " the church that is in their house."

It is evident that the church was the people in the house. And when the people left the house, then the church was leaving the building. It is very important to recognize our identity as that building.

12. But God has people in his Church Who aren't Saved Doesn't He?

"And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2:47)

According to the Bible, only those who are saved, or born again, make up the remnant seed of God. This is and has always been God's Church from the beginning.

13. Are men to Decide and add to the church books those who constitutes God's Church after Close Examination?

"But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels. To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect," (Hebrews 12:22, 23)

"And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2:47)



6 | P a g e

God does leave it in the hands of men to acknowledge what God has done in the believer's life by baptizing those who make a profession of faith. (1 Cor 12:13) However, ultimately it is God who will add to the church, and it is only left to God to judge. (Heb 12:22, 23) And God only adds those who are saved to his church. Men make mistakes.

It is very important to understand that for centuries men given high positions have been as cruel as the devil judging the worthy saints as heretics. (Joh 16:2,3) They even put to death our dear savior. For this reason, it must be made clear that men need to be humble, as many times they have been mistaken. Even Paul the apostle at one time thought that John-Mark the author of the gospel of Mark wasn't ready for God's work while Barnabas did. (Acts 12:37, 38) Yet afterward Paul came to see Mark as a true convert, fellow worker, and he was even requested by Paul as "profitable" to him. (1 Tim 4:11)

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

"Ye are called into 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, the 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)



Everyone believes they are in God's Church, this isn't good if

we believe the Church is denomination or sect. However, it is good if we recognize the truth about God's Church, that there is only one body, and that we are all part of that same body.

Many times people ask "What Church do you go to?" This question stems from a misunderstanding of what the Church is. The Bible says we are the Church.

15. 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' remnant church by baptism. It is important to understand however, that just because we have gone through the ordinance, does not mean we are members of the Church. Unless we have received the Spirit of God and are born again. Then we cannot be baptized into the church. Baptism symbolizing death, burial and resurrection. To baptize an unconverted person is only to bury someone alive.

16. Does the Bible provide other evidence that Jesus has only one remnant church?

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 a boat, the church, that will take His people safely through earth's final events. Don't miss this boat!

Many are expecting a call into another body. But the word Church does not mean "called into". It is actually the Greek word "Ekklesia" which means "called out". We are to be called out of the fallen bodies, recognizing our identity as the body of Christ and being baptized into that body by receiving the Holy Spirit.

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

A.It is built on Jesus, the Rock (1 Corinthians 3:11; 10:4), and "the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18).

B.Jesus died for His church (Ephesians 5:25). **C.** Its doctrines are all true (1 Timothy 3:15).

God has a call to recognize our identity, and like Elijah of old, setup the altar, like John the Baptist call people back to worship of the true God saying "think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father:" or we are

the remnant seed. As God is "able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Matt 3:9). Though it is a bold message, the misunderstandings concerning the remnant seed and church is to be restored.(Mal 4:4-6)

18. 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).

19. Are you willing to recognize Jesus' call recognizing your call as His end-time remnant church?

Answer:

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

1. Is there really a serious danger that many professed Christian people will be caught off guard and lost when Jesus returns?

Yes. Jesus made that point crystal clear. He warned of several things that will trap and destroy Christians: (1) surfeiting (KJV), (2) drunkenness, (3) the cares of this life, and (4) sleeping (Luke 21:34; Mark 13:34–36).

A. Surfeiting is overdoing in anything—eating, working, reading, recreation, etc. It upsets balance and destroys clear thinking. It also precludes spending time with Jesus.

B. Drunkenness refers to things that bring on a stupor and give us a distaste for heavenly things.

Examples include pornography, illicit sex, evil companions, neglect of Bible study and prayer, and avoiding church services. Such things cause people to live in a dream world and thus miss out.

C. Cares of this life destroy Christians who become so busy doing perfectly good things that time for Jesus, prayer, study of the Word, witnessing, and attendance of church services are crowded out. In so doing, we take our eyes off the real goal and drown in peripheral matters.

D. Sleeping refers to being spiritually asleep. It might be the biggest problem today. When a person is asleep, he does not know he is asleep. Taking our relationship with Jesus for granted, having a form of godliness with no power, and refusing to become actively involved in Jesus' work—

all these things and others make sleepwalkers of those who, unless wakened, will sleep past the moment of truth.







2. I've accepted the Spirit into my hearth, my calling, and my identity as God's remnant church and have never been so happy. But I have never been harassed so much by the devil, either. Why is this?

Because the devil is angry with God's remnant people and spends his time trying to hurt and discourage them (Revelation 12:17). Jesus did not promise that His people would not suffer trials, woes, onslaughts from the devil, tough times, and even serious injury from Satan. He promised that such things would, indeed, come to His people (2 Timothy 3:12). He did, however, gloriously promise: (1) to give His people victory (1 Corinthians 15:57), (2) to be with His people always, in everything they face (Matthew 28:20), (3) to give them peace (John 16:33; Psalm 119:165), and (4) to never forsake them (Hebrews 13:5). Finally, Jesus promised to hold onto His children so tightly that no one can take them out of His hands (John 10:28, 29). Amen!

3. What does the word "church" mean?

The word "church" is translated from the Greek word "ekklesia," which means "called-out ones." How fitting! Jesus' people are called out of the world and Babylon into His precious fold of safety. People become part of Jesus' remnant end-time church by being baptized when Jesus calls them. Jesus says, "My sheep hear My voice ... and they follow Me" (John 10:27).

4. But what About Israel being Called God's house or God's people throughout the Old Testament? His Church in the Wilderness. (Acts 7:38) That consisted of unsaved people didn't it?

No. Actually the Bible is clear about this, that even in those times God only had a remnant seed who were truly born again. In Galatians 4 speaking of the children of Abraham (Israel) born in his day we read "But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." (Galatians 4:29) In other words, the same was true then concerning the children as it is today. And Romans 9, contending with this same point about Abraham's two sons, Ishmael and Isaac says:

"Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, *these are not the children of God*: but the children of the promise are counted for *the seed*." (Romans 9:7, 8)

So the children of God or the "sons of God" even in that day were only the spiritual seed, and not the fleshly seed. That is the seed that was born again. This becomes abundantly clear when we consider how God said to Pharoah.

"And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn: And I say unto thee, Let my son go...let my people go." (Exo 4:22, 23, 5:1)

Who were his people or sons? Israel was his first BORN. Esau and Jacob (Israel) were born twins, and Esau came out first. So why wasn't Esau considered God's firstborn? We are told that Esau "rejected the birthright" (Heb 12:16) Jacob on the other hand finally accepted it becoming a "son of God". And the Bible says "as many as are led by the Spirit, they are the Sons of God" (Rom 8:14). So therefore when the message was given to Pharoah that "Israel is my firstborn" it is clearly referring only to the spiritual birth, since there is no other way by which we might become sons of God.

Furthermore in Hebrews 12 after we are told that Esau rejected the "birthright" in verse 16 and understanding furthermore that "Israel" is God's "firstborn" it should not be hard to understand why in verse 22 we are told it is called "the Church of the Firstborn." (Heb 12:22, 23) The Church is only those who are filled with the Spirit, and has forever been that way.

Even in Revelation 12, the woman "Jerusalem" is the mother of the seed "Israel". And that church has "the testimony of Jesus, which is the Spirit of Prophecy" (Rev 12:17, 19:10) This is not just about having a set of books called the spirit of prophecy. But rather, it is about having that Spirit inside of the body, the church.

9 | P a g e

Having it only in letter, and not in spirit was the mistake the Jews made.

"For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God. What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." (Romans 2:28-3:2)

Many have the letter, written on paper, but they don't have it written in the heart. (2 Cor 3:3) They "call themselves Jews and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan" the Bible says. (Rev 3:9, 18:1-4)

QUIZ QUESTIONS

- 1. How does Jesus symbolize His true church in prophecy? (1)
 - _____ By a tall steeple.
 - _____ As a beast.
 - _____ By a bright angel.
 - _____ As a pure woman.
 - _____ By a mysterious cloud.
- 2. What was the "wilderness" into which the church fled? (1)
 - _____ Solitary places such as caves, forests, etc.
 - _____ The Sahara desert.
 - _____ Iraq.
 - _____ The Gobi desert.
- 3. The following items are part of the three angels' messages: (3)
 - _____ Babylon is fallen. Come out of her!
 - _____ Hell burns forever and ever.
 - _____ God's judgment is in session. Revere, praise, and worship Him as the Creator by keeping His holy Sabbath--which is His sign, or mark.
 - _____ The plagues have ended.
 - Everybody is going to be saved.
 - _____ Do not worship the beast or receive his mark.
- 4. Jesus provides six identification points to help us discover His true Remnant Church. This church will (3)
 - _____ Consist of some who are saved and some unsaved.
 - _____ Keep God's Commandments
 - _____ Have some hypocrites.
 - _____ Enjoy going to movies.
 - _____ Pray much.
 - _____ Have the Testimony of Jesus .
 - _____ Have many fine church buildings.
 - _____ Arise and do its work only after 1798
- 5. How long was the church to be in the wilderness? (1)
 - _____ Five years.
 - _____ 1,000 years.
 - _____ 680 years.
 - _____ 1,260 years.
 - _____ 33 years.
- 6. In Revelation chapter 12, the symbol of a baby born to a woman represents (1)
 - _____ The apostolic church.
 - _____ Jesus.
 - _____ The gospel going to the Gentiles.
- 7. Does Jesus call His people out of the world and Babylon and into His remnant church? (1)

10 | Page

- _____ Yes.
 - No.
- 8. How does one become a member of the remnant church? (1)
 - _____ By shaking the preacher's hand.
 - _____ By signing a membership card.
 - _____ By receiving the Spirit of God and being baptized
 - By giving a large donation.
- 9 There are many Christians in all churches, and even some who are not members of any denominational church. (1)
 - Yes.
 - No.
- 10. God's Church is a building Made by Men with Hammers, nails, chisels and screw Drivers?____ True.
 - False.
- 11. Which of the following things cause Christians to be caught off guard and lost? (4)
 - _____ Surfeiting.
 - _____ Cares of this life.
 - _____ Getting too excited about your religion.
 - _____ Spiritual drunkenness.
 - _____ Being spiritually asleep.
 - _____ Faithful witnessing.
 - Praying too much.

12. Which of the following does God promise His children? (3)

- _____ They will have no troubles.
- _____ Victory.
 _____ They will never get sick.
- No one can take them out of His and Jesus' hands.
- _____ He'll never forsake them.
- They will be rich.
- 13. The Church is can sometimes be called. (3) God's Temple
 - _____ God's Building
 - _____ Sons of God
 - Wall of China

14. What does the word "church" literally mean? (1)

- _____ A properly designated place of worship.
- _____ A congregation of the faithful.
- "Called-out ones."
- A cathedral.

15. I want accept my calling to be part of God's end-time remnant church.

- Yes.
- No.

BUILT UPON THE ROCK

BIBLE STUDY SET

ESTABLISH YOUR FAITH ON A FIRM FOUNDATION.

FOR MORE PLEASE CONTACT US:

DANIEL

