

PANORAMA OF PROPHECY

A LIFE-CHANGING BIBLE STUDY!

A MOTHER-DAUGHTER CONSPIRACY

Mark 6:17-29

THE STORY ...



King Herod's wife, Herodias, hated John the Baptist. The desert-dwelling prophet had dared to call her an adulteress for leaving her husband Philip to marry his evil but wealthier brother. Now the wicked queen determined to use her influence over Herod to get even with John. First, she persuaded him to have John imprisoned. Then she asked to have John executed, but Herod refused. He knew that John was a true prophet and feared political backlash from the people.

Finally, Herodias developed a fool-proof scheme. She threw a party for Herod's birthday and invited all his friends and the nobles from his realm, then arranged for her beautiful daughter Salome to dance in a seductive, captivating style.

Herodias hoped that after Herod had a few glasses of wine, he would ask Salome what reward she wanted for her enchanting dance.

Her sinister plan worked. After Salome's dance, Herod made a pompous oath: "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half my kingdom." Mark 6:23. As the inebriated guests were applauding the king's generosity, the girl stood ready with her reply. Then she shocked everyone by asking for the head of John the Baptist on a platter! Herod was stunned by the gruesome request, but all of his shocked friends were watching for his response. Afraid that he would appear weak if he refused, the proud king reluctantly gave the order. That very day the mighty prophet John was beheaded alone in prison.

This was not the first time that a mother and daughter team used the government to persecute God's people.

THE STUDY

Fill in the blanks after reading each Bible text.

1. What other mother and daughter team persecuted God's people in the Old Testament?

1 Kings 18:13 _____ killed the prophets of the LORD.

2 Kings 11:1 When _____ ... saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal heirs.

NOTE: In the Old Testament, Jezebel and her daughter Athaliah were known for violently controlling the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and for forcing pagan worship on God's people.

2. What is the second angel's message in Revelation 14?

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

NOTE: Revelation 14 contains an urgent three-point message that must reach the entire world before Jesus' second coming. In this lesson we will look at the second point of that message. God's indictment of Babylon is given because she has made all nations drunk with her intoxicating wine. This lesson will address some very straight, and perhaps disturbing, messages to both Catholic and Protestant believers. Remember that the second angel's message is from Jesus, the One we all love. Open your heart to His truth, for His only aim is to save and to bless you.

3. How does God symbolize Babylon in Revelation 17?

Revelation 17:18 And the _____ whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.

NOTE: In Bible prophecy, a woman symbolizes a church. A pure woman represents God's true church as described in Revelation 12. An unfaithful woman represents a church that has departed from the Scriptures. We can be certain who this fallen woman is, because Revelation 17:18 says she was ruling when Revelation was written. History tells us it was pagan Rome (Luke 2:1) that eventually turned over its authority, capital city, and power to papal Rome.

4. What other evidence from Revelation 17 proves that Babylon refers to papal Rome?

- She is guilty of blasphemy (v. 3).*
- She is dressed in purple and scarlet (v. 4).*
- She is called the Mother (v. 5).*
- She has harlot daughters who also are fallen (v. 5).*
- She persecuted and martyred the saints (v. 6).*
- She sits upon "seven mountains" (v. 9).*
- She ruled over "the kings of the earth" (v. 18).*

NOTE: Papal Rome fits every description. Its headquarters is in Rome—"the city of seven hills." Scarlet is the color of cardinals' robes, and the pope often wears the royal color of purple at important functions. The Roman Catholic Church freely admits that during the Middle Ages, she persecuted the saints and ruled over the kings of the earth. (For evidence that the papacy is guilty of blasphemy, review Lesson 19.) God's symbolism fits perfectly—a fallen mother church whose fallen

daughters protested and thus began to be called Protestants. Notice this quote from Father James A. O'Brien: "That observance [of Sunday instead of Saturday] remains as a reminder of the Mother Church from which the non-Catholic sects broke away."¹

¹ *The Faith of Millions* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1974), p. 401.

5. How do the beasts of Revelation 13 and 17 compare?

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

Revelation 17:3 And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of _____, having seven _____ and ten _____.

NOTE: The beast of Revelation 13:1-10 and the beast of Revelation 17 are obviously the same. Both symbolize this Roman power. Revelation 17 points out the church-state coalition, with the church (the fallen woman) riding and controlling the state (the beast). Revelation 13 also portrays two beasts involved in forcing others to worship. The first beast is the same power as the "mother of harlots" described in Revelation 17. This lesson will soon reveal the identity of the second beast.

6. What is the meaning and origin of the word "Babylon"?

Genesis 11:4, 6, 7, 9 Let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens. ... And the LORD said, ... Let Us go down and there _____ their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. ... Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the LORD _____ the language of all the earth.

NOTE: The terms "Babel" and "Babylon" both mean "confusion." The name originated at the Tower of Babel, built by defiant pagans after the Flood. They hoped to build it so high that no future floodwaters could cover it. But the Lord confused their languages, which created such chaos that the project was abandoned. Babylon later arose to be an idolatrous world kingdom that persecuted God's people. In the book of Revelation, the term "Babylon" signifies a counterfeit religious kingdom that is an enemy of God's spiritual Israel.

7. How does God describe Babylon in urging His people to leave?

Revelation 18:2, 4 And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is _____, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit. ...

_____ of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues."

NOTE: God says that Babylon has fallen and has become the home of devils and evil spirits. He warns that her sins are so offensive that Babylon must be destroyed. God's people must come out quickly, or else be destroyed with Babylon's plagues.

8. Jesus repeatedly indicts Babylon for making the world drunk with her wine. What is this wine?

Revelation 17:4 *Having in her hand a golden cup full of*

NOTE: Her wine cup is full of intoxicating lies (Proverbs 12:22), or false teachings that make people spiritually drunk. Here is a partial list of her beguiling lies:

- A. The Ten Commandments are not binding (see Lesson 6).
- B. Sunday sacredness (see Lesson 20).
- C. Secret rapture (see Lesson 1).
- D. Immortality of the soul (see Lesson 9).
- E. An eternal torment in hell (see Lesson 13).
- F. Confessing your sins to a priest (see Lesson 19).
- G. Counterfeit baptisms (see Lesson 12).
- H. A confusion of tongues (see Lesson 21).

The sad truth is that once Babylon's messages are accepted, a person becomes spiritually drunk and virtually unable to understand what the Bible really says, because these false doctrines dull a person's ability to comprehend the truth.

9. What power will support the beast in the end time?

Revelation 13:11, 12 *Then I saw _____ coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.*

NOTE: Brace yourself! This second beast of Revelation 13 symbolizes the United States of America. Consider the evidence:

- A. *The time it arose.*
God described this power as rising up about the same time the first beast goes into captivity and receives its deadly wound (Revelation 13:10, 11). The United States of America rose about the time the papacy's power was broken at the end of the 1,260 years, which was in 1798. America declared its independence in 1776, voted the Constitution in 1787, adopted the Bill of Rights in 1791, and was clearly recognized as a world power in 1798.
- B. *It arose from the earth.*
As we've studied before, the waters from which most kingdoms (beasts) arose represent a densely populated area (Revelation 17:15). The earth represents the opposite. The United States fits this point perfectly because it was established on a sparsely populated continent.
- C. *It had two horns like a lamb.*
In prophecy, a lamb represents Jesus and a horn represents power. The two great horns represent Protestant principles upon which America was founded—civil and religious liberty. The Founding Fathers fled from Europe to escape religious and political persecution. They established a society based on the principles of civil and religious freedom—“government without a king and religion without a Pope.”

10. According to the prophecy, what drastic change will take place in America?

Revelation 13:11 *And he ... _____ like a*

NOTE: Speaking as a dragon means that the United States, under the influence

of Satan, will reverse its original Protestant principles of the separation of church and state. It will pass religious laws forcing people to worship contrary to conscience or else be punished with economic sanctions (vv. 16, 17) and finally death (v. 15).

11. What three powers will unite against God's people in the end time?

Revelation 16:13 *And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the _____, out of the mouth of the _____, and out of the mouth of the _____.*

NOTE: The dragon is Satan (Revelation 12:9), working through pagan religions. The beast of Revelation 13:1-10 is the papacy. The false prophet in Revelation 16 is apostate Protestantism in America, which is the same power as the beast of Revelation 13:11-17 that has two horns like a lamb but will later speak as a dragon. This is the power that does “great signs” and “deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast.” Revelation 13:13, 14. (Compare with the description of the false prophet given in Revelation 19:20.)

12. Will these diverse organizations ever effectively unite?

Revelation 16:14 *For they are spirits of demonss, performing signs, which go out to the _____ of the earth and of the _____ world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.*

NOTE: Yes, God says they will unite. Notice that they are united in their work of spreading deception and building a confederacy against God's people. “The battle of that great day of God Almighty” is the same event as the dragon making war with the woman's offspring (Revelation 12:17).

13. What effective methods will this end-time coalition utilize?

Revelation 16:14 *For they are spirits of demons, performing _____.*

Revelation 13:13, 14 *He performs great _____, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And he _____ those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do.*

NOTE: This end-time coalition will work mighty miracles by the spirits of devils, and almost the entire world will be convinced (Revelation 13:3) and deceived. Revelation 18:23 says, “By your sorcery all the nations were deceived.”

14. What will prevent God's end-time people from being deceived?

Isaiah 8:20 *To the _____ and to the _____! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*

NOTE: God's people will need to test everything by the Bible. They will not be deceived, because they will test the miracles and teachings to determine whether they come from spirits of devils or from the Lord.

YOUR RESPONSE

Today, God is calling His people out of Babylon into the safety of His remnant church. He says that those who remain in Babylon will partake of her sins and receive her plagues. In Noah's day, only eight people entered the ark God had provided for their salvation. All others perished. Today He provides His remnant church as an ark of safety, and millions are entering. Jesus is inviting you to “come into the ark, you and all your household.” Genesis 7:1. Will you say “yes” to His invitation today?

ANSWER: _____

SUPPLEMENT

This section provides additional information for further study.

How Powerful Are the USA and Rome?

Revelation 13 points out that in the end time, the papacy and the United States will team up to influence the entire world to worship the beast. Are these entities powerful enough to accomplish this?

The papacy is by far the strongest religiopolitical power in the world. Nearly every leading country has an official ambassador or state representative at the Vatican. The pope is revered and welcomed by virtually all countries. Former U.S.S.R. leader Mikhail Gorbachev said, “Everything which took place in Eastern Europe in recent years would have been impossible without the Pope's efforts and the enormous role, including the political role, which he played in the world arena.”¹ The pope has made more than 50 world trips to achieve his goal of unifying the religious world under the papacy's leadership by the end of this century.

America is now looked upon as the number one military power and center of influence. “[America is] the planet's sole remaining superpower.”² “America's power will now determine all major global events.”³

Bible prophecy predicts with clarity that the United States of America and the papacy will join hands, and world events clearly show that the coalition is being formed.

¹ *Toronto Star*, March 9, 1992, p. A-1.

² “The UN Obsession,” *Time*, May 9, 1994, p. 86.

³ Jim Hoagland, “Of Heroes ...,” *The Washington Post*, August 21, 1991, p. A-23.