

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Chapters 2-3 – Church History – Seven Letters to Seven Churches

THE THYATIRA LETTER – PART ONE – REVELATION 2:18-29

Today's study reveals the _____ letter written to the seven churches in Asia Minor by the apostle John—the letter to the church at Thyatira. During the *second* Smyrna period in church history (200-325 AD), persecution and martyrdom was the standard operating procedure of the enemy Roman State. In spite of this, the word of God _____. Cunningly the devil exchanged his methods by marrying the church to the Roman Empire. This brought a reprieve for believers. However, it was short-lived because old sly-foot could not contain himself. Here in Thyatira the devil returned to what he does best—torment and _____ the followers of Christ. This Thyatira time led the planet into the first half of the inquisitions and crusades of Rome, which has been dishonestly renamed the *Middle Ages*, but was rightly titled the _____.

The name Thyatira means:

1. Continual sacrifice; odor of _____ – Rev. 2:18a
 - This name supernaturally represents the _____ of this church and its time period in church history.
 - By the time we arrive in Thyatira the church is nothing like what is described in scripture. Salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone has been _____ with works and allegiance to the State church. Evangelism is not through prayer and publishing the gospel to the lost, but rather by military force. The authority of scripture is replaced by visions, apparitions, councils, and creeds. Water baptism of believers only has now shifted to babies being sprinkled as members into the mother church. Anyone believing otherwise will suffer affliction and death.
2. The salutation – Rev. 2:18b
 - Identifies Jesus Christ as "*Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass*"

There are positive commendations given:

1. It was hard working – Rev. 2:19a

2. It was maturing and growing – Rev. 2:19b
 - Their hard work led to *charity, and service, and faith, and patience, and more works that grew into more works*

There are negative condemnations given:

1. They suffer (_____) that woman and *self-proclaimed* prophetess Jezebel to teach and to seduce God's servants – Rev. 2:20
 - a. To commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed unto idols
 - In Rev. 2:14 it is referred to as the doctrine of *Balaam*; in verse 20 this is called *Jezebel* (also referred to as a *doctrine* in verse 24)

 - b. Consider the NT view of fornication
 - Acts 15:29; 21:25; 1 Co. 6:18; 7:2; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5; Rev. 14:8; 17:2, 4; 18:3, 9; 19:2

 - c. Consider some parallel OT passages
 - The Bible often refers to a fornicating female as a *strange woman*. When the Bible refers to a strange woman it is generally a doctrinal type of an organized false _____ system – Prov. 5:1-8, 20; 6:20-25

 - The woman Jezebel in Rev. 2:20 is also equated to a false religious system. She is teaching and seducing Christ's servants in the church to do things that _____ their true worship of God – Rev. 2:20; 17:1-6, 18

- As we compare scripture with scripture we have eye-opening revelations of Jezebel:

Judges 17-18 – A Levite is commissioned to be the personal priest and “_____” to an Ephraimite man named Micah. The Levite priest uses Micah’s idols and images as part of their new religion.

The tribe of Dan comes along and confiscates the priest for use in their own religious services. He leads them to follow the same chameleon religion with his Ephod (*clerical robe*) and Teraphim (*his _____*), as they call him “*father*.”

The tribe of Dan has been in total apostasy for nearly 1000 years. They end up building a city near Zidon (*where the Zidonians live*). The Zidonians are worshipers of Baal. Dan now dwells near them and by *fornication and marriage* mixes in with them as they worship in apostasy with their robed priests called “*father*” and their icons, _____, and images.

1 Kings 16 – Ahab becomes king of Israel and marries Jezebel who is the daughter of the king of the ZIDONIANS. She practices _____ while a propheticess of Baal – Ahab ultimately serves Baal. Jezebel causes Israel to fall into apostasy as she gets them all to worship Baal after the manner of her fathers (*who were connected with the tribe and religion of Dan with robed priests called fathers who worshipped in a house full of icons and idols*).

1 Kings 18 – This Baal worship, connected with the tribe of Dan, is practiced in Israel. They worshiped the Sun god on Sun-day. They had robed (*2 Kings 10:22 – robes, vestries, or vestments*) Baalite priests called fathers who mutilated themselves as penance for their sins to their god. Through their penance they seek to _____ their god to coax him to do what they want.

1 Kings 21:1-16 – Here are major types. Jezebel is the whore of Revelation 17. She is the painted lady (*2 Kings 9:30*) who will service anyone to get what she wants. Ahab was her husband. He was married to the whore just like the age of Pergamos married into the world. Ahab was the king of Israel. He pictures the rest of the kings of the earth who co-habit with this strange bedfellow Jezebel. Rev. 17:2 says the kings of the earth commit fornication with this whore and are made drunk with the wine of her fornication. Political and religious power and the lust for world domination seduces temporal rulers into her lair. The vineyard of Naboth is a type of the Nation of Israel (*Is. 5:1-7*) ... Finally, Naboth himself is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the rightful owner of the vineyard who is killed and cast out of it.

Church History by Greg Axe – page 254

Jezebel is a seductress, a deceiver, and a conspirator. She will go to any length to get what she wants. She will murder or conspire to murder anyone who comes against her plans and purposes.

2. They are judged by God – Rev. 2:21-23

a. She was given an opportunity to _____

- God always offers a chance to change. If we will not respond to his offer, great tribulation always follows.

b. She experiences great tribulation, her children will be killed with _____, and they will receive according to their works

- You reap what you sow – Prov. 22:8; Gal. 6:7-8

3. Promises are given to some that may repent or that were never a part of her – Rev. 2:24-29

- The repentant or faithful unwavering servants in the church will _____ experience the burdens of the seduced; they will have power over the _____; they will receive the morning _____

NEXT WEEK: The Thyatira Letter – Part Two