

CHAPTERS TWO AND THREE – SEVEN LETTERS TO SEVEN CHURCHES

THE LETTER TO THE CHURCH OF THYATIRA – REVELATION 2:18-29

The passage here in Revelation 2:18-29 is the fourth of seven letters written to the key churches of Asia Minor. This epistle is to the church of Thyatira (signified by their appearance before God in heaven – *the angel*). Its scriptural value is threefold:

- 1) Historical – Written to the actual church in Thyatira around 91-96 AD...
- 2) Doctrinal – Details the events and circumstances taking place during the church age around 500 AD thru 1000 AD...
- 3) Devotional – Contains commendations, condemnations, judgments and promises to all churches at all times in history... (including the blood-washed assemblies of believers saved during the tribulation period as seen in verses 22, 26-28)

After laying our textual foundation, we will make a beeline to the doctrinal application concerning the events of church history. Today's study is not for the faint of heart. If you will be open to the truth of the Bible and to the facts of history, you will receive a _____ blessing. If your heart is hard, it is likely you will leave here cursing...

The name Thyatira means: Continual _____; the title is also defined as, "odor of _____"

The commendation – Revelation 2:19

- It was a working, charitable, _____ church of faith and patience – "*I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.*"

The condemnation – Revelation 2:20

- They suffer (_____) that woman and self-proclaimed prophetess Jezebel, to teach and to seduce God's servants to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed unto idols – "*Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.*"

- Someone is committing fornication and eating things sacrificed unto idols – Note the connection...in Rev. 2:14 it is referred to as the doctrine of "Balaam," in 2:20 this is called "Jezebel."
- The NT view of fornication: Acts 15:29; 21:25; 1 Co. 6:18; 7:2; Col. 3:5; Eph. 5:3 – God says, "*Don't do it!*"
- 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 – Proverbs 5:1-7
- 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.
- As we compare scripture with scripture we have an eye-opening revelation of Jezebel:

Judges 17-18 - A Levite is commissioned to be the personal priest and A _____@ 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 (_____ colored garments) and Teraphim (his _____) as they call him *Afather@*.

The tribe of Dan is in total apostasy for nearly 1000 years. They end up building a city near Zidon (where the Zidonions live). The Zidonions are worshipers of Baal. Dan now dwells near them and mixes in with them as they worship in apostasy with their black robed priests called *Afather@* and their _____ 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 prophetess 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).
- 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 black robes (2 Kings 10:22 call the robes vestries or vestments) Baalite priests called fathers who mutilated themselves as penance for their sins to their god. Through their penance they try to _____ their god to get him to do what they want.

The judgment – Revelation 2:21-23

- They will experience great tribulation, her children will be killed with _____, they will receive according to their works – *“And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.”*

The promises – Revelation 2:24-28

- The faithful unwavering servants in the church will _____ experience the burdens of the seduced; they will have power over the _____; they will receive the morning _____ – *“But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star.”*

Historically – 91 AD – 96 AD

- Thyatira was located on a main commercial trade route in Asia Minor.
- It was the home of a large and lethal Roman military garrison – because of its strategic location and operation Rome considered it worthy of protection. The heavy hand of Rome was felt against anyone interfering with trade and order.
- The city was the headquarters for many blue-collar trade unions (I.E. potters, tanners, weavers, robe and uniform makers, and dyers – Lydia, a convert of the apostle Paul, was a seller of purple (Turkey red) dye and from Thyatira – Acts 16:14.
- Thyatira, once an economically depressed area was emerging as a place of steady employment and wealth. Because of this new prosperity, the residents were relentless about participation in a trade union and each union had its favored deity that supposedly blessed that trade’s activities. If you did not pay proper homage to that deity, judgment with heavy persecution soon followed.
- Thyatira was home of the cult that worshipped Apollo, son of Zeus. It was the happening scene for all kinds of false cults and demonic religions. Idols and images of false gods were everywhere. Certain influential cults exalted women as diviners and soothsayers; they often referred to their followers as “children.”
- The political climate combined with the demonic influence in the area lent itself to spawn spurious Christian activity. The church was diluted with false teachings from the female goddess cults. Many believers in Thyatira were seduced into including horrific pagan practices as part of everyday church worship services.
- The city, though naturally beautiful in its spectacular location, was inwardly a religiously _____ demonic place to live.

Doctrinally – 500 AD – 1000 AD

- The Thyatira Period of Church history begins with the time we call the _____ Ages and ends around the time of the beginning of the crusades. The Thyatira period takes us into the very _____ of the Dark Ages.
- This time period introduces us to a man named Mohamed (570 - 632 AD) and a religion called Islam.
- In the Pergamos period the *Achurch@* was married to the world thus producing a counterfeit church. In the Thyatira period the counterfeit church is married to a political system. We now see this system come to fruition...it is now referred to as the *A_____*.
- In the Thyatira Church Period, Satan used a figurative woman named Jezebel in an attempt to corrupt and _____ biblical truth. This religion has black robed priests called *Afathers,@* who use idols as aids in worship. It is a chameleon and can be easily transferred from one superstitious society to another with little trouble.
- In this religion, Baal is called Jesus, but He is _____ the Jesus of the Bible. It is another Jesus (2 Co. 11:4), proclaimed in another gospel (2 Co. 11:4), received through another spirit (2 Co. 11:4), and is preached by false apostles (2 Co. 11:13) who are actually Satan=s ministers disguised as ministers of righteousness (2 Co. 11:15).
- Baalism of the OT is Roman Catholicism in the NT; they are the same _____ system – see Judges 17-18; 1 Kings 16-18.
- The 14th century yielded some of the most horrific records of the *A_____*.@ The disease known as the *ABubonic Plague@* began in the Thyatira church period in 541 AD along the commercial trade routes of the Roman Empire. By the end of the Dark ages some 25 million people would lay dead as a result. (*Was this God=s judgment? Rev. 2:23 explains that God did not do this to them, but rather gave them the wages they earned.*)
- During this time period even the *Awoman Jezebel@* is _____ as the East (Constantinople - Greek) and the West (Rome - Roman) branches of the counterfeit church separate. To this very day they remain divided.
- This period (500-1000 AD) introduces us to the darkest time of church history. It is dark because the Bible has been _____ from the hands of the common man (Ps. 119:130) and most everyone on the earth believes that the Catholic Church is the one true Christian church.
- This period, however, has its faithful preachers and Bible believers. They are often referred to by their enemies as: Cathari, Montanists, Novatians, Donatists, Euchites, Messalines, Nestorians, Paulicians, Bogomiles, Albigenses, and Picards, to name a few. They would later be called: Waldensees, Anabaptists, Mennonites, Hussites, Brethren, and _____.
- During this period the Roman Catholics used Jerome=s Latin Vulgate. They preserved copies on the finest leather. These copies were not used by the populace as they were kept locked up in their monasteries – as a result these copies were not worn out, but lasted throughout the test of time. These bogus copies of so-called scriptures won _____ to saving faith in Jesus Christ.
- The genuine believers of this time period did not have completed Bibles. They preached from whatever copies of scriptures they could get their hands on. They were relentlessly pursued and _____ for their faith in those scriptures. They won multitudes to Christ and disciplined them to carry on their godly heritage. The scriptures they used were what we now call the Textus Receptus, the Greek texts from Antioch, Syria. They used the Old Latin Bible which was translated from those God blessed _____ texts. Those texts would ultimately become our beloved AV of 1611. The faithful believers of that time were hard working, charitable servants. They were faithful soul winners and patient _____ makers.
- During the Thyatira church period, papal Rome – the Holy Roman Empire began her _____ of the world. Anyone who would not conform to her religion was murdered (followers of Islam, agnostics, born again Bible believers, anyone). Their motto was, “*All the world must be Catholic.*”

Devotionally – Have you been clueless?

Do you feel the burden of the Lord for the lost?

Do you feel the burden of the Lord for the work?

What are you going to do today as a result of what you have learned?