

The Book of Revelation

The Seven Churches – Part II

Pergamos – A Licentious Church – 2:12-17

- Pergamos was a well-to-do city situated on major trade routes and home to many temples. The most famous of these was dedicated to Asclepius (god of medicine and healing), whose was worshipped through the imagery of the serpent.
- Description of Christ - vs. 12
 - Has the sharp, two-edged sword - also in 1:16 - speaks of judgment
- Commendation - vs. 13
 - Faithful despite strong local opposition
 - “Satan’s seat” - throne or judgment seat, showing his control.
 - Antipas - no other record of this individual, probably a martyr.
- Condemnation and Warning - vs. 14-16
 - We have a good church that is harboring evil doctrines and people.
 - Balaam (see Numbers 22-25 and 31:15-16 for his story)
 - Doctrine of Balaam (Revelation 2:14) - Jews intermarry with heathen - COMPROMISE.
 - Way of Balaam (II Peter 2:15) - selling prophetic gift for money
 - Error of Balaam (Jude 11) - assuming God would judge Israel.
 - Nicolaitans - see notes on Ephesus (2:6)
- Exhortation and Promise - vs. 17
 - hidden manna – refers to the pot of manna in the Ark of the Covenant
 - Speaks of intimacy and access.
 - white stone - probably speaks of approval or pardon.
 - Claims that this is based on a local custom are fanciful.
 - new name - Christ’s? Compare to 3:12.
 - Godsoe: “Pergamos is wooed away from friendship with evil to friendship with the Coming King.”
- Church period possibly described - A.D. 314-590
- Application for today: There is no compromise on truth.

Thyatira – A Lax Church – 2:18-29

- Thyatira was a much smaller town known for the manufacture of purple dye. Lydia in Acts 16:14-15 was from here.
- Note the three authorities at work: Satan, Jezebel, and Christ.
- Description of Christ - vs. 18
 - Note the name - Son of God
 - The description of the eyes and feet (see 1:14-15) symbolize a righteous judge.
- Commendation - vs. 19
 - This church is very active, but we'll see it has doctrinal problems.
- Condemnation and Warning - vs. 20-23
 - vs. 20 - suffer - allow or tolerate
 - Jezebel - probably not the woman's real name but using the wicked queen's name as comparison reveals much about this individual.
 - This Jezebel, like her Old Testament counterpart, seems to have tried to merge the Holy and the profane, teaching that Christians should participate in the most wicked of pagan traditions.
 - vs. 23 - God will make an example out of them
- Exhortation and Promise - vs. 24-29
 - Note the separation of this church into two groups. Now that we have dealt with the wicked, we will turn to exhort the faithful.
 - vs. 25 - note the command to the faithful to hold fast
 - vs. 26-27 - the reward for staying faithful is beyond any hardship we face on earth.
 - vs. 28 - morning star – Godsoe: “Jesus Himself. The Morning Star rises in the dark night and ushers in the New Day. Rev. 2:26-28; 22:16.”
- Church period possibly described - A.D. 590-1000
- Application for today: Do not tolerate apostasy or false doctrine, even if masked by good works.