

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

### INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTERS 2 & 3

1. Verse 20 of Chapter 1 concludes “*the things which you have seen*” following the command of 1:19.
2. With the initial vision of the glorified Christ on the island of Patmos completed and recorded (1:4-20), John now is ready to record the 2<sup>nd</sup> command of 1:19, “*the things which are*”.
3. It is this phrase that constitutes the next chronological division of the book of Revelation as recorded in chapters 2 & 3.
4. As Rev.2:1 will make clear, the vision of Christ returns to John now seen “holding” (present active participle) the seven stars in His right hand and “walking” (present active participle) among the seven golden lampstands.
5. It is predominately this vision that governs the prophecy dictated to John to each of the seven messengers and local churches recorded in chapters 2 & 3.
6. The visionary scenario John has before Him is Christ as he saw Him in His glorified state in chapter one, yet with His glory subdued sufficiently on John’s behalf.
7. The most notable difference now is that Christ is seen walking around in the midst of the lampstands, rather than as He appeared standing in full glory earlier.
8. That Christ has retained His earlier appearance in this regard is seen in the continued references to the stars in His right hand (2:1 cp. 1:16), sharp two-edged sword (2:12b cp. 1:16) and the burning eyes and feet of bronze (2:18b cp. 1:14b-15).
9. Further, that He retains this appearance throughout this section is supported in 3:1 that again mentions reference to His continued possession of the seven stars (present active participle “*He who has*”).
10. That Christ is continuously “walking” around among the lampstands during His dictation is to signify His Personal activity as it applies to each of these messengers and churches individually and as a whole.
11. Therefore, chapters 2 & 3 are to be viewed not only on the basis of representing local churches existing in the Church Age; they are to be viewed corporately as representing the Church Universal.
12. This is seen in the fact that Christ continuously is holding all seven stars together throughout the vision that are representative of the cumulative P-T’s representing the cumulative churches.
13. Further Christ is viewed as continuously active among all of them at one time, though He communicates to each one individually.
14. And not to be dismissed is the fact that there are “seven” P-T’s and “seven” local churches in view that symbolically represent, a perfect or completed overview of representation of the cumulative Church.
15. Therefore, the proper interpretation of “*the things which are*” of necessity must begin with conditions that existed in John’s day and continues throughout the extended history of the Church Age.
16. The interpretation of chapters 2 & 3 are two-fold in application:
  - A. They represent any local church during any given time in the history of the Church (since each of these churches existed individually in one period of time).
  - B. They represent the Church Universal during any given time in CA history (since they are represented as a whole while individually addressed in a chronological order brought to completion).

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17. The vision represents Christ's critiquing of each local church throughout the course of the Church Age while at the same time critiquing the Church Universal chronologically throughout seven general eras of the Church Age.
18. That the entire period of the Church Age is definitely in view is further substantiated by the final phrase of 1:19, "*the things which shall take place after these things*".
19. Any intellectually honest exegete must acknowledge that the phrase "gevne, sqai meta. tau/ta – genesthai meta tauta/to become or shall take place after these things" is only used two times in the book of Revelation, Rev.1:19; 4:1.
20. Rev.4:1 actually uses the shorter phrase "*after these things*" two times to emphatically denote that there is a definite historical and chronological advance in the book.
21. Furthermore, for the *things* recorded in 4:1ff to "come into existence/*take place*" *after these things* demands that a new period of history is now in *place* upon completion of the preceding context of history.
22. The history of 4:1ff is seen in the representation of translation and transporting of John from being on earth on Patmos during the vision of chapters 1-3 to the 3<sup>d</sup> Heaven beginning of chapter 4. Rev.4:1-2
23. This is representative of the rapture of the Church ending the Church Age dispensation beginning the final period of the Age of Israel that immediately precedes the coming of the Revelation.
24. It should be clear that one cannot effectively understand the difficult sections of the Bible with respect to the Kingdom of God apart from a proper understanding of dispensationalism.
25. The term dispensation is taken from the Greek word "oivkonomi,a – oikonomia" that literally means relating to the task of administration, stewardship or management.
26. It is used in connection with chronological time as it applies to the Church in Eph.1:10 and 3:9.
27. A dispensation is defined as a period of history in which God works in a particular way, administering His rule over the world as He progressively works out His purpose for world history.
28. He does so through the custodialship of men given His plan that in turn are responsible for its communication and administration of it to others in the world.
29. In order for each dispensation to be distinct from all other dispensations, it must have at least four essential characteristics:
  - A. 1<sup>st</sup>, it must have a particular way of God's administering His rule. A unique ruling factor or combination of ruling factors characterizes each dispensation.
  - B. 2<sup>nd</sup>, it must involve a particular responsibility for man. Each dispensation makes man responsible to obey God in accordance with its unique ruling factor or combination thereof.
  - C. 3<sup>rd</sup>, it must be characterized by Divine revelation that had not been given before. In order for man to know God's new way of ruling and his new responsibility, he must have these things revealed to him. Example: Paul indicated that the present dispensation is definitely related to new revelation that God gave to the Apostles and NT prophets. Eph.3:2-10
  - D. 4<sup>th</sup>, each dispensation has a specific type of priesthood under which believers are to function.
30. While many have divided and sub-divided dispensations (in the extreme this is called hyper-dispensationalism), there are four major dispensations (excluding the eternal state of the new heavens and earth) that can be clearly seen in God's economy:

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- A. The Age of the Gentiles, from Adam to Abraham, characterized by the family priesthood.
  - B. The Age of Israel, from Abraham to Pentecost, characterized by the Aaronic priesthood.
  - C. The parenthetical dispensation of the Church Age, from Pentecost to the rapture, characterized by the Royal priesthood.
  - D. The Millennial dispensation lasting 1000+ years, from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent to the release of Satan, characterized by the earthly reign of the High Priest and King, Jesus Christ.
31. Our current dispensation is sometimes referred to as a “mystery” dispensation, since it falls between the two Advents of Christ and was not specifically detailed in the OT. 1Pet.1:11
  32. The general state of the Kingdom of Heaven during the inter-Advent era is largely, though not exclusively, seen in the state of the Church.
  33. The state of the Kingdom during this time may be observed in the parables that are presented in Mat.13 that may be summarized as follows:
    - A. As vss.10-11 makes clear, the parables of this chapter revolve around the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.
    - B. The mystery in view looks to revelation of BD pertaining to God’s plan that is inclusive of the Church Age, doctrine in detail not given to OT saints. Cp.vs.17
    - C. The parable of the sower, vss.3-23: there will be a consistent sowing of the Word of God throughout the inter-Advent age.
    - D. The parable of the wheat and tares, vss.24-30: there will be a satanic infiltration by means of negative unbelievers.
    - E. The parable of the mustard seed, vss.31-32: there will be massive external growth.
    - F. The parable of the leaven, vs.33: there will be internal doctrinal corruption.
    - G. The parable of the hidden treasure, vs.44: the Lord will conclude His program by redeeming a +V remnant/portion of Israel.
    - H. The parable of the pearl, vss.45-46: He will similarly gain a treasure in the Church.
    - I. The parable of the dragnet, vss.47-50: the end will come with separation and judgment.
  34. Whereas Matthew was concerned primarily with the Kingdom aspect (primarily directed at the Jews), John is concerned with God’s plan for the Church.
  35. Therefore the teachings of Mat.13 that are applicable from the time of Christ until the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent, roughly parallel the Church Age that is detailed in Rev.2-3.
  36. The first and primary interpretation of these two chapters relates to the seven churches to which, the letters were addressed detailing their spiritual condition before the Lord and His advice to them.
  37. There would certainly be a direct historical application of what is recorded here to each one of the seven churches.
  38. Secondly, since these letters address *the things which are*, they are seven representative churches that when viewed as a whole reflect the spiritual conditions of the visible church at any point in the human history of the CA.
  39. This means that local churches today (or at any time in the CA) are not only reflective of one of the seven types of churches in view, but are part of the overall spiritual condition of the Church Universal.
  40. That they are placed in a chronological sequence they denote a general chronological and prophetic progression in the CA.

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41. The fact that there is certainly a prophetic element will become obvious, since some of the things Christ says to these church are not fulfilled at their times in history. Rev.2:22; 3:10
42. These particular churches were chosen and in this order, since this is the order that one would encounter them as he moved along in time and space as the book was distributed.
43. That it reflects seven general eras of the Church Age does not mean that the interpreter can date set exactly (of day or year) a distinct transition in the Church when its overall spiritual condition changes.
44. The changes noted in this spiritual barometer of the Church must account for a period of time for the transition to occur.
45. The only black and white time established in this regard is the beginning and ending of these eras beginning with the early Church represented by Ephesus and the end of the Church represented by Laodicea.
46. Therefore any chronological dating of these eras are to be viewed as a general account of seeing the transitions of these eras as recorded in Church history.
47. The chronological order of these seven Churches is designed to foreshadow the successive dominant phases and eras through which the Church moves from the time John writes until the rapture.
48. It is also important to note that each succeeding epoch does not necessarily terminate the preceding age as to specific characteristics ascribed to it.
49. Each era will gradually give way to the next dominant era taking its specific characteristics with it and any age may overlap another and extend its influence to the end of the age.
50. In this way, one can grasp the full flavor of the Church Age, the general spiritual condition of the Church at general times in history and see the overall influences, errors and prescriptions combined that makes up the Church and the local churches supporting the Church.
51. As an example, the Ephesian church can exist in some form throughout the CA and its influence is still active and while it is not the dominant type of Church in any other era, it still gives us insight as to its influence in the critiquing of the Church overall by Christ.
52. Another clear example is the case of the Philadelphia church promised deliverance from Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week that demands its prophetic presence at the rapture.
53. This notes that it is because of the existence of this type of local church that the Church is spared the consequences of the tribulational judgment and that there will be local churches on the scene like the Philadelphia church when the rapture occurs.
54. In contrast is the Laodicean church that is lukewarm denoting the overall spiritual condition of the Church that brings about the judgment of removing the Church as the custodian of God's plan.
55. Yet, the Laodicean church has existed since the time of John's writing.
56. Since these passages have such important significance in God's economy, each local church should study each of the seven letters carefully in order to evaluate their position, to see if any of these trends exist within and to see where they are chronologically in the CA (the prophetic application).
57. Each of the letters to the churches contain certain things in common (although all do not contain all elements) and may be divided as follows:
  - A. The city/church that is in view, the destination for the book.
  - B. A description of Christ taken from the vision established in chapter one.

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- C. A statement of the Lord's omniscience with respect to their spiritual condition.
  - D. A commendation
  - E. A condemnation.
  - F. Advice and warning.
  - G. A promise.
58. Further, it must be noted that there is only one bonafide, recognized church in each city, even in the very large cities such as Ephesus.
59. These messages are not addressed to the pastor-teachers (plural) in Ephesus, but to the singular P-T in charge of the established church in that city.
60. So much for doctrinal apostates that want to justify their violation of another P-T's canon by suggesting that there can be several sound doctrinal churches in a given city.
61. If God the H.S. established a legitimate local church that is the pillar and support of the truth in a given city, why would He establish a competing organization in the same place?
62. Thirdly, with respect to these seven letters; they are to be applicable to any believer, living at any time in the Church Age, as seen in the command at the end of each letter, "*He (singular) who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches (plural)*".
63. As one final note with respect to the lampstands (local churches): It is apparent that each lampstand is identical with the others (at least no variation is mentioned), denoting the fact that all local churches should follow the same doctrinal model of organizational assembly, hierarchy and autonomy.

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### THE PROPHETIC PRONOUNCEMENT ON EPHESUS VSS.1-7

#### EXEGESIS VERSE 1:

GNT Revelation 2:1 Tw/| avgge,lw| th/j evn VEfe,sw| evkklhsi,aj gra,yon\ Ta,de le,gei o` kratw/n tou.j e`pta. avste,raj evn th/| dexia/| auvtou/( o` peripatw/n evn me,sw| tw/n e`pta. lucniw/n tw/n crus w/n\

NAS Revelation 2:1 **"To the (corrected) messenger of the church in Ephesus write:**

*Tw/| o` avgge,lw| a;ggeloj (d.a. + n-dm-s; "To the messenger/envoy/one sent"; ref. the pastor-teacher/communicator ordained by God) th/j h` evkklhsi,aj evkklhsi,a (d.a. + n-gf-s; "the local church") evn (pL of location) VEfe,sw| :Efesoj (n-Lf-s; "Ephesus") gra,yon\ gra,fw (vImp./aa--2s; epistolary/prophetic aorist; "write"; the aorist denotes action as though already completed in a futuristic point of time) **The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this:** o` kratw/n krate,w (d.a. + subs. ptc./p/a/nm-s; lit. to be strong/possess power; "the One holding/having control over") tou.j o` e`pta, avste,raj avsth,r (d.a. + card. adj./am-p + n-am-p; "the seven stars") evn (pL) auvtou/( auvtou,j (npgm3s; ref. Christ) th/| h` dexia/| dexio,j (d.a. + ap-Lf-s; "right"; the hand understood) o` peripatw/n peripate,w (d.a. + subs. ptc./p/a/nm-s; "the One walking") evn (pL) me,sw| me,soj (ap-Ln-s; "the middle/midst"; hence, "walks among") tw/n h` (d.a. + gfp +) e`pta, (card. adj./gf-p; "the seven") tw/n h` crusw/n\ crusou/j (d.a. + a--gf-p; "golden") lucniw/n lucni,a (+ n-gf-p; "lampstands"; governed by the first d.a. before "seven") le,gei le,gw (vipa--3s; "keeps on saying") Ta,de o[de (demon. pro./an-p; "these things"; focuses on what is going to be said; it is at the beginning of the sentence for emphasis; looks to a dramatic pronouncement)*

#### ANALYSIS VERSE 1:

1. Verse 1 begins a direct dictation by Christ to John on the state of spiritual affairs of the **seven** churches.
2. That it is Christ speaking and not the commissioned angel of 1:1 is implied in 4:1 where John makes reference to *"the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet...said"* indicating a change of communicator from chapters 2 & 3 beginning chapter 4.

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3. Each of the **seven** introductions to the **seven** churches begins with a grammatical similarity under the terms “**write**” and the phrase “**says this**”. Cp.2:1; 2:8; 2:12; 2:18; 3:1a,b; 3:7; 3:14
4. In all **seven** instances, John uses a prophetic aorist imperative “to **write**” and a present active indicative in the phrase “**says this**”.
5. The prophetic aorist of the command “to **write**” looks to a future certainty of action viewed as already completed in a point of time.
6. That the things written are prophetic in nature (hence, the emphasis of a prophetic aorist over its epistolary action) denotes that the things recorded concerning these **seven** churches are to be viewed two-fold:
  - A. A distinctive or individual prophecy for each is to be gleaned.
  - B. The individual prophecy for each is revealed as being completed in a specific point of time.
7. This points to the dual nature of the prophecies concerning the **seven** churches:
  - A. Each prophecy is designed to be a standard of evaluation for each local church existing in the Church Age during their allotted time in history.
  - B. Each prophecy is designed to be a standard of evaluation chronologically as to the condition of the Church Universal and what era of the Church Age is in view for each believer’s orientation to the time in which they live.
8. That all local churches and hence believers are to view each of these prophecies in this manner is then further brought out by the prophetic pronouncement phrases declaring Christ “**says this**”.
9. The present active indicative of the verb “**says**” denotes continuous/linear action and could be rendered “keeps on saying”.
10. The sense of this verb denotes that what Christ is saying to be recorded continues to be true throughout the entirety of the existence of each local church as well as throughout the entirety of the Church Age.
11. In addition, at the close of each pronouncement upon these churches, Christ gives a warning to all believers, “*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches*”. Cp.2:7; 2:11; 2:17; 2:29; 3:6; 3:13; 3:22
12. Again, the present active indicative is used with the verb “**says**”.
13. That this warning is instituted after the very first **church in Ephesus** demands that the reader of this book focus ahead or forward to the remaining churches in view for the completed picture and intent of the prophecy. (*How else could the plural of “churches” be taken after only one church has been addressed.*)
14. That the unbroken linear warning is addressed to all believers and it encompasses all the “*churches*” (plural) demands a continuation of time not only as it pertains to each church or epoch of time, but also looks to the completion of the Church Age itself.
15. With this in view, Christ makes His first pronouncement “**To the messenger of the church in Ephesus**”.
16. Again, it is noted that there is only one **messenger** and one local **church** located in the city of **Ephesus**.
17. Throughout all **seven** messages given to these churches, 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular pronouns and verbs are used to address the **messenger/P-T** first, who is then responsible to disseminate the information to the congregation.
18. It ties together in one package the P-T with the congregation as that which constitutes a bonafide local **church**.
19. It denotes that Christ scrutinizes each local church as a whole/corporately.

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20. It points to the reality that the local **church** is evaluated first based on the purity of BD communicated by the P-T and secondly based on the response by the congregation to that doctrine.
21. It denotes that each local church is designed to be a reflection of the teaching. Phi.4:1; 1The.2:19
22. While we are all individual members of it, the local **church** as a whole is designed to be a pillar and support of the truth (1Tim.3:15) and is a representative of the **Church** Universal.
23. That the congregation is to be a reflection of the teaching drives home the importance as to why one should adjoin themselves to an adjusted ministry whose P-T is teaching sound doctrine.
24. The principle is that the student of the WOG will do well to be as their teacher. Luk.6:40
25. However, this does not mean that any local **church** that gets a failing grade corporately is necessarily a true reflection of the teaching given.
26. Otherwise, we have some serious problems with situations such as with Moses and the Exodus generation, Paul and the churches at Corinth and Galatia, not to mention that John is the head of these **seven** local churches with corporate maladjustment ascribed to five out of **seven**.
27. On the other hand, when there exists problems within the **church** and the need for correction and rebuke is necessary, it must begin with the P-T as it is each messenger's responsibility to relate these things to their own congregation.
28. That **Ephesus** was John's home base and local **church** from which he operated, it is ludicrous to think that the doctrine communicated there was anything less than pure, a fact that is substantiated in the message to them. (*There success in keeping false prophets from their midst vs.3*)
29. The etymology of the name '**Ephesus**' denotes it is a derivative of the Greek verb "evfizw – ephizo" meaning "to sit, to sit upon" and is a term that can have a positive and negative connotation.
30. In a positive sense, the word means something that is established, while in a negative sense it implies apathy, impassiveness or attitude of resting on one's laurels sitting on past accomplishments.
31. As we will see, both connotations are represented in this local church.
32. The positive looking to the purity of BD by which this church was established and the negative viewing this second generation congregation taking for granted the doctrinal victories that had been won by the first generation of converts in that city.
33. The isagogics of **Ephesus** shows that it was the most prominent city in Roman Asia Minor (present day Turkey).
34. It was the political, religious and commercial capital of this province having the most important seaport in that part of the world, with a population of approximately half a million swelling to between one and two million on certain occasions.
35. This city was also know for its great library that rivaled those at Rome, Athens, Antioch of Syria and Alexandria in Egypt.
36. The Roman amphitheater seated some 25,000 people and had an acoustical design that enabled the audience to hear without the convenience of any further system of amplification.
37. It was also the home to one of the then seven wonders of the world, the Temple of Diana that was a temple of immorality, a bank and an art gallery.



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38. Its pagan religious significance was based on the fact that it was the headquarters for the phallic cult of Artemis (Latin: Diana), the mother goddess of fertility, life, sex, and reproduction and who ironically was depicted as the patroness of virginity.
39. This in turn proved a commercial boon in the sales of religious artifacts and trinkets, especially the sale of statues of Diana, bringing substantial revenues to the silversmith's guild. Act.19:25
40. The worship of Diana consisted of her idol, a female figure without clothing from the waist up, covered with multiple rows of breasts that portrayed the sensuality and degeneracy of her worship.
41. The actions of her worship consisted of a plethora of eunuchs and temple prostitutes and included all forms of phallic activity up to and including mutilation.
42. The Greek philosopher Heraclitus, known as the weeping philosopher said, *"The darkness of the temple altar in **Ephesus** is the darkness of vileness; the morals of the temple are worse than the morals of animals, for even promiscuous dogs do not mutilate each other; the worshippers of Diana are fit only to be drowned."*
43. Paul established a **church in Ephesus** on his 2<sup>nd</sup> journey, assisted by Priscilla and Aquila (Act.18:19) and later spent three years teaching there. Act.19:8-10; 20:31
44. His missionary work in **Ephesus** was ended by a riot that was instigated by Demetrius, a member of the silversmith's guild. Act.19:23ff-20:1
45. While Christianity was successful enough to prompt this riot and appeared to have the upper hand against the worship of Diana, there was another cult that flourished in the city that would prove to be a further source of testing to the **church**: The cult of Rome and Emperor worship. Act.29:31
  - A. The Asiarchs, or High Priests of Asia, were the heads of the imperial, political-religious organization of the province that prompted the cult of the emperor and Rome.
  - B. These men were civil and religious officials of the province of Asia, chosen yearly to preside over the national games and theatrical displays.
  - C. The Asiarchs financed the games and theaters and every year an Asiarch was chosen from the wealthy and aristocratic families of the province.
  - D. These men were held in high esteem and their title was probably borne for life by the officers in the league; so in Paul's day there would have been a number of Asiarchs at **Ephesus**.
  - E. Like other leagues in other provinces, the Asiarchs were a quasi-religious organization with certain political functions.
  - F. While the group did not have political authority, it served the interests of Rome by promoting the cult of Caesar and securing loyalty to Roman rule.
  - G. Their headquarters was in Pergamum, where their chief temple was erected in about 29 AD; other temples being erected in honor of the ruling Caesar in Smyrna and **Ephesus**.
46. Paul wrote to this **church** in that city during his first Roman imprisonment (one of the books commonly called the prison epistles), which is the extant book of Ephesians.
47. After his release, Paul returned to **Ephesus** and established Timothy as the pastor of the **church** and wrote the two letters that bear his name while he was pastoring there. 1Tim.1:3
48. Tradition has it that our author John the Apostle eventually relocated to **Ephesus** as his home base of apostolic function.
49. It was while John was living in **Ephesus** that he was taken captive and exiled to Patmos and apparently later released returning to **Ephesus** to complete his course.

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50. In 262 AD the city was destroyed and never regained its former glory and all that remains is its ruins.
51. In vs.1b, Christ then begins the teaching aspect of the message that John is to **write**.
52. He begins here as with all the individual messages, with a self-description that reflects some aspect of the vision of Christ John had and now beholds or by some aspect of what He has said about Himself represented by the vision.
53. Further, Christ speaks of Himself in the third person in each initial comment to each **church** employing a literary device designed to draw attention to the exalted nature of His Person, function and message.
54. It denotes that we are to view the glorified Christ outside any limitations placed upon Him by physical creation or man as He is truly God in Person speaking.
55. Therefore, while each self-description has direct application to each **church**, it is not limited to just that one **church** and is just as applicable to all the churches in view just as much as what He will say following the description. Cp.1:7a
56. His first self-description to **the church in Ephesus** is two-fold:
  - A. **The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand.**
  - B. **The One who walks among the seven golden lampstands.**
57. As Christ has already interpreted in 1:20, **the seven stars** = the **seven** pastors and **the seven golden lampstands** = the **seven** churches.
58. As previously noted in chapter 1, the **right hand** signifies a place of greatest honor and is recognized as the ultimate in strength and power.
59. In correlation to P-T's contextually, the **right hand** denotes the special relationship, authority, responsibility, protection, blessing and control that the Lord has over a P-T.
60. That all **seven stars** are held together notes the following:
  - A. What is true for one P-T remains true for all.
  - B. There is no time in the history of the CA that Christ does not exercise complete control over any P-T and his commission of office.
  - C. He is the Good and Chief Shepherd retaining authority over all legitimate under shepherds. Joh.10:11,14 cp. 1-5; 1Pet.5:4
  - D. Every P-T throughout the CA is under the direct scrutiny of Christ as to the content of the truth of BD taught and management of their local **church** and will answer directly to Him.
  - E. He protects them in office without qualm or limitation.
  - F. Any assembly or organization void of a commissioned P-T is not considered a local **church** or as representative of the **Church** Universal.
  - G. The office of P-T is a privileged position in the POG and is deserving of double honor. 1Tim.5:17
  - H. The office of P-T is the highest extant office designed to carry the **Church** post apostolic to its completion.
  - I. This is seen in the fact that the last remaining Apostle, John, is now being used as an intermediary communicator to these P-T's.
61. The second part of His description relates to the Lord's tireless activity (present participle of peripateo, peripateo; continually walking around) with respect to the local churches, emphasizing His omnipresence and omniscience.
62. That Christ is seen now walking in the midst of all **seven** churches notes the following:
  - A. Again, what is true for one local **church** is true for all local churches throughout the CA

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- B. Each local **church** is constantly under the direct scrutiny of Christ corporately as a congregation/assembly.
  - C. Christ constantly is active in reading each local church's volitional and doctrinal "tape" corporately ensuring that their needs are met in this regard.
  - D. There is never a time that Christ does not provide an assembly of believers with their right P-T in accordance to their volitional aptitude.
  - E. Christ has a specific star for each specific lampstand and has total authority in putting them together. Cp.Act.20:28
  - F. Christ oversees the history of the **Church** Universal as its supreme authority.
  - G. Nothing that each local **church** or CU is or does escapes the notice of Christ.
  - H. Each local **church** and its congregation corporately will be held accountable to the message of truth provided to them by their P-T.
  - I. This is seen in not only their acceptance of the truth, but in their Ph<sub>2</sub> success in application as implied by the term "**walks**". Rom.6:4; 8:4; 1Cor.3:3; 7:17; 2Cor.4:2; 5:7; Gal.5:16; Eph.2:10; 4:17; 5:8; Phi.3:17-18; Col.1:10; 4:5; 1Joh.1:6,7; 3Joh.1:4; et al
  - J. That Christ is willing to make application towards the local **church** corporately points to what He is looking for from each local **church** corporately i.e., application of BD
63. Putting the two descriptions together points to the two-fold criteria that each local **church** and the CU is graded upon: the content of message (truth of BD) and application of it.
  64. That this self-description is presented to the first local **church** in the list and as representation of the first post apostolic era of the **Church (seven stars and seven lampstands)** provides invaluable insight as to the success and failures to each local **church** as well as the CU.
  65. As noted, the **church in Ephesus** is a **church** that is founded on the pure truth of BD as established during the apostolic era.
  66. However, their downfall is in their lack of personal zeal and application of that doctrine as a **church** corporately.
  67. That all churches are represented in Christ's description notes that the **Church** (and the local **church**) was all initially established with the teaching of pure truth and acceptable application of it by the congregation before God.
  68. The beginning of the downfall of any adjusted **church** in which truth is being taught is seen in their cavalier attitude in application of the truth as represented by **Ephesus**.
  69. It is lack of application that is a primary predator for failure of any otherwise adjusted **church**.
  70. Christ's self-description is a reminder to **Ephesus** that they represent the foundation of the **Church** and that their lack of personal application will ultimately open the doors for even more gross failings of the **Church** in the future, to include the distortion of doctrine itself.
  71. While sound teaching and understanding may carry the **church** for a time, a failure to apply it as a whole/corporately ultimately spells doom for any **church**.
  72. It is **this** principle that underwrites what Christ **says to the church in Ephesus** and to all the churches (vs.7) in view.
  73. While we cannot control the spiritual disposition of the **Church**, as a local **church** we are to take to heart the ramifications for failure to apply in evaluating our own destiny.

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### EXEGESIS VERSES 2 – 3:

GNT Revelation 2:2 Oi=da ta. e;rga sou kai. to.n ko,pon kai. th.n u`pomoh,n sou kai. o[ti ouv du,nh| basta,sai kakou,j( kai. evpei,rasaj tou.j le,gontaj e`autou.j avposto,louj kai. ouvk eivsi.n kai. eu-rej auvtou.j yeudei/j(

NAS Revelation 2:2 **'I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance,** *Oi=da* (viPFa--1s; "I know/recognize/have knowledge of"; when used of a deserved recognition of another it has the nuance of "respect/appreciate/have regard for" cp. 1The.5:12; here it points to a commendation based on Christ's omniscience compared to a condemnation as seen in the strong adversative "But" in vs.4) *sou su, (npg-2s; singular person points to the corporate church)* *ta. to, e;rga e;rgon (d.a. + n-an-p; "works/deeds")* *kai, (cc)* *sou su, (npg-2s)* *to.n o` ko,pon ko,poj (d.a. + n-am-s; lit. a beating; "toil/exhaustive physical or mental exertion/hard labor"; used 18x)* *kai, (cc)* *th.n h` u`pomoh,n u`pomoh, (d.a. + n-af-s; "perseverance/patience/steadfastness"; patience with respect to circumstances; same as 1:9)* **and that you cannot endure evil men,** *kai, (ascensive conj.; "even"; points to the most notable example)* *o[ti (ch; intro. indir. disc.)* *ouv du,nh| du,namai (neg. + vipd--2s; "you are not able/cannot")* *basta,sai basta,zw (compl. inf./aa; lit. to carry/bear/lift up; fig. "to bear the difficulty of/endure/put up with/put up with the pressure of/tolerate"; used 27x)* *kakou,j( kako,j (ap-am-p; "evil men"; contextually false apostles/imposters)* **and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false;** *kai,(cc)* *evpei,rasaj peira,zw (viaa--2s; "you put to the test/examine/prove")* *tou.j o` le,gontaj le,gw (d.a. + subs. ptc./p/a/am-p; "those who call"; the ptc. looks at their ongoing attempts at rhetoric behind their claims)* *e`autou.j e`autou/ (reflex. pro./am3p; "themselves")* *avposto,louj avpo,stoloj (n-am-p; "apostles")* *kai, (cc)* *ouvk ouv (neg. +) eivsi.n eivmi, (vipa--3p; "are not")* *kai, (ch)* *eu-rej eu`ri,skw (viaa--2s; "you found/discovered")* *auvtou.j auvto,j (npam3p; ref. false apostles)* *yeudei/j( yeudh,j (ap-am-p; "false/liars/deceivers")*

GNT Revelation 2:3 kai. u`pomoh.n e;cej kai. evba,stasaj dia. to. o;noma, mou kai. ouv kekopi,akejÅ

NAS Revelation 2:3 **and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's**

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

**sake, and have not grown weary.** *kai, (cc) e;ceij e;cw (vipa--2s; "you keep on having") u`pomoh.n u`pomoh, (n-af-s; "perseverance"; same vs.2) kai, (cc) evba, stasaj basta, zw (viaa--2s; "have endured"; same vs.2) dia, (pa; "because of/on account of/for") mou evgw, (npg-1s; ref. Christ) to, o; noma (d.a. + n-an-s; "the name") kai, (cc) ouv (neg. + ) kekopi, akejÅ kopia, w (viPFa--2s; "have not grown weary/exhausted/tired/ gave up as a result of toil and hard labor"; used 23x)*

### ANALYSIS VERSES 2 – 3:

1. The evaluation of this church at Ephesus begins in vs.2 with the same Greek verb that Christ uses for all the churches, **‘I know’** emphasizing His absolute omniscience.
2. The Greek verb **‘di-da – oida/to know’** in His address to these churches is always used in the perfect tense denoting past action with existing results.
3. Compared to the verb **“ginw,skw – ginosko”** that has emphasis of figuring out, discerning or learning, oida emphasizes the information acquired and means to fully **know** or thoroughly comprehend.
4. Christ does not **“figure out”** anything with respect to the condition of individuals or churches as His omniscience demands that He possesses perfect knowledge of every situation, person or thing.
5. In 5 of the 7 addresses including Ephesus, Christ relates His knowledge to **‘your deeds’** and then precedes to define what type of works to which He is referring. Rev.2:2,19, 3:1,8,15
6. This is designed to focus the believer on the fact that it is our works/**deeds** aka Divine good production that will be judged and not our professions, our good intentions or our desires. 1Cor.3:12-15
7. It is the works of these churches that He refers to that are the overt manifestations of their internal spiritual condition.
8. As applied to the local church at Ephesus, Christ’s knowledge of their Divine good production is given in the form of commendation and approval.
9. It emphasizes that Christ considers Divine good production itself as worthy of His respect and appreciation.
10. Their works are first dissected into two attributes connected to their Divine good emphasizing their motivation as seen in the terms **“and your toil and perseverance”**.
11. The first term **“toil/ko,poj – kopos”** is a strong term for working and notes activity that is physically or mentally exhausting emphasizing the hardship or troubles encountered in such work.
12. This term is used to denote that pursuit of Divine good production is to be an unceasing labor, can be difficult and always involves a degree of self-sacrifice and self-denial.
13. It is used in 1The.1:3 in connection with Divine love **“labor of love”** to commend the Thessalonian believers on the fact that their hard work proceeded from motivation to guard/apply the truth of BD across the board, that is the manifestation of true/perfect or complete love for Christ. Cp. Joh.14:15,21; 15:10; 1Joh.5:3
14. As we shall see in vs.4, Divine good in this most complete sense (application of BD in its fullest sense) has not been the case in Ephesus as of late.

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15. The second term further emphasizing their Divine good production is “**perseverance**/u`pomoh, - hupomone” that emphasizes patience with regard to the circumstances of life.
16. It is defined as a steadfast course of action in spite of the difficulties, testing, persecution, etc. that arise in our niche.
17. It looks to motivation to stick with it over the long haul and compliments their **toil**.
18. These two terms are a strong tribute to the overt applications of the Ephesian church in the face of difficult and trying circumstances.
19. It is the next commentary Jesus offers that focuses on the aspect of their Divine good fully worthy of commendation, “**and even that you cannot endure evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false**”.
20. The connective “**kai, - kai/and**” beginning this clause is to be viewed as an ascensive conjunction “even/indeed” introducing the most notable example while grammatically establishing grounds for the stark contrast beginning vs.4.
21. The aspect of Divine good that the Ephesian church excelled in deals with the reality of false teachers, false doctrine, and the inevitable attacks against the truth that originate with the forces of darkness and are perpetrated by liars and deceivers. Cp.1Tim.4:1-2
22. The **evil men** in view are those that have come against the church and are specifically defined by what we see in the following phrases.
23. It points to the organized evil of false teachers and their followers, as well as the false doctrines and evil practices they promoted.
24. As this verse makes clear, Satan began very early to seek to undermine the church by using **evil men** to produce a syncretism (the fusing of different beliefs and actions) between Christianity and pagan religions, Gnostic teachings and other types of demonic human viewpoint thinking that are not compatible with Christianity/BD.
25. Christ’s words of praise are based on the fact that this church **cannot endure**/bear these **men**, using a term that denotes their lack of tolerance, disgust and righteous indignation toward false teachers.
26. In spite of the ecumenical spirit that permeates the world today and has infiltrated doctrinal churches as well, there is no place for dropping our doctrinal distinctives and associating with those that are known to be negative.
27. Further, as the phrase “**and you put to the test**” makes clear, we have every right to critically examine any teacher and his teachings to see if they are consistent with the doctrine we know to be true.
28. One thing any examination must take into account is that many false teachers use similar, if not identical, vocabulary in order to deceive believers through semantics.
29. Therefore, we must be prepared to examine what **men** mean by what they say, force them to say what they truly mean, and not merely accept their terminology at face value.
30. If they fail to meet a rigorous doctrinal test, and most will, they are to be rejected and fall under the doctrine of separation.
31. We should find joy that there are certain people that find us intolerant of their spiritual folly, since a person is defined as much by their enemies sometimes as they are by their friends.
32. We should take a very hard line against those that begin to water down the doctrines of the faith, such as separation, SG<sub>3</sub>, R<sub>B</sub>, the local church, the P-T, authority, face-to-face teaching and many others, in order to appeal to a wider audience of –V.

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33. Jesus Christ makes no qualms in expressing His delight for their willingness and ability to subject anyone that comes to them to the most sever doctrinal scrutiny, recognizing the truth that Paul recorded in 2Cor.11:13-15.
34. During the mid to latter part of the first century AD, there came on the scene and existed numbers of itinerant pseudo-ministers that attempted to pass **themselves** off as legitimate **apostles**, claiming apostolic authority (in some cases superior authority) and succession.
35. It was men such as these that sought to redefine and/or replace the authority of the original 12 **apostles**, the truth they had disseminated and the organizational structure, message and purpose of local churches established correctly by the original 12.
36. These false teachers assumed apostolic authority based on their STA agendas for the sake of approbation lust, power lust and more commonly for monetary gain.
37. This local church had a policy of automatically putting any new teacher or addressing any proclaimed teacher to the doctrinal test, which led them to dismiss these false **apostles** after finding **them to be false**.
38. The term “**test**/peira,zw – peirazo” meant to put something or someone to the **test** for the purpose of approving them if they met the requirement(s) in view.
39. The term “**false**/yeudh,j – pseudes” emphasizes that their claims of authority and message was based on lies and deceit and points to the tool for their testing i.e., the truth of BD as taught by the original 12.
40. It is the truth of BD as recorded for us today in the NT that contains the same doctrine taught by these faithful and +V 12 men and the standard established for all believers and local churches to adhere.
41. This further points to the primary category of Divine good production in which this church did not wane.
42. And that was that their zeal to ensure that the purity of BD and organization as a local church corporately as established under true apostolic authority and recorded for us in the NT was never left undefended and its integrity in that regard was fought for with undiminished zeal.
43. Further, it would be remiss for the student to not take note that out of all of the churches addressed at the end of the first century, none has any reference to the temporary spiritual gifts or offices excepting this battle against false **apostles** in Ephesus.
44. None of the churches are commended for discerning spirits, tongues, prophecy, etc., and the only commendation given in this respect is for rigorously investigating the claims of those that came to them proclaiming authority over the church.
45. While this is not conclusive, it supports through implication the doctrinal position that the temporary gifts and offices were fading away leaving the extant permanent gifts to carry the Church. Cp.1Cor.13:8
46. Therefore, in a prophetic sense, Ephesus represents the era of transition from direct apostolic rule to the rule of the individual local church under the office of P-T, since only Ephesus contains a reference to **apostles**.
47. In this case, John’s death marked the definite termination of apostolic authority; from then on each local church was to be independent with only one pastoral/communicative office in the ordained P-T, with each local church equal members of the body of the Church under its One Head, Jesus Christ.
48. Hence, why the term “**apostles**” is here applied to false teachers.

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49. Satan, as an angel of light (2Cor.11:14), sought to counterfeit the church by attacking the authoritative office of apostleship in the early church instituting false teachers to function in that realm.
50. That it was **apostles** that established and organized the Church into properly functioning local churches representing the Church, Satan provided his own false **apostles** seeking to distort true Christianity into another “religion”.
51. The church at Ephesus is given the “high five” for ensuring that the authority structure and function of the local church as instituted by Christ and the 12 **apostles** was not undermined in any way in taking the Church into its first post apostolic era.
52. The challenging nature of the task faced by this first post apostolic generation may be seen in the fact that believers are still having trouble with trying to find answers in pseudo-rituals and pseudo-hierarchical authority structures (looking to denominationalism and Catholicism).
53. Further problems are seen in believers trying to figure out exactly what to look for in the priorities of a local church, what it is to provide for individuals and how it is to represent itself to the world via functions, ministries, programs, etc.
54. Believers should look to the one place, namely the Bible, and to the administration of its truths to determine a properly functioning local church.
55. Any proclaimed church that does not appeal to the Scriptures with steadfast presentation for documentation and authorization as to their m/o (method of operation) should be regarded with suspicion.
56. With all apostolic rule, the miracles and miraculous gifts that had attended the infant Church ending, it meant that the Church now would have to become totally dependent upon the less spectacular (though intrinsically more powerful) procedure of administering the WOG entirely through proper exegesis of the Bible.
57. From the second generation of believers until today, the real spiritual works have been accomplished exclusively through ordinary Christians that have not possessed such impressive and extraordinary gifts.
58. It has not been through healing, tongues, apostolic authority or any other overtly miraculous means that the Church has spread the message of Jesus Christ.
59. The post-apostolic Church has provided for its own growth in the power of the H.S. through individual evangelism, sound teaching and pastoring and the permanent gifts of individual believers as they function in a bonafide local church.
60. Success in the transitional era of Ephesus (or in any future era) would depend upon individual Christians concentrating their efforts in the WOG: hearing it, believing it, learning it, teaching it, applying it and helping others do the same.
61. In vs.3, Christ reiterates the spiritual reality of this church in their application stating, **“and you have perseverance and have endured for My name’s sake, and have not grown weary”**.
62. As to the steadfastness of this local church, Jesus makes clear that they maintain a present course of action in this regards as brought out by the present tense of **“you keep on having” perseverance**.
63. He then employs the aorist tense **“have endured”** to denote completed action in a point of time.
64. The final phrase, **“have not grown weary/kopia,w – kopiao”** employs the perfect tense to denote completed action in the past with existing results.
65. Together, the tenses of these verbs denote that Ephesus and its representative 2<sup>nd</sup> generation era is and was faithful throughout their existence in this regard passing on



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the positive ramifications from their applications to the Church for its future generations.

66. It points to the fact that there are and always were and will be churches like the local church at Ephesus throughout the Church Age.
67. At any given time in the history of the Church, a local church that is functioning correctly under the RCOC, disseminating the truth of BD, can be found somewhere on this planet.
68. That is the positive legacy of the Ephesian church left to the Church.
69. Christ then highlights that the underwriter behind their zeal and drive to maintain this legacy was on account of/because of **“My name’s sake”**.
70. Christ’s name harks to His reputation and thus all that He represents in Person and message.
71. These believers in Ephesus would not allow any misrepresentation of their witness to the world as a local church corporately with reference to Christ’s Divine design for the Church and each local church as members of His body to be the pillar and support of the truth.
72. This church at Ephesus would not fall prey to various reactor factors, either politically or religiously and continued to maintain their fidelity to their presentation of the pure truth of BD under the proper RCOC.
73. This is seen in the final word **“have not grown weary”** expressing the reality that they were tireless in their service to Christ in this regard.
74. This harks to a danger in the Christian life referred to as “soul fainting” that occurs when believers or the church begin to react to the various forms of testing and persecution in their niche and become tempted to throw in the towel.
75. Today it may come in the form of derision from denominational and fundy circles that look down upon a local church because of size, lack of worldly wealth, being nondescript in physical appearance or notoriety and the fact that we follow only one man for our spiritual guidance.
76. While Ephesus had their act together in this very important application of BD to ensure a properly functioning local church teaching truth, they fell short in exploiting their strengths of this application as vss.4-5 will show.

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### EXEGESIS VERSE 4:

GNT Revelation 2:4 avlla. E;cw kata. Sou/ o[ti th.n avga,phn sou th.n prw,thn avfh/kejÅ

NAS Revelation 2:4 **‘But I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love.** *Avlla, (strong advers.; “But/In stark contrast to the preceding”) e;cw (vipa—1s; “I keep on having”; subject ref. Christ) “this” supplied kata, (pg; “down upon/against”) sou/ su, (npg-2s; collective singular; ref. the local church corporately) o[ti (cs; intro. Indir. Disc.) avfh/kejÅ avfi,hmi (viaa—2s; “you have left/abandoned/leave behind”; legally used for divorce in 1Cor.7:11,12,13; it has the nuance of forsaking or abandoning something resulting in no further advancement or continuation in what is left behind cp. Heb.6:1) sou su, (npg-2s) th.n h` prw,thn prw/toj (d.a. + restrict. Attrib. Ord. Adj./af-s; “the first”; the restr. Attrib. Emphasizes the attribute of the noun it modifies and suggests there might exist an example that does not possess this quality) th.n h` avga,phn avga,ph (d.a. + n-af-s; “the love”; ref. Divine love)*

### ANALYSIS VERSE 4:

1. In spite of the Ephesian church being a correctly functioning doctrinal church as to its teaching and internal authoritative structure and decorum, Jesus now makes clear that beyond that they corporately are failing.
2. To highlight this sharp contrast and change from commendation to condemnation, Christ begins vs.4 using the strong adversative “avlla, - alla/**But**” or “In stark contrast to”.
3. Even though they have kept the church doctrinally pure as applauded in vss.2-3, Christ has an ongoing problem with this church.
4. This is seen in the present active indicative verb and prepositional phrase that follows, **‘I have *this* against you’**.
5. The nuance of this form is that He “keeps on having ***this* against them**”, indicting the church corporately viewing the P-T together with the congregation as one assembly.
6. Apart from the integrity they have maintained to the Apostolic design for the local church as an assembly for the dissemination of truth, Christ yet finds them offensive/repulsive.
7. Jesus Christ has a sanctified grudge/complaint **against** this local church based on His zeal and righteous passion for the POG.
8. The final clause introduces the root of their problem, **‘that you have left your first love’**.
9. The accusative (our direct object) noun **love** is placed first for emphasis in the Greek text.

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10. It is modified placing it in a class of its own with the restrictive attributive adjective **“first”**.
11. The nuance of this adjective **“first”** denotes a quality ascribed to the noun **“love”** suggesting another example that does not possess this quality.
12. It could be used here in the sense of:
  - A. Foremost as to position.
  - B. Former as to **first** in time.
  - C. Best as to quality.
13. In fact, all three nuances can be applied since in vs.5 they are told to *“do the deeds you did at first”* as the antidote to their current problem indicating works that held a position of priority, was previous to their actions now and obviously of the best quality.
14. Christ is making extremely clear that something dramatic has changed with respect to the previous manner that this church was conducting its ministry.
15. This church has opted for another form of **love** that falls short in rank, priority and quality failing to meet God’s standards.
16. The vast majority of interpreters now attempt to make distinctions between what the Ephesians thought and how they felt emotionally about the Lord.
17. One particular quote sums up their thoughts noting, “While the Ephesians had hands and heads committed to the Lord, their hearts were far from Him”.
18. This human viewpoint garbage is a direct reflection of lazy interpreters that do not do proper word studies and themselves let emotions rule rather than the strict dictate of BD.
19. The noun **“love/avga,ph – agape”** does not demand any emotions attached to it in its purest form of application.
20. It emphasizes the attributes of the one applying **love** versus the attributes of the one to whom the **love** is expressed, no matter how one may feel or consider another. Cp.Mat.5:44; Luk.6:27, 35
21. This **love** is based on the virtue of self-sacrifice placing the object of **love** above one’s own interests. Joh.15:13
22. For this **love** to be acceptable by God, it must be Divine in nature and therefore free from any STA defilement, since God is **love** and this **love** comes from Him. Cp.1Joh.4:7,8; 4:16,20
23. Therefore, the **love** in view is Divine **love** and must fall under the standards of His righteousness and the veracity of His word.
24. This is the real danger of our time in history, since so many organizations (local churches) seek to convince people that their **love** for Christ is comprised of some subjective emotional feeling.
25. They advocate a form of Christianity that is not based on sound, substantive and objective exegesis and teaching of the Scripture and rather appeal to the subjective feelings of each believer and the god they have manufactured in their own minds.
26. In fact, our time in history is comprised largely of believers that have become their own final authority with respect to the truth and are too arrogant to submit themselves to the delegated authority of an adjusted P-T.
27. Our period of history is dominated by the Laodicean mentality that is not only spiritually asleep, but also completely deluded. Rev.3:17
28. Nevertheless, believers go to church, pray, visit the sick, evangelize (at least some), give and engage in a multitude of “Christian” activities, while consumed with their own arrogance.

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29. They engage in action without honor before God.
30. It is incongruous to proclaim one's **love** for the Lord, while repudiating and rejecting substantial portions of His Word, yet you can walk into churches all day long and find believers of this ilk.
31. Jesus Christ is not fooled by the external professions of those that reject and distort portions of the truth they do not like.
32. The real indication of our **love** for Christ (The Living Word) relates to our attitude toward His Word (what He thinks).
33. The key to understanding what is meant by the Ephesians abandoning their **first love** is found in Christ's very own definition of what true **love** for Him is in the Gospel of John. Joh.14:15; 21-24
34. The nuance of "keeping His commandments/word" demands not only hearing the truth, **but** also applying it in the Christian life. Cp. Luk.8:21
35. Divine **love** goes beyond inhale faith (believing BD) and demands exhale faith (applying BD). 1Joh.2:4-6; 3:17; 5:2-3
36. The book of James further drives this point home. Jam.1:21-24; 2:14-26
37. Divine **love** demands the combination of isolation of the STA (FHS), hearing the truth and then application of it, all being manifestations of self-sacrifice.
38. Divine **love** begins by denying the propensities of the flesh and followed through with our sacrifice of time and effort in pursuit of the inhale and exhale of BD.
39. The Ephesian church had begun with an illustrious history with respect to BD and the importance of doctrine under the teaching ministry of Paul.
40. The +V that surfaced in this city must have been substantial, since Paul determined before the Lord to spend some 3 years there teaching them. Act.20:31
41. He laid an impressive groundwork of doctrine and in his parting message to them, continued to emphasize the doctrine of the importance of Bible doctrine. Act.20:32
42. What had begun to wane with the Ephesian church is their zeal in their application of that doctrine.
43. While they retained a zeal to hear the truth and ensure its presentation, they had become cold in applying it as a church corporately
44. This passage makes it very clear to all believers, beginning with the P-T, that it is possible to be theologically clean/sound and yet spiritually at a standstill.
45. While it may not have been visible to the average observer, this church had begun to lose pace and intensity in their commitment to apply the doctrine they were taught.
46. It should be evident that the P-T is expected to continually set the pace in doctrine, beginning with his own self-discipline in the text, moving at a consistent speed, not distracted by non-essentials and faithfully teaching the text in an intellectually honest manner.
47. The Ephesian church had witnessed the apostolic era with its attendant miracles, healings, supernatural deliverance's from demons and exposition of the Scriptures via prophetic and other supernatural communicative gifts. Cp.Act.19:11-12
48. They were now faced with a post-apostolic world in which they had to rigorously pursue the text of Scripture in a less exciting environment.
49. The temporary gifts gave way to the permanent extant gifts and this church had adopted a mundane attitude lacking luster in their pursuit of application of doctrine overall.
50. Bible class became a routine of academic assembly while forfeiting the motivation of integrating all that was taught into the very life of the church.

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51. The communicator and congregation both lost the zeal for the WOG this church once had due to allowing cosmic distractions and other substitutions to take its place.
52. Application of the sound doctrine left to them as a legacy of the apostolic period was no longer **first** priority as a church, their **love** was directed elsewhere.
53. With the newness and glamour gone from apostolic beginnings, these believers became bored and indifferent to continuing advancing in the POG.
54. The term ‘ἀvfi,hmi – aphiamei/**you have left**’ has a wide variety of meanings that must be determined by context, with a root sense of moving one thing away from another:
  - A. It is used of sending forth missiles in Homeric writings.
  - B. Herodotus uses it in the sense of uttering words, giving vent to speech.
  - C. It is used of sending out an expedition or troops.
  - D. It can be used of sending something or someone away, loosing them, or setting them free.
  - E. In a legal sense it is used of releasing one from an engagement or accusation.
  - F. Herodotus also uses it in the sense of dissolving, disbanding, or breaking up an army.
  - G. Biblically it is used in the sense of divorce, or send away (separate). 1Cor.7:11-13
  - H. It is used of canceling debts and the forgiveness of sins. Act.8:22; Rom.4:7
  - I. It is used of departing an area, leaving someplace or something. Joh.4:3,28
  - J. It is also used to allow someone to proceed, tolerating their person or actions. Rev.2:10
55. In our context, the sense of the word indicates that the Ephesian church had disjointed or released the importance of application of BD from the importance of doctrine itself as necessary to truly fulfill the principle of Divine **love**.
56. It notes that they had abandoned any effort to maximize their Divine good production and were willing to settle for a mediocre accumulation of SG<sub>3</sub> ultimately forfeiting the prize.
57. One’s MPR (most pressing responsibility) begins with the inhale of truth, but is not completed until the exhale of truth is realized.
58. The Ephesian church had moved away from its **first** priority of application as recipients of the truth, while continuing to be overtly active and orthodox.
59. They had freed themselves from the encumbrance of obligation and responsibility to apply doctrine that had become a hindrance, monotonous and/or inconvenient apart from that which they just had to do to keep the church doctrinally correct.
60. They did not have the same qualities of motivation in their application of doctrine as they did in scrutinizing the viewpoint of others.
61. They had ceased to advance spiritually, which advancement must come through the continuous application of doctrine.
62. A local church cannot be content to rest on its past successes, riding its previous momentum; it must consistently strive to move ahead in not only the teaching and understanding of the Scriptures, but its applications, while excelling and advancing to higher application as doctrine and life demands.
63. Each believer must understand that the POG demands a life-long commitment to not only the pursuit of sound teaching, **but** also pursuit of sound application in all aspects of the Word (pursuing application of all the royal imperatives).
64. It begins by maintaining the number one priority of Bible class as the foundation and creation for knowledge and momentum for the future. Hos.6:3; Heb.6:1

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65. The church must then guard the truth with every fiber of their being by establishing and maintaining a perimeter of application able to repel any attempts of robbing them of the prize, while maximizing their SG<sub>3</sub>.
66. To lose one's zeal for application is a direct indicator of losing one's zeal for doctrine itself.
67. When we start cooling our heels in applying, rather than seeking to applying higher and better, we open the doors for the very deterioration of doctrine itself.
68. For the Ephesians to abandon their zeal for application of doctrine, they are opening the doors in the future to "water down" doctrine overall in its teaching becoming "weak" and a church now prone to large-scale apostasy.
69. The problem with the Ephesian church is one that every believer will inevitably encounter in the CWL, when the initial zeal for doctrine begins to fade.
70. In the beginning, all doctrines are new to us, the information challenging and exciting, the P-T admired and we can't wait to get to Bible class.
71. As time goes on and we learn the basic doctrines, which are taught through repetition, and we start encountering the pressures upon us in all forms as part of our applications, the excitement fades and Bible class is less than something new, thrilling and edifying to us.
72. One danger is that believers begin to get bored with the same old manna, week after week, year after year, with the same old applications time after time, and secretly desire to replace it all with something more stimulating.
73. It is particularly easy to fall into this trap in our culture that places so much emphasis on stimulating people with new movies, books, TV shows, music, funsville, and the pursuit of money and details, replacing each image in any category with a new one every six seconds.
74. Failure to acclimate to one's niche denotes failure of application of BD.
75. The intake and application of BD is not designed to be entertaining, it is designed to allow +V to assemble for their own spiritual growth, nourishment of the soul and to maximize in their Divine good production. Mat.4:4; Col.1:9-10
76. The problem unfolds when the bored believer either fails to correctly prioritize, or because he begins to get his priorities skewed and substitutes less important things (that may be more fun or stimulating) for more important things.
77. Another danger that can be just as destructive is to think we already do enough.
78. Obviously, the Ephesians thought that and Christ has just hammered them.
79. To think one has "arrived" spiritually ceasing to arm themselves with continued training in application of BD is tantamount to a form of arrogance that will eventually catch you spiritually with your "pants down".
80. It is this syndrome of arrogance that "I'm so great nothing will shake me now" that is behind the very fall of the U.S.A. as recorded in Rev.18:7.
81. While one may not fall into exceptional acts of immorality, the very attitude of riding on past accomplishments only coasting along dulls one's perception of life and moves away from the priorities once established that brought them to their perceived point of greatness to begin with.
82. There will be times in our Christian lives that we will lose focus and intensity, dropping our guards of application and the challenge during these times is to fight back and not give in to the creeping paralysis of spiritual regression.
83. You will have to force yourself to pray (a lack or decline in application that is a stark warning flag), doing all you can to draw near to God, fight through your own

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laziness, stupidity and non-concern, returning to the zealous state you formerly occupied. Jam.4:8-10

84. There will be challenges under the doctrine of separation, in a lot of cases your own family, which must be applied rigorously lest your heart be drawn away from the truth in application by those that are negative.
85. People don't need to tell us about our condition (although more astute believers around you may notice it) like the Ephesians; all we need to do is to be a merciless judge of our own condition and act accordingly. 1Cor.11:31
86. While it is commendable that we align ourselves with a theological and doctrinal ministry as a church, we don't want to be caught shorthanded because of our lack of zeal to apply.
87. If not for the zeal of application by the Apostles in establishing churches like Ephesus, grounds for the initial commendation to begin with would have been voided.
88. If you don't apply the doctrine given you, then to that degree you don't truly **love** the doctrine.
89. While all believers may fail to apply in any given situation, +V, adjusted, spiritually advancing believers never cease in trying to make the right applications across the board.
90. And so it is for the local church in functioning as the body of Christ.
91. This verse is a warning to all sound doctrinal churches to evaluate themselves corporately as to their level of application as a church determining any areas in which they may be lacking.
92. It begins with ensuring that the support is there necessary to continue providing the truth in assembly and further that the members of the body are doing their individual part to ensure proper application is made towards one another and in our own individual lives.
93. This includes applications necessary for the function of different aspects of our ministry such as prep school and nursery, building and grounds, living grace, pulpit support, giving, aiding in missionary work as applicable, our personal and corporate evangelization, helping others, prayers, etc.
94. Procrastination of application equals no application.
95. If you think you have sacrificed enough or have reached some level that exempts you from further sacrifice when called upon, then **you have left your first love**.
96. The examples to be set are to come from those with authority and emulated by the rest. Phi.3:17; 1The.1:2-7
97. However, just as with the Ephesians, even if you have good examples to follow, failure to apply their examples still leads to condemnation.

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### EXEGESIS VERSE 5:

GNT Revelation 2:5 mnhmo,neue ou=n po,qen pe,ptwkaj kai. metano,hson kai. ta. prw/ta e;rga poi,hson\ eiv de. mh,( e;rcomai, soi kai. kinh,sw th.n lucni,an sou evk tou/ to,pou auvth/j( eva.n mh. metanoh,shjÅ

NAS Revelation 2:5 **'Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first;**  *mnhmo,neue mnhmoneu,w (vImp/pa--2s; "Remember/Recall/Think again of"; the imperative gives a sense of urgency, "Remember now!") ou=n (infer. conj.) po,qen (interr. adv.; "from where/from what condition") pe,ptwkaj pi,ptw (viPFa--2s; "you have fallen/dropped/collapsed"; looks at their existing state of lowered spiritual standards) kai, (cc) metano,hson metanoe,w (vImp/aa--2s; "repent/change your mind"; used 34x) kai, (cc) poi,hson\ poie,w (vImp/aa--2s; "do/apply") ta. to, (d.a./anp +) prw/ta prw/toj (ord. adj./an-p; "the first"; first in sequence, priority, time and quality) e;rga e;rgon (n-an-p; "deeds/works") **or else I am coming to you, and will remove your lampstand out of its place-- unless you repent.**  *eiv (part. +) de, (cs; +) mh,( (neg.; "or else/otherwise/yet if not") e;rcomai, e;rcomai (vipd--1s; "I am coming") soi su, (npd-2s) kai, (cc) kinh,sw kine,w (vifa--1s; "I will remove"; used 8x) sou su, (npg-2s) th.n h` lucni,an lucni,a (d.a. + n-af-s; "lampstand") evk (pAbl; "from out of") auvth/j( auvto,j (npgf3s; "its") tou/ o` to,pou to,poj (d.a. + n-gm-s; "place"; emphasizes its custodial position of the POG as a local church) eva,n (conj. +) mh, (neg.; "unless") metanoh,shjÅ metanoe,w (vsaa--2s; "you might repent")**

### ANALYSIS VERSE 5:

1. Christ now gives the church at Ephesus the prescription to their spiritual delinquency.
2. He doesn't "coddle" them with a "now please Johnny" approach, but is extremely insistent upon them taking corrective measure or else they will face the consequences.
3. His insistence is seen in the use of the 3 commands He issues to them to **"Remember, repent and do/apply"**
4. With all the imperatives there is a sense of urgency that now is the time to make their adjustments.
5. It harks to the fact that we are only given a certain amount of time as believers to align ourselves with the WOG.
6. We are to give no room for procrastination with respect to our spiritual state, as that is flirting with spiritual suicide.
7. Every minute, hour and day that believers hesitate to lock in with doctrine and seek to make the right applications across the board is a day closer to facing shame at the Bema. 1Joh.2:28; Jam.4:14-17



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8. Every opportunity that we bypass in making application and advancing spiritually we place ourselves in a position of loss of SG<sub>3</sub> and run the risk of further rationalizing the need for application and ultimate spiritual disaster.
9. For the believers at Ephesus, the first order on their recovery menu is to **‘Remember therefore from where you have fallen’**.
10. The term **‘you have fallen/pi,ptw – pipto’** is used to indicate a spiritual state of reversionism resulting in the sin unto death. Heb.4:11
11. It has the nuance of falling out of favor before God due to negative volition toward doctrine.
12. It points to the fact that all sin is disobedience to God’s word and therefore failure to apply BD is sin. Jam.4:17
13. Lack of application of BD can lead one into a state of reversionism just as rejection of the intake of BD is reversionism.
14. If we continuously refuse to apply the doctrine we learn and know to be right, it sets the stage for the reversionism process to occur ultimately leading to a total disregard for our error, failure to rebound it ending with SUD. Heb.10:25-27
15. While this term indicates the current state of this church, what Christ orders the Ephesian church to do is to recall **from where you have fallen**.
16. His command is to reflect back upon the earlier history of their church to a time in which this church was formed and functioned with the zeal of application to the doctrine, which they embraced under Apostolic authority.
17. It is designed to cause them to look back at all the doctrine(s) they were taught that manifested what the local church is all about and the purpose of a local church teaching sound doctrine and all the sacrifices made to make it a reality.
18. And that is for the spiritual growth and Divine good production that comes from making the 3 adjustments to the justice of God.
19. Though Christ does not specifically state what doctrines the church has slacked off on, it is obvious that the doctrines of SG<sub>3</sub> and Divine good production are on that list.
20. They have lost the zeal and motivation to keep their eyes on these important doctrines of application and have now become wrapped up in their own temporal desires.
21. Further, that no specific doctrine is mentioned points to the fact that failure to embrace and apply any doctrine is dangerous and can lead a church down the path of reversionism.
22. They are to look back at their beginnings and remember the level of application this church once had and then they can clearly see their current spiritual truancy.
23. They are to note the detrimental changes that have occurred and evaluate where they have gotten off course.
24. What in doctrine has changed since the beginning with respect to their responsibility to apply?
25. What in their priorities has changed that has distracted them from sound application?
26. In many ways the Ephesian church probably went on from day to day with little discernable difference; however, over the course of a generation, the difference between their initial zeal for doctrine and their current state would be obvious.
27. And now over time, they represent the very name of Ephesus in its negative connotation, which means to sit, denoting the spiritual danger to which this church has fell prey.
28. It is impossible to stand still in the CWL for long without repercussions and setbacks.
29. Doctrine is designed to cause the believer to continually move forward through its intake and application, or the believer will find himself falling back.

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30. For a local church to start relaxing in its application of BD is the first step as to relaxing to the importance of BD itself in its role of intake, as the strict standard set forth to serve God.
31. The church under this mentality can then easily substitute many other emphasis in lieu of teaching and promoting sound doctrine as their MPR, such as witnessing, giving, building, outreach, socializing, singing, supporting charities, etc.
32. When a church heads this direction unabated, it is doomed to spiritual regression.
33. All legitimate ministries of the local church must flow from the consistent diet of the WOG that equips the saints for the work of the ministry. Eph.4:12
34. When anyone removes the proper emphasis on doctrine and substitutes even otherwise bonafide activities, the very subtle danger that exists is a slow downward drift from the Lord. Heb.2:1
35. The basic emphasis for this to church to “**remember**” is a call that they must first recognize that a problem in their ministry exists.
36. Until they recognize that they are failing in application of BD, their priorities are not intact and realize that is not what God gave them doctrine for to begin with, recovery is moot.
37. Christ’s 2<sup>nd</sup> order that must follow their recognition of failure is simple and straightforward **and** they must “**repent**”, which simply means “change their mind”.
38. This term (metavnoe,w – metanoeo) looks at the mental and volitional capabilities for any individual to intellectually change their thinking or purpose regarding a previous decision, frame of mind or idea.
39. It means to think differently regarding something and has no sense of feeling bad or sorry for what you have done.
40. It emphasizes the fact that following their recognition of error they now consider their current path wrong and will now refocus on starting to pursue the correct course of action.
41. Ideally, one should manifest a certain orientation to the truth that was not there previously, but one can certainly change his mind at any time and revert back to a previous course of action contrary to what the fundies think. Mat.3:8; Luk.17:3-4
42. The correct course of action they are to take is finally stated, “**and do the deeds you did at first**”.
43. As has been made clear, the doctrine they have before them is theologically and doctrinally sound.
44. This is the first application or “work” necessary for any church to have a chance at being acceptable to God without condemnation.
45. The works here obviously must then refer to the quality of their applications of the doctrine they possess.
46. That it indeed is application of BD in view is explicitly revealed in the imperative “**do**/poie,w – poieo” that contextually means “to make application”.
47. This church must not only recognize their error(s), adopt the correct viewpoint regarding their error(s), but also must start applying the doctrine at an acceptable level in line with their culpability.
48. They are to recognize their fall from grace and get back to applying sound doctrine and this all must begin at the top with the P-T and his emphasis in Bible class.
49. They must reorient and reprioritize their function as a local church and start re-implementing whatever doctrines they have forsaken in application.
50. They will have to jettison any garbage they have allowed to usurp application of otherwise sound doctrine.

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51. These three commands are now accompanied by two not so veiled threats if they do not make the adjustments, **‘or else I am coming to you, and will remove your lampstand out of its place’**.”
52. There are many guesses by interpreters as to exactly what the phrase **‘I am coming to you’** means, which is a present tense with clearly a future emphasis denoting certainty.
53. Options are the rapture, 2<sup>nd</sup> advent or a personal visit in time in the form of judgment.
54. The 2<sup>nd</sup> advent is quickly eliminated due to the doctrine of dispensationalism.
55. Contextually, a judgment is in view, since the ultimate reaction by Christ is a removal of this church as a **lampstand**.
56. The term **‘lampstand’** here emphasizes the role of this local church as a custodian of God’s plan, a pillar and support of the truth. 1Tim.3:15
57. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that one aspect of His **coming** in this regard is in the form of judgement or Divine discipline upon the church in its historical removal for failure to adjust.
58. The word **‘remove/kine,w – kinew’** literally notes a moving or wagging of the head as a sign of contempt.
59. It notes that Christ will look upon them as an assembly with scorn or derision.
60. Therefore, holding the church in contempt, they will ultimately face a certain removal from their status as custodians of the POG.
61. The emphasis here is a separation or withdrawing of support from God towards a local church.
62. While Christ, who establishes local churches is obviously free to eliminate a church for cause, to make this mean that He absolutely immediately removes all churches historically when they get to a certain point of failure to apply is historically illogical.
63. Otherwise, why has He allowed all kinds of local churches, denominations, etc., to exist in spite of their heresy and flagrant misapplications over the centuries?
64. The emphasis of **removing** them as a local church is that He will judge them as no longer a church worthy of being a true representative of God’s plan.
65. What He immediately **will remove** is there historical distinction as being a local church doing it right.
66. What physically follows may or may not be an actual shutting of the doors historically regarding their assembly, though failure to apply itself is a natural cause for any local church to become extinct.
67. Some churches may totally fold, others may continue for years.
68. In the case of Ephesus in failure to make the adjustments, Christ will accurately judge the –V their and withdraw His support for that local church.
69. They in turn will only retain their physical existence not due to blessing from God, but will be supported through energy of the flesh and the cosmic system.
70. However, there is a sense in which Christ will physically **remove** the **lampstand** due to failure to apply.
71. And that is as the Church Universal via the rapture.
72. The dual prophecy behind Ephesus looks to the post-apostolic next generation era of the Church Universal.
73. In this regard, Ephesus represents the Church spinning off of the Apostolic period in which it was previously totally adjusted.
74. It represents the overall condition of the Church spiritually as now faltering and failing in application.
75. It is exactly this spiritual syndrome that will open the doors for the Church in the

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future to engage in doctrinal apostasy even in their teaching.

76. While Smyrna and Philadelphia reflects periods of Church history that the Church is overall adjusted as in Apostolic times, the influence of failure to apply by the Church as represented by Ephesus has its ultimate toll as seen in the final Laodicean period.
77. It is the final era of Church Age history that is lukewarm denoting an admixture of truth and error doctrinally and in application that the Church is overall engaged in. Rev.3:16
78. This is the ultimate result of failure of the Church in making sound application throughout the centuries.
79. It created a dispensational history that is seen constantly vacillating with ups and downs spiritually, mostly downs.
80. As Rev.3:16 makes clear, the rapture of the Church ending the CA, though a blessing, is also a judgement of condemnation upon the Church (*I will spit you out of My mouth.*).
81. Laodicea represents the Church failing to fully **repent** from failure to maintain sound application of BD after some time in the future resulting in the physical removal of the Church under judgement and the condemnation of the Church as –V overall.
82. Therefore, in that sense, if the Church fails to maintain sound application of doctrine and thus maintain sound teaching, Christ is **coming** and **will remove the lampstand Universal out of its place.**
83. Ephesus represents the era of the Church that introduced the primary Achilles heel that will ultimately take the Church down the path of reversionism and removal from the planet i.e., failure to maintain spiritual advancement and integrity through consistent sound application of BD.
84. On one hand, this era passed on the legacy of sound teaching in a correct doctrinal assembly, but on the other hand introduced the leaven that eventually will leaven the whole lump of dough; failure to apply it.
85. That volition is key to repentance, is seen in Christ’s final conditional exhortation once again emphasizing, “**unless you repent** (eva,n mh, metanoew – ean [conditional particle] + me [negative] + metanoeo [aorist active subjunctive] ”.
86. The construction of this phrase denotes a change from negative to positive.
87. **Unless** Ephesus, any other church teaching sound doctrine or the Church Universal does not “choose” (volition applied) to accept the truth regarding the importance of application of BD as the fulfillment of Divine love, future judgement is inevitable.
88. Failure to remain committed to the teaching of the WOG in application places both the local church and the Church in great jeopardy and can and will result in making both irrelevant and ultimately non-existent.
89. The reality that any local church can lose the support of God ought to create a sanctified fear of the Lord within our own assembly.
90. There can be little doubt that failure to continually emphasize the importance of Bible doctrine and its application will cause slow erosion in the church/Church, invisible at first, but ultimately ending with the removal of its custodianship from history.
91. *Review the Doctrine of Divine Good.*

### EXEGESIS VERSE 6:

GNT Revelation 2:6 avlla. tou/to e;ceij( o[ti misei/j ta. e;rga tw/n Nikolai?tw/n a] kavgw. misw/Å

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NAS Revelation 2:6 **'Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.** *avlla, (strong advers.; "But/Yet") tou/to ou-toj (near dem. pro./an-s; "this"; looks to what follows) e;ceij( e;cw (vipa--2s; "you keep on having") o[ti (conj.; intro indir. disc.) misei/j mise,w (vipa--2s; "you keep on hating/detesting/rejecting") ta. to, e;rga e;rgon (d.a. + n-an-p; "the works/deeds") tw/n o` Nikolai?tw/n Nikolai<thj (d.a. + n-gm-p; "the Nicolaitans"; used 2x, 2:15) a] o[j (rel. pro./an-p; ref. to "the deeds"; "which") kavgw, (adjunct. conj. & per.pro/n-1s; "I also"; ref. Christ) misw/Å mise,w (vipa--1s; "keep on hating")*

### ANALYSIS VERSE 6:

1. In vs.7, Christ once again places commendation upon the church at Ephesus.
2. With just as strong a contrast that previously pointed to their error versus what they have done right, He refocuses on their righteous accomplishments with the strong adversative “**Yet/But**” (avlla, - alla).
3. This points to the fact that when Christ evaluates or critiques churches or individuals, He is just as quick to point out the good from bad as He is vice versa and does not allow either quality to discolor any further assessments.
4. It points to the fact that He judges not based on appearance, but strictly by the facts with the righteous judgement of BD. Joh.7:24
5. To many people tend to approach the mistakes of others staying focused only on the bad qualities about them, rather than evaluate them as to all of their qualities keeping their perception balanced.
6. In spite of the fact that this church had a significant problem, which if left unchecked would eventually spell their spiritual doom, it has maintained a solid foundation of doctrine from the past on which it can build.
7. The importance of a solid theological grid cannot be overestimated, since it will protect you from many errors and evils in the CWL.
8. However, as Christ has made clear, a solid theological grid without application is hardly viewed in a favorable manner by Him.
9. In fact, there must be a continual love for the doctrine, consistent and persistent dealing with the STA, a zeal to press forward to maturity and complete your course and a zeal for Divine good production that always accompanies true spiritual advance.
10. The obvious warning to the Ephesian Church and by extension all believers, is that having the truth (theological orthodoxy) is not sufficient to guarantee God’s continued blessing.
11. The Ephesians orientation to the necessity of sound doctrine and its importance in dissemination for a correctly functioning local church protected them from a primary evil that was infiltrating the ranks of the Church at that time.
12. Though they were failing in application, they continued to possess the proper doctrinal balance to allow the standard of Scripture to dictate the proper protocol of assembly and worship applicable for the local church.

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

13. Christ declares this by reflecting upon their attitude with respect to an organized sect advocating differently and states, “**this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate**”.
14. The passage addressed to the church in Pergamum links the **Nicolaitans** with the Balaamites condemning both groups yet, denoting a difference in these two sects. Rev.2:14-15
15. It is clear that this sect was somewhat enigmatic and is only mentioned these two times in the Scripture.
16. While there is a strand of historical tradition that suggests that this sect was founded by Nicolaus of Antioch, one of the original seven deacons in Jerusalem (Act.6:5), a credible external source discredits this position:
  - A. The earliest mention we have of them outside the WOG is from the traditional authorities in the writings of Ignatius.
  - B. He is accredited as a disciple of John with Polycarp, lived from approximately 30-107 AD and is claimed to have seen Christ when he was a child.
  - C. He was heavily involved in combating the Gnostic sects that arose during the latter half of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD.
  - D. Ignatius in one of his letters says, “*Flee also the Nicolaitanes, falsely so-called, who are lovers of pleasure and given to calumnious speeches.*”
  - E. The implication from this statement is that the **Nicolaitans** assumed a counterfeit recognition in name, negating the assumption they were disciples of Nicolas of Antioch.
17. To further understand this sect is found in other writings of early Church fathers, such as Irenaeus (c120-? AD) that condemned them, indicating that they were descendants of the early Gnostic sects under Simon Magus (Act.8:9ff) and Menander.
18. Later writers also condemned them including Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Victorinus, Hippolytus and Eusebius, though writing many centuries later, also saw them to be of Gnostic origin and to be classed with them.
19. Another clue as to their works is seen in their very name, which is a compound from ni,kh – nike/victory and lao,j – people, stressing not only the victory over an opponent, or having the upper hand, but the domination of the opponent.
20. It is this sect that is known to have introduced a system of hierarchy into the Church, establishing a false distinction between the inspired leaders and common believers elevating the clergy to a status of “holiness” far above their followers.
21. They are further known to have compromised with paganism in order to assimilate potential followers into their sect.
22. As we saw in 1<sup>st</sup> John, Gnosticism is a belief that puts the value of esoteric wisdom over openly declared Biblical wisdom and standards, is mystic in function and was of such philosophy that it was able to absorb asceticism as well as liberalism into its beliefs.
23. It was the early forerunner to the ecumenical movement we see today.
24. On the legalistic side of Gnosticism, its emphasis is that personal morality and/or actions, outweighs the importance of ones fidelity to the truth in application.
25. On the liberal side it promotes a mystic disjuncting of self in one’s mind from body allowing the individual to engage in all forms of evil, yet viewing themselves above that, since all matter is evil and it is impossible to live otherwise.
26. That a distinction is made between the Balaamites and the **Nicolaitans** in the message to Pergamum, yet they are sandwiched together in condemnation, breaks these two

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- sects down into classifications of the liberal approach versus the legalistic approach to the Church.
27. It is the Balaamites that are noted for their immorality (2:14c) while that quality is omitted regarding the **Nicolaitans** (2:15).
  28. This does not mean that they did not engage in immorality, only that in their teaching, immorality was considered a sin though the remedy did not meet Biblical standards.
  29. It is the sect of **Nicolaitans** that were the forerunners of formulating a legalistic and otherwise mystical overtone of philosophy into an organized religious semblance of the Church to include:
    - A. A false pompous hierarchy.
    - B. Assimilation of paganism into their ranks.
    - C. Looking to asceticism and/or other legalistic forms of works as superior to the truth of BD and as a prescription for sins.
    - D. Dissemination of their truth is esoteric and can only truly be understood by the church leaders.
    - E. They have a flair of ecumenicalism via absorbing a plethora of philosophies into their ranks in a worldwide outreach.
  30. In short, the **Nicolaitans** are the beginning sect that would eventually evolve into what is known as Roman Catholicism today and other churches of that ilk.
  31. The Ephesian church despised those that sought to take the formation, structure and representation of the truth of the WOG as represented by the Church in this direction.
  32. As believers pursuing sound doctrine, we must strive to maintain the principles that are set forth in the Bible and not deviate to the left (liberalism) or to the right (legalism).
  33. To begin with, Biblically it is very easy to establish the fact that Christ did not advocate a system that differentiated between those that taught doctrine and those that learned from them, since God the H.S. is the ultimate teacher. Mat.23:8-10; 1Joh.2:27
  34. Furthermore, Christ made it plain that those that were granted authority and positions of leadership were not to abuse this power, but were to use it to serve the +V around them. Mat.23:11-12 cp. Joh.21:15-17
  35. Peter further confirms that while the P-T has the mandate to shepherd the flock allotted to him, he is not to attempt to dominate and control believers by abusing his authority (playing pope over them), but by example. 1Pet.5:3
  36. The pastor-teacher or the church corporately, cannot afford to become arbitrary and believe their authority exceeds the bounds of Scripture that forms the beginning of the Nicolaitan mentality in this regard.
  37. Furthermore, immorality must be viewed in the light of truth and all prescriptions for it must center on Jesus Christ's work on the cross. 1Joh.1:5-10
  38. It was this sect that primarily left the constraint of doctrine to establish a church based on a form of religiosity.
  39. The sound doctrine that the Ephesians had teathed on made it quite clear to them that this was not the way of true Christianity.
  40. Christ has set this commendation apart from the earlier commendation of vs.3 that also emphasized Ephesus' integrity to the Biblical format for a local church specifically to point out the importance of having a doctrinally adjusted local church teaching truth.

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41. Christ in so many words is stating that He cannot over-emphasize His pleasure for any church that has maintained the integrity of the local church as instituted and designed in the apostolic era.
42. However else the Ephesians are failing in application, the potential for their recovery rests on this very fact.
43. Not to diminish the gravity of their failure, if there is anything that Christ detests more than lack of application and spiritual advancement, it is to replace the importance of dissemination of the truth as the #1 priority of the church.
44. For a church to totally fall out from under the good graces of God is change the face of what the church is to represent failing to keep the integrity of Christ name intact.
45. And for those that claim that God doesn't "**hate**" anything, Christ makes it clear that He considers this attitude and approach of turning the Church or any local church into a form of religiosity as something totally despicable.
46. The **Nicolaitans** were guilty of attempting to compromise with the negative world around them, accommodating religious apostasy within the confines of the church and violating the doctrine of separation to maintain their status in a pagan society.
47. They represent the legalistic form of religiosity that is no better source of dealing with immorality as the liberal form that says immorality is a non-issue.
48. The Ephesian church represents all sound doctrinal local churches teaching the truth emphasizing the importance of maintaining the integrity of doctrine with regard to its very assembly and function of ministry.
49. They serve as a warning to all sound adjusted ministries that to let our guards down with respect to application is a step towards spiritual regression and ultimate failure as an adjusted local church.
50. Furthermore, adherence to sound teaching is designed to correctly critique other churches around us and to promote the doctrine of separation with respect to all religiosity.
51. This church also characterizes the early post-apostolic period ~80 - ~100AD.
52. They represent the overall spiritual temperature of the Church Universal at that time.
53. They reflect a period of subtle cooling off through lack of application that was the prelude to apostasy in later years.



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### EXEGESIS VERSE 7:

GNT Revelation 2:7 ο` e;cwn ou=j avkousa,tw ti, to. pneu/ma le,gei tai/j evkklhsi,aij<sup>o</sup> tw/| nikw/nti dw,sw auvtw/| fagei/n evk tou/ xu,lou th/j zwh/j( o[ evstin evn tw/| paradei,sw| tou/ qeou/<sup>o</sup>

NAS Revelation 2:7 **'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.** ο` e;cwn e;cw (d.a. + subs.ptc./p/a/nm-s; "He who has") ou=j (n-an-s; "an ear"; similar to Mat.11:15 of Jesus' teachings; used 36x) avkousa,tw avkou,w (vImp./aa--3s; "let him hear") ti, ti,j (inter. pro./an-s; "what thing") to, pneu/ma (d.a. + n-nn-s; "the Spirit"; ref. the Holy Spirit) le,gei le,gw (vipa--3s; "keeps on saying") tai/j h` evkklhsi,aij<sup>o</sup> evkklhsi,a (d.a. + n-df-p; "to the churches") **To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life,** tw/| ο` nikw/nti nika,w (d.a. + subs. ptc./p/a/dm-s; "To him who overcomes/defeats/conquers"; this word can be used of both positional truth [all believers are overcomers, 1Joh.5:4,5] and experiential truth [victory in time, 1Joh.2:13,14 ) dw,sw di,dwmi (vifa--1s; "I will give/grant/allow") auvtw/| auvto,j (pers.pro./dm3s) fagei/n evsqi,w (inf. purp./aa; "to eat") evk (pAbl) tou/ to, xu,lou xu,lon (d.a. + n-Abln-s; "the tree"; used 20x) th/j h` zwh/j( zwh, (d.a. + n-gf-s; "of life") **which is in the Paradise of God.'** o[ o[j (rel. pro./nn-s; "which"; ref. the tree) evstin eivmi, (vipa--3s; "keeps on being") evn (pL) tw/| ο` paradei,sw| para,deisoj (d.a. + n-Lm-s; "paradise"; from an old Persian word for garden or park; used 3x; sheol paradise of Luk.23:43 and heaven called paradise in 2Cor.12:4) tou/ ο` qeou/<sup>o</sup> qeo,j (d.a. + n-gm-s)

### ANALYSIS VERSE 7:

1. Christ concludes His message to Ephesus with the same exhortation found closing His remarks to all of the churches, **"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches"**.
2. The fact that Christ now references all 7 **churches** after only having addressed the first one demands that these messages to **the churches** are to be viewed both chronologically in sequence and as a whole (viewing the CA) as well as each particular entity (application to any local church).
3. The phraseology of **"He who has an ear, let him hear"** is a common verbal and literary devise designed to call the individual to consider what has been communicated.
4. That it is addressed in the grammatical form of a singular person denotes that even though these messages are written to these churches corporately, they have just as

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much bearing upon each individual believer.

5. It is individual believers that make up the corporate church and therefore each believer's responsibility to ensure their own fidelity to the truths presented.
6. While the phrase looks to the physical organs attached to our heads as our physical means of audio input, it goes beyond that emphasizing the communication of spiritual truth. Mat.13:15,16 cp. Rom.11:8
7. It is a distinct call for +V to GAP the information presented.
8. In the physical realm, this phrase would imply 3 types of individuals:
  - A. Those that did not have ears.
  - B. Those that had ears but could not hear or did not listen.
  - C. Those that had ears and listened.
9. These physical realities form the basis for the corresponding spiritual reality:
  - A. Those that do not have ears represent unbelievers.
  - B. Those that have ears but are dull of hearing or refuse to listen represent negative believers.
  - C. Those that have ears, **hear** the information and act on it representing positive believers.
10. The nuance of the use of the 3<sup>rd</sup> person in '**let him hear**' is designed to highlight the importance to the information herein, get in touch with the spiritual reality of it and make the appropriate application of it to the individual's life.
11. Christ takes up the call of OT prophets in their condemnation of Israel for reversion recovery from a nation that could **hear** but simply refused to listen. Jer.5:21; 6:10; 7:26
12. The emphasis for all believers here is a warning that failure to GAP this information will result in reversionism.
13. This is further heighten by the use of the singular for the noun '**ear**' indicating that the very minimum behind being +V escaping reversionism demands listening to the truth of BD.
14. No matter what else one may **hear** in life, if they don't at least give an '**ear**' to the truth they will come under condemnation from God.
15. Christ then equates what **He says to the** very words and communication of the Holy **Spirit**.
16. This is in fulfillment of what Christ promised to the disciples on the night before the crucifixion respecting the Person and work of the H.S. Joh.16:13-15
17. This revelation was given to the Son by the Father (Rev.1:1), who in turn passes the information to the H.S., who is responsible then to communicate and teach it to the believer. 1Joh.2:27
18. It is the H.S. that is the ultimate communicator of BD, no matter who literally does the speaking.
19. The emphasis on the H.S. in connection with one's hearing is a demand for the believer to get into fellowship so that they may truly GAP this information.
20. That this standing order is related to all **the churches** in view makes it quite clear that the doctrine given is designed for the believer to not only examine his own life with respect to commendation and condemnations, but also to examine the corporate life of his local church and to determine the overall barometer of his time in history.
21. Maintaining the personal emphasis to the individual believer, Christ then gives His final words in the form of a conditional blessing, "**To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God**".

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22. The lone condition behind the blessing is determined by whether one is an “overcomer”.
23. This verb (nika,w – nikao) is used 28x in the NT, usually translated “overcome” and has the nuance being victorious against an opponent or adversary legally, militarily, spiritually and otherwise.
24. The word itself presupposes the presence of adversaries, war, contests, battles or conflicts that one can win or lose.
25. Its use here has presented several views as to its interpretation.
26. The four most notable include:
  - A. Those that are not overcomers represent believers that have lost their salvation.
  - B. The perseverance of the saints view that suggests that all true believers will be obedient.
  - C. A title referencing all believers, based on 1Joh.5:4,5
  - D. An experiential or rewards view that suggests that these promises are to serve to motivate the believer to application, to overcome the spiritual problems dominant in their time in history.
27. The first view obviously contradicts so much Scripture that it cannot be taken seriously; it is impossible for a believer to lose his salvation. Joh.3:16,36; 6:40; 10:28-29; Eph.2:8
28. The 2<sup>nd</sup> view is Calvinistic under their doctrine of the perseverance of the saints that declares that all true believers will pan out spiritually.
29. These teachers wrongly suggest that all genuine believers will persevere, live godly lives and though sin from time to time ultimately will live victorious lives to the end proving the genuineness of one’s salvation.
30. The problem is that the Bible nowhere states this and some of the Corinthians that were believers are a direct refutation of this position. 1Cor.11:29-32
31. Other believers in the Bible are certainly not viewed as victorious but as spiritual casualties. 1Tim.1:19-20; 2Tim.1:15; 2:17; 4:10; 3Joh.9-10
32. Therefore this view must likewise be rejected.
33. The big question remaining then is this title reference to positional or experiential overcoming.
34. That it is definitely used both ways is seen not only in 1Joh.5:4,5 denoting believers, but in 1Joh.2:13,14 denoting spiritually advancing believers.
35. That John uses this term in both ways in his other writings, then the first place to investigate is within the near context of his current writing.
36. Of the 16x it is used in Revelation, 10x it is used as a reference to believers as overcomers or those victorious to include all messages to the 7 churches. Rev.2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21; 12:11; 15:2; 21:7
37. Of these 10 occurrences, there are no explicit indications that the overcomer in view has been required to exceed faith in Christ for the term’s designation to be placed upon them.
38. In addition, the one time that an explicit condition for experiential victory is included for the promised blessing to be realized, that condition is stated as in addition to them being overcomers to begin with. Rev.2:26
39. Therefore, John’s use of this term in this book denotes a positional overcoming through our faith in Christ, hence all believers, and if experiential overcoming is in view, that will be stated separately.
40. At the point of faith in Christ, all believers are designated as overcomers, since they have triumphed over Satan, evil and the world system for all eternity.

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41. For all believers, there are normal blessings attached to their so great salvation as part of their Ph<sub>3</sub> glory and all believers will share in these blessings.
42. This is in spite of any over and beyond blessings they could enjoy in the form of SG<sub>3</sub> if they would plug in with doctrine and hold to the end.
43. Unless Christ further qualifies their overcoming with an additional condition, then the promised blessing attached **to him who overcomes** is applicable for all believers.
44. The sense of the promise here attached to the church of Ephesus is designed to remind the individual that the source of all blessings from God for Ph<sub>3</sub> starts with faith in Christ.
45. This ensures the primary and most notable blessing and example for the Church in its representation and as to its so great salvation, eternal life.
46. The first promised bestowed for one that will embrace the reputation of Christ as disseminated by the Church is he will be allowed **to eat of the tree of life**.
47. In all the promises to all **the churches**, Christ is consistently seen as the One that bestows any honor that is received, emphasizing His right to divide His inheritance.
48. **The tree of life** is a literal reality that exists in the new earth, and is not just one **tree**, but a collective term referring to two rows of trees that are found on either side of the river of the water of life. Rev.22:1-2
49. It is associated with positive volition toward Bible doctrine or its application, and is consistently spoken of in this way in Proverbs. Pro.3:18; 11:30; 13:12; 15:4
50. The reference to **the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God** takes us back to the original **Paradise of God** in which man was placed and from which he was expelled due to his disobedience. Gen.2:9; 3:22-24
51. As Gen.3:22-24 brings out, its main attribute was to instill eternal life.
52. The significance of **the tree of life** :
  - A. It is something that was available to man before the fall and will be available again in the eternal state, but from which mankind is currently barred.
  - B. Its existence in the garden and in a perfect environment was a tribute to eternal life that their sinless righteousness maintained.
  - C. Partaking of **the tree of life** looks to **the tree** as being a source of eternal **life** perpetuated through the maintaining of Adam and Eve's state of +R through their works (eating of the fruit).
  - D. If man had been successful and had attained to maturity and held, Satan would have no hold on the world, would ultimately been declared defeated and any appeals he had made previously to God would have been overturned.
  - E. The test for man was that there was another tree in the Garden of Eden to test their volition in this regards, and man failed the test in perfect environment by disobeying God and eating of **the tree** of human good and evil. Gen.2:9
  - F. Consequently, it was necessary for God to remove man's access to **the tree of life**. Gen.3:22
  - G. Otherwise, if man had ate of **the tree** in a fallen state, they would have been placed in a dilemma of a works proposition for all eternity, looking to his own power for a source of salvation.
  - H. He would have had to be his own savior, an obvious impossibility.
  - I. This is the nuance behind God stating in Gen.3:22, "*Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil..*" that is reference to the 2<sup>nd</sup> member of the Godhead, God the Son, who would be judged in His humanity for all sin and thus Himself acquainted with "*human good and evil*".

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- J. Therefore, God has now established another **tree** to test man's volition outside of perfect environment – the cross. Act.5:30; 1Pet.2:24
- K. +V towards this **tree** (Jesus Christ) makes man an overcomer positionally and qualifies them to partake of **the tree of life** that will be present in eternity.
53. That there is only **the tree of life** in our eternal state and no other **tree** to test man excepting the cross denotes that via Christ's work on the cross and ultimate victory in the A/C, all eternal works by believers will result in nothing less than an eternal perpetuation of +R.
54. It will be the new **tree of life** that will be a direct reflection of the prestige and status of serving God (our eternal works/fruits) in our eternal state.
55. This is seen in the 12 varieties and different kinds of "fruits/works" associated with it in the eternal state. Rev.22:2
56. This notes that there is more to eternal **life** than just living, but holds the potential of a **life** designed for men to fulfill their every desire in terms of prestige, authority and wants as part of the elect.
57. And it is one's attitude to the very truths of the Revelation as outlined in this book that will determine to what degree one will be allowed to be held in such esteem. Rev.22:19
58. However, all believers will have access and partake to some extent the tree's fruits.
59. **The tree of life** is a direct reflection and indication of the believer's attitude towards doctrine in time and therefore the privilege of eating from it will be determined overall to the degree that BD is applied in time.
60. In that sense, Christ's exhortation and promise is designed for believers to focus on the reality and potential of blessing in Ph<sub>3</sub>.
61. That all believers will partake of this **tree**, but some more than others is why we and the believers at Ephesus, should make the appropriate adjustments maximizing our Divine good production and therefore maximize our eternal blessing.
62. Some concluding observations of the message to Ephesus:
- A. All seven churches existed historically at the same time, indicating that all the conditions in all the letters existed at the time of writing.
  - B. However, the Ephesian type church exhibited the dominant characteristics of the church at large immediately following the apostolic era and demise of the temporary gifts.
  - C. The Church during the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century going into the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century was still very theologically sound, since the Apostles had thoroughly instructed them with respect to theological orthodoxy and the format and function of local churches.
  - D. However, their zeal in application began to cool and they are seen in stark danger of eventually departing from the sound and consistent study of the WOG that was so characteristic of the apostolic faith.
  - E. Since application is the basis for continued growth and advance, they are warned about their condition and expected to make the necessary correction.
  - F. Today you can identify the Ephesian type church by the fact that they have been exposed to the correct form of doctrine that results in sound theology, but have begun to move away from their zeal for application and are falling prey to the current condition of being lukewarm.
  - G. This dominant feature of the early Church is gradually replaced by the next dominant phase in history found in the letter to the church at Smyrna.

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

### THE PROPHETIC PRONOUNCEMENT ON SMYRNA VSS.8-11

#### EXEGESIS VERSE 8:

GNT Revelation 2:8 Kai. tw/| avgge,lw| th/j evn Smu,rnh| evkklhsi,aj gra,yon\  
Ta,de le,gei o` prw/toj kai. o` e;scatoj( o|j evge,neto nekro.j kai. e;zhsen\

NAS Revelation 2:8 "**And to the (corrected) messenger of the church in Smyrna write:** Kai. kai, (cc) tw/| o` avgge,lw| a;ggeloy (d.a. + n-dm-s; "to the messenger") th/j h` evkklhsi,aj evkklhsi,a (d.a. + n-gf-s; "the local church") evn (pL) Smu,rnh| Smu,rna (n-df-s; "Smyrna"; an Arabian resinous gum used in myrrh for embalming the dead and other ointments; used 4x) gra,yon\  
gra,fw (vImp./aa--2s; "write") **The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this:** o` prw/toj (d.a. + ord.adj./nm-s; "the first") kai, (cc) o` e;scatoj( (d.a. + ap-nm-s; "the last") o|j (rel. pro./nm-s; "who") evge,neto gi,nomai (viad--3s; "became/was") nekro,j (a--nm-s; "dead/a dead man/corpse") kai, (cc) e;zhsen\  
za,w (viaa--3s; "became alive/has come to life") le,gei le,gw (vipa--3s) Ta,de o|de (dem. pro./an-p; "these things"; points to what follows; placed at the beginning of the clause in the Greek to emphasize the words over the One speaking cp.Psa.138:2)

#### ANALYSIS VERSE 8:

1. Christ now addresses the 2<sup>nd</sup> **church** in sequence, "**And to the messenger of the church in Smyrna write:**"
2. Christ, as with all the letters to these churches, first addresses the pastor-teacher that is responsible to GAP and teach the information to his flock.
3. Again, there is only one recognized **messenger** for each of these local churches.
4. It is not God's design for men to follow a multitude of "drummers" with respect to their spiritual well being.
5. For believers to give an ear to more than one communicator at a time will result in a bias of affection and overall failure in their spiritual growth. Mat.6:24
6. The issue for any believer is to adhere to a P-T that is teaching doctrine sufficiently to take one to maturity and maximize in their Divine good production.
7. Any conflicts between the sheep and shepherd are not resolved by turning to another shepherd (tapes and other communicative devices included) as an additional substitute for spiritual nourishment.
8. As 3<sup>rd</sup> John made clear, if a legitimate conflict does arise, such as abuse of authority in rejection or distortion of BD by the P-T, then the believers are simply to move on, separate themselves from their previous shepherd, and align themselves with another

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

adjusted P-T.

9. It is as unnatural for sheep to submit to more than one spiritual authority for their spiritual matriculation at a time, as it is for a woman to try and be married to more than one husband at a time and impartially submit to their authority.
10. **Smyrna**, which is modern day Izmir, Turkey, was the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest and reputedly the most beautiful city of the 7 that is still in existence today.
11. It is located on a beautiful bay area with mountains in the background providing a major port for commerce and in addition today it is a popular resort area.
12. It is one of the oldest cities in the Mediterranean world with history dated by some historians as far back as 3000 BC and is renowned as the home of the legendary Homer.
13. It became a Greek colony as early as 1000 BC.
14. In John's day, it was a city that had been "resurrected from the dead" in that it was destroyed about 600 BC by the Lydeans, but then reestablished by Alexander the Great following his defeat of the Persians about 300 BC.
15. It developed into one of the wealthiest cities of the region, vying with Ephesus and Miletus for the title of "First City of Asia".
16. Its beauty is further described by other titles given it such as the "Ornament of Asia", the "Crown of Asia" and sometimes the "Flower of Asia".
17. By the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD, it had a population approaching 100,000 and economically had natural control over the trade of the rich Hermus Valley due to its very safe harbor.
18. It was known for its municipal rivalry and pride, with its loyal subjects devoted to exalting it as the greatest city on earth.
19. It was loyal to Rome very early on (c 200 BC) and was the first city in the world to erect a temple to the goddess Roma and the "spirit of Rome".
20. Its notoriety of fidelity to Rome is expressed in its praise by Cicero (c 106 – 43 BC, a famous Roman politician and public speaker), who called it "*one of our most faithful cities and most ancient allies*".
21. In 23 BC, **Smyrna** was given the honor of building a temple to the Emperor Tiberius and it became a center for the cult of emperor worship, a fanatical religion that would bring severe persecution to the early church.
22. The city received its name from one of its principle products, a plant producing myrrh, which is resin taken from its stem used to make perfume, used in the anointing oil of priests and also in the embalming process for the dead.
23. It is also known for medicinal values as well as having a very bitter taste. Cp.Mar.15:23
24. The word **Smyrna** negatively carries with it a nuance of bitterness or suffering symbolically denoting a major characteristic of the Church during this representative era.
25. Positively, its meaning denotes a promotion of healing and a gift of blessing bestowed. Cp.Mat.2:11
26. While the Church was persecuted during the time of Paul (Nero c. 67 AD) and John (Domitian c. 95 AD), an extended period of intense persecution began about 170 AD and continued until about 315 AD.
27. In fact, it was during this time that the Church experienced the greatest level of persecution that it has seen, having many thousands of believers suffer martyrdom for the faith.
28. From what we can deduce, the **church in Smyrna** was founded by Paul on his 3<sup>d</sup>

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- journey and was certainly a force by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century. Act.19:10
29. Church history records that Polycarp (~69-156 AD) served as pastor of this **church** for over 50 years appointed by the Apostle John.
  30. He was martyred by burning with his execution instigated by a mob of Jews and Gentiles.
  31. This city had a large colony of Jews notably aggressive and hostile to Christianity.
  32. Christ then refers to Himself in 3<sup>rd</sup> person and title as the primary agent from the Father sending this message to this **church** in vs.8b, **“The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this:”**
  33. Again, this approach of identification is to emphasize the exalted nature of Christ in Person and message.
  34. It denotes that the words of the P-T communicated to **the church in Smyrna** are not to be heard as just that man’s opinion, but are words of truth spoken as if by Christ Himself.
  35. The adjusted P-T is a herald of the truth of God and those under his charge are to keep their eyes off the man and onto the WOG disseminated via the FHS.
  36. Believers are to approach the teaching of BD as a very personal form of communication from God Himself.
  37. It denotes that the WOG is to be held exalted as the integrity upon which God’s very reputation is preserved among His creation. Ps.138:2
  38. He draws upon His use of title of Rev.1:17c-18a, there used in part as a means of encouraging John to overcome his fear in that situation.
  39. He now uses it in that same vein of encouragement for these saints at **Smyrna**.
  40. His reference as **“the first”** emphasizes that God the Son eternally preexisted with the Father and the H.S., being the agent through whom all things were created and are currently sustained. Joh.1:1,3; Col.1:17
  41. As **“the last”** emphasizes that He will exist after the material creation has been destroyed and that He is the conclusion of God’s plan for the ages. Eph.1:10; Rev.22:13
  42. While the first reference as **the first** is true of His Deity only, the second assertion as **the last** is true of His whole Person.
  43. At the point of the incarnation, God the Son was permanently united with a body of flesh, forming One Person for all eternity.
  44. In our context, we are to understand this phrase is set forth to emphasize the God/man’s independent, self-existence and complete sufficiency as the Sovereign of the universe, in contrast with the supposed superiority of the temporal power reigning over the city of **Smyrna**.
  45. It denotes that Christ has complete control over history and the lot of suffering that comes upon all believers and churches throughout time.
  46. The second designation **“who was dead, and has come to life”** is just as apropos as encouragement to these believers.
  47. This **church** was going to have to face the reality of physical death (martyrdom) and Christ presents Himself as the conqueror of death.
  48. A more straightforward translation rather than **“who was dead”** would be **“who became a corpse”**.
  49. That He became alive after death obviously points to His resurrection and promise to all believers that face death in this life of their own resurrection. Rom.6:5
  50. The alluding to His resurrection would have further significance for those that lived in this city as it was conversant with its history of previous destruction and now



## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

flourishing.

51. As we will see, the message to **Smyrna** is only one of two (the other Philadelphia) of the seven that holds no condemnation by Christ upon this **church**.
52. Its very name harks to the realities of this **church** not only physically as to their sufferings, but also spiritually as to the prescription for their sufferings.
53. This is seen in the contrasts of what appears to be the case overtly compared to what the real spiritual reality was and the promised result:
  - A. Tribulation/pressure, yet victorious.
  - B. Poor, yet rich.
  - C. Faithfulness to the end = the crown.
54. They reflect the next era of **Church** history following the Ephesian period whereas they represent that the **Church** overall made the necessary adjustment lacking at Ephesus i.e., lack of application.
55. This points to the reality that the believer's sufferings and tests in life are spiritually medicinal for bringing out the best in application of +V.
56. While the **Church** initially began to wane in application, this period of intense suffering brought out the necessary applications sufficient to avoid any further condemnation by Christ in this regards, during this era.
57. As prophetically applied to this era of the **Church** Age, the **Church** overall was willing to step up to the plate in application of sound doctrine when their backs were against the wall.
58. As the early **Church** began to wane, God turned up the heat of testing to prove the value of gold, silver and precious stones that they possessed in doctrine and to manifest that the **Church** overall remained positive.
59. As applied to the local **church**, it denotes that suffering is part of our allotment in the Christian life and it is designed to test our volition with respect to maximizing our application of BD.
60. How we deal with our testing is a direct indicator of our volition.
61. That the local **church in Smyrna** and the **Church** Universal overall during this era are willing to face their sufferings in time with application of faithfulness to doctrine, Christ proclaims and expresses His solidarity with them, having endured what they are about to face.

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

### EXEGESIS VERSE 9:

GNT Revelation 2:9 Oi=da, sou th.n qli/yin kai. th.n ptwcei,an( avlla. plou,sioj ei=( kai. th.n blasfhmi,an evk tw/n lego,ntwn VIoudai,ouj ei=nai e`autou.j kai. ouv k eivsi.n avlla. sunagwgh. tou/ Satana/Å

NAS Revelation 2:9 **I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich),** *Oi=da, oi=da(viPFa--1s; "I know"; looks to omniscience) sou su, (npg-2s; "your"; ref. the church in Smyrna) th.n h` qli/yin qli/yij (d.a. + n-af-s; lit. a pressing together; "tribulation/pressure/affliction/trouble"; same as 1:9) kai, (cc) th.n h` ptwcei,an( ptwcei,a (d.a. + n-af-s; " extreme poverty"; used 3x) avlla, (strong advers.) ei=( eivmi, (vipa--2s; "you keep on being") plou,sioj (a--nm-s; "rich/wealthy/well-to-do/abounding in possessions"; used 28x) **and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not,** *kai, (cc) th.n h` blasfhmi,an blasfhmi,a (d.a. + n-af-s; "the blasphemy/ slanderous speech/falsely accusing another as a liar"; used 18x) evk (pAbl; "from the source of/by") tw/n o` lego,ntwn le,gw (d.a. + subs. ptc./p/a/AbIm-p; "those who say/those proclaiming") e`autou.j e`autou/ (reflex. pro./am3p; "they/themselves") ei=nai eivmi, (inf. of purp./pa; "to be/are") VIoudai,ouj VIoudai/oj (ap-am-p; "Jews") kai, (cc) ouv k ouv (neg. +) eivsi.n eivmi, (vipa--3p; "are not") **but are a synagogue of Satan.** *avlla, (strong advers.) "are" supplied sunagwgh, (n-nf-s; "a synogogue/formal religious assembly"; used 56x) tou/ o` Satana/Å Satana/j (d.a. + n-gm-s; "the Satan/Adversary")***

### ANALYSIS VERSE 9:

1. As with all 7 messages, Christ begins with “**I know**” asserting His omniscient awareness of the historical and spiritual situation that existed in each church.
2. Every believer must be cognizant of the fact that God is keenly aware of each and everything going on in his niche at all times.
3. This knowledge is designed to be a comfort to us when we are facing the testing and pressure associated with being a +V believer in a –V world.
4. If we recognize that Christ is completely conversant/familiar with all that we face and apply the principle that He does not make mistakes, it combats the STA tendency to become depressed or discouraged because things do not meet our wants and expectations.
5. It is very easy to fall into the trap of seeing all the things around us that put pressure on our STA’s, while refusing to keep our focus on the real blessings associated with our niche of being +V in an adjusted local church.
6. Certainly, if any group of believers could have wanted to change their niche, it would

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

have been the church in Smyrna.

7. That they refused to cave in under their intense testing points to a necessary application one is expected to make in the Christian life; acclimation to one's niche.
8. This harks back to the church at Ephesus that had left its first love due in part to a maladjustment in their niche of transition from the temporary gifts and spectacular beginnings of the Church to the permanent gifts and perceived mundane regiment of application in that regard.
9. That suffering is a part of the CWL is made clear as Jesus specifically claims knowledge regarding this church and "**your tribulation and your poverty**".
10. The first aspect of suffering in view that Christ proclaims has not escaped His notice is their "**tribulation**", which is the translation of the Greek term "qli/yij – thlipsis".
11. This word emphasizes the concept of being in a confined space, a pressing together that causes pressure and is used of the external pressures we endure in time based on our association with Christ.
12. It harks to the restrictive nature of truth and that which it embraces compared to the nature of the cosmos that rejects truth embracing the immeasurable spectrum of lies contradicting truth and seeking to further compact truth into a category of irrelevance or non-existence.
13. The negative world despises the truth and seeks to squash it and those that adhere to it enveloping it with hostility and antagonism. Joh.15:18-20; 17:14; 1Joh.3:13
14. How one stands in the face of **tribulation** is a direct test of their volition. Cp.Mat.13:20-21
15. It is pressure of this type of testing that will demand the believer to stand in application for the truth or to capitulate reflecting that it truly is not their first love.
16. For those that are truly +V and waning in application, when **tribulation** of this sort occurs in their life and the pressure demands to step forth or become a spiritual casualty, their +V will be stirred to application.
17. While the cosmos and others may look upon testing of this kind as terrible and something we should avoid at all costs, God's view is that it is designed to maximize the application of all true +V.
18. That the Church was waning in application in the previous Ephesian era, God allowed intense suffering to come upon them in order to manifest the true volitional disposition of the Church at this time.
19. While **tribulation** is part of all believers' lives, including those that remain adjusted in application, it serves to bring forth the best and highest of applications from all concerned producing SG<sub>3</sub>. Cp.2Cor.4:17
20. The second thing that Christ says He is aware of is the ramification that this type of **tribulation** often brings in the form of physical pressure i.e., **poverty**.
21. The term "**poverty**/ptwcei,a – ptokeia" emphasizes extreme **poverty**, to be destitute as in the life of a beggar.
22. This is in contrast to another Greek term for "**poverty**/pe,nej – penes" that emphasizes the poor or lower economic class of a common laborer that has few possessions and must work hard just to eke out a meager living.
23. The **poverty** brought upon the church at Smyrna by the pressures of the –V world about them was of such degree that it cost them their jobs and loss of personal property.
24. It was not a self-inflicted **poverty** such as asceticism, but an economic status forced upon them in keeping with the good conscience and otherwise beyond their control.

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25. Historically we know that Satan attacked the Smyrna Christians in three ways, all of which overlapped.
26. First was an indirect attack by passing laws that the authorities knew Christians couldn't in good conscience keep and by virtue of these laws Christians became criminals, subject to judicial punishment.
27. While this technique was used abroad against all the Churches in Asia Minor, it was especially prevalent in Smyrna due to the loyalty to Rome of Smyrna's general population.
28. When believers refused to bow in worship to the emperor as a self-proclaimed deity in accordance with the law, they ultimately found it difficult to find work forcing most of the Christian population to rely on self-employment.
29. Under Domitian c 87-96AD, emperor worship became compulsory under threat of death.
30. A second form of persecution came through the taxation system attached to emperor worship.
31. Once a year all people had to bring their taxes to the temple of the emperor and sign allegiance to this man/god.
32. If Christians refused, which they most certainly did, their property and all worldly goods were seized and confiscated plunging them into deep **poverty**.
33. Many believers were reduced to bankruptcy when those in positions of power looted their property and confiscated what they chose, with all believers being generally prejudiced against simply because they were believers. Cp. Heb.10:32-34
34. However, the irony behind these steadfast believers that would not capitulate to the pressures of their society is drastically compared as Christ then stated, "**but you are rich**".
35. Christ informs this church that while they do not have anything in terms of material wealth, they are **rich** in His estimation contrasting the human viewpoint of the world with the only viewpoint opinion that matters!
36. Their riches consisted of several great blessings that make life worthwhile:
  - A. They had a sound history of doctrine, not only having the Divine viewpoint but also in applying it to their testing.
  - B. This produced the incredible wealth of +H not ever to be overestimated (Pro.12:25; 13:12; 15:13,15; 17:22, et al) and does not look to the circumstances of life for its possession but focuses on the unseen realities of doctrine.
  - C. In like manner, it produced inner peace beyond human comprehension. Pro.3:17; 12:20; 1Cor.14:33; Phi.4:7, et al
  - D. Last but not least, this group had an incredible amount of reward based on their faithfulness to the truth in very trying circumstances and was **rich** in SG<sub>3</sub>.
37. In spite of even dire physical circumstances this church faced, they were all the time producing a portfolio of wealth that was not subject to loss by any known system of man or what man may inflict upon them.
38. This passage should serve to instruct believers that there are more important things in life than being financially successful and secure in this present world.
39. Without +H and inner peace, whatever else we have in this world is nothing more than a crutch to help us remain motivated to continue on with life.
40. All of these material things are temporal and of no permanent benefit to give any of us a true capacity for life.

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41. Life without God's joy and peace is nothing more than a life of inner misery and unsatisfied desires consistently seeking to find that which the STA thinks will give us joy and peace.
42. It is incredibly stupid of believers to observe the relative blessing, or lack thereof, of another believer and make any assumptions about what they are spiritually.
43. Many believers, including Christ Himself, possessed very little of the world's goods and did not spend any time pursuing personal blessing because there were higher spiritual issues at stake. Mat.8:20; Heb.11:37; Jam.2:5
44. It is equally a mistake for believers that may not have much in the way of the details of life to judge those that have, assuming them to be less than spiritual because they have a greater level of material prosperity.
45. The example of John the Baptist and Christ ought to instruct believers in the fact that there can be a great deal of variation in the Ph<sub>2</sub> niche of equally positive believers.
46. The danger for those that lack materially is that they begin to maladjust to that niche and violate their doctrinal priorities by placing material wealth and comfort above the application of BD.
47. The danger for those prosperous is that they begin to trust in that (1Tim.6:17), resenting and refusing to make financial and physical sacrifices on behalf of those that has less. 1Tim.6:18; Gal.6:9-10
48. The primary difference between believers that **are rich** and maladjusted believers to either degree is their attitude and willingness to sacrifice or not anything of this world to keep BD the number one love of their life.
49. The third form of Satanic attack was a direct physical attack upon believers to include martyrdom.
50. Always preceding the physical attack was a bombardment of verbal slandering and maligning.
51. This is the force of the final clause of vs.9b, **"and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan"**.
52. The term **"blasphemy/blasfmi,a – blasphameia"** literally means "to call one a liar in light of unmitigated truth" or "to defame one's reputation with slanderous speech".
53. As applied to God, one blasphemes when they hold the truth of His word in contempt. Cp.Mar.3:28-29
54. To reject the truth of God in the face of its proclamation by positive believers obviously leads to slander and disdain for those that adhere to it.
55. Its use contextually emphasizes the contempt of others towards God and the truth and its resultant ramifications of verbal derision brought upon those that stood for it.
56. It points to the misrepresentation that was verbally disseminated concerning these believers that ultimately would lead to outright genocide.
57. The persecution of believers in the Roman Empire followed a general pattern of misrepresentation to include:
  - A. Accusations that they were not true believers, but really atheists, since they did not follow the main line religiosity of their society and statues or images in their places of worship were forbidden; obviously they did not believe in God.
  - B. A second accusation was that Christians were cannibals that were represented as people that ate the body and drank the blood of their founder.
  - C. Thirdly, Christians were charged with being unpatriotic, since they would not bow to the image of Caesar and declare him to be Lord.

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

- D. And otherwise, economic problems were blamed upon Christians that would not frequent the pagan temples, causing a loss of monetary support in the temples, which was a major source of revenue in some places.
58. While many political, civil and otherwise religious factions would be involved in this verbal campaign of vicious rumors, Christ centers on one particular sect deserving infamous notoriety.
59. These were engaged in a **blasphemy** that for all intents and purposes proclaimed a relationship with true Judeo-Christianity **but** in reality was a religion of unbelievers.
60. The question arises as to who or what we are to make of this categorization of those that **say they are Jews and are not**.
61. A Jew is defined as a member of the Jewish race inclusive of their birth, ethnicity and religion that characterizes these descendants of Abraham as being the chosen children of God.
62. In its fullest sense, racially and spiritually, it denotes those of mankind that have claim to represent the true POG that provides salvation for all of men.
63. Several suggestions as to how to interpret this designation have been put forth:
- A. They are unbelieving **Jews**, relying on their race and religion to provide a relationship with God apart from the new birth. Rom.2:28-29; 9:6; Joh.8:44
  - B. They are the same as the Judaizers that were so prominent in Acts and were consistently harassing Gentile churches with their legalism. Act.15:1-12ff
  - C. This is a figure to denote Samaritans that were not recognized by orthodox **Jews**. Joh.4:9
  - D. This is a figure to denote the state-sponsored system of religion that was promoted in the Roman Empire that claimed to be the true religion.
  - E. This is a figure to denote apostate Gentile unbelievers that claim some unique relationship with God that does not exist, while opposing His Church.
64. There is no doubt that there was a strong Jewish community in Smyrna that was hostile to the church and slandered believers to the authorities, cast suspicion on their loyalty to Rome and aroused the locals against them.
65. This is seen in their recorded involvement in the martyrdom of Polycarp c~156AD.
66. However, the natural reading of vs.9b clearly suggests that these people were not really **Jews** at all as seen in the fact that they "**say they are Jews and are not**".
67. This is clearly designed to contrast their verbal proclamations with the reality that they are not God's people at all, racially, religiously, or in any other way, but were Gentiles masquerading as **Jews** proclaiming they represented the true way of salvation.
68. Further, they are obviously organized into something called "**a synagogue**" that is a term that denotes a gathering together, an assembly that is designed to ostensibly worship God.
69. However, this organized assembly does not worship God at all and is devoted to **Satan** and is clearly set forth as hostile to the local church in Smyrna.
70. Another major clue is given in Rev.3:9 in the letter to Philadelphia that once again gives dishonorable mention to them.
71. It is the era of Philadelphia that advances the Church Age to just prior to the final era of the Church bringing on the rapture, Laodicea, indicating that this counterfeit religious order is still thriving centuries into the future.
72. Finally, that this order worships **Satan** himself would point to an underground secret society operating behind the scenes of mainline paganism/religions of the time.

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73. In our day, finding hard evidence to support the fact that a secret satanic order was a primary force behind the persecution of Christians during the Smyrna church period is lacking for two reasons:
  - A. We are removed from that time by almost some 2000 years.
  - B. It is difficult to uncover their nefarious secret since **Satan** operates behind the cover of darkness and those that follow him love to do the same.
74. But this does not mean it is impossible and what we must look for is a secretive satanic counterfeit religion that claimed to be Jewish and was **not**, that attacked the church in Smyrna and continues to exist into our present day.
75. The most viable answer proposed is found in the Gnostic mystery religions that combined Christian doctrine with mystic Oriental arts, Jewish Kabbalah (mystic Jews heavy into numerology, symbolism, etc.) and various other mysteries, producing a secret society that claimed to have imparted a higher knowledge of God than what is found in the literal interpretation of the Bible.
76. One dominant type of these mystery cults was the Greek Eleusinian mysteries, in which the initiates were promised greater degrees of illumination after they were initiated into the mystery cult.
77. Like the modern counterpart, these initiates took an oath of secrecy and their initiation ceremony surpassed all initiations of its kind and was deemed to be so important that their secrets fell under the protection of the government.
78. In fact, by state law the rulers, most of whom were the highest degree initiates, met annually at the close of their cities' licentious festival to pass sentence on anyone that violated the laws that governed the sacred rites.
79. Hence, a legal excuse was legislated for the persecution of Christians that refused to participate in the cult.
80. Further, like its modern counterpart, these mystery religions had a standard system of secret signs, grips and passwords and concealed their true teachings behind an allegorical, ritual system.
81. Finally, we know that during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century, Gentile mystery religions began to take on Jewish character.
82. This was the direct result of a few Jewish rabbis putting to pen a work they called the Kabbalah.
83. The Kabbalah is a compilation of mystical rabbinical tradition that from the time of the Babylonian captivity was orally handed down from rabbi to rabbi.
84. Much of the Kabbalah contains the Gnostic doctrine of the Zoroastrinas of Persian empire days and this mystical work found its way into the Gentile mystery religions of Asia Minor where its contents were absorbed in their rituals.
85. Such a secret society that opposes true Christianity that was operative during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Centuries AD, does indeed continue to exist today.
86. The modern form is called Freemasonry, and like its historical counterpart developed a religion that originated with the trade guilds that were so dominant in Asia Minor.
87. In the writing by Mackey, *Manual of the Lodge*, he traces Masonic teaching back to "the ancient rites and mysteries practiced in the very bosom of pagan darkness..." (Albert G. Mackey, *Manual of the Lodge*, Macoy and Sicles, 1802, p.96).
88. According to Mackey's *"Encyclopedia of Freemasonry"* the Eleusinian mysteries exerted a powerful influence on the secret societies of the Middle Ages such as the Rosicrucian and the Knights Templar Order.
89. It was these two Orders respectively that founded in 1717 English Freemasonry and in 1725 French Freemasonry.

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83. Also in the book, *“Encyclopedia of Freemasonry”*, we find the following statement:  
*“Each lodge is and must be a symbol of the Jewish Temple, each master in the chair representing the Jewish king, and every Freemason is a personification of the Jewish workman.”*
84. In fact, Masonic Lodges are laid out after the pattern of Solomon’s Temple, and Gentiles are dressed like Jewish priests, who bow down before a replica of the Ark of the Covenant.
85. The following are quotes from men that are, or who have, occupied the highest positions in this **synagogue of Satan**.
- A. *“Every Masonic Lodge is a temple of religion; and its teachings are instructions of religion.”* Albert Pike, 33rd degree
  - B. *“The Blue Degrees are but the court of portico (porch) of the Temple. Part of the symbols are displayed there to the initiate, but he is intentionally misled by false interpretations. It is not intended that he shall understand them; but it is intended that he shall imagine that he understands them....their true explication is reserved for the Adept, the Princes of Masonry.”* (32nd & 33rd degrees). Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogma*
  - C. From the first degree, and initiation, the Mason is urged mightily to "seek the light!". The average Mason is continually saying that he is "seeking the light" and will spend his entire life "moving toward the light." Concerning this light that every mason is told to eagerly seek, Pike gives his answer; *"Lucifer, the Light-bearer! Strange and mysterious name to give to the Spirit of Darkness! Lucifer the Son of the Morning! Is it he who bears the light, and with its splendors intolerable blinds feeble sensual, or selfish souls? Doubt it not!"*
  - D. *“Freemasonry is a fraternity within a fraternity....an outer organization concealing an inner Brotherhood of the elect...it is necessary to establish the existence of these two separate and yet interdependent orders, the one visible the other invisible. The visible society is a splendid camaraderie of 'free and accepted' men enjoined to devote themselves to ethical, educational, fraternal, patriotic, and humanitarian concerns. The invisible society is a secret and most August fraternity whose members are dedicated to the service of a mysterious arcannum arcandrum.”* [defined as 'a secret, a mystery'] ~Manly P Hall 33rd degree, *Lectures on Ancient*, p.433]
  - E. *"When a mason learns the key to the warrior on the block is the proper application of the dynamo of living power, he has learned the mystery of his craft. The seething energies of Lucifer are in his hands and before he may step upward, he must prove his ability to properly apply energy."* [The Lost Key of Freemasonry, Manly P. Hall, 33°, p.48]
  - F. *"Masonry makes no profession of Christianity..but looks forward to the time when the labor of our ancient brethren shall be symbolized by the erection of a spiritual temple..in which there shall be but one altar and one worship; one common altar of Masonry on which the Veda, Shatra, Sade, Zeda-Avesta, Koran and the Holy Bible shall at who’s shrine the Hindu, the Persian, the Assyrian, the Chaldean, the Egyptian, the Chinese, the Mohammedan, the Jew and the Christian may kneel."* [ "The Kentucky Monitor" Fellowcraft Degree p. 95 ]
  - G. *".... the literal meaning (of the Bible) is for the vulgar only."* [Albert Pike "Digest of Morals and Dogma," p. 166 ]
  - H. *"The true name of Satan, the Kabalists say, is that of Yahweh reversed; for Satan is not a black god.. for the initiates this is not a Person, but a force, created for*



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*good, but which may serve for evil. It is the instrument of liberty and free will.*"  
[ Albert Pike "Morals and Dogma," Master Mason / 3rd Degree p. 102 ]

- I. *"Masonry is a search for light. That light. That search leads us back, as you see, to the Kabala. In that ancient and little understood (source book) the infinite will find the source of many doctrines; and (he) may in time come to understand the Hermetic philosophers, the Alchemists, all the Anti-papal Thinkers of the Middle Ages, and Emanuel Swedenborg."* [ Albert Pike "Morals and Dogma," 28th Degree p. 741 ]
  - J. *"All truly dogmatic religions have issued from the Kabala and return to it; everything scientific and grand in the religious dreams of the Illuminati, Jacob Boehme, Swedenborg, Saint Martin, and others is borrowed from the Kabala; all Masonic associations owe to it their secrets and their symbols."* [ Albert Pike "Morals and Dogma," 28th Degree p. 747 ]
  - K. *"Though Masonry is identical with the ancient Mysteries, it is so only in this qualified sense: that it presents but an imperfect image of their brilliancy, the ruins of their grandeur .."* [ Albert Pike "Morals and Dogma" Fellowcraft Degree p.22 ]
86. These statements from their own writings make it clear that the ancient and modern mystery religions owed much of their message to Jewish mysticism.
  87. In fact, in the ancient Eleusinian Mysteries, the Gentile membership was given the title "Jew" upon completion of their initiation.
  88. While there is much more information available about these esoteric cults, the clear message here is that they are not benign or ambivalent with respect to the church.
  89. These are groups that promote Gnostic heresies, oppose the true teachings of doctrine, and persecute those that hold to the truth.
  90. In America, it is difficult for us to fathom the persecution of the Church, yet in other countries it has occurred this century and was instigated by secret societies.
  91. Some examples as brought out in the written work, "*Secret Societies and Their Infiltration into the Seven Churches of Revelation*" by author John Daniel, drives home the point that the Masonic cult is worldwide and has been instrumental in the persecution of Christians and true **Jews** for many years.
  92. In Russia following the 1<sup>st</sup> World War, the communist revolution slaughtered millions of Christians and evidence points to members of the homicidal Masonic Lodge as predominately responsible leaving carved Masonic symbols on the victim's bodies as their mark of involvement.
  93. Hitler himself, knew that communism was the brainchild of Freemasonry, but he believed that Freemasonry was controlled by Jews and coined the phrase "Judeo-Freemasonry".
  94. British Intelligence attributes the communist revolution in Angola Africa in the 70's as a Masonic revolution and slaughter of Christians.
  95. Upon investigating the murder of 13 white missionaries at the Elam Mission Station, all victims bore the signs of Masonic ritualistic murder with Kabbalistic symbols carved all over their disemboweled and mutilated bodies.
  96. Another persecution of Christians occurred in China beginning in 1950 with the Chinese Communist Revolution: It too, was a secret society revolution led by Grand Orient Freemason Mao Tse Tung.
  97. While Christians in our society are generally protected due to the nature of our constitutional laws, Masonic power and influence politically and otherwise in our country is not to be considered benign.

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98. In the book, "*New World Order: The Ancient Plan of Secret Societies*" by William T. Still, he provides strong evidence that Masonic power controls the destiny of the U.S. and Britain and is directly instrumental in our involvement with the U.N. and the New World Order.
99. Through their political power and influence they are serving **Satan** in setting up the world into a political stage conducive to the introduction of himself as the one world ruler in the person of antichrist.
100. It is not hard to see Masonic influence, not only in the architecture of the buildings in Washington D.C., but in the very seat of highest power controlling our nation, as it is recorded that no less than 17 past Presidents have been Masons: Washington, Madison, Monroe, Jackson, Polk, Buchanan, Andrew Johnson, Garfield, McKinley, Teddy Roosevelt, Taft, Harding, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Truman, Lyndon Johnson, Ford and Reagan.
101. While their "visible" appearance may remain "whitewashed" in order to maintain appeal to the masses, always remember that their doctrine of hating the truth and those that stand for it has always remained the same.
102. **Satan** is the master "angel of light" and through his genius produces counterfeit doctrines that can pull the wool over even the believer's eyes. 2Cor.11:14
103. The Bible makes clear that there are spiritually unscrupulous types that will use the name of Christ and the ruse of Christianity simply to advance their own negative STA agendas and are in fact unbelievers. Mat.7:21-23
104. The obvious application for any believer is to avoid these groups, separate from anyone involved with them, and lock into God's vehicle in this world, the local church.

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### EXEGESIS VERSE 10:

GNT Revelation 2:10 mhde.n fobou/ a] me,lleij pa,sceinÅ ivdou. me,llei ba,llein o` dia,bolaj evx u`mw/n eivj fulakh.n i[na peirasqh/te kai. e[xete qli/yin h`merw/n de,kaÅ gi,nou pistoj a;cri qana,tou( kai. dw,sw soi to.n ste,fanon th/j zwh/jÅ

**NAS Revelation 2:10 '(Corrected) Fear nothing of the things which you are about to suffer.** fobou/ fobe,omai (vImp/p/d--2s; "Fear") mhde.n mhdei,j (apcan-s; "nothing/not one thing") a] o[j (rel.pro./an-p; "the things which") me,lleij me,llw (vipa--2s; "you are about" +) pa,sceinÅ pa,scw (+ compl. inf./pa-; "to suffer/undergo")

**Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days.** ivdou, (exclamatory part.; "Behold!") o` dia,bolaj (d.a. + ap-nm-s; "the devil/slanderer") me,llei me,llw (vipa--3s; "is about" +) ba,llein ba,llw (+ compl. inf./pa-; "to cast/throw") evx evk (pAbl; "from out of/some of") u`mw/n su, (npAbl-2p) eivj (pa) fulakh.n fulakh, (n-af-s; "prison"; used 47x) i[na (conj. of purpose; "in order that") peirasqh/te peira,zw (vsap--2p; "you might be tested/examined/proven") kai, (cc) e[xete e;cw (vifa--2p; "you will have") qli/yin qli/yij (n-af-s; "tribulation") de,kaÅ de,ka (card. adj./gf-p; "ten") h`merw/n h`me,ra (n-gf-p; "days")

**Be faithful until death, and I will give you the (corrected) wreath of life.** gi,nou gi,nomai (vImp./p/d--2s; "Be/Become") pistoj (a--nm-s; "faithful") a;cri (pg; "until/up to the point of") qana,tou( qa,natoj (n-gm-s; "death") kai, (cc) dw,sw di,dwmi (vifa--1s; "give/bestow upon") soi su, (npd-2s) to.n o` ste,fanon ste,fanoj (d.a. + n-am-s; "the wreath") th/j o` zwh/jÅ zwh, (d.a. + n-gf-s; "of the life")

### ANALYSIS VERSE 10:

1. That Christ renders no fault or condemnation in His message to Smyrna states in silence that this church has been corporately passing their tests.
2. He has made them aware that He is totally cognizant of the persecutions brought upon them by evil men in the Devil's world.
3. That Christ is privy to their situation should instill into them encouragement and comfort knowing that He is the author of **life** and there is no power on earth greater than Him.
4. His previous acknowledgment was designed to let them know that while Satan and his followers often use covert tactics to make Christians look bad and bring suffering into their lives, these things do not go unnoticed by Christ and therefore never beyond His control.
5. His proclamation of vs.2 then is further designed to instill into them more confidence in facing the onslaught of antagonistic -V and whatever else they may throw at these believers.

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6. It is with this in mind that we are to understand the force of vs.10, **‘Fear nothing of the things which you are about to suffer’**.
7. The command not to **fear** is not to insinuate that they were in a state of corporate **fear** at this point, rather it looks forward to the potential of **fear** in reaction to the information that will follow.
8. The command to **‘fear nothing’** uses a singular object and literally means to **‘fear not one thing’**.
9. The singular is then quickly replaced by the plural of the relative pronoun in the following clause, **‘which things you are about to suffer’**.
10. The blasphemy against them that was instigated by the esoteric Gnostic “synagogue of Satan” is destined to take a decided turn for the worse.
11. What started as religious persecution on a personal or local level with verbal maligning causing job discrimination and loss of property will eventually manifest itself into a fully blown state-sponsored prejudice and persecution.
12. These believers were attacked by the secretive Gnostic sects that ultimately garnered the approval of the state (obviously by having some of their membership in positions of authority and power), and overt persecution took on a new impetus and complexion.
13. The heat in the angelic conflict is about to be turned up in the face of believers that refuse to fold under the current pressure put upon them.
14. One may think that being slandered publicly, losing one’s wealth and becoming financially destitute would be sufficient to appease those so hostile to the truth.
15. But the reality is, as John made clear in 1Joh.3:12-13, when believers maintain their application of the truth and those that are exceptionally –V to it are left unabated in expressing their STA’s towards +V, they will not stop short of murder.
16. That Christ has proclaimed His absolute knowledge on every affair of life that is having direct impact on these believer’s life, to now have **fear** in the face of additional testing headed their way after passing their tests thus far would be flirting with spiritual disaster.
17. In contrast to the Ephesians’ lachrymose attitude towards application of BD being their Achilles heel, for these believers it is the issue of sin **fear** that is the potential inward enemy seeking to rob them of the prize.
18. It is **fear** that is a dominant STA trend that neutralizes the believer’s application(s) in life under pressure situations.
19. These believers have sufficiently overruled any trend in that area up to this point, and they are to carry this momentum of application forward to meet all future testing.
20. Principle: We are to build upon our doctrinal strengths as much as we are to build up our weaknesses.
21. They are exhorted to face their future tribulations with the total confidence that there is literally not one thing of all **things** they may undergo that is worthy of making them afraid knowing that Jesus Christ “SEES” all **things**.
22. Christ then immediately makes it clear the degree that they can expect to face in further testing and states, **‘Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison’**.
23. While we have been introduced to the human element in this persecution implying Satan’s support, Christ now declares unabashedly that he is the mastermind and spiritual force behind these men.
24. The term **‘Devil/dia,boloj – diabolos’** literally means one that casts through, one that is slanderous, backbiting and accuses others falsely.

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25. The nuance of his title in this context is one that brings charges with hostile intentions and points to his activity of orchestrating his plan through the Roman authorities and legal system.
26. This is the essential character of Satan, a super-being, personal, evil, world ruler that is consistently portrayed in the WOG as the enemy of God and man.
27. He and his demonic charges are viewed as the spiritual powers that lie behind many earthly rulers, who are employed by Satan to advance his plan of persecuting believers. Cp.Eph.6:12; 1Pet.5:8
28. From the book of Job, it is obvious that Satan's power is limited and must subject itself to the will of God in the matter. Job 1:12
29. This indicates that believers truly have **nothing to fear** since any testing (small or large) comes from the directive or permissive will of God and is not completely in the hands of our enemy.
30. Christ then further brings out the reality that it is not God's will for all of these believers to have to face the ultimate persecutions as He makes it quite clear that only **some of** them are destined for **prison**.
31. This points out the fact that not all believers have equal niches and what God may assign to one, He may not another.
32. Again, it brings us back to a primary spiritual principle brought out in the message to Smyrna and that is the necessity for each believer to acclimate to his or her own niche.
33. For those that will face the test of **prison**, their potential of the kind of **fear** they will face is obvious.
34. For those that are not called at this time to face the same tests, the issue of **fear** for them to overrule is to witness the testing of the others around them and succumb to **fear** in attempts to potentially avoid the same test in their own lives.
35. We must not read our societal understanding of the modern **prison** into our verse, as those in Smyrna would have recognized that **prison** was not an institution designed to permanently house criminals for any long length of time.
36. Imprisonment was not recognized by the law of that day as a punishment for crime in either Greek or Roman culture and was only a holding facility during the intervening stage between trial and execution.
37. The State did not burden itself with the custody or care of prisoners, apart from this brief phase.
38. These believers would have recognized that the first order of business was their apprehension and imprisonment by the civil authorities, then a trial and pronouncement of sentence by the magistrate.
39. The usual range of penalties for criminal activity was a fine, beating, exile or death.
40. That these believers were already facing the pressure of financial bankruptcy, it is obvious that the next level is direct physical punishment to include death.
41. Christ then tells this church the very purpose for why He permits persecution upon believers in the next clause, "**that you may be tested**".
42. The verb "**tested**/peira,zw – peirazo" means to put to the test, to examine something or someone for the purpose of ascertaining the quality of a thing or person. Cp. Rev.2:2
43. It is our testing in the crucible of life including undeserved suffering at the hands of the cosmos that demonstrates our understanding and willingness to apply the Divine viewpoint.

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44. It is the testing of the doctrine in our souls that provides us the opportunity to apply the doctrine, glorify God, produce Divine good and ultimately lay up SG<sub>3</sub>. 1Pet.1:6-7
45. Such testing should not be feared, but be a cause for rejoicing. Mat.5:11-12; Jam.1:2
46. The principle is that whatever tests we face in life, the time is brief compared to the eternal weight of glory that will follow for those that past their tests. 2Cor.4:17
47. Christ then brings out that the persecution they will face is indeed not forever, as He gives them a specified length of time for their suffering, “**and you will have tribulation ten days**”.
48. This clause, as with most of this book, has also occasioned a great deal of discussion.
49. The viable proposals presented as to the actual duration of these **ten days** includes:
  - A. **Ten** literal 24 hour **days**.
  - B. **Ten** years represented by **ten days**.
  - C. **Ten** specific periods of time or waves of persecution.
  - D. **Ten days** is simply a contrast to the much longer time designations in this book and just means a short duration.
50. There are no historical records that give indication of **ten** literal **days** that this church underwent persecution of this nature, although obviously records are scant.
51. While their period of persecution was indeed brief compared to the larger scheme of time and eternity, this does not satisfy the definite nature of time as is naturally read into the number **ten** modifying these **days**.
52. Those that propose it is reference to **ten** significant waves of persecution headed by **ten** Roman Emperors provide a mixed review as to who those Emperors were to include:
  - A. Nero, c.65 AD.
  - B. Domitian, c.96 AD.
  - C. Trojan, c.104 AD.
  - D. Hadrian, 125 AD.
  - E. Marcus Antoninus, c.151 AD.
  - F. Marcus Aurelius, c.177 AD.
  - G. Septimius Severus, c.197 AD.
  - H. Maximinus, c.237 AD.
  - I. Decius, c.250 AD.
  - J. Valerianus, c.257AD.
  - K. Dioclesian, c.303 AD.
  - L. Licinius, c.320 AD.
  - M. Julian, c.360 AD.
53. As counted, as many as 13 Emperors are proposed to have fit the bill as persecutors of the church during this period.
54. Even those that disregard Nero, since Christ is clearly looking to a future event (“**you will have**”), beginning with the later reign of Domitian, who was ruling at this time in history, there remains 12 rulers and periods in view.
55. History records that by the time of the reign of Julian in 360 AD, who was raised a Christian but followed polytheism in practice, martyrdom of Christians by the State had for all intents and purposes on a national scale come to an end.
56. In fact, even those exiled were pardoned, albeit Julian’s intentions for doing so are questionable.
57. Further, Constantine ( I ) the Great became the next renowned Emperor after Diocletian and himself was one of the first Roman Emperors to personally proclaim himself as a Christian.

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58. He forged an edict with Licinius to provide tolerance for Christians and their restoration from persecution under the so-called Edict of Milan c.~310 AD.
59. What is inferred in historical accounts is that upon the retirement of Diocletian from power, the persecution of Christians at the level prophesied by Christ quickly died down.
60. This brings us to the rule of Diocletian, who is renowned in history, of engaging in **ten** years of almost uninterrupted persecution of Christians.
61. This then would look at the final **ten days** as being the final **ten** years of intense persecutions that the Christians would face in the hands of Diocletian.
62. In fact, the number **ten** is symbolic of completeness or a completed state. Ref. New Bible Dictionary, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.
63. To end this era of persecution with Diocletian, plus voiding Nero that does not fall into the prophetic time frame, also narrows the reign of persecuting rulers down to **ten**.
64. The **ten days** in view's primary emphasis looks to the future when believers will undergo a final and steady **ten** years of unceasing hardcore persecution that will in and of itself bring this era of the Church essentially to a close introducing the next era of Pergamum.
65. Secondly, it looks to **ten** waves of persecution substantiated through **ten** Roman rulers.
66. Christ is telling the Saints at Smyrna that they can expect the worst for Christian persecution to exist for a period of time ending with **ten** steady years of unabated persecution, which in reality will not be until some 200 years later.
67. During this 200-year period, persecution of Christians on a blanket scale would be hot and cold centering on the influence of **ten** emperors and would end with one final **ten**-year continuous assault.
68. The **tribulation** they **will have** for **ten days** looks to the culmination of persecution on an empirical scale being fulfilled with a final **ten** years of mass imprisonment ushering in a reign of more tolerant Emperors in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century to wind down this era of the Church.
69. The era of the Church as represented by Smyrna is then calculated to be from ~100 – ~320 AD.
70. Christ then makes these believers a conditional promise if they will not capitulate spiritually ending vs.10, **“Be faithful until death, and I will give you the wreath of life”**.
71. The condition is that these believers must maintain their adherence to the truth of God in application to the end, no matter what the consequences may be.
72. The literal Greek is **“Become faithful until death”**.
73. This brings home the reality that every second of every day that the believer exists and faces their allotments of suffering in **life**, they bring into existence the manifestation of their faith.
74. For those that will maintain their adherence to BD in application **until death**, they manifest that maximum +V has come into existence.
75. By implication, it points to the nature of free will/volition and that the believer's will is tested at all times and that true +V to BD is only manifested as time progresses.
76. Volition considered positive enough to receive maximum reward from God is only volition that orients to the truth in application holding to the end.
77. The reward for those that remain **faithful until death** goes over and beyond the normal rewards for believers and the SG<sub>3</sub> they have accumulated with the highest

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reward bestowed, **the wreath of life**, a.k.a. as “the prize”. 1Cor.9:24; Phi.3:14; Col.2:18; 2Tim.2:5

78. For those that submit to God’s will exiting this life under +V, it is apropos that the prize they receive reflects **life**.
79. The **life** in view is a reward of eternal **life** and for the believer that receives the reward of the **wreath of life**, it is a promise of maximum blessing as it is applied to the believer’s Ph<sub>3</sub> niche in terms or prestige, wealth and recognition.
80. The principle is that in whatever area of **life** the believer may suffer loss in order to pursue and apply doctrine, God has promised to reward placing His plan first by replacing all that the believer may lose and more beyond any expectations.
81. In this case, the ultimate experience of all that constitutes real living will become the lot of those that have suffered loss of **life** for His name’s sake.
82. All that is wrapped up into enjoying their eternal **life** niche will be highlighted in the **wreath of life** they will adorn and in a way that only God has the power and where with all to make it a supernatural reality beyond anyone’s wildest imagination of good things.
83. Christ encompasses the very process of spiritual matriculation and growth and its resultant reward for those that hold to the end under the very term, “**faithful**”.
84. That spiritual maturity is omitted as necessary to obtain the prize emphasizes that maturity is relative to faithfulness to BD in acclimation to one’s niche.
85. Whatever one’s niche may be in the POG, our faithfulness to BD determines our spiritual status and state before God.
86. For those that hold to the end, no matter the length of time God gives them, they manifest a state of maturity and degree of +V that is acceptable to God for the bestowal of the highest reward given to believers.
87. One cannot evaluate another believer’s spiritual maturity based on time in grade alone.
88. That evaluation is reserved for one’s faithfulness to sound doctrine in application throughout time and whether one stays the course to the end.
89. For some it may encompass only a short life, while others it may involve many years.
90. In either case, their final spiritual assessment is determined by God based on what they did with doctrine over time in their niche and whether they held to it in the end.
91. The **wreath of life** (cp. Also Jam.1:12) is one of four descriptive titles given to the prize, the others being the wreaths of righteousness (2Tim.4:8), glory (1Pet.5:4) and exultation (1The.2:19).
92. Paul equates the “prize” (singular) with the “**wreath**” (singular) in 1Cor.9:24-25.
93. This at least implies that there is one **wreath** and that **wreath** is imperishable.
94. Christ in His return at the 2<sup>nd</sup> advent is seen with only one “*golden wreath*” on His head. Rev.14:14
95. While different descriptive titles are used for the **wreath** and some will point out that some titles are only used with reference to a communicator versus believers in general, to make an argument that they are separate rewards accordingly remains speculative.
96. In fact, the **wreath** of exultation is represented by the communicators right congregation and figuratively speaking the congregation is the **wreath** which the communicator is envisioned as being adorned with, based on his success in teaching the truth, thus tying together both congregation and communicator with the **wreath**.



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97. The descriptive titles point to the attributes that all believers that are faithful to the end are adorned with including eternal **life** with maximum blessing reflecting their pursuit of +R in time, as their eternal glory and grounds for eternal exultation.
98. All believers that fulfill this criterion will wear this distinction for all eternity.

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### EXEGESIS VERSE 11:

GNT Revelation 2:11 ο` e;cwn ou=j avkousa,tw ti, to. pneu/ma le,gei tai/j evkklhsi,aij  
 ο` nikw/n ouv mh. avdikhqh/| evk tou/ qana,tou tou/ deute,rou

NAS Revelation 2:11 **'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.** ο` e;cwn e;cw (d.a. + subs. ptc./p/a/nm-s; "He who has") ou=j (n-an-s; "an ear") avkousa,tw avkou,w (vImp./aa--3s; "let him hear") ti, ti,j (interr. pro./an-s; "what") to, pneu/ma (d.a. + n-nn-s; "the Spirit"; ref. the Holy Spirit) le,gei le,gw (vipa--3s; "keeps on saying") tai/j h` evkklhsi,aij evkklhsi,a (d.a. + n-df-p; "to the churches")

**He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.'** ο` nikw/n nika,w (d.a. + subs. ptc./p/a/nm-s; "He who overcomes") ouv mh, (double neg.; "in no way possible/shall not/absolutely will not") avdikhqh/| avdike,w (vsap--3s; "be hurt/wronged/suffer loss or damage"; the subjunctive mood with the double negative states that there is not even a potential of occurrence) evk (pAbl; "by/from") tou/ ο` deute,rou deu,teroj (restrict. attrib. ordinal adj./gm-s; "the second one in sequence") tou/ ο` qana,tou qa,natoj (d.a. + n-gm-s; "the death")

### ANALYSIS VERSE 11:

1. The message to Smyrna is the shortest message written to the seven **churches**.
2. Its brevity speaks for the church itself and the spiritual condition and circumstances for the Church during this era.
3. That there is no condemnation given denotes that the assault upon the Church/church is totally undeserved.
4. This denotes that on the local level as a church, Smyrna corporately is adjusted and applying doctrine correctly.
5. It denotes on a prophetic level that the Church Universal has made the necessary adjustments in application from the preceding Ephesian era and is now poised to stand fast in the faith.
6. That there is this degree of persecution coming upon the Church/church corporately in and of itself will manifest the doctrinal fiber of the believers involved.
7. One cannot remain benign in application of BD and expect to pass tests of this magnitude and pressure.
8. The very circumstances and situations for this church/Church in and of itself are all that needs to occur for one to truly evaluate their doctrinal fortitude.
9. The proclamation that believers are willing to undergo economical suffering, public humiliation and even martyrdom for the faith declares unabashedly the type of +V that exists.
10. For many believers living in this era, their lives will be cut short choosing to stand for the faith rather than to capitulate and save their skins.

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11. When pressure of this type occurs in the Christian life for believers that subscribe to sound doctrine, the primary exhortation truly only needed is to keep their eyes on the eternal rewards and hold to the end.
12. Christ's exhortation in this regards in essence is a cry for these believers to continue to faith-rest in the promises of BD in their lives knowing God will richly reward and bless them over and beyond to include the supreme reward.
13. To remain faithful to the end demands the believer engages the faith-rest technique that is the antidote to fear.
14. As with all the letters, Christ closes this message with an exhortation for all believers, "**He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches**".
15. Christ declares that the doctrine presented is mandated for all believers to **hear**, no matter what else they may listen to in life.
16. It is the communication of BD that deserves the believer's utmost attention demanding that they not only listen audibly, but through the GAP system.
17. That **the churches** are looked to collectively further demands that the believer not only remember what has already been said but continues to listen to all forthcoming doctrine.
18. It points to the fact that all doctrine is disseminated for the very purpose and benefit for believers to embrace and act upon in directing their own CWL.
19. Christ then ends the message with another promise that "**He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death**".
20. Again, contextually, the overcomer is a reference to all believers.
21. The term "**second death**" is one that is defined within the book of Revelation and is not subject to any other interpretation. Rev.20:14; 21:8
22. The first **death**, which is the lot of mankind apart from the rapture, is physical **death**, the separation of the soul from the body. Heb.9:27
23. The **second death** is that of eternal separation from God being confined to the lake of fire and enduring eternal torment.
24. The Greek sentence structure is very emphatic employing the double negative with the subjunctive mood to express emphatic negation of even any potential possibilities.
25. While it is true that all believers are exempt from the ravages of the **second death**, this particular aspect of blessing is designed to encourage those facing the very real expectation of physical **death**.
26. It is mentioned here to strengthen their faith to make the necessary applications.
27. That all believers have conquered the **second death** through their union in Christ, there is to be no fear of the first **death** and the issue is to keep their eyes focused on the truth of BD and its application seeking the ultimate reward for Ph<sub>3</sub>.
28. The Smyrna church was the dominant type of the Church Universal immediately following the first post-apostolic generation and looks to the Church in its association with the state and its resultant consequences.
29. Satan apparently recognized that overt persecution would not eliminate the church and next moves to promote his plan through seeking to cause the church to compromise with religiosity and the state creating division within.
30. *Review the Doctrine of Faith-Rest.*

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### THE PROPHETIC PRONOUNCEMENT ON PERGAMUM VSS.12-17

#### EXEGESIS VERSE 12:

GNT Revelation 2:12 Kai. tw/| avgge,lw| th/j evn Perga,mw| evkklhsi,aj gra,yon\ Ta,de le,gei o` e;cwn th.n r`omfai,an th.n di,stomon th.n ovxei/an\

NAS Revelation 2:12 **"And to the (corrected) messenger of the church in Pergamum write:** Kai, (cc) tw/| o` avgge,lw/ a;ggeloj (d.a. + n-dm-s; "the messenger/pastor-teacher) th/j h` evkklhsi,aj evkklhsi,a (d.a. + n-gf-s; "the church") evn (pL) Perga,mw/ Pe,rgamoj (n-df-s/n-dn-s; the neuter gender was also ascribed to this word by ancient writers; "Pergamum/Pergamos"; lit. means "high/lofty/high tower"; used 2x; 1:11) gra,yon\ gra,fw (vmaa--2s) **The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this:** o` e;cwn e;cw (d.a. + subs. ptc./p/a/nm-s; "The One who has") th.n h` ovxei/an\ ovxu,j (d.a. + restrict. attrib./a--af-s; "the sharp"; same as 1:16) th.n h` di,stomon di,stomoj (d.a. + restrict. attrib./a--af-s; lit. having two mouths hence; "two-edged/double-edged"; same as 1:16) th.n h` r`omfai,an r`omfai,a (d.a. + n-af-s; "sword/broad sword") le,gei le,gw (vipa--3s; "keeps on saying") Ta,de o[de (dem. pro./an-p; "these things/this")

#### ANALYSIS VERSE 12:

1. Christ now addresses the 3<sup>rd</sup> local **church** in sequence and time.
2. As is the Divine authoritative policy for the post-apostolic **Church**, Christ addresses the sole pastor-teacher in charge, **"And to the messenger of the church in Pergamum write:"**
3. John is again instructed to delineate in writing Christ's critiquing of this **church** highlighting the prophetic spiritual temperature of the **Church** during this era.
4. That John is the human author behind the writing of this book deduces that as the sole representative of the original 12 Apostles, his (and the previous 11) viewpoint is in total agreement with the Divine viewpoint given by Christ to each of these churches.
5. This in turn implicitly states that the positive legacy reflected by each of these 7 churches were handed down to them via the apostles and that John and Company are not held accountable for any condemnation any of these churches receive.
6. It fact, it is safely assumed that John, as well as any of the other apostles, if circumstances allowed, would personally bring like condemnation or commendation upon them in their previous roles of Apostolic authority.
7. It denotes that John and Company remained totally faithful to their administration of Apostolic office in message and function and are to be separated from any liability to the maladjustment's ascribed to these churches.
8. This very reality in and of itself highlights a dominant doctrine inclusive in this letter,

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the Doctrine of Separation.

9. The name **Pergamum** is a derivative from the Greek word “pu,rgoj – pergos”, which means “tower/citadel/something lofty/high”.
10. This name is very apropos for this city as it was situated on a high hill in the Caicus valley between two of the tributaries of the Caicus river, the Selinus and the Kteios.
11. It was located about 55 miles northwest of Smyrna and about 15 miles inland from the Aegean Sea.
12. This city was famous from antiquity, being the name of the citadel (acropolis – fortified upper part of a city) of the fabled city of Troy and initially was the capital of the Asian province.
13. It still remains today as Bergama, a Turkish corruption of the old name, and possesses 15 mosques.
14. One of the mosque’s is said to be the early church of Sophia from the Byzantine era (4<sup>th</sup> century - ~1400 AD).
15. Though the modern town is considerable in size, it is built among the ruins of the old city and is less extent.
16. The ancient city was known for its trade in ointments, parchment and pottery, while today its chief exports consists of wool, cotton, valonia (extract from dried acorn cups used in tanning, dyeing, ink-making, etc.), leather and opium.
17. During the Roman era, it was also a University City with a large library boasting over 200,000 volumes that later was given as a gift from Antony to Cleopatra.
18. While Ephesus became the main commercial capital, this city boasted of its religious superiority being very wealthy and a main center of emperor worship with many other temples devoted to various pagan gods.
19. It bore the title “Thrice Neokoros”, meaning that in the city 3 temples had been built to the Roman emperors, in which the emperors were worshipped as gods.
20. Their priesthood was chosen from the native aristocratic families in Asia called the Asiarchs. Act.19:31
21. Four of the pagan temples included worship of Zeus, Dionysus, Athena and Asklepios, the latter being a “healing” god in the form of a serpent through which the priests by means of dreams were given remedies to heal physical maladies.
22. The temple of Zeus was considered a wonder of the world at that time and included a forty foot altar sitting on the very top of the mountain and visible for miles in every direction.
23. Another god freely worshiped in this city was Bacchus, the god of revelry, the spirit of which is very much alive today in New Orleans during Mardi Gras.
24. As history makes clear, this city became a stronghold of pagan religion and emperor worship and in fact, a title held by the inhabitants of **Pergamum** was “chief temple-keepers of Asia”, due to the plethora of pagan idolatry.
25. Further, it has the elements needed in uniting both political and religious evil into one blasphemous system.
26. Understanding the cosmic nature of this city in contrast to the local **church in Pergamum** provides the spiritual insight in representation of its very name.
27. That its strategic and mountainous location provided a natural defense, the proper sense of its name, as a high tower or citadel, describes this city as a formidable fortress.
28. In a metaphorical sense, it signifies high and lofty, noting things that were sublime, inspirational or spiritual called “ta pergama – ta pergama” by the Greeks.
29. It therefore can be applied both physically and spiritual in connotation.

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30. Combined, the sense of its name looks to the pursuit of God/god(s) as the fortress or strength behind one's existence or life.
31. It carries with it, as with the former two churches, both a bad and good connotation as applied to this **church**.
32. The good looks to the established **church** seeking God through Christianity making Him their fortress in life. 2Sam.22:33; Psa.18:2; 91:1-2
33. True Christianity seeks God based on His terms and conditions, on His works and revelation to man, via a faith system. Joh.1:12-13
34. True Christianity looks to God's efforts reaching out to man to provide them with salvation and man's determined response to Him. Rom.1:20-21 cp. 2Sam.22:3; Psa.25:5; 62:1; 70:4; 2The.2:13; Tit.2:11
35. All other systems of approach to God or spirituality do not reflect true Christianity and are systems of religiosity.
36. This points to the evil connotation behind the name; man's efforts to reach God through a fallacious system of religiosity (energy of the flesh) sponsored by Satan and his demons. 2Cor.11:14
37. While the **church in Pergamum** is an established adjusted local **church** standing for the truth (vs.13), from it came those that compromised with the faith diving headlong into Satan's counterfeit to Christianity, religion and its evils (vss.14-15).
38. The **church in Pergamum** prophetically represents the **Church** from the time of Constantine I (~320 AD) to Gregory the Great (~ 590AD; first Roman Bishop often called the first "Pope").
39. This era denotes a period of **Church** history in which the **Church** began to compromise with Roman rule, enjoying great power and riches, with its principle seat ultimately established in Rome.
40. After an unprecedented period of suffering by the **Church** as represented by Smyrna, there were those that began to embrace forms of pagan idolatry and ritual, seeking to incorporate it into the faith in order to politically advance the cause of the **Church**.
41. There were those that refused to remain separate from the negative world and political environment of the time and began a time that the **Church** officially became associated with the state.
42. It began a time that a deep division found its way into the **Church** producing the schism of Christianity from its religious counterfeits.
43. While +V seeks God on high, -V seeks a lesser god that has volitionally decreed and elevated himself to be God. Isa.14:13
44. This god, Satan, provides mankind with a plethora of religious counterfeits, under which systems his followers are deluded into thinking that through their ideals, philosophies, idols, etc., they can through their own energies attain to a spiritual height equal to God.
45. True spirituality looks to God for making provision physically while counterfeit spirituality looks to the physical to produce the spiritual realities of God.
46. This very philosophy in turn produces a world in which men look to themselves in a combined religious-political system as the answer to providing salvation for mankind.
47. It is this very philosophy that has migrated through time evolving into a system supporting a one-world government a.k.a., the New World Order.
48. While the NWO may predominately manifest itself in the political arena, it is based on a system of philosophical religiosity.
49. This will play right into the hands of Satan, via the antichrist, who will eventually appear to the world proposing he is the ultimate answer to their system and can truly

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make it work.

50. The bad sense of the name **Pergamum** emphasizes believers and the **Church** that compromise the truth of Christianity embracing a cosmic system of religiosity that feeds into the ecumenical tactics of the antichrist of a one world religion under a one world power. Cp.1Joh.2:18-19, 22
51. It harks to the failure of the **Church** Universal to maintain the integrity of the faith, failure to separate from the world, while seeking to integrate the satanic system of religiosity in correlation to world dominance into the Christian faith.
52. It must be understood that the message to this **church** is a message to believers and for believers and the condemnation is against those believers that adhere to the evils described.
53. **Pergamum** represents the predecessors of negative believers responsible for distorting the Christian faith into a religious system compatible with the world under satanic rule.
54. Knowing this about this **church** adds depth to understanding Christ's further comments about "*Satan's throne*" and "*where Satan dwells*" of vs.13.
55. That Satan has not succeeded in wiping out the **Church** through persecution he now gives his attention to seeking to destroy its integrity through those believers that are negative within.
56. The process of the **Church** in history further unravels:
  - A. Failure to apply BD beginning in Ephesus opened the doors to weaken the integrity of the truth.
  - B. Failure to "*be faithful until death*" as exhorted to Smyrna opened the doors to compromise with the cosmic system of power and rulership.
  - C. Combined, these failures resulted in a gross distortion of the truth producing a counterfeit religion of Christianity representing the **Church**, while being absorbed into Satan's plan for world domination.
57. The highlight of this distortion is seen in its ultimate production of an ecumenical religion absorbing all types of religious and belief systems compatible with Satan's plan for a one-world government.
58. The dominant religious organization today taking center stage that represents this brand of evil is the Roman Catholic Church.
59. It was during the **Pergamum** era that the RCC came into existence uniting the Christian faith with world politics.
60. Satan will gain control over the **Church** physically during this period able to manipulate it through evil negative world rulers.
61. He is able to take an organization that calls itself Christian and will in the future use it to turn against Christians.
62. Satan will smear the face of Christianity and the **Church** throughout the world through organized religion providing the world with further excuses to reject the truth of God's word, while at the same time promote the ideology of a one-world political religion conducive to the reign of antichrist.
63. In fact, it would be remiss not to see the inference to the "tower of Babel" from the name **Pergamum** that looks to Satan's previous attempt in history to promote this very ideology. Gen.11:1-9
64. The condemnation brought upon this **church** relates to negative believers that were instrumental in helping to establish the name of Christianity in such a grossly distorted way that it is hardly recognizable as being anything of the truth.
65. They in fact separate themselves from the truth of the faith to embrace religiosity.

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66. And it is the truth of BD that remains the issue in this regard as Christ then introduces himself to this **church** as “**The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this**”.
67. He harks back to the image of Rev.1:16 highlighting the attribute of His Person that proceeds from His mouth.
68. The **sword** (r`omfai,a – hromphaia) itself combines the size of the Roman broadsword and the **two-edged** short **sword** (ma,caira – machaira; cp. Heb.4:12), giving it the advantages of both without the disadvantage of its size.
69. The **sword** is not literal and as Heb.4:12 makes clear, it is designed to symbolize the Word of God in His mouth going forth in judgment.
70. It is the truth of BD as encapsulated in the Person of Christ that is the judgment incurred upon man in time. Cp. Rev.2:16
71. The judgment itself is a division of +V from –V. Cf. Joh.3:17-18 cp. 19-21
72. As the passage in John’s gospel makes clear, mankind is divided into two camps; unbelievers from believers (-V vs. +V), vs.19 and –V believers from +V believers, vss.21-21.
73. The object that separates man is “*the light*” that is the truth of BD fulfilled in Christ. Cp.Joh.1:1-5; 2Cor.4:4
74. It is the Word of God, the truth of BD, which ultimately separates all of mankind volitionally and even to the degree of their thinking and intentions.
75. The length of the **sword** emphasizes the depth of which Christ is able to judge men even to their very volitional aptitude towards the truth.
76. The fact that it is **two-edged** indicates that his judgment is designed to cause a separation volitionally based on one’s acceptance or rejection of the truth.
77. The truth of BD by its very nature is given to mankind to effectuate separation both spiritually and physically. Cp.Mat.10:34-39
78. In our context, Christ indicates that His intention to wield the **sword** is for the purpose of bringing judgment against negative reversionistic believers.
79. These –V believers have departed from the truth, embracing various forms of false doctrine that will eventuate in the sin unto death.
80. Christ’s title in this regard’s points to the fact that separation itself is the judgment in view for failure to adhere to the truth of BD.
81. Failure to separate from the world promotes separation from God in time and eternity.
82. What Christ “**says**” concerning this issue is not just a general comment, but a solemn pronouncement as the Greek structure is emphatic and could be translated “*Thus says Christ*”.



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### EXEGESIS VERSE 13:

GNT Revelation 2:13 Oi=da pou/ katoikei/j( o[pou o` qro,noj tou/ Satana/( kai. kratei/j to. o;noma, mou kai. ouvkhvrnh,sw th.n pi,stin mou kai. evn tai/j h`me,raij VAntipa/j o` ma,rtuj mou o` pisto,j mou( o]j avpekta,nqh parV u`mi/n( o[pou o` Satana/j katoikei/Å

NAS Revelation 2:13 **'I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is;** *Oi=da* (*viPFa--1s*; "I know") *pou/* (*interr. adv.*; "where/in what place") *katoikei/j*( *katoike,w* (*vipa--2s*; "you live/dwell/reside"; used 44x) *o[pou* (*interr. adv.*; "where/in which place") *o` qro,noj* (*d.a. + n-nm-s*; "the throne/seat of rule"; same as 1:4) *tou/ o` Satana/(* *Satana/j* (*d.a. + n-gm-s*; "of the Satan/the Adversary") **and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith,** *kai,* (*cc*) *kratei/j krate,w* (*vipa--2s*; "you keep on holding fast/seize/continue firmly in"; same as 2:1) *mou evgw,* (*npg-1s*; *ref. Christ*) *to, o;noma* (*d.a. + n-an-s*; "the name") *kai,* (*cc*) *ouvkh* *ouv* (*neg. +*) *hvrnh,sw avrne,omai* (*viad--2s*; "did not deny/disown/repudiate/consider untrue"; used 33x) *mou evgw,* (*npg-1s*; *ref. Christ*) *th.n h` pi,stin pi,stij* (*d.a. + n-af-s*; "the faith"; here in the passive sense i.e., BD) **even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one,** *kai,* (*ascensive conj*; "even") *evn* (*pL*) *tai/j h` h`me,raij h`me,ra* (*d.a. + n-Lf-p*; "the days") *`Antipa/j* (*n-nm-s*; "Antipas") *mou evgw,* (*npg-1s*) *o` ma,rtuj* (*d.a. + n-nm-s*; "witness"; same as 1:5; has the nuance of "unwavering witness/martyred witness") *mou( evgw,* (*npg-1s*) *o` pisto,j* (*d.a. ascript. attrib. adj--nm-s*; "the faithful one"; in comparison to an unfaithful witness) **who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.** *o]j* (*rel. pro./nm-s*; "who"; *ref. Antipas*) *avpekta,nqh avpokei,nw* (*viap--3s*; "was killed/put to death/terminated") *parV para,* (*pAbl*; "among") *u`mi/n( su,* (*npAbl-2p*; "you all") *o[pou* (*interr. adv.*; "in which place") *o` Satana/j* (*d.a. + n-nm-s*) *katoikei/Å katoike,w* (*vipa--3s*; "resides/dwells")

### ANALYSIS VERSE 13:

1. Christ begins His critiquing of this church, as with Ephesus, with a commendation as set forth in vs.13.
2. As with all the churches, He proclaims He stands upon His omniscience as that attribute that enables Him to accurately judge these churches declaring **"I know where you dwell"**.
3. Only through the ability to have all the facts at hand regarding a situation can absolute perfect judgment be guaranteed.
4. His knowledge is stated here regarding the very circumstances and situations in which this church exists.
5. The term **"dwell – katoike,w – katoikeo"** emphasizes a physical or literal residence.
6. Its emphasis is to connect the one residing with the habitation of their existence, here

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

regarding the physical city of Pergamum as their geographical niche.

7. While all believers obviously physically reside in the cosmos on planet earth, spiritually we are viewed as transient aliens. Heb.11:13; 1Pet.2:11
8. This notes that as believers, we are held captive by the cosmos placed into a system of life foreign to the spiritual realities of the kingdom of God.
9. In our Ph<sub>2</sub>, we are to conduct ourselves according to these spiritual truths and reality separating ourselves from the cosmic system of operation STA.
10. Christ in essence is stating that He is very aware of the physical conditions and all of the pressures in their life that surrounds them in their physical niche.
11. As has been brought out, it is a social and political environment governed by the flesh under negative volition engaged in the evils and monstrosities of religious idolatry.
12. It is a society that offers every incentive for the STA to gravitate towards and be fulfilled while at the same time stroking any religious/philosophical trends one may have.
13. This is the society in which God established this local church and it is to be noted that he does not instruct them to relocate geographically to an area less evil.
14. It points to the fact that the primary issue for any local church is not their geographical, social or political environment, but to maintain their witness of the life in whatever environment God has established them.
15. In the face of the external pressure these believers face with the antagonism and temptations it holds, Christ assures them that nothing is escaping His notice.
16. He further goes on to qualify the height of evil in which they live with the next phrase, "**where Satan's throne is**".
17. In Rev.2:9, we were introduced to the *synagogue of Satan* that referred to an organized but isolated group of people that were emissaries of **Satan** and were enemies of the local church and sound doctrine.
18. However, our verse goes beyond that and declares that Pergamum was the very place on planet earth **where Satan** chose to establish his headquarters in administration of his plan of darkness and lies.
19. The Bible makes clear that **Satan's** general itinerary is roaming about on earth seeking to orchestrate and implement his plan as its ruler. Job 1:7;2:2; 1Pet.5:8 cp. Joh.12:31; 14:30; 16:11
20. Therefore, **Satan's throne** is mobile determining its location at **Satan's** will. Cp.Isa.14:13
21. The physical logistics in how **Satan** rules is via the medium of mankind that are negative to the truth influencing them through the STA in correlation to the human viewpoint darkness of lies, of which he is the author. Eph.2:2-3; Joh.8:44
22. The very use of the word **throne** in this book is designed to make clear that there are two rival kingdoms that are competing in the angelic conflict. Rev.1:4 cp.2:13 cf. Eph.6:12
23. It is clear that God possesses a heavenly **throne** and that **Satan's** place of power is confined to planet earth and the immediate area around it.
24. After **Satan** was expelled from Heaven, he set up his headquarters on the earth, constantly moving his **throne** to the center of political and military power.
25. As one world power conquered another, **Satan's throne** was moved to the place of the new world power and his pagan religions was merged with the political power of the state.

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

26. Therefore, if the new dominant power in the world had subjects that wanted to be prospered in **Satan's** kingdom, they must engage in the worship of the current state religion.
27. In Pergamum, we have the ultimate mixture of pagan cult worship combined with political cult worship that prefigures the worship of Antichrist.
28. Its dominance in this regard now established the base for **Satan's** rule ideologically both in a religious and political environment.
29. While these religions boasted of several facets of idolatry, **Satan** strategically incorporated an underwriter counterfeit religion designed to produce a unification of their many themes into one primary philosophy.
30. This underwriter was the product of and the result of the ancient Babylonian mother-son cult (tower of Babel) that was forced to relocate to Pergamum after the Persian invasion.
31. This occult was formulated soon after the death of Nimrod (the grandson of Ham via Cush and the master-mind behind the tower of Babel) sponsored by his wife Semiramis and included his son Tammuz. Gen.10:6,8-10 cp.11:1-4
32. In order not to lose the power she had enjoyed with Nimrod, Semiramis propagated the lie that Tammuz was really Nimrod reincarnated as a reward for crushing the head of the serpent (Gen.3:15).
33. She was exalted to the status of deity and was worshipped as the "Virgin Mother" ultimately titled the "Queen of heaven" producing the "begotten son".
34. This mother-son cult spread into all of the ancient cultures adopting various names for its personages.
35. Its occultic practice even became present in Israel due to their failure to separate from pagan nations and is given separate mention underscoring their other pagan practices. Jer.7:18; 44:17-19, 25
36. Through this occult, the ideology of a religious-political system was promoted.
37. Attulus III, a vile priest-king of the Chaldean hierarchy adhering to this Babylonian cult, moved his capital from Babylon to Pergamum when he fled the conquering Persians.
38. Under this system he was both honored as king and worshipped as a god, and later bequeathed his kingdom to the Romans.
39. The title of the Magian high priest was "Chief Bridge Builder" that means one who spans the gap between mortals and the gods.
40. In Latin, this title was "Pontifex Maximus", which was later conferred on Julius Caesar, taken up by Constantine in 325 BC and is the current title of the Pope. Cp.1Tim.2:5
41. Thus, the Roman emperor became the object of both political and religious worship and all people were required to declare that Caesar was lord and to formally offer incense at the foot of his statue.
42. Refusal for one to participate in the cult was viewed as treason and punishable by death.
43. Pergamum is the home base from which **Satan** is seen to re-institute his diabolical plan of a one world religious-political order conducive to the overall scheme of introducing the Antichrist.
44. From this point in history, further groundbreaking has occurred to facilitate the necessary steps to introduce and insert into history the necessary mechanisms to bring to fruition the appearance of the Antichrist into modern day history.

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

45. The sad state of affairs is that this very scheme was further supported and sponsored through negative believers.
46. The pressure for Christians living in Pergamum was no doubt a great temptation to compromise in order get the heat of the A/C off their backs.
47. Although subject to all the threats involved, Christ makes it clear that this church corporately remained loyal and gives accolade noting, “**and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith**”.
48. The **name** stands for the person in reputation; when one is loyal to the **name** they are **faithful** to the person that the **name** represents.
49. The present indicative of the verb “**hold fast** /krate,w – krateo” indicates that they were continuing to believe, articulate and apply the doctrines that they had been taught. 2The.2:15
50. Their fidelity to BD is confirmed in the clause that follows since they **did not deny My faith** that relates to the objective body of teaching that had been delivered through Christ and His Apostles.
51. These two clauses relate to the principle that Christ taught with respect to those that “**deny Me before men**” and those that “**confess Me before men**”. Mat.10:32-33
52. The believer that fails to separate from the evil and apostasy around them and those that adhere to it, compromises with the cosmos and downplays the importance of Christ and His unique Person and work is effectively denying him in time.
53. Their faithfulness is then highlighted against the backdrop of one martyred from them, “**even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you**”.
54. His name literally means “against all” and comes to symbolize his stand against the promotion of the pagan-imperial cults that dominated the culture of Pergamum.
55. Others note that his name is the contraction of Antipater, and is the same with Antipapas, or Antipappas, which signifies one that is against the pope.
56. Though not certain, tradition holds that he was placed as the pastor-teacher of this church by the apostle John and under the reign of Domitian was roasted alive for failure to comply with the cult of the emperor.
57. No matter his identity, his sacrifice did not get past the eyes of Christ as **Antipas** has now been recorded in the legacy of spiritual hall-of-famer’s for all eternity.
58. He won’t be hard to find in Ph<sub>3</sub> as he will be one of the few wearing the “wreath of life”.
59. The believers in Pergamum were well aware that the verbal persecution was taking a new form and impetus and had now escalated to the point of physical violence.
60. No doubt, the death of **Antipas** was designed to put fear in the hearts of those that witnessed it and destroy this local church.
61. However, these believers continued to hang in there with the truth and faith rested their circumstances, in spite of the immediate danger in which they found themselves.
62. Vs.13 ends with a seeming redundancy noting “**where Satan dwells**”.
63. However, this is emphatic to demonstrate that the death of **Antipas** that came about due to his refusal to engage in emperor worship was directly attributed to the unseen spiritual force that motivated his murder. Joh.8:44
64. It emphasizes that **Satan** literally resides on this planet calling it home and is the primary agent from which the darkness of evil reigns.
65. Once again, this foreshadows the political-religious force of Antichrist, who will engage in this type of murder on a widespread basis. Rev.13:15

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### EXEGESIS VERSES 14 – 15:

GNT Revelation 2:14 avllV e;cw kata. sou/ ovli,ga o[ti e;cej evkei/ kratou/ntaj th.n didach.n Balaa,m( o[j evdi,dasken tw/| Bala.k balei/n ska,ndalon evnw,pion tw/n ui`w/n VIsrah,l fagei/n eivdwlo,quta kai. porneu/sai

NAS Revelation 2:14 **'But I have a few things against you,** avllV avlla, (*strong advers.; "In stark contrast too/But"*) e;cw (vipa--1s; *"I keep on having"*) ovli,ga ovli,goj (*ap-an-p; "a few things"*) kata, (pg; *"against/down upon"*) sou/ su, (npg-2s; *the singular indicts the church corporately*) **because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam,** o[ti (*causal conj.; "because"*) e;cej e;cw (vipa--2s; *"you keep on having/possessing"*; contextually it has the nuance of *"embracing/retaining a hold upon"*) evkei/ (*adv.; "in that place/there"*; *ref. their assembly; links the embracing to a physical or personal form of contact/fellowship*) kratou/ntaj krate,w (*supplementary ptc./p/a/am-p; "those who hold to"*) th.n h` didach.n didach, (d.a. + n-af-s; *"the teaching/ instruction/doctrine"*) Balaa,m( (n-gm-s; *"of Balaam"*) **who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel,** o[j (*rel. pro./nm-s; "who"*; *ref. Balaam*) evdi,dasken dida,skw (viIPFa--3s; *"kept teaching"*) tw/| o` Bala,k (d.a. + n-dm-s; *"Balak"*) balei/n ba,llw (*inf. purp./aa-; "to cast/throw", hence; "to put"*) ska,ndalon (n-an-s; *lit. the bait stick or trigger in a trap and then the trap or snare itself; metaphorically used to denote an action that causes one to fall into sin, hence; "a stumbling block"*) evnw,pion (pg; *"before/in the presence of"*) tw/n o` ui`w/n ui`o,j (d.a. + n-gm-p; *"the sons"*) VIsrah,l (n-gm-s; *"Israel"*) **to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit acts of immorality.** fagei/n evsqi,w (*inf. purp./aa-; "to eat"*) eivdwlo,quta eivdwlo,qutoj (*ap-an-p; lit. the remains of flesh left over from an animal sacrifice to a pagan god; "things sacrificed to idols"*; used 9x) kai, (cc) porneu/sai porneu,w (*inf. purp./aa-; lit. "to sell sex/harlot for hire/prostitute", hence; "to commit prostitution/unrestricted sexual intercourse/commit sexual immorality"*; used 8x)

GNT Revelation 2:15 ou[twj e;cej kai. su. kratou/ntaj th.n didach.n tw/n Nikolai?tw/n o`moi,wj

NAS Revelation 2:15 **'Thus you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.** ou[twj ou[tw (*adv.; "Thus/In this manner"*) su, (npr-2s) kai, (*adjunct.*) e;cej e;cw (vipa--2s) kratou/ntaj krate,w (*supplem. ptc./p/a/am-p; "those holding to"*) o`moi,wj (*adv.; "in the same way/similarly"*) th.n h` didach.n didach, (d.a.

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+ *n-af-s*; "the teaching") o` Nikolai?tw/n Nikolai<thj (d.a. + *n-gm-p*; "the Nicolaitan"; same as 2:6)

### ANALYSIS VERSES 14 – 15:

1. Again, as with the message to Ephesus, Christ has a legitimate criticism of condemnation of which this local church is guilty.
2. In stark contrast to Pergamum's faithfulness to application of sound doctrine in the midst of consistent testing and persecution, He declares He still must **hold** them in contempt stating, "**But I have a few things against you**".
3. The singular of the pronoun "**you**" indicts this church corporately in its failure.
4. The adjective "**a few things**/ovli,goj – oligos" literally denotes a small amount (few) or degree of that which it qualifies.
5. Its emphasis is that His criticism does not contain a vast amount of misapplications by this church and not that their failure is seen as relatively inconsequential.
6. Their failure actually centers on one primary misapplication revolving around two notable issues of teaching that **some** in this church adhere.
7. The failure of the church corporately is maintaining a Biblical position with respect to the doctrine of separation concerning these teachings further described.
8. Christ makes crystal clear that He holds this church accountable for allowing negative believers in this church to persist in adhering to and/or promoting false doctrine.
9. The accountability is not that they are responsible for what others do, **but** a failure on their own part for not properly dealing with them and continuing to embrace them in their circle of fellowship.
10. The condemning message to this church states unequivocally the importance that Christ places on the doctrine of separation.
11. Even though this church has been making excellent applications otherwise, their failure in this regard is sufficient for Christ to assume a posture of opposition towards them.
12. It centers on the same test that faces every local church and hence every believer to compromise with the enemies of the truth in order to fit into and be accepted by the negative cosmos.
13. The principle that "*a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough*" becomes highlighted as a doctrine critical for any adjusted local church. Gal.5:9
14. Failure to remain aloof from those that adhere to a system of religiosity, which has its roots in the evils of pagan idolatry, will produce the inevitable result of further compromise and greater contamination from evil.
15. In spite of the corporate adjustment of overall application as seen in the Church during the Smyrna era, its failure in this one area of doctrine will lead the Church into an era of the most infamous of all eras, the dark ages (the medieval era of the RCC).
16. While Ephesus was guilty of lack of application overall, Pergamum is guilty of lack of application regarding one specific doctrine.
17. This iterates that lack of application of any doctrine is spiritually detrimental.
18. This further points to the fact that lack of application is tantamount to compromise of the doctrine itself and destroys the virtue of a sanctified truth. Cp.Joh.17:17
19. Truth separates believers from the negative world and failure to apply it is tantamount to hostility towards God. Jam.4:4
20. As we shall see in vs.15, the actions of the **Nicolaitans** that had been exposed and

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

rejected in Ephesus (ironically who applied separation), have now found a settled home in Pergamum.

21. However, Christ focuses first on the primary cause for separation centering on the fact, “**because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam**”.
22. The nuance of “holding to **the teaching**” is that there are those they embrace that have taken up a theological position doctrinally commensurate with the man **Balaam**.
23. They in turn have brought this doctrine into the church and obviously are espousing it to others.
24. Balaam’s doctrinal position is made clear by Christ in the remainder of vs.14, “**who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit immorality**”.
25. **Balaam** himself is the same **Balaam** that lived in OT times as recorded for us primarily in the book of Numbers, but is also mentioned elsewhere both OT and NT.
26. His name means “lord of the people” and he was a Gentile believer that was entrusted by God with a prophetic ministry. (*Note the irony of his name with respect to his sin.*)
27. While some have suggested that he was an unbeliever based on Num.24:1, he was a superstitious believer with a number of problems, but a believer nonetheless.
28. His ministry was directed towards the Gentiles and obviously he lived among them.
29. It is clear that they held him in high regard, likely because they had seen his track record with respect to prophetic matters. Num.22:6c
30. The historic incident to which our passage refers is found in Num.22-24 and deals with the attempt by **Balak**, king of the Moabites, to curse the children of Israel during the Exodus.
31. When **the sons of Israel** encamped in the plains of Moab, the Moabites entered into some sort of an alliance with the Midianites. Num.22:3-4
32. **Balak** instigated the political leaders of the nations to send a delegation to **Balaam** to induce him, by means of a monetary bribe, to pronounce a curse on the advancing Israelites. Num.22:5-6 cp.vss.7, 17-18
33. Rather than immediately sending these men on their way, separating from them, **Balaam** entertained their idea and invited them for a sleep over. Num.22:7-8
34. God already knew Balaam’s intentions in this regard, confronted him first in the matter and then gave him the directive to not go with them and not to curse the Israelites. Num.22:9-12
35. He initially obeyed God and told them to return to their own land giving them the Divine viewpoint. Num.22:13
36. **Balak** was not deterred by this and sent another delegation considerably larger and with better dignitaries. Num.22:14-15
37. Once again, **Balaam** refused, citing the will of God with respect to doing anything that was contrary to His will. Num.22:16-18
38. However, again he invited them to spend the night implying that that he was quite motivated with the money and secretly wanted to go to **Balak**. Num.22:19 cp.2Pet.2:15; Jud.1:11
39. God again confronts **Balaam** and this time he gives him permission to go with the men, but only with the intention of teaching them BD (evangelizing). Num.22:20-21
40. That **Balaam** has ulterior motives is then made clear as seen in God’s anger (Num.22:22a) and operation “Jackass”. Num.22:22b-35 esp. vs.32
41. **Balak** then proceeds to make three attempts to have **Balaam** curse **Israel**, none of which worked since he spoke the Divine viewpoint. Num.22:8-24:9
42. While it is not specifically recorded at this point, **Balaam** then advised **Balak** that

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- rather than attempting to curse the Jews, he could get them to compromise and come under God's displeasure. Num.25:1-3 cp.31:16
43. The plan was to get the people to compromise by violating the doctrine of separation that they had been repeatedly taught. Exo.23:24; 34:12-16
  44. His strategy was to use sex as an enticement to draw the men of **Israel** into relations with the women of Moab (encourage a social life), who would then influence them with their human viewpoint idolatrous evil wielding their sexual power.
  45. One of the easiest methods to get people to compromise the truth is to entice them with respect to the opposite sex, the natural desire to have a relationship.
  46. When people are willing to pursue inappropriate relationships with –V, they will be more willing to compromise doctrine in other areas.
  47. This is the introduction of leaven, the principle of evil by compromise that if left unchecked will spread throughout the local church.
  48. It is no wonder that adjusted pastors are constantly hammering on the dangers of dating or marrying –V, since it places the believer in a position conducive to allowing the influence of their human viewpoint evil to take **hold**.
  49. The **teaching of Balaam** was his instruction to **Balak** when he **kept teaching** (the imperfect of dida,skw –didasko confirming ongoing past action) **Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel**.
  50. This construction indicates that it was not simply a momentary lapse of judgment (incidental sinning), but a calculated and continued process in which **Balaam** engaged for the sole purpose of making money.
  51. His motivation for such reprehensible activity is clearly revealed in 2Pet.2:15 noting he was a monetary reversionist that conducted his ministry for his own financial benefit.
  52. The literal meaning of “**stumbling block**/ska,ndalon – skandalon” looks to the trigger mechanism of a trap in connection with the trap itself designed to ensnare its victim.
  53. Figuratively, it refers to a thing or person that causes one to fall into error, sin and possibly destruction.
  54. The two aspects of the trap used (the trigger and the trap itself) begins first with eating **things sacrificed to idols**.
  55. It is here that most commentators hammer home the evils of pagan idolatry and sexual sins.
  56. While this is the doctrine of the blatantly obvious, it only superficially addresses the real issue behind these **acts**.
  57. Paul makes it clear in his dissertation of freedoms in Christ that for a believer living in the Church Age, it is not a sin in and of itself to literally **eat meat sacrificed to idols**. 1Cor.8:8; 10:23-31
  58. Therefore, the emphasis contextually as addressed to the Church is not regarding literal food, but is designed to teach a higher spiritual principle.
  59. That principle is found in that fact that even the icon idol is a non-entity and the true evil is found in the demon activity behind the idol. 1Cor.10:19-20
  60. This in turn points to the human viewpoint evil or belief system that is spread through demon activity.
  61. And this in turn produces the standards of the religion they follow and practice.
  62. It looks to the intellectual and soulish ingestion or embracing of human viewpoint evil in the world set forth to compliment the STA.



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63. Human viewpoint (anti-doctrine) is Satan's counterfeit net to draw in the world as the truth of BD is God's net to draw in +V. Cp.Joh.6:44 (*It is through the agency of truth that God "draws" men.*)
64. The trigger mechanism for the trap is the human viewpoint evil of the doctrine of demons.
65. Once the individual embraces this evil, they then become ensnared into the trap itself.
66. The trap itself is then described under the very graphic but real terms, **"to commit immorality"**.
67. The term **"immorality/porneu,w – pornueo"** literally means "to prostitute/sell sex for value".
68. Again, while all sex outside the institution of marriage is a sin, it is the spiritual reality behind the sexual activity that is being taught.
69. The Greek makes clear that it is the **'sons of Israel'** that are actually engaged in prostituting themselves (visualized as male prostitutes). Cp.Num.25:1
70. As the Bible makes clear, when sexual intercourse or copulation is engaged, the two partners become one flesh. Cp.1Cor.6:16
71. This denotes that a union has been established.
72. In the case of the subjects in view, it is an illegitimate union not sponsored by God.
73. This pictures the trap itself; a union between two parties not sanctioned by God. 2Cor.6:14-18
74. The parties in view are those that solicit the STA under demonic human viewpoint evil and believers that succumb under their STA adopting their human viewpoint standards.
75. In the analogy, the STA is the bait, human viewpoint is the trigger and those unwitting believers that embrace them fall into their trap of evil i.e., become one in their thinking with them.
76. Ironically, it is the –V believer that through their own choice that fails to separate that literally becomes their own trap.
77. It is this believer that is willing to sell, for value of the gratification in having a union/close relationship with those that are negative, the truth of BD that provides the true union and fellowship with God.
78. They spiritually prostitute themselves.
79. They find themselves trapped as enemies of God. Jam.4:4
80. When believers embrace –V compromising BD, they engage in Satan's scheme of spiritual porn by embracing human viewpoint lies under their STA's. Joh.8:44; Eph.4:14
81. The doctrine of **Balaam** summarized:
  - A. **Balaam** himself symbolizes a negative believer pastor/communicator that succumbs to his STA and establishes another agenda with respect to his ministry.
  - B. In his case it was monetary lust that drove him, though other agendas are just as apropos such as power, approbation or sex.
  - C. His method of operation includes:
    - 1) Failure to adequately isolate the STA.
    - 2) Failing to maintain separation with negative types in his ministry.
    - 3) Ultimately succumbing to what these negative relationships have to offer.
    - 4) Manipulating or distorting the truth of BD in order to fulfill his agenda.
    - 5) It is possible that he can maintain an overt appearance of fulfilling his duties of office in the course of his scheming.

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

- 6) When doctrine no longer serves its purpose for his agenda, his scheme will ultimately be exposed.
  - D. He will use his negative associations in the role of pursuing his agenda.
  - E. His associations will further create a compromise of BD in his own life.
  - F. This compromise will consist of promoting an agenda of false doctrine capable of satisfying his own STA while seeking to maintain interaction between those that are negative and those positive in the course of his ministry.
  - G. In so doing, he creates a “**stumbling block**” doctrine with those that are negative towards those that are positive.
  - H. The doctrine itself is the promotion of associating/establishing a relationship with those that adhere to human viewpoint evil in order to facilitate a compromise of doctrine by those positive establishing an unholy union.
82. As Balaam’s doctrine makes clear, failure to separate from –V only promotes an ecumenical approach with respect to the variety of religious belief systems that exist in this world.
83. The world itself will use every advantage it has to appeal to the STA in order to entice the believer to establish a close relationship with it.
84. The phallic cult was very popular throughout the Roman Empire including Pergamum, promoting licentious (complete devotion to immoral activity) rituals with temple prostitutes.
85. In a civilization where temples to false gods stood on every corner and sexual indulgence was not only condoned but promoted, it would be a strong draw for anyone with that trend to come and embrace their form of worship.
86. Balaam’s doctrine further emphasizes the extreme liberal approach to idolatry.
87. It promotes the rejection of doctrine in order to facilitate the STA, denying all of the commandments not to separate, worship other gods and abstain from sexual **immorality**.
88. We would say that this represents the extreme left as applied to Christianity.
89. Therefore, the first issue at hand in evaluating those that we are to separate from are any that openly reject the light of truth in word or deed. Cp.Joh.3:19-21
90. Those that sought to infuse this liberal approach into the church have been labeled by some theologians as those from the Libertine (liberal) Gnostics.
91. In vs.15, Jesus then addresses the second sect involved that this church failed to separate from, “**Thus you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans**”.
92. This is the same sect whose doctrine had been rejected by the church at Ephesus. Rev.2:6
93. This sect too has been tied together with Gnosticism.
94. Gnosticism may be generally described as the product of the blending of certain Christian truths with human speculation and mystic imaginings derived from any number of sources (Greek, Jewish, Eastern Mysticism, etc.).
95. They advocated a superior knowledge to the plan of God possessed by the leader and passed on to the initiates if they complied with his system.
96. This is obviously a satanic attempt to pervert the true system of learning doctrine under the ministry of a local church, a sound P-T and the GAP system.
97. While Gnosticism itself is extremely sophisticated in its theological/philosophical make up, there are certain Biblical facts that contribute insight into this cult.
98. It is clear that there were those of the Gnostics that advocated the liberal and lascivious extreme, such as graphically depicted in vs.14.

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99. These held that the body (and all matter) was evil and as such, had nothing to do with the spiritual and therefore, fornication and adultery were both acceptable expressions of the Christian experience.
100. If all matter is evil, then true spirituality must transcend matter/the physical and hence, one's actions are moot.
101. In fact, some of these sects encouraged lasciviousness and blasphemously promoted lewdness to be as obligatory as a law, necessary to salvation, not only compatible to Christianity, but also an essential part of it.
102. However there is another side to Gnosticism as described in John's 1<sup>st</sup> epistle.
103. As we covered in our notes, one purpose for John's writing of the letter was to defend the faith against Gnosticism.
104. A pertinent doctrine behind Gnosticism is a claim of sinless perfection by the individual. 1Joh.1:6-10
105. While on the one hand, one that denies that sin is even an issue (the liberals) can claim that perfection, they do not have a corner on this distorted market.
106. One can also engage in systems of legalism proclaiming this same perfection, such as asceticism.
107. The common denominator between both parties is that both reject the truth in their own fashion and both put emphasis on morality (good or bad) over the adherence to and purity of the truth of BD.
108. It is the **Nicolaitans** that represent the sect of Gnosticism that sponsors the legalistic (right) approach to doctrine.
109. The two adverbs, "**Thus**/ou[tw – houto" and "**in the same way**/o`moi,wj – homoios" give a double emphasis on this sect of operating in a like manner or similar way.
110. Most commentaries here automatically relate these two adverbs solely as referring to the same physical idolatrous and lascivious actions attributed to the doctrine of **Balaam**.
111. While the **Nicolaitans** were known for an "over indulgence" approach to life, the true emphasis again goes deeper.
112. What Christ is stating is that exactly **in the same way** there were those that held to the doctrine of **Balaam** by following their STA's, embracing –V with their human viewpoint evils and engaging in this unholy union religiously i.e., the **Nicolaitans**.
113. However, they maintained their own distinct brand of infusing error with the truth and hence, why they are mentioned separately.
114. The key to their modus operandi is found in their very name derived from the compound Greek word "ni,kh – nike/victory" and 'lao,j – laos/people" that stresses the domination of the people. (***Balaam** – "lord of the people".*)
115. It is the **Nicolaitans** that are predominately known to advocate a fallacious system of hierarchy within the church.
116. Under this system, men are elevated to be held as supreme by all laity.
117. Under the Gnostic system, these men would be considered sinless and looked to as being equal with God.
118. As our notes brought out in the message to Ephesus (2:6), it was this sect that was the forerunners to establishing Roman Catholicism.
119. They advocated that only those elevated to these sinless positions could legitimately communicate God's plan to the people.
120. In so doing, a system was formulated under which the laity must look to only the leaders for a relationship with God.

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

121. Their brand of idolatry and spiritual **immorality** included:
  - A. A false pompous hierarchy.
  - B. Assimilation of paganism into their ranks, but themselves above the immorality sponsored by paganism.
  - C. They prescribed a system of asceticism and/or other legalistic forms of works/rituals as the key to a relationship with God.
  - D. Dissemination of their truth is esoteric and can only truly be understood by the church leaders.
  - E. It promotes a system of worship of man.
122. It is this sect of Gnostics that are responsible for the insertion of legalism into the Christian religion, while maintaining the liberal posture held by the Libertines.
123. Together, these two groups within this church at Pergamum represent both sides of the coin of the human viewpoint approach to God, a system of liberalism and a system of legalism.
124. Both systems provide the STA with every opportunity to express itself in a religious format.
125. It is the very formula behind the principle of ecumenicalism.
126. Putting them together further gives us the full picture of the ultimate result for failure to separate from either approach.
127. And that is that these two religious approaches are compatible human viewpoint sisters dependent upon each other for survival.
128. We cannot liberalize (reject) doctrine apart from filling the gap with legalism nor can we insert legalism without rejecting doctrine.
129. There is no true liberal religion or true legalistic religion as both views are dependent upon one another. (*Note mainline Judaism: Pharisees & Sadducees*)
130. Just as Roman Catholicism embraces liberal human viewpoint conjoining with a legalistic approach, so do all local churches not maintaining the perfect balance of doctrine.
131. It all has its roots in pagan idolatry under the doctrine of demons and always results in spiritual **immorality**.
132. The Bible makes it very clear that we are not to stray to the right nor left of the truth of BD. Due.5:32; 17:11; 28:14
133. These two sects have infiltrated the church at Pergamum and they have all the ingredients necessary for the principle of ecumenicalism religiously-politically to produce its ugly head.
134. And it is this very philosophy upon which the antichrist will stand.
135. Christ's condemnation centers on this churches (and believers) failure to correctly separate from –V.
136. Their failure to do so keeps the door open for compromising the truth of BD in their own ranks and providing support for the very system of religious idolatry that headlines the NWO under the antichrist.

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### EXEGESIS VERSE 16:

GNT Revelation 2:16 metano,hson ou=n\ eiv de. mh,( e;rcomai, soi tacu, kai. polemh,sw metV auvtw/n evn th/ r`omfai,a| tou/ sto,mato,j mou

NAS Revelation 2:16 **'Repent therefore; or else I am coming to you quickly,** *metano,hson metanoe,w (vImp/aa--2s; "Repent/Change your mind"; same as 2:5) ou=n\ (infer. conj; "therefore"; looks to the preceding as the context of what to repent) eiv (part. +) de, (cs +) mh,( (neg.; "or else/yet if not") e;rcomai, e;rcomai (vipd--1s; "I am coming"; ref. Christ as the subject) soi su, (npd-2s; "to you") tacu, tacu,j (adv.; "quickly/soon")* **and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.** *kai, (cc) polemh,sw poleme,w (vifa--1s; "will make war/make battle/engage in hostile conflict/aggressively attack"; the conflict can be verbal [Jam.4:2], angelic [Rev.12:17] or literal [Rev.13:4]; used 7x) metV meta, (pg) auvtw/n auvtu,j (npgm3p; looks to those engaged in spiritual immorality) evn (pI; "with/by") th/| h` r`omfai,a| r`omfai,a (d.a. + n-Ij-s; "the sword") mou evgw, (npg-1s) tou/ to, sto,mato,j sto,ma (d.a. + n-In-s; "the mouth"; in apposition to the sword)*

### ANALYSIS VERSE 16:

1. Again, just as with Ephesus, Pergamum is given a terse command to remedy their failure of application as Christ orders them to **"Repent therefore"**.
2. To **repent** of something is to change one's mind with respect to a previous point of view or course of action.
3. The inferential conjunction **"therefore"**, looks to the preceding context of false teaching that those in this church are embracing.
4. The second person singular of the verb **"repent"** places the burden of responsibility for the proper adjustment upon the church corporately.
5. In contrast to the fundy human viewpoint mentality of today holding themselves exempt from any condemnation deserving upon others embracing false teaching, Christ makes it clear that condemnation resides within the church itself.
6. While the order to **repent** obviously applies to those holding to false teaching, it does not exempt those that otherwise are adjusted from a change of mind towards those that will not **repent**.
7. This is further emphasized in the remaining two clauses of our verse:
  - A. The continued use of the second person singular pronoun in the next clause, **"or else I am coming to you (singular) quickly"**.
  - B. The dramatic shift to the plural of the third person pronoun in the final clause, **"and I will make war against them(plural) with the sword of My mouth"**.
8. Christ makes it clear that if repentance is not executed, He will make a visit to this church and will on a Personal level engage in combat with the proponents of false teaching.
9. The full ramification of these two promises indicates that if the proponents of false

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

- teaching continue to exist in this household of faith, Christ is **coming** to this “home” and it will be party to an aggressive conflict that ensues within.
10. This points to a primary principle that failure to separate from –V creates conflict in the Christian life. Jam.4:4; 1Cor.15:33; Gal.5:9
  11. The command to **repent** umbrellas those embracing false teaching and those that embrace those that embrace false teaching.
  12. It is a command to those otherwise adjusted that it is time to change their minds with respect to tolerating false teaching AND their proponents.
  13. The insidious nature of false teaching is that it reflects rebellion towards God and His word and if left unchecked as part of our close associations in life can eventually take over and destroy a local church and by application any believer.
  14. As the local church of Thyatira that follows reveals, association is not limited to just groups or masses of heretical teachers, but can be propagated by a single person within tolerated as one of their own. Rev.2:20
  15. And for those believers that love to rationalize the doctrine of separation, as this message to Pergamum has made clear, separation is not limited to just “pastors”, but is inclusive of all that “hold to their teaching”.
  16. While the example of Balaam and other Scripture makes clear, separation is not designed to kill the witness of the life, which is an association for the purpose of testifying to the truth of BD. Num.22:20 cp. 1Cor.10:27
  17. However, while we seek to be patient with men and soliciting them with the truth, there comes a time when tolerance is not to be our approach and must take a hard line against falsehood making our position unquestionably clear. Tit.1:10-16 cp. Mat.23
  18. Beyond the point that it is clear that rejection of the truth is the mindset, grace turns to judgment and the condemnation of separation via the conflict is to be our battle cry. Mat.10:34-39
  19. And that that judgment is not to wait our whole lives to happen is made clear by Christ threatening this church that He is **coming quickly** to resolve this matter.
  20. For the history of this local church, it denotes judgment within the assembly itself as a matter of their near future.
  21. For the Church Universal, it looks to a judgment upon the Church as a matter of course for the Church Age that will manifest as a great conflict within the Church as revealed in the next era of Thyatira.
  22. The judgment itself links the fact of Christ’s **coming** with Him aggressively attacking those embracing false doctrine **with the sword of my mouth**.
  23. In the Greek structure, the nouns ‘**sword**’ and ‘**mouth**’ are in apposition (equal) to one another emphasizing that it is the truth of BD that issues from His **mouth** that is the instrument of judgment used in this warfare.
  24. The judgment **therefore** is to openly declare **war** (an open conflict of hostility between two or more parties) upon the enemies in view using the truth as the primary weapon of choice for engagement.
  25. While BD is seen as a defense for believers, it also serves as a weapon to aggressively confront our opponents in any counter attack necessary for our defense.
  26. It provides all that is necessary to survive in the angelic conflict. Eph.6:12-17
  27. The aggressive nature of BD is that it creates conflict between those that adhere to it and apply it with those that reject it embracing some other form of religiosity.
  28. While BD solicits peace to all men that will embrace it, it in turn actively alienates those that will not.

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29. That the description of **the sword** mentioned does not include the *two-edged* quality as noted in the initial vision (1:16) and introduction to Pergamum (2:12) is to emphasize the piercing or thrusting affect of God's word (the large roman **sword**).
30. While the WOG divides, it also pierces to the invisible depths of the soul and correctly judges every aspect and inclination of one's being. Heb.4:12
31. While Christ states He Personally is the one **coming quickly** and making **war with** His word, the reality is that His actual **coming** is in the distant future of some 1600+ years.
32. The nuance of His statements harks to those that represent Him and His word as the soldiers sent under His command to execute His word.
33. A military motif of this nature describing adjusted communicators and believers is found elsewhere in the NT. Cp.1Cor.9:7; Phi.2:25; 2Tim.2:3-4; Phm.1:2
34. What Christ is saying is that it is the power of His word as wielded by adjusted positive believers obedient to His commands that will be engaged in the conflict at hand.
35. The judgment is thus:
  - A. Failure for those ascribing to false teaching and churches that will not separate from them (purge the associations) will result in temporal judgment.
  - B. That judgment will be an act of separation in conflict with these.
  - C. The presence of conflict will occur within the church/Church itself as the battleground.
  - D. The standard of judgment will be the truth of BD in this regard.
  - E. That truth will be wielded by those that accurately represent it in application.
  - F. It will be aggressively directed towards those maladjusted to the truth.
  - G. The force of thrust and impact of the truth will create a division to the most inner circles/being of the church/Church.
  - H. This in effect will divide true adjusted local churches from churches embracing human viewpoint religiosity.
  - I. It is the doctrine of separation that aggressively or offensively protects adjusted churches from the dangers of religious distortions.
  - J. As long as doctrinally maladjusted churches are in existence, this conflict with adjusted local churches will remain in full force and effect.
36. Unless the church at Pergamum repents of tolerating via association those advocating false teaching, there will arise within the church those that have had enough and will openly declare spiritual **war** against these traitors.
37. The judgment that will ensue will come in the form of a division in the church itself.
38. If this local church fails to separate, they will with certainty undergo a conflict within facing the barrage of BD in a sanctified retaliation for allowing these associations to continue.
39. This doctrinal warfare will not only serve to purge –V from the church, but will in effect cause those on the sidelines to make their own choices regarding their associations with those negative.
40. This rift will accurately judge this church causing it to remain pure in the faith or show its true colors of ecumenicalism.
41. For those that do not change their mind towards this approach to Christianity, their destiny ultimately will result in the SUD.
42. Those that advocate doctrine different from sound apostolic faith initially create the conflict and it is our responsibility to separate from them. Rom.16:17

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

43. STA human viewpoint teaching has no place in the POG for any local church and is open game for the truth to take issue with it by means of those that are adjusted.  
Cp.Act.15:1-12
44. When dissension occurs, an automatic division will be forced to take place and continued separation of -V and +V will be effected.
45. Christ has personally declared **war** on those in the church/Church that seek to entice others with STA propositions designed to integrate human viewpoint religiosity into the circle of +V and the CWL.
46. Those that hold to doctrine of demons in pursuit of the flesh, seeking to institute it into the Christian faith operating under a man made system of hierarchy, are enemies of the cross and operate in open conflict with Christ and the truth of His word.
47. These enemies are tagged as idolaters lead by the STA marrying the Christian faith to a combined system of liberalism and legalism.
48. Failure for the Church Universal in this regard will lead them into an era in which a system of worship will be invented incorporating both the liberal and legalistic philosophies of Gnosticism.
49. The organization primarily reflecting this reality is Roman Catholicism that will dominate the Christian landscape for approximately the next millennia.
50. This era will be followed by an era of reformation in which spiritual **war** is declared upon the RCC and they will be categorized (separated out as) as a false religion not part of the true Christian faith.
51. This **war** results in separation/division among the ranks.
52. *Review the Doctrine of Separation.*



## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

### EXEGESIS VERSE 17:

GNT Revelation 2:17 ο` e;cwn ou=j avkousa,tw ti, to. pneu/ma le,gei tai/j evkklhsi,aijÅ tw/| nikw/nti dw,sw auvtw/| tou/ ma,nna tou/ kekrumme,nou kai. dw,sw auvtw/| yh/fon leukh.n( kai. evpi. th.n yh/fon o;noma kaino.n gegramme,non o] ouvdei.j oi=den eiv mh. ο` lamba,nwnÅ

NAS Revelation 2:17 **'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.** ο` e;cwn e;cw (d.a. + subs. ptc./p/a/nm-s; "He who has") ou=j (n-an-s; "an ear") avkousa,tw avkou,w (vImp./aa--3s "let him hear") ti, ti,j (interr. adj./an-s; "what thing") to, pneu/ma (d.a. + n-nn-s; "the Spirit") le,gei le,gw (vipa--3s; "keeps on saying") tai/j h` evkklhsi,aijÅ evkklhsi,a (d.a. + n-df-p; "to the churches") **To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna,** tw/| ο` nikw/nti nika,w (d.a. + subs.ptc./p/a/dm-s; "To him who overcomes/conquers") dw,sw di,dwmi (vifa--1s; "I will give") auvtw/| auvto,j (npdm3s; ref. the overcomer) tou/ to, ma,nna (d.a. + n-gn-s; "the manna"; used 4x) tou/ to, kekrumme,nou kru,ptw (d.a. + adj. ptc./PF/p/gn-s; "having been hidden/concealed/kept secret", hence; "some of the hidden manna"; used 18x) **and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone** kai, (cc) dw,sw di,dwmi (vifa--1s) auvtw/| auvto,j (npdm3s) leukh.n( leuko,j (a--af-s; "a white/shining/brilliant"; same as 1:14) yh/fon yh/foj (n-af-s; "stone/small pebble/smooth worn stone"; used 2x; used as a ballot to cast a vote in Act.26:10) kai, (cc) kaino.n kaino,j (a--an-s; "new/unused") o;noma (n-an-s; "name") gegramme,non gra,fw (circ. ptc./PF/p/an-s; "having been written") evpi, (pa; "upon") th.n h` yh/fon yh/foj (d.a. + n-af-s; "the stone") **which no one knows but he who receives it.** o] o[j (rel. pro./an-s; "which"; ref. the new name) ouvdei,j (neg.card.adj./nm-s; "no one/not even one") oi=den oi=da (viPFa--3s; "knows") eiv mh, (part. + neg.; "if not/except/but") ο` lamba,nwnÅ lamba,nw (subs. ptc./p/a/nm-s; "he who receives it")

### ANALYSIS VERSE 17:

1. Closing this message, Christ again calls upon its recipients and all believers, **“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches”**.
2. It is the assimilation of BD primarily in its audible form that is essential to living the Christian life.
3. The use of the singular person coupled with the plural of the assemblies indicates that the truth of BD is designed to first appeal to each individual believer that corporately make up the local **churches** in our dispensation.
4. It is an appeal for believers to hook into the system of GAP in order to evaluate correctly **churches** in existence throughout the CA, as well as their own.

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5. Contextually it possesses further weight with regard to believers hooking in with the Holy **Spirit** versus demonic spirits seeking to manipulate and distort the truth of God's word. 1Joh.4:1
6. Further it proclaims that the messages to these **churches** are designed to impart spiritual realities in contrast to the pursuit of the physical promoted through demonic human viewpoint evil.
7. For all men that have listened to the H.S. at least once making the SAJG, Christ again makes a promise to them under the terms "**To him who overcomes**".
8. The "Overcomer" contextually looks to all believers by virtue of their position in Christ having claimed victory over Satan and his demonic forces for all eternity. 1Joh.2:13,14; 4:4; 5:4,5
9. No matter what the believer does or doesn't do with BD after salvation, this fact remains a reality. Cp.1Cor.3:11-15
10. That our position in Christ guarantees eternity in the kingdom of God, it then behooves all believers to focus in on all of the promises associated with that eternal life niche.
11. His promises are designed to motivate these believers to sufficient +V to act on what Christ tells them.
12. His promises here have a direct correlation to the onslaught of Gnosticism seeking to rule their ranks.
13. In this case, all believers are promised two things:
  - A. "**To him I will give of the hidden manna**".
  - B. "**And I will give him a white stone**".
14. These gifts are given free gratis simply for believing in Christ based on a non-meritorious act of faith. Cp.Eph.2:8-9
15. The impact of these promises are designed to combat the doctrine of demons via Gnosticism that proclaim that one must adhere to a system of religiosity to attain to esoteric knowledge necessary to be accepted by God in the ranks of sinless perfection.
16. Some consider these blessings as not part of the normal blessings for believers, since they are only mentioned in this verse.
17. However, against the background of Gnosticism that claims extraordinary knowledge and insight into God **hidden** to the normal layman, a one-time mention is apropos.
18. These blessings are not broadcast to all, only to those that seek insight into God's plan via the book of Revelation, specifically regarding the church at Pergamum.
19. The first promise has as its background the supernatural provision that God made for the living grace of the Jews in the wilderness. Exo.16:4-5, 14-21
20. Based on this literal provision of physical food from heaven, many interpreters have concluded that the **manna** here refers to the actual food that will be eaten in Ph<sub>3</sub>. Isa.25:6
21. However, just as the things sacrificed to idols and immorality pointed to a higher spiritual principle, so does the reality of the **hidden manna**.
22. The Scripture makes it clear that the provision of the physical bread that fed the Jews was designed to teach the truth that "*..man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord*". Deu.8:3
23. Jesus Christ made it clear in Joh.6:32-33 that He was the "*true bread out of heaven*".
24. When Christ was dealing with the multitudes that were following Him, He was consistently seeking to get them to make the leap from the concept of physical life to eternal life.

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25. He not only possesses the attribute of eternal life, He is the author, creator, giver and sustainer of all life.
26. Therefore, to partake of the heavenly **manna** Ph<sub>1</sub> is to place your faith in the truth with respect to the Person and work of Christ. Joh.6:49-50
27. It should be obvious that as God there is no limit to the amount of truth that Christ now possesses in His glorified hypostatic union.
28. In fact, the Word of God makes it plain that He is the only source of in which “*are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*”. Col.2:3
29. The fact that this **manna** is currently “**hidden**/kru,ptw – krupto; perfect passive participle” is designed to highlight the fact that Christ will continue to reveal and teach believers about the truths of God’s plan currently **hidden** in Him.
30. Just as the Church Age dispensation reveals, God unveils His plan in parts, according to the necessity for each dispensation to fulfill His plan during that time. Ex. The rapture of the church in resurrection called a mystery doctrine, 1Cor.15:51 cp.Rom.11:25; 16:25, etc.
31. We make note that there is no mention of eating this **manna**, since eating and drinking symbolize faith, unnecessary in Ph<sub>3</sub>. 1Cor.13:13
32. The future indicative of certainty of “**I will give**/di,dwmi – didomi” emphasizes that whatever aspects of the POG that are **hidden** are to wait for the believer’s Ph<sub>3</sub> for the believer to find out and understand.
33. This is in direct contradiction to the Gnostics that seek an esoteric **hidden** wisdom in time as necessary to have a relationship with God.
34. Christ is implicitly declaring that all believers have all the doctrine necessary given to them in His written word (or via temporary gifts) to serve God in time and there is no need to seek spiritual wisdom in any realms beyond the Scriptures.
35. The second blessing repeats the verb “**I will give**” to emphasize that this gift is equally important, yet distinct from the first.
36. While the **manna** has prompted only two basic interpretations, the **white stone** has occasioned a number of conjectures as to its meaning.
37. One such conjecture is that stones were used as part of various secret societies and were worn as amulets of protection or “good luck charms/icons”.
38. This is easily rejected since it was certainly part of the pagan religious practices so strongly condemned in the Bible and there will be no need for protection in Ph<sub>3</sub>.
39. One viable alternative looks at the practices of Greek judges that tried all criminal cases that involved the possibility of the death penalty casting their vote by means of a **white** or black stone.
40. After they had heard the case, each judge would walk by an urn and drop one of the stones into it in order to cast his vote; the black **stone** for condemnation and the **white** for acquittal.
41. If this is symbolic of this **white stone**, then the emphasis is our eternal acquittal of our crimes/sins.
42. Another possibility is another custom popular in John’s day of giving an intimate friend a small smoothed **stone** or piece of ivory with an inscription on it.
43. The **stone** became the secret private possession of the one that received it symbolic of the intimate relationship that existed between the two parties.
44. This would obviously emphasize our eternal relationship as sons of God.
45. Our Greek word for “**stone**/yh/foj – psephos” is used only one other time in the NT. Act.26:10

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46. The action of the **stone** was for the purpose of “voting” regarding the disposition of Christians by Paul in a judicial matter.
47. This act of voting points to the real emphasis behind the **stone** itself being the determination to elect or choose by ballot.
48. That it is “**white**” is symbolic of pureness as a description given to the saints, elect angels and Christ/God denoting the righteousness attributed to them. Mat.17:2; 28:3; Rev.1:14; 3:4,5; 3:18, et al
49. While the two previously mentioned viable options do no disservice to the symbolism, its meaning can be more accurately explained.
50. The **white stone** is symbolic of God casting His vote, called the chosen or elect in the NT, for all those that believe in Christ at which time they are imputed with God’s +R. 2Cor.5:21 cp. Rom.8:33; Col.3:12; 2Tim.2:10
51. The **white stone** given to all believers will be symbolic of those whom God predestined in eternity past to be conformed to Christ as part of the elect/chosen qualifying them to have God’s +R for all eternity through their faith (choosing/+V) in Jesus Christ.
52. This is in stark contrast to the Gnostics that claim their own form of sinless perfection through their demonic avenues of human viewpoint.
53. Sinless perfection is ascribed to all believers positionally through faith in Christ, not through some esoteric system of ideology, rituals or other works systems.
54. Further, as the elect, we are guaranteed a resurrection body like Christ’s that is perfectly sinless.
55. Through Christ’s work on the cross, believers are imputed with God’s +R in time which will be revealed experientially in our resurrection bodies in Ph<sub>3</sub>.
56. In fact, as believers, our sins have been “**hidden**” in Christ. Rom.4:6-7.
57. These two gifts symbolically hark to a figure of speech called a hypocatasis implying a comparison between the “**manna**/BD” and the “**white stone**” where BD and the believer is inferred symbolically and that both have attributes that are “**hidden**”.
58. The symbolism of the **white stone** is a direct slam against the Gnostics that claim sinless perfection in time, yet flagrantly exposes their sins.
59. At the same time they declare it necessary to find secret knowledge in time.
60. Christ declares just the opposite noting all sufficient doctrine is given in time and the purpose behind the truth is to provide an ultimate hiding of sins for all eternity.
61. The **white stone** goes totally into the face of the Gnostics that claim only a chosen few can receive sinless perfection and the reality is that all believers are chosen and all via their union in Christ have +R attributed to them.
62. Further, this sinless state does not become experientially a reality until Ph<sub>3</sub>, another slam against Gnostic doctrine that claims sinless perfection in time. 1Joh.1:8ff
63. The **white stone** in and of itself will be a symbol of our elect status conforming to the image of Christ via imputation of +R positionally in time manifested for all eternity experientially in Ph<sub>3</sub> through our faith in Christ and nothing else.
64. That this **stone** is **white** or brilliant or bright suggests that this gift be literally in the form of a precious stone, such as a diamond.
65. Christ then notes an additional feature characteristic of this **stone**: “**And a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it**”.
66. The adjective “**new**/kaino,j – kainos” means **new** in quality.
67. The isagogics behind the **name** change is found in the OT.

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68. Names reflected something about the individual and God often changed names to reflect a change in the individual's status spiritually.
69. Examples include: Abram (father is exalted) to Abraham (father of a multitude); Sarai (contentious) to Sarah (princess); Jacob (grasper or deceiver) to Israel (let God contend). Gen.17:5,15; 32:27-28
70. All believers will have inscribed on their new gem a brand **new name** only he/she will know and it will reflect some specific quality about your person as a believer designated by God.
71. In some form or fashion it will reflect your association with and input into the plan of God.
72. It will reflect your elevated status of being part of the elect in the realm of +R for all eternity.
73. It denotes that everything that Satan has to offer in this world is a lousy counterfeit of what God truly has to offer for those that believe in Him.
74. For the Gnostics that love secretive things, this is one secret that will be only between the believer and God.
75. In part, that secret reflects upon the fact that all believers have a relationship with God for all eternity and He pays individual attention to each and everyone of His children.
76. The **white stone** is a token of our so great salvation that comes through the Person of Jesus Christ and eternal reminder that He knows His own with an affinity of parental affection moved to actually personally name each of His children for their **new** eternal state. Joh.10:14,27-28

## OVERVIEW OF THE MESSAGE TO PERGAMUM

- I. Pergamum as a distinct local church looks at the danger of failure to apply separation, even though they are otherwise adjusted.
- II. They leave the legacy of setting precedence for the introduction of religious practices distorting the true practice and belief of Christianity.
- III. The promised judgment for failing to apply separation is the result of division within the church itself dividing true +V from -V religious reversionistic believers and unbelievers.
- IV. Prophetically, it represents the historic period of the Church following the persecutions of the Smyrna age, dating it about 120-590 AD.
- V. This era saw Christianity go from being persecuted to a transition of compromise into the established state religion under Constantine.
- VI. During this time, Gnosticism would come together in both its liberal and legalistic views into an organized "church" marrying the Christian faith with idolatry.
- VII. Under Constantine, he declared the entire empire to be "Christian".
- VIII. Via compromise by reversionist believers, Constantine and his successors helped formulate the church into a political- religious entity.
- IX. During this time, people would join the ranks of believers apart from the new birth, but merely on the basis of political and social reasons, and many unbelievers were baptized into this new Roman visible church.
- X. In fact, it was during this period (c.300-600AD) that law required the baptism of infants.

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- XI. This caused many to equate the invisible church with the visible organized organization and the logical conclusion was that membership in the visible church was equal to salvation.
- XII. As some have noted, the “victory” that the church began to enjoy in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD was at best a mixed blessing since the political alliance between church and state was essentially a compromise or bargain with Satan.
- XIII. This union would guarantee that politics and national concerns would at least influence (and very often dominate) the administration, organization and doctrinal practices of the church.
- XIV. The priest of the pagan temples had been paid from the empire treasury and since Caesar was now a “Christian”, the priests rushed to be baptized into the church so they could remain on the imperial payroll.
- XV. Heathen temples (basilicas) were now converted to “churches” and heathen priests were now “Christian priests”, bringing their religious rites ceremonies into the church.
- XVI. It was during this time that the church brought many of the pagan religious practices into its midst, dressing them in Christian clothing, but not altering their true nature.
- XVII. This was predominately headed by the sect of Nicolaitans that advocated their unbiblical division between the clergy and laity demanding unquestioned obedience to a man or legalistic system rather than to the truth of doctrine.
- XVIII. Even during the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD we witness Clement’s desire for external church unity as obedience to the church officers that has biblical justification, but is easily distorted.
- XIX. Cyprian (c.250AD) developed the doctrine of the Episcopal church (that which related to bishops, leaders above pastor-teachers), taught apostolic succession, advocated the primacy of the bishop of Rome, ultimately leading to one bishop being exalted over all others.
- XX. Churches adopted this spurious hierarchy and bishops became rulers over the church and the princes of the state became princes in the church.
- XXI. Since the WOG makes it plain that we are a kingdom, priests to His God and there is only one mediator between God and man, this is clearly a violation. Rev.1:6; 1Tim.2:5
- XXII. At some point in this degeneration, priests began to be called fathers, adopted a different form of clothing to set themselves apart from the “laity” and finally the bishop of Rome was recognized as being supreme at a church council in 381AD. Mat.23:9
- XXIII. Augustine (c.350-430AD) advanced the idea of using force to win heretics if words did not succeed and also advocated the principle that there was no salvation outside the church and salvation was obtained via the sacraments.
- XXIV. Eventually, imperial and pagan titles would be given to the bishops of Rome, with precedence set by Constantine taking the title of Pontifex Maximus (Pontiff for short).
- XXV. As a result of this mixed marriage of the church with paganism, many pagan practices were mixed with church doctrines including:
  - A. Worship of saints and angels (375AD).
  - B. Worship of Mary (430AD).
  - C. Doctrine of purgatory (590AD).
  - D. Prayers directed to Mary (600AD).

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- XXVI. It was during this time that the confessional came into being, something that is notorious for financial and phallic abuses, as seen in the continuing modern scandals in the Catholic Church.
- XXVII. This era saw the rise of the monastic order, as prophesied in 1Tim.4:1ff, the infiltration of the demonic doctrines of celibacy and legalism with respect to certain foods.
- XXVIII. Another heretical doctrine that entered the church during the Pergamum era was that doctrine of postmillennialism the predecessor to amillennialism, promoted by Augustine as he saw the church become rich and powerful.
- XXIX. Therefore, he began to spiritualize (an allegorist of the worst kind) the millennium by suggesting that the union of the church and state ushered in the millennium apart from the return of Christ.
- XXX. Since one needed support for such a radical conclusion, the church was made to be spiritual Israel forming the basis for Covenant Theology and allocating all the promises to Israel to the Church.
- XXXI. During this time, less offensive pagan practices were also incorporated, including the observance of Christmas and Easter, neither of which were celebrated by the apostolic church.
- XXXII. While much more could be said about this era when the Pergamum type church was the dominant force, the dangerous trend toward the bureaucratic centralization of power and imposition of a pseudo faith are the two primary problems.
- XXXIII. The fall of the Roman Empire and the power vacuum that ensued coupled with the desire for external unity led to a state-sponsored church, which is seen by many historians as the key element in its political success, but also the major factor in its spiritual decline.
- XXXIV. We may readily trace to this time in history the initial development of most if not all of the pagan and superstitious practices that came to characterize the medieval church institutionalized in the Roman Catholic.
- XXXV. These include the ones listed above along with the evolution of an elite priesthood, the use of statues, the system of penance and works and use of ecumenical power to squelch legitimate diversity.
- XXXVI. Of course, the pagans of this time loved this stress on such practices and paraphernalia.
- XXXVII. When the Christian priests looked and behaved like pagan priests, Christian statues looked like those in pagan temples and Christian rituals and practices came to be almost indistinguishable from their pagan counterparts, conversion became an easy matter.
- XXXVIII. While the Roman Empire came to demise, the church established by Rome continued to flourish.
- XXXIX. It was under Gregory the Great that his position culminated into both the political and religious power perceived by this system c.590AD and therefore is considered by some historians as the real 1<sup>st</sup> Pope of the Catholic Church.
- XL. It was during his reign that historians generally attribute the beginning of the mediaeval era as represented by the next church on the list, Thyatira.

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

### THE PROPHETIC PRONOUNCEMENT ON THYATIRA VSS.18-29

#### EXEGESIS VERSE 18:

GNT Revelation 2:18 Kai. tw/| avgge,lw| th/j evn Quatei,roij evkklhsi,aj gra,yon\ Ta,de le,gei o` ui`o.j tou/ qeou/( o` e;cwn tou.j ovfqalmou.j aurtou/ w`j flo,ga puro,j kai. oi` po,dej aurtou/ o[moioi calkoliba,nw\

NAS Revelation 2:18 **"And to the (corrected) messenger of the church in Thyatira write:** *Kai, (cc) tw/| o` avgge,lw/ a;ggeloj (d.a. + n-dm-s) th/j h` evkklhsi,aj evkklhsi,a (d.a. + n-gf-s) evn (pL) Quatei,roij Qua,teira (n-Ln-p; "Thyatira"; lit. "continual sacrifice"; it is a derivative of the name "Thyगतira" which means "daughter"; used 4x) gra,yon\ gra,fw (vImp/aa--2s) **The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this:** o` ui`o,j (d.a. + n-nm-s) tou/ o` qeou/( qeo,j (d.a. + n-gm-s) o` e;cwn e;cw (d.a. + adj. ptc./p/a/nm-s; "who has/having") tou.j o` ovfqalmou.j ovfqalmo,j (d.a. + n-am-p; "the eyes") aurtou/ aurtou,j (npgm3s; "His"; ref. Christ, not translated) w`j (cs; "in such a way/as/like") flo,ga flo,x (n-af-s; "a flame") puro,j pu/r (n-gn-s; "of fire") kai, (cc) aurtou/ aurtou,j (npgm3s; ref. Christ) oi` o` po,dej pou,j (d.a. + n-nm-p; "feet") o[moioi o[moioj (a--nm-p; "resembling/the same nature as") calkoliba,nw\ calkoli,banon (n-dn-s; "burnished bronze/refined metal"; same as 1:15) le,gei le,gw (vipa--3s; "keeps on saying") Ta,de o[de (dem. pro./an-p; "this"; focuses on what follows)*

#### ANALYSIS VERSE 18:

1. As with all of the churches, Christ singles out the pastor-teacher as the individual responsible to communicate His words to those under his charge i.e., **"And to the messenger of the church in Thyatira write"**.
2. It is the P-T's communicative gift and responsibility of office that is designed to relate the truth of BD interpretatively to the local **church** corporately. Eph.4:11-13 cp.1Tim.4:11,13-16; 2Tim.4:1-4
3. With the pastor's authority in the RCC comes the weight of responsibility to faithfully impart the message of God ensuring that his right congregation receives the proper instructions to live the CWL.
4. Furthermore, the NT makes clear that only males are qualified to hold this office (1Tim.3:1ff) and women have no place to exercise authority over or teach men in a local church (1Tim.2:12).
5. The only way a believer will learn all that is necessary for a successful Ph<sub>2</sub> is to attach themselves to a local **church** faithfully articulating the POG under a properly functioning royal chain of command.



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6. This particular local **church** was located in the region of Lydia hugging the Mysian border on the river Lycus about forty miles southeast of Pergamum in Asia Minor.
7. Compared to the location of the other seven churches, this town was overtly the least important and never grew to achieve metropolitan status.
8. However, in spite of its seeming insignificance overtly, Christ delivers His longest message and critiquing to this **church** compared to the other six.
9. This points to the fact that size, prestige, economic status, environment, popularity and all the other superficial things believers tend to categorize churches into as to their importance before **God** are of no significance in His relationship with them.
10. The issues are and always will be the spiritual realities of each local **church** and Christ is just as focused on and actively involved with a physically nondescript **church** as He is one of greater numerical or physical qualities.
11. **Thyatira** stood on none of the main Greek trade routes, but on the lesser road between Pergamum and Sardis.
12. It derived its commerce from the Lycus valley and as an industrial and manufacturing center, sponsoring the most completely organized trade guilds of all the ancient cities.
13. Inscriptions found about this city mention numerous types of workers in wool, linen, leather, bronze, pottery, bakers and slave traders.
14. It was particularly known for its wool and dyeing industry, as illustrated by Lydia, who was a distributor of purple garments for which this city was famous. Act.16:14
15. While there is no direct mention of Paul or others evangelizing this city (though implied Act.19:10), it is obvious the gospel was proclaimed there and this local **church** established.
16. The town is in existence today named Ak Hisseron, with a population of about 20,000.
17. Its main industry now centers on rug making.
18. Its name is of interest and is a compound of qu,w – thuo/sacrifice and ateirhj – ateires/not worn away, continual or stubborn.
19. It literally denotes a continuous sacrifice.
20. Its name also has further significance as it is a variation of “Thyगतira”, the name given the town by Seleucus Nicator (301-281 BC), who re-founded this village after Alexander the Great’s death.
21. It previously was known as Pelopia, and Semiramis.
22. He made it primarily a military post designed to defend against the power of Lysimachus, who governed to the North and West, albeit a post not designed to stop advancing armies, only as a forward observer for preemptory attacks.
23. While at war with Lysimachus, Seleucus heard he had a daughter born and hence its name “Thyगतira/qugath,r -thugater” which means “daughter”.
24. It’s combined meaning of “continuous sacrifice” and “daughter” is symbolic both spiritually and prophetically regarding this **church**.
25. Spiritually, it has a good connotation regarding the **Church** metaphorically referred to as a “bride of Christ”. Eph.5:23 cp. Joh.3:29; Rev.19:7-9
26. The **Church** is made this “bride” by virtue of our union in Christ and under the law of marriage, our betrothal to **the Son of God** makes the **Church** the “daughter” of **God** the Father.
27. As believers cannot in and of themselves establish a relationship with **God** apart from His uniquely and naturally born **Son**, our relationship to the Father is equated legally under such terms as “adoption” and/or “marriage”. Cp.Rom.8:15; Eph.1:5

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28. The good sense of the name **Thyatira** looks to the continual sacrifice of this **church** in their application of Divine love in obedience to their right man, Jesus Christ.  
Cp.2:19
29. Prophetically, this name takes on an evil connotation.
30. It centers on the woman called Jezebel in vss.20ff.
31. It is of consequence that this self-proclaimed prophetess bears the same name as the infamous Jezebel recorded in the OT. 1Kgs.16:31;18:4,13,19; 19:1,2; chptr.21; 2Kgs.9
32. Similarities of character and reputation include:
  - A. Their adherence to pagan idolatry (1Kgs.16:31 cp. Rev.2:20).
  - B. A profound influence on the rule of Israel vs. the rule of the **Church**, in hostility to those adjusted (1Kgs.19:1-2; 21 cp. the judgment of SUD Rev.2:23).
  - C. An aspiration to exalt herself as the highest authority (her influences over Ahab, 2Kgs.9:7 cp. Rev.2:20 “*teaches and leads*”).
33. It is this woman Jezebel that is representative of the effeminizing effect of pagan idolatry as it infiltrated the **Church**.
34. First, it harks to the exalting of the Virgin Mary to the status of Deity by Roman Catholicism in 430AD.
35. The pagan worship of female deities such as Diana, Athena, Dionysos, etc., found its way into the distortion of the Christian faith by elevating Mary, the mother of Jesus, to the status of God equating the RCC with the truly heretical title as the mother-son cult.
36. The Catholic **Church** during this period promoted the worship of Mary equating her even over and beyond Jesus Christ as necessary for salvation exalting her to a higher authority.
37. She represents the missing formula of worshiping the “Queen of Heaven” as the necessary ingredient for making this distorted Christian religion into its Satanic counterfeit of the Babylonian cult (religious-political/mother-son cult). Gen.11:1-9 cp. Jer.7:18; 44:17,18,19,25
38. It is the worship of Mary that highlights symbolically the paganism of Roman Catholicism.
39. That they exalted Mary to Deity, they were claiming that she was the “natural daughter” of God to whom they were to make continual sacrifices via ritual, prayers, etc.
40. The influence of this pagan idolatry now comes to symbolize the spiritual immorality that the **Church** becomes deeply involved in during this era.
41. Its corruption takes on a new impetus in light of its current religious and political trends.
42. This effeminate idolatry began the corrupt breakdown of Christianity placing the Roman **Church** on a course prophetically regarded as the great whore. Rev.2:22; 17:1ff
43. During this time, the effeminate effect could be seen in the swarms of monks, friars and religious orders of several sorts, as Franciscans and Dominicans, who claimed Mary as their patroness.
44. Even their dress reflected this evil as they clad themselves in cowls and long garments and looked more like women in hoods and petticoats, than really men.
45. Its influence was so deep that tradition has it (with very tangible support) that there was even established a woman pope in the 900’s AD (middle of the dark ages), Pope Joan.

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46. Secondly, the depth of this pagan perversion promoted direct hostility upon otherwise adjusted believers during this era not willing to profess the faith of Roman Catholicism.
47. It is this great whore that is responsible for murdering believers just as Jezebel of the OT. Cp.Rev.2:22 cp.17:5-6
48. The peak of her persecution in this regard centers on the dark ages historically, of which the era of **Thyatira** represents.
49. The name Jezebel represents the reputation/character of the **Church** itself as exalting herself above God prostituting the Christian faith into a pagan religion postured as the agent of worship necessary for salvation in hostile defiance to the POG.
50. The era of **Thyatira** (~590 - ~ 1606 AD) looks to a period of **Church** history in which the CU was dominantly characterized by Roman Catholicism and a period under which –V via religiosity is the vast representation for the **Church**.
51. It is a period in which the **Church** is considered filly as representatives of the Christian faith in the form of gross spiritual prostitution.
52. It is a period in which they not only embrace idolatry as a form of worship, but become a religious organization responsible for breeding religious idolatry under a Christian banner into the world.
53. Against the background of the name **Thyatira**, Christ's introduction of Himself now takes on a new level of emphasis as He first refers to Himself as "**The Son of God**".
54. In contrast to His introduction in John's initial vision as "*à Son of man*", Christ utilizes His title of Deity as a slam against the **church** prophetically.
55. It in essence declares that there is only one Person ever to live on this planet among men deserving the title of **God** and deserving of worship.
56. Prophetically it declares that salvation is through God's **Son**, not any woman man may elevate to the status of Deity.
57. Further, by reminding the local **church** in **Thyatira** of His Divine Sonship, Jesus elevates His own words over and above the authority of anything that would have originated from the cult religion that existed in their city.
58. While the trade guilds were the source of real financial benefit, they in turn created a tremendous problem for believers, since it was extremely difficult to pursue your trade without belonging to one of these organizations/unions.
59. Each guild had its own patron false god, its own religious festival days and seasonal festivities that included participation in ritual sacrifices and the phallic cult.
60. Citizens of the city had to join a guild to gain employment and membership required their participation in the annual company party that all employees were expected to attend.
61. This was the same citywide revelry that was celebrated throughout all Asia Minor, the Bacchanalia, during which meat that had been sacrificed to the heathen god was eaten and an orgy ensued.
62. This practice of illicit sexual copulation perfectly represents the symbolism of Jezebel and this influence she had upon the **Church**.
63. It is this embracing of idolatry and sexual infidelity that personifies the **Church** in an unholy union via adulterating the WOG. 2Cor.4:2
64. Obviously, to belong to a guild put a believer in a very compromising position because of the political, social and financial pressure to participate in these pagan celebrations.
65. If one failed to join an appropriate guild and participate fully with their fellow members, he was looked upon as being grudging, hostile and a poor neighbor.

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66. While Christ proclaimed Deity condemns the effeminate characterization of the **Church**, it is also designed to squelch any communication of others that proclaim any other god, since there is only one true **Son of God**.
67. It was not just an affront to Jesus that fellowship with gods that were no gods was taking place, but that the one that was the primary object of worship was falsely call a **son of god** providing salvation to men albeit in a male or female capacity.
68. He lumps into one title the reality that there is only one object of worship given to men ordained by **God**.
69. This isagogically harks to another point of interest with respect to the communication of information in these cults.
70. An example centers on the occult of Apollo that was worshipped in this city.
71. Without going into all the myths behind this god, it is noticed that Apollo's medium or mouthpiece on the earth was the Pythia (python spirit), that delivered oracles under Apollo's supposed inspiration.
72. Since the Pythia passes on words from the deity, she must remain silent when Apollo speaks directly.
73. Therefore, by speaking as **the Son of God**, Jesus obviously overrules anything and all that Jezebel (or any other pagan teacher) has already taught or what they might teach in contradiction to the content of this letter.
74. As noted, while the **church** at Ephesus rejected false teachers, there were those in Pergamum that advocated embracing religiosity in its legalistic and liberal veins.
75. The **church in Thyatira** now looks at the result of not separating from these types appearing in the form of a Christian religion that is following not only a male elevated to the status of a god (the Pope), but also a goddess (Virgin Mary).
76. Christ's proclamation as Deity is followed by His assertion that He is the One, "**who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze**".
77. As previously noted, the representation of **His eyes** emphasizes **His** omniscience, passion and jealousy for the plan of **God**.
78. It is this sanctified jealousy for the truth that causes Him to blaze with righteous anger in judgment against those that promote or tolerate rival for the affection of believers.
79. Christ demands our loyalty and separation from those that are opposed to His plan.
80. Pursuing or engaging in social life with reversionists or unbelievers is an affront to Him.
81. Ironically, the city of **Thyatira** was also a center for the manufacture of the image of the all-seeing eye, a small glass object that is still on sale today to tourists.
82. Obviously, this designation is designed to counter the Luciferic concept of the all-seeing eye that was promoted among the trade guilds and is still prevalent in the Masonic Lodges and the New World Order.
83. This symbol was placed on our currency beginning in 1935 being the work of Nicolaus Roerich and then Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morganthau.
84. This harks back to the continued influence of the secret society of the synagogue of Satan as noted in the message to Smyrna.
85. The all-seeing eye signifies the Spiritual Hierarchy of Light, the Silent Watchers over humanity's spiritual development, and is placed atop an unfinished pyramid that symbolizes humanity's lack of Luciferian enlightenment.
86. It is against this satanic deception, which is designed to dupe believers, infiltrate and neutralize the **Church** that **His eyes** blaze so brightly.
87. The symbolism of **His feet like burnished bronze** emphasizes His unique

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qualifications to function in the capacity of judge toward those that oppose the truth.  
Joh.5:27-29

88. It is with **His feet** that He will ultimately tread down all that are opposed to Him with unmerciful judgment.
89. That He was initially noted of walking among all of these churches (Rev.2:1) notes that He is postured spiritually and experientially to render judgment against any **church** or the **Church** that aligns themselves with religiosity that has its basis in idolatry.
90. The **church in Thyatira** highlights the spiritual principle that rebellion against God's authority, the WOG, is tantamount to the promotion of false authority personified as a prostituting woman leading believers into the realm of Satanic evil.
91. The sophistication of Gnosticism is now seen in its production of a religious organization that renders Christianity as nothing more than a religion equal to being a whore in the POG.
92. Christ's zeal for the **Church** is such that He considers the promotion of false gods as rivals to His Bride.
93. When left unabated in a religious form, the worst case scenario is presented as a so-called Christian **Church** that is likened to the worst kind of infidelity towards Christ.
94. And that is the embracing of human viewpoint evil sponsored by Satan and his demons turning a virtuous woman via their marriage to Christ into nothing more than an insatiable spiritual slut following their STA's. 2Cor.4:2
95. This in turn produces a religious regime that exalts itself above **God** and is postured in antagonism towards any others that do not adhere to their idolatrous system.
96. Christ **says this** and all that follows as further warning to all churches of the path they take when they fail to separate as exhorted to Pergamum.
97. Just as the Jezebel of the OT reflects an unholy union between Israel and paganism, so does the Jezebel of this **church** reflect the unholy union of religion and Christianity.

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### EXEGESIS VERSE 19:

GNT Revelation 2:19 Oi=da, sou ta. e;rga kai. th.n avga,phn kai. th.n pi,stin kai. th.n diakoni,an kai. th.n u`pomoh,n sou( kai. ta. e;rga sou ta. e;scata plei,ona tw/n prw,twn

NAS Revelation 2:19 **'I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance,** *Oi=da, (viPFa--Is) sou su, (npg-2s; ref. the local church corporately; subjective genitive denotes the church produces the works) ta. to, e;rga e;rgon (d.a. + n-an-p; "works/deeds") kai, (cc) sou( su, (npg-2s; this genitive sets apart the following attributes correlating with their works; the following attributes are in apposition to one another) th.n h` avga,phn avga,ph (d.a. + n-af-s; "Divine love") kai, (cc) th.n h` pi,stin pi,stij (d.a. + n-af-s; "faith") kai, (cc) th.n h` diakoni,an diakoni,a (d.a. + n-af-s; "service/support"; used 34x) kai, (cc) th.n h` u`pomoh,n u`pomoh, (d.a. + n-af-s; "perseverance/patience/steadfastness") **and that your deeds of late are greater than at first.** *kai, (cc; ascensive; "in fact/even"; could supply the phrase "I know"; translated "and that") sou su, (npg-2s) ta. to, e;rga e;rgon (d.a. + n-an-p) ta. to, e;scata e;scatoj (d.a. + a--an-p; "the last works"; hence "of late") plei,ona polu,j (compara. adj./an-p; "are greater than") tw/n to, prw,twn prw/toj (d.a. + ord. adj./gn-p; "the first ones/at first")**

### ANALYSIS VERSE 19:

1. Christ begins the critiquing of this local church on a positive note.
2. It reflects the positive aspect of their name in their fidelity to Christ as the Church.
3. He again expresses His omniscience about their spiritual welfare as it pertains to their application of sound doctrine stating; **"I know your deeds"**.
4. His commendation that follows addresses the church corporately as seen in the singular pronoun **"your/su, - su"**.
5. He acknowledges the application of their works (plural) in spite of the indictment against them that follows in vs.20.
6. This again points to the impartiality of judgment by Christ in not allowing the failure or successes of believers to color His overall perceptions otherwise.
7. It denotes that we can depend upon Him to accurately judge our works in all areas of our Christian lives and neither condemns when right or praises when wrong.
8. Understanding the omniscience of Christ is extremely important in the believer's life since our lives are a varied admixture of successes and failures spiritually.
9. That their applications fall in the realm of Divine good is seen in the four specific qualities stated in the singular attributed to their works, as Christ further notes, **"and your love and faith and service and perseverance"**.
10. Each of these four qualities are in apposition to each other and together provide the necessary ingredients for Divine good and its resultant ramifications from application.

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11. The **love** in view is Divine **love** noting that the quality of our applications must stem from God's **love** (1Joh.4:7-8) including being in fellowship (1Joh.4:20-21), following the regiment of self-sacrifice (Joh.15:13) and a zeal to apply BD in our lives as our MPR (Joh.14:15, 23-24).
12. **Faith** here is active and looks to the quality of our volition as not restricted to simply inhale **faith** (intellectually believing BD), but is followed through with exhale **faith** (application of BD). Jam.2:17-20,26
13. Application of BD is the overt manifestation of our **faith** in it.
14. These two ingredients for Divine good go hand in hand and are equal to each other in expression to the degree we apply or not.
15. The third quality of **service** looks to the intended result towards others through our applications.
16. Application of BD is intended to render physical and spiritual aid and support to others around us. Eph.4:12; 1Joh.3:17-18
17. It literally renders **service** on behalf of God Himself to others. 1Tim.1:12 cp. Heb.1:14
18. The final quality of **perseverance** looks at the intended result of our applications as it applies to ourselves.
19. Application of BD builds within us the ability to stand fast in our niche maintaining the willingness and ability to press on under the difficult or challenging circumstances of our niche. Luk.8:15 cp. 2Cor.6:4-5
20. It produces patience and endurance within not easily usurped by the relationships and circumstances surrounding us. Jam.1:2-4
21. These singular qualities as attached to the multiplicity of our applications reflect the **love** of God through our +V in fulfilling the POG towards others and ourselves.
22. The plurality of our works denotes that the more we apply, the more the qualities of our applications manifest their true force and affect as intended via the POG.
23. We cannot expect the power of God's word to intrinsically manifest its power fully with a haphazard or isolated attempts at application.
24. It demands a consistency of **love, faith, service and perseverance**.
25. Christ then further expresses that this local church has excelled under these qualities in the close of His commendation stating, "**and that your deeds of late are greater than at first**".
26. It denotes that their degree of quality in application has become superior in their spiritual matriculation as a local church.
27. It looks at the natural process of spiritual growth for churches that adhere to sound doctrine.
28. As time progressed, this church was called upon and rose to a higher standard of application befitting their culpability to doctrine.
29. This was not an Ephesian type church that sat back on the laurels of application by others, but has taken doctrine by the horns and made it a reality in their own lives.
30. It highlights their zeal for application of BD producing the type of spiritual maturity doctrine is intended to produce.
31. However, in all the areas of applications that they possibly could make and excel in, there remained one area of corporate failure sufficient to bring condemnation upon them as seen in vss.20ff.

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### EXEGESIS VERSES 20 – 21:

GNT Revelation 2:20 avlla. e;cw kata. sou/ o[ti avfei/j th.n gunai/ka Vleza,bel( h` le,gousa e`auth.n profh/tin kai. dida,skei kai. plana/| tou.j evmou.j dou,louj porneu/sai kai. fagei/n eivdwlo,quta

NAS Revelation 2:20 **'But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel,** avlla, (strong advers., "But/In stark contrast to") e;cw (vipa--1s; "I keep on having"; subject in Christ) "this" supplied kata, (pg; "against") sou/ su, (npg-2s; singular indicts the church corporately) o[ti (cs; intro. indir. discourse; "that") avfei/j avfi,hmi (vipa--2s; lit. "to send away/emit; legally of divorce"; contextually it denotes to "allow/tolerate/maintain a union") th.n h` gunai/ka gunh, (d.a. + n-af-s; "the woman/female"; used 215x) Vleza,bel (n-af-s; "Jezebel") **who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray,** h` le,gousa le,gw (d.a. + adj. ptc./p/a/nf-s; "who calls/the one calling") e`auth.n e`autou/ (reflex. pro./a/f/3s; "herself"; places the following title upon herself) profh/tin profh/tij (n-af-s; "a prophetess"; used 2x) kai, (cc) dida,skei dida,skw (vipa--3s; "she keeps on teaching") kai, (cc) plana/| plana,w (vipa--3s; "keeps on leading astray/cause to wander/misleading/ deceiving") evmou.j evmo,j (possess. adj--am1p; "my/what belongs to me") tou.j o` dou,louj dou/loj (d.a. + n-am-p; "bond-servants/slaves") **so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.** porneu/sai porneu,w (inf. of result/a/a-; "to prostitute themselves/commit acts of immorality"; same as 2:14) kai, (cc) fagei/n evsqi,w (inf. of purp./a/a-; "to eat") eivdwlo,quta eivdwlo,qutoj (ap-an-p; "things sacrificed to idols/the remains of an idol sacrifice"; same as 2:14)

GNT Revelation 2:21 kai. e;dwka auvth/| cro,non i[na metanoh,sh|( kai. ouv qe,lei metanoh/sai evk th/j pornei,aj auvth/j

NAS Revelation 2:21 **'And I gave her time to repent; and she does not want to repent of her immorality.** kai, (cc) e;dwka di,dwmi (viaa--1s; "I gave") auvth/| auvto,j (npdf3s; ref. Jezebel) cro,non cro,noj (n-am-s; "time/a period of time"; looks to grace in action) i[na (cs; purpose; "in order that") metanoh,sh|( metanoe,w (vsaa--3s; "she might repent/change her mind") kai, (ch) ouv (neg. +) qe,lei qe,lw (vipa--3s; "wish/want/desire" +) metanoh/sai metanoe,w (compl. inf./a/a-; "to repent") evk (pAbl) auvth/j auvto,j (npgf3s; ref. Jezebel) th/j h` pornei,aj pornei,a (d.a. + n-Ab1f-s; "whoring/prostituting/immorality"; used 25x)



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### ANALYSIS VERSES 20 – 21:

1. In stark contrast to the high level of application found in this church, Christ finds a major fault deemed spiritually detrimental in their custodianship of the POG and states, **“But I have *this* against you”**.
2. Again, the singular pronoun **“you”** indicts this church corporately to include the P-T and leadership.
3. Their failure is of such gravity and force that failure to make adjustments will potentially rob them of the prize.
4. This is made clear in vs.24 that recognizes that all in this church are not guilty of condemnation (*“But I say to you (plural-singling out believers), the rest who are in Thyatira”*).
5. This is further followed with an exhortation to these that *“hold fast”* and *“keeps My deeds until the end”* in vss.25-26, indicating believers securing their wreath.
6. The indication is however, that the fully adjusted believers are of the minority and the dominant spiritual temperature of this local church and the Church is one of gross spiritual failure.
7. Christ then pinpoints their corporate failure at hand explaining, **“that you tolerate the woman Jezebel”**.
8. The verb **“tolerate/avfi,hmi – aphiemi”** literally means “to send away” and signifies “to permit or allow” (cp. Mat.3:15 used 2x) and contextually indicates that this church accepted as part of the fold this **woman Jezebel** and the evil ascribed to her.
9. Compared to the church at Pergamum that would not separate from some that held to heretical teaching, Thyatira would not separate from and jettison from their midst one specific individual.
10. Though the name **Jezebel** obviously harks back to the reputation of the **Jezebel** of the OT, there are no hermeneutical grounds to indicate that this name is purely representative or metaphorical just to indicate one’s character.
11. In fact, the literal and natural reading indicates she was a literal **woman** by this name active within this local church.
12. This is seen in the following clause that grammatically and contextually describes her as a real person living at this time, **“who calls (present participle) herself a prophetess, and she teaches (present indicative) and leads astray (present indicative) My bond-servants”**.
13. The present tenses of these verbs denote an ongoing action at the present time of this church.
14. While the church at Pergamum would not separate from those that advocated a false religious system making its presence known, suddenly there is found an open advocate within the confines of this church promoting religiosity.
15. Therefore, **Jezebel** as presented in the message to Thyatira relates to this church two-fold: Both literally and in turn in name representatively and prophetically to the Church in their failure to separate from religiosity taking a turn for the worse.
16. The primary similarities between this **Jezebel** and the one of the OT are again recounted:
  - A. Their adherence to pagan idolatry (1Kgs.16:31 cp. Rev.2:20).
  - B. A profound influence on the rule of Israel vs. the rule of the **Church**, in hostility to those adjusted (1Kgs.19:1-2; 21 cp. the judgment of SUD Rev.2:23).

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- C. An aspiration to exalt herself as the highest authority (her influences over Ahab, 2Kgs.9:7 cp. Rev.2:20 “*teaches and leads*”).
17. Further, that this **Jezebel** is a self-proclaimed **prophetess**, harks to **Jezebel** of the OT recorded to be involved in the occult and witchcraft (2Kgs.9:22).
  18. Just as that **Jezebel** would have emitted the esoteric knowledge of demons, so our **Jezebel** is claiming a higher knowledge as it pertains to the Scriptures.
  19. The remainder of vs.20 gives the ultimate results from her teaching and deceptions placing believers in positions “**so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols**”.
  20. It is the full description of her in this verse that relates Thyatira’s **Jezebel** to the false teaching permeating the Church/church at this time:
    - A. As a self-proclaimed **prophetess** she is claiming knowledge from God, but is in reality proclaiming the deep things of Satan. Cp.Vs.24
    - B. She advocates a distortion of hierarchy within the Church since as a woman she “**teaches**” in direct contradiction to the injunctions of Scripture (1Tim.2:12), thus aligning her with the Nicolaitans. Vss.6,15
    - C. She advocates the teaching of Balaam as a stumbling block to believers causing them to **commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols**. Cp.Vs.14
  21. Our present time **Jezebel** reflects the epitome of Gnosticism as it now has a foothold within the Church.
  22. This Satanic philosophy has opened the doors for the most despicable form of religiosity to enter into the Christian ranks.
  23. And that is to reverse the Divinely appointed authority structure in the POG elevating the ranks of the inferior designed to be subject to a superior God (Eph.5:23 cp. Col.3:18) to the role of rank and authority as God.
  24. Hence, the effeminizing representation of **Jezebel** as applied to the Church/church in conjunction with its religious influence epitomized in the RCC portrayed through the deification of the Virgin Mary.
  25. This self-exaltation reflects the very purpose and will of Satan against God. Isa.14:13-14
  26. For all intents and purposes, her person is seen in a light of evil equal to the **Jezebel** in the OT.
  27. The name **Jezebel** is a derivative from the Hebrew **lbz** – zebel, which means “dung” as Elijah referenced in 2Kgs.9:37
  28. This relates to her idolatrous religious approach to the true faith as an anathema to God.
  29. Others have suggested that her name means “chaste, without a husband” or “wife of Baal”.
  30. This reflects the reality that the Church’s posture and approach at this time does not look to Christ as the Head and is spiritually operating under the doctrine of demons.
  31. The OT **Jezebel** was the unbeliever princess daughter of Ethbaal whose name clearly means “with Baal”, who was the king of Sidon. 1Kgs.16:31
  32. That she was an unbeliever reflects the fact that a religious approach to God destroys the very essence of the POG that revolves around the principle of faith in Christ.
  33. Ahab (King of Israel 874-853 BC) made an alliance with the Phoenicians that was cemented by his marriage to **Jezebel** denigrated in the book of Kings.
  34. While some have noted that Ahab only carried out the types of policies that his predecessors including Solomon carried out, it should be noted that the OT taught

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repeatedly against making alliances with foreign nations. Lev.18:24; Deu.12:29-30; 20:16-18; 2Kgs.17:15

35. The spiritual similarities between the OT scenario as applied to **Jezebel** and the Church can be better understood with the background to the cult of Baal and its worship that both Jezebel's ostensibly promoted:
  - A. Basically, Baal was the storm god, the bringer of rain and thus fertility to the land.
  - B. There was rivalry among the gods and a struggle erupted between Yamm, the sea, and Baal, the rain.
  - C. With the help of his sister Anat, the goddess of war, and Astarte, the goddess of earth and fertility, Baal defeated Yamm and his cohorts, Tannin, the dragon of the sea and Loran (or Lothan cf. Isa.27:1), the serpent with seven heads.
  - D. The gods began to build a magnificent house for Baal so he could be at rest and provide abundant rain for the earth.
  - E. However, Baal was challenged by Mot (or Mut/Muth), the god of death and the underworld.
  - F. Mot temporarily triumphed and Baal disappeared into the underworld.
  - G. Anat and Shapash, the sun god, found Baal, brought him back to life and restored him to his house.
36. These counterfeit gods are designed to represent the spiritual parallels to the Son of God in the blessings of His death and resurrection.
37. Further, these series of stories is even more clearly, especially in its details, an agrarian (that which pertains to lands) myth personifying the cycle of rainy and dry seasons of the Middle East, dealing with the danger inherent in drought and ensuing famine.
38. With this understanding of the details that comprised Baal worship in the Mideast, it becomes obvious that this myth is more explicitly concerned with fertility, specifically cast in terms of human sexuality.
39. Worship of Baal involved imitative magic and the performance of rituals including sacred prostitution, which were understood to bring vitality to Baal in his struggle with Mot, the god of death.
40. It takes little imagination to see the connection between the human sexual act and rain watering the earth to produce fruit.
41. While we have no surviving Canaanite religious texts, the accounts of Baal worship in the OT correspond closely to the existing version of the Baal myth and what we know of religious practices in surrounding areas.
42. Contrary to what is generally thought, the problem that faced Israel through most of its history was not that the people totally abandoned Yahweh for the worship of Baal, but was the syncretism of worship, the blending of Yahweh worship with Baal worship.
43. Yahweh has been experienced as a God of power, the God that fought Pharaoh, parted the Red Sea, led the Israelites through the desert, parted the Jordan and brought them into the land by toppling the walls of Jericho and routing the Canaanite and Philistine armies.
44. This led to the idea that Yahweh, the God of the patriarchs was a powerful warrior God, and the God of the desert that could be counted on to march in with his heavenly armies in times of crisis.
45. However, as the Israelites settled into the land, they encountered the fertility cult of Baal, by which they were easily convinced that while Yahweh may be God of the

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desert, battles and power, it was Baal that was in charge of the more mundane aspects of everyday life, such as rain, crops and livestock.

46. Israel then reconciled their faith with religious paganism blending the two conflicting beliefs.
47. Jeremiah graphically depicts the debauchery and excesses that developed in the worship of Baal. Jer.7:9; 11:13; 19:5; 32:35
48. Because of the sexual overtones of Baal worship, it is easy to use the metaphor of prostitution or sexual **immorality** to describe the problem that such syncretism raised for Israel and now the Church/church.
49. **Jezebel** not only attempted to create such a syncretism, she actively moved to eliminate all true worship of Yahweh by killing all His true prophets. 1Kgs.18:4
50. This reflects the period of Thyatira primarily during the 12<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> centuries known as the period of the “Inquisition”, spearheaded by Pope Gregory IX in 1231 AD.
51. **Jezebel** was an open advocate for the Baal cult being a motivating factor for Ahab to build a temple and altar to Baal in Samaria. 1Kgs.16:32; cp. 21:25-26
52. She became a patron for the cult, providing for the prophets of Baal at her own table. 1Kgs.18:19
53. Hence, the influence of idolatry as it infiltrates the Church/church establishing a system of worship to facilitate –V under the banner of Christianity.
54. Some have concluded that since **Jezebel** of the OT was an unbeliever, such is this **woman** in our verse.
55. However, that issue is speculative and avoids the issue of believers and the Church going into reversionism.
56. More clearly, the Church as represented by **Jezebel** has fallen into a state of religious reversionism with its apex of distortion promoting a system of unbelief ultimately failing to present an adequate gospel presentation for salvation Ph<sub>1</sub>.
57. To think believers cannot be a part of and/or promote a religious heresy to this extent is failure to understand the power of the STA and –V to the truth of BD.
58. **Jezebel** in the church at Thyatira is actively and openly seeking to impose her pagan religious views upon the church corporately.
59. That the church is indicted corporately points to the head of the church, the P-T, as the primary authority responsible for not addressing this issue, though not depreciating the responsibility of the church as a whole.
60. Though each believer is ultimately responsible for his or her own spiritual welfare, it is the P-T that holds the office to manage the well being of the church corporately.
61. This is one of the more unpleasant aspects of shepherding a local church; that the P-T must be willing, ready and able to deal with those that invade the body with their pernicious views.
62. This is the root meaning of the term “overseer” that denotes the reality that the P-T is to keep himself apprised of what is happening in his canon. 1Tim.3:1ff
63. It is not as though he is to follow believers around, spy on them, invade their privacy and listen to gossip concerning the sheep or other Gestapo type tactics, since God will bless his authority in the proper manner with the necessary pertinent information.
64. It is managing righteously with an obvious problem so that it does not take root in the body and defile others. Heb.12:15
65. This **woman** was a clear candidate for church discipline that was not carried out, thus leaving the local church at odds with Christ.

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66. We must always remember that we are here to represent Christ and His interests and not allow personal rancor, attempts at self-vindication or any other type of STA activity to influence us with respect to others.
67. On the other hand, we must also recognize that the Lord does not tolerate those that advocate heretical doctrines in the local church and neither should we.
68. This **woman** claimed the prophetic gift of prophecy that she did not truly possess, claiming to speak and teach under the direct influence of the Holy Spirit.
69. She, like so many in the ministry, had taken upon herself the right to the ministry being self-appointed and totally self-deceived.
70. While the anti-church element began to infiltrate the church in Pergamum, now there is actually someone in a church seducing believers away from doctrine being allowed to operate with authority.
71. The obvious question therefore is where are the P-T and other church leadership in their responsibilities to deal with this situation?
72. The fact that this **woman** has an audience with believers at least implies failure on the part of this P-T in effectively shepherding his flock.
73. This principle can be looked to as a primary failure for divisions to occur in the Church/church theologically.
74. This is not to say that some believers cannot engage in covert anti-doctrinal activities behind the shepherd's back, but by all appearances in this situation it was known throughout the church, since it is indicted corporately.
75. The Greek construction "**teaches and leads astray**" is one that the first verb is used to specify the means by which the second verb is accomplished, indicating that by her teaching, she deceives others.
76. That these others are Christ's **bond-servants** indicates that believers are the primary targets of attack.
77. Satan's attack has now taken form in the Church to seek division within theologically resulting in condemnation for believers for their resultant state of error.
78. It is obvious that this **woman** had embraced the phallic cult and was actively involved with the debauchery that was promoted through the trade guilds.
79. This is the literal meaning of the fact that she deceived others into committing **acts of immorality and to eat things sacrificed to idols**.
80. Once again, virtually most commentaries focus in on the evils of sexual sins and worshipping icons.
81. While we don't depreciate the gravity of these things, just as with the teaching of Balaam as mentioned in the message to Pergamum (vs.14), it is the spiritual ramifications behind these physical acts that is the clear issue.
82. To **commit immorality** is literally "porneu,w – porneuo" in the Greek and means "to prostitute".
83. It spiritually emphasizes the unholy union engaged when one embraces a form of religiosity with the Christian faith. (*See notes on vs.14*)
84. In order to blend a form of religion into the POG, one must distort the truth of His word and in like metaphorical description "adulterate the Word of God". 2Cor.4:2
85. To **eat things sacrificed to idols** is not talking about going to a meat market and buying meat that had been butchered in a pagan temple, taking it home, cooking it and eating it as a normal part of living grace. 1Cor.10:25
86. It looks to the participation of believers in the heathen religious practices by which eating the meat indicated their solidarity with the god in view. 1Cor.8:4; 10:19-20

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87. It indicates the human viewpoint of the doctrine of demons that the believer embraces seeking to rationalize it into the Christian faith.
88. While the analogy of the trap in vs.14 emphasized the doctrine of demons as the trigger for the trap ensnaring believers into this unholy union of religion and the Christian faith, we note here that Christ reverses the word order emphasizing the union first followed by the doctrine of demons.
89. This in essence restates the principle of incorporating religious ideologies into our Faith as being the result of leading with our STA's (**immorality**) resulting in the embracing of human viewpoint evil.
90. It points to the fact that the STA and human viewpoint are partners in the spiritual crime of a syncretic Christian faith. Rom.8:7
91. **Jezebel** was obviously using the solicitation of believers STA's to encourage them to join her in the immoral and idolatrous feasts that included cult prostitutes.
92. She was possibly advocating Gnostic philosophies as it was applied to believer's freedoms in Christ to entice them into a religious world designed to influence them with human viewpoint rationalization.
93. This is merely one example of the reason why Paul instructed local churches not to place or allow women into positions of leadership with the local body. 1Tim.2:12-14
94. Paul not only cites the order of creation to document his position that the authority resides with the male, he also notes the female's propensity to be more easily fooled than the male.
95. It would be bad enough to have a woman exercising authority over men in the church; it is double despicable to allow the worst type of female to ply her trade.
96. This does not mean that God is against women, only that males and females are emotionally and physically different creatures designed by God to exercise authority vs. submitting to authority portraying the POG to mankind.
97. Women are to adopt a gentle and quiet spirit submitting to their proper authority(s) and thereby reflect the very nature of Christ at the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent. 1Pet.3:1-6
98. Just as the Church is expected to do in orientation to the authority of the Head.
99. It is not to go unnoticed that when a woman is used symbolically in the Scriptures to convey a religious teaching; she represents the principle of false doctrine. Zec.5:5-11; Rev.2:20; 17:3
100. In vs.21, Christ unequivocally makes the statement that grace precedes judgment and tells us, "**And I gave her time to repent**".
101. **To repent** indicates a willingness to change one's mind or course of action.
102. It denotes that God gives people **time** to pull in their horns and make the adjustments necessary before Him.
103. The problem with this **woman** is that she simple was not willing to change her mind and conduct in spite of the obvious need to do so.
104. And so it is for the Roman Catholic Church that still flourishes today in spite of the gross spiritual form of Christian religiosity she so zealously represents.
105. This is the prophetic force of the final clause, "**and she does not want to repent of her immorality**".
106. Just as **Jezebel** would not reign in her STA, neither will the RCC in their pursuit of perpetuating false doctrine viewed as spiritual fornication.
107. Summary of **Jezebel**:
  - A. There are three Jezebels in Scripture, two named explicitly, one inferred prophetically:

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- 1) Ahab's pagan queen that attempted to integrate the worship of Baal into the worship of Israel.
  - 2) A female believer that mixed pagan practices with Christianity in Thyatira.
  - 3) A religious system spearheaded by Roman Catholicism that blends paganism with Christianity (and Judaism) that reached its heyday in the medieval period (the era of Thyatira).
- B. The **Jezebel** of the OT:
- 1) Ahab, king of Israel, married this unbeliever from Sidon. 1Kgs.16:31
  - 2) A primary motivating factor was to establish a political alliance with the Phoenicians.
  - 3) She attempted syncretism of the worship of Israel with the worship of Baal.
  - 4) She was involved in mysticism and demonic communication and activities. 2Kgs.9:22
  - 5) Ahab built a temple and altar to Baal in Samaria. 1Kgs.16:32
  - 6) He also erected the Asherah (icon of a female deity) promoting an effemine influence in worship. 1Kgs.16:33
  - 7) **Jezebel** sponsored false prophets. 1Kgs.18:19
  - 8) She attempted to stamp out true worship by destroying the true prophets. 1Kgs.18:4-13
  - 9) She died SUD. 2Kgs.9:29-37
- C. The **Jezebel** of Thyatira:
- 1) She was a real person active in this local church. Rev.2:20
  - 2) She was a self-proclaimed **prophetess** involved in demonic communication. Rev.2:20b
  - 3) She operated under a skewed authority. Rev.2:20c
  - 4) She was attempting syncretism of pagan worship with the Christian faith. Rev.2:20d
  - 5) This in turn would promote religious persecution against those not aligning with mainline religiosity.
  - 6) She refused to repent. Rev.2:21
  - 7) She died the SUD. Rev.2:22
  - 8) She obviously sought to compromise with the social-political world around her.
- D. The prophetic **Jezebel** of the Thyatira era of Church history a.k.a. the Roman Catholic Church, a.k.a. the Great Whore or Religious Babylon of Rev.17
- 1) During the Medieval period the Roman Church continued with and expanded the evils of the Pergamum era.
  - 2) The church made grandiose and bogus claims of apostolic succession and authority.
  - 3) The church became a syncretism of Judaism, Christianity and paganism.
  - 4) The popes claimed to speak ex cathedra (the claim was that because of his rank and special revelation from God, the pope's word was final and equivalent to the Word of God).
  - 5) The popes manipulated European politics often controlling kings.
  - 6) The majority of Christendom was under papal authority.
  - 7) Mary was exalted to deification symbolizing the effeminizing effect of the Church.
  - 8) In spite of outward piety, the church was infamous for sexual excesses.

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- 9) Believers that refused to follow the false doctrine promulgated by the church were persecuted.
- 10) The church will ultimately be taken out of existence comparable to the SUD. Rev.17:16
108. The similarities are numerous for all 3 of these “Jezebels”.
109. All 3 proclaim false doctrine.
110. All 3 elevate a woman beyond her rightful station in life and the POG.
111. All 3 operate under a Gnostic system of syncretism, esoteric knowledge and true disregard of the STA and its ramifications positionally and experientially.
112. All 3 promote a religion designed to destroy the integrity of the true Faith mixing paganism with Christianity.
113. All 3 target believers in their distorted attacks.
114. All 3 promote an ecumenical approach to the POG under the banner of religion.
115. All 3 are ultimately destroyed via the SUD.
116. All 3 compromise religion with their political surroundings.



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### EXEGESIS VERSES 22 – 23:

GNT Revelation 2:22 ivdou. Ba,llw auvth.n eivj kli,nhn kai. Tou.j moiceu,ontaj metV auvth/j eivj qli/yin mega,lhn( eva.n mh. Metanoh,swsin evk tw/n e;rgwn auvth/j(

NAS Revelation 2:22 **‘Behold, I will cast her upon a bed of sickness,** ivdou, (exclam. Part.; “Behold!/Pay attention!”) ba,llw (vipa—1s; “I keep on casting/throwing”) auvth.n auvto,j (npaf3s; ref. Jezebel) eivj (pa; lit. “into”) kli,nhn kli,nh (n-af-s; “a bed/couch/something that one may lie on”; used 9x) “of sickness” supplied **and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation,** kai, (cc) tou.j o` moiceu,ontaj moiceu,w (d.a. + subs. Ptc./p/a/am-p; “those who commit adultery/unlawful sexual intercourse with another’s spouse”; used 11x) metV meta, (pg; “with”) auvth/j auvto,j (npgf3s; ref. Jezebel) eivj (pa; “into”) mega,lhn( me,gaj (compara. Adj.—af-s; “great”) qli/yin qli/yij (n-af-s; “tribulation”; the phrase “great tribulation” is used 3 other times in the NT, 2 of which is ref. Daniel’s 70<sup>th</sup> week; Mat.24:21; Act.7:11; Rev.7:14) **unless they repent of her deeds.** Eva,n (part. +) mh, (+neg.; “unless/if not”) metanoh,swsin metanoe,w (vsaa—3p; “they might repent”) evk (pAbl) auvth/j( auvto,j (npgf3s; ref. Jezebel) tw/n o` e;rgwn e;rgon (d.a. + n-Abln-p; “works/deeds”)

GNT Revelation 2:23 kai. Ta. Te,kna auvth/j avpoktenw/ evn qana,tw|Å kai. Gnw,sontai pa/sai ai` evkklhsi,ai o[ti evgw, eivmi o` evraunw/n nefrou.j kai. Kardi,aj( kai. Dw,sw u`mi/n e`ka,stw| kata. Ta. E;rga u`mw/nÅ

NAS Revelation 2:23 **‘And I will kill her children with (corrected) death;** kai, (cc) avpoktenw/ avpoktei,nw (vifa—1s; “I [Christ] will kill/slay/take away/eliminate”) auvth/j auvto,j (npgf3s; ref. Jezebel) ta. To, te,kna te,knon (d.a. + n-an-p; “children”) evn (pI; “with”) qana,tw|Å qa,natoj (n-Im-s; “literally “physical death”; translated “pestilence”) **and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts;** kai, (ch) pa/sai pa/j (a—nf-p; “all”) ai` h` evkklhsi,ai evkklhsi,a (d.a. + n-nf-p; “the churches”) gnw,sontai ginw,skw (vifd—3p; “they will know/figure out”) o[ti (cc; intro. Content of knowledge; “that”) evgw, (nfn-1s; emphatic; “I Myself”) eivmi, (vipa—1s; “am/keeps on being”) o` evraunw/n evrauna,w (adj. Ptc./p/a/nm-s; “He who searches/examines carefully or thoroughly”; used 8x) nefrou.j nefro,j (n-am-p; lit. “kidneys or veins”; metaphorically relating to the inner being of thoughts, purposes, soul or mind) kai, (cc) kardi,aj( kardi,a (n-af-p; “hearts”; “all that you are at any time”) **and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.** Kai, (cc) dw,sw di,dwmi

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(vifa—Is; “I [Christ] will give”) e`ka,stw| e[kastoj (ap-dm-s; “to each/every single one of”) u`mi/n su, (npd-2p; “the plural breaks the group into individuals) kata, (pa; “according to”) u`mw/nÅ su, (npg-2p) ta. To` e;rga e;rgon (d.a. + n-an-p; “works/deeds”)

### ANALYSIS VERSES 22 – 23:

1. In vss.22-23, Christ now centers on the Jezebel of Thyatira inclusive of its prophetic ramifications concerning the religious Jezebel i.e., the RCC.
2. Time has been granted for the woman in view to pull in her STA horns and exercise +V to the truth, but she refuses to do so.
3. Though the principle is that grace always precedes judgment, soon or later grace will end and judgment will ensue.
4. Its not that God removes grace at any level, it is always there, but because of men’s unceasing perpetuation of –V in rejecting grace, it is deemed recalcitrant, becomes moot and judgment is then facilitated.
5. While God in His omniscience knows exactly when to pull the plug on grace, it is the proper balance of knowing when to apply grace or intervene with discipline that the believer must get a handle on in dealing with others.
6. By keeping the truth of BD as our standard of evaluation coupled with the facts, that decision should be found to be accurate. Joh.7:24
7. Christ then calls strict attention to the Divine response of judgment levied against Jezebel and those affiliated with her in vs.22, **‘Behold, I will cast her upon a bed and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation’**.
8. The interjection **‘Behold/ivdou, - idou’** is exclamatory and is used to draw attention to something that is dramatic and should not be missed.
9. The present active indicative of the verb **“cast/ba,llw –cast/throw”** is a futurist present with the same force as the preceding threats to the other local churches. Rev.2:5,16
10. The force of the present in this sense is that the future certainty of judgment is guaranteed to be fulfilled as if it was happening right at the moment of writing this message.
11. The judgment promised is a definite reality (indicative) that Christ will actively execute (active voice) with absolute certainty (futuristic present).
12. The phrase **“upon a bed”** omits the normal preposition of “evpi, - **upon**” substituting the preposition “eivj – into” to denote a permanent and final state of judgment.
13. In other words, when people lie on a **bed**, they normally arise from it and resume their normal life however, Jezebel is being thrown into a bed from which she will not arise.
14. The translators have supplied the term **‘of sickness’** describing the **bed** correctly understanding that the nature of the Greek contextually is referring to a physical calamity.
15. There are only 3 times that the terms **cast** and **bed** are used together and all indicate a state of physical incapacitation due to physical or demonic problems. Mat.9:2; Mar.7:30
16. It denotes that Jezebel would be turned over to demons and/or incapacitated with a physical problem from which she could not recover, eventuating in physical death.
17. Prophetically and spiritually it represents that the Roman Church will be put into a

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- position that spiritually she will not ever recover and ultimately meet her physical demise.
18. Not only will Jezebel undergo this judgment, but also **those who commit adultery with her**’.
  19. Christ uses two discreet verbs for immorality in this letter, both with their distinct nuances:
    - A. porneu,w – porneuo; to prostitute one’s self, sale sex for value, fornicate, play the whore.
    - B. moiceu,w – moicheuo; to **commit adultery**, to engage in illicit sex with someone that is married, to be an adulterer.
  20. This suggests that Jezebel, like her OT counterpart, was married, just as the Roman Church considers its organization as the Bride of Christ.
  21. The verb **“commit adultery** is used 13 other times in the NT and in all other uses it refers to the physical act of **adultery**.
  22. Its cognate “moicali,j – moichalis/adulteresses” is used of spiritual **adultery** in Jam.4:4
  23. In fact, we must view this woman’s activity as adulterous on both the spiritual and physical level.
    - A. Spiritually she was claiming a divine gift she did not have, teaching false doctrine and seducing believers to participate in the worship of demons that characterized the local civic guilds.
    - B. Physically, she enticed believers to lead with the phallic grid of the STA and there is no reason to believe she did not practice what she taught by engaging in illicit sex with those within and outside the local church.
  24. Hence, the literal and prophetically spiritual aspects of Jezebel.
  25. Her **bed** was the place for her activity in seducing those inattentive souls that would give her an audience and it will be the place in which her Divine discipline will occur.
  26. This reflects the place or organizational structure of worship in which those that follow her lead will find themselves associated with when they experience their judgment.
  27. It denotes those that have attached themselves to this heretical form of Christianity are resigned to be a part of it until the end.
  28. Those that were unfortunate enough to cave to this woman’s wiles in her system of spiritual immorality and perpetuate this reversionism to the end (participle of **“who commit adultery”**) will meet their own Divine discipline associated with their religious attachment.
  29. The judgment will not be light as the verb **“I will cast”** further governs this final clause to include casting these **“into great tribulation”**.
  30. In fact, there is one translation that understands the **bed** to be defined by the term **“great tribulation”** and is rendered, **“Behold, I am going to throw her and her adulterers with her onto a couch, yes, into great tribulation...”**.
  31. While the phrase **“great tribulation”** itself literally indicates extreme pressure, testing or in this case discipline, the very use of this phrase recalls the same phrase with reference to Daniel’s 70<sup>th</sup> week. Mat.24:21; Rev.7:14
  32. On a local level this phrase is taken to mean that God will provide the most severe form of discipline on those that embrace this whore and her false teaching.
  33. In a prophetic sense there can be little doubt that these types of people as epitomized by Roman Catholicism will enter the most formidable period of history known to mankind in which God pours out His wrath to the maximum. Rev.17:16

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34. Those that adhere to this religious system in the last days in which the gospel is so confused in its proclamation will find themselves still in a unsaved state and will like the rest of negative unbelieving mankind find themselves **cast** into Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.
35. That this letter has a definite prophetic element with respect to the last days is seen in the later command to "*hold fast until I come*". Rev.2:25
36. It should be clear that this Jezebel type of teaching will attract any number of unbelievers that would be more than happy to comply remaining enmeshed in this type of religious reversionism.
37. Those that **commit adultery with her** refers to people that have embraced a deceptive system comprised of demonic and human viewpoint teachings of evil, actively participate in it and promote it to others. 1Tim.4:1ff
38. The Bible has much to say about the physical adulteress that is designed to make the unwary take notice of this type of woman and avoid her.
  - A. The adulteress is viewed as being unfaithful to her word and her God. Pro.2:17
  - B. She relies on her overt appearance to attract the stupid. Pro.6:25
  - C. She seduces her prey through flattery. Pro.2:16; 5:3; 7:5
  - D. She promises an intoxicating time with various translations reflecting this in Pro.5:20 (captivated, seduced, infatuated, exhilarated and ravished).
  - E. She is not content unless she can make a conquest implying a huge ego to be satisfied. Pro.6:26
  - F. Her prey is much the worse after his encounter with her. Pro.6:26
  - G. Certain discipline awaits those that violate the Divine institution of marriage. Pro.5:8-11; 6:27-29
  - H. Discipline in time may result in the SUD. Pro.6:34-35
39. The physical reality of **adultery** is designed to illustrate the spiritual **adultery** that believers **commit** when they are not faithful to their God. Jer.3:9; Eze.23:37; Hos.3:1
40. And the only way this judgment can be escaped is for reversion recovery as Christ finishes vs.22, "**unless they repent of her deeds**".
41. It must be understood that Christ is not talking about incidental sinning and religious distortion, but a full blown reversionistic approach.
42. The only way those associated with the Jezebel system can escape God's wrath is if they change their minds and pull out of this syncretic religious camp.
43. The plural of the verb "**they repent**" compared to the singular of the phrase "**her deeds**" looks to their withdrawal from the STA based religiosity that Jezebel promotes and hooking into sound doctrine.
44. Thus far, Christ has noted two specific parties involved in judgment, Jezebel and **those who commit adultery with her**.
45. In vs.23, a third party is now introduced associated with Jezebel, "**And I will kill her children with death**".
46. This is in reference literally to the bastard offspring that resulted from her adulterous unions in a physical sense.
47. It denotes a cursing by association in which the next generation of **children** of certain reversionistic types falls under the curse of their parents. Exo.20:5
48. It looks to the fact that the parent's offspring are generally taught the ways, philosophies and theologies of their parents and will slide right into perpetuating these things in their own lives.
49. Spiritually and prophetically it refers to organizations and systems that came about due to this unholy union between the world and the church producing para-

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- organizations that function happily within the Jezebel system while claiming to be Christian.
50. Commentaries take the literal meaning of the word “**death**” here as some sort of pestilence (as per NAS) or plague.
  51. However, it is not in the way that these will die that is the emphasis, but the very fact that their judgment is the Sin Unto **Death**.
  52. Christ isn’t being redundant saying that He is going to “**kill**” these with “**death**”, but is emphasizing that He is the One that will execute the judgment of **death**.
  53. God/Christ is the agent through which all men die. Psa.30:3; 118:18
  54. No matter what manner of sin unto **death** religious reversionists will undergo, Christ is the one that will impose it upon them.
  55. When Christ executes His judgments it is designed to emphasize that He has the right, the knowledge and authority to render a definitive verdict and pass the appropriate sentence.
  56. When Christ intervenes with such drastic measures, the result is that it will get the attention of others as vs.23b continues, “**and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts**”.
  57. When the SUD comes upon this Jezebel, **all the churches** surrounding Thyatira including herself, will have a distinct appreciation for Christ.
  58. Therefore, **all the churches** contextually refers to local **churches** Christ centered and Biblically based and grounded, no matter aside problems they may have.
  59. The verb “**know**/ginw,skw – ginosko” emphasizes the act of perceiving, learning or figuring something out.
  60. These **churches will** figure out that religious reversionism of this ilk is not anything that escapes the judgment of Christ.
  61. Just as sound evangelical **churches** established today see through the ruse of Catholicism and **know** this organization is under the total scrutiny of Christ and will face her own judgment.
  62. The phrase “**searches the minds**” is an anthropomorphism (ascribing to God a human action or emotion) to denote the function of omniscience.
  63. As Deity, the Son does not have to acquire information; He is completely cognizant of all things at all times. Rom.8:27; 1Cor.2:10
  64. The Greek term translated “**minds**/vnefro,j – nephros” is literally “kidney” and looks to one’s innermost being.
  65. Contextually, it emphasizes the individual’s intents.
  66. The heart is the current you and contextually comprises all that the person is volitionally, beliefs, etc., now or at any given time in existence.
  67. God the Son is absolutely aware of why people do what they do and what they think in the innermost being that we can never truly see.
  68. This makes Him the only Person that is capable of rendering a fair and impartial judgment since He alone possesses all the facts necessary to execute righteousness.
  69. Vs.23 concludes with a promise of equity for all in this regard, “**and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds**”.
  70. The promise that “**I will give**” is a statement of the fact that God will fairly and impartially evaluate every church (and hence all that “fly the Christian banner”) and provide that which is commensurate with His righteousness. Cp. Rom.2:3
  71. The basis for His evaluation is seen in the final phrase, “**according to your deeds**” that indicates that it is not our thoughts, ideas or good intentions that ultimately will be evaluated, it is our actions.

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72. Our actions as a local church will be evaluated by Christ and what is done under Divine good production will be rewarded commensurately with SG<sub>3</sub>.
73. Just as actions of reversionistic churches will be judged with loss of SG<sub>3</sub>.
74. And just as actions of Pseudo-Christian (unbelieving) churches will be repaid for their negative volition and various forms of evil at the Great White Throne. Rev.20:12
75. This should cause all of us to consider carefully what we embrace theologically and our applications as a church (and believers) and encourage us to redeem the time acceptable to God.

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### EXEGESIS VERSES 24 – 25:

GNT Revelation 2:24 u`mi/n de. le,gw toi/j loipoi/j toi/j evn Quatei,roi(j o[soi ouv k e;cousin th.n didach.n tau,thn( oi[tinej ouv k e;gnwsan ta. baqe,a tou/ Satana/ w`j le,gousin\ ouv ba,llw evfV u`ma/j a;llo ba,roj(

NAS Revelation 2:24 **'But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching,** *de, (mild adverb.; "But/Now") le,gw (vipa--1s; "I keep on saying") u`mi/n su, (npd-2p; "to you all"; the plural singles out believers) toi/j o` loipoi/j loipo,j (d.a. + ap-dm-p; "the rest/those remaining/the others/the remnant who are"; used as a conclusion "for the rest"; used 55x) toi/j o` (ddmp; "the ones"; not translated; emphasizes that only these definite believers as now described are the subject) evn (pL) Quatei,roi(j Qua,teira (n-Ln-p; "Thyatira") o[soi o[soj (correlative pro./nm-p; "everyone who/as many as") ouv k ouv (neg. +) e;cousin e;cw (vipa--3p; "do not hold/embrace") tau,thn( ou-toj (near dem. pro./daf-s) th.n h` didach.n didach, (n-af-s; "teaching/instruction/doctrine") **who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they (corrected) speak** oi[tinej o[stij (indef. rel. pro./nm-p; "whoever/such a kind as") ouv k ouv (neg. +) e;gnwsan ginw,skw (viaa--3p; "has not known/figured out"; the aorist tense looks at a past point of time; the emphasis is "whoever has stayed ignorant of/refused to be indoctrinated to" ) ta. to, baqe,a baqu,j (d.a. + ap-an-p; "the deep things/depth of/deep secrets of") tou/ o` Satana/ Satana/j (d.a. + n-gm-s; "the Satan/Adversary") w`j (compara. cs; "just as/in like manner as") le,gousin\ le,gw (vipa--3p; lit.; "the keep on saying/speaking") **-- I place no other burden on you.** ouv (neg. +) ba,llw (vipa--1s; "I do not place/cast/throw") a;llo a;lloj (a--an-s; "another of the same kind") ba,roj( (n-an-s; "burden/weight/difficult duty/over and beyond the basic command"; used 6x) evfV evpi, (pa; "upon") u`ma/j su, (npa-2p; "you all")*

GNT Revelation 2:25 plh.n o] e;cete krath,sate a;cri ou- a'n h[xwÅ

NAS Revelation 2:25 **'Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come.** *plh,n (cc; "Nevertheless/However/Except that"; used to point out parenthetically what is important, "Only one thing"; denotes what follows is the basic "burden placed upon them") o] o[j (rel. pro./an-s; "that which/what") e;cete e;cw (vipa--2p) krath,sate krate,w (vImp.aa--2p; "hold fast/seize/grasp/be strong in embracing") a;cri (pg; "until") ou- o[j (rel. pro./gm-s +) a;n (+ indef. part.; "whenever/of which if"; not translated) h[xwÅ h[kw (vsaa--1s; "I might come/arrive")*

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### ANALYSIS VERSES 24 – 25:

1. After pronouncing the severe judgment upon this false teacher Jezebel, her religious system of **teaching** and those that adhere to it, Christ now turns His attention to the faithful living **in Thyatira**.
2. He does not use the normal strong adversative “avlla, - alla/in stark contrast to”, but inserts the mild adversative “de, -de/**But/Now**” to begin His address.
3. He softens the contrast to denote that while He is addressing this class of believers, they are not the dominant influence this message is designed to address.
4. This implies that while these believers are standing fast, they are yet in the minority though remaining in need of continued encouragement in the face of this onslaught of religious reversionism, as the verb “**I keep on saying**” denotes.
5. It points to the fact that even though the leadership and Church/church overall are failing to enforce the doctrine of separation from this woman and many are succumbing to her STA solicitations, others have managed to remain clear of this failure.
6. No matter the failure in application by church leadership or those around us in Bible class, these are no excuse for our own personal failures in like manner.
7. Ultimately, we can blame no others for our personal failures and those that are subject now in our verses are solid proof that any believer can rise above other’s maladjustment and remain locked into sound teaching and application.
8. That these are indeed believers not engaged in the Jezebel party is made clear by a series of pronouns and adjectival phrase:
  - A. “**To you**”, the dative plural of su, - su.
  - B. “**The rest who are** (those remaining/the remnant”) **in Thyatira**”.
  - C. “**Who do not hold** (as many as **do not have**; correlative pronoun o[soj – hosos/whatever the number) **this teaching**”.
  - D. “**Who have not known** (indefinite pronoun o[stij – hostis/such a kind as) **the deep things of Satan**”.
9. This emphatically declares that there were those not classed with the “*bond-servants led astray*” (vs.20) and were not involved in religious idolatry and the associated STA activities it promoted.
10. It addresses the positive remnant found **in Thyatira** that continue to possess sound doctrine rejecting the human viewpoint evil surrounding them.
11. While these believers were surrounded with the evils of religious reversionism (what church isn’t?) and the resident evil teacher operating within the church, they had sufficient +V to maintain their fidelity to Christ.
12. These believers had an aversion to Jezebel’s **teaching** and her evil.
13. The doctrine she espoused called here “**this teaching**” is in complete contradiction to the apostolic **teaching** that was the accepted norm in local churches. 2Joh.9-11
14. Believers must always be on guard against any form of **teaching** that is in conflict with the sound doctrine they have previously received, lest they be caught up in false doctrines that can destroy them. Phi.4:9
15. This is one of the reasons that God has provided each local church with a shepherd to keep watch over your souls, to protect you from spiritual wolves and hirelings and even those within that can become a danger through their own arrogance. Act.20:28-30 cp. Heb.13:17



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16. A study of early Church history will confirm that believers formed their own study groups to advance their own private interpretations, convincing others that they had some deeper insight into the truth than the accepted apostolic teaching of Scripture.
17. While we encourage a serious and detailed study of the Word of God, new and unique views that are radically different than what has been considered orthodox must be closely and carefully examined.
18. Very often, these supposed new breakthroughs come from those not equipped to study doctrine in the first place and simply reflect their fertile imaginations and/or work of deceitful spirits.
19. Christian books written by believers are a dime a dozen, while sound exegesis notes and doctrines are few and far between.
20. **This teaching** of Jezebel, and so others like her, are now referred to as **the deep things of Satan**, a metaphorical use of the term ‘baqu,j – bathus/**deep**’ to indicate that which is profound, difficult or mysterious.
21. The Gnostic sects were famous for promoting their secret hidden knowledge that would enable believers to ‘**know**’ God in a more intimate way.
22. Beware of these Gnostic types that:
  - A. Advocate knowledge of God’s plan that cannot be documented with Scripture.
  - B. Advocate a **teaching** that promotes STA sponsored thinking and agendas.
  - C. Present themselves as superior in their relationship with God beyond what the normal believer has through faithfulness to sound doctrine in application and consistency in the Word of God.
  - D. Set themselves up as an elite moral standard viewing themselves superior to pastors like me that simply teach BD and allow believers to grow up at their own pace.
  - E. Place the issue of morality, above the importance of adhering to the sanctified veracity of God’s word.
  - F. Propose either a legalistic application to BD or insist the STA is not really an issue in the CWL.
  - G. Advocate a position of authority for themselves while violating the royal chain of command in either gift or office.
23. The method of operation for these types in their deception is their contention that they understand the deeper aspects of the truth, forcing believers to ignore the literal and obvious meaning to seek a deeper, esoteric or allegorical meaning behind the text.
24. This is exactly the way Roman Catholicism operates:
  - A. The leadership sets themselves apart as spiritually superior to the laymen.
  - B. They use the allegorical hermeneutic as opposed to the grammatical/historical (ICE) hermeneutic.
  - C. They say that the literal common sense meaning of Scripture is not the real meaning and thus they are the only source of truth and salvation.
  - D. They advocate a skewed RCOC.
25. The irony regarding Jezebel’s claiming to be a prophetess as applied to this era of the Church Age cannot be missed and harks to a prime example of deceit applied.
26. It should be clear to any church existing at this time in Church history (~590-1606 AD) that this temporary gift has ceased (1Cor.13:8) and any astute believer should recognize her bogus claim.
27. Therefore, her proclamation of this gift represents the false claim of authority those false teachers of this ilk stand upon and highlights the first line of defense in scrutinizing these types.

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28. Any proclaimed communicator today that proclaims him or herself as an apostle, prophet, prophetess (or any woman pastor), miracle worker, healer, Pope, Father (or other assorted non-biblical titles) can easily be written off as a false teacher.
29. In addition, any that claim authority outside of the Biblical canon ascribed to their office are “so called” authorities and should be rejected. 2Cor.10:13-16
30. When individuals, organizations or even local churches claims some secret or mysterious authority that allows them to reject what is clearly taught in the Scripture, then God rejects them.
31. If they rely on the traditions of men, their own personal and unique interpretations or some sort of personal infallibility, they have every earmark of cultic and Gnostic intrusion.
32. Their claims of moral and spiritual superiority are simply designed to get believers to seek them out and become part of their group. Gal.4:17-18
33. What was true in the early church is equally true today as men reject the final authority of the Bible, substitute their own interpretations and draw believers away after themselves.
34. When one rejects the Bible as being the final authority and substitutes their own interpretations and ideas, there is no authority on earth that is capable of making them accountable to God since they have usurped His authority.
35. The truth of the matter is that those that operate on this level practice a form of pagan idolatry, leading with their STA’s, while adulterating the WOG using the name of Christianity as their pious façade.
36. It should be clear that **the deep things of Satan** was the Divine assessment and not what Jezebel was telling those that followed her.
37. There can be little doubt that she used the “angel of light” approach to deceive and entrap believers into her system. 2Cor.11:13-15
38. One must always use some devious method to make the false teaching seem palatable, attractive, interesting, good and with depth, and it often begins with attacks on the true teachers of doctrine designed to win the affection of the unsuspecting. 2Cor.10:9-11
39. While these may seem to be overtly clever and put a lot of effort into making their false doctrine look attractive, the allure of their ministries is similar to the seductive charms of the prostitute.
40. This is one reason why it is so important to learn and identify the STA and all its trapping, keeping its reality cognizant before us at all times through fastidiousness in R<sub>B</sub> and our nose in the perfection of truth.
41. And that is so that when it is solicited by a false teacher as part of their luring us into their human viewpoint message, their message is recognized as STA sponsored and not worth the toilet paper one would use to wipe off this filth.
42. Beware of anyone that would initiate an STA underwriter as a tact to presenting their message such as: gossip, maligning, going behind the back of an appropriate authority, complaining, abuse of moral freedoms in Christ, undocumented biblical sources, anger, vindictiveness, jealousy, guaranteed health and wealth, unverifiable facts, greed, etc.
43. This discernment should be applied on an individual level with one another as well.
44. If any sin is required to present or adhere to the message, the message is suspicious.
45. The final portion of vs.24 has been translated a couple of different ways, concluding **“as they speak – I place no other burden on you”**.

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46. Some have suggested that the phrase “**as they speak**” goes with the following clause, “**I place no other burden on you**”.
47. In so doing, it has the force of confirming the Jerusalem council and what they said to believers about abstaining from idolatry and sexual immorality in Act.15:28-29 (refraining from engaging in the idolatrous system and its practices).
48. However, the most natural reading places it in conjunction with the preceding **deep things of Satan** simply denoting what the exponents of the sect said about their teachings.
49. While there is no punctuation in the original text, copiers of the text have placed a high dot after the phrase “**as they speak**”, also suggesting that it be taken with what preceded.
50. The natural contrast would be between what Christ is saying about this sect and what they say about themselves.
51. It does not mean that they overtly were saying follow **Satan**, only that their approach, philosophy and ideology of human viewpoint/STA religiosity is based on the very depths of Satanic attack towards true Christianity.
52. Many well intended Christians speak in the manner of satanic human viewpoint evil in their proclamation of God’s plan.
53. The major difference between normal adjusted believers and those following the Jezebel system is:
  - A. The +V adjusted believer constantly struggles with their STA and human viewpoint intervention and even often capitulates to their solicitations as a matter of fact and reality in living the Christian life.
  - B. Yet, they pursue to the fidelity of God’s words as their standard for living.
  - C. Jezebel false teachers and followers in some form or fashion openly advocate (knowingly or unknowingly) the expression and embracing of the STA and human viewpoint as a necessary ingredient to living the Christian life.
  - D. They pursue a religious life based on their own generated STA ideals and philosophies violating the veracity of God’s word.
54. For those that shun this religious approach to Christianity, Christ then assures them that any additional pressure from Himself on their part at this time is not necessary.
55. This is the force of not placing any “**other** (a[lloj –allos; another of like kind) **burden on** them.
56. The primary application that carries the true weight of spiritual significance of avoiding any condemnation from Christ in this manner is the application of separation.
57. The **burden** of judgment placed upon believers in this church is for their allowing the association of Jezebel in their midst, with her **teaching** and influence upon them, and failing to separate from her.
58. For those that have applied this **burden** of judgment individually via their application of separation, in spite of the gross failure of the church corporately, Christ is saying that that application is sufficient on their part.
59. While separation from false teaching is sufficient to maintain a true course of doctrine, it is obviously not all-sufficient for completing one’s course.
60. This is the force of exception and exhortation of vs.25, “**Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come**”.
61. The conjunction “**Nevertheless/plh,n – plen**” has the force of exception and points to what is important and could be translated, “*Except that/Only one thing*”.

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62. It compliments the fact that while Christ lays **no other burden on** them in like manner, since they already are obviously applying separation, there still remains a weight of responsibility for them in the CWL.
63. And that is that they must continue to fight the good fight and remain faithful in application of Doctrine they currently **have** and as so commended to this church in vs.19.
64. Christ is saying in so many words that application of doctrine while failing to keep separated from false teaching is unacceptable, so is applying separation while failing to apply doctrine otherwise across the board in the Christian life.
65. Christ now essentially ties in the principle of failure to apply doctrine as seen with the Ephesian church (though they applied separation from false teachers) with the failure to separate **in Thyatira** (though they applied at a high level elsewhere).
66. Failure at any of these two primary levels in application will result in condemnation from Christ and demands that these two principles go hand in hand in the Christian life.
67. That these believers are applying separation correctly at this time, the only remaining injunction placed upon them is to stick with applying sound doctrine in the face of their adversity. 2The.2:15
68. The final phrase, “**hold fast until I come**” is designed to teach the definite reality that Christ will return, while using a Greek construction that makes the time of that return indefinite.
69. Clearly, this does not apply to believers in the historical church at **Thyatira**, except prophetically, since they would not live to see the rapture.
70. It focuses on the future in which believers are to maintain hope in that Christ will ultimately return and rectify all situations appropriately and in righteousness.
71. We would say, “**hold fast until** the end” and Christ is stating that His return will justify our holding to the end.
72. Prophetically it exhorts all believers throughout the Church Age to hang in there applying separation in conjunction with remaining sound doctrine and that Christ will vindicate us at the appropriate time of the rapture, whether preceding in death or still alive.
73. It is a rally cry for believers to continue to perpetuate the string of +V for which the Church was established maintaining a faithful remnant throughout the CA to the end.
74. This in spite of the gross religious evil that surrounds us and the failures of churches and pastors in their separation from it.

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### EXEGESIS VERSES 26 – 28:

GNT Revelation 2:26 kai. o` nikw/n kai. o` thrw/n a;cri te,louj ta. e;rga mou( dw,sw auvtw/| evxousi,an evpi. tw/n evqnw/n

NAS Revelation 2:26 **'And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end,** kai, (cc) o` nikw/n nika,w (d.a. + subs. ptc./p/a/nm-s; "he who overcomes") kai, (cc) o` thrw/n thre,w (d.a. + subs. ptc./p/a/nm-s; "he who keeps/guards/watches over"; indicates application) mou( evgw, (npg-1s; ref. Christ) ta. to, e;rga e;rgon (d.a. + n-an-p; "the deeds/works") a;cri (pg; "until") te,louj te,loj (n-gn-s; "the end/completion/achieving full measure of a goal"; here it is synonymous for completing the course; used 40x) **TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS;** dw,sw di,dwmi (vifa--1s; "I will give") auvtw/| auvtou,j (npdm3s; ref. the one in view that fulfills these qualifications) evxousi,an evxousi,a (n-af-s; "authority/right/power of control") evpi, (pL; "over"; emphasizes position) tw/n to, evqnw/n e;qnoj (d.a. + n-Ln-p; "the nations/peoples"; used 162x)

GNT Revelation 2:27 kai. poimanei/ auvtou,j evn r`a,bdw| sidhra/| w`j ta. skeu,h ta. keramika. suntri,betai( w`j kavgw. ei;lhfa para. tou/ patro,j mou(

NAS Revelation 2:27 **AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON,** kai, (ch) poimanei/ poimai,nw (vifa--3s; "He will rule/shepherd"; contextually a governing authority physically and spiritually; used 11x) auvtou,j auvtou,j (npam3p; ref. the nations) evn (pI; "with") r`a,bdw| r`a,bdoj (n-Lf-s; lit. a measuring stick; "rod/shepherd's staff/royal scepter"; used 12x) sidhra/| sidhrouj(a--Lf-s; "of iron"; emphasizes strict and exact justice of rule"; used 5x) **AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES,** w`j (compara. conj.; "just as/in such a way as") ta. to, skeu,h skew/oj (d.a. + n-nn-p; "the vessels"; contextually earthenware/pottery; used 23x) ta. to, keramika. keramiko,j (d.a. + a--nn-p; lit. made of clay/made by a potter; "of the potter"; hapax) suntri,betai( suntri,bw (vippp--3s; "have been broken to pieces/smashed to pieces/ shattered/crushed"; used 7x ) **as I also have received authority from My Father;** w`j (compara. conj; "as") kavgw, (compound conj. + 1s-pro-nom.; "I also") ei;lhfa lambda,nw (viPFa--1s; "have received") "authority" supplied para, (pAbl) mou( evgw, (npg-1s; ref. Christ) tou/ o` patro,j path,r (d.a. + n-gm-s; "the Father")

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GNT Revelation 2:28 kai. dw,sw auvtw/| to.n avste,ra to.n prwi?no,nÅ

NAS Revelation 2:28 **and I will give him the morning star.** kai, (cc) dw,sw di,dwmi (vifa--1s; "I will give") auvtw/| auvto,j (npdm3s; ref. believer with the right to rule) to.n o` prwi?no,nÅ prwi?no,j (d.a. + a--am-s; "morning/early/beginning of the light of day"; used 2x and only metaphorically, cp. Rev.22:16) to.n o` avste,ra avsth,r (d.a. + n-am-s; "the star"; same as 1:16,20; 2:1)

### ANALYSIS VERSES 26 – 28:

1. Christ now follows His exhortation to *hold fast until I come* ending vs.25 connecting those that are successful in so doing with two distinct promises in vss.26-28.
2. In vs.26a, He first articulates the two qualifications for any individual to fulfill this level of faithfulness introducing each qualification with an opening correlative conjunction, "**And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end**"
3. As with all these messages, the overcomer is any person that has at the least exercised faith into Christ Ph<sub>1</sub> emphasizing the believer's victory in the A/C via our union with Christ.
4. The first step for any individual to be the recipient of God's eternal blessings is making the SAJG.
5. However, what is distinct in our verses from the rest of the messages is the additional qualification that follows to keep **My deeds until the end**.
6. Therefore, the promises attached here require not only Ph<sub>1</sub> faith, but also Ph<sub>2</sub> faith in the truth of BD.
7. This demands not only inhale faith of the truth, but exhale faith in application.
8. The participle '**he who keeps**/thre,w – tereo' means to guard, protect, watch over, indicating a nuance of actively protecting Christ's accomplishments of executing the POG via His Person and message as our means for salvation.
9. Christ's (**My**) works looks to all that He did and taught as the perfect explanation and execution of the will of God for the world. Joh.1:18
10. This qualification revolves around the believer's active works in application of doctrine that in turn experientially is an action of defending the very works of righteousness manifested by Christ.
11. His works were a result of executing His own words of truth (Joh.5:19;30; 14:10) that is a reflection of the Divine love we are to reciprocate with as believers in application to Him. Joh.14:15,21,23-24
12. To apply doctrine in this sense is to maintain the essence of the CWL in the face of various challenges, rejections, etc.
13. Christ then makes clear that our Ph<sub>2</sub> faithfulness must be a life commitment as he highlights the successful believer as the one that applies sound doctrine **until the end**.
14. He challenges the believers in Thyatira and all believers to continue to live the Christian life in spite of the false teachings and practices that are present.
15. These promises are not for the spiritually weak and lukewarm, but is only available to those that have the spiritual integrity and strength to complete their course.
16. This is the sense of the noun '**end**/te,loj – telos' that indicates the full measure of

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achieving the goal as a successful Christian.

17. Since there are only two possible ways for the Ph<sub>2</sub> of a believer to end, though indefinite as to an exact time, it can only refer to physical death or the rapture.
18. Therefore, the mark of a successful Ph<sub>2</sub> is adhering to the faith maintaining it in application all the way into Ph<sub>3</sub> via death (dying grace) or the rapture.
19. It is also only these believers that will receive the ultimate prize or wreath as taught elsewhere in the NT. Cp.1Cor.9:24-27
20. In effect, it reflects the believer that is willing (+V) to keep on keeping on in the faith in spite of the enemies of the faith, the attacks of unbelief and -V or whatever else may arise in the course of the A/C.
21. Again, any omission to the maturity adjustment is to denote that one's state of spiritual maturity is relative to one's willingness to hold to **the end**. Cp.Vs.10c
22. This is designed to encourage all believers, regardless of time in grade or level of spiritual growth to continue to fight the good fight, keep the faith and complete the course.
23. The first promise to these overcomers that have a successful Ph<sub>2</sub> is taken from Psa.2, which is a Messianic SG<sub>3</sub> promise for the Son's fidelity to the Father, "**To Him I will give authority over the nations**". Psa.2:8-9
24. As part of Christ's eternal blessings, He now enjoys the attribute of sovereignty in the glorified hypostasis, being the designated Man through whom God administrates His plan. Mat.28:18; Dan.7:13-14; Eph.1:20-22a; Col.2:10; 1Pet.3:22
25. Via positional truth, all believers share in Christ's victory at some level, but those that complete the course will experientially exercise authority with Christ **over nations** in the Millennium.
26. To appreciate this aspect of SG<sub>3</sub>, one must understand the conditions that will exist in the Millennium and how it is to be administrated.
27. Church Age believers are in view (the context of Rev.2-3 mandates this interpretation) that were taken from planet earth at the rapture and spend the 7 years of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week in Heaven with the Lord. 1The.4:13-17
28. At the end of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, the Lord will return via the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent, destroy Antichrist and all unbelievers that oppose him in a military battle. Rev.19:19-21
29. Following His military victory, all that remains of mankind will be gathered before Christ that will separate the believers from the unbelievers at the judgment of the sheep and the goats. Mat.25:31-46
30. This will result in nothing but believers left on the planet in their fleshly bodies with an active and functional STA.
31. This is further illustrated in the parable of the Vineyard laborers of Mat.20:1-12 that reflects all believers will enter the Millenium equal as believers, yet with an STA:
  - A. The setting for this parable is Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.
  - B. The landowner is Jesus Christ, the vineyard the world and the workers believers, whose Ph<sub>2</sub> includes living through Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.
  - C. Some will become believers early in the week and enter the service of Christ, while others will believe at various points, even until the latest of hours reflecting the 7<sup>th</sup> year.
  - D. Being hired denotes Ph<sub>1</sub> salvation and their payment wages reflect the blessings of their salvation.
  - E. The blessing itself is to enter into the Millennial Age.
  - F. That STA's are still active and alive is seen in the disgruntled believers complaining because they had been believers longer than others hired after them

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and yet received the same wages.

- G. This parable is not teaching that all believers are equal in Ph<sub>3</sub>, but that God's grace provides certain blessings to all men based on grace and not their relative time in grade.
32. As these believers enter the restored world under conditions of maximum blessing, they will begin to procreate and their progeny will likewise possess an STA.
  33. Even though Christ will be visibly ruling from Jerusalem, many will be negative and will not believe in Him for salvation. Psa.110:2 cp.Rev.20:7-8
  34. Even among those that have or will believe, the STA will continue to be functional and operative, resulting in the possibility of criminal activity.
  35. Christ will execute His rule with perfect righteousness in accordance to the civic Law and will not tolerate crime (anything that violates the person, privacy or property of another) in any fashion and will administer a government, of which believers with the prize will jointly **rule**, dealing with these criminal types surely, swiftly and severely.
  36. The Greek term "**nations**/e;qnoj – ethnos" is to be taken in a more distinct sense of Gentiles (Mat.10:5) designating non-Jews.
  37. The Millenium will consist of Gentile nations in addition to the Jewish nation of Israel.
  38. Christ on the throne of His father David and the twelve Apostles will administer the kingdom/nation of the Jews. Mat.19:28
  39. Following precedence, this implies that rulership will consist of a ruling council for each nation with each council made up of any number of prize winning believers, obviously a number sufficient to provide each and everyone of them a position in this regards.
  40. The believers that are Ph<sub>2</sub> overcomers will be given maximum authority of the remaining national entities no matter whether they are male or female.
  41. That these believers will **rule** with the same zeal and accuracy of righteousness as Christ's is then made clear in vs.27, "**And he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father**".
  42. The verb "**rule**/poimai,nw – poimaino" is the verb used to denote the process of shepherding a flock and speaks of the administrative and protective activity in His kingdom both physically and spiritually.
  43. The real purpose of government is to protect positive volition and allow maximum freedom so individuals can pursue the plan of God under their own priesthood, a purpose that will be fulfilled perfectly in the Millennium. Cp.Act.17:26-27
  44. The statement about breaking **the vessels of the potter to pieces** is designed to teach the reality that criminals will be helpless against the righteous government of the Lord.
  45. The **vessels of the potter** refer to humanity, while the breaking **with a rod of iron** indicates the reality of capital punishment and its practice.
  46. It denotes that certain STA types will continually be separated from society providing the utopian world under which +V and mankind will flourish.
  47. For 1000+ years those adjusted Church Age believers in resurrection body will execute the righteous judgment of the Lord and the enemies of domestic peace will be subdued and executed if necessary.
  48. Christ cites His **authority** to give these believers their **authority** as the delegated **authority** He has **received from** God the **Father**.



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49. He shares His **authority** with those that choose to acclimate to God's **authority** in time refusing the pseudo-**authority** as represented in religiosity.
50. Therefore, the promise is apropos in light of the effeminate distortion brought upon the Church by religious reversio nists following Jezebel.
51. The 2<sup>nd</sup> promise attached to the faithful believers is then proclaimed in vs.28, "**and I will give him the morning star**".
52. Some manuscripts include this verse as part of vs.27, while others isolate it as separate pointing out the fact that chapter and verse divisions are not inspired, only the text itself.
53. As stated previously, when a symbol is interpreted for us within the book of Revelation, it behooves us to follow that interpretation.
54. This same construction is used in Rev.22:16, with the additional term "bright/lampro,j – lampros" meaning "shining/bright/radiant".
55. That verse confirms that **the morning star** is Jesus Christ.
56. Some confusion exists regarding this title since some translations indicate that Lucifer is the "**morning star**" in Isa.14:12, that is easily explained.
57. The name "Lucifer/ **lleyhE** – heylel", comes from a root that denotes the giving off of light by celestial bodies and should be translated as shining or shining one.
58. As second in command before Satan's fall, Lucifer (the bearer of light) was given authority over the physical creation and was designed to reflect the light of God, but chose darkness instead.
59. He is often mis-titled as **the morning star** rather than the light bearer as a son of the dawn.
60. The prophecy in Num.24:17 clearly relates the humanity of Messiah to His genetic roots in Jacob and also parallels **the star** to "*a scepter that shall rise from Israel*".
61. When Satan forfeited his position in the POG due to his negative volition, God determined that a man would be exalted over His creation and receive that position of power and glory. Psa.8:5-8
62. However, not just any man would be able to occupy this exalted position and God determined in eternity past that it would be His own Son. 1Pet.1:20
63. In order to effectively **rule** over God's creation, one would have to possess the attributes of eternal life, righteousness, justice, wisdom and more.
64. Christ perfectly fulfills all these requirements and perfectly reflects the POG in His Person.
65. The astronomical concept of **the morning star** is especially pertinent to the Church, as we await the coming of Christ at the rapture.
66. Venus is **the morning star**, the brightest of the planets that is visible in the eastern sky just before sunrise.
67. It is a well-known fact that it truly becomes darkest before the dawn, indicating that the cosmos will achieve maximum saturation with evil just prior to the rapture. 2Tim.3:1ff
68. While Paul does not fully explain this fact, it is clear that the vast majority of believers will be asleep (disoriented to doctrine in general and prophecy in particular) at the coming of Christ. 1The.5:10
69. Nevertheless, he clearly teaches that all believers whether spiritually awake or asleep will be delivered from God's wrath. 1The.5:9

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70. This astronomical reality also indicates that the rising of the Day **Star** (Christ's coming for the Church) is overshadowed by the rising of the sun (the Millennial day via the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent). Mal.4:1-3
71. The Day **Star** relates to Christ coming for the Church, while the Sun of Righteousness relates to His coming for Israel.
72. While these things are true, Christ's promise of giving these believers **the morning star** is not to be construed as a promise of the rapture, since all CA believers will be taken regardless of spiritual status.
73. It is to be taken as a promise of His own personal presence with the believer (completely fulfilling Joh.14:23) and the unique eternal approbation of others that comes with our association with Him.
74. And that is as it relates to the concept of rulership as this title is (Rev.2:26-27 cp. ref. to offspring of David [Davidic throne] Rev.22:16; Num.24:17).
75. Therefore, the giving of His Person to the believer that rules with Him reflects all of the association and approbation we will receive via the **rule**, dominion, royalty, glory and splendor of Christ Himself.
76. The successful believer's very person will reflect the very glory of Christ as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, though diminished as a Day **star** compared to the brightness of Christ as the Sun of Righteousness (the "brilliant" **morning star**).
77. This is not stating that just these special believers will be associated with Him, which is true for all, but that there is a unique manifestation in their resurrection bodies of the very essence and glory of the Son as reflected in His emitting of Divine glory as the ruler of all creation.
78. The visual glory that these believers will possess will outshine all other bodies of other resurrected believers and current human residents on earth as Venus is light brighter than early **morning**, identifying to all the prestigious members of the ruling councils.

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### EXEGESIS VERSE 29:

**GNT Revelation 2:29** ο` e;cwn ou=j avkousa,tw ti, to. pneu/ma le,gei tai/j evkklhsi,aijÅ

**NAS Revelation 2:29** 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' ο` e;cwn e;cw (d.a. + subs. ptc./p/a/nm-s) ou=j (n-an-s; "an ear") avkousa,tw avkou,w (vIaa--3s; "let him hear") ti, ti,j (interr. pro./an-s; "what thing") to, pneu/ma (d.a. + n-nn-s; "the Spirit"; ref. the H.S.) le,gei le,gw (vipa--3s; "keeps on saying") tai/j h` evkklhsi,aijÅ evkklhsi,a (d.a. + n-df-p)

### ANALYSIS VERSE 29:

1. Christ closes the message to Thyatira as with all the **churches** with a call to orientation, “**He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches**”.
2. The singular of “**ear**” indicates those that are positive and the necessity to GAP this information that for a clear understanding of dominant matters in Christ’s critiquing of each local church and the Church.
3. Only then can believers as part of the church/Church know what to avoid and what to embrace in seeking commendation from Christ.
4. The singular of the interrogative pronoun “ti,j – tis” is literally “**what thing**” viewing the parts of these messages as a whole, indicating that there is an underlying principle behind the overall critiquing of these seven **churches**.
5. That principle can best be summarized under the doctrine of the Importance of Bible Doctrine as the standard used in the critiquing of the church/Church and its spiritual state.
6. That a primary principle is underscored in this fashion follows the precedent of each individual message we have read thus far.
7. For Ephesus, the primary principle evolved around application of BD.
8. For Smyra it was perseverance under testing and tribulation.
9. For Pergamum, separation.
10. And now for Thyatira, that principle revolves around the doctrine of authority.
11. The effeminizing effect of Jezebel on this church looks at the gross distortion that the leaven of religiosity has upon the church/Church.
12. When left unchecked, it produces a system of worship in which the authority of God has been replaced/reversed with the authority of man following the very agenda of Satan.
13. It is this leaven that openly declares religious reversionism as it pertains to the church/Church.
14. History makes clear that it found its way into the Church via the Roman Catholic system.
15. While fundamentalist and evangelical **churches** recognize and generally look down upon this organization, the reality is that any local church that has instituted traditions of men, have misplaced authority structures and/or seek a form of godliness in lieu of maintaining the veracity of the Scripture, remain bedfellows to Catholicism to that degree.

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16. It is clear that apart from understanding the importance of BD, any individual doctrine expressed in any of these individual **churches** fails to carry maximum weight of intended instruction.
17. Separation, application, testing, authority and whatever else are all empty if there is no appreciation and understanding of the importance of God's word as it pertains to living the Christian life.
18. Beginning with this message, there is a change in the order of this call to faith placing it at the very end of the communication rather than before the promise(s), of which the remaining three messages follow suit.
19. It has been suggested that this change of format now gives Christ's call the force of a final warning rather than a simple admonition.
20. This makes total sense, since up to this point in Church history, the Church has only flirted with reversionism and now they are headed neck deep into it.
21. While we will see a basic improvement of the Church's spiritual status to include a short period of acceptable adjustment via the Philadelphia period, the warning will remain since that period is short and reversionism is the Church's final spiritual state.
22. For the Church Universal this indicates that due to its ultimate ending with spiritual calamity, the issue of admonition with encouragement of promised blessings becomes moot.
23. There is no reason to encourage one with final promises of blessing when they are predetermined to end their spiritual career under judgment. Rev.3:16
24. Only correction and warning make any sense in this regard.
25. These warnings serve to tell those that are +V and adjusted to beware of the Church and the path she has chosen and therefore remain generally if not totally aloof from mainline Christianity.

## OVERVIEW OF THE THYATIRA ERA

- I. This church represents approximately the years of 590-1606 AD of Church Age history.
- II. The historical developments during the previous age of Pergamum did much to set the stage for what would occur during the next several hundred years.
- III. The Church continued to be influenced by false doctrine from within and the syncretism of paganism, Judaism and Bible doctrine continued to bring the Church under the influence of evil.
- IV. During that era, following the reign of Constantine, the visible Church moved deeper into the Roman Catholic Church form and now is presented ultimately in its final form as a pagan oriented religious organization.
- V. The coup de grace of satanic influence upon the Church is illustrated through the woman Jezebel.
- VI. She denotes the ultimate effeminizing effect that the leaven of religiosity accomplishes by reversing the authoritative role of the Church in submission to God to a Church usurping God.
- VII. As the RCC became more entrenched in history, more and more people were seduced by the evil and ended up committing adultery with her.
- VIII. This is a reference to the attempts of the organized, visible church to incorporate the world in the Church and the Church into the world and historically was fulfilled by the Church's attempt to manipulate European politics.

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- IX. In 606 AD, Boniface III was crowned as the first universal pope, though Pope Gregory placed the Church truly into its political-religious format with limited authority over Western Europe in 590 AD.
- X. At this point the vast majority of Christendom came under papal influence, a situation that has largely continued to this day.
- XI. Ironically enough, the very incorporation into the world and the use of politics that enable and supported this system will be the very thing that is used to bring it to an end in Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. Rev.17:16-18
- XII. The offspring of this unholy, adulterous union prophetically refers to the various sects that came out of the Reformation but did not break with Roman Catholic mentality.
- XIII. These organizations will be observed more fully under the Sardis type church, but are not very theologically different from the Jezebel from which they separated. Rev.3:2-3
- XIV. The theological darkness of false doctrine during this time in history continued to intensify and many abominations were introduced into the visible organized church continuing to our time:
- A. Kissing the pope's foot. 709 AD
  - B. Worship directed toward images and relics. 786 AD
  - C. Use of holy water instituted. 850 AD
  - D. Canonizing dead saints and directing believers to pray to them. 995 AD
  - E. Fasting on Fridays. 998 AD
  - F. Celibacy of the priesthood. 1079 AD
  - G. Prayer beads. 1090 AD
  - H. Sale of Indulgences. 1190 AD
  - I. The doctrine of transubstantiation. 1215 AD
  - J. Bible forbidden for laymen. 1229 AD
  - K. The cup is no longer allowed to laymen at the Lord's table. 1414 AD
  - L. Purgatory invented (and not Colorado). 1439 AD
  - M. Tradition granted equal authority as the Bible. 1545 AD
  - N. Apocryphal books included in the Canon of Scripture. 1546 AD
  - O. Immaculate Conception of Mary. 1854 AD
  - P. Infallibility of Pope decreed. 1870 AD
  - Q. Public education condemned. 1930 AD
  - R. Mary assumed bodily to heaven. 1950 AD
  - S. Mary proclaimed Mother of the Church. 1965 AD
- XV. It was also during this period that grandiose and untrue claims of apostolic succession began to be advanced, eventuating in the belief that that Pope had absolute authority over the church.
- XVI. It is proclaimed in Catholic writings that *"There is no just ground for denying to the Apostolic teachers of the nineteenth century in which we live a prerogative clearly possessed by those of the first, especially as the Divine Word nowhere intimates that this unerring guidance was to die with the Apostles. On the contrary, as the Apostles transmitted to their successors their power to preach, to baptize, to ordain, to confirm, etc., they must also have handed down to them the no less essential gift of infallibility."* (The Faith of Our Fathers, p.54)
- XVII. Further, their own writings fraudulently claim that *"Peter was the first pope and Vicar of Christ receiving his eternal reward June 29<sup>th</sup> in the year 67. The first 31 popes all shed their blood in defense of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic*

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*Church. Pope John Paul II is the 266<sup>th</sup> successor in the unbroken line of popes since Saint Peter.”*

- XXVIII. These types of beliefs led ultimately to the Papal bulls (letters and diplomas with instructions or granting special privileges) and later to the belief that the Pope could speak *ex cathedra* (when teaching doctrine, he is infallible).
- XIX. The very name Thyatira means “continual sacrifice/a daughter” reversing the authoritative Biblical role placing the authority on the church above God’s being a central heresy that they have promoted producing false doctrine destroying the integrity of faith in Christ and Christ alone for salvation.
- XX. Basically, the RCC denies the finished work of Christ and believes in a continuing sacrifice that is reflected in the crucifix and their doctrine of transubstantiation.
- XXI. This also leads to praying for the dead, praying to dead saints (some possibly not even believers), burning candles, various forms of penance and other nonsense that delude men into thinking that their salvation is effected by their own efforts.
- XXII. The Word of God is quite clear that the work of Christ is finished and is completely efficacious for providing forgiveness to those that accept it. Heb.10:10-14
- XXIII. As the church moved further away from sound doctrine, various forms of faulty hermeneutics, especially allegorism, emerged and the truth became further corrupted.
- XXIV. As the organized visible church became more corrupt what some viewed as a golden age is accurately reflected by history as the Dark Ages, when the church basically became the agent of removing light from the world.
- XXV. Anyone that questioned Catholic dogma was branded a heretic and many serious persecutions were carried out in the name of God.
- XXVI. The Roman emperors Constantine and Theodosius I, in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, stopped the persecution of the Christian Church and along with Justinian I some 200 years later, essentially made the Catholic Church the state religion.
- XXVII. This became the format of a one world religious-political rule that will ultimately be dominated by the Antichrist.
- XXVIII. Just as the wealth of today migrates toward tax shelters, over the next 700 years aristocracy migrated toward the tax-sheltered positions of power in the higher offices of the church, those of bishops, cardinals and pope.
- XXIX. Where the Church and its people were once one, the Church hierarchy (First Estate) and aristocracy (Second Estate) were now one and there was now a distinct division between the church leaders and the common people.
- XXX. From their new power base running the church, the combined 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Estates sold indulgences and salvations, since the common people were terrified of purgatory (hell) and the last bit of wealth could be extracted from those that hope to be saved and go to heaven.
- XXXI. With the returning Crusaders in the late 11<sup>th</sup> and early 12<sup>th</sup> centuries came many different Christian beliefs, others (called cults and heresies) were springing forth all over Europe and various unorthodox Christian beliefs were filtering into Europe from Jerusalem.
- XXXII. Some of these beliefs permitted each person to find his or her own way to heaven and (primarily the well organized and rapidly expanding Cathars and Waldensians) openly frowned on a wealthy, licentious church.

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- XXXIII. Others were drawing away church members by competing claims of miraculous cures and since all power brokers fear the expansion of the political powers of others while their own shrinks, the church did likewise.
- XXXIV. The Albigensian Crusade (1209-1229 AD) was organized by Pope Innocent III to destroy the Cathars of southern France with their threatening doctrines and parallel organization of dioceses headed by bishops, was the largest of various efforts to suppress heresies since the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century.
- XXXV. As with all crusades (the crusade of the Cold War is an example), this required a massive social control belief system (propaganda) portraying the Cathars as a dangerous enemy, in this case as infidels and heretics, to justify the slaughter of targeted people and theft of their wealth.
- XXXVI. The burning of heretics at the stake for 200 years coalesced between 1123-1206 AD into the formal Inquisition.
- XXXVII. In 1206 and 1210 AD Pope Innocent III founded the Franciscan and Dominican Mendicant Orders to preach against heresy and in 1215 AD the Lateran Council was held which listed “clause by clause” heretical interpretations of the faith, the removal from office of heretics, confiscation of their property, excommunication and their referral to the feudal lords for punishment.
- XXXVIII. With the Cathars fleeing to other sections of Europe to escape certain death from zealous inquisitors and secular lords, between 1227 and 1252 AD Pope Gregory IX and Pope Innocent IV issued several bulls that further encoded and formalized the form of the Inquisition.
- XXXIX. The Inquisition was ready to start work on a grand scale shortly after the midpoint of the 13<sup>th</sup> century and as the Christian sects went underground, Popes Alexander IX, Urban IV, Clement IV, and Boniface VIII issued bulls to maintain that momentum and root out the last vestiges of threat to their power.
- XL. Franciscan and Dominican priests organized to lead heretics back to the fold evolved into a few zealous priests becoming inquisitors and torturers, condemning hundreds of thousands of heretics to burn at the stake over a period of 700 years, the majority being Cathars, Waldensians, Jews and Muslims.
- XLI. The irony is that this did not mean that all of these priests, etc., were unbelievers as Christ makes clear in His message to Thyatira that believers were promoting and engaging in these heresies.
- XLII. This also did not mean that there were not many substantial contributions made by the church either, and should not go unnoticed.
- XLIII. The local monastery often served as the equivalent of a modern experimental farm that would demonstrate better methods of agriculture.
- XLIV. Monks cleared forests, drained swamps and marshes, constructed roads, improved seeds and developed better breeds of livestock.
- XLV. During the Dark Ages, monasteries helped to keep scholarship alive when urban life was disrupted by barbarian invasions.
- XLVI. The men copied and preserved various manuscripts that were thus preserved for posterity and this included much patristic and classical literature.
- XLVII. Further, such men as Bede, Einhard and Matthew Paris wrote historical records that are the primary sources of information concerning this period of history.
- XLVIII. Many monks became missionaries, moving out as fearless representatives of the cross to evangelize unbelievers and found new monasteries.
- XLIX. They often provided for those in society that were outcasts, downtrodden and in need of medical help.

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- L. Those in serious need of hospitalization would usually find sound care in the monastery, just as the weary traveler could find a refuge for the night with a bed, food and hospitality.
- LI. Toward the end of this period, during the late middle ages (1000-1500 AD), because of crowding and poor sanitation in the monasteries, nurses moved into the community, hospitals were built and the number of medical schools began to increase.
- LII. In the late 1500's, several groups began nursing and tending the sick, poor and dying, among these were St. Francis de Sales, the Order of the Visitation of Mary, St. Vincent DePaul, the Sisters of Charity, Dames de Charite', Louise le Gras, Albuquerque, Order of St. Augustine, St. Camillas De Lellis, Jeanne Biscot and the Nursing Sisters of St. Joseph de La Fleche.
- LIII. Whether any of these works were rewardable with SG<sub>3</sub> will remain to be seen, as it is Christ that is the ultimate judge and will render it appropriately.
- LIV. *Review the Doctrine of the Importance of Bible Doctrine.*