

Lesson 5 The Church of Smyrna – the great commercial center

Day 1 History of city of Smyrna, Geographic Position, Title of Christ used

The present-day city of Izmir is the same city in which the church of Smyrna resided. Today it is the third largest city in Turkey, after Istanbul and Ankara. The population in 2019 was estimated at 4.4 million people. The province of Izmir today includes two other cities we are interested in in this study, the city of Ephesus and the city of Pergamum. The city was known as Smyrna (Greek name) until 1928 when its name was changed to Izmir. Today, Izmir is 99% Muslim, but small groups of Jewish people and small groups of Christians still reside in the city. Smyrna came under Roman control in 27 B.C. and because of her faithfulness as an ally of Rome, Rome made her inhabitants materialistically wealthy. The city was almost completely wiped out by an earthquake in the reign of Tiberius and reduced to rubble in additional seismic activity that followed. Marcus Aurelius restored the city but once again the area was reduced to rubble in 378 B.C. with another earthquake. The people of Smyrna rebuilt again. The first wave of Turks came in 1082 and besieged Smyrna several times. Then in the second wave of the Turks in the 15th century, the Turks stayed. Remember that Constantine moved the church from Rome to Constantinople (Istanbul today) in early A.D. 300's. Although Smyrna is quite a distance from Istanbul, you would think some Christian influence would prevail. For a time, the Muslims practiced their religion in the northern half of the city of Smyrna and the Christians practiced their religion in the southern half of the city of Smyrna. This is just FYI, in the past 41 years since 1983, at least eleven major earthquakes have been recorded in this country of Turkey, claiming the lives of over 79,000 people. They have occurred in clusters, one in 1983, one in 1992 one in 1995. Then six quakes hit Turkey again between the years of 1998 and 2003, another in 2010, four in 2020 and three in 2023. Most of us remember the one in August of 1999 when a 7.6 magnitude quake decimated the country, leaving over 17,000 dead and close to 45,000 injured. In February of 2023, another 7.6 magnitude quake killed 62,000 people (this includes the Syrians who were killed).

Izmir was an important trading post throughout its long history as it has an excellent harbor. It is strategically located for trade with Europe and Asia. It is on the western coast of Asia Minor and today it exports tobacco, grapes, figs, cotton, olives, and olive oil. In antiquity, its largest export was a plant called Myrrha commiphora, a shrub that produced a substance called myrrh, a costly substance, used in embalming dead bodies. You will remember that the Magi from the East brought the baby Jesus, gold, frankincense and myrrh. Gold for a king, frankincense for a god, and myrrh to preserve a man's body for a little while after death. Smyrna was founded as a city twice. It was founded as a Greek colony to begin with and then again under Alexander the Great in the 4th century before Christ. Because Smyrna had experienced a second life after Alexander the Great founded it again, perhaps that is why Christ addressed Smyrna as He who was dead and came back to life.

Smyrna was known as the **Crown** of Smyrna or the Paris of Levant. Smyrna had a double harbor so this made it excellent for trade. Smyrna was called the Crown of Smyrna because of its perfect and symmetrical buildings that encircled Mount Pagos. At the bottom of the mountain, stood the Temple to Zeus. Zeus was the father of all the gods in Greek mythology. He was the supreme

ruler who reigned over the sky, rain, clouds, and thunder. He can be compared here with the supreme god of the Canaanites, Baal. In the same area surrounding Mt. Pagos, there were shrines to Apollos, (the sun god), Aphrodite, (the goddess of love and beauty), and Aesculapius (the god of medicine). A shrine to Cybele (the mother of Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades) and statues dedicated to Poseidon (the sea god) and Demeter (the corn god) were placed near the commercial and political areas of the city.¹ Those who were priests of the different deities wore **crowns** called “Stephans” (see **Revelation 2:10**) when they had finished their year of duty in the various temples. Cybele was the giver of wealth and the goddess of the settled life or walled cities (fortresses). I am wondering what kind of significance and influence these devil gods have today over the peoples of the world and the Church, especially here in the United States. Do you ever think of how comfortable we really are? In addition to these pagan deities, the people of Smyrna also engaged in Caesar worship. The worship of Caesar was of course mandatory and primary before the people of Smyrna could worship their other gods. Those in the Church of Smyrna refused to worship Caesar and thus were subject to burning at the stake or being torn apart by wild beasts in the arenas for all others to watch. Polycarp was the Bishop to the church at Smyrna and he was burned at the stake on the Sabbath because he refused to recant and worship the emperor of Rome. (Lucius Verus and Marcus Aurelius in 169 A.D.)

What is the **title of Christ** used for the Church at Smyrna? **Revelation 2:8**

Rishon Va-Acharon is the Hebrew transliteration of “the First and the Last.”

What is at the first and last of the alphabet?

In the Greek, what are these two letters called? See **Revelation 22:13**.

In the Hebrew, what are these two letters called?

Now look at these two verses from **Isaiah 44:6** and **Isaiah 48:12**. Write the verses below and memorize them this week.

Isaiah 44:6

Isaiah 48:12

When you pray to the Alpha and Omega, to whom are you praying?

Remember, Moses and the burning bush, where he encountered God. What Name did God give to Moses to tell the Israelites in Egypt Who sent Moses to them?

If you know the meaning of **YHWH** or “yode heh waw heh” in the Scripture, write it down here. If you do not know, please turn in your Bible to **John 1:1-5** or simply glean this from **Revelation 1:4**.

¹ I crack myself up sometimes. I just spell check corrected the ‘corn dog,’ in place of the ‘corn god.’

Jesus is the Great I AM. Please see John 8:58 where Jesus said to Jews, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM.” Why did the Jews pick up stones to throw at Him?

If Christ is the Beginning and the End in ENGLISH, the Aleph and the Tau in HEBREW, the Alpha and Omega in GREEK, then doesn't it follow that He is also all the letters in between and all the spaces, too? Read **Matthew 5:17-18**.

I want to share with you some of what I am learning in the Hebrew Revelation course I am taking online now: A passage from the Talmud reveals a rabbinic understanding of Messiah coming as both Messiah ben Joseph (the suffering servant) and Messiah ben David (the conquering king) or in two comings. If the people's condition was worthy, then Christ would have hastened their reward and set up the kingdom during His first coming, but if not, He would have to come as the Messiah ben Joseph first and then later after He had made the people righteous by His blood, He would come as Messiah ben David, the Conquering King. This is not the first time I have come across this. Dr. J. Vernon McGee firmly believed that the Jews in 1948 did not return to the land in faith. The preterists believe that the return to the land in 1948 holds no significance to His coming again and His setting up a kingdom on this earth. Most preterists are also amillennialists; they do not believe there will be a literal physical political kingdom on this earth. So, what does this have to do with Jesus the Great I AM?

What do you do with letters?

How did Jesus perfectly communicate the love of God?

How did Jesus perfectly communicate (reveal) who God is?

How did Jesus perfectly communicate what God's intentions are?

Now, let's answer some even deeper questions:

From the first chapter of the Gospel of John (written by the same John writing in Revelation),
What was in the Beginning?

Who was in the Beginning with the Word?

Who was God?

How was everything made?

What was in Him from the beginning?

What was this Light in the beginning?

What cannot be hidden in darkness?

Read **Romans 1:20** and write your thoughts down here.

Who was present at the world's beginning? Were you? How about anybody else you know? Were they present at the beginning? Were they privy to what God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit were doing in the Creation work in the beginning?

Turn to **Romans 1:18-27**. I would like you to spend the rest of today's lesson meditating on these verses. Read them over and over again at least 3 times. After this is done, read these verses slowly taking in each word written. Do this one more time and then in the space below, tell me what happens to people today who say that God was not in the Beginning? That He had nothing to do with Creation?

Day 2 Continuing on with Jesus' Title

Do you know what Smyrna means? See what you can find out from your references.

The meaning of the name, Smyrna, tells us something about what's in store for this church. Read on in **Revelation** and record below what the connection is between the church of Smyrna and the name of the city, "Smyrna."

Read **Isaiah 60:6** and record below what clue is included in this passage that says this is about Christ's second coming and not His first.

What you are going to find out about the church of Smyrna may not be to your liking. Everything about the church of Smyrna in this letter is about death. **Death! Death! Death!** But look at the way Jesus reveals Himself to the Church of Smyrna: Write this below:

What is He telling the Church of Smyrna up front?

What has He already done for them?

Reread **Revelation 1:17-18** and write out the text here.

From this passage, why does Christ tell the church of Smyrna not to be afraid?

Have you ever been afraid? Of course, you have. Do you ever wonder where He is when you hurt so badly? When that migraine has you so sick that you are throwing up. Or maybe you've lost a spouse or a loved one. Maybe you've had cancer and had to undergo radiation or chemotherapy that has made you sick for weeks. Have you ever felt so far away from Him as you did during that time period? Or what about that job you just got laid off from? God are you there? Does anybody care ...out there? Do You care what happens to me? Can you see me?

I am going to give you several other names for God for you to ponder on.

The first name is **YHWH Shammah** and this Name means "*the God Who is there.*" You all know this. You sense His presence with you at various times in your lives. What makes His presence so, so real for you in one moment of time and not in another? I don't know the answer to that question, but I do think it must have something to do with where your head is at the moment.

What does He tell you in **Hebrews 13:5-6**?

The second name of God to be considered here is **El Chay** or **El Chai** and it means **Living God**. Why would this name be so important to the church of Smyrna?

Why is this name important for you?

Read **2 Kings 19:15-16 NASB** and write it out below:

Why would Hezekiah use the name, "**Living God**" for God here in verse 16? What were Hezekiah and the Jewish people facing? If you don't know, read **Isaiah 37:33-37**.

There is one more description of Jesus in **Revelation 1** that parallels His Title given to the Church at Smyrna. It is in **Revelation 1: 5**. Write it below:

Using a study tool online; see Biblehub.com, look up the Hebrew word used for "**first-born.**" Record what you find below:²

4416 *prōtōtokos* (from **4413** /*prōtos*, "first, pre-eminent" and **5088**/*tiktō*, "bring forth") – properly, *first in time* (Mt 1:25; Lk 2:7); hence, *pre-eminent* (Col 1:15; Rev 1:5).

² 'Bekor' Strong's concordance Hebrew 1060 "**first born**; hence chief, eldest son"

4416 /*prōtōtokos* ("firstly") specifically refers to *Christ as the first to experience glorification*, i.e., at His resurrection (see Heb 12:23; Rev 1:5). For this (and countless other reasons) Jesus is "preeminent" (4416 /*prōtōtokos*) – the *unequivocal Sovereign over all creation* (Col 1:16).

[4416 (*prōtōtokos*) refers to "the first among others (who follow)" – as with the *preeminent, glorified Christ*, the eternal *Logos* who possesses *self-existent* life (Jn 5:26).]

What did the eldest son receive? What did his siblings receive?

What does “the first-born” express In Jesus’ relationship with His Father?

Look up **Colossians 1:15-18** and write down what you learn about the word “firstborn.”

Another word for this similar idea is “*first fruits*.” What does this mean that Jesus was raised the First Fruits? **Lev 23:9-14, 1 Corinthians 15:20-23**

Do you understand this?

Because Jesus’ Father raised Him from the grave, He is the promise of more to be raised from the dead. We may physically die on this earth and our bodies may be laid in the dirt, but we will be raised from the dead by our LORD never to die again...we will live eternally with Him.

Why is the description of Jesus as the *Living God* so important to the Church of Smyrna?

Day 3 The Commendation Christ uses for the Church at Smyrna

The commendation is found in **Revelation 2:9**. Write this below:

These people who belonged to the church of Smyrna had a misconception about themselves. What was this misconception?

In contrast, move forward into **Revelation 3:17** and see what misconception the church of Laodicea had about themselves?

There are two states of poverty in the Greek.

1. **Penia**: the state of having nothing superfluous
2. **Ptocheia**: the state of one who has nothing at all; would have to beg to stay alive

When I looked at the Hebrew for poor (not poverty), the word “ani (disability or stress)” and “ebyon and dalit (poor and needy)” seem to say the same as the B’rit Hadashah: “I know thy tribulation and thy poverty.” But, for me the two Greek words used for the states of poverty, make the poor of the Church of Smyrna stand out even more, for they had nothing at all. Because the church of Smyrna would not deny Christ and embrace the culture and the gods of the time, they had economic sanctions placed on them and they had nothing at all.

Look up in your concordance in the Greek New Testament section to see which Greek definition goes with the Church of Smyrna? The number to go to is 4432. Click on this link and it will take you right there: URL: <https://biblehub.com/greek/4432.htm>

Strong's Greek and Hebrew **Search results for: 4432.**

Strong's Greek: 4432. πτωχεία (ptócheia) -- beggary, i.e. destitution

... Bible Strong's Greek **4432 4432**. ptócheia Strong's Concordance ptócheia: beggary, i.e. destitution Original Word: πτωχεία, ας, ἡ Part of Speech: Noun, Feminine Transliteration: ptócheia Phonetic Spelling: (pto-khi' ah) Definition: ...

URL: <https://biblehub.com/greek/4432.htm>

What is **Revelation 2:9** saying about the “Great Tribulation?” If this verse is not talking about the Great Tribulation, what is this verse talking about? See **John 16:33, 2 Timothy 3:12**

I didn't find a word for tribulation in the Hebrew. The **Greek** word for “**tribulation**” is “**thlipsis**” and has the following meaning:³

- 1) pressure
- 2) afflicted, anguish, burdened, persecuted, tribulation, trouble

Do you suppose Jesus telling the church of Smyrna that He knows their suffering gave them any peace? Would Jesus telling you He knows your suffering give you any peace?

Read these same two verses as above **John 16:33; 2 Timothy 3:12** and write your thoughts below:

How could the church at Smyrna have been released from the “suffering?” Answering this question may take some effort on your part. I will give you a hint: the church of Smyrna wouldn't worship Caesar as a god before they worshiped Jehovah God. A pinch of incense offered first to Caesar sufficed or allowed them afterwards to worship any god of their choosing. So, what would the church of Smyrna not do?

³ Strong's 2347 thlipsis

Surprisingly, during this period of severe persecution, the church continued to grow. We would think just the opposite, wouldn't we?

The Complete Jewish Bible translates **Revelation 2:9** like this. "I know the insults of those who call themselves Jews but aren't - on the contrary, they are a synagogue of the Adversary." Most of our Bibles will translate this verse as "they are a synagogue of satan," not "adversary." Some in the Messianic Jewish movement take offense at translating the word "satan" as "satan" instead of "adversary." The word in the original Greek text (diabolos) means "an opponent and slanderer." This word applies to "the angel who tests." They also take objection to the translation of the word "synagogue" as "synagogue" instead of "assembly" or "church." It has been only over time in the New Testament era that the word "synagogue" has been attributed exclusively to a Jewish house of worship. This word for "synagogue" is "sunagoge" and means an assembly of people and is found in Strong's 4864 in the Greek section. The word for "church" can also be translated as "assembly." Some Christians say that the Jewish Believers (who were "not really Jews, not truly Jewish Believers or pretending to be Jewish Believers) were causing division in the church of Smyrna through satanic influence.⁴ Dr. Chuck Missler thinks that those causing division, those who only "thought" they were Jewish Christians, were actually the people called the Judaizers, and they were demanding that all New Christians become Jews first and then undergo circumcision. As I have said before in this study, the gospel of grace rather than law was new to the Jewish people. This type of thinking was very different and very difficult for some of the Jewish people to successfully grasp. This group called the Judaizers followed Paul from town to town teaching the necessity of keeping the law. They followed Paul to Galatia and the letter to the Galatian church was written in part to warn them of the Judaizers.

I would like you to read **Acts 13** and **Acts 14** as well as all six chapters of the Book of Galatians. As you read, write down in the space below, your thoughts concerning those who wanted to keep the Church under the yoke of the Law. This is a long assignment. If you choose to do this assignment, that is fine, but if you do not, it is okay. However, I would like you to read the references listed with the questions below and answer those questions.

What had Paul and Peter been entrusted with according to **Galatians 2:7**?

Why does Paul speak twice about those preaching a gospel contrary to what they originally received in **Galatians 1:8-9**?

The Judaizers were preaching a gospel contrary to what the true Jewish-Christians originally received. Paul said in Galatians 1:8, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

⁴ Lost in Translation, Vol. 2, pp.106-107.

Replacement theology is a belief that the Church has replaced the Jews; God is finished with the Jews and they no longer have any place in God's kingdom; this includes the present and the future. Some of the Messianic believers today, attribute this problem with the Judaizers in the church at Smyrna and the way these words were translated in most of our Bibles, as the beginning of replacement theology thinking. In other words, the true Messianic believers of the church of Smyrna were not the Judaizers, but the replacement theology people have made them one and the same. The true Messianic Believers believe that salvation comes by grace alone, not by works of the law.⁵

If you would like to look at what the Bible has to say on the subject of the Jews' replacement with the church, read **Romans 9,10, and 11**. What you will find in these three chapters is that the promises made by God to the Nation of Israel have not been nullified. They continue as from the time they were given to them by God to this day. For a moment, there is a veil over the eyes of Israel until the fullness of the (count) of the Gentiles comes in. And when that last Gentile soul steps over the mark, the Jewish people will take center stage once again in God's timetable. (I believe we will not be here – I believe we will be raptured in that moment, at that time, in the blink of an eye. The Bridegroom's Father is going to tell His Son to go get His Bride, and voile we will be in His Presence). Going back to this circumcision disagreement, there is probably fault on both sides here, and I don't think anybody knows for sure what this "synagogue of satan" is actually referring to, but the discussion of this does bring out that circumcision vs. no-circumcision was a big deal in the early church.

Day 4 No rebuke for the Church at Smyrna/ Warnings for the Church of Smyrna

Rebuke

Was there any rebuke for the Church at Smyrna?

Warnings/Instructions

But what He does tell them is to not fear what they are about to suffer. Oh, boy! I told you that this church was all about suffering and death. And this is another cog of suffering in the wheel of death. Jesus is telling them they will suffer. What do you think is meant by the tribulation lasting 10 days in the following verse?

"Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for 10 days."

For any of you who have been schooled in all of Church history, can you tell when and what part of Church history Smyrna played? Remember, if the seven churches were in any other order, this would not ring true. There are some commentators that believe that these 10 days of tribulation were those days that were lived by the church of Smyrna under 10 terrible rulers of Rome who persecuted them. Again, oddly enough, the church grew during this period of persecution of which we would think just the opposite.

⁵ Notes of Revelation, Chuck Missler, p 26

Those 10 rulers who persecuted the Suffering Church were:⁶

Nero (54-68 A.D.) Paul was beheaded; Peter was crucified upside down.

Domitian (95-96 A.D.); John was exiled

Trajan 104-117 A.D.); Ignatius burned at the stake

Marcus Aurelius (161-180 A.D.); Polycarp martyred

Septimus Severus (200-211 A.D.); killed Iraneus

Maximinus (235-237 A.D.) He killed Ursula and Hippolytus

Decius (249-251 A.D.)

Valerian (257-260 A.D.)

Aurelian (270-275 A.D.)

Diocletian (303-313 A.D.) The worst of all!

Who was next on the emperor scene and what did he do?

Constantine was the next emperor on the scene and he became a Christian. So, the suffering stopped for a time. However, Constantine also moved the church from Rome to Byzantium or Constantinople in Turkey. One of his sons was the Bishop of Rome and the Roman church believed that Jesus was and is God in the flesh and He had always existed as God. Constantine's other son, was the Bishop of Constantinople and the eastern church did not embrace the Trinity. (For those of you who are curious, there is nothing new under the sun. The theology of the Mormons, the Jehovah Witnesses, all those who do not believe that Jesus is God in the flesh in today's culture, started and were perpetuated from the time of the beginning of the church. Read 1,2, and 3 John for more on this.)

What happened to the Roman church after that?

There was a war between the Constantinople church and the Roman church. There were 35,000 Believers in the Roman church who lost their lives to the Constantinople church over this issue of the Trinity.

Exhortation

How does Jesus exhort the Church of Smyrna?

Be faithful until death, ..."

They were faithful. They were martyrs for their faith in Jesus.

Five million Christians were martyred during the reign of these 10 kings above.⁷

"...and I will give you the crown of life."

What does a "crown" have to do with the church of Smyrna? If you can't remember, go back to the beginning of this church and see what connection there is between the city of Smyrna and "crowns."

⁶ Thru the Bible, "Revelation," J Vernon `McGee, Thomas Nelson, INC., publishers, Cambridge, Ontario, Vol. 5, p.906.

⁷ Foxes Book of Martyrs

Do you remember how the architecture of the city was laid out in a circle around Mt. Pagos making it appear as a crown from the sky? Who would have observed the “crown’ effect back then?

You have heard of the “crowns” in Scripture before; I will give you a list of them here and their addresses in the Scripture so that you can check them out yourself if you would like. There are five of them:

- Crown of Life – to be presented by the Lord to those who persevere under trial, love Him, and are approved (**James 1:12**; and **Revelation 2:10**)
- Crown of Righteousness – to be presented by the Righteous Judge in the future to all who have loved His appearing (**2 Timothy 4:8**)
- Crown of Glory – to be presented when the Chief Shepherd appears to those who have fed the lambs, the sheep, the flock (**1 Peter 5:4**)
- Crown Incorruptible – “an imperishable” wreath for those who press on for the goal (**1 Corinthians 9:25**)
- Crown of Exultation (Joy) - to be presented to those who win souls when Christ comes to take His church (**Thessalonians 2:19**). Paul was looking forward to meeting those again whom he had led to Christ. I think of my own pastor at Crossroads when I come across this crown of exultation. He has pointed so many towards Christ. What joy it will be when he meets up with all those in heaven who have been touched and transformed because of his far-reaching words.

What will we do with the crowns that we receive? Go ahead and read **Revelation 4:9-11**. Even though, it is the 24 elders who are here and they are the ones who are casting their crowns before the throne, at least 12 of these elders are representative of the Church.

Promise to the Overcomer

What is the promise Jesus gives to the overcomer from the Church of Smyrna?

Does this include you and me? Whatever we are faced with in this life, if we are overcomers, we will not be hurt by the second death. But, you say, what if I can’t do it? What if I chicken out? My flesh is so weak! Darling Daughter of the King, you will overcome because He who lives in you will overcome for you. Your job is to stay close to Him. He will do the rest for His Beloved. You are not alone. He will go before you. He will never leave you.

Closure

Smyrna is one of two letters to the seven churches, which has no condemnation, no criticism. The other one that has no criticism is the church of Philadelphia. These two churches are the only

cities of the seven that have prospered to the present day. Jesus was pleased with the church of Smyrna. He was right there in the midst of them. He had suffered, too. He knew what they were going through and He was there with them giving out His peace and His care in the conflict, in their tribulation. They were not alone. They had hope. God was still in control, even when they suffered. Jesus had been dead, but His Father raised Him from the dead. The church of Smyrna would suffer persecution and death, but with Jesus' resurrection from the dead as the first fruits came the promise of the many more of the church of Smyrna that would also be raised from the dead. They would not face the second death. We will study the second death in more detail when we get to Revelation 20:6. There are two deaths mentioned in the structure of Revelation. There is the first death that separates the soul and the body and the second death that separates the soul and the spirit.

**Day 5 What is in the Old Testament Concealed, is in the New Testament Revealed – the Church at Smyrna
Revelation 2:8 with Isaiah 44:6, Isaiah 48:12**

These two referenced verses speak of God being the *First and the Last, the Rishon Va-acharon* that we looked at early on in this lesson. There are two more titles/names of God here. The first one is *Israel's Redeemer*, and the second one is *King, Lord of Hosts*. We are going to look at these two titles/names of God here before we go on. Yes, we touched on both the First and the Last and King, Lord of Hosts earlier in our study. Please find out what you can about these two names/titles before reading what I have written below.

Ga-al

Melek, YHWH Tsabaot

1. **The Redeemer** – in Hebrew this name is “*Ga-al*” in our pronunciation. **Mark 10:45** says of the Redeemer, Jesus Christ: “for even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.” (**Mark 10:45**). Jesus came the first time as the Suffering Servant, as Messiah ben Joseph, who would give of His life and blood to pay for the sins of Mankind. The second time He will come as Messiah ben David, the conquering King. There was even confusion in Christ's day, the Jewish clergy wondering if there were two different Messiahs coming. Do you remember John the Baptist in jail asking Jesus if He was the One for whom the Jews had been looking or were they to look for another? The *Ga-al* has its first mention in the Scripture in the tiny four chapters of the book of Ruth. Boaz was Ruth's “Kinsman Redeemer,” her *Ga-al*. In this small book, we see three people who decide in their hearts to walk uprightly and do what is right. The church at Smyrna was pleasing to God because they also had determined in their lives to walk uprightly no matter the cost. The Church of Smyrna will die physically for their faith in Christ. But the Church of Smyrna will be redeemed. In the story of the Moabite Ruth, God had made provision in the Old Testament law, to take care of her because she was the widow of Naomi's son, an Israelite. Naomi had made such an impression on Ruth

for her belief in the Hebrew God, YHWH, that she followed Ruth back to Israel after her husband's death and she determined to worship YHWH. Boaz was a kinsman of Naomi's son and he took Ruth as his bride and thus provided for her for the rest of her life. Jesus Christ came to earth, as a man, making Him a kinsman. Jesus died for the sins of Mankind redeeming Mankind, buying them back for God. Ruth is found in the genealogy of Jesus Christ.

2. ***King Lord of Hosts*** – in Hebrew this name is “Melek, YHWH Tsabaot” in our pronunciation. This is a name of Authority and it means God is the King and He is the also the Lord of all angelic host. We will look at this further in next week's lesson. We will discuss the three different kinds of angels who were each created by the LORD God Himself. They were not pro-created, as we are; they were each created individually. For Mankind, only Adam and Eve were created, and Eve was created with a rib of Adam. Some, one third of the angelic host, fell from heaven because they were convinced by ha-satan (the devil, Lucifer) to follow him in rebellion. The fallen angels still have to play by God's rules. Even ha-satan has to play by these rules. All the fallen angels (including Lucifer) are under sentence to spend eternity in the lake of fire. See their judgment carried out in **Revelation 20**. The lake of fire is the second death. All those whose names are not written in the book of life, will experience the second death. The fallen angels cannot be redeemed. They have life and have been given permission to do what they do for a time. But their doom is certain and they know it. And ha-satan and his minions know their time is short. Check out **Hebrews 1**, Jesus is better than the angels and **Hebrews 2**, Jesus was made lower than the angels for a short time. Write your thoughts in the space below before going on to the second set of cross-references. Do not skip this. You will know why later in the study.

Revelation 2:10 with Daniel 1:12,14

For what was Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego tested according to the cross reference in **Daniel 1** and again in **Daniel 3**?

For what was the Church of Smyrna tested in **Revelation 2:10**?

Has God ever tested you? Please elaborate.

Has Man ever tested you? Please tell your story.

Which is more important, God's or Man's testing? This is not just a rhetorical question.

Which testing was more important to Daniel and his three friends?