

Lesson 7 The Church of Thyratira: A Military City

Review so far:

The book of Revelation is the only book of the Bible that has a divinely inspired outline of the book and also a blessing for the reader/ hearer of the words of this book and for the one who heeds the things that are written in it. So far, we have covered the first section of the outline, the things which John saw, by the time we were at Revelation 1:19. We are currently making our way through the second section of the outline, the things which are, chapters 2 and 3, which are the seven letters to the seven churches. We have already looked at the churches at Ephesus, Smyrna, and Pergamum. The next letter to be studied will be to the church at Thyatira.

The seven letters to the seven churches have four levels of meaning. What are these four levels of meaning? If you can't remember them, go back to lesson 3, day 3 and review them. Write them below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Ephesus was good at keeping heresies out of the church, but she was so busy doing things for the kingdom that she didn't have time for her first love, the King. So Ephesus was encouraged to restore that relationship. Her name means "darling." The overcomers from the church of Ephesus will be granted to eat of the Tree of Life.

Smyrna was the church written with death all over it. "Death, death, death!" God seemed to be warning them that they would indeed die for their faith. Theirs was to endure through it all until they were killed. The overcomers are promised there will be no harm to them from the second death. The name Smyrna comes from the myrrh that was made from a plant in this part of the world at that time. Myrrh was used in the embalming of the dead.

Pergamos or Pergamum was the church that married the world. It was the religious center of Caesar worship. In Church history it parallels the time of Constantine and his supposed conversion to Christianity. The one who overcomes in this church will be given a white stone with a new name on it that only the overcomer knows.

As I read over each of these three churches that we have already studied, I have noticed those who overcome their inadequacies in each of the individual churches will all receive the rewards stated for all the church(s) so far. Remember, the letters were given, not just to the specified churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, and Pergamum, but they were circulated to all the church(es) in Revelation and also all the church(es) of that time in Christendom and they certainly pertain to us today, as well.

Day 1: Background History: Thyatira and the Names of Christ Used

Today the road from Istanbul to Izmir connects through the town of Akhisar (population: 108,000). Akhisar now occupies the land where an important military city once stood, the city of Thyatira. In the time of the first century Christians, this city stood at the crossroads of three main roads leading to Pergamum, Smyrna, and Sardis. The city was first called Pelopia by the first inhabitants, the Lydians. Then the Persians took the city and changed its name to Semiramis that has overtones of Nimrod and Babylon. Then the city went to one of Alexander the Great's four generals' Lysimachus, and he named the city, Thyatira. I don't know if you remember this part of history from when we studied Daniel together, but Alexander the Great had no heir. He was only 33 when he died. So, his great conquests of land were divided up and given to his four generals. Lysimachus was given the city of Thyatira to rule. He was later defeated by another one of Alexander's generals who ruled Syria, Selucus I (Nicator) and thus this city of Thyatira became part of Syria. The city was then transformed into a fortress to guard the way to Pergamos. "Thyatira" in Greek means "daughter," and some think Lysimachus named the city "Thyatira" because he had just been informed that a daughter had been born to him. Another possible meaning for "Thyatira" is "a continual sacrifice." This will become important later when we start looking at the paganism of the culture of the surrounding land. Thyatira became famous for its trade guilds and membership in these trade guilds became mandatory if one was to work a certain trade. These trade guilds many times owned large areas of land. Each of the trade guilds had their own patron god or deity to worship. You might remember that Martin Luther called upon the patron saint of the miners in the 14th century before he broke away from the Catholic Church. Of course, Martin Luther lived in Germany and he prayed to a saint and not a god, but you can see how this type of idolatry made its way into the Catholic Church. This still exists in the Catholic Church today for many Central and South American Catholics: praying to Mary, the Mother of Jesus, or choosing a favorite saint to pray through as though that saint could help them in whatever their plight was. The city of Thyatira was also known for a purple dye that came from the madder-root which grew in that area. In the history of the Church, the Church of Thyatira is thought to cover the mid-evil time period from 600 to 1500 A.D. including the papacy and the rise to power of the Catholic Church in Europe. This is most interesting: most of the Catholic Church today and all of the Catholic Church in the past believes that Peter was the first pope and there has been a continuous apostolic succession in the papacy from Peter to the present pope. "Peter" is the name of a Chaldean (Babylonian, Iraq today) priest who interpreted the obscure and secretive doctrines of the Babylonian mysteries. This Chaldean priest wore a garment with two keys on it, a symbol of spiritual authority. These are the same two keys, Janus and Cybele, which don the attire of the pope to this day. Remember, the Apostle Peter, from whom the papacy of the Catholic Church claims its authority, was given the keys of the kingdom in Matthew 16:19.

The Name and Title of Jesus used for the Church of Thyatira

How did Jesus describe Himself to the Church of Thyatira?

Where have you seen this description of Him before in this study?

What is the difference in the description of Jesus used in Revelation 1:19 and the description of Jesus used for the Church of Thyatira? Why the difference?

I don't really know the answer to the question. All the other descriptors in the churches quotes almost word for word the description found in Revelation 1:19. Maybe the Son of God is also the Son of Man?

Son of Man

We are going to follow a rabbit trail again today in order to teach you about the name of Jesus as the Son of Man, rather than choosing the name of Jesus as the "Son of God." We will use the text of **Daniel 7, Matthew 16:13-20, and Matthew 26**. Please read these references now. Jesus was going to come as the Son of Man, a human being. He also would come and perform three miracles that only the Messiah could perform thus identifying Him to the Scribes, the Pharisees, the Saducees, and the Priesthood as the long awaited Messiah. There is evidence of His identity coming as the Son of Man in the Old Testament from the book of Daniel. The Hebrew word for the "Son of Man," is "**Bar-Enash.** "

Read **Daniel 7:13-28**

How did Daniel describe the one who came like the Bar-Enash in **Daniel 7:13-14**?

Does this sound like an ordinary human being? Or does this sound like the Promised Messiah who was to come?

In addition to this description of the Son of Man in Daniel and its apparent association to the Messiah, for whom they were looking, the Scribes, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Priesthood of Jesus' day were also looking for the One, the God/Man, who could perform the three miracles that could only be done by the Messiah. These three Messianic miracles were:

- The healing of a Jewish leper
- The casting out of a dumb demon
- The healing of a man born blind

Sometime before Jesus came the first time, the rabbis grouped miracles into two categories, one for those miracles that could be performed by anyone who had the power of the Spirit upon them and another one for those miracles that only the Messiah could perform.

If you will remember, Jesus purposefully sent the cleansed Jewish leper to the priesthood. This was so the Jewish leadership would start to investigate His Messianic claims. When the Jewish man cleansed of leprosy came to the priesthood, they were to initially make an offering of two birds. If after the man had been free of leprosy for seven days and the priests had determined that he truly had leprosy beforehand, they were to make four more offerings: a trespass offering, a sin offering, a burnt offering, and a meal offering. There had been no Jewish person (before the leper in this story who was cleansed by Jesus or any one else) who had come forward claiming before the priesthood that he had been completely cleansed of his leprosy.

In between the healing of the Jewish man with leprosy and the second Messianic miracle, Jesus was investigated by the priesthood. The circumstances of the second miracle can be found in **Matthew 12:22-37** and also in **Mark 3:19-30**. The casting out of a demon could have been performed by the priesthood, except for one exorcism, the casting out of a demon that caused a person to be dumb or not able to speak. In order for a priest, according to Pharisaic Judaism, to cast out a demon, he had to establish contact with the demon, and in order to establish contact he had to know the demon's name. If the man was not able to speak, the demon's name could not be known and thus the priests were powerless to perform this miracle.

The third Messianic miracle was the healing of a man born blind from birth. It so happens that the above man with a demon or demons who had caused the man to be dumb, so happened to be blind from birth, too. Jesus healed the man of his blindness, also. ¹

Do you remember when John the Baptist was in prison and he sent his disciples to ask Jesus if He was the Expected One, or should they look for someone else? Jesus told John's disciples to report to John what they had seen and heard. Write out **Matthew 11:2-5** in the space below:

Read **Matthew 12:31**. What do you think blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is? Answer this before you go on to the next paragraph.

¹ Arnold Fructenbaum, *The Three Messianic Miracles Manuscript 35*, Ariel Ministries, pp.1-20.

The Jewish leadership knew that Jesus was their long awaited Messiah. They were afraid they would lose their power over the Jewish people if they embraced the Christ who had come. The leadership wanted Him to be a King who would annihilate their enemies, the Romans. As a result of the leadership's rejection of Christ as their Messiah, the Jewish people, as a whole, rejected the Christ. It was very clear, at least to the leadership, that the Christ would come as the Son of Man and that Christ would perform these three Messianic miracles. Because of this rejection, Jesus pronounced a certain judgment on that generation of Jews that was unique to them...the unpardonable sin. The miracles had been clearly witnessed by the leadership and some of the Jewish people and they were held accountable for their rejection of Him as the Messiah, the Son of Man, the Son of God, and for the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit of God.

He who has eyes like a flame of fire and He who has feet like burnished bronze

Again, we see this first in the book of Revelation in chapter 1:13-14, "His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace..." The Name/Title of Jesus that encompasses this description of Jesus is found in the Hebrew as *El Kanna, Esh Okla*. The interpretation of these two names is: "God, A Consuming Fire," and "Jealous God." Have you ever thought about God being Jealous?

What do you think God has to be jealous about concerning you?

I would like you to compare the above verses in **Revelation 1 and 2** with the following verses in the Old Testament.

Revelation 1:13-14, 2:18 with Exodus 34:14

Revelation 1:13-14, 2:18 with Deuteronomy 4:23-24

What is the trigger for God's jealousy? It is worshiping something or some god, other than the one true God, YHWH. Let's think about this. What do we worship in this culture that we live in that has the potential to anger God?

Days 2- 3 – The Title of God used for the Church of Thyatira, *Shophet Tsaddiq*

***Shophet Tsaddiq* or Righteous Judge**

I am having quite the time today. My prayer time with God was taken up with a great deal of focus spent on His Title as *Shophet Tsaddiq* or Judge. I have to be honest with you. The Judge title today, and the picture in yesterday's lesson of God being a consuming fire and a Jealous God, has rattled me a bit. Not for myself, but for others who I have thought were genuine Christians, you know, those who profess publically as being born-again, but their lives bear no or little fruit and they have not known a significant lifestyle change. As long as I have been in Christ, there have been those who have really kept my mind churning concerning this. Do you know why? I imagine you do, because you, on the one hand, like me, want these people to be saved, but on the other hand, you, like me, have not necessarily seen their lives changed as you have seen your own or other Christians. Since 1997, I have taught 13 semesters of classes, each eleven weeks in duration, for Precept Upon Precept on the topic of Covenant. I certainly can now recite the lectures in my sleep. From the material I presented in those classes, a template remains on my mind at all times and I make sense of my world and the things around me by seeing them through this filter of "covenant." What I carry around from the Covenant course is this: when a covenant has been made between you and God, that time when you humbled yourself before Him and asked Him to forgive you of your sins and to come into your life, He wrote the law that was previously on tablets of stone for the Jewish people, onto your heart (mind) and you now are very careful to obey everything that is written on it. I don't know if this makes any sense to you, but it makes all kinds of sense to me. The people who continue to cause my mind to churn here are the ones who continue to get drunk with alcohol or do drugs, or continue to have immoral relationships outside of God-ordained marriages, after they have previously gone forward for an altar call and given their lives to Christ publically. I thought I had it figured out when one of my friends and her husband went forward to the altar together; her life completely changed and he went back to the streets and to his bottle. I thought the key was repentance then, and now I still think repentance has something to do with it. My girlfriend felt remorse for the life she had lived and she wanted to change. I don't think her husband had a change of heart. For me, I changed just like that with no effort. I came from a background of alcohol. Others I know did the same, with no effort on their part. Their sins and their vices just vanished. Others I know struggled, and with His help eventually won their battles. But there was something or some one inside of these people that drove them on to overcome; that some one has to have been the Holy Spirit. What I am afraid of, for those who could not overcome their addictions, are these four thoughts:

- 1) they didn't know of the Holy Spirit in them to call on Him
- 2) the Holy Spirit wasn't there at all, because they were not remorseful over their sin
- 3) they never quit running with their crowd of friends who lived similar lifestyles as their former self
- 4) it was just easier to give in to their addictions instead of fighting

So eventually they were back in that vicious cycle and they couldn't get out of it. But you say, "once saved, always saved." And yes, I do believe you cannot lose your salvation, but you must agree that there is some confusion here, or we are at least missing something in our understanding of eternal security. Certainly these addictions are **strongholds**. I also believe that God sometimes takes people out of their lives early because they are in a stronghold and they have not been able to get out of it and they are truly Believers. There is a record of such a situation in **1 Corinthians 5:5** where Paul says this, "I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."² I do struggle with making sense of it all. Sometimes I get clarity and then other times the waters get murky again. But Girls, I do know this, it is God who sees the heart and the mind and He is the judge. I need to give Him my trust that it is His desire to save people and He will complete what He has started in their lives and He will be a merciful and righteous judge. Would you want it any other way?

The Just and Righteous Judge

Before we go on to study these two judgments, I want us to look at some Old Testament Scripture that reveals this Just and Righteous Judge whom we will stand before someday to give an account of our deeds/sins of this life. Does God have the global right to rule? Does He have the right to make the Law, to enforce it, and also to judge the matters thereof?

Psalm 9:7-8

These verses right here make my heart soar above the clouds. From who or where do you think we get our sense of right and wrong, just verses unjust, righteousness verses unrighteousness, what is fair and what is not fair? As you answer this question, remember, we were made in His image. What does that mean exactly?

2 Chronicles 19:5-7

What are some words that come to mind when you think of justice?

² Dr. Arnold G. Fructenbaum believes that Satan has the power of death over an excommunicated Believer in only this one situation and after all four points of church discipline have been carried out by the church and the Believing offender has not repented and turned from his ways.

What are some words that come to mind when you think of injustice?

Do you think the judges of this land have gone from just to unjust judgment in our courts today? Give some examples.

I can think of one: The switch from moral law to unjust precedent judgment.

Do you think the judges of this day, in our land, fear the LORD?

Jeremiah 9:24

Psalm 99:4

Psalm 89:14

Psalm 33:5

God, indeed has the right to rule. He is King over all the kings of the earth. He has authority over all the earth, all of the entire universe, and all of the heavens. He is the ultimate Judge over men and over all the myriads of legions of heavenly hosts. When He judges all the earth, He will take away all evil, and He will establish His own goodness.

What are the three judgments depicted in Scripture?

1. The Bema Seat Judgment or the Judgment Seat of Christ

There is quite a bit of confusion about the Bema Seat Judgment. Please check out the following verses and write your thoughts in the spaces provided. This is about the judgment of the Believer.

Romans 14:10–12

2 Corinthians 5:10

Romans 8:1

1 John 2:2

John 3:16

Matthew 28:18-20

Romans 6:1-4

James 3:1-9

What can you conclude from these verses?

The Bema seat judgment does not decide our salvation. Our salvation is determined on whether or not we have individually accepted Christ as our Savior from sin and it is His blood that atones for our sin. At the Bema seat we will give an account of our actions. For part of this we will answer for our sins. For the other part of this, we will be rewarded for the accomplishments we have made for His Kingdom. I believe the crowns we talked about earlier in the study may be given out here. I definitely think my pastor at Crossroads has a crown of exultation awaiting him and he will meet up with all those he has led to the Savior and there will be great rejoicing in heaven when that happens. Some of us might be judged on our obedience to give out the Gospel message, or on our victories over sin, or on how well we controlled our tongues, or how faithfully we served the Lord in teaching, or if we persevered under testing.

Crowns

We have looked at these crowns before in this study. Check out the following verses and write your thoughts in the spaces below:

2 Timothy 4:8

James 1:12

Revelation 2:10

I Peter 5:4

Hebrews 2:7

1 Corinthians 9:25

1 Thessalonians 2:19

**2. The Great White Throne Judgment - See Revelation 20:11-15
Judgment**

In **Revelation 20:11-15**, we have the description of the white throne judgment and it is the last judgment. It is this judgment that will come after the Millennial Kingdom. At the end of this judgment the lost (not the saved) will be cast into the Lake of Fire. This Lake of Fire was originally meant for Satan and his angelic hosts who followed him into rebellion. At the Great White Throne Judgment, the Lake of Fire will be kept burning for both Satan and his followers and the lost. In Revelation 20:7-15, we see that this judgment for the lost souls will occur after the Millennium and after Satan, the beast of revelation, and the false prophet of revelation have already been cast into this Lake of Fire. So, the Lost will be judged and thrown into the Lake of Fire after Satan and his followers have been cast into the Lake of Fire.

I want to look at God's accounting system right now. Check out these verses and write down your questions to be answered. Are these verses talking about just one book or more than one book that must be considered for judgment?

Revelation 20:11-12

What does the Book of Life contain?

Psalms 28:4, Psalm 62:12 Revelation 20:15

There is more than one book of accounting that is opened at the GWT Judgment. At this same time as the opening of the books that recorded all the deeds of everyone who was dead, another book is opened, called the "Book of Life." This book records the names of

all those who have eternal life, those who have been saved from eternal punishment because their sins have been paid for by Christ's shed blood on the cross. Sometime in these peoples' respective lives they have come into relationship with Jesus Christ. They will spend eternity with Him. Those whose names are not in the Book of Life, whose names have been blotted out of the Book of Life or erased from the Book of Life, will spend eternity away from God in the Lake of Fire.

What does **Revelation 3:5** imply about the names that are blotted out or erased from the Book of Life?

According to **Revelation 17:8** how long ago was everyone's name written in the book of Life?

Those whose names do not appear in the Book of Life, how are they judged? According to what?

Those whose names are not in the Book of Life will be judged according to their deeds. Some theologians say the sins of these same people will determine the degree of punishment they will receive in the Lake of Fire by the deeds they have done in their lives. I'm not sure the Scripture says this. It's nice to think that there are levels of punishment in Hell, but I don't think this is Biblical. This teaching has overtones of purgatory coming from the Catholic Church.

3. The Judgment of the Sheep and the Goats - See Matthew 25:31-36

The two judgments that we will mainly concern ourselves with in the Book of Revelation are the Bema Seat Judgment and the Great White Throne Judgment that we have discussed above. There is one more judgment mentioned in the New Testament in **Matthew 25:31-36**, the Judgment of the Sheep and the Goats or the Judgment of the Nations. Some of the scholars think this nation judgment takes place after the Great Tribulation but before the Millennial Kingdom is set up. These see the purpose of the judgment of the sheep and goats to be the determination of who of the nations will enter the Millennial Kingdom. There are also some scholars who think all three of these judgments (Bema Seat, Great White Throne, Sheep and the Goats) coincide and are given out simultaneously. However, if the Judgment of the Sheep and the Goats is simultaneous with the other two judgments, it will not occur before the Millennial Kingdom and the above purpose of this judgment comes into question. With all of this said, we will consider only the Bema Seat Judgment as occurring at the same time as the Great White Throne Judgment. Matthew 25:31-46 records the Sheep and Goat Judgment. If these verses are truly about the nations of the world, and how they view, deal with, or treat Israel, then those on the left (the goats) who have treated Israel poorly and have wanted to drive her into the sea, will go into eternal punishment. But those (the sheep) who have

fed her and given her drink, who have clothed her, and visited her in prison, then they will inherit the kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world.

Who will be the Judge in all three of the Judgments?

How will He judge?

In Romans 2:5 we are told the unbelievers are storing up the wrath of God against themselves. Whether or not all the judgments are only one judgment, it is definite that Jesus will be the judge of all the earth and He will judge righteously. The dead in Christ will be raised up and they will spend eternity with the Savior although they will stand accountable for their deeds and actions. Those who have rejected Him will spend eternity away from the Godhead in the Lake of Fire. They, too, will be judged for their deeds. Only they can never do enough good works for God to let them into heaven. Only the Believer, who may also have issues with sin, will be welcomed into the kingdom because he has the blood of Jesus as a covering for his sin.

Day 4 – 5 The Commendation, Admonition, Exhortation and the Promise to the Overcomer for the Church of Thyatira

The Commendation

What does God say good about the Church at Thyatira?

Who produces within the believer these six virtues?

Jesus tells them they are doing well and improving. All these things are good. But, he has this against them: they tolerate the woman Jezebel.

I would hope that my current church would exhibit all of these six virtues and I believe they do, but if Jesus had something against this church, I'm pretty certain that there are things He would be against in my church as well. What about your church?

I can certainly see one thing we do tolerate in our church is the sexual immorality in the younger generations, perhaps because we are trying to reach them; its not that we condone it or sanction it or elevate it...there is a definite call to holiness in our church...its just that we don't know quite what to do with them to keep them coming and also to call them to repentance, a change of heart that wants to walk uprightly with God. Personally, I know there are things that I have just overlooked on purpose because I don't

know how to deal with them. I don't know how to communicate Truth in those situations without coming off as judgmental. However, this does not excuse me. How about you? How do you communicate Truth in similar situations?

The Admonition

In the church of Ephesus, we see the Nicolaitans' philosophy distorting the written Word. In the church of Smyrna, we have the Judaizers pushing circumcision on the Gentile Believers. In the Church of Pergamum, we perceive once again the Nicolaitans' philosophy soiling the pure Gospel message and we also see a new heresy coming to the forefront in the teaching of Balaam: the sacrificing of eternal riches for temporal gain.

Now, we will look more closely at what God had against the Church of Thyatira.

What does God have against the Church of Thyatira? See Revelation 2:20?

List everything you can find out about this woman Jezebel from Revelation 2. She is mentioned only three times in Scripture, once here in Revelation 2 and twice in the Old Testament books of I Kings and II Kings. See **1 Kings 16:29-33; 18:4,13,19, 19:1-3, 21:23-26, 2 Kings 9:22, 30-37**. Another **seven!**

In II Kings we see Jezebel aligned with the Northern Kingdom of Israel. She was married to King Ahab of the Northern Kingdom called the Kingdom of Israel. The nation of Israel had been split into two kingdoms during the reign of King Rehoboam, Solomon's son. Jeroboam of Nebat took the northern ten tribes and Rehoboam was left with only the tribes of Judah and Benjamin as the southern Kingdom of Judah. The Israelites were supposed to worship God only in Jerusalem and the men of the Nation of Israel were supposed to travel to Jerusalem at least three times a year to do so. Jeroboam made two places for worship in the northern kingdom of Israel. By doing this, the northern ten tribes would not need to go to Jerusalem to worship God. They could worship right there in their own territory. No more trips to Jerusalem to worship God. They could worship whomever they wanted to worship and not leave home to do it. Remember there were no good kings from the Northern Kingdom of Israel. The Southern Kingdom of Judah had a few good kings.

Jezebel's father was King of Eth-Baal and priest of Astarte. Astarte is the Greek form of the Middle Eastern goddess Ishtar.³ I cannot remember if we ever talked about this before, but all the gods from the beginning of history in Assyria, were just passed along from one great empire to another great empire with name changes. There is really nothing new on the planet. Those gods were really devils, fallen angels. Those fallen angels had set themselves as rulers over the lands of man. Actually, God had allowed them as rulers over the lands of man.⁴ YHWH was ruler over Israel; He was Israel's God. They were territorial and were behind the scenes of the great dictators of these vast empires. Remember the King of Tyre and the Prince of Tyre in Ezekiel 28 as we looked at last week? As these gods saw the empires of history established and expire, they were passed down from one empire to the other with a change of name. Thus we have Astarte in this time of the Kings of Israel who was really the Assyrian god, Ishtar. Now I have something else with which to intrigue you. Nimrod, the first great ruler of Assyria, was married to an "Ishtar" and supposedly, they had a son together who died and who was miraculously resurrected from the dead, back to life. I see Satan and his minions playing counterfeit all over this. What do you see?

Getting back to Jezebel. God had told the nation of Israel that when they rejected Him as king and accepted an earthly king, the king was not to multiply wives and they were not to intermarry with a foreigner who worshiped other gods. Why?

They would eventually worship their foreign wives' gods. King Ahab worshiped Jezebel's gods. Together, Ahab and Jezebel would eventually lead their people into worshiping other gods and committing spiritual adultery.

Now list everything you can find out about this woman Jezebel from the Old Testament References below:

I Kings 16:29-33

I Kings 18:4,13,19

I Kings 19:1-3

³ Wikipedia, "Astarte", August 22, 2016.

⁴ Dr. Michael Heiser

I Kings 21:23-26

II Kings 9:22, 30-37

What similarities do you see between the Jezebel of Revelation 2 and the Jezebel depicted in the Old Testament Tanach?

The letter to the church of Thyatira is the longest letter to the churches so far. Also this church of Thyatira occupies the fourth place on the menorah, or the Shemash. Remember, the shemash was the tube that was filled with oil to supply oil to all the other six lamps on the lampstand. Keep this in mind as we continue to move forward in our study. Don't forget, the Shemash also represents the Messiah. When we think about the seven lamps of the lampstand, let's also remember, that the lampstand is a picture of the Holy Spirit before the Throne of God. Remind your self of this every time you see the cover art for this study. This menorah is almost like a diamond, multi-faceted when it comes to the Holy Spirit and the Messiah as One.

Remember, there are four levels of meaning of the Seven Churches of Revelation: the local, the all inclusive of all the churches, the personal, and the church in history.

Many scholars who believe the seven churches are representative of the Church in history, place the church of Thyatira in the years of the medieval papacy from A.D. 600 to 1500. Thus, these verses in Revelation concerning Thyatira run parallel to the Roman Catholic Church during the Middle Ages. The Popes and the Catholic Church during this time period wielded power and incredible hold on the populace of Europe. The Church at Thyatira wasn't so much under the control of an outsider, as it was under the control from someone or something from within the church itself.

So what was the sin of this church?

Jezebel obtained lands through "inquisition." Read about this incident of Naboth's Vineyard in I Kings 21.

What did Ahab want that was not his to have?

Did Ahab not offer Naboth another piece of property that was better than the one Naboth possessed?

Did Ahab not offer Naboth a good and fair price for his land?

So what's the root problem Naboth had with selling his land for a good price or trading his land for a better piece of property?

See **1 Kings 21:3**

What did Ahab do?

What did Jezebel tell Ahab she would do for him?

Who is in charge of the northern kingdom of Israel? Trick question.

How did Jezebel pull this off? How did she get the vineyard that belonged to Naboth the Jezreelite for her crybaby husband?

She wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal and petitioned the elders and nobles of Naboth's city to hold a feast, and seat him at the head of the people. They were to hire two worthless men who would sit before Naboth at this table and falsely testify against Naboth that he had cursed God and the king. Then they took him out and stoned him to death with stones.

How is this like the Inquisition of Europe? What period of time does this cover? If you don't know, go back to your computer and google "the Inquisition" or look this up in one of your Bible references.

The Inquisition was an ecclesiastical tribunal established by Pope Gregory IX in 1232 for the suppression of heresy. It was active chiefly in northern Italy and southern France, and moved later into Spain and Portugal, killing those of the Jewish and Muslim faiths of whom it was thought had falsely converted to Catholicism. It was a way for the Catholic Church to get their hands on the property or the lands of wealthy Jews and Muslims. It was re-established in the 1500's by the papacy to combat Protestantism.

What did God give this woman called Jezebel who called herself a prophetess in the church of Thyatira?

What will God do to this Jezebel?

What will all the churches know about God? See Revelation 2:23.

Can you now answer a previous question of which church might go through the great tribulation?

What should the church of Thyatira have done? What should any church do that has tolerated immorality in the church?

Check out the following verses that may help you:

Matthew 18:15-20

1 Corinthians 5:1-13

1 Timothy 5:19-21

Please check back in Lesson 6 Day 5 for the Hebrew definition of repentance or *nahum* where it was concerning Balak, Balaam, and the Moabite women.

While we are still here, I want to ask you some very important questions. What do actions or behaviors have to do with repentance? How would Jesus or any other person know whether or not Jezebel and those with her had repented?⁵ All of the following verses are from the New Testament not the Old but check them out anyway:

Matthew 3:1-8

2 Corinthians 7:10-11

What lessons have we learned for our lives from the way Christ handled the Church of Thyatira and specifically Jezebel.

Romans 2:2

Hebrews 13:4

1 Corinthians 6:18

⁵ Precept Upon Precept Revelation 1, Precept Ministries of Reach Out, Inc., 1993, pp. 50-51.

Romans 1:26-27

I Thessalonians 4:3-6

Unfortunately, I have been in churches where immorality has run rampant and without check on the right persons. I realize that this may offend some of you who know to which church I am referring. I am not apologizing for my words. Marriages were shattered and children were tossed to and fro by those who came into the small groups ministry looking to hook up with a different marriage partner. It was like a cancer. Or, maybe described better as wolves clothed in sheep's clothing. Once one divorce was in place, many more followed. Children were conceived and brought into this world with no marriage intact. It seemed as though everybody was dissatisfied with their current marriage and actively looking for another good time. And the church pastor did very little and the church elders did even less. Perhaps they didn't know how to handle those who were caught in their sin. In one of those situations I did try to make contact with one gal who I thought was my friend but she never answered my phone calls or the letter I had written her. I had not seen what was really going on with her after her last child had been born; she was depressed and hurting. The disappointment in the church for me was how this gal was accepted back into the Body with no responsibility to break off the extra marital relationship and no consequences for her actions, not even any questions about it. I know that I do not know everything that was done by the pastor and the elders, nor the questions that were asked or not asked. However, it is not surprising that the pastor left for another ministry and the church pretty much fell apart. Those who had been the problem moved on to greener pastures where others didn't know their story and the dastardly deeds they had done. But, you know, the damage had already been done. Today, that church is struggling to stay alive. I'm afraid their lampstand has been taken away. Did the presence of the Holy Spirit leave the premises?

The Exhortation and Promise to the Overcomer

There are still a few verses in the Old Testament that we have not yet gone over in this lesson which can give us still more insight into the church of Thyatira.

Let's take a look at them.

Read **Revelation 2:20 with 1 Kings 16:31-32, and 2 Kings 9:7-10, 21-28.**

Check out **Revelation 2:23 with Psalm 7:9, 26:2, 28:4 and Jeremiah 11:20, 17:10**

Revelation 2:18 through 2:27 with Psalm 73:1-20

What are the consequences to immorality?

Compare **Revelation 2:23** with **Psalms 7:9, 26:2, 28:4** and **Jeremiah 11:20, 17:10**.

The Exhortation

What does Jesus say to the rest of them in the church of Thyatira who do not hold to Jezebel's teaching, who do not know the deep things of Satan?

Are these who do not know the deep things of Satan, the remnant survivors of this church? You know, the 10% that belongs to God?

I wonder about that church which had so many immorality problems. After the problem children, the pastor, and the music director left, there must have been only about 10% of the original numbers in that church.

That happened back almost 26 years ago now. That church has never recovered, and they are not the vibrant church they once were.

Promise to the Overcomer

Finally compare **Revelation 2:26-29** with **Psalm 2:7-9, Isaiah 30:14** with **Jeremiah 19:11**

Revelation 2:26-29

Psalm 2:7-9

Isaiah 30:14

Jeremiah 19:11

Am I reading Revelation 2:27 and Psalm 2 correctly? God has given Jesus the nations as an inheritance and Jesus will share His inheritance with those who overcome. Does this mean you and me? Will we be overcomers? You and I will be heirs if we are truly in

Christ. Remember, our job is to actively be in relationship with Him. He will do the work of overcoming for you. Stay close to Him.

Lastly, before we leave the Church of Thyatira, do you remember what the fourth position on the menorah is called? The Shemash.

The Church of Thyatira occupies the Shemash position on our menorah that we drew on page 30. This Shemash is the center Light on the Menorah. In Hebrew, “Shemash” is also the word for “sun” or the main source of light. The Shemash is the hollow tube from which all the other tubes on the menorah are filled with oil. It is indeed the main source of the Light in both the earthly and heavenly Temples.

In the Gospel of John, penned by the same apostle John who wrote down the Book of Revelation, Jesus is called the Light of the World. I find it so fascinating that the first creation of the natural world is Light. “And God said, ‘Let there be Light.’” Light is absolutely essential for every thing else to exist. Without light, we could not see. If we could not see, then there would be no need for eyes. Without light, none of the plants on this earth would grow from seeds. Without light, there would be no animals to eat of the plants of the world because there would be no plants. Without light, everything would have remained dark. We would not be able to see color or beauty. I would like you to stop whatever you are doing right now and just think about light.

You must understand ahead of this paragraph that God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit are One. Light is used all the way through both the Old Testament and the New Testament to testify that God is. The Shekinah Glory was that cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, with which the Israelites were given to follow in the desert so they would not lose their way. The Israelites could always look for the Light of the Shekinah Glory to assure them that the source of their security and comfort was always with them. In Genesis 15, the Shekinah Glory (God revealed to the Israelites in this manner) made a covenant with Abram and passed between the pieces of the flesh of the sacrifice while Abram was asleep, to make that covenant lasting and binding. “And it came about when the sun had set, that it was very dark, and behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a flaming torch which passed between these pieces.” **Genesis 15:17** The Shekinah Glory filled the whole mountain of which Moses climbed to receive the 10 commandments of the Law from God. After the sprinkling of the blood and the forgiveness of the sins of the people of Israel, God told Moses to invite Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, along with the seventy elders of Israel, to come up the mountain and worship Him at a distance. **Exodus 24:1-2** The Shekinah Glory would come to rest between the two cherubim above the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies in the Tent of Meeting and He would fill the Tent/Temple with His Glory so the Israelites could see, but not come close, lest He consume them in their sinful state. **Exodus 40:34-38** When Peter, James, and John saw the Transfiguration of Jesus, they were blown away with the whiteness of His clothes. When they awoke, for they had been overcome with sleep, they saw His glory and the two men standing with Him. **Luke 9:28-26** In the **Gospel of John 8:12**, Jesus spoke to those who had no hope and were in darkness, “I am the Light of the world, he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.” I want to share

three more Hebrew names/titles of the Triune God, here because they all have to do with Light and God's Splendor:

El Ha-Kavod or He is the God of Glory

Psalm 9:9

Psalm 29:3-4

Ezekiel 1:28

Or Olam or He is the Everlasting Light

Psalm 104:1-2

Habakkuk 3:3-4

Isaiah 60:19

Naddir Kavod or His is Majestic Glory

Psalm 24:7,10

Psalm 27:4

Psalm 145:12

Isaiah 33:17

Isaiah 42:8

Zechariah 9:17

John 15:5

Why would I place this name here with all the other verses that speak of light and glory?

Jesus is the Shemash. There are many overtones here that the Shemash stands for the Messiah. Jesus is the Shemash, the Vine, and the other branches are representative of the Church. Shemash is filled with oil. The other branches get their oil from the filling of the oil into the Shemash. Our filling of oil is dependent on that relationship with Jesus. Without Him, I can do nothing. Tank me up, LORD. Tank me up!

NOW, ON TO THE CHURCH OF SARDIS