

## **Revelation 2:18-29**

Sunday, August 2, 2020

### **I. The Christians (18a)**

### **II. The Christ (18b)**

### **III. The Commendation (19)**

### **IV. The Counsel to the Rebellious (20-23)**

### **V. The Counsel to the Rest/Remnant (24-25)**

### **VI. The Covenant with the Overcomers (26-29)**

### **I. The Christians (18a)**

**18a** **And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write,**

#### **A. Leadership**

The "angel" is most likely in reference to the pastor, the messengers, the teachers with that task to pass the message on to the congregation.

#### **B. Fellowship**

Thyatira was 40 miles southeast of Pergamus; it would be next on the postal route.

Jesus has a lot to say to them. It's interesting that the longest letter of the 7 in Revelation chapters 2 and 3 is written to what may have been – at least from a human perspective, the least significant city.

If Thyatira was noted for anything, it would be the numerous trade guilds it had...there were there, according to archaeological and historical finds, associations for weavers, tanners, dyers, and potters.

It wasn't much politically, but commercially, there was booming industry. It wasn't necessarily a great metropolis, but it was a great commercial center.

Barclay, *"From the inscriptions which have been found in the neighborhood it is clear that Thyatira possessed more trade guilds than any other town of its size in Asia."*

Acts 16:14-15 mentions Lydia of Thyatira, who was a *seller of purple* cloth from the city of Thyatira.

### **II. The Christ (18b)**

**18b** **These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass:**

#### **A. Son of God (His nature)**

The phrase "Son of God" is found 46 times in the Bible, but only once in the Book of Revelation. Jesus wants Thyatira to be aware of His deity...to seriously consider the fact that this is not some passing prophet, a typical teacher, a random rabbi, a high-ranking angel; Jesus indeed has 2 natures, but this message is not from the Son of Man, per se, it's from the Son of God. (I hope we all realize this)

### **B. Eyes like a flame of fire (His knowledge)**

He sees all – everyone, everything; Jesus searches the souls of the saints of every chamber of every church; He scrutinizes us with His eyes of omniscience (23b - literally = minds and kidney's - thoughts and emotions).

**Hebrews 4:13** (NKJV) "And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account."

**Job 31:4** (NKJV) Does He not see my ways, and count all my steps? (step-counter) (Job 34:21-22)

**Proverbs 5:21** (NKJV) For the ways of man *are* before the eyes of the Lord, and He ponders all his paths.

\*see also Isaiah 29:15-16; Jeremiah 16:17

### **C. Feet like fine brass (His necessity)**

Brass or bronze is symbolic of judgment. The sacrifices were killed on the brass altar and all the utensils used in this sacrifice which point to judgment, were made of brass. The brass serpent (Numbers 21).

Feet talk of going - Jesus is going, He is coming to judge the world, and judgement begins in the house of God (1 Peter 4:17).

## **III. The Commendation (19)**

**19 "I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last *are* more than the first.**

### **A. Works**

The Greek word is *ergon* (2041) and refers to a good deed, or action; it frequently occurs in an ethical sense.

### **B. Love**

The Greek word is *agape* (26) – in reference to Divine love from above, they had it, Jesus saw it, the fruit of the Spirit.

And not only did they have moral fruit, they also had ministry fruit.

### **C. Service**

The Greek word is *diakono* – usually translated “ministry” in the Bible. We’ve derived our English word deacon from this Greek word, speaking of servants, someone who runs errands, who executes the commands of another.

When you consider this list, it’s rather impressive isn’t it? Jesus knew this church in Thyatira had works, love, service...and the next one is pretty epic as well.

#### **D. Faith**

This is how we’re saved; this is how we’re sanctified.

This is how our walk with God begins and this is every step of the way - we walk by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7)

#### **E. Patience**

The Greek word is *hupomone* (5281) a remaining under, a patient enduring.

In the New Testament this is the characteristic of someone who is not swerved from his or her deliberate purpose and loyalty to the Lord by even the greatest trials and suffering.

When others would quit – they just kept going. When others fell by the wayside, they stood by Jesus’ side.

People like Adoniram Judson and William Carey.

#### **F. More Works**

The Greek language seems to indicate that not only were their works greater in *quantity*, but also in *quality*.

They looked so good, there was so much good, and yet, in that otherwise healthy body a malignant cancer had begun to form – the enemy was allowed to harbor there in Thyatira. (see also Nehemiah 13:4-9)

### **IV. The Counsel to the Rebellious (20-23)**

**<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.**

#### **A. Teacher/Teaching - that Woman “Jezebel”**

(Allow = KJV “sufferest” to allow, permit, not to restrain)

Jezebel was no Belle, she was allowed to teach and seduce Jesus’ servants into committing sexual immorality and idolatry. (Acts 20:30)

Jezebel – not too many little girls are named Jezebel, and there’s good reason for that. She’s the wicked woman of the OT – a woman of manipulation, intimidation, demonic indoctrination, leading to the utter contamination of the nation of Israel.

**1 Kings 16:31–33** (NKJV) <sup>31</sup> And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him. <sup>32</sup> Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. <sup>33</sup> And Ahab made a wooden image. Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him. (Hillary Clinton – Nancy Pelosi – it’s one thing to have them in the Senate of the White House, but imagine have that spirit in God’s house!)

(Jezebel can be found primarily in 1 Kings 16 - 2 Kings 9)

According to 1 Kings 18:4 Jezebel massacred the prophets of the Lord. Even the great prophet Elijah was afraid of her, he fled from her.

As you read the account in 1 Kings it seems as if King Ahab had a slight heart to serve the Lord, making alliances with the King of Judah, yielding to the ministry of Elijah, even honoring the Word, in that he would not usurp his authority over a neighbor named Naboth.

But Jezebel straight out, manipulated, intimidated, contaminated, and dominated her husband Ahab so that we read in **1 Kings 21:25** (NKJV) “But there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the Lord, because Jezebel his wife stirred him up.”

In the dictionary, Jezebel is a synonym for a shameless and immoral woman.

The Greek word translated Sexual Immorality is *porneuo* (4203) speaks of literal adultery as well as spiritual adultery; they go hand in hand (Revelation 17:2; 18:3, 9).

Some teachers believe that Jezebel was encouraging the Christians of Thyatira to attend the ceremonies and feasts of the local trade-guilds which were dedicated to pagan deities and often ended in unbridled sex.

David Guzik, *“Perhaps a Christian was invited to the monthly meeting of the goldsmith’s guild, and the meeting was held at the temple of Apollo. “Jezebel” would allow or encourage the man to go – perhaps even using a “prophetic” word – and when the man went, he fell into immorality and idolatry.”*

The draw to the guilds and their meetings was powerful. “No merchant or trader could hope to prosper or make money unless he was a member of his trade guild.” (Barclay) Nonetheless, Christians were expected to stand in the face of this kind of pressure. One ancient Christian named Tertullian wrote about Christians who made their living in trades connected to pagan idolatry. A painter might find work in pagan temples or a sculptor might be hired to make a statue of a pagan god. They would justify this by saying, “This is my living, and I must live.” Tertullian replied, *Vivere ergo habes?* “Must you live?”

(Spiritual Adultery is seen ever so clearly in the Catholic Church)

## **B. The Time**

**21 And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.**

God gave them time to repent. And God is perfectly patient; no one knows how long He will put up with our wrongs, but He **is** longsuffering and He does give us time to repent; to discover and immediately deal with doctrines of demons, to handle those Jezebels, to excommunicate unrepentant adultery, sexual immorality, godless idolatry.

God gives us time (like those gracious parents)

David Guzik, "*God gives **time to repent**, but it is not an unlimited time. There is a time when God says, My Spirit shall not strive with man forever (Genesis 6:3). This means that when God gives us **time to repent**, we must take advantage of that time.*"

God informs and warns, so they would hear and fear, and even though they were so far, that they'd return and draw near to the Lord. Don't be insistent, don't be resistant, don't be persistent – don't wait to get right, 'cuz you might run out of time.

Get right or get left

### **C. The Tribulation**

**22 Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. 23 I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.**

If she and her followers, kept sleeping around, Jesus warned and informed them that He would cast them into a sickbed, and the place of pleasure would become a place of pain...and there in this bed they idolized, they'd be paralyzed.

Not just Tribulation, but Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:21; Revelation 7:14)

It's interesting to note that the Catholic church even teaches that the church WILL go through the Tribulation Period.

Her children would die; and the churches would see – that God sees.

**Revelation 2:23 (NLT)** I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am the one who searches out the thoughts and intentions of every person. And I will give to each of you whatever you deserve.

(Tribulation/Damnation)

### **V. The Message to the Rest/Remnant (24-25)**

**<sup>24</sup> “Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden. <sup>25</sup> But hold fast what you have till I come.**

Notice who Jezebel’s pimp is (Satan)

Jon Courson, *“The depths of Satan speaks of the exoteric mystery of the false, cultic Babylonian religion. ‘We alone know the mysteries, the deep things,’ said the Babylonian priests.”*

When I think of the depths of Satan in a context like this I think of the Dark Side.

No other burden:

**Acts 15:28**, “For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things:”

(Acts 15:29 - abstain from idolatry and sexual immorality)

(Catholic church teaches salvation by faith *and* works - burdens)

### **A. Hold fast/tight what you have**

(John 15:1-8 – Rest/Remain)

We need a vice grip for victory.

**1 Thessalonians 5:21** (NKJV) Test all things; hold fast what is good.

“Till I come” - this the first promise of Jesus’ return found in these letters to the seven churches.

### **B. Hear what the Spirit says to the churches (29)**

## **VI. The Covenant with the Overcomers (26-29)**

**<sup>26</sup> And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations— <sup>27</sup> ‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels’— as I also have received from My Father; <sup>28</sup> and I will give him the morning star. <sup>29</sup> “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”**

### **A. Power over the nations**

(Revelation 20:4; 22:5)

(that’ was Jezebel’s goal)

Jon Courson, *“Ahab and Jezebel united in marriage to increase their power by merging countries and joining religions.”*

## **B. The Morning Star**

Jesus refers to Himself as the Morning Star (Revelation 22:16)

Another view that makes sense to me because I see these rewards beyond the norm, is that here is a promise that some believers will reflect Christ's glory even more so and shine like a star.

**Daniel 12:3** (NKJV) Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.

**Matthew 13:43** (NKJV) Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

**David Guzik, He who has an ear:** *"This is a letter that applies to everyone. It applies to those who are like Jezebel, who lead others into sin. It applies to those who follow the teaching of a Jezebel, and follow others into sin. It applies to those who permit a Jezebel to work her wickedness. Finally, it applies to the faithful who must hold fast."*

May we hear and flee sexual immorality and any form of idolatry.