

I. THE CHURCH OF THYATIRA

- A. The modern town of Akhisar is on the site, so little archaeological excavation has been done. Probably the least important of the seven cities, yet it is the longest of the seven letters. The city was especially known for its trade guilds. Trade guilds were centers of social life as well as the commerce of the city.
- B. All employees in trade guilds had to attend worship feasts for Apollo the Sun-god, the son of Zeus, or their patron god which involved going to idolatrous feasts which included much drunkenness and immorality. Those who refused the feasts were not allowed to be hired.

II. JESUS' REVELATION OF HIMSELF

And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, ' These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass (Rev. 2:18)

- A. Son of God. This is a frequent title in the Gospel of John and it speaks of Jesus' divinity, majesty, and power to judge.
- B. Eyes like a flame of fire (Cf. Rev. 1:14-15; Dan. 10:6) speaks of Jesus' desire to impart passion (Luke 24:32; Acts 2:1-4) and/or to convict of sinful deeds. Fire is the symbol of love and holiness.
- C. Jesus is a mighty warrior who walks over His enemies and brings all sin under His feet. Brass is a symbol of judgment against sin.

III. AFFIRMATION FOR FAITHFULNESS

I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first (Rev. 2:19)

- A. The 2 churches with the most serious problems also have the most extensive list of good "works." This is the only church commended for both their love and service.
- B. Jesus affirms their increase of work. The deeds of this church were more in number and quality than their earlier days (which was opposite of the Church in Ephesus).

IV. CORRECTION FOR COMPROMISE

- A. Although their strengths were great, their weaknesses were even more severe. Like Pergamum, they had begun to tolerate wrong doctrine that led to immorality and had been tolerating the heresy that Ephesus had rejected. Pergamum had false teachers among them, but here, they "tolerated" the leader, Jezebel.

- B. They allowed Jezebel to teach “liberty in grace” in context to attending pagan idol feasts which involved immorality. Immorality is one of Satan’s primary weapons against the Church in the End-Times (Rev. 9:21; 14:8; 17:1-4; 18:2-4, 9-10; 19:2; 21:8).
- C. Depths of Satan –false teaching on grace that allowed people to embrace immorality with confidence in God. Jezebel taught that Christians can participate in immorality without fear of judgment. This constitutes the depths of satanic deception.
- D. Jezebel called herself a prophetess – She acted like the Jezebel in the OT who was a daughter the idolatrous king of the Sidonians (1 Kgs. 16:31-34; 21:25-26 2; Kgs. 9:22, 30-37). The Israelite king Ahab married her and was then seduced to engage in her idolatry and immorality. She led Israel into immorality and Baal worship. The NT Jezebel may have deliberately taken this name in her brazen boldness to show her confidence in endorsing sin. In the OT, she hated Elijah and killed the prophets. The NT Jezebel killed the prophets spiritually by seducing them to immorality.

V. FALSE PROPHETS AND TEACHERS

- A. The Scriptures repeatedly warn us of false prophets and teachers who would arise to deceive many (2 Pet. 2:1-22). *True teachers: Paul (2 Tim 1:11), Jesus (John 20:16; 13:13), in Antioch (Acts 13:1), One of the Five-fold ministries that Jesus gives to the church (Eph 4:11).*

Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.¹² And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold (Matt 24:11-12).

For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.²⁵ See, I have told you beforehand (Matt. 24:24-25).

- B. We must be aware of what the Bible teaches so that we will not be deceived.
 1. One test is to see if they confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh (1 John 4:1, 2).
Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.² By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God (1 John 4:1-2)
 2. Through greed and covetousness, false teachers exploit people with deceptive words (2 Pet. 2:3)
 3. We will know them by their fruits. (Matt. 7:15-16) Some come in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.
 4. If they claim, that they are the Christ, but do not come in the clouds, then they are false (Matt. 24:24-27). Many will show great signs and wonders to deceive and say it’s Christ.
 5. False teachers will not declare the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27), but only what people’s itching ears want to hear (2 Tim. 4:3-4).

For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27)
(Paul to elders of Ephesus).

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;⁴ and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables (2 Tim. 4:3-4)

6. False prophets have false and deceptive visions (Lam. 2:14). They will speak only happy prophecies which avoid negative things at the expense of tolerating sin. They will say “everything is okay.” If they had truly presented God’s case, people would have an opportunity to repent and have a chance for restoration.

VI. EXHORTATION TO RESPOND (WITH A WARNING)

- A. *I gave her time to repent.* Time is almost up, judgment is imminent. Jesus is patient even with Jezebel. God has amazing patience, but we must not mistake it or laxness. He will come in judgment (2 Pet. 3:3-13)
- B. *I will cast her into a sickbed.* Her bed of judgment was in contrast to her bed of immorality. Believers are sometimes made sick and even die in context to God’s judgment on immorality. Elijah prophesied of the death of Jezebel (1 Kgs.21:17-24).
- C. *Great tribulation* here refers to judgment on Jezebel’s disciples in that generation. This is not a reference to the Great Tribulation at the end of the age (Rev 7:14).
- D. *All the churches will know.* Christ is pouring out His judgment so that all the churches will know (1 Tim. 5:20)
- E. *Unless they repent* – the option to reverse God’s judgment remains open to any who repent.
- F. *According to your works.* Each person receives judgment on the basis of what each had done. It is at the heart of this book. God does not play favorites, but judges each by his or her works (1 Pet. 1:17).
- G. *I will put on you no other burden. Hold fast what you have till I come* – it takes diligence to hold fast to the doctrines of purity. It is not automatic. Jesus comes in seasons to “evaluate” us.

VII. PROMISE FOR OVERCOMERS

- A. *To him I will give power over the nations as I also have received from My Father* – reigning in the Millennial Kingdom (Lk. 19:11-27; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 3:21). Some will receive greater authority than others (2 Cor. 5:10). The reward for faithfulness in resisting immorality is to reign with Christ in His earthly kingdom.

- B. ***He shall rule them with a rod of iron; they shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels*** – David prophesied this of Jesus' Millennial Kingdom (Ps. 2:8-9). Iron is symbolic of an unbreakable and inflexible rule. The nations will be dashed into pieces as easily as a brittle clay vessel is shattered by an iron rod (Rev. 12:5; 19:15).
- C. ***I will give him the Morning Star*** – revelation of Jesus, His Word and authority. The morning star is the brightest star in the sky (planet Venus) seen just before the dawning of a new day. Jesus will prophetically lead His faithful with light as the new Millennial day draws near. This reward refers to Jesus sharing his authority with us along with nearness of His presence and increased prophetic insight as the darkness of the Tribulation increases and the day draws near.
1. The Morning Star is a reference to Jesus. A deep relationship with Jesus is promised here.
¹⁶ I, Jesus...am the Bright and Morning Star. (Rev 22:16)
 2. Jesus is the star or king from Jacob's family line who was given dominion over the nations.
¹⁷ A Star shall come out of Jacob; a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and batter the brow of Moab, and destroy all the sons of tumult...¹⁹ Out of Jacob One shall have dominion, and destroy the remains of the city. (Num 24:17-19)
 3. Receiving the morning star refers to receiving greater understanding of prophetic Scriptures.
¹⁹ We have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts... (2 Pet. 1:19)