

RUSSELL SANDERS

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THE SEVEN CHURCHES – LESSON 5

THATIRA

Thyatira (Revelation 2:18-29) was an inland city that was located on a great Roman highway located between two river valleys. It was a center of commerce with many trade guilds (forerunners of our trade unions). It served over several centuries as a location for a garrison of Roman soldiers. This corresponded to an Anatolian deity armed with a battle axe. The city also had (like Ephesus) a magnificent Temple of the pagan god Artemis (Diana).

Thyatira was also the home of Lydia whom Paul encountered in Macedonia at Philippi. Lydia was a seller of purple who Pastored the first Philippian church at her house. Jesus complimented this church in verse 19 on their works, their love, service, faith, and patience. He was especially proud of their works which were now greater than they were in its early years.

He was, however, highly critical of them for allowing ***“that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach.”*** (Verse 20.) This led many she taught into the sexual sin of fornication. (Sex without marriage.) She also promoted the meat offered to idols as being good food for the church, just like Pergamos (Pergamum) had done. Jesus said he would cast her and her followers into great tribulation, even to death. Only repentance could save them. Repentance from what? From sexual sin of all kinds.

We today often encounter the powerful and seductive demon spirit of Jezebel, who takes its name from King Ahab’s evil queen. Yes, all demons, including Jezebel, are male, but how does he operate?

Jezebel is frequently found in churches with the purpose of dividing the church and destroying its leadership. Jezebel comes in like a “wolf in sheep’s clothing” appearing to be good. It often slips into leadership or teaching positions. He is so convincing that many in the church gravitate toward the person with this spirit as their real leader. Rumors are started about the leadership designed to bring them down. It is a well-hidden spirit, but very strong and quite subtle and divisive.

Jezebel is also about control. This spirit can also be found in individuals as a controlling spirit. It is often only discovered in churches or individuals by discernment from Holy Spirit. It is one of the strongest of demons.

Jesus made a promise to the overcomers who maintained His works in Thyatira in verses 26-28, ***“To him will I give power over the nations.”*** This is presumably in the millennial kingdom. Jesus also said He would give them the “morning star” which is Jesus Himself. It’s a great reward as they will rule and reign as one with Jesus. This shows us that for the overcomer, heaven is only a temporary home. God has far greater plans than just heaven for us (wonderful

that it is) for our eternal future, where we shall reign as Kings and Priests (priestly Kings) with Him.