

Chapter 2 Commentary on Revelation

In chapters two and three of Revelation, there are seven letters. Jesus dictated them, and addressing them to the seven assemblies. These letters are an extension of the vision in chapter 1. Each letter is addressed to each of these seven messengers or pastors of the seven churches or assemblies. Let me begin by saying that scholars present three different theories as to what these letters mean.

The first point of view is that these seven letters are what is known as “church ages” and that they are consecutive through time. It is supposed that each letter is represented by a period of time beginning with Ephesus and ending with what is considered today’s period of the church of Laodicea. So we are the Laodician church, the church of today. This theory was made more popular after the Reformation by Martin Luther when a lot of churches left the Catholic Church. They thought they were cleaning up Christianity, which in many ways they did, but in many ways they just created different problems. They concluded that they were the church of Philadelphia. And I think one of the reasons that they thought that was because Christ had absolutely nothing bad to say about that church. Then that was followed with the church at Laodicea, which was concluded was the “last days” church. Laodicea was the church Christ said He wanted to spit out of His mouth.

The biggest problem with this view is that Jesus just told us how to divide up the book of Revelation... past, present, and future (Revelation 1:19). Where does the future part begin? Chapter 4:1. Chapters 2 and 3 are the present, from John’s perspective. So how could the whole thing be prophetic? It runs blatantly contrary to what Jesus just told us.

The second point of view is that they are simply what they say; they are letters to those specific churches, for them at that time, and nothing more. I think there is something more to it than that because why else would God preserve these letters for us to read and know about some 2,000 years later? If they didn’t mean anything for future generations of Christians why include them in the Bible? Every single thing in the Bible is there for a reason, even if we don’t yet know what that reason is. And the key to understanding the future, is understanding the past. God is always consistent in how He deals with His people. Besides, at the end of each one of the letters is a very interesting statement. Look at Revelation 2:7. And you will find this statement in each and every one of these letters.

Revelation 2:7 NKJV "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

He is saying, “He that has an ear, singular, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches, plural.”
Ο ΕΧΩΝ ΟΥΣ ΑΚΟΥΣΑΤΩ ΤΥ ΤΟ,, Ο (he, the one, anyone) **ΕΧΩΝ** (has, possesses) **ΟΥΣ** (ear) **ΑΚΟΥΣΑΤΩ** (listen) **ΤΥ** (any) **ΤΟ** (the)... In Greek this means that although this is being spoken to a single church, this church is to make the message known to other churches, plural. You can understand it the exact same way in English.

Now the third point of view, and it’s the view I hold, these letters were to specific churches that existed in John’s time, and they were to be given to other future churches as examples of what to do or not to do in order to stand blameless before Jesus in the Resurrection. Some churches

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(assemblies) might hold some of the same doctrines/problems as a particular church that Jesus is going to warn us about. Otherwise, why would the letters even be mentioned in the Bible at all?

So with that said, let's take to verse 1.

Revelation 2:1 NKJV "To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:

So we know that these seven stars are seven "angels", which are in turn, most likely, pastors, or simply messengers, giving Jesus' message to the local teaching elder (pastor) in order to convey to the congregation. That seems simple enough, but there are those who teach that these angels are actually angels from heaven. Let me ask you a question. Why would Jesus, who is in heaven **with** His angels, why would He tell John to write letters to His angels? So that John could "spiritually" mail them to heaven so He could have an earthly postmark and return address for His tax records? I'm just saying...

Now what is the significance of Jesus holding them in His right hand? In scripture, there is a precedent for this being a metaphor for protection and power. Psalm 63:8.

Psalms 63:8 LXX My soul has kept very close behind You: Your right hand has upheld me.

And the One walking in the midst of the seven golden lampstands would be, in fact, inspecting and watching the assemblies.

Revelation 2:2 NKJV "I know your works,

Pause right here. This is more properly translated from Greek to mean "I see your works, or deeds." The word "know" is better translated as "see" in some cases, in the Bible so we can get a very clear picture of what is happening.

G1492 – know

ΕΙΔΩ (εἶδω)

A primary verb; used only in certain past tenses, the others being borrowed from the equivalent, G3700 and G3708; **properly to see** (literally or figuratively); by implication (in the perfect only) to *know*: - be aware, behold, X can (+ not tell), consider, (have) known (-ledge), look (on), perceive, see, be sure, tell, understand, wist, wot. Compare G3700.

In every letter He says, "I know your works... or I see your deeds." He is saying that He is watching. He knows what we are doing because He is watching us. This is very clear, though some don't see it. They don't see it in order to continue to push forth manmade doctrines.

Revelation 2:2 NKJV "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars;

What does He mean when He says these are false apostles, that they are liars? Paul and John both had to deal with these. These were what we call Gnostics. They were people who had taken their

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Greek philosophy and mixed it with Christianity and came up with this mongrel kind of religion. It is actually very much like the churches of today, only they don't actually see it themselves. These were self appointed apostles (emissaries) not commissioned or sent by Jesus, but still claiming authority to speak on His behalf. Paul makes mention of these kinds of people in 2 Corinthians 11:12-14. But Jesus only commissioned twelve apostles (emissaries) including Paul. We can see this by reading Revelation 21:14.

2 Corinthians 11:12 NKJV But what I do, I will also continue to do, that I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast.

2 Corinthians 11:13 NKJV For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:14 NKJV And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.

Revelation 21:14 NKJV Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

And to this day there are still groups, including modern Gnostics that don't always call themselves Gnostics, that do this. The Roman Catholic Church continues to the present day this heresy of being Jesus' "apostle" with their doctrine of "Apostolic Succession". Several cults as well as the modern Charismatic movement also continue this heresy.

Now I have said it many times before, but for those who are not familiar with TAWA I will say it again... The best English word for apostle is emissary. And being Jesus' apostle would mean that Jesus had to **personally** appoint that particular individual to a certain task. Jesus sent out more than just the twelve to do some of His work, see Luke 10:1, but this particular honor He gives to THE TWELVE as is obvious from Revelation 21:14, and was, in fact, for those twelve ONLY. And they were given supernatural signs to prove they were apostles of the Christ, Jesus. Do modern day "apostles" do supernatural signs or miracles? Verifiable supernatural signs by objective means? No. Be careful that you are not deceived.

Luke 10:1 NKJV After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go.

So modern day speakers lay the same claims as the Gnostics did in the time John was writing this down. Essentially one of their, that is the Gnostics, main tenants was that Christ was not a physical being. Christ was a spirit, a god of sorts, and that Jesus was just a man, and that when Jesus was baptized, this spirit called Christ came upon the man Jesus and gave Him power to do all these miracles. Then when He was crucified this Christ spirit left Him and went back to heaven. In so doing, they say Jesus wasn't the Savior, He was just an example that the spirit Christ used.

The Gnostics had many other crazy ideas, but that was one of them. And they called themselves apostles. Actually, they claimed that Jesus had secretly given some secret knowledge to some other people, who had passed it down, secretly, to them. So they were "secretly" Jesus' apostles and they had all this other wisdom that the other Apostles, the real Apostles, didn't know about yet.

Let's read verse 2 again:

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Revelation 2:2 NKJV "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars;

In this verse Jesus commends them for testing those, so called, apostles and finding them false. What does that tell us? Should we just accept anyone who comes down the road and claims to be someone sent by God or Jesus? No. We should test them. The Bible says we should even test spirits, 1 John 4:1.

1 John 4:1 NKJV 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.

Paul also told us to test all things.

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

We test against Scripture. We use objective means, rules of interpretation, and search diligently to see if what we are being told is true. God does NOT expect us to dive in with blind faith. And we are given an example in Scripture as well. Acts 17:11.

Acts 17:11 NKJV These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

Jesus warned many times in the Gospels "not to be deceived". And as we are fast approaching the END TIMES, it is going to become more and more difficult to keep from being deceived. You MUST know your Bible, be with like-minded Christians, and as Jesus commanded, "Watch and pray always..." Luke 21:36, a favorite verse here at TAWA.

Luke 21:36 NKJV "Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

Remember, you are not called to blind faith. Faith comes in when you have studied the Word and know and believe regardless of the current circumstances that God will deliver His promises. Faith is when, even through doubts, you continue to follow Christ's commandments. Do you think Abraham had doubts? Of course he did. That's how we got that whole mess with Ismael over in the Middle East to this day. Yet when the Bible talks about Abraham, it talks about the "Faith of Abraham". It is because he continued to follow God's commands even when in doubt.

Revelation 2:3 NKJV "and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary.

All these are good things, but then in verse 4 He says, "I have something against you."

Revelation 2:4 NKJV "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.

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...you have left your first love. Do you know what they were doing? They started out well. And by all appearances they were still doing well, but they were just going through the motions, so to speak. "...First love", this is a waning love for Christ and each other within the assembly.

I have to make mention here... If you cannot find other Christians that are diligently seeking God's truth, but are instead holding to false doctrines of men, which 95+% of modern churches hold to, then it becomes very easy to fall into this category of losing your first love. You become in fact resentful of so-called Christians. I have been guilty of this... even knowing better. It is very hard to do because most Christians, if you don't think exactly as they do, will not even fellowship with you. Do Catholics fellowship with Baptists or vice versa? Of course not. I know different denominations of Baptists that will not fellowship with each other. They will even gossip and lie about each others churches and or individual congregants. In fact, sometimes even within the same church. It is appalling to me. It is absolutely taking the name of God in vain. It makes me always want to qualify to unbelievers or strangers what it is to be Christian. I have to defend the faith from Christians. I do not want to be known as one of "those Christians." They absolutely impugn God's character. And if I am not careful, my own resentment towards those types of Christians leads me to do the same exact thing, only to other Christians. The sad thing is that I never have problems with non-Christians. I speak four other languages and understand the cultures of these people, and never in all my years have had any problems with them about or between religions or denominations. The problems always come from professing Christians within the English speaking world. Now I know this isn't everyone. It's just everyone I've known. I have only to remember, and remind, that those who **endure** until the end shall be saved, Matthew 24:13; Matthew 10:22; Luke 21:19; Mark 13:13; Revelation 2:7. And I'm sure there are more.

Revelation 2:5 NKJV "Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place; unless you repent.

What is He saying here? He is saying that if you do not repent of your fallen state, then He will remove His light from your assembly. The church will become completely dead. Notice the necessity of repentance. Repentance is being called a "work" in a lot of modern churches and is being dismissed as a requirement, as Jesus commanded, because we are "in the age of grace."

The removal of the lampstand means that the Spirit or Breath of God would no longer reside among that assembly. Remember, we are talking about assemblies here, not individuals. This can also imply that, as the leaders of the assembly do, so does the congregation. That is why it is so important to have good leaders.

Revelation 2:6 NKJV "But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

The Nicolaitans were followers of Nicolas of Antioch, the only Greek among the seven chosen men in the Jerusalem assembly (Acts 6:3-5). Nicolas apostatized from the Apostolic Faith by embracing the teachings of Plato and blending it with Christianity, which is carried on in today's modern churches. According to Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book I, ch. xxvi:3, John's Gospel was written in part to counter the teachings of the Nicolaitans who denied that "the Word" became flesh. His Platonic dualism also removed the necessity and possibility of the resurrection of the flesh. Paul

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first encountered this aspect in the Corinthian assembly (1 Corinthians 15:12-18). For a further description of the Nicolaitans, see [Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Bk. III, ch. xi.](#)

I want to read these parts of Irenaeus. I know this seems trivial, but I want everyone to have a complete and through understanding of the book of Revelation, as we **are** nearing the biblical end times, for which no one prior to today could have anticipated correctly because the angel Gabriel told Daniel to “seal the book **until** the time of the end.” (Daniel 12:4). No other time in history, especially since Covid tracing and tracking, which is part of the Antichrist System being set up, have we been able to actually implement the Mark of the Beast. We are in a brave new world, people. And I highly advise getting right with God, and connecting to like-minded Christians in order to receive God’s protection through this “storm”.

If you would like to skip these excerpts and just take my word for it, which I don’t advise you doing, then I have highlighted them here for the next six pages or so, to scroll past more easily.

Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book I, ch. xxvi:3

3. The Nicolaitanes are the followers of that Nicolas who was one of the seven first ordained to the diaconate by the apostles.¹⁹⁰ They lead lives of unrestrained indulgence. The character of these men is very plainly pointed out in the Apocalypse of John, [when they are represented] as teaching that it is a matter of indifference to practise adultery, and to eat things sacrificed to idols. Wherefore the Word has also spoken of them thus: “But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate.”

Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Bk. III, ch. xi.

Chap. XI — Proofs in Continuation, Extracted from St. John’s Gospel. The Gospels Are Four in Number, Neither More Nor Less. Mystic Reasons for This.

1. John, the disciple of the Lord, preaches this faith, and seeks, by the proclamation of the Gospel, to remove that error which by Cerinthus had been disseminated among men, and a long time previously by those termed Nicolaitans, who are an offset of that “knowledge” falsely so called, that he might confound them, and persuade them that there is but one God, who made all things by His Word; and not, as they allege, that the Creator was one, but the Father of the Lord another; and that the Son of the Creator was, forsooth, one, but the Christ from above another, who also continued impossible, descending upon Jesus, the Son of the Creator, and flew back again into His Pleroma; and that Monogenes was the beginning, but Logos was the true son of Monogenes; and that this creation to which we belong was not made by the primary God, but by some power lying far below Him, and shut off from communion with the things invisible and ineffable. The disciple of the Lord therefore desiring to put an end to all such doctrines, and to establish the rule of truth in the Church, that there is one Almighty God, who made all things by His Word, both visible and invisible; showing at the same time, that by the Word, through whom God made the creation, He also bestowed salvation on the men included in the creation; thus commenced His teaching in the Gospel: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made.³⁰ What was made was life in Him, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.” (Joh_1:1, etc.) “All things,” he says, “were made by Him;” therefore in “all things” this creation of ours is [included], for we cannot concede to these men that [the words] “all things” are spoken in reference to those within their Pleroma. For if their Pleroma do indeed contain these, this creation, as being such, is not outside, as I have

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demonstrated in the preceding book;³¹ but if they are outside the Pleroma, which indeed appeared impossible, it follows, in that case, that their Pleroma cannot be “all things:” therefore this vast creation is not outside [the Pleroma].

2. John, however, does himself put this matter beyond all controversy on our part, when he says, “He was in this world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own [things], and His own [people] received Him not.” (Joh_1:10, Joh_1:11) But according to Marcion, and those like him, neither was the world made by Him; nor did He come to His own things, but to those of another. And, according to certain of the Gnostics, this world was made by angels, and not by the Word of God. But according to the followers of Valentinus, the world was not made by Him, but by the Demiurge. For he (Soter) caused such similitudes to be made, after the pattern of things above, as they allege; but the Demiurge accomplished the work of creation. For they say that he, the Lord and Creator of the plan of creation, by whom they hold that this world was made, was produced from the Mother; while the Gospel affirms plainly, that by the Word, which was in the beginning with God, all things were made, which Word, he says, “was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” (Joh_1:14)

3. But, according to these men, neither was the Word made flesh, nor Christ, nor the Saviour (Soter), who was produced from [the joint contributions of] all [the Aeons]. For they will have it, that the Word and Christ never came into this world; that the Saviour, too, never became incarnate, nor suffered, but that He descended like a dove upon the dispensational Jesus; and that, as soon as He had declared the unknown Father, He did again ascend into the Pleroma. Some, however, make the assertion, that this dispensational Jesus did become incarnate, and suffered, whom they represent as having passed through Mary just as water through a tube; but others allege him to be the Son of the Demiurge, upon whom the dispensational Jesus descended; while others, again, say that Jesus was born from Joseph and Mary, and that the Christ from above descended upon him, being without flesh, and impassible. But according to the opinion of no one of the heretics was the Word of God made flesh. For if any one carefully examines the systems of them all, he will find that the Word of God is brought in by all of them as not having become incarnate (*sine carne*) and impassible, as is also the Christ from above. Others consider Him to have been manifested as a transfigured man; but they maintain Him to have been neither born nor to have become incarnate; whilst others [hold] that He did not assume a human form at all, but that, as a dove, He did descend upon that Jesus who was born from Mary. Therefore the Lord’s disciple, pointing them all out as false witnesses, says, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” (Joh_1:14)

4. And that we may not have to ask, Of what God was the Word made flesh? he does himself previously teach us, saying, “There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came as a witness, that he might bear witness of that Light. He was not that Light, but [came] that he might testify of the Light.” (Joh_1:6) By what God, then, was John, the forerunner, who testifies of the Light, sent [into the world]? Truly it was by Him, of whom Gabriel is the angel, who also announced the glad tidings of his birth: [that God] who also had promised by the prophets that He would send His messenger before the face of His Son, (Mal_3:1) who should prepare His way, that is, that he should bear witness of that Light in the spirit and power of Elias. (Luk_1:17) But, again, of what God was Elias the servant and the prophet? Of Him who made heaven and earth,³² as he does himself confess. John, therefore, having been sent by the founder and maker of this world, how could he testify of that Light, which came down from things unspeakable and invisible? For all the heretics have decided that the Demiurge was ignorant of that Power above him, whose witness and herald John is found to be. Wherefore the Lord said that He deemed him “more than a prophet.”

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(Mat_11:9; Luk_7:26) For all the other prophets preached the advent of the paternal Light, and desired to be worthy of seeing Him whom they preached; but John did both announce [the advent] beforehand, in a like manner as did the others, and actually saw Him when He came, and pointed Him out, and persuaded many to believe on Him, so that he did himself hold the place of both prophet and apostle. For this is to be more than a prophet, because, “first apostles, secondarily prophets;” (1Co_12:28) but all things from one and the same God Himself.

5. *That wine,³³ which was produced by God in a vineyard, and which was first consumed, was good. None (Joh_2:3) of those who drank of it found fault with it; and the Lord partook of it also. But that wine was better which the Word made from water, on the moment, and simply for the use of those who had been called to the marriage. For although the Lord had the power to supply wine to those feasting, independently of any created substance, and to fill with food those who were hungry, He did not adopt this course; but, taking the loaves which the earth had produced, and giving thanks, (Joh_6:11) and on the other occasion making water wine, He satisfied those who were reclining [at table], and gave drink to those who had been invited to the marriage; showing that the God who made the earth, and commanded it to bring forth fruit, who established the waters, and brought forth the fountains, was He who in these last times bestowed upon mankind, by His Son, the blessing of food and the favour of drink: the Incomprehensible [acting thus] by means of the comprehensible, and the Invisible by the visible; since there is none beyond Him, but He exists in the bosom of the Father.*

6. *For “no man,” he says, “hath seen God at any time,” unless “the only-begotten Son of God, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared [Him].” (Joh_1:18) For He, the Son who is in His bosom, declares to all the Father who is invisible. Wherefore they know Him to whom the Son reveals Him; and again, the Father, by means of the Son, gives knowledge of His Son to those who love Him. By whom also Nathanael, being taught, recognised [Him], he to whom also the Lord bare witness, that he was “an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile.” (Joh_1:47) The Israelite recognised his King, therefore did he cry out to Him, “Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel.” By whom also Peter, having been taught, recognised Christ as the Son of the living God, when [God] said, “Behold My dearly beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: I will put my Spirit upon Him, and He shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench, until He send forth judgment into contention;³⁴ and in His name shall the Gentiles trust.” (Joh_1:49, Joh_6:69; Mat_12:18)*

7. *Such, then, are the first principles of the Gospel: that there is one God, the Maker of this universe; He who was also announced by the prophets, and who by Moses set forth the dispensation of the law, — [principles] which proclaim the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and ignore any other God or Father except Him. So firm is the ground upon which these Gospels rest, that the very heretics themselves bear witness to them, and, starting from these [documents], each one of them endeavours to establish his own peculiar doctrine. For the Ebionites, who use Matthew’s Gospel³⁵ only, are confuted out of this very same, making false suppositions with regard to the Lord. But Marcion, mutilating that according to Luke, is proved to be a blasphemer of the only existing God, from those [passages] which he still retains. Those, again, who separate Jesus from Christ, alleging that Christ remained impassible, but that it was Jesus who suffered, preferring the Gospel by Mark, if they read it with a love of truth, may have their errors rectified. Those, moreover, who follow Valentinus, making copious use of that according to John, to illustrate their conjunctions, shall be proved to be totally in error by means of this very Gospel, as I have shown in the first book. Since,*

then, our opponents do bear testimony to us, and make use of these [documents], our proof derived from them is firm and true.

8. It is not possible that the Gospels can be either more or fewer in number than they are. For, since there are four zones of the world in which we live, and four principal winds,³⁶ while the Church is scattered throughout all the world, and the “pillar and ground” (1Ti_3:15) of the Church is the Gospel and the spirit of life; it is fitting that she should have four pillars, breathing out immortality on every side, and vivifying men afresh. From which fact, it is evident that the Word, the Artificer of all, He that sitteth upon the cherubim, and contains all things, He who was manifested to men, has given us the Gospel under four aspects, but bound together by one Spirit. As also David says, when entreating His manifestation, “Thou that sittest between the cherubim, shine forth.” (Psa_80:1) For the cherubim, too, were four-faced, and their faces were images of the dispensation of the Son of God. For, [as the Scripture] says, “The first living creature was like a lion,” (Rev_4:7) symbolizing His effectual working, His leadership, and royal power; the second [living creature] was like a calf, signifying [His] sacrificial and sacerdotal order; but “the third had, as it were, the face as of a man,” — an evident description of His advent as a human being; “the fourth was like a flying eagle,” pointing out the gift of the Spirit hovering with His wings over the Church. And therefore the Gospels are in accord with these things, among which Christ Jesus is seated. For that according to John relates His original, effectual, and glorious generation from the Father, thus declaring, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” (Joh_1:1) Also, “all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made.” For this reason, too, is that Gospel full of all confidence, for such is His person.³⁷ But that according to Luke, taking up [His] priestly character, commenced with Zacharias the priest offering sacrifice to God. For now was made ready the fatted calf, about to be immolated for³⁸ the finding again of the younger son. Matthew, again, relates His generation as a man, saying, “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham;” (Mat_1:1, Mat_1:18) and also, “The birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise.” This, then, is the Gospel of His humanity;³⁹ for which reason it is, too, that [the character of] a humble and meek man is kept up through the whole Gospel. Mark, on the other hand, commences with [a reference to] the prophetic spirit coming down from on high to men, saying, “The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as it is written in Esaias the prophet,” — pointing to the winged aspect of the Gospel; and on this account he made a compendious and cursory narrative, for such is the prophetic character. And the Word of God Himself used to converse with the ante-Mosaic patriarchs, in accordance with His divinity and glory; but for those under the law he instituted a sacerdotal and liturgical service.⁴⁰ Afterwards, being made man for us, He sent the gift of the celestial Spirit over all the earth, protecting us with His wings. Such, then, as was the course followed by the Son of God, so was also the form of the living creatures; and such as was the form of the living creatures, so was also the character of the Gospel.⁴¹ For the living creatures are quadriform, and the Gospel is quadriform, as is also the course followed by the Lord. For this reason were four principal (καθολικαί) covenants given to the human race:⁴² one, prior to the deluge, under Adam; the second, that after the deluge, under Noah; the third, the giving of the law, under Moses; the fourth, that which renovates man, and sums up all things in itself by means of the Gospel, raising and bearing men upon its wings into the heavenly kingdom.

9. These things being so, all who destroy the form of the Gospel are vain, unlearned, and also audacious; those, [I mean,] who represent the aspects of the Gospel as being either more in number than as aforesaid, or, on the other hand, fewer. The former class [do so], that they may seem to have discovered more than is of the truth; the latter, that they may set the dispensations of God aside. For Marcion, rejecting the entire Gospel, yea rather, cutting himself off from the Gospel,

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boasts that he has part in the [blessings of] the Gospel.⁴³ Others, again (the Montanists), that they may set at nought the gift of the Spirit, which in the latter times has been, by the good pleasure of the Father, poured out upon the human race, do not admit that aspect [of the evangelical dispensation] presented by John's Gospel, in which the Lord promised that He would send the Paraclete; (Joh_14:16, etc.) but set aside at once both the Gospel and the prophetic Spirit. Wretched men indeed! who wish to be pseudo-prophets, forsooth, but who set aside the gift of prophecy from the Church; acting like those (the Encratitae)⁴⁴ who, on account of such as come in hypocrisy, hold themselves aloof from the communion of the brethren. We must conclude, moreover, that these men (the Montanists) can not admit the Apostle Paul either. For, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, (1Co_11:4, 1Co_11:5) he speaks expressly of prophetic gifts, and recognises men and women prophesying in the Church. Sinning, therefore, in all these particulars, against the Spirit of God, (Mat_12:31) they fall into the irremissible sin. But those who are from Valentinus, being, on the other hand, altogether reckless, while they put forth their own compositions, boast that they possess more Gospels than there really are. Indeed, they have arrived at such a pitch of audacity, as to entitle their comparatively recent writing "the Gospel of Truth," though it agrees in nothing with the Gospels of the Apostles, so that they have really no Gospel which is not full of blasphemy. For if what they have published is the Gospel of truth, and yet is totally unlike those which have been handed down to us from the apostles, any who please may learn, as is shown from the Scriptures themselves, that that which has been handed down from the apostles can no longer be reckoned the Gospel of truth. But that these Gospels alone are true and reliable, and admit neither an increase nor diminution of the aforesaid number, I have proved by so many and such [arguments]. For, since God made all things in due proportion and adaptation, it was fit also that the outward aspect of the Gospel should be well arranged and harmonized. The opinion of those men, therefore, who handed the Gospel down to us, having been investigated, from their very fountainheads, let us proceed also to the remaining apostles, and inquire into their doctrine with regard to God; then, in due course we shall listen to the very words of the Lord.

FOOTNOTES

23 Literally, "that he should place the incense." The next clause is most likely an interpolation for the sake of explanation.

24 "Ascriberet Deo" — make the property of God.

25 Harvey observes that the Syriac, agreeing with the Latin here, expresses priority in point of time; but our translation, without reason, makes it the precedence of honour, viz., was preferred before me. The Greek is, πρῶτός μου.

26 Thus found also in the Vulgate. Harvey supposes that the original of Irenaeus read according to our *textus receptus*, and that the Vulgate rendering was adopted in this passage by the transcribers of the Latin version of our author. [No doubt a just remark.] There can be no doubt, however, that the reading εὐδοκίας is supported by many and weighty ancient authorities. [But on this point see the facts as given by Burgon, in his refutation of the rendering adopted by late revisers, *Revision Revised*, p. 41. London, Murray, 1883.]

27 The text seems to be corrupt in the old Latin translation. The rendering here follows Harvey's conjectural restoration of the original Greek of the passage.

28 The Greek of this passage in Mark [Mar_1:2] reads, τὰς τρίβους αὐτοῦ, i.e., His paths, which varies from the Hebrew original, to which the text of Irenaeus seems to revert, unless indeed his copy of the Gospels contained the reading of the Codex Bezae. [See book iii. cap. xii. 3, 14, below; also, xiv. 2 and xxiii. 3. On this Codex, see Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 12, etc., and references.]

29 See ii. 35, 3.

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30 Irenaeus frequently quotes this text, and always uses the punctuation here adopted. Tertullian and many others of the Fathers follow his example.

31 See ii. 1, etc.

32 This evidently refers to 1Ki_18:36, where Elijah invokes God as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, etc.

33 The transition here is so abrupt, that some critics suspect the loss of part of the text before these words.

34 The reading νεῖκος having been followed instead of νῖκος, victory.

35 Harvey thinks that this is the Hebrew Gospel of which Irenaeus speaks in the opening of this book; but comp. Dr. Robert's Discussions on the Gospels, part ii. chap. iv.

36 Literally, "four catholic spirits;" Greek, τέσσαρα καθολικά πνεύματα: Latin, "quatuor principales spiritus."

37 The above is the literal rendering of this very obscure sentence; it is not at all represented in the Greek here preserved.

38 The Greek is ὑπέρ: the Latin, "pro."

39 The Greek text of this clause, literally rendered, is, "This Gospel, then, is anthropomorphic."

40 Or, "a sacerdotal and liturgical order," following the fragment of the Greek text recovered here. Harvey thinks that the old Latin "actum" indicates the true reading of the original πρᾶξις, and that τάξις is an error. The earlier editors, however, are of a contrary opinion.

41 That is, the appearance of the Gospel taken as a whole; it being presented under a fourfold aspect.

42 A portion of the Greek has been preserved here, but it differs materially from the old Latin version, which seems to represent the original with greater exactness, and has therefore been followed. The Greek represents the first covenant as having been given to Noah, at the deluge, under the sign of the rainbow; the second as that given to Abraham, under the sign of circumcision; the third, as being the giving of the law, under Moses; and the fourth, as that of the Gospel, through our Lord Jesus Christ. [Paradise with the tree of life, Adam with the Shechinah (Gen_3:24, Gen_4:16), Noah with the rainbow, Abraham with circumcision, Moses with the ark, Messiah with the sacraments, and heaven with the river of life, seem the complete system.]

43 The old Latin reads, "partem gloriatur se habere Evangelii." Massuet changed partem into pariter, thinking that partem gave a sense inconsistent with the Marcionite curtailment of St. Luke. Harvey, however, observes: "But the Gospel, here means the blessings of the Gospel, in which Marcion certainly claimed a share."

44 Slighting, as did some later heretics, the Pauline Epistles.

This should give you a good understanding of who the Nicolaitans were in John's time. And of the deeds being done, which Jesus HATES. By truly understanding, we are able to follow Christ's commandments more easily. This will take us to salvation through the Resurrection and into the Kingdom. This is our goal.

Revelation 2:7 NKJV "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

There is a lot to this verse too. So here we go... "He who has an ear, let him hear," This was a common expression by Jesus referring to those with a tendency to heed the words of His voice (cf. Matthew 11:15; 13:9; 13:43).

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In each of the seven letters, Jesus plainly identified Himself as the one issuing the commands. He was doing so through the Spirit of God, called the “Helper” in John 14:16-18. The Spirit (Breath) is clearly not a distinct Person, otherwise it would create a severe problem in each of the seven letters as to the source of the command. That the following words attributed to the “Spirit” in each letter cannot be a message from a third Person is proven in Revelation 2:26-29. We will see this in detail when we get there.

What does “overcome” mean in this verse? It means to conquer or win a victory, as in a fight or a race.

Go to 1 Timothy 6:12 real quickly. By the way, Timothy was in Ephesus at the time Paul wrote this letter. He had already put Timothy in the church of Ephesus to train some elders.

1 Timothy 6:12 NKJV Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Now turn to 2 Timothy 4:7-8:

2 Timothy 4:7 NKJV I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

2 Timothy 4:8 NKJV Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

This tells us that the Christian life is a struggle, a fight, or race. It is a battle.

2 Timothy 3:12 NKJV Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

Do not let anyone tell you that all you have to do is go to and become a member of some church, sign a card, and show up and everything will be perfect and easy and you will become prosperous and happy. That isn't how it works. The Bible tells us that some very bad things are going to happen before Jesus returns. The post-Covid world is different now. The Antichrist **is** on the scene. How are we going to fair during those periods of time? How do we know the future?

Here is the thing you need to remember... in order to understand the future, you have to understand the past. God is consistent in how He deals with His people. The way God has dealt with His people in the past is the way God will deal with His people in the future. The way God protected His people in the past is the same way He will do it in the future.

Do we have examples of God protecting or preserving His own in difficult times? Absolutely. What about when He sent angels to get Lot out of Sodom before destroying the city? When we look at Israel in Egypt, we see that God did not remove them until after the plagues were over. Instead, He protected them from the worst of what took place. In the case of Noah, he went through the flood but was protected in the ark. Rahab went through the destruction of Jericho and was delivered afterwards. Daniel went through the lion's den, but God protected him. His friends, Hananiah (Shadrach), Mishael (Meshach), and Azariah (Abednego) went through the fire, but God sent an angel to protect them. The same could be said for Joseph in the pit and in the dungeon, the disciples

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in the storm, and many others. It just seems that God is more likely to see His people through hard times rather than around them.

Is God going to let all these bad things that are predicted in Revelation to come down on us, and we have absolutely no idea what to do? Where to go? Or how to protect ourselves? He has never done it that way in the past, why would He start now? He gives His people what they need at the right time. But here is one thing to know about God, He doesn't usually give you what you need for those difficult times in advance. Remember, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever, Hebrews 13:8. And what did He tell us in Malachi 3:6, "I am Jehovah, I do not change."

With all of that said, you must OVERCOME, you must ENDURE to the end. There will be no secret rapture. And although most of Christendom believes that today in America, it is a false doctrine. You cannot find it in the Bible without twisting scripture, making assumptions, having "fuzzy" logic, and fearing the truth. It's just not there. DO NOT risk your salvation by taking the Mark of the Beast because you think you are going to be up out of here when all of "that" goes down.

Let's reread verse 7:

Revelation 2:7 NKJV "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

There is a little article, under the 'Classroom' tab, on the site here called "The Tree of Life and Everlasting Life" that will give you a good understanding of the real meaning of the "Tree of Life".

As for the "Paradise of God", Paradise or Garden (**ΠΑΡΑΔΕΙCOC**) it is the same word in Greek. The Garden of Eden will be restored (Isaiah 51:3 LXX). Its location was where Jerusalem is now located. The Tree of Life will grow on both sides of the River of Life flowing from the Temple (Ezekiel 47:12; Revelation 22:1-2). It is a kind of tree, it is not a single tree. Later you will see that we are going to eat from it a different fruit every month.

Also again note that in each of the seven letters, Jesus plainly identified Himself as the one issuing the commands. He was doing so through the Spirit/Breath of God, the "Helper" (John 14:16-18). The Breath (Spirit) is clearly not a distinct Person, otherwise it would create a severe problem in each of the seven letters as to the source of the command. That the following words attributed to the "Breath" in each letter cannot be a message from a third Person is proven in Revelation 2:26-29.

Revelation 2:8 NKJV "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, 'These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life:

Jesus' identification is given by two statements: 1. "The First and the Last," which points to His origin as deity. The phrase first comes from Isaiah 48:11-13, 16. 2. "the one who died and came to life," points to His becoming resurrected in the flesh.

Revelation 2:9 NKJV "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

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Jesus knows their poverty, but they are rich. The meaning here is obvious. They were rich in faith, and the grace and favor of Christ, as well as the Father. Their reward might include their fellow Jews' servitude in the Kingdom. Much like He is going to do for the Philadelphian Assembly. See Revelation 3:9. Those "synagogue of Satan" dudes are going to have to bow down and worship those in Philadelphia.

Revelation 2:10 NKJV "Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

This can be a somewhat scary passage for some. Today's Christian in America can't truly conceive of a God that would allow them to go through "tribulations" as such. What does it say here? "You **will** have tribulation ten days." You **will**... and "be faithful **until death**." That is a command. It is in the middle voice, which means it's up to you to perform the action of the verb; and it is in the imperative mood, so it is a command. Intuitively, I think Christians today know the truth. They become defensive, and even offensive, when you mention it out loud.

The early Christians actually expected to suffer for the faith. And it wasn't that there wasn't any fear, but that they had the correct perspective, like Abraham, in that they held on to the hope of the resurrection to eternal life. They endured until the end. They believed the promises of God. They knew that the troubles in this life, no matter how terrible they seem, could not compare to the glories that follow. So it was a small price to pay.

There should be no fear in suffering. Polycarp was the perfect example. As head of this assembly, he gave the perfect example to follow. And although there **should** be no fear, that doesn't mean that there won't be. Polycarp, who was actually appointed bishop of the assembly of Smyrna by the Apostle John prior to his imprisonment on Patmos, was "faithful until death," suffering martyrdom in Rome shortly after the writing of the book of Revelation.

There have been a few different 'theories' on what is actually meant by the **ten days of tribulation**, ten days of testing... 1. Some **early Christians** understood this to refer to 'Ten periods of persecution from Nero to Diocletian'. Or specific to the Diocletian persecution, which lasted exactly ten years, after which time Emperor Constantine ended the official Roman persecution of Christians. 2. The 'Ten Days' could refer to **all Christians**. As an example Daniel and his three friends were "tested" for ten days (Daniel 1:12-15). However, it may have a more enigmatic reference pertaining directly to the end times, as there are ten literal days from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur, which is the Day of Jesus' return. And 3. The 'Ten Days' could refer to **Endtime Christians**... 10 days from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur, is Christ's return. The darkening of the sun and moon that accompany His return may begin on Rosh Hashanah and last for ten days.

James 1:12 speaks of the "crown of life" being given to those who successfully endure the testing.

James 1:12 NKJV Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

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Jesus said, "If you love me, follow my commandments." If you follow His commandments, you will "endure to the end" to receive salvation with the "crown of life", which is eternal, everlasting life. Seems simple enough.

Revelation 2:11 NKJV "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death."

See Revelation 20:14, 21:8 for clarifying "second death" statements. In the first death there remains hope of resurrection to life again. Not so in the second death, which is permanent destruction (See Matthew 10:28 and Jude 1:7).

Revelation 20:14 NKJV Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Revelation 21:8 NKJV "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Matthew 10:28 NKJV "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Jude 1:7 NKJV as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Also note concerning this same matter, that in Jude 1:7 "ΔΕΙΓΜΑ ΠΥΡΟΣ ΑΙΩΝΙΟΥ" is translated in the KJV/NKJ as "...an example of eternal fire." Yet, the Greek word "ΔΕΙΓΜΑ" (δειγμα G1164) means a specimen (of the same thing) and not merely a representation. Therefore, the fire that fell on Sodom and Gomorrah was indeed "ΠΥΡΟΣ ΑΙΩΝΙΟΥ" This shows that "ΑΙΩΝΙΟΥ" which is rendered "eternal" in the KJV/NKJ does not mean that the fire burns forever, **but that the effects of the fire are permanent.** Sodom and Gomorrah were completely obliterated so that absolutely nothing remained. Otherwise all would be able to see the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah burning at this very moment. Also, if the English translation were correct, that would make God out to be a liar.

Let's read that verse again so we can stay focused... okay, so I can stay focused.

Revelation 2:11 NKJV "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death."

The second death, as we know, is being thrown into the Lake of Fire. We'll see that later in Revelation. Notice back in verse 9 they were already suffering from the Jews, then in verse 10 he says fear not for you are about to suffer even more. It's not bad enough that they have been suffering tribulation and poverty at the hands of the Jews, now Satan is going to make them suffer even more. It says that the Devil intends to throw some of you in prison that they may be tested even further.

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Here is a church that has been completely faithful. Jesus had nothing bad to say about the church of Smyrna, they were suffering, and what He told them was “you’re going to suffer a lot more.” He told them to be faithful as they have been and then He gives them a promise of the crown of life.

Now here in verse 11, Jesus stresses being an “OVERCOMER”. Man, all this makes me tired. But let’s keep going.

Revelation 2:12 NKJV "And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, 'These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword:

The sharp two-edged sword implies that He has the authority to judge. It is a metaphor for the execution of God’s justice on mankind. Compare it with Revelation 1:16; 2:16; 19:11-16; John 5:22-27; Hebrews 4:12. And the execution of justice is not only on the “wicked” but also on the “house of God”. In fact, Peter said that judgment must begin at the house of God. We also see an example of this in Ezekiel 9 where God’s begins His judgment at His Temple.

1 Peter 4:17 NKJV For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

Ezekiel 9:6 NKJV "Utterly slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women; but do not come near anyone on whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary." So they began with the elders who were before the temple.

Given that God the Father, and the Son, do not change, the judgment that is rapidly nearing this world, will begin with the Christian assemblies, the churches.

Revelation 2:13 NKJV "I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

Do you know what Jesus is saying here when He speaks about Satan’s seat? It is an extraordinarily large pagan altar that was set up in Pergamum. To this day, it is in a museum, called the Pergamum Museum, in Berlin, Germany. Satan’s seat was located in Pergamos, which was the center of idolatry. There was an attempt to forge an unholy alliance between Christianity and paganism at this time. The people of Pergamum were much like the Nicolaitans in their paganism. In fact, the Nicolaitans were rejected at the Church in Ephesus, but received a more sympathetic reception in Pergamum.

Revelation 2:14 NKJV "But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.

The Apostle Paul had this to say about eating food sacrificed to idols, “You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord’s table and of the table of demons” (1 Corinthians 10:21-22).

‘Sexual immorality’ or ‘fornication’ is most times in scripture used as a metaphor for idolatry. Because God forbid Israel from marrying pagan women, idolatry was quite often spoken of

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metaphorically as “fornication” and “adultery” in Scripture. Thus the crime of some of the members of this assembly was in tolerating and excusing forms of idolatry. See Numbers chapters 22-25. The “Incident of Peor” was instigated by Balaam, whereby after being prevented by the “Angel of the LORD” from cursing Israel, he instead counseled the Moabites to invite the Israelites to join with them and to intermarry with their women. This led to reprehensible idolatry, including participating in pagan rituals for Baal of Peor (eating idol’s sacrifices).

Part of the pagan worship included prostitution in their temples. That could also be what He’s talking about here. People who say they are Christian and go to the church on one day, but then on the pagan festivals they go over to the pagan temples and have sex with the temple prostitutes. This was going on with some of the people, but not all of them.

Revelation 2:15 NKJV "Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

Revelation 2:16 NKJV 'Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

We are going to find out later, in chapter 19, that when Jesus says “the sword of my mouth” He is referring to the way in which He will kill the wicked

Revelation 2:17 NKJV "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it."

Note that when Jesus speaks it is always in the present continuous form when He makes these statements. “Those who are being victorious, those who are overcoming... not those who were victorious at some time, or who did overcome in the past tense. This is how He always speaks in Greek.

A portion of manna was hidden in the Ark of the Covenant, along with the stone tablets and Aaron’s rod. These three items hidden away in the Ark symbolize God’s work in the end times: The stone tablets represent the restoring of the Law of Moses for Israel’s repentance (Daniel 9:27); Aaron’s rod represents the anointing of the restored Levitical priesthood by Elijah (Malachi 4:4-6); The hidden manna represents supernatural provision for God’s covenant people (Micah 7:15; Revelation 12:6, 14). The promise in this instance for those being victorious is supernatural provision.

In the ancient courts, the accused were judged by giving him or her black stones. The “jury”, so to speak, would give either a black stone for a guilty verdict, or a white stone for a not guilty verdict. If you received more black stones than white, you were condemned to your decided fate. Some say even one black stone was enough to send you to death. Here, the sense seems to be not only acquittal, but a new beginning with his or her new name.

It is interesting to note that the Freemasons of today still do this stone thing in their “so called” secret meetings. The Freemasons are another cult that still exists today. In many cases, today they are the “so called” elite of the world. But this is an entirely different can of worms.

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Revelation 2:18 NKJV "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:

Revelation 2:19 NKJV "I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first.

Now here they were doing better than when they first started out as a church. Remember that Ephesus started out good and began going downhill. This church is slowly going uphill. In other words, they are growing in their relationship with Christ.

Revelation 2:20 NKJV "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.

This is almost the same problem that the church at Pergamos except here they actually have a woman in the church promoting this behavior. In the next three verses He tells them what they can expect if they do not repent.

Jezebel is used metaphorically because of her devotion to idolatry. You can read about this in 1 Kings chapters 18-21.

Self-appointed prophets and prophetesses are abundant today in the Charismatic movement. These false prophets and prophetesses are something we have already talked about. But we do need to add that Paul forbade women teaching in the assemblies (1 Timothy 2:12-14). The Charismatic and modern ecumenical movements not only encourages self-appointed "prophets" and "prophetesses" today but also women teachers and pastors.

Anything and everything that goes against the way God has laid down rules for us to adhere, is currently under attack. Roles of men and women are reversed in today's society. That includes in the marriage, the workforce, politics. We literally will murder children out of convenience, and prosecute someone for defending themselves or others.

Revelation 2:21 NKJV "And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.

Revelation 2:22 NKJV "Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.

Revelation 2:23 NKJV "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.

Hebrews 4:12-13 identifies the one searching the minds and hearts as "Word (Logos) of God," a title given to Jesus Christ. See John 1:1, as well as the up and coming Revelation 19:13.

Hebrews 4:12 NKJV For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

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.

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And Jesus says that He will give according to your works. This implies a merit system.

Revelation 2:24 NKJV "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.

The term “know the depths of Satan” was a common saying from the Gnostics. They had a belief that experience was knowledge and that you should experience everything, no matter how vile or perverted, in order to gain that knowledge. That is where this phrase came from. In “experiencing” everything, even that which you should not, you learn to “know the depths of Satan”.

Revelation 2:25 NKJV "But hold fast what you have till I come.

Revelation 2:26 NKJV "And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations;

“My works” refers to doing the works of Jesus Christ, obeying His commandments and carrying on His mission (Matthew 5:14-16; John 9:5).

Revelation 2:27 NKJV '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;

In Psalm 2 the Father’s Son was promised the inheritance of all the nations, and that He would “shepherd them with a rod of iron.” This is how Jesus will rule the unruly. Here Jesus quoted the LXX, (the Hebrew has “break them,” while the LXX has “shepherd them”). In this verse Jesus promised to share His power and reign with His faithful followers. This Psalm is referenced again in Revelation 12:5 and Revelation 19:15, and this Psalm is fulfilled in Revelation 20:1-4.

Revelation 2:28 NKJV "and I will give him the morning star.

Compare to 2 Peter 1:19, and Revelation 22:16 coming up.

Revelation 2:29 NKJV "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Again He ends with that same statement, which is telling you that there is a message in these letters, not just for that particular church, but for all churches.