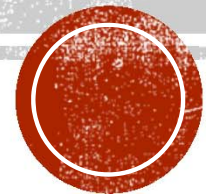


REVELATION 2

Letter to the churches – Thyatira



By Richard Osei

REVELATION “THE UNVEILING”

- The consummation of all things
- The only book promising a special blessing to the reader
- 404 verses containing over 800 allusions from the Old Testament
- It present the climax of God’s Plan for you and me



THE SEVEN CHURCHES

- Why these seven?
- One phrase that echo's through out the letters (He that heath an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches)
- Levels of Application
 1. Local – Sir William Ramsay conducted an intensive archeological investigation (Had local problems that the letter address)
 2. Admonitory to all churches (all the seven letters were sent to all the seven churches, with one specifically to that church)
 3. Homiletic (Personal)
 4. Prophetic



SEVEN DESIGN ELEMENTS

- In each of the Letters to Seven Churches
 1. Name of the Church
 2. Title of Christ Chosen
 3. Commendation (2 letter - nothing good to say about them)
 4. Concerns (2 letter - nothing bad to say about them)
 5. Exhortation
 6. Promise to the Overcomer
 7. Close: "He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the Churches."



EPHESUS

- Nevertheless I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love.
- They are too busy on the business of the King, to have any time for the King (Example: Luke 10:38-40)

1. Name of the Church → Ephesus
2. Title of Christ Chosen → Rev. 2:1
3. Commendation → Rev. 2:2-3
4. Concerns → Rev. 2:4
5. Exhortation → Rev. 2:5-6
6. Close: “He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the Churches.”
→ Rev. 2:7
7. Promise to the Overcomer → Rev. 2:7



SMYRNA

¹⁰ 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.

1. Name of the Church - Smyrna
2. Title of Christ Chosen – Rev. 2:8
3. Commendation - Rev. 2:9
4. Concerns – no concerns
5. Exhortation - Rev. 2:10
6. Close: “He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the Churches.” - Rev. 2:11
7. Promise to the Overcomer - Rev. 2:11



PERGAMOS

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. ¹⁵ Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

1. Name of the Church - Pergamos
2. Title of Christ Chosen – Rev. 2:12
3. Commendation - Rev. 2:13
4. Concerns – Rev. 2:14
5. Exhortation - Rev. 2:15
6. Close: “He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the Churches.” - Rev. 2:17
7. Promise to the Overcomer - Rev. 2:17



THYATIRA



THYATIRA

- Originally a Lydian town bearing the name of Pelopia, then Semiramis, and the Euphippia
- The word Thyatira - means Daughter ("Semiramis" or "Continual Sacrifice")
- Semiramis – the wife of Nimrod (the mother of Tammuz)
- The Babylonia Tri (Nimrod, Semiramis and Tammuz)
- It was taken by the Persians and then Alexander, and it ultimately passed to the possession of Lysimachus, one of Alexander's four generals
- In 301 B.C., however, Lysimachus was defeated by his rival Seleucus I (Nicator) and it thus became part of Syria
- Nicator named it "Thyatira" (Greek. Thygater, for daughter) on being informed that a daughter had been born to him



THYATIRA – (TODAY – AKHISAR)



BABYLONIAN LEGEND

- Tammuz born to Nimrod and Semiramis
 - - Associated with the sun god
 - He “dies” at the winter solstics (~Dec. 22).
 - Is “resurrected” as the days get longer
- Thus, celebrated by burning a “yule” log (Chaldean: infant), replaced by trimmed tree the next morning (Jer. 10:1-5)
- - Also mistletoe (fertility); wassail, etc. (Histop, The Two Babylons)



BABYLONIA ROOTS

- Nimrod who founded the original Babylonian religion
- - Virtually identical to Phaethon – or Aesculapius, eventually developing into the worship of his widow Semiramis and his posthumous son
- - Semiramis & Tammuz of Babylon
- - Ashtoreth & Tammus of Phoenicia
- - Isis & Horus of Egypt
- - Aphordite & Eros of Greek
- - Venus & Cupid of Rome

- (Alexander Hislop)



THE MIGRATING PRIESTHOOD

- When Cyrus conquered Babylon, the Babylonian priesthood and their initiates fled and set up shop in Pergamos
- As the centroid of power ultimately shifted to Rome, this same religious system adopted Latin labels and formed the foundation for pagan Rome



PONTIFEX MAXIMUS

- When Cyrus conquered Babylon, they founded a new center at Pergamos and that king became Pontifex Maximus, the high priest of that pagan system (G. H. Pember)
- Subsequent transfer of the cult from Pergamos to Rome, with the appointment of successive Caesars as high priest
 - 378 AD: Damasus, the Bishop of Rome, Completed the absorption of the Babylonianism into the Roman (Histop & Pember)



CONSTANTINE

- 312 AD Constantine set out to defeat the forces of Maxentius, his rival, for supreme power in the empire.
 - His father had prospered when he had prayed to God to the Christians, and Constantine, in his extremity, resorted to the same action
 - It is said that on the next day he saw a shining cross in the sky with an inscription above “ in hoc signo vinces: “In this sign thou shalt conquer.”
 - He defeated Maxentius at the Malvan bridge, and immediately declared his conversion to Christianity
 - Other records say it was baptize on his death bed
- 325 AD: Edict of Toleration established freedom of religion;
 - Favored Christians at court
 - Exempted Christian ministers from taxes
 - Issued a general exhortation to all his subjects to become Christians
- 330 AD: Moved the capital of the empire to Byzantium, calling it Constantinople



CONSTANTINE

- Ceased the gladiatorial fights
- Reduced the killing of unwelcome children
- Abolished crucifixion as form of execution
- Repealed the persecution edicts of Diocletian
- Assumed headship of the church (he empowered the Council of Nicaea)
- Advanced Christians to high offices
- Declared Sunday a day of worship
 - Forbid work on Sunday
 - There were groups of 3 sun worshipers at that time
 - By making Sunday (not Sabbath) the day of worship was peaceful political move
 - It was a way to unify is empire
 - Slaves had a day off (they did not have a day off)
 - Reduced slavery



MARRIAGE CONSUMMATED

- 361-363 AD Julian, “The Apostate”
 - - sought to restore paganism
- 363-364 Jovian
 - - Re-established the Christian religion
- 378-395 Theodosius
 - Made Christianity the state religion
 - Forced conversions filled the churches with unregenerate
 - Ambition to rule, heathenism, & ceremony emerge in the world church



PERVERTED MARRIAGE

- Heathenisms was Christianized
 - Pagan temples became Christian churches
 - Heathen festivals were converted into Christian ones (Christmas Day, Easter, etc)
- Pagan priest slipped into office as Christian priests
- Change was mostly classification

- What persecution didn't accomplish, marriage to world did



THYATIRA

- **Commercial Trade**
 - An important center for powerful trade guilds
 - - Membership compulsory
 - - Each under the patronage of some pagan deity
- Thyatira was know for its dyes – particularly its purple (perhaps scarlet)
 - Derived from the madder-root which is prolific in the area
 - Cf Lydia, a wealthy sales rep for Thyatira dwelling in Phillipi (Acts 16:11-15)



THYATIRA - CHRIST TITLE AND COMMENDATION

- ¹⁸ “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:
- I know your works, love, service, faith,^[b] and your patience; and as for your works, the last *are* more than the first.

Title of Christ: Son of God

Commendation: I know your works, love, service, faith,^[b] and your patience; and as for your works, the last *are* more than the first.



THYATIRA — CONCERN:

- ²⁰ Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow^[c] that woman^[d] Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce^[e] My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. ²¹ And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. ^[f]²² Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their^[g] deeds.
- Jezebel - calls herself a prophetess
- Sexual immorality
- Eat things sacrificed to idols
- Adultery (Sexual sin, also worship of other gods)
- The problem is not Jezebel, but by condoning or allowing her to affect the church



JEZEBEL

- Daughter of Eth-Baal, King of Sidon, Priest of Astarte, the murderer of his predecessor, Pheles, whom he killed to seize the throne
- Married King Ahab to seal a profitable trade alliance between Israel and Phoenicia
- She sought to exterminate prophets of YHWH (1Kings 18:13)



PAGAN WORSHIP

- Worshipper of Baal and Astarte (originated in Babylon). She and King Ahab ushered in the worst period in Old Testament (1King 16:30,33)
- Hebrew Asherah, a Canaanite goddess
 - - Ashtoteth Judges 2:13, 10:6, 1 Samuel 31:10
 - - The Groves (phallic symbols) Duet. 16:21
 - - The Abomination of Sidonians 2 Kings 23:3,6,7 Ezek 36:15
- “Queen of Heaven” A Babylonian concept (Jer. 7:18, 44:15-36)



THE SHOW DOWN

- Elijah and the false prophets
- ²¹ And Elijah came to all the people, and said, “How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD *is* God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people answered him not a word.
- 1 Kings 18
- 1 Kings 21 (Naboth Vineyard)



NABOTH'S VINEYARD 1KINGS 21

- King Ahab desired Naboth's vineyard
- Queen Jezebel arranges and Inquisition
 - False witnesses
 - Condemnation
 - Execution
- Naboth's vineyard seized for the king



EXHORTATION:

- ²⁴ “Now to you I say, and ^h 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 ⁱ put on you no other burden. ²⁵ But hold fast what you have till I come.
- First reference of Jesus coming (hold fast what you have till I come)



PROMISE TO THE OVERCOMER AND CLOSING

- ²⁶ And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—
 - ²⁷ ‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels’^[1]—
 - as I also have received from My Father; ²⁸ and I will give him the morning star.
-
- ²⁹ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”



ADMONITORY (TO ALL CHURCHES)

- Application to All Churches
 - Ephesus → Devotion, not just doctrine
 - Smyrna → Endure Persecution
 - Pergamos → Purify Ambassadorship
 - Thyatra → Pagan Practice (Sunday, Easter, ...)
 - Sardis
 - Philadelphia
 - Laodicia



PERSONAL (HOMILETICS)

- Personal Application
 - Ephesus → Neglected Priorities
 - Smyrna → Satanic Opposition
 - Pergamos → Spiritual Compromise
 - Thyatra → Pagan Practice (Sunday, Easter, ...)
 - Sardis
 - Philadelphia
 - Laodicia



PROMISES TO THE OVERCOMER

- Application to All Churches/Person
 - Ephesus → Eat of Tree of Life
 - Smyrna → Not hurt of 2nd death
 - Pergamos → Manna, Stone, Name
 - Thyatra → Power over nations
 - Sardis
 - Philadelphia
 - Laodicia



WHO IS THE “OVERCOMER”

- ⁴For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our^[a] faith. ⁵Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? (1 John 5:4-5)
- Overcomer promises are to the people of faith



PROPHETIC PROFILE?

- “Depths of Satan”
 - Esoteric mysteries of the Babylonian cults
 - In 378 A.D., Damasus, the Bishop of Rome, took on the office of Pontifex Maximus, (high priest) of the Babylonian religion, which had previously been the prerogative of the Roman emperor, thus combining the “Christian” church with pagan religion



PROPHETIC PROFILE?

- Ephesus - Apostolic Church? (**The Loveless Church**)
 - Knew the word, and on a mission but left their first love
 - Being too busy on the business of the King rather than for the King Himself
- Smyrna - Persecuted Church? (**The Persecuted Church**)
 - that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation
 - They ambassadorship was tested

Pergamos – The Marriage Church (**The Compromising Church**)
you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith
Compromising with the world

Thyatira – The Medieval Church? (**The Corrupt Church**)

- I know your works, love, service, faith, ^[b] and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first
- Allowing what is evil (immorality) in the church



NEXT READ CHAPTER 2 & 3

- Outline the Letter to Sardis
 1. Name of the Church
 2. Title of Christ Chosen
 3. Commendation
 4. Concerns
 5. Exhortation
 6. Promise to the Overcomer
 7. Close: “He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the Churches.”



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