



CHURCH OF SMYRNA

<p>8 “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: ‘The words of <u>the first and the last, who died and came to life.</u></p>	<p>*Jesus name ‘the first and the last’ reflects His eternal existence and the phrase ‘who died and came to life’ reminds them of His death and resurrection.</p> <p>How would that have encouraged the followers of Jesus in Smyrna?</p>
<p>9 “ ‘I know your tribulation and your <u>poverty</u> (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.</p>	<p>Encouragement</p> <p>*The Christians in Smyrna may have had their property and other forms of wealth taken away by the Roman government. How can Jesus say they were rich?</p> <p>*The word slander (blasphemeo) means to speak against someone in such a way as to harm or injure his or her reputation.</p> <p>*When Jesus says these Jews were not really Jews, He means that they thought they were members of God’s chosen people because they were Jews by birth. But since they did not trust in Jesus as the Messiah, they did not really belong to Him.</p> <p>*There are two main words for the supreme evil being; Satan (satana) which means adversary (v9) and devil (diabolos) which means slanderer (v10). Jesus reminds his followers of the reality that Satan is behind some of their suffering. How is Satan the architect of their suffering? How is Satan the architect of some types of suffering today?</p>
<p>10 Do not fear what you are <u>about to suffer</u>. Behold, the <u>devil</u> is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be <u>tested</u>, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the <u>crown of life</u>.</p>	<p>Hope</p> <p>*Jesus does not promise to keep his followers from persecution, but he does promise to be with them through it. What other scriptures remind us of this?</p> <p>*God is the one who allows Satan to put people through suffering in order to be tested. The word tested (peirozoa) means to try to learn the nature or character of someone or something by submitting it to thorough and extensive testing. What does this definition say about the purpose of God behind this type of suffering?</p>



BLUEPRINTS OF A DANGEROUS CHURCH
STUDY KEY

	<p>*A crown symbolizes royalty or a prize from winning an athletic event. What would a 'crown of life' represent for each of those metaphors?</p>
<p>11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the <u>second death</u>.'</p>	<p>Hope</p> <p>*The second death is eternal punishment in the 'lake of fire' (Rev 20:14).</p>