

## THE BOOK OF REVELATION 19

### *The Church at Pergamos 1*

I. (Rev. 2:12-17 NKJV) <sup>12</sup>"And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, 'These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: <sup>13</sup>"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. <sup>14</sup>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. <sup>15</sup>Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. <sup>16</sup>Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth. <sup>17</sup>"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.'"

A. Two things Jesus knew about them: their works and where they were dwelling.

1. Jesus always knows about our works, whether they are good or bad.

2. And He always knows where we are living and what we are facing in our circumstances.

B. Jesus knew that this church was dwelling in a city that had been given over to Satanic influences.

C. He referred to the city of Pergamos as "*where Satan's throne is.*"

D. Evidently, He was not referring to a literal, earthly throne.

E. The Bible tells us that Satan and his angels have their dominion in the heavenly realm that surrounds the earth.

F. (Eph. 6:11, 12 NKJV) <sup>11</sup>Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup>For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against *spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

1. The Satanic kingdom is divided into four echelons: the principalities answer to the powers, the powers answer to the rulers of the darkness of this world. These are evidently the types of evil spirits that operate on the earth.

2. But the rulers of the darkness of this world answer to the wicked spirits the heavenly places. Satan and the highest echelon of fallen angels dwell in the heavenly places that surround this earth.

G. The Bible speaks of **three** distinct heavens. (2 Cor. 12:1-4 NKJV) *<sup>1</sup>It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: <sup>2</sup>I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven. <sup>3</sup>And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—<sup>4</sup>how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.*

H. Here Paul referred to being caught up to the third heaven into Paradise.

1. The **first** heaven is the cloudy atmosphere of the earth. (Psalm 36:5 NKJV) *<sup>5</sup>Your mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.*

2. The **second** heaven is the outer reaches of space...the starry space. (Gen. 15:5 NKJV) *<sup>5</sup>Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be."*

3. The **third** heaven, as we have already seen is the place where God's throne is located. (Our Father who is in Heaven) and where Paradise is located, the place where saved people go when they die.

4. Satan has his throne in the first heaven, the atmospheric heaven that surrounds the earth. (Eph. 2:1, 2 NKJV) *<sup>1</sup>And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup>in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience.*

I. Dr. Dake's note on this passage says that Pergamos was referred to as Satan's throne because it had become the headquarters of the ancient Babylonian cult...the center of occult practices in the earth...a center of Satanic activity of all kinds...the people there were very involved in the occult...now called the New Age Movement.

J. The Bible predicts an increase in occult activity in the earth in the last days. Dr. Lester Sumrall said that the Lord showed him that North America would become a main center of demonic activity in the last days.

K. Well, Jesus understood where this church was living and what this church was dealing with.

L. He understands the spiritual atmosphere of our community. Satan would bring much opposition to the church in a city like this.

M. Yet they continued to believe in Jesus as the Son of God and to confess Him as Lord.

N. According to verse 13 they were holding fast to the Name of Jesus even though they were living in a community that was given over to the occult.

O. Verse 13 of our text goes on to tell us that they had not denied the faith even in the days when Antipas was martyred among them.

P. Antipas was an unknown martyr.

1. He died for his witness of Jesus Christ in Pergamos.

2. According to tradition he was the pastor of the church at Pergamos.

3. He refused to confess that Caesar was Lord, and as a result the Romans roasted him alive in a hollow brass bull.

4. When he said, "Antipas, don't you know that the world is against you?" He answered, "Then Antipas is against the world."

Q. The church at Pergamos refused to deny their faith in Jesus even when Antipas was put to death for his faith in Jesus.

R. There are two ways to deny Jesus.

1. By denying Him as your Lord before men. (Matt. 10: 32, 33 NKJV)

*<sup>32</sup>"Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. <sup>33</sup>But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.*

2. By denying Him by our lifestyles...living contrary to His commands. (Titus 1:16 NKJV) *<sup>16</sup>They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.*

S. We do not have to yield to Satanic pressure to deny Jesus. His dominion over our lives was cancelled when Jesus died in our place. As far as we are concerned, He is a dethroned power.

1. (Col. 1:12-14 NKJV) *<sup>12</sup>giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. <sup>13</sup>He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, <sup>14</sup>in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.*

2. (James 4:7 NKJV) *<sup>7</sup>Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*