

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Lesson 6

REVELATION 2:

vs. 8 - vs. 11

The Letter to the church in Smyrna:

The Suffering Church

Seven Churches of Revelation

— Chapters 2-3 —

- 1 Ephesus
- 2 Smyrna
- 3 Pergamos
- 4 Thyatira
- 5 Sardis
- 6 Philadelphia
- 7 Laodicea

Island of Patmos: where John received the vision



From Ephesus to
Smyrna:

35 miles to the north.
Smyrna, like Ephesus
was a wealthy port
city.

“The Lovely, the
ornament of Asia”



SMYRNA, TURKEY



IZMIR (SMYRNA), TURKEY

SMYRNA

Mentioned only in Revelation

From historical documents:

Wicked city

Opposite to the Christian Gospel

(first century)

REVELATION 2

8 "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:

IGNATIUS [The Martyrdom of Ignatius 3], on his way to martyrdom in Rome, wrote to Polycarp, then (a.d. 108) bishop of Smyrna

TERTULLIAN [The Prescription against Heretics, 32],

IRENÆUS, who had talked with Polycarp in youth,

They tell us Polycarp was consecrated bishop of Smyrna by
St. John.

REVELATION 2

8 "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:

CHRIST, THE ETERNAL ONE

The First and the Last

Was dead and is alive

ALWAYS EXISTED IN THE PAST

WILL ALWAYS EXIST IN THE FUTURE

The One “who became dead”

(death on the cross)

ETERNAL: IN LIFE

The One who lives

(Resurrection as the Eternal Resurrected One)

ETERNAL: IN TIME

SMYRNA:

“The persecuted church”

JESUS:

The One “who became dead”

The One who lives

Became incarnate and died

Rejected and persecuted by man

ANTICIPATE ULTIMATE VICTORY

SMYRNA:

“Myrrh”

Sweet perfume for the embalming of dead bodies

Holy anointing oil used in The Tabernacle

EXODUS 30

EXODUS 30

- 23 "Also take for yourself quality spices-- five hundred shekels of liquid myrrh, half as much sweet-smelling cinnamon (two hundred and fifty shekels), two hundred and fifty shekels of sweet-smelling cane,
- 24 "five hundred shekels of cassia, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hin of olive oil.

24 "five hundred shekels of cassia, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hin of olive oil.

25 "And you shall make from these a holy anointing oil, an ointment compounded according to the art of the perfumer.
It shall be a holy anointing oil.

26 "With it you shall anoint the tabernacle of meeting and the ark of the Testimony;

27 "the table and all its utensils, the lampstand and its
utensils, and the altar of incense

28 "the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the
laver and its base.

29 You shall consecrate them, that they may be most holy;
whatever touches them must be holy.

30 "And you shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister to Me as priests.

31 "And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying:
This shall be a holy anointing oil to Me throughout your generations.

SONG OF SALOMON 3

6 THE SHULAMITE Who is this coming out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, With all the merchant's fragrant powders?

7 Behold, it is Solomon's couch, with sixty valiant men around it, of the valiant of Israel.

PSALM 45

7 You love righteousness and hate wickedness; Therefore
God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness
more than Your companions.

8 All Your garments are scented with myrrh and aloes and
cassia, out of the ivory palaces, by which they have made
You glad.

**THE FRAGRANCE OF JESUS:
THE HEAVENLY GROOM**

REVELATION 2

9 "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.

“I SEE YOUR TRIBULATION AND POVERTY”

Tribulation: pressure, distress

Poverty: destitute, beggar

YOU ARE RICH: wealthy, abundant.

Poverty: destitute

They had been robbed of their goods

Persecuted and afflicted

RICH:

Virtues and eternal possessions

JAMES 2

5 Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen (choosing out of many) the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?

2 CORINTHIANS 6

10 as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

REVELATION 2

9 "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.

"I see your tribulation and poverty"

AND

"I SEE YOUR ENEMIES"

REVELATION 2

I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

Not just pagans offended by their Christian faith

Hostile Jews

SATAN HIMSELF

Jewish by birth

The same kind of Jews who persecuted Paul

“Enemies of Christ”

“I SEE”

The blasphemy:

Slander, injurious speech to another's good name
(against Jesus)

The blasphemy:
“Birkat haMinim”

For the apostates (meshumaddim)[v] let there be no hope,
and uproot the kingdom of arrogance (malkhut zadon),
speedily and in our days.

May the Nazarenes (ha-naẓarim/noṣrim/notzrim)[w][x] and the
sectarians (minim) perish as in a moment.

Let them be blotted out of the book of life,[y] and not be written
together with the righteous.

You are praised, O Lord, who subdues the arrogant.

MATTHEW 3

9 "and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.

JOHN 8

33 They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can you say, 'You will be made free '?"

ROMANS 2

28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh;

29 but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.

Years later...

BISHOP POLYCARP

Disciple of John

Born 65 AC

Died 155 AC

Without the sanction of Rome

Antagonism by the Jewish community

AT THE ARENA OF SMYRNA:

(execution is announced)

'When this was proclaimed by the herald, the whole multitude both of Gentiles and of Jews who dwelt in Smyrna cried out with ungovernable wrath and with a loud shout, 'This is the teacher of Asia, the father of the Christians, the puller down of our gods, who teaches people not to sacrifice or worship.'

THE MARTYRDOM OF POLYCARP 12:2

AT THE ARENA OF SMYRNA:

(execution is announced)

These things then happened with so great speed, quicker than words could tell, the crowds forthwith collecting from the workshops and baths timber and bundles of sticks, and the Jews more especially assisting in this with zeal, as is their wont.

THE MARTYRDOM OF POLYCARP 13:1

POLYCARP 15:2

The fire, making the appearance of a vault, like the sail of a vessel filled by the wind, made a wall round about the body of the martyr; and it was there in the midst, not like flesh burning, but like [a loaf in the oven or like] gold and silver refined in a furnace. For we perceived such a fragrant smell, as if it were the wafted odor of frankincense or some other precious spice.

POLYCARP 16:1

So at length the lawless men, seeing that his body could not be consumed by the fire, ordered an executioner to go up to him and stab him with a dagger. And when he had done this, there came forth [a dove and] a quantity of blood, so that it extinguished the fire; and all the multitude marvelled that there should be so great a difference between the unbelievers and the elect.

POLYCARP 17:1

But the jealous and envious Evil One, the adversary of the family of the righteous, having seen the greatness of his martyrdom and his blameless life from the beginning, and how he was crowned with the crown of immortality and had won a reward which none could gainsay, managed that not even his poor body should be taken away by us, although many desired to do this and to touch his holy flesh.

POLYCARP 17:2

So he put forward Nicetes, the father of Herod and brother of Alce, to plead with the magistrate not to give up his body, 'lest,' so it was said, '**they should abandon the crucified one and begin to worship this man**'--this being done at the instigation and urgent entreaty of the Jews, who also watched when we were about to take it from the fire, not knowing that it will be impossible for us either to forsake at any time the Christ who suffered for the salvation of the whole world of those that are saved--suffered though faultless for sinners--nor to worship any other.

POLYCARP 18:1

The centurion, therefore, seeing the opposition raised on the part of the Jews, set him in the midst and burnt him after their custom.

POLYCARP 18:2

And so we afterwards took up his bones which are more valuable than precious stones and finer than refined gold, and laid them in a suitable place;



CHURCH IN THESSALONICA



1 THESSALONIANS

9 For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God.

13 For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

1 THESSALONIANS

14 For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Judeans (Jews),

15 who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men,

1 THESSALONIANS

16 forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up the measure of their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

CONFRONTED FALSE DOCTRINES

“Marcionism”

OLD TESTAMENT:

YHWH, is evil. The creator

NEW TESTAMENT:

GOD THE FATHER

JESUS: not the messiah of the OT

OLD TESTAMENT MESSIAH:

“Emanuel” only for Jews

(had not appeared)

Paul understood Christ

Peter, founder of a Jewish sect

POLYCARP:

According to Irenaeus in *Adversus Haereses*, Polycarp once encountered Marcion:

Polycarp himself replied to Marcion, who met him on one occasion, and said, "Dost thou know me?"

"I do know thee, the first-born of Satan."

REVELATION 2

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.

EXHORTATION

PROMISE

“TRIBULATION FOR TEN DAYS”

Ten historical persecutions

Present persecution was a forerunner

Devil will cast some of them into jail

“FEAR NOT”

“BE FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH”

TEN PERSECUTIONS:

1. Nero, a.d. 54
2. Domitian, a.d. 81
3. Trajan a.d. 98
4. Adrian [Hadrian], a.d. 117
5. Septimius Severus, a.d. 193
6. Maximin, a.d. 235
7. Decius, a.d. 249
8. Valerian, a.d. 254
9. Aurelian, a.d. 270
10. Diocletian, a.d. 284

LAST PERSECUTION:

Diocletian persecuted the church for 10 years.

TEN PERSECUTIONS

Lasted 250 years

“TRIBULATION FOR TEN DAYS”

Jesus knew the beginning and the end

SHORT LIMITED TIME

HUMAN SUFFERING

Why do the righteous suffer?

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

The will of God is holy, righteous and good

Sometimes....DISCIPLINE

1 CORINTHIANS 11

30 For this reason, many are weak and sick among you,
and many sleep.

31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be
judged.

32 But when we are judged, we are chastened (paideuo:
instructed) by the Lord, that we may not be condemned
(judged) with the world.

Sometimes.....PREVENTION

2 CORINTHIANS 12

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.

Sometimes.....TO LEARN

HEBREWS 5

8 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.

ROMANS 5

3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;

4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

APOSTLE PAUL

ACTS 9

15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.

16 "For I will show him (to show by placing before the eyes) how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

TESTIMONY OF JESUS

EXHORTATION

"Do not fear"

"Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."

2 TIMOTHY 4

8 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.

1 PETER 5

4 and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive **the crown of glory** that does not fade away.

REVELATION 4

4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

1 THESSALONIANS 2

19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?

1 CORINTHIANS 9

25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.

THE CHURCH IS SMYRNA

No word of correction

WORD: testing

PROMISE:

11 "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."

REVELATION 20

11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire.

This is the second death.

15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

