



**Part 2
Still in Thyatira
Jezebel Today
Revelation 2:18-29**

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We are still in Thyatira. Last time we were together, we discussed the good they were doing, and there is a lot of good going on. But there is also some of the bad connected to the name Jesus uses, Jezebel. The earlier reference to Balaam in Pergamum pointed to one class of false teachers, and this type of false teaching is still evident even today. The name Jezebel points to another class of false teacher. In both cases, this does not appear to be a single point in time issue, but something that we see today.



Let's take another look at our text.

Revelation 2:18–29

““And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and feet like burnished bronze, says this: ‘I know your deeds, and your love and faith, and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first. ‘But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. ‘I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her sexual immorality. Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. And I will kill her children with plague, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds. But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them—I place no other burden on you. Nevertheless what you have, hold firmly until I come. The one who overcomes, and the one who keeps My deeds until the end, I WILL GIVE HIM AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE SHATTERED, as I also have received authority from My Father; and I will give him the morning star. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”” (NASB 2020)

This is all about the church and the issues being experienced by it in Thyatira, but it is also a picture of the church of the dark ages, 590 AD to 1517 AD.

During that time, the primary church in the west was the Roman Catholic church and we have already discussed those doctrinal errors that were introduced during that time within the church. The issue here, per Jesus, someone He calls Jezebel.

Again, recall the original person who is behind the name.

Jezebel was a foreigner who taught her idolatry to the Israelite king who married her. She was thus one who did not belong to the people of God, who infiltrated the people of God, and who led the people of God into idolatry. (Hamilton Jr. 2012, 97)

A self-proclaimed wolf in sheep's clothing who practiced leading others into compromising. The church in Thyatira tolerated her and a group in the church followed her and her teachings.

Again, there are three types of people there, those who are true to the word, those who are compromising, and those who want to get along.

Jesus has given her time to repent, and she has refused to do so. The probation time has ended. Judgment is pending, but we still hear Jesus, desiring repentance.

Revelation 2:22

“Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds.” (NASB 2020)

If Jezebel was a code name for a real person, they would already be long dead and gone by now and she and her followers would be gone as well. How could they go into the Tribulation? “Yet the prophecy is very specific: she and her children will be cast into it. Only if Jezebel is representative of a system can this be true. And again, when a woman is used symbolically, it symbolizes a religious system or entity.” So, as a religious system, the apostate church of the middle ages, what happens. (Fruchtenbaum 2003, 60)



Revelation 2:23

“And I will kill her children with plague, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.” (NASB 2020)

This apostate church will continue to today. Clearly recognizable as the Roman Catholic church, but there are other churches as well as so called ministries also given over to deception as well.

Those within the church today, who are not true believers, but are followers of Jezebel, will enter the Tribulation and will suffer physical violence and death as part of the judgment Jesus is imposing on them.

By the way, this lack of concern for the truth is reflective in other churches today as well. Deception is Satan’s tool of choice.

In her own eyes, Jezebel’s alleged special revelations from God qualified her as an authoritative teacher in the church. Some others agreed and she became a recognized leader, the critical problem being that she was leading people astray. (Thomas 1992, 215)

And that is how it is done today as well. How do some of the false teachers we see today obtain a following.

Why is it they tend to not be part of a church, but rather an independent ministry preying on those within the church who desire something that the Bible does not teach. They travel from city to city renting large venues and they draw followers away from Jesus to become followers of them. Just like Jezebel. The void is filled with their false teaching amidst an atmosphere of being “religious” but not necessarily orthodox in terms of what is being taught or followed.

Jude describes just how those infected with the Jezebel spirit get in.

Jude 4

“For certain men have secretly slipped in among you—men who long ago were marked out for the condemnation I am about to describe—ungodly men who have turned the grace of our God into a license for evil and who deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.” (NET 2nd ed.)

Jezebel was symptomatic of certain actions. “This doesn’t mean there is a specific demon (or principality) named Jezebel. It means there are certain characteristics associated with Jezebel, and when we see this same set of characteristics at work, we know who is behind it. Put another way, when we observe the same things happening in our society (or within the church) as happened in Israel in Jezebel’s day, we understand it is no coincidence. It is satanic, it is systematic, and it is intentional.” (Brown 2019, 16)

What was happening in Thyatira did indeed infect the church of the middle ages and continues to do so today. This was intentional and well thought out, a serious tactic of Satan, which is why Jesus found Himself addressing her followers as well as her children.

“By refusing to repent, Jezebel declared that she did not belong to the people of God. Once she made this plain, the church in Thyatira had a responsibility to tell her the truth—she was not right with God. They had a responsibility to protect the flock. They had a responsibility to exclude her from the church. Instead they were tolerating her, and as a result of the church’s failure to act, she was leading the servants of Jesus into sin.” (Hamilton Jr. 2012, 98) The church failed at their job. Of protecting the flock and instead embraced the false teaching.



There was no serious active opposition to her, which is the fault of those in the body. So, she wound up being firmly established in this church and had their approval. Yes, there are some who are doing well, but there is this group there that is following her.

It is easy to point fingers at one church and say, see. But here is the problem, Jezebel is alive and well in a lot of churches all across this nation today. The infection is way past pandemic in scope.

What is it we see happening around us today? As messages flip from the Bible in churches around us to a celebration of sinful lifestyles and worldly success? I can hear what the Lord said through Amos.

Amos 2:11–12

“I chose some of your sons to be prophets and others to be Nazirites. Can you deny this, my people of Israel?” asks the LORD. “But you caused the Nazirites to sin by making them drink wine, and you commanded the prophets, ‘Shut up!’” (NLT)

As we follow Jesus, there will be voices, some from “Christian” voices, that we are not to get too extreme about following Him and keeping ourselves in but not of the world.

I remember hearing them shortly after I was saved. Don’t get so heavenly minded that you are no longer of any earthly good. Loving folks, but ones who didn’t have a clue of what the Spirit was doing since they were not in the Spirit.

Romans 8:5–10

“For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.” (ESV)

The “progressive” churches around us would tell us to cool it. But there is this problem. “We are called to be prophetic, not popular; servants, not superstars; like our Savior, not above our Savior.” As Jesus said:

Matthew 10:25

“It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household.” (ESV)

As we saw, there is a promise to that group following her, the apostate believers within this church, they will go into the Tribulation. These are those who do not worship Jesus, but instead, follow the Jezebel playbook.

Jesus did not come to make you a better you. He did not come to fulfill your dreams and your destiny. He did not come, die on the cross, and then walk out of the grave simply to create a gospel of me.

That is where the idolatry is today. That is the god that many are following in churches all across this nation right now. It isn’t all about Jesus, it is all about how I can have a better life right now.

Yes, there were various doctrines that were implemented because of this false teaching, but I don’t want us to lose sight of how insidious this truly is. Jezebel is here in the US today.



We are a culture that is all about me. We are a culture as well that has thrown off the so-called old morality in favor of a new morality, which, if you study history, is not new at all but is a rehash of old immorality seen and practiced in and around Israel over 2000 years ago.

Solomon was right.

Ecclesiastes 1:9–11

“What has happened before will happen again. What has been done before will be done again. There is nothing new in the whole world. “Look,” they say, “here is something new!” But no, it has all happened before, long before we were born. No one remembers what has happened in the past, and no one in days to come will remember what happens between now and then.” (GNB)

How pervasive is the infection? Epidemic.

56% of American evangelicals agreed with this statement: “God accepts the worship of all religions, including Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.”

73% of American evangelicals agreed with this statement: “Jesus is the first and greatest being created by God.”

43% agreed that “Jesus was a great teacher, but he was not God.”

60% agreed that “The Holy Spirit is a force but is not a personal being.”

57% agreed that “Everyone sins a little, but most people are good by nature.”

Did Solomon call it? For those keeping count of the ancient heresies affirmed by many American evangelicals today, that is Universalism, Arianism, Ebionism, Pneumatomachianism, and Pelagianism. You don’t have to know all the names of these ancient heresies, but you should know that the early Christian churches recognized all of these doctrines as a complete denial of the Christian faith.

Why do so many today agree with these ancient heresies, 53% agreed that “the Bible, like all sacred writings, contains helpful accounts of ancient myths but is not literally true.”

Let me give you another example. For us modern Christians it may feel at times as if no one else in church history has faced anything like transgenderism. But actually, the early church was familiar with something similar in the religion of Cybele, an ancient goddess-worship cult that had priests called “Galli” who presented themselves in ways similar to transgender people today. (Branch 2019, 7)

The priests were all self castrated, usually publicly in a festival and then wore female attire as part of their leading worship of the latest manifestation of Inanna, a gender fluid goddess from Mesopotamia.

When Jesus died on the cross, He died for all our sin. If you have been caught up in the culture and involved in alternative lifestyles, been confused about your own sexuality, or been involved in abortion, I have good news for you. Jesus died for you too. There is forgiveness at the cross.

He does not tell us we have to change before we come to Him, He simply says come. He takes it from there as the Holy Spirit enters in and begins the process of making us more like Jesus. Yes, there is much more than self-centered meism as a lifestyle. His name is Jesus and He wants us to have a relationship with Him.



Jezebel would have you think otherwise. “The idea that Christian sexual ethics are oppressive and must be rejected is an idea that now pervades America. Seen in this light, transgenderism is the ultimate rejection of Judeo-Christian sexual ethics.” (Branch 2019, 17)

The need for wearing the armor of God has been never more required. We have a real enemy out there who wants us to think he has power, he doesn't, not with the believer. In Christ, we have already won.

1 John 4:2–4

“By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. And this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. Little children, you are from God and have conquered them, for the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.” (NRSVue)

Romans 8:37–39

“Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (NKJV)

1 Peter 5:8–9

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.” (NKJV)

We live in a culture given over to Jezebel and unfortunately, there are many churches that have already fallen in line. “As believers we are not immune to sexual temptation, and you can be sure the spirit of Jezebel would like nothing more than to target followers of Jesus, especially leaders. We really do need to be on our guard. We have been marked by hell for destruction.” (Brown 2019, 56)

Revelation 2:22–23

“Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. And I will kill her children with plague, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.” (NASB 2020)

For those who are leaders of this, ones like Jezebel, Jesus has a special promise, and He also expands it to those who engage with the false teaching and follow it. Those groups, those churches, those institutions will enter the Tribulation. As we travel through Revelation, we will learn that elements of the apostate church do indeed miss the rapture.

It is the apostate church that winds up being the cause of millions of deaths during the first half of the Tribulation. Millions come to Christ after the rapture, but the decision will be costly. Those who are part of that, who have followed false teaching and been sucked into believing the lie, the future, post-rapture looks dim per Jesus.

This seems to fall in alongside something Paul teaches in 2 Thessalonians 2.

2 Thessalonians 2:11–12

“For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.” (NASB 2020)



When Christ is rejected, truth is forfeit and THE LIE is bought into, hook, line, and sinker.

What is this saying about those who are still here, those who have been left behind but had heard the truth and rejected it? Is it saying that once the man of sin has been fully revealed, they can no longer be saved?

The “powerful delusion” (v. 11) that God will bring on these individuals in particular suggests that few if any then living on the earth will be saved after the Rapture. This seems to be a special judgment from God that will occur at this one time in history. The many saints which the Book of Revelation indicates will be living on the earth during the Tribulation may thus be people who did not hear and reject the gospel before the Rapture (cf. Rev. 7:4). (Constable 1985, 721)

Or is it at the point he is fully revealed when he enters the Temple and says, worship me, that they are toast? The Tribulation is all about deception “in fact, the Tribulation will be a time of satanic deception unlike any other in history. As bad as Satan’s previous deceptions have been, it will pale in comparison to what awaits the world ahead.” Jezebel is nothing compared to what is coming. (Harris 2005, 75)

But here, we are talking about those who have rejected and rejected and rejected to the point that, just as Jesus with Herod, God will no longer talk to you.

Instead, what we see here is rejection that has now resulted in a generation of those who rejected the truth being unable to ever believe it.

Revelation 2:23

“And I will kill her children with plague, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.” (NASB 2020)

They have hardened their hearts, believed the deception and the lies, and now God, in agreement with that decision, fixes them on that path they have decided on. God uses Satan and the Beast as instruments of judgment on those who refuse to believe. This is the Day of the Lord; it is God’s judgment on an unbelieving world and Satan will deceive the totality of unredeemed humanity to believe THE LIE.

They will believe that the Beast is God. Those who go with THE LIE, put themselves into this position.

They are still culpable for their decision. We will see much more of this as we move along here in Revelation.

We should certainly understand that it is not God but Satan who deceives, but that he does so by the permission of God, who thereby accomplishes his objective to bring to bear on sinners the full consequences of their rejection of his salvation. (Weatherly 1996, 2 Th 2:12)

Let’s take another look at our text. Why is it, in the face of truth, with all that goes on in the Tribulation up to this point, would anyone choose to believe THE LIE. Simple, “because they did not accept the love of the truth so as to be saved.”

2 Thessalonians 2:11–12

“For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.” (NASB 2020)

By this point, 3 ½ years into the Day of the Lord they are rejecting the Lord in the face of:



- The rapture of the church
- Every single living creature, including them give praise to Jesus (Revelation 5:13)
- All the seal judgments
- Global thermonuclear war
- Global famine
- Massive global ecological disaster
- Asteroids hitting the planet
- A demon army
- Depopulation of the planet by about ½ in just 3 ½ years
- The casting down of Satan to earth and all the fallen angels
- The world leader apparently being assassinated but then coming back in a seeming miracle then entering Jerusalem and declaring he is God.
- And lots more.

So, in the face of all of that, THE LIE is believed and “God is pleased to honour the moral choices of individuals. Those who embrace a particular lifestyle will eventually find that God gives them over to the consequences of their choice (Rom 1:24, 26, 28). Prefer lies to the truth of God and you will find yourself becoming hardened, increasingly willing to embrace a way of life which flaunts sin in its ugliest forms. One of the ways in which God punishes us for our sins is that he leaves us to wallow in them, allowing a dissipated lifestyle to take its inevitable toll upon us.” (Arthur 1996, 127)

Those who remain choose, over all the evidence that says otherwise, to believe THE LIE. Why? To seal the court case on them. All the churches will indeed know that Jesus gives to each according to their deeds.

They did not believe truth, they loved wickedness, they are judged. The rebellion is fully evident at Armageddon when Jesus Christ returns, and the church is with Him. We will see the armies of the beast turn to attack Jesus. It does not end well for them. For those of us who have recognized and accepted the truth, we are able to remain unmoved by the culture running headlong into the arms of the lie as we await the coming of our Lord for us.

In other words, Jezebel has no hold on us. Even though the temptations are there, as believers, we have our armor on as we continue to engage the enemy on a daily basis and continue to snatch those on the way to hell away from the devil and see them redirected to an eternal destination with the Lord.

Revelation 2:24–25

“But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them—I place no other burden on you. Nevertheless what you have, hold firmly until I come.” (NASB 2020)

After speaking judgment on those who are engaged with Jezebel, Jesus turns His attention to the remnant, the true believers who are embedded in that church, and they are indeed there. I personally know of many engaged in ministry seeing salvations almost daily in the church. For those who follow, for those who have not given themselves over to Jezebel. Comfort from Jesus.

Jesus makes an interesting comment about those who do not follow Jezebel’s teachings, they “have not known the deep things of Satan.” What is He saying here? There are two ways to look at this and either one works.

Jesus is using sarcasm. Those who follow Jezebel are saying they are learning the deeper things of God, Jesus says, nope, the deeper things of Satan. His comment reflects the true origin of the doctrines.



False teaching sounds good because it appeals to our flesh and by ripping scripture out of context, we are led to believe it is from God. Nope...Satan is the source.

The other possibility here is that Jesus is making reference to some of the false teachings of the gnostics, another problem group. Those following Jezebel would consider themselves, per the Nicolaitans, to be superior to the general flock in the church. "Their higher standing gave them immunity from any risks. They could fathom securely what the immature orthodox called immorality. Devil-study, or even devil-worship (13:4 is quite different) was not uncommon in some of the Gnostic sects throughout Asia Minor." (Moffat n.d., 362)

Whichever is intended, the instructions from Jesus is to "hold firmly until I come." That is for us today. We are to keep on following Him. To hold firm also brings to recall the charge of Paul to Timothy.

2 Timothy 1:13

"Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus." (NKJV)

In both cases, it is a charge to remain loyal to the word of God. To hold fast, firm in His love. Firm in His care and firm in His word.

And with that, Jesus moves to His conclusion to this letter. So, what is in store for the overcomer from Thyatira?

This is the first explicit reference to His returning in the letters to the churches.

Jesus is talking to us today, He is coming...soon.

Revelation 2:26–29

"The one who overcomes, and the one who keeps My deeds until the end, I WILL GIVE HIM AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE SHATTERED, as I also have received authority from My Father; and I will give him the morning star. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB 2020)

What takes place after Jesus returns the second time? If you have read ahead, it is His 1000-year rule and reign here on planet earth. Yes, a Jew will rule the planet and will do so from Jerusalem. We call this the Millennium.

As believers, we are to be part of that. Jesus makes that crystal clear here as He quotes from Psalm 2.

This is for overcomers. For the ones who keep His deeds until the end.

Jesus intends to share duties with us.

Psalm 2:8–9

"Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (ESV)

Let's count down the promises here.

- We will share with Jesus in His rule over the planet.



- Ruling means we will be judging. “Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases?” (1 Corinthians 6:2, ESV) We will be tending for and caring for His sheep planet wide.
- The rule will be with a rod or scepter of iron. Jesus will be the last word. Righteousness will be enforced globally.

Those who choose to rebel against the rule of Jesus will be “...AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE SHATTERED, as I also have received authority from My Father;” (Revelation 2:27b, NASB 2020)

For “those who rebel against Jesus will be dashed to pieces like a clay pot hit with an iron bar. Jesus includes this here to give hope to the faithful Christians of Thyatira, who felt overwhelmed by the immorality and idolatry all around them. Jesus reminds them, “You’re on My winning team.”” (Guzik 2013, Re 2:26-28)

Revelation 2:28–29

“and I will give him the morning star. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (NASB 2020)

For the overcomer, the one who remains faithful to the end, the promises are magnificent, but Jesus saved the best for last. We will be given the morning star. The reward for faithfulness is Jesus Himself. He will tell us later in Revelation 22:16 that He is the morning star.

Christ allows the church to share in his messianic authority (compare 19:15 with 2:26c–27; 22:16 with 2:28), and here Christ allows the church to share also in his messianic glory as the “morning star.” (Osborne 2002, 168)

And Jesus finishes once again telling all of us in the church throughout history, to listen to what it is He is saying here.

Who have you been listening to? There are many voices vying for attention these days and the majority want to deceive you.

Listen to a message I have heard recently. Your life is not complete unless you have the following products at your home. Bottled water, but not just any bottled water, but smart water. Drink that along with your healthy vitamin infused bread sandwich made with only the finest ingredients the ensure you can have your best life right now.

Yes, I am going a bit overboard. But you as long as you are driving the right kind of car, is it electric today, or hybrid, or who cares. Our culture is built on creating a desire for products most of us really do not need. I have never heard an ad for what we all truly need, Jesus.

Today is the day to let Him take over.

Romans 3:21–24

“But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.” (NLT)



Romans 10:9–13

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”” (NLT)

ABC's of Salvation

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.

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