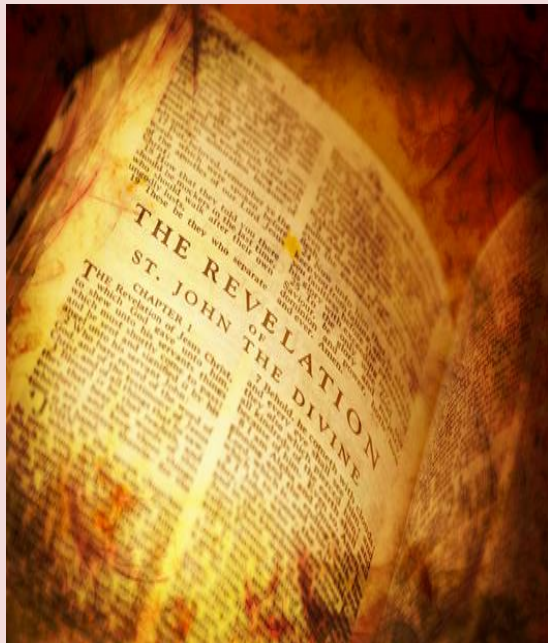


STUDYING THE BOOK OF REVELATION THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST (5)



REVELATION 2 *To the Church in Smyrna*

Revelation 2:8-11
New International Version (NIV)

To the Church in Smyrna

8 *"To the angel of the church in Smyrna write:*

These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again. 9 I know your afflictions and your poverty—yet you are rich! I know about the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten

days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor's crown.

11 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death.

More on the Revelation of Jesus Christ

Content. The central message of the Revelation is that "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (19:6). This theme has been validated in history by the victory of the Lamb who is "*Lord of lords, and King of kings*" (17:14).

Yet, those who follow the Lamb are involved in a continuing spiritual conflict, and Revelation thus provides deeper insight into the nature and tactics of the Enemy (*Eph. 6:10-12*). The dragon, frustrated by his defeat at the Cross and the consequent restraints placed upon his activity, and desperate to thwart the purposes of God before his inevitable doom, develops a counterfeit trinity "*to make war*" on the saints (*12:17*). The first "*beast*" or monster symbolizes the reality of anti-Christian government and political power (*13:1-10, 13*); and the second, anti-Christian religion, philosophy, and ideology (*13:11-17*). Together they produce the ultimately deceptive and seductive anti-Christian secular society, commerce, and culture, the harlot Babylon (*chs. 17; 18*), composed of those "*who dwell on earth.*" These thus bear the "mark" of the monster, and their names are not registered in "*the Lamb's Book of Life.*" The dragon continually delegates his restricted power and authority to the monsters and their followers in order to deceive and discourage anyone from God's creative-redemptive purpose.



WORD TREASURES

2:9 poverty: From a root meaning "to cower." The word indicates a state of abject poverty destitution, indigence. In the NT it describes the voluntary poverty that Christ experienced on our behalf (2 Cor. 8:9); the condition of saints in Macedonia (2 Cor. 8:2); and the extreme want of the church of Smyrna (Rev. 2:9).

2:10 tried, to explore, test, try assay, examine, prove, attempt, tempt. The word describes the testing of the believer's loyalty, strength, opinions, disposition, condition, faith, patience, or character. *Petrazo* determines which way one is going and what one is made of.

KINGDOM DYNAMICS

2:9 Even though the Christians were poor, probably as a result of economic boycott; they were spiritually rich. Opposition from the **Jews** made life particularly difficult for Christians there. Although their official life was "*Synagogue of the Lord*" (see Num. 16:3); the hostile, unbelieving Jews had become **the synagogue of Satan**. The "*Synagogue of the Lord*" is now the church.

2:10 The devil (*meaning "slanderer"*) is behind the persecutions. **Ten days** is symbolic of a relatively short time (see Dan. 1:12). **Crown of life:** The joy of life eternal given to a victor.

2:11 The second death is eternal separation from God (*see 20:6, 14, 15:21:18; Dan. 12:2; John 5:29*). ... *to be cont'd.*



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