

STUDYING THE BOOK OF REVELATION

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST (6)



REVELATION 2

Message to Pergamos

Revelation 2:12-17
New International Version (NIV)

Message to Pergamos

12 *"To the angel of the church in Pergamum write: These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword.*

13 *I know where you live—where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, not even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city—where Satan lives.*

14 *Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: There are some among you who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin so that they ate food sacrificed to idols and committed sexual immorality.*

15 *Likewise, you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.*

16 *Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.*

17 *Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.*

More on the Revelation of Jesus Christ

For Our Personal Application. God has created the orders of community, that is, marriage and the family, economic activity, government and the state (*see Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Tim. 2:1, 2*). Satan, unable to create anything, tempts others to distort and misuse what God has created. Christians must discern whether a government is functioning *under* divine authority or as a divine authority. When the latter is the case, Christians must pray, courageously endure, and patiently accept the consequences of obeying the God, whose image and seal they bear (*see Mark 12:16, 17; Acts 4:19*). They must do so, in the confidence that after their victorious sufferings they will reign with Him.

Behind the appearances of the pomp and power of the world, there is the reality of the absolute sovereignty of the Lord God who is the Lamb, which ensures the ultimate doom of sin and evil. God is utilizing all the forces of evil, all the consequences

of sin, even the suffering of His saints, to accomplish His own purposes. Believers undergoing persecution need to know that their sufferings are not meaningless, and ultimately they will be vindicated. The mainspring of Christian hope and courage is the certainty that the Enemy has been defeated and is doomed, and that followers of the Lamb are not fighting a losing cause. He has already overcome, and therefore they can and will be overcomers!

Key Lessons in Faith. Faith is established in the knowledge of God, trusting Him for understanding and wisdom in the face of persecution. Faith's commitment to overcome, based on the shed blood of Jesus, does not fear even death.



*So Is The Wisdom of His
Holy Word*

2:12-17 Pergamos was a doctrinally compromising church in the oldest city of the province and the official seat of the Roman government.

2:13 Satan's seat is military terminology, suggesting combat against the forces of the Evil One (*see Eph. 6:10-18*). All believers are overcomers, but these who remain faithful in the midst of persecution and doctrinal error give proof to their faith. This is the primary emphasis in Revelation. **The tree of life** symbolizes spiritual sustenance to maintain eternal

life. **Paradise** is a Persian word for garden, which was used to designate the heavenly garden of God (*Luke 23:43*). The symbolism suggest the perfect fellowship for God and humankind enjoyed in Eden before the Fall.

2:14-15 The doctrine of Balaam and of the Nicolaitanes were teachings that seduced the people of God into idolatry and immorality (*see 2:6, 20; Num. 22-24;25; 31:15, 16; Acts 15:28, 29; 1 Cor. 10:27-29*).

2:16 The Lord will purge the church with His word of judgment.

2:17 Hidden manna: Jewish apocryphal mythology maintained that the pot of manna in the ark (*see Ex. 16:4, 31-34*) was hidden by Jeremiah, or taken by an angel to heaven, at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 a.c., where it

would remain until the Messiah should come (2 *Maccabees* 2:4-6), Jesus is "***the true bread from heaven***" (7:16; see *Ps.* 78:24; 105:40; *John* 6:31-35, 48-51),. Juries voted for acquittal by casting a **white stone** in an urn. Special stones were also used as tokens for various purposes such as rewards for victors in games. **New name** refers to the imputed character of Christ (see 22:4; *Is.* 62:2).... ***to be cont'd.***



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