

Wandering Stars Part IV

Jesus' Message to Thyatira

Rev 2:18 "And to the angel of the **church in Thyatira** write: 'The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze.

¹⁹ "I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first.

²⁰ But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols.

²¹ I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality.

²² Behold, I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works,

²³ and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you according to your works.

²⁴ But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden.

²⁵ Only hold fast what you have until I come.

²⁶ The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations,

²⁷ and he will rule [shepherd] them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father.

²⁸ And I will give him the morning star.

²⁹ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

(Revelation 2:8-18-29)

Psalms of the Messiah

Psalms 23 and **2** are two of the best known of all the poems ever written. They are also among the most beloved passages in the Scripture, primarily because of their deep Christological significance both as prophecy and as history. The first deals with **God's people**, the second with the **nations**.

Psalm 23 is the most celebrated of all the Psalms. It begins, “**The LORD is my Shepherd**” (**Ps 23:1**). The Psalm is talking to **God's people**. This Shepherd has a rod and a staff which comforts his people (**4**). He prepares a table for his people in the presence of their enemies (**5**). He makes them to dwell in his house, forever (**6**).

“**Shepherd**” is a title the Lord Jesus gives for himself in John 10. “**I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep**” (**John 10:11**). It is a title that goes back at least to the days of Jacob who referred to “**the God who has been my shepherd all my life long to this day, the angel who has redeemed me from all evil**” (**Gen 48:15-16**). Jacob knew that his Shepherd was not the Father in heaven, but the unique Son of God with whom he wrestled, the God who literally

walked there with him.¹ As such, the title speaks of **Christ in history**. It is also a title used by the **prophets to predict** the coming Messiah in human flesh. “**And you, O Bethlehem ... from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people**” (**Matt 2:6**; cf. **Micah 5:2-4**). “**He will tend his flock like a shepherd**” (**Isa 40:11**). “**I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David ... They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes**” (**Ezek 34:23**).

Psalm 2 is the flip side. Rather than speaking to God’s people, it speaks to “**the nations.**” “**Why do the nations rage?**” (**Ps 2:1**). It tells us of the “**kings of the earth**” and the “**rulers**” (Gk: *archons*), whom I take to be their counterparts in heaven, taking **counsel together, against the LORD** (the Father) **and against his Anointed (Messiah)**” (**2:2**). But the Father (who sits in heaven) **laughs**, and the Messiah (Adonai) **holds them in derision** (**4**). They really think they can thwart God’s plans? Who are they kidding?

So the Father speaks. “**As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.**” And the Messiah replies, “**I will tell of the decree: The LORD (Yahweh) said to me (Adonai), ‘You are my Son; today I have begotten you’**” (**Ps 2:7; see n. 16**).

¹ This will be relevant when we see that Jesus identifies himself as the “Son of God,” but the “sons of God,” that is the gods of the nations are often called “shepherds” (KTU 1.12.II; 1En 89:59; etc.). See my sermon on Psalm 23, “Jesus is My Shepherd,” (1-15-2017), <https://www.rbnc.com/Psalms%2023%20Jesus%20is%20My%20Shepherd%20big%20font.pdf>.

The Messiah is identified as **the Son**—the *Son of God*, begotten and beloved of his Father. “**Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance**” (8). The Son receives the nations and the earth to be his possession forever. “**You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel**” (9). What kind of a rod? A shepherd’s rod. Hence, “**You shall break them**” is translated by the LXX as “**rule** (*poimainō*) them,” but which literally means “**to shepherd**.”

It is common and honestly quite easy, when dealing with the seven churches, to begin our thinking of them with what is **negative**. That’s all the truer in Thyatira which brings us to climactic center of the letters with the phrase, “**the deep things of Satan**” (**Rev 2:24**). This is a messed-up group, caught in the heart of some profound spiritual darkness. But the reality is, while it is vital to heed the warnings of Christ to this and all the churches, without a glimpse of the glory of Jesus, the negative evaluations and threats that he gives them will not and cannot be heeded. Instead, we must see who this Jesus is and what he is for his churches if we are to have any hope in this world to, as Ezekiel said, “**walk in his rules and obey his statutes**.”

Of course, that necessarily includes **knowing what the problem is** so that it may be corrected, and we will get to that in due course. But I want you to get a glimpse up front of this Messiah who inherits the nations, shepherds them with a rod of iron, compels them to kiss him, lest they perish in the way (**Ps 2:12**) so that they may themselves **serve the LORD with fear**, and rejoice with trembling (**11**), even as his church, his sheep, hear his voice (**John 10:3**) and do not want because he makes them lie down in green pastures (**Ps 23:1-2**), even if he leads them through the valley of the shadow of death (**4**).

Thyatira: The Center of the Messages to the Seven Churches

Thyatira. The last of our churches in this study, but the fourth of the seven in the Apocalypse. This is because we have been looking at the seven letters to the churches not in their geographical order, as they appear to us when we read the book, but in their chiastic or literary order as we make our way to the heart and central message and themes which bind them all together.

Unlike the other churches, **Thyatira has no literary counterpart**, no parallel church. Rather, it stands by itself at the central position of the chiasm:

- A. **Ephesus**: No strengths to commend. Jesus will reject the entire church unless there is repentance (2:5)
- B. **Smyrna**: Faithful. Testing from “the synagogue of Satan” (2:9). No weakness of the church.
- C. **Pergamum**. Unfaithful, fallen into sin, but a faithful group still.
 - D. **Thyatira**. *Central position*, longest letter, contains all seven common elements of the seven letters. Idolatry/Worshiping the Beast is a major theme of the book. Jezebel is a false teacher, charged with deceiving God’s servants (2:20). Climax of unfaithfulness.
- C’. **Sardis**. Unfaithful, fallen into sin, but a faithful group still. Still, worse than Pergamum.
- B’. **Philadelphia**: Faithful. Testing from “the synagogue of Satan” (3:9). No weakness of the church.
- A’. **Laodicea**: No strengths to commend, but harsher than Ephesus. Jesus will reject the entire church unless there is repentance (3:16)²

It has some very **similar themes** to that of the previous church, **Pergamum**, as well as the first church, **Ephesus**. That is, there is **a dangerous false teacher** in their midst causing them great harm and leading them into deep unfaithfulness.

While the false teacher is explicitly identified as **Jezebel**, using our wandering star idea, we can relate her directly to **Venus**. This is because the most explicit of all the wandering stars that Jesus holds in his hand (**Rev 1:16, 20; 2:1; 3:1**) appears in this letter: **the morning star** (vs. **28**), which is Venus. Venus is the Roman goddess of love, beauty, sex, desire, and victory (if you’ve ever heard the 1969 hit *Venus*

² See **Paul M. Hoskins**, *The Book of Revelation: A Theological and Exegetical Commentary* (North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace, 2017), 119-121.

by Shocking Blue, later covered by Bananarama, you know that!).³ Her Greek name is **Aphrodite**. Among the peoples of the Middle East, she was called **Astarte** (Ashtart), **Astoreth**, Ishtar, Inanna, or Isis, the powerful seductress of sexuality and war. Indeed, she was called the very queen of heaven (see **Jer 7:18**). Our villain Jezebel is just like her.

Importantly, she is a **different goddess**, technically speaking, to **Asherah** (their names begin with different Hebrew letters: **ʾāšērā^h** vs. **ʿaštārōt̄** / **אשרה** vs. **עשתרת**). Asherah is directly linked to Jezebel in **1Kg 18:19** as the “**400 prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.**” Jezebel was a Phoenician/Sidonian princess (**1Kg 16:31**). And yet, we have absolutely no extra-biblical attestations of the worship of Asherah among those people at this time. However, we do have a ton of evidence that Astarte was worshiped by them. She was in fact their main goddess. Indeed, Jezebel’s father was Ithobaal I, the **high priest of Astarte** (**Josephus, Against Apion 1.123**). This has led some scholars to propose that the later editor/copiest of 1 Kings confused the two goddesses and that in fact Jezebel had a soft

³ **Going Deeper.** It’s interesting to compare the way Venus is described in that song (“**burning like a silver flame**” or “**weapons were her crystal eyes**”) with Christ “**who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze**” who “**searches mind and heart.**” “**Black as the dark night she was, making every man mad**” but Christ “**will give [the conqueror] the morning star, which is he himself.**” Jesus is the anti-Venus!

spot in her heart for the prophets of Venus.⁴ This would then give us a fascinating and direct “wandering star” reference in Thyatira. They were being seduced by the very queen of heaven! That’s not good.

As with the other churches, Thyatira has its own internal structure and center.

Thyatira

A. ^{2:18} To the angel of **the church** in Thyatira write: The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze.

B. ¹⁹ I know **your works**, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that **your latter works** exceed the first.

C. ²⁰ I But I have this **against you**, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is **teaching** and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. ²¹ I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. ²² Behold, I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of **her works**, ²³ and I will strike her children dead.

D. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you according to your works.

C’. ²⁴ But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who **do not hold this teaching**, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden. ²⁵ Only hold fast what you have until I come.

B’. ²⁶ The one who conquers and who **keeps my works** until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, ²⁷ and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father. ²⁸ And I will give him the morning star.

A’. ²⁹ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says **to the churches.**”

This center is **vs. 23**. Given that this is the center church, this would also make this verse **the center of the entire seven churches**, which is interesting given that this verse says,

⁴ “The question is why the name of Asherah is used here. If Phoenician Astarte was the goddess lying behind this reference to Asherah, the reference to ‘the prophets of Asherah’ in 1 Kings 18:19 might be explained in terms of the threat that Astarte may have posed. As the main Phoenician goddess during the Iron Age, Astarte could have represented an intrusion during the monarchy ... the gloss may be the result of substitution and not historical report.” For a discussion, see **Mark Smith**, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel* (Biblical Resource Series). Apple Books.

“And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart.” In other words, this message to Thyatira is the only one that explicitly speaks beyond them to all the churches (of course, all the others are the same, but this is a rhetorical function that stands out in this letter).

But importantly, as this letter like Psalm 23 is to God’s people, it is in this same letter that we have the first introduction in Revelation to “the nations,” and this makes it like Psalm 2. In fact, Jesus actually quotes Psalm 2 from the LXX (with some important changes) to them as this is brought up for the first time. “The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces” (Rev 2:26-27; cf. Ps 2:8-9).⁵ Also important, just like LXX makes an interpretive change to the Hebrew, so does Jesus. The verse changes the word “break” them with a rod of iron into

5

Ps 2:8 LXA	Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen <i>for</i> thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth <i>for</i> thy possession.	he one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations,	Rev 2:26
	αἰτήσαι παρ’ ἐμοῦ καὶ δώσω σοι ἔθνη τὴν κληρονομίαν σου καὶ τὴν κατάσχεσίν σου τὰ πέρατα τῆς γῆς	Καὶ ὁ νικῶν καὶ ὁ τηρῶν ἄχρι τέλους τὰ ἔργα μου, δώσω αὐτῷ ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν	
Ps 2:9 LXA	Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces as a potter’s vessel.	and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father.	Rev 2:27
	ποιμανεῖς αὐτοὺς ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρᾷ ὡς σκεῦος κεραμῆως συντριψεῖς αὐτοὺς	καὶ ποιμανεῖ αὐτοὺς ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρᾷ ὡς τὰ σκεύη τὰ κεραμικὰ συντρίβεται ...	

“rule” them ... which can be translated as “shepherd” them, thus linking us to both Psalm 2 and Psalm 23.⁶

Thyatira: Church of Compromise

Let’s begin our look at the letter with a brief **tour of the ancient city**. Of the seven cities, this one is by far **the smallest**, least known, and least important which makes the letter ironic, since it is by far **the longest** a most difficult to interpret.⁷ This city was the opposite of our last two cities. Rather than fortified and strong, it was **located in a valley** connecting two other valleys (though some rocky hills were nearby). Garrisons were often put here to protect the citizens from attack. This makes the name of the city ironic: High tower; a castle. Castles are strong and protected. Not Thyatira. This is probably a main reason it was so small. I believe there is also **a play here on the death of Jezebel** with the name of the church. For if you recall, Jezebel met her fate when she was thrown out of a high window and her blood spilled on the walls (**2Kg 9:30-34**). Artists often depicted her as being thrown out of a tower.

⁶ A fascinating discussion is **Jon Morales**, *Christ, Shepherd of the Nations: The Nations as Narrative Character and Audience in John’s Apocalypse*, Library of New Testament Studies 577 (New York: T&T Clark, 2018), 45-69.

⁷ See **Graves**, “Seven Churches Part I,” 54.



Ancient Thyatira



Death of Jezebel (Left, Holburne Museum, Bath, UK. Bridgeman Art Library. Right: F. M. Monogrammist, Oil on Copper



The most important fact about the city for our purposes is that it was a **trading city**, with guild-workers of all kinds setting up shop here (i.e. wool-workers, linen-workers, coppersmiths, shoemakers, leather workers, dyers, tanners, potters etc.). This may be a reason Jesus identifies himself to them as having “**feet like burnished bronze**,” something the local bronze guild would have appreciated. This cities security was not in armies and fortification, but in economics and money.

Each guild seems to have had **its own particular deity**, much like we see in India today. **Apollo** Tyrimmaeus, the patron god of guilds, was **celebrated with feasts and religious activities**, and Jesus’ identification of himself as the Bronze and Shining One may have contrasted with the depiction of Apollo on their coins.⁸ Hendriksen conveys this scenario for a Christian living in Thyatira:

⁸ This is in **Graves** (p. 55).

If you wish to get ahead in this [city], you must belong to a guild; if you belong to a guild, your very membership implies that you worship its god. You will be expected to attend the guild-festivals and to eat food part of which is offered to the tutelary deity and which you receive on your table as a gift from the god. And then, when the feast ends, and the real – grossly immoral- fun begins, you must not walk out unless you desire to become the object of ridicule and persecution!”⁹

That takes us to the heart of the syncretism that we will see very shortly

As we have seen, the **seven-fold formula** outlines the letter. Jesus *addresses* the city: “**To the angel of the church in Thyatira write...**” (**Rev 2:18**). He then *identifies* himself with the following characteristics. “**The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze**” (**18b**). In this description, we move to the heavenly angelic figure seen by John which was previously seen by Daniel and Ezekiel. Importantly, he identifies himself as “**the Son of God.**” This connects the angelic figure to the sons of God from the OT. But more importantly, it connects our letter directly to Psalm 2.

⁹ Hendriksen, p. 71.

Remember in that Psalm that the Messiah is called “God’s Son,” though we won’t see that plainly until later.

What does Jesus *know* about Thyatira? The same as several other churches. “I know your works” (19a). Jesus knows what we do. We can’t hide from this kind of God, one brilliant and shining, arrayed in gleaming metal with eyes like fire that burn a hole through our souls. He knows what we do, and we know that he knows what we do. Even the pagans know this, which is why guilt remains in their hearts.

So what have *they done*? “Your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first” (19b). Their works consist of five things they have done well, which is better than several of the churches. Someone comments,

This fellowship had hard workers that were known for their actions, not just their beliefs. [They] had love for many people. In fact, they are the only church that Jesus commended for having love. But this could prove to be a downfall. Their deeds and love were motivated by their faith in Christ. The church was heavily involved in ministry and in serving others. They had patient endurance/steadfastness. Their latter works exceeded the first. That means they were

growing in their faith, not just resting in something God did for them in the past.¹⁰

Notice how their works came because of faith, not the reverse. This is how works can be considered good. And yet, though this is quite a list, its one verse pales in comparison to the *criticism* that follows. This would have been rough for them to hear, but hear it they must. All churches must.

“But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols” (20). The sins mentioned are identical here to the teachings of Balaam at Pergamum (14). This time, it is a different OT villain who has wormed her way into the church. She is called that most infamous of all the female scoundrels of the OT: Jezebel, not that Jezebel (or Balaam) reincarnated or something, but that the same spirit or teaching she had continues on.

Who was Jezebel? As we saw, she was the daughter of a high priest to Ashtarte/Venus who was also the king of the Sidonians. In an act of solidifying their kingdoms, but which God considered a great evil, the wicked king Ahab married

¹⁰ Pilgrim Benham, “Five Ways A Church Becomes Tolerant: The Church of Thyatira,” *CalvaryChapel.com* (Oct 24, 2018), <https://calvarychapel.com/posts/five-ways-a-church-becomes-tolerant-the-church-of-thyatira>.

Jezebel in a ceremony. While the Bible does not tell us about this ceremony, Brian Godawa has imagined it in his novel *Jezebel*. They called it the “**Sacred Marriage**,” and it had origins going back many centuries into ancient Sumer.

In the ritual, there was a **marriage feast** consisting of royal and priestly elites. It’s interesting that Elijah calls for the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah/Ashtarte, who “**eat at Jezebel’s table**” (1Kg 18:19). That’s very close to “**eating food sacrificed to idols**.” The marriage would be consummated through a cult prostitute surrogate for the goddess or between the two partners who were representing two deities. It isn’t hard to imagine Ahab thinking about a wedding between his cultish view of Yahweh and Ashtarte. In this way, they believed this “marriage” would not only unite the kingdoms but would bring the favor of the gods upon their crops and population in childbearing in the coming years.¹¹ That’s very close to “**practicing sexual immorality**.” It’s pure syncretism, blending the sacred with the profane, blurring God and the gods.

The LORD viewed such things as horrible acts of **unfaithfulness** to him, compromising his power and

¹¹ For the theological explanation of this sacred marriage see **Brian Godawa**, *The Spiritual World of Jezebel and Elijah* (Los Angeles, CA: Embedded Pictures, 2019), ch. 5.

replacing it with that of lesser created beings. Literally uniting with them through sacramental acts of magic and ritual, when he is the one who had taken them to be his people, he is the one who had married them. Thus, it was, in fact, **spiritual adultery**, a theme which will never be far from the book of Revelation. This sacred marriage of old would have been a real-world outworking of these sins and a very practical way you can see what they were doing.

The phrase “**sexual immorality**” returns in the **vs. 21**. “**She refuses to repent of her sexual immorality.**” The Greek word is *porneia*. “**It is a generic word for sexual infidelity or marital unfaithfulness and includes every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse**” such as **prostitution, ritual-temple intercourse** (the word *pornei* comes from *pornemi* meaning “to sell” especially “slaves”), **incest, fornication** (sex outside of marriage), **adultery, homosexuality, bestiality**, etc.¹² We don’t know if the church at Thyatira was simply confining this to their guilds and if the temptation was compartmentalized and justified since it was away from church, or if this had spread to a kind of licentiousness that lead them to be committing any and every kind of sexual

¹² A pretty thorough study is **C. Chemtingla Sangtam**, “An Analytical Study of the Word PORNEIA in First Corinthians,” https://www.academia.edu/26915978/AN_ANALYTICAL_STUDY_OF_THE_WORD_PORNEIA_IN_FIRST_CORINTHIANS.

immorality imaginable, in a kind of drunken orgy of antinomian lawlessness.

It is clear that the root matter is the **spiritual crossing-over to the other realm**, the violation of the First Commandment not to have other gods before the LORD. Otherwise, Jezebel would not have been the name used here. This is clear throughout the story of this woman and her husband. “**And as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, he took for his wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and went and served Baal and worshiped him. He erected an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he built in Samaria. And Ahab made an Asherah. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him**” (1Kg 16:31). These were the things “**Jezebel his wife incited**” (21:25). These were “**the whorings and the sorceries of your mother Jezebel**” (2Kg 9:22).

A lot of people today don't think that this kind of application could possibly **be for us today**, because we have, they wrongfully think, evolved past the superstitions of believing in and worshiping the gods. But nothing could be farther from the truth. I think a lot of people believe this because they fail to understand that in the ancient mind,

things that we think of as inanimate ideas void of living essence were personified and attached directly to the gods.

For example, **Venus** is the goddess of beauty and love and war. But the word itself comes from a Proto-Indo-European root *wen-* from which we get words like *venerate* (a form of worship) or *venom* (from serpents) or *venison* (large game that is hunted for its meat) or *venery* (the pursuit of sexual pleasure). In fact, *wen-* means “to desire, strive for.” In other words, the goddess Venus is a personification of and a kind of way of thinking about the origin of the human lust for war and lust. Do we not engage in these things today? When we do, the ancients would have said we were *venerating* the goddess. That puts a different spin on it, doesn't it?

This is why it is so important when studying these creatures to know what their names mean. For example, **Zeus** and **Baal** (same entity) both mean “lord.” The god **Eros** means “Desire.” **Eris** means “Strife.” **Gaia** means “Earth.” **Nemesis** means “Retribution.” **Momus** means “Blame.” And so on. Do not people today worship the Earth? Do they not put human desire or strife or blame almost as gods that consume their own passions? This is the very reason why Paul could say that “their god is their belly” (**Php 3:19**). The

church father **Clement** calls it the *koilodaimon*—**belly-demon** (*The Instructor [Paed.]* 2:1.15.4).¹³ Jesus could say people worship Mammon (Money; **Matt 6:24**). So we ought not be over prideful that we moderns are beyond the kind of spiritual adultery that Thyatira was tempted by through Jezebel.

It is interesting, though, how in **Rev 2:21** it says, “**I gave her time to repent.**” This means that this teaching had been in Thyatira for a while and Jesus did not discipline them. It is probable that **he did warn them**, perhaps through Christian leaders who came through the cities in earlier years. They clearly knew it was wrong; he told them to repent. But they kept refusing. It is difficult, when one’s livelihood is on the line, when you might lose your job, your income, your friends, your status in the community, to do the right thing. But Jesus is quite clear to the church here.

In fact, Jesus threatens the church with these words. “**Behold, I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works, and I will strike her children dead**” (**Rev 2:22-23**). To many people even all

¹³ “Those who bend around inflammatory tables, nourishing their own diseases, are ruled by a most lickerish demon, whom I shall not blush to call the Belly-demon, and the worst and most abandoned of demons. He is therefore exactly like the one who is called the Ventriloquist-demon. It is far better to be happy⁷ than to have a demon dwelling with us.”

these years later still have this picture of Jesus as some patchouli smelling, tie-die wearing hippie from Boulder who walked to Woodstock in his Birkenstocks while passing out granola bars and holding up his fingers in the form of a peace sign to anyone who came near him. No. This is the Divine Warrior, the one with the two-edged sword who broke the walls of Jericho with the mere power of his voice. Jesus is here threatening war.

He says he will throw her onto a sickbed. He refers to the false teachers. The picture is one of bring suffering upon them. The image may refer to a couch on which Jezebel and her followers reclined during pagan feasts or to the dining-court of the guild-feasts, which are similar.¹⁴ “Great tribulation” is not referring here to some future seven-year Great Tribulation, as again many seem to think. While there may be a Great Tribulation awaiting the whole world in our future, this refers to this church, *in Thyatira*. Perhaps it came to fulfillment in the events of Nero or Diocletian which brought severe persecution upon the churches. The point is, Jesus won’t forget what they are doing. Our Lord sees and, in his time, acts.

¹⁴ Tony Garland, *A Testimony of Jesus Christ, vol. 1: A Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (Camano Island, WA: Spirit and Truth, 2004), 235.

https://www.google.com/books/edition/A_Testimony_of_Jesus_Christ_Volume_1/K7vqJyRA_dj4C?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=psalm+2+thyatira&pg=PA232&printsec=frontcover.

But, he is also *coming after the children of Jezebel*. This clearly does not refer to Ahab's sons and daughters, but to *the spiritual children, those who are listening to this wicked teaching*, perpetuating it, and acting on it in the church. There is now an entire segment of the visible church that openly celebrates this teaching today as it embraces homosexuality, wicca, transgenderism, even flagrant adultery in the name of tolerance. We call it **Liberalism**. I'm not talking about inviting these sinners, like we would any sinners (for we are all sinners) to hear the gospel and be converted, but rather applauding these activities, openly, without shame. And **Evangelicalism** is quite honestly not too far behind them. R. Fowler white asks,

Do we have ears to hear Christ's message to Thyatira? Has the lure of economic security led our churches to tolerating false teaching? Our Protestant forebears saw their church turn into a harlot liable to Christ's judgment. So they renounced Jezebel; they "let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also." Let us repent of our promiscuous desire for economic security in this Babylonian world and end our affairs with teachers who would tempt us away from the holy safety of Jerusalem above and the world to come.¹⁵

¹⁵ R. Fowler White, "The Letter to the Church in Thyatira," *Ligonier*, first published in *Table Talk* (May 2009): <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/letter-church-thyatira/>.

In this regard, it is vital to know that **the parallel** at the end of Revelation is, in fact, the **Babylonian whore** with her merchants, her money, and her marital unfaithfulness.

This is **the center of our church letter** and of all the church letters. “**All the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you according to your works**” (**Rev 2:23**). If these words penetrate you, it is because this is the same language Hebrews gives for the word of God. It is “**living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart**” (**Heb 4:12**). But like those gods who embody those passions, so also this word. For the Word is Christ and he searches and knows your mind and heart.

But the Divine Warrior and his Holy Spirit are One. We learn, “**The Spirit searches everything**” (**1Co 2:10**). May he search us, know us, and convict us and then turn and give us mercy by granting us repentance. It is curious that this is what he did for **Lydia of Thyatira**. She is the opposite of Jezebel. “**The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to**

what was said by Paul” (Acts 16:14). God is indeed very merciful.

This verse about the Holy Spirit concludes that the Spirit searches “even the depths of God.” Compare this to Rev 2:24, “But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan...” This is what it comes down to then. People who perhaps have been tempted through immorality to participate in the deep things of Satan or, as some scholars suggest, people who were using sexual immorality in order to themselves learn the deep things of Satan. Beale for instance writes, “This expression implies the view that it was possible for Christians to participate to some degree in idolatrous situations, thus having some experience with the demonic-satanic realm, and yet not be harmed spiritually by such participation.”¹⁶

After all this, our Lord softens towards his people. To those who do not give in to this, “to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden” (24). Apparently, it was enough difficulty for them to resist this temptation. As we have seen, if your job, your reputation, your family’s well-being are all

¹⁶ G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, Cumbria: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1999), 265.

on the line here, that's already quite serious. And the Lord Jesus does not overwhelm his people. He is much kinder in grace to us than many of us are with one another.

Nevertheless, he *encourages* them, “Only hold fast what you have until I come” (25). It's another coming. We've seen these comings in judgment to the churches. We've seen how they anticipate the great final Second Coming of Christ to make all things right. The point is, Jesus is always here with us. He continually interacts with his people and his churches, helping them or removing their candlesticks. He makes it so that we cannot help but see and know that he is truly the one who searches our hearts and minds and gives to each according to our works, not as some kind of works-salvation, but as works-rewards or, if one never has trusted in Christ, as the just punishment a person's rebellious works against him deserve.

He *concludes* with the crown of reward: “To the one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, and he will rule [shepherd] them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father” (26-27). Here then, we return to Psalms 2 and 23. The word “rule” can and probably should be

translated as “shepherd” them, thus linking us to the 23rd Psalm with the Lord our Shepherd walking with us wherever we go, even on into our eternal reward.

But it is Ps 2 and how Jesus has transformed it here that is truly comment worthy. You see, in Ps 2 itself, it is **the Son of God who is given authority** over the nations. He is the one who rules with a rod of iron, who breaks the nations like pieces of iron pottery. He is the one who was said to receive this authority from his Father.

Now, back then, this **was a prophecy**. But after the resurrection, it became **fulfilled history**. This is why Jesus says to his disciples, “**All authority in heaven and on earth has been given me...**” (**Matt 28:18**). He has won for himself the right to have this authority over the nations not just because he is the eternal Son of God, which he is, but now as the Son of Man. He has reclaimed that authority Adam abdicated. And as the God-man, he now begins to unite all things in heaven and on earth, even working in a fallen world, and rebellious nations, and fallen sinners like us.

But this takes us to the great change and fulfillment of Psalm 2 in Revelation 2. You see, this authority that Jesus received, **he now gives to his church** as an extension of his very person. We are his body on earth. He will give us authority

over the nations. Not to defeat them in some Holy Crusade. We will shepherd them with a rod of iron. *Because* he received authority from his Father. This is the church's role.

Now, this must be viewed as both **an already and not-yet**. We do not yet see the fullness of what this will mean at the Second Coming. Much of the end of Revelation helps us see more of this. And yet, there is clearly something “already” about this ruling now. But we need to understand it clearly. Jesus is not here giving us a view of the Medieval world that the Holy Roman Empire will “rule the nations” as we saw happen for 1,000 years centuries ago. That's an over-realized eschatology which forces salvation as the edge of a sword.

Nevertheless, there is some kind of ruling that takes place here. I'm not certain that American politics and religion with its severe separation of church and state, however, is much better at understanding this than the Holy Roman Empire was. One view is total dominance over the world; the other seems to be near total absence of the church in the world.

It's difficult to say exactly what the best expression of this has been, but perhaps something like **Calvin's Geneva** comes closer. Here, there was **no sharp distinction between**

the state and the church, and yet there was enough. Calvin was pastor most of his life outside this great city. But for a few years, he served essentially as its mayor. He made the city a safe refuge for Protestants. He started a school which taught both the Bible and classical education. He created hospitals where none existed. Geneva, like all places short of heaven, had its share of problems. But at the heart there was this idea that in some way God's people who are able to overcome and follow their Lord into battle end up ruling the nations.

And yet, is this rule that of an earthly military? It sometimes was in Geneva. But if the word “shepherd” is better, then the metaphor shifts from pure force to that of loving, caring, but strong overseer. In this, when we speak truth to the world, when we get involved in it on the level of politics or become bosses or principles or whatever, and especially when we preach in the churches of Jesus Christ the law and the gospel, God's requirements for mankind, his forgiveness in Christ for falling short, and his redemptive sanctifying love that creates true and faith-filled obedience, we cannot help but see God change the lives of people among the nations. We cannot help but see the nations themselves change—in their laws, their policies, their services, their ways of executing moral law in a civilization.

That's the influence our salt and light has on them. That's what I believe Jesus is promising here to Thyatira. This great city of commerce is being given a promise that in conquering and keeping his works and words until the end, they can expect—certainly at the age to come, but also even now, that the Lord's authority over the nations will make a distinct impression through them in the places they live and move and have their being.

In this, Jesus now *promises* the, “I will give him the morning star” (Rev 2:28). Now, our ironic use of Venus shows itself for what it truly is. The veiled threat of giving the people over to Jezebel and her goddess if they do not repent is turned into one of the great promises in all of Scripture for those who do. For what do we learn in other places? While the pagans assign the heavenly bodies to the gods, it is in all actuality the fact of the matter that he created them. They are his. “He holds the seven stars in his right hand.”

As such. The true morning star is not the goddess, but the God of gods—Jesus. The parallel at the end of Revelation tells us, “I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star” (Rev 22:16). This is in accordance with the prophecy going all the way back to Balaam. “I see him, but not now; behold him, but not near:

a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel” (Num 24:17).¹⁷

Hence, the Messiah is “the sun of righteousness” (Mal 4:2), the “sunrise who visits us” (Luke 1:78), the Light shining out of darkness (John 1:5; 2Co 4:6). Therefore, “We have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts” (2Pe 1:19).

Jesus can give himself to us because he gave himself *for* us. This is why it is so helpful to read the parallels in John’s Gospel, which help interpret Revelation. One such parallel demonstrates his omniscience. He told the church, “*I know your deeds, and your love.*” Peter, who was fraught with despair at having forsaken his Master at his moment of

¹⁷ Another fascinating one is found in Psalm 110:3 LXX. This translation identifies Melchizedek as the begotten son, seemingly of Psalm 2. But it uses the “morning star” idea to do it. “From the womb, before the morning star, I have begotten you.” (cf. Justin Martyr, *Dialogue* 83). Besides morning star, the second parallel here to our discussion today is “begotten you,” which comes straight out of Psalm 2.

A second background is Isaiah 14:12 where we learn about Lucifer (Latin Vulgate), the “Morning Star, Son of the Dawn.” Morning star is “sons of God” language (Job 38:7). Again, this is reference to Venus, but this time, it is associated with the creature of Eden. While Venus was usually identified with the goddess, sometimes it was given a masculine identification, such as Hesperus (Evening Star) and his half-brother Phosphorus (Morning Star) in Greek mythology, or in ancient Canaanite religion, it was Attar, the masculine variant of Ishtar. Eventually, Attar ended up ruing the underworld after his attempt to seize the throne of Baal failed. This is similar to Hades and Zeus (in fact, Baal is Zeus). It is also very similar to Ishtar becoming the ruling queen of the underworld. In this way, Lucifer, the god of Hell was born in translation Lucifer in this passage.

darkness and dire need was being restored by the resurrected Christ and he came to confess, “*Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.*” He knew that the Lord knew all things as we learn in the parallel to our central verse, “*All the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts*” found in **John 2:24-25**, “*Jesus ... knew all men ... for He Himself knew what was in man.*”

Peter knew that Jesus knew this, but he **was no longer afraid** because he now knew that the Lord first loved him. Our parallel to the conquering end of the letter to Thyatira where it says, “*And he who conquers and keeps my works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations ... they shall be broken like clay vessels as I also received from my Father*” is found in a subtle play on these words when our Lord is hanging on the cross. “*A vessel full of sour wine was sitting there ... when Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, ‘It is finished’ ... that the Scripture might be fulfilled, ‘Not one of his bones shall be broken’*” (**John 19:29, 30, 36**). Until the end parallels it is finished. The breaking of the vessels parallels his bones not being broken.

This is the explanation for why Jesus can give us himself. This is precisely what we learn at **the Lord’s Supper**, when he taught us to remember, “*This is my body, broken for you*”

(1Co 11:24 KJV). This is our table, **not the table of idols**, or orgy marriage feasts, but of the **communion** with the son of God. And because Jesus broke his body (but not his bones) and overcame the temptations even to the point of death, he was justified and raised from the dead and now he can and does shall all of his Messianic blessings with his churches. This truly is the heart and soul of the letters to the seven churches, for as much as they have wrong with them, what they have right is their common Savior. He is indeed the Divine Warrior of John's vision. He is the one who knows everything about his churches. He warns us where we go astray. He leads us back with his shepherd's rod when we hear his words. But most of all, he gives us his very life so that we might have the power to overcome which he commands.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches (**Rev 2:29**).

Bibliography

Aune, David E. *Revelation 1–5*, vol. Word Biblical Commentary 52A. Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1997.

Beale, G. K. and Campbell, David H. *Revelation: A Shorter Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015.

Benham, Pilgrim. "Five Ways A Church Becomes Tolerant: The Church of Thyatira." *CalvaryChapel.com* (Oct 24, 2018). <https://calvarychapel.com/posts/five-ways-a-church-becomes-tolerant-the-church-of-thyatira>.

Clement of Alexandria, *The Instructor*.

- Sangtam, C. Chemtingla. "An Analytical Study of the Word PORNEIA in First Corinthians." https://www.academia.edu/26915978/AN_ANALYTICAL_STUDY_OF_THE_WORD_PORNEIA_IN_FIRST_CORINTHIANS.
- Gage, Warren Austin. *John's Gospel: A Neglected Key to Revelation?* Fort Lauderdale, FL: Warren A. Gage, 2001.
- Garland, Tony. *A Testimony of Jesus Christ, vol. 1: A Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (Camano Island, WA: Spirit and Truth, 2004).
https://www.google.com/books/edition/A_Testimony_of_Jesus_Christ_Volume_1/K7vqJyRAAdj4C?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=psalm+2+thyatira&pg=PA232&printsec=frontcover.
- Godawa, Brian. *The Spiritual World of Jezebel and Elijah*. Los Angeles, CA: Embedded Pictures, 2019.
- Graves, David E. "Jesus Speaks to Seven of His Churches, Part 1." *Bible and Spade* 23.2 (Spring 2010): 45-56.
https://www.academia.edu/6962453/Jesus_Speaks_to_Seven_of_His_Churches_Part_1.
- Hendriksen, William. *More Than Conquerers*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1940.
- Hoskins, Paul M. *The Book of Revelation: A Theological and Exegetical Commentary*. North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace, 2017.
- Josephus, *Against Apion*.
- Justin Martyr. *Dialogue to Trypho*.
- Morales, Jon. *Christ, Shepherd of the Nations: The Nations as Narrative Character and Audience in John's Apocalypse*, Library of New Testament Studies 577. New York: T&T Clark, 2018. 45-69.
- Smith, Mark S. *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel, second edition*. Biblical Resource Series. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002. Apple Books Edition.
- Van Dorn, Douglas. "Psalm 2: Inheritance of Messiah." (9-18-2016).
<https://www.rbnc.com/Psalm%202%20Inheritance%20of%20Messiah%20big%20font.pdf>.
- _____. "Psalm 23: Jesus is My Shepherd." (1-15-2017).
<https://www.rbnc.com/Psalm%2023%20Jesus%20is%20My%20Shepherd%20big%20font.pdf>.
- White, R. Fowler "The Letter to the Church in Thyatira." *Ligonier*. First published in *Table Talk* (May 2009). <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/letter-church-thyatira/>.

Appendix 1a: Seven Churches Chiastic Parallels: New Heavens & Earth

(Both of these charts are in Gage, *John's Gospel*)

Ephesus	2:7 "I will give to him to eat of the tree of life "	22:2 "in the midst of its (New Jerusalem's) street—the tree of life "
Smyrna	2:11 "he shall not be hurt by the second death "	20:6 "on these the second death has no power"
Pergamos	2:17 "I will give to him a <i>stone</i> , and on the stone a new name written "	21:14, 19 "the city has twelve foundations, and <i>on them</i> the names of the twelve apostles ... the foundation was of every precious <i>stone</i> "
Thyatira	2:26–28 "I will <i>give authority over</i> the nations , and he will shepherd them with a rod of iron ... I will give the morning star "	19:15, 22:16 "He ... <i>strikes</i> the nations ... He Himself will shepherd them with a rod of iron ... I am the bright morning star "
Sardis	3:5 "he will be <i>clothed in</i> white ... his name in the Book of Life "	19:14; 20:12 "the armies in heaven ... <i>dressed in fine white linen</i> ... and another book was opened, the Book of Life "
Philadelphia a	3:8, 12 "I have set before you an <i>open door</i> that no one can shut ... I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God ... and the name ... of My city of the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from God shall be on him"	21:2, 22, 25 "the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God ... the <i>Lord God Almighty</i> is its temple , and the Lamb ... and its <i>gates</i> shall not be shut "
Laodicea	3:21 "I will give him to sit with Me on My throne , and ... on His throne "	22:3 "and the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it (New Jerusalem)"

Appendix 1b: Seven Churches Chiastic Parallels and the Whore

Ephesus	2:5 "Repent ... but if not ... I will <i>remove your</i> lampstand "	18:23 "And the light of <i>a lamp shall not shine</i> in you (Babylon)"
Smyrna	2:10–11 "the devil is about to <i>throw some of you in</i> prison ... you will have tribulation <i>ten days</i> ... <i>bethousand years</i> ... those who had been <i>beheaded</i> ... faithful until <i>death</i> , and I will give you a <i>crowns</i> ... you <i>lived and reigned</i> with Christ ... <i>over such</i> the second death shall not be hurt by the second death "	20:2–7 "He laid hold of the devil and <i>bound him</i> for a prison ... <i>Satan</i> will be released from his prison "
Pergamos	2:13–14 "Antipas, My faithful martyr , who was <i>killed</i> among you ... you have there some holding the <i>teaching of Balaam</i> so that they would ... <i>eat food</i> martyrs ... <i>the false prophet</i> who had performed signs <i>sacrificed to idols</i> "	17:6, 19:20 "the woman (Babylon) was <i>drunk with the blood</i> ... of the martyrs ... <i>the false prophet</i> who had performed signs of deceit ... <i>to make them worship the beast</i> "
Thyatira	2:20, 22–23 "you permit that woman Jezebel ... and to <i>eat things sacrificed to idols</i> (abominations) adultery with her ... I will give to each one according to your works "	17:4, 18:6, 9 "The woman (Babylon) ... had a golden <i>cup full of abominations</i> and the filthiness of her fornication ... <i>repay her according to her works</i> ... those <i>committing fornication with her</i> "
Sardis	3:3 "Repent ... (or) you will not know in what hour <i>will come upon you</i> "	18:10 "Woe to you, the great city (Babylon) ... for in one hour has your judgment come "
Philadelphia	3:9 "I will make them come (false Jews of Satan's synagogue) and <i>know that I have loved you</i> "	20:9 "They (Satan and those he deceives) went up ... and surrounded the beloved city ... and <i>fire came down from heaven and God and devoured them</i> "
Laodicea	3:17–18 "you say, ' <i>I am rich</i> ... and have need of <i>nothing</i> ' ... you do not know that you are ... naked ... <i>scarlet</i> and adorned with gold ... (yet) these will ... Buy from Me refined gold ... and <i>white garments</i> "	17:4, 16, 18:7 "the woman (Babylon) was <i>arrayed in scarlet</i> and adorned with gold ... in her heart she says, ' <i>I sit as a queen</i> ... I will not see sorrow'"

Appendix 2: Chart of Parallels of Seven Churches in John's Gospel

John	Revelation		
All Seven			
"He (Jesus) breathed on them, and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit' "	20:22	2:7, 11, 17, 29, 3:6, 13, 22	"He who has an ear, <i>let him hear</i> what the Spirit says to the churches."
"This is now the third time Jesus showed Himself to His disciples."	21:14	1:4	"Grace ... and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come."
Suffering Before Glory	18-19	2-3	Suffering Before Glory
Recognizing the Risen Lord	20	1-3	Recognizing the Risen Lord
Jesus Calling Out to His Disciples Across Waters	21	1-3	Jesus Calling Out to His Disciples Across Waters
Ephesus (2:1-7)			
"Jesus ... took bread and gave it to them"	21:13	2:7	To Ephesus: "To him who overcomes I (Jesus) will give to eat from the tree of life"
"they crucified Him with two other men ... and Jesus in the midst. "	19:18	2:1	"the One who walks in the midst of the seven lampstands"
Jesus asks Peter, "Do you love Me?"	21:15	2:4	To Ephesus: "you have left your first love"
Smyrna (2:8-11)			
Jesus tells Peter "by what death he would <i>glorify</i> God"	21:19	2:10	To Smyrna: "be faithful unto death , and I will give you a <i>crown</i> "
"the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns ... Then Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns"	19:2, 5	2:10	"Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life"
Pergamum (2:12-17)			
Jesus gives Peter a new name: " <i>Cephas</i> , which is translated, 'a stone' "	1:42	2:17	"To him who overcomes ... I (Jesus) will give a white <i>stone</i> , and on the <i>stone</i> a new name"
"now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus ... a teacher in Israel"	3:1, 10	2:15	"the teaching of the Nicolaitans" (2:6)
(MY ADDITION): "while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb"	20:1	2:17	"To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it."
Thyatira (2:18-29)			
Peter says, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I <i>love</i> You."	21:17	2:19	To Thyatira: " <i>I</i> (Jesus) know your deeds, and your love ..."
"a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there ... when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, 'It is finished' ... that the Scripture might be fulfilled, 'Not one of His bones shall be broken'"	19:29, 30, 36	2:26-27	"And he who overcomes and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations ... 'they shall be broken like clay vessels' as I also received from My Father"
"Jesus ... knew all men ... for He Himself knew what was in man"	2:24-25	2:23	"all the churches shall know that I (Jesus) am He who searches the minds and hearts"
Sardis (3:1-6)			
"But when the morning had come, Jesus stood upon the shore, but the disciples did <i>not know</i> that it was <i>Jesus.</i> "	21:4	3:3	To Sardis: "if you do not watch, I will come to you ... and you will <i>not know</i> what hour I will come upon you."
"The Jews said to Pilate, 'Do not write ... Pilate answered, 'What I have written, I have written."	19:21-22	3:5	"I (Jesus) will not erase his name from the book of life."
"they clothed him in a purple garment"	19:2	3:5	The overcomer "shall be clothed in white garments"
Philadelphia (3:7-13)			
"Peter denied it and said, 'I am not.'"	18:25, 27	3:8	"You have kept My word, and have not denied My name."
"I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues and in the temple"	18:20	3:9	"those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not"
"when the doors were shut ... Jesus came and stood in their midst"	20:19	3:7-8	"The One having the key of David, who opens and no one can shut ... I have given you an open door."
Laodicea (3:14-22)			
Jesus purges the temple: " Zeal for Your house will consume Me"	2:17	3:19	Jesus purifies His church: "Be zealous therefore, and repent"
"he who does evil hates the light ... lest his deeds be reproved"	3:20	3:19	"as many as I love I reprove"
"the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice"	3:29	3:20	"Behold, I stand at the door ... if anyone hears My voice ... I will come in to him and dine with him"
"for this cause I (Jesus) have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth"	18:37	3:14	"These things says the Amen, the faithful and True Witness."
"Simon Peter ... girded himself, for he was naked."	21:7	3:18	To Laodicea: "clothe yourself, lest the shame of your nakedness be revealed"