

Bible Prophecy and the book of Revelation, Lesson 5

7 Letters to the 7 Churches, The Church at Thyatira

Revelation 2:18-29. This is the longest letter and the longest church age. Review of the themes of the letters thus far:

- ✓ Ephesus: Jesus wants our devotion.
 - ✓ Smyrna: Jesus is with us in our suffering and persecutions.
 - ✓ Pergamum: Do not join with false teachings; do not marry the world.
 - ✓ Thyatira: We are going to see what comes as a product of an unholy union.
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1. Details of the city itself.

- ✓ It's on the road from modern Istanbul to Izmir, Smyrna; you run through a city called Achazar which is modern day Thyatira. The town was named Semiramis, a Lydian name, which means queen of paganism, also known as queen of Heaven. Later on, it received the name of Thyatira from the Greeks; this name means "Daughter."
 - ✓ It became a center of trade guilds, similar to unions. The guilds came with benefits, were highly organized, protected the members, and each had its own patron deity.
 - ✓ This put Christian tradesmen in a huge dilemma; trying to survive outside of the guild was hard to do or joining a guild and tolerating the association to paganism. Thyatira was known for its dyes, especially the color purple.
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2. Thyatira represents the age of the medieval Church 600-1500 A.D. The dangers to the Church arose from within.

- ✓ Verse 18b "Son of God"; this is the only place this title appears in the Revelation. This is the title of Jesus' power and authority; why does He use it? Apparently, this is where the challenge was. "Eyes like a flame of fire and feet of burnished bronze;" these are symbols of judgment.
 - ✓ Verse 19 Not all is negative about this church; they are doing some things well and have even improved and are commended.
 - ✓ This puts us in a strange position in our thinking. The medieval church had some huge problems and gross misapplications of Scripture and were single handedly responsible for the Dark Ages.
 - ✓ The following church age was that of the Protestant age in which there was reform and open bibles, etc., yet Jesus has no commendation for them, only bad news!!
 - ✓ Verse 20 Who is this woman? Jezebel, locally, she was some woman who was doing just what it says. The chief sin of the church was failing to raise a protest against her.
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- ✓ Jezebel is a symbolic name from the Old Testament.
 - 1) She was the daughter, Thyatira, of the king of Sidon, who was the high priest of Astarte, also known as Ishtar, Asherah, Ashtoreth, and Semiramis who murdered his predecessor.
 - 2) She was married to King Ahab to seal a trade alliance between Israel and Phoenicia.
 - 3) She brought her religious background with her.
 - 4) She doesn't just introduce idolatry into Israel but sets out to wipe out all the prophets of God!
 - 5) 1st Kings 16:30 is quite a statement!! Verses 31-33.
 - 6) Her queenship profile is found in 1st Kings 18:11-13.
 - 7) An incident from her reign is found in 1st Kings 21:1-16.
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- ✓ Pay careful attention to the methodology here. It's like the inquisition which falsely accuses in order to gain property.
 - ✓ This becomes one of the M.O.'s of the Medieval Church for nearly a thousand years!!!
 - ✓ Verse 21 "fornication and immorality"; also refers to the spiritual and also means being involved with other gods.
 - ✓ Verse 22 Promise to throw them into the Tribulation? Are they saying they are not saved?
 - ✓ In Ephesus, Christ's bride doesn't have time for Him. In Thyatira, she's in a full-blown affair.
 - ✓ This is the first of the seven letters to mention the second coming by way of the Great Tribulation.
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- ✓ The promise to the overcomer is moved into the body of letter.
 - ✓ The interpretation: The first 3 Ages are complete and the remaining 4 are changed: Thyatira is promised to last up to and possibly go into the Tribulation.
 - ✓ Laodicea has the same promise. Philadelphia is promised to go up to but delivered from the Tribulation. Sardis, He says "I will come like a Thief."
 - ✓ Jezebel gets hers in the end; do you remember how? She is thrown down and dogs devour her body.
 - ✓ Revelation 18:21, Revelation 17:16 This religious system and those who refuse to repent of it are destroyed.
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- ✓ Verse 23, it is interesting that Jesus threatens to send pestilence for those who do not repent.
 - 1) 6th century. Bubonic plague ravaged the known world with death totals of 100 million in Europe, Middle East, and Africa.
 - 2) 14th century. Bubonic plague ravaged Europe and ¼ to ½ of all Europeans lost their lives, 75 million.
- ✓ Verse 24 “depths of Satan;” this religious system is Satanic. Only the remnant survive. Unlike the previous three letters, the majority here seem to be Unsaved!
- ✓ Verse 25 Second coming is mentioned.
- ✓ Verse 26 “power over the nations”; it is interesting since the goal of Jezebel in the O.T. and the Church of this age was world domination.
- ✓ Verse 27-29 Let us remember that though there were many atrocious theological errors during this time, there were still many true believers, even so, they did not have Bibles and all their theology was given from the pulpits of the Roman Church.
- ✓ Let us also remember that as proud as we may be of our Protestantism, that somewhere our ancestors were Catholic because there were no other denominations.
