



the Seven Churches of Revelation

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Seven Churches – Thyatira [thai-uh-tee-rah]

Church of Thyatira

Ancient History

In ancient times, this city was called Pelopia [puh-lop-pe-ah], located on the border of Lydia and Mysia, the territorial homeland of Pergamon. The Greek name, which means “*daughter*”, was assigned to the province in the early Hellenistic period by a King paying tribute to the birth of his child while he was at war.

Its location is in a region also known for well-made garments and linen work, specifically purple, a valuable, extraordinary, and rare color elsewhere in the world at that time. An inscription honoring the ancient guild of dyers can be found in the unearthed ruins of the city.

The city, known for its unique clothing and goods, was a market center frequented by many world travelers in the early days of Church history. The city celebrated its popularity as an ancient Greek icon, with a history of idolatry and mythical stories of gods well-woven into its character and culture.

Lesson Four

The Revelation Message:

Rev 2:18 And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet *are* like fine brass;

Rev 2:19 I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last *to be* more than the first.

Rev 2:20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

Rev 2:21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.

Rev 2:22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

Rev 2:23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that **I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.**

Rev 2:24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

Rev 2:25 But that which ye have *already* hold fast till I come.

Rev 2:26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

Rev 2:27 **And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers:** even as I received of my Father.

Rev 2:28 And I will give him the morning star.

Rev 2:29 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

(Revelation 2:18) - The opening author affirmation in this letter describes the eyes and feet of the resurrected Christ. The focus of His bodily features is a metaphoric reference to the eternal body of the resurrected Christ. The fiery eyes express His eternal purity, see through and beyond all matters of creation and men. The feet of brass symbolize the brazen process of a refiner that finalizes metal work in the flames of fire. The resurrected Christ is finished like brass; nothing more can be or will be added to his nature or stature.

(Revelation 2:19) - "I know thy works, charity, service, and faith..." The primary work reviewed for this Church reflects their charity (love) or affection for service. The review by the Son of God implies the Church was accomplished in serving the needs of others. Ministry to the poor was always an important virtue in Judaism and was certainly a continued focus in the early Church, influenced by Jewish culture. The reference to service could reflect how well they handle the ministration of material needs to families within the Church body, as modeled in Acts 6:1-2, or even responding to calls for assistance by other Churches, as in the case of Apostle Paul's appeal for Macedonia. The Son of God acknowledged their faith, best represented by their deeds of service.

The commendation for their patience could also be tied to their service work. The term used in the passage conveys consistency and endurance, accurately describing their reliability in always showing up for service.

The service-type model is illustrated by Mary, Martha's sister, who never left the house when Jesus visited their home after Lazarus died. Mary was occupied with serving the needs of other guests who gathered during the mourning period. When God is present, all other service responsibilities and duties should be released, turning all focus upon Him. Thyatira was occupied with service to the extent of missing opportunities to turn their full attention towards God.

The observation of the Son of God appears redundant when He repeats: "He knows their works." The second reference is not a duplicate observation, but instead a final one. His reference points toward the final status or outcome of all their work. His observation is a summation of their work from the beginning to the end, leaving room for change or improvement.

The final assessment determined that the last or final work was more than the first. The valuation was measured in *quantity*, not in quality, which means that more service-work and good deeds are counted at the end than at the beginning.

(Revelation 2:20) – The primary overview leaves the Son of God with a few things at odds against the reputation of the Church for great deeds of service. The Church has allowed a "Jezebel" prophetess to teach and seduce believers to turn away from the truthful practice of their faith. The word "Jezebel" is used as a term for a type of seducer known within Judaism for influencing Kings and leaders to turn against their faith to follow after false gods.

The charge the Son of God makes against Thyatira says they "sufferest" the Jezebel prophetess to teach. The word used in the Greek is "eao" [eh-ah-o], which means to allow, permit, and **leave alone**. The Church was aware of the false teacher and did not remove or rebuke her; they left her alone. With permission, the prophetess taught believers to eat food set aside for idol worship celebrations. This practice had become rampant in the first-century Church, including the heresy led by the Nicolaitans, who were known for introducing the doctrine. (Rev. 2:15)

(Revelation 2:21) – The Church gave her space to work against God. God gave her space to repent, but the Church never rebuked her; therefore, she chose not to repent.

(Revelation 2:22-23) – In the absence of the Church taking action against Jezebel, the Son of God will cast her, along with all whom she has influenced to commit adultery against God, into the same (eating couch) bed of tribulation and affliction.

Repentance is the only way for them to escape such judgment. This judgment condition is available to the Church because God's greater objective is to save humanity, not to condemn them. The option of repentance accompanies every judgment.

Without repentance, judgment is more severe. Their parents' condemnation will burden the next generation of Thyatira's children. The generation born from the extreme idolatry practice of the Church will be marked by death. Their lives will be limited and eventually terminated because they will inherit the traits of idolatry passed on to them by their parents.

God searches the reins of the heart; He knows in advance the controlling factors in a person's life. The generation born from the Church of Thyatira would follow the practice of the bloodline that gave birth to them. The parents and the succeeding generation will receive judgment according to their works.

(Revelation 2:24-25) – The Son of God offers a word to those who have not followed the doctrine of Jezebel or become influenced by Satan's deceptions. He will not add to the burden they already carry, striving to represent God and His truth even when leaders within the Church have failed them.

They are encouraged to continue to hold fast, and secure to the truth they have trusted until the Son of God returns.

(Revelation 2:26-27) – To those who overcome and keep God's works to the end will be given power over nations. They will rule against wickedness and idolatry with a rod of iron, breaking them into pieces like a pottery vessel.

The Son of God gives the faithful a glimpse of the future victory they will enjoy when He comes to rule over all nations, and they shall join him. His illustration refers to the one-thousand-year period when all nations on earth will surrender to the Monarchy of the Son of God. (Revelation 20:4)

(Revelation 2:28) – The faithful will receive the morning star. The Old Testament points to the "star" that will come from the house of Jacob, bearing a scepter to destroy Israel's enemies and to rule. It is a prophetic reference to the Messiah and His return to judge mankind and rule as King. (Numbers 24:17)

The exact phrase and reference are used in only one other place in scripture. The resurrected Christ affirms His identity as the bright and "morning star", from the seed (root) of David.

The faithful shall receive the "*bright and morning star*" as their reward in eternity. He is our eternal reward.

(Revelation 2:29) – He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.