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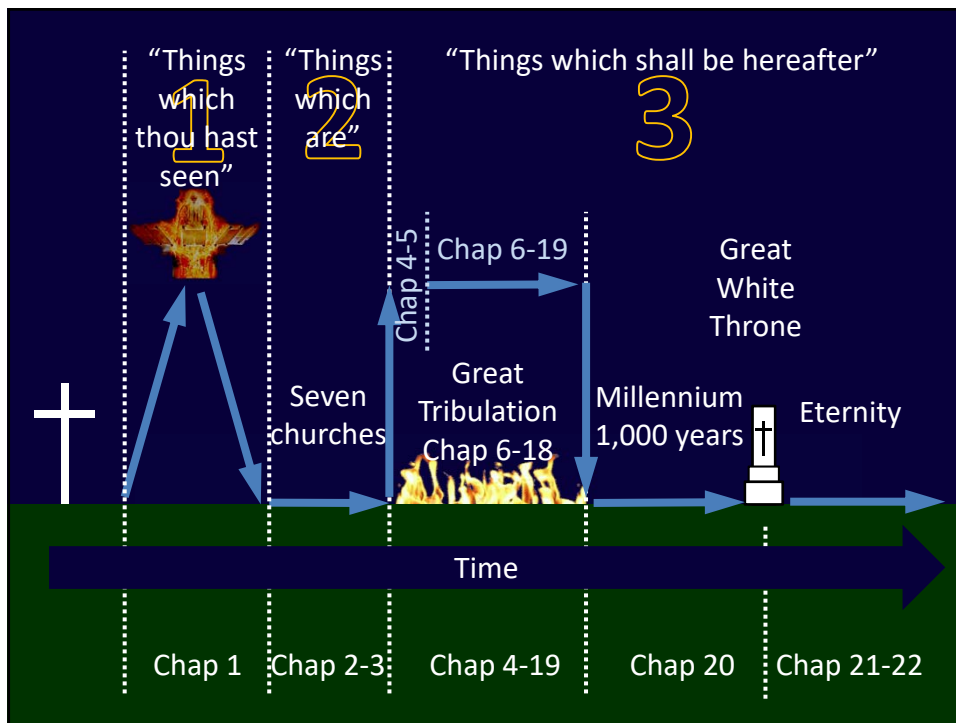


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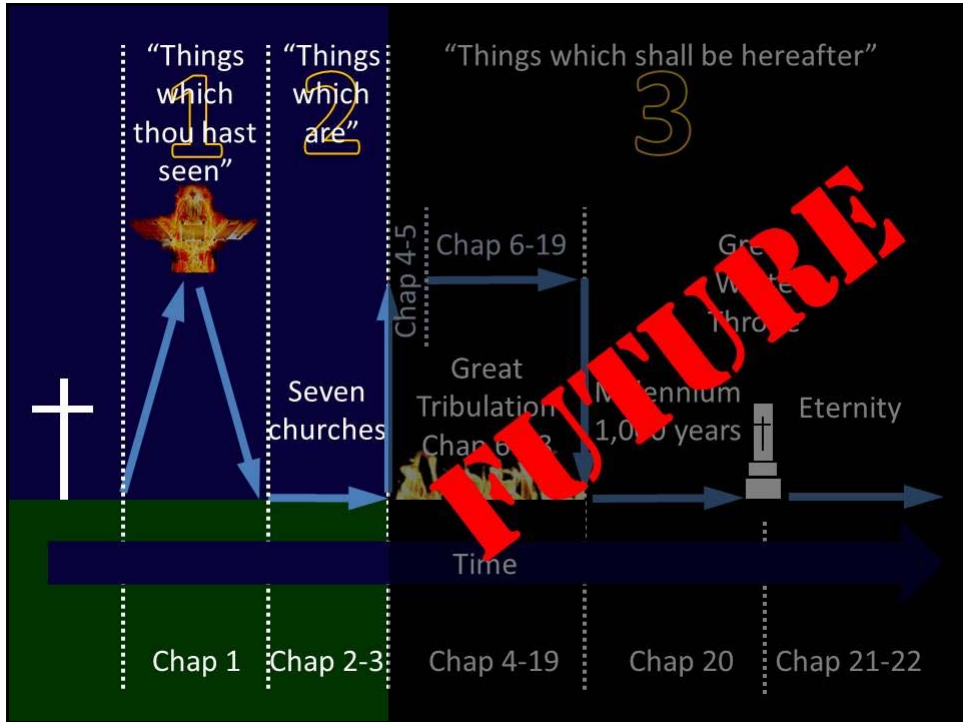
## The book of Revelation

<b>THINGS WHICH THOU HAST SEEN</b> (Chapter 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John' vision of the exalted Christ, 1</li> </ul>	
<b>THINGS WHICH ARE</b> (Chapters 2-3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The messages to the seven churches, 2-3</li> </ul>	
<b>THINGS WHICH SHALL BE HEREAFTER</b> (Chapters 4-22)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Throne in heaven, 4-5</li> <li>• Tribulation on earth, 6-19</li> <li>• The Kingdom of Christ, 20</li> <li>• The new heavens and earth</li> </ul>	

3



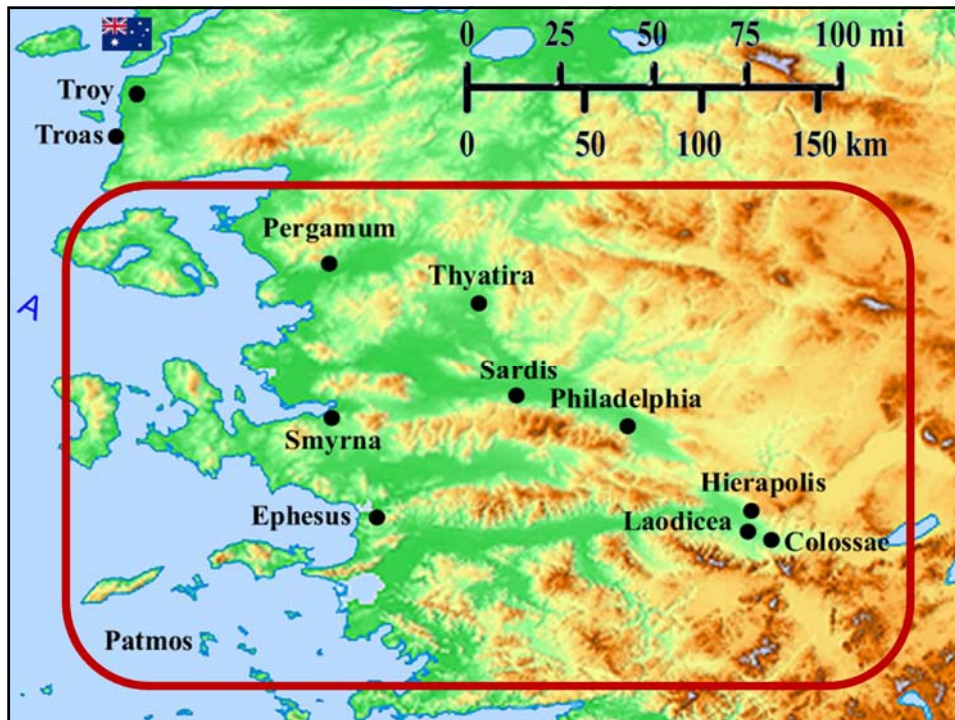
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5

"I've read the last page of the Bible.  
It's all going to turn out all right."  
Billy Graham

6



7

## Seven Parts of Each Letter

- 1. Name of church:** "To the Angel in...."
- 2. Title of Christ:** "These are the words of Him who..."
- 3. Commendation:** "I know your deeds..."
- 4. Concern:** "Yet I hold this against you..."
- 5. Exhortation:** "...or I will come ...."
- 6. Appeal:** "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."
- 7. Promise to the overcomer:** "To him who overcomes I will ...."

8

<p><b>EPHESUS</b> <i>(Desirable)</i> <b>The loveless church</b> Political centre of Asia</p>	<p><b>SMYRNA</b> <i>(Death, myrrh)</i> <b>The persecuted church</b> Commercial centre of Asia</p>	<p><b>PERGAMON</b> <i>(Mixed marriage)</i> <b>The compromising church</b> Religious centre of Asia</p>
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**A TALE OF  
THREE CITIES**

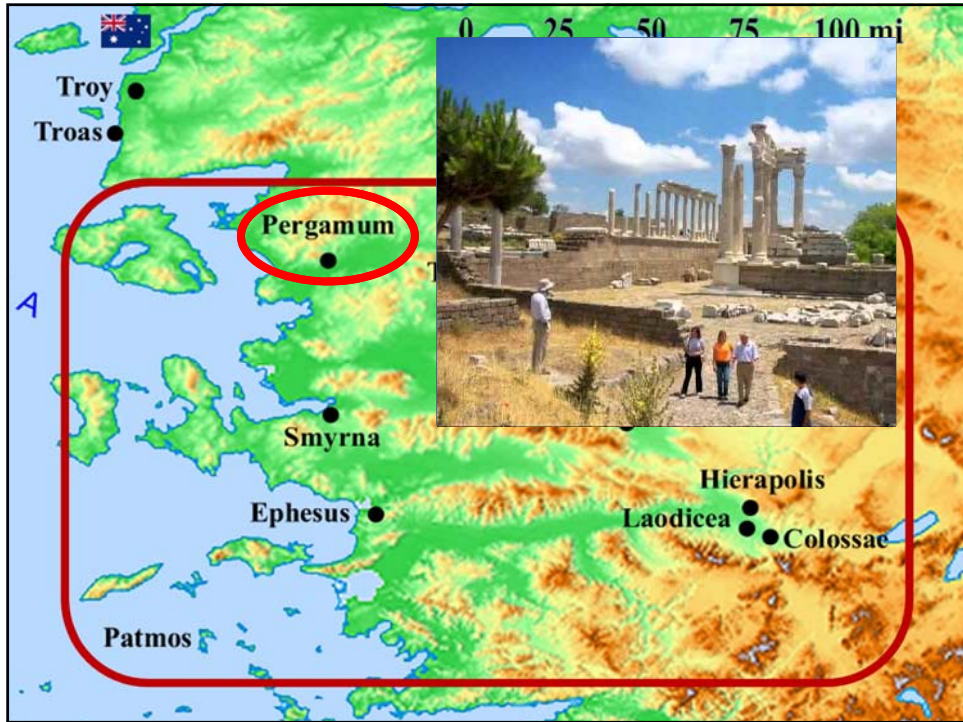
Throughout biblical times, these three cities vied with each other, through means fair and foul, to be known as "first in Asia."

9

Καὶ τῷ ἀγγέλῳ τῆς ἐκκλησίας  
To the angel of the church in  
**PERGAMUM**  
Revelation 2:12-17

10

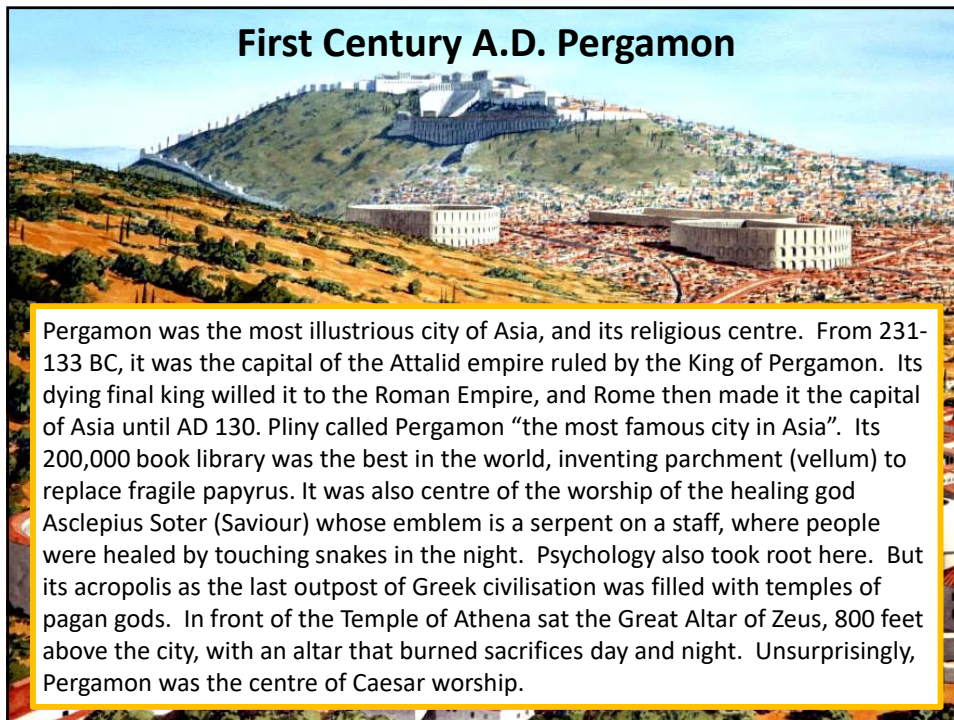




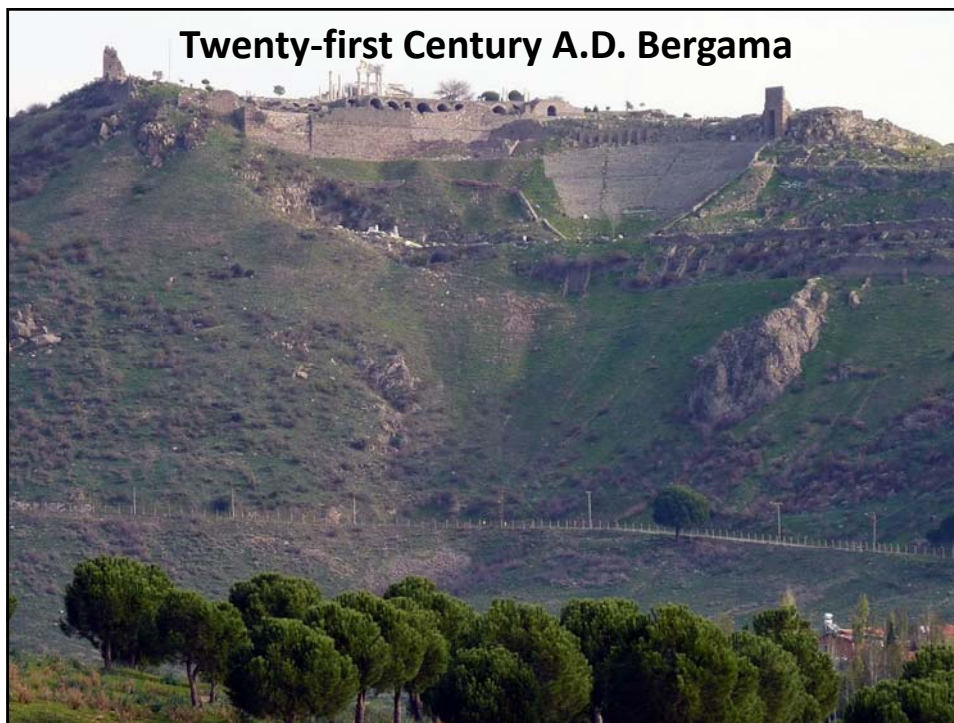
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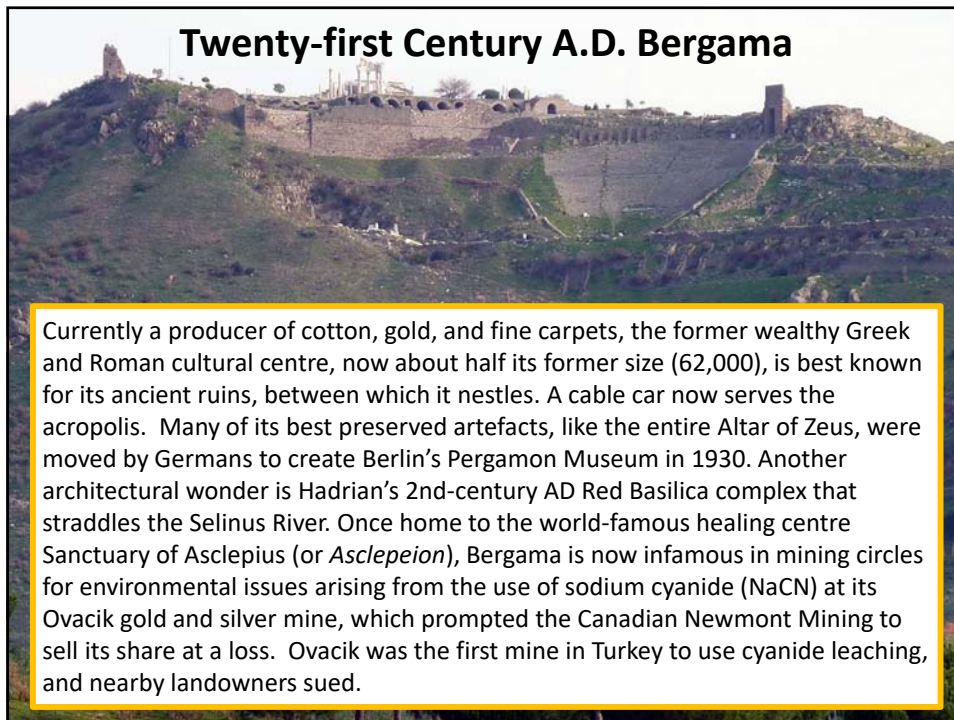


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14





15

### Pergamon, the compromising church

- <sup>12</sup> "And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write,  
 'These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: <sup>13</sup> "I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas *was* My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.
- <sup>14</sup> But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. <sup>15</sup> Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. <sup>16</sup> Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.
- <sup>17</sup> "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives *it*."

16



## Pergamos, the compromising church

Name	✓
Title	✓
Commendation	✓
Concern	✓
Exhortation	✓
Promise	-
Appeal	✓
Promise	✓

<sup>12</sup> “And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, ‘These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword:

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17

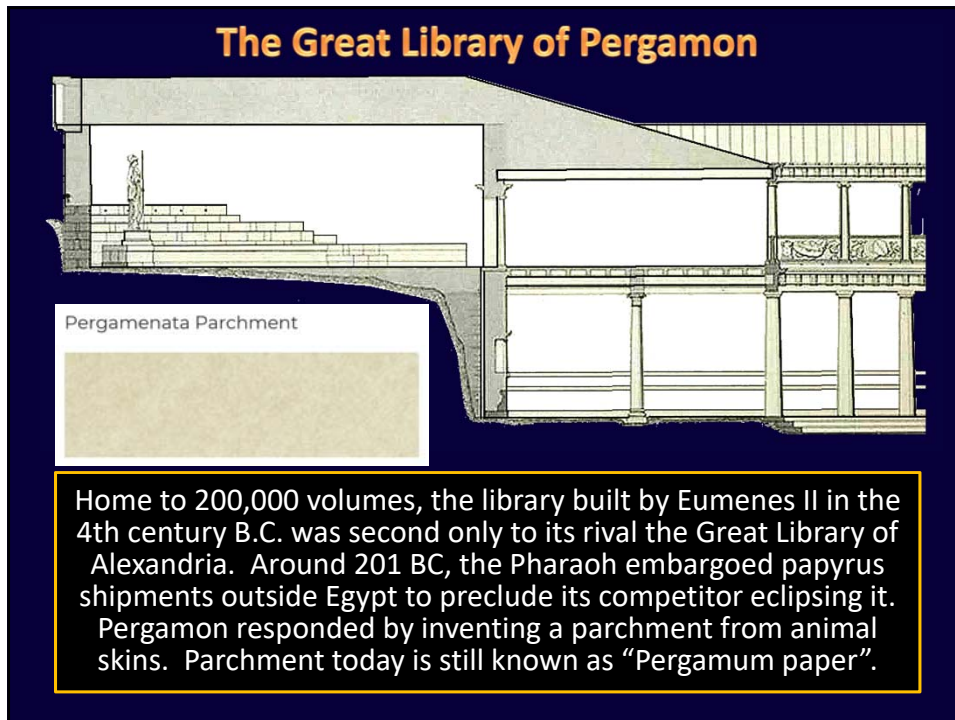
## The Title of Christ

<sup>12</sup> “These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword:”

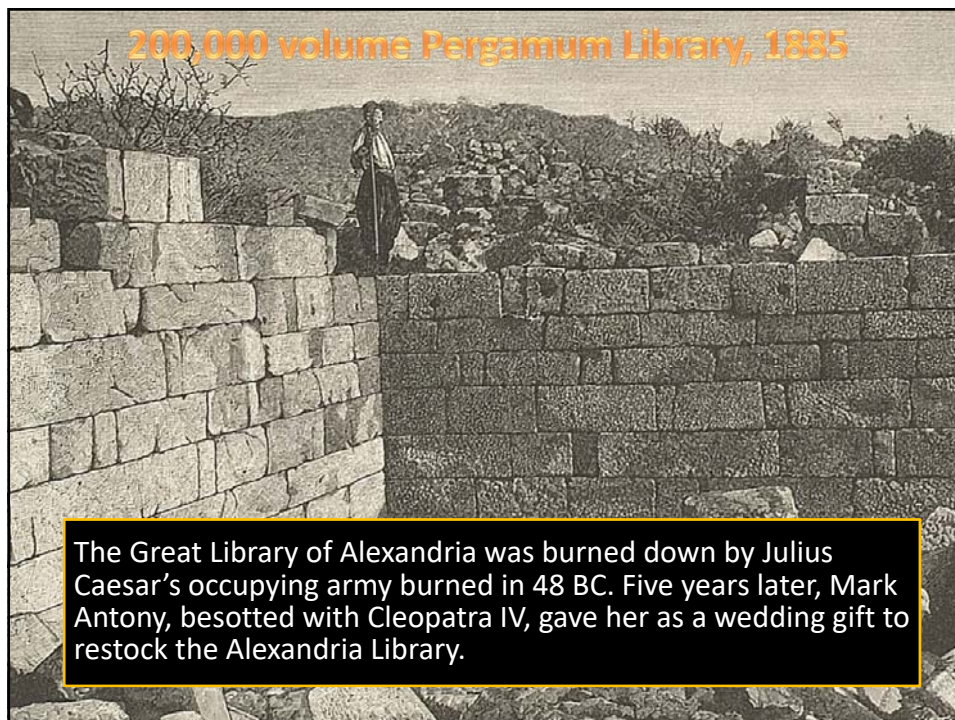
Jesus’ self-description with the “sharp two-edged sword” (which we know from Ephesians is actually the Word of God) would have resonated, because the Roman Proconsul here possessed *jus gladii*, the power to execute by the sword.



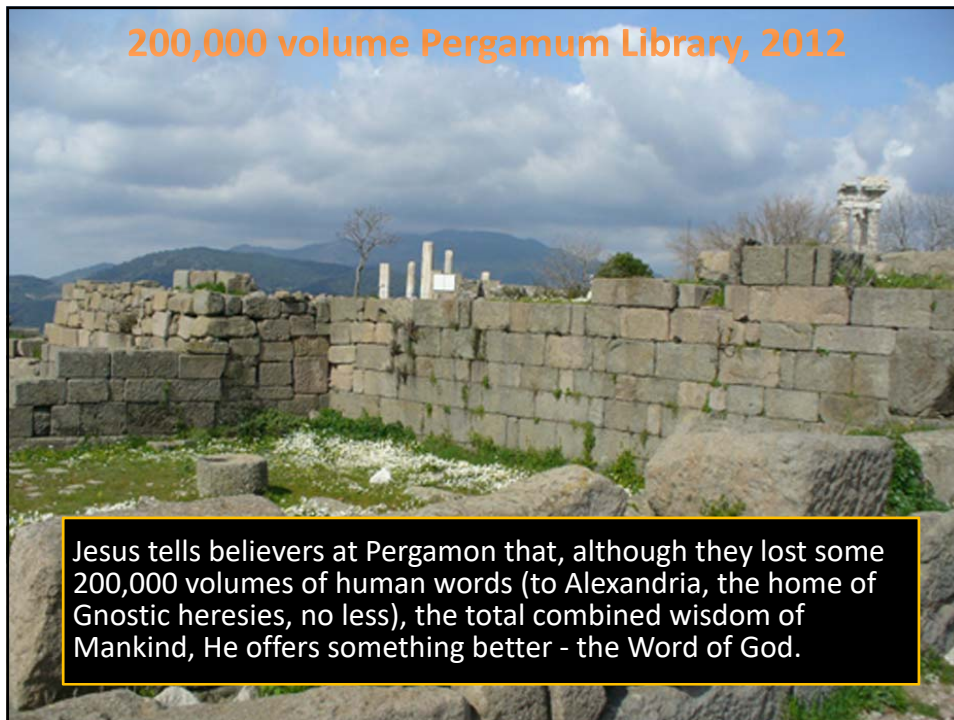
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19



20



21

## Commendation

<sup>13</sup> "I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne *is*. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas *was* My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells."

Pergamon had the first emperor worship temple in Asia and rabidly promoted the cult in competition with Ephesus and Smyrna. The first martyr listed in revelation died in Pergamon and other believers had suffered persecution for the faith.

- Antipas = anti (in place of) + pater (father); "like the father"
- Satan's throne may have alluded to actual locations:
  1. The cult temple dedicated to emperor worship.
  2. Temple of Serapis to Isis, where Antipas was executed.
  3. The temple of Zeus on the Acropolis
  4. The temple of Asclepius, symbolised by a serpent.

22

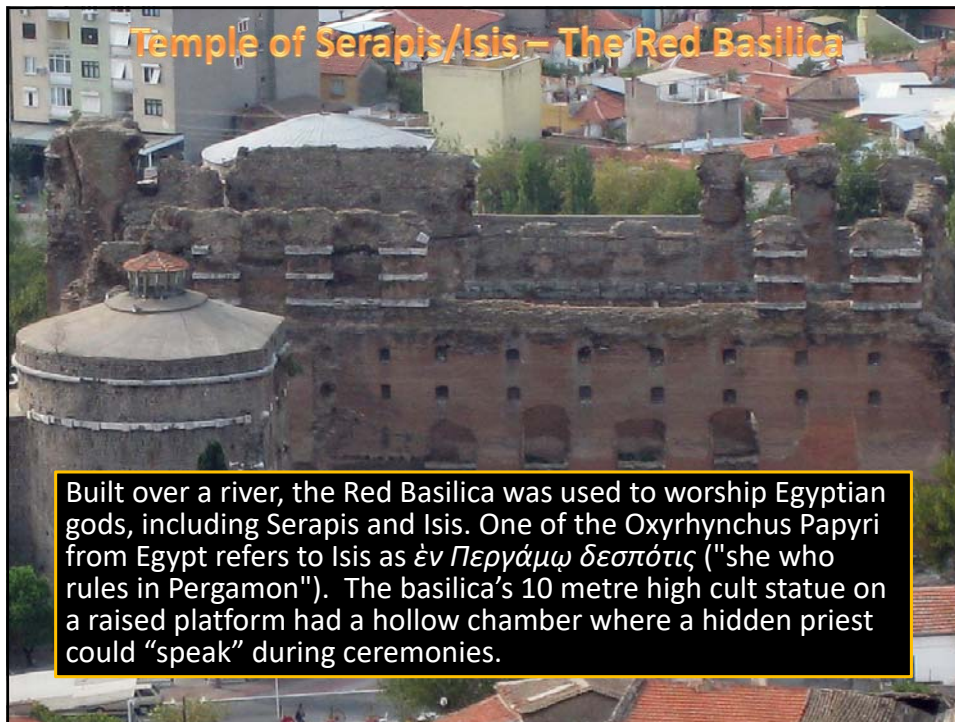




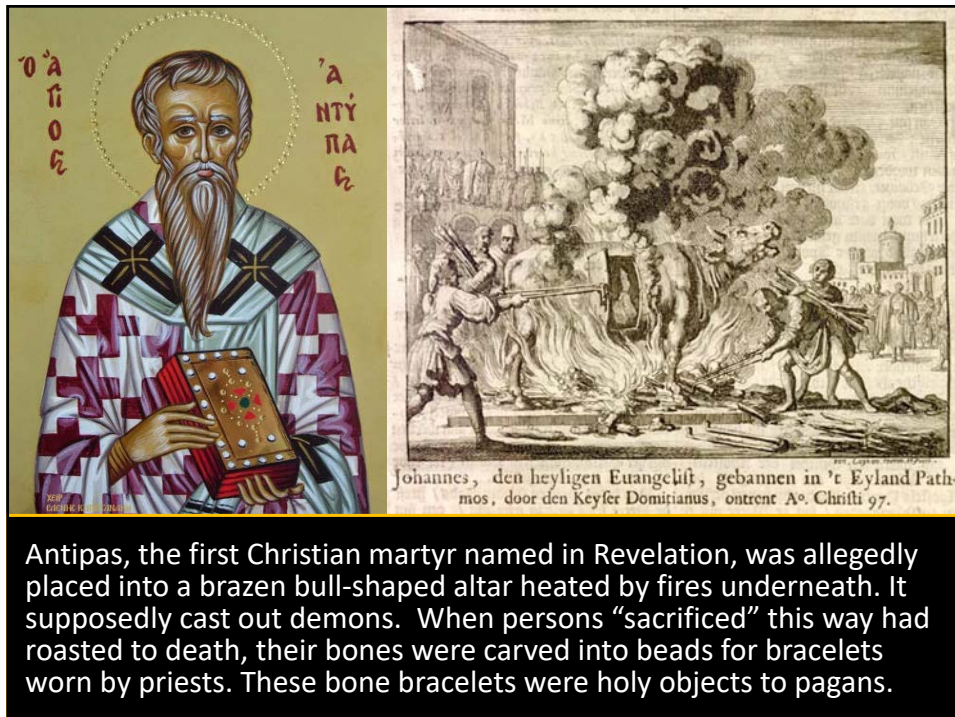
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27



28



## Concern

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- Balaam in Hebrew means “lord of the people.”
- Nicolaitans in Greek means “rule over the people.”

**COINCIDENCE?**

29

## Concern

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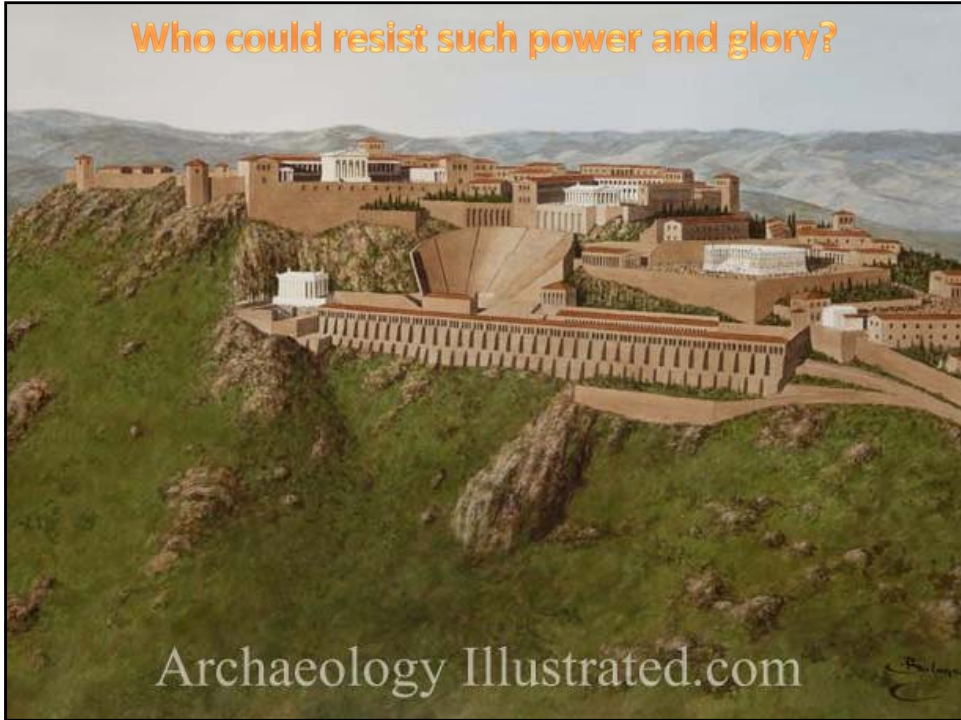
- Balaam in Hebrew means “lord of the people.”
- Nicolaitans in Greek means “rule over the people.”

**COINCIDENCE?**

Balaam the prophet prostituted his gift to earn money from King Balak, who hired him to curse the people of Israel. But when Balaam opened his mount, blessings came out instead of curses. But Balaam still gave Balak his money’s worth by advising him to send their prettiest women to the camp, then invite the Jews to worship and feast at the pagan altars. They ate meat from pagan altars and participated in pagan sexual religious rites.

Numbers 22-25

30



31

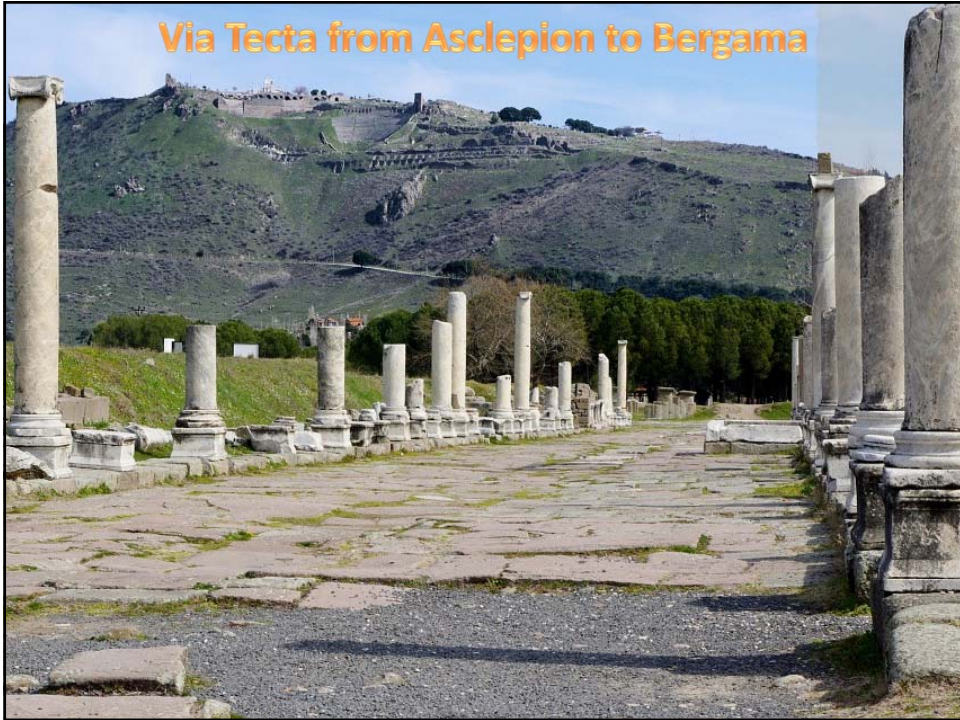


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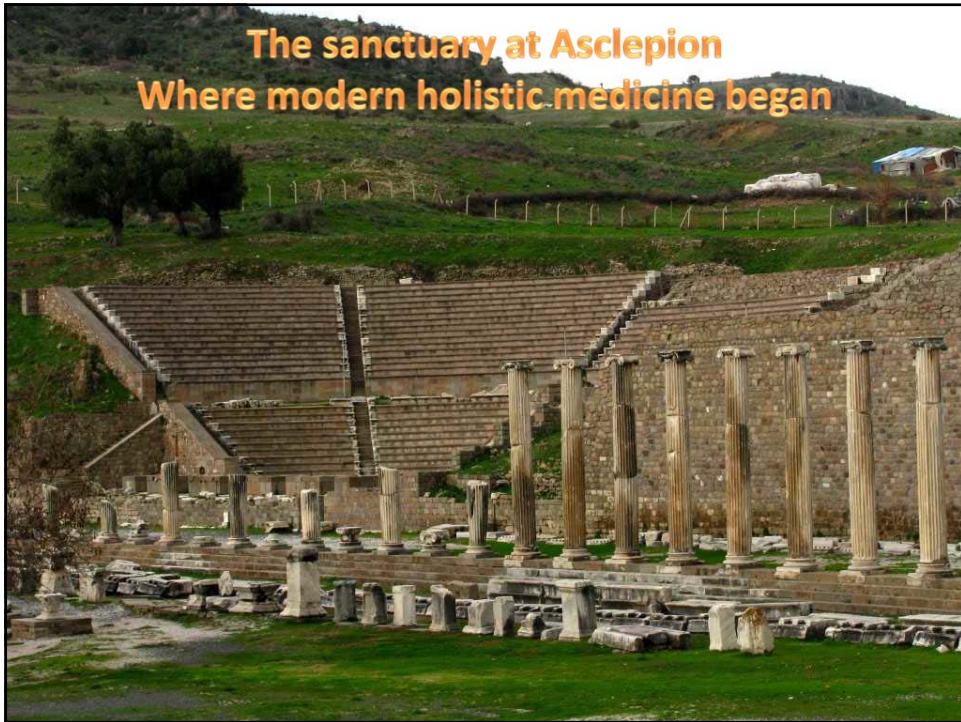


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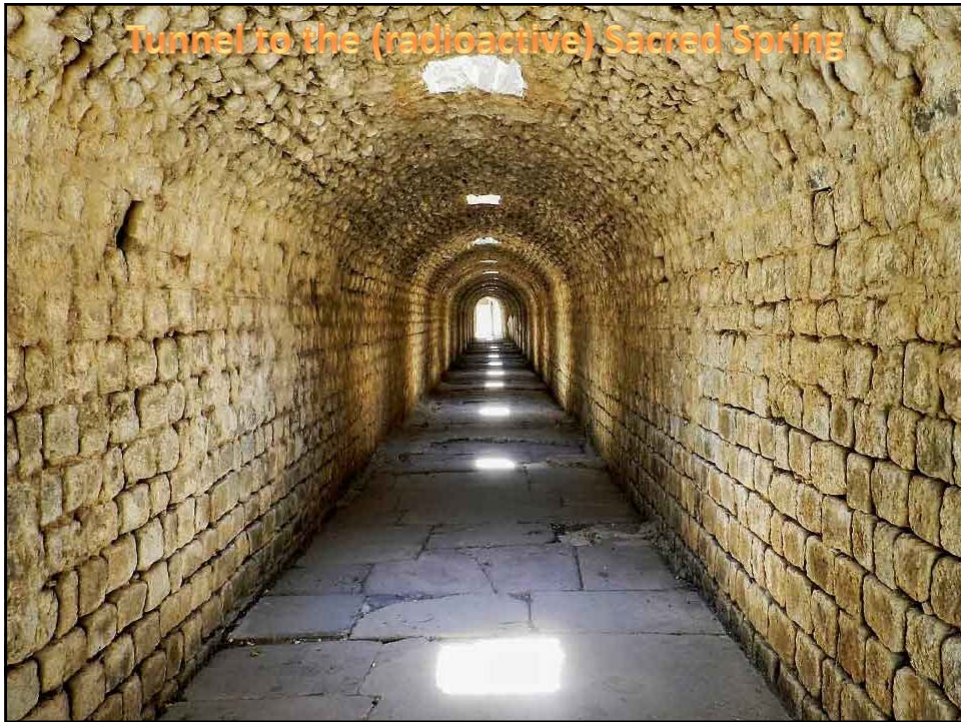


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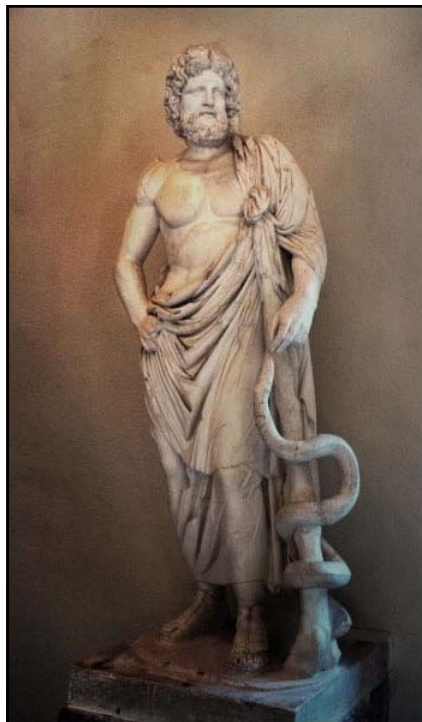
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36



37



Unlike today's modern hospitals, people were eager to get to the Asclepios.

Galen, the most famous doctor in the ancient Roman Empire, the personal physician of Marcus Aurelius, worked in the Asclepios for many years.

It was a mixture between a sanctuary and modern spa. It had facilities where the sick could relax and enjoy themselves such as a library and a small theatre. Services included:

- Dream therapy
- Psychology
- Massage
- Mud baths
- Shopping
- A healing spring
- Library
- Spa baths
- Surgery
- Plastic surgery
- Drug therapy
- Music therapy
- Sacred reptiles
- And much more

38



## Two Symbols

### Asclepius

God of healing



### Hermes

Greek god of trade, commerce, luck, thieves and trickery



39

## Exhortation

<sup>16</sup> “Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.”

Antipas had felt the sword of Rome, but the church at Pergamos would feel the sword of Christ—the Word (Heb. 4:12)—if they did not repent. This refers to a judgment that will befall an *ekklesia* that disobeys God’s Word.

Jesus introduced Himself as “He which hath the sharp sword” (Rev. 2:12), which anticipated and reinforced this message.

40



## Appeal

<sup>17</sup> “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

**THEY WHO HAVE  
AN EAR,  
LET THEM HEAR**

41

## Promise

“To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives *it*.”

Instead of eating “things sacrificed to idols” (Rev. 2:14), the believers in Pergamos will feast on God’s holy food, the **bread of life** found in Jesus Christ (Matthew 4:4). Manna is in the Ark of the Covenant, God’s throne.

1. A judge put a white stone into a vessel to acquit someone.
2. White stones were also used to gain admittance to a feast.  
∴ The believer is spiritually declared righteous through faith and will feast with Christ in glory.
3. A stone with a name was an invitation to “come again.”

42

## Promise

“To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives *it*.”

God is jealous of His name. Biblical names are used to depict revealed facets of one’s character. For example, God revealed Himself to Moses at the burning bush as “I AM THAT I AM”, or YHWH, which refers to God's everlasting, eternal nature.

A name stands for everything which the name covers and anything aroused in the mind by mentioning, hearing, remembering, the name.

The “new name” represents the overcomer’s transformed character.

43

## Overview of Design

	Ephesus	Smyrna	Pergamos	Thyatira	Sardis	Philadelphia	Laodicea
Name	✓	✓	✓				
Title	✓	✓	✓				
Commendation	✓	✓	✓				
Concern	✓	✗	✓				
Exhortation	✓	✓	✓				
Promise	-	-	-				
Appeal	“He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the Churches”						
Promise	✓	✓	✓				

44

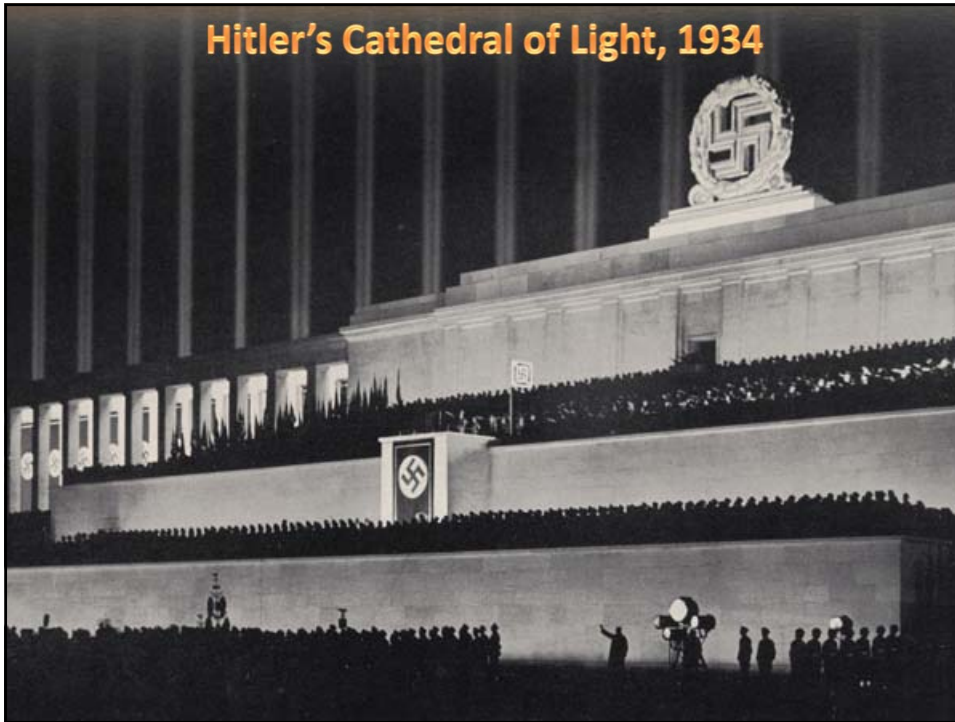


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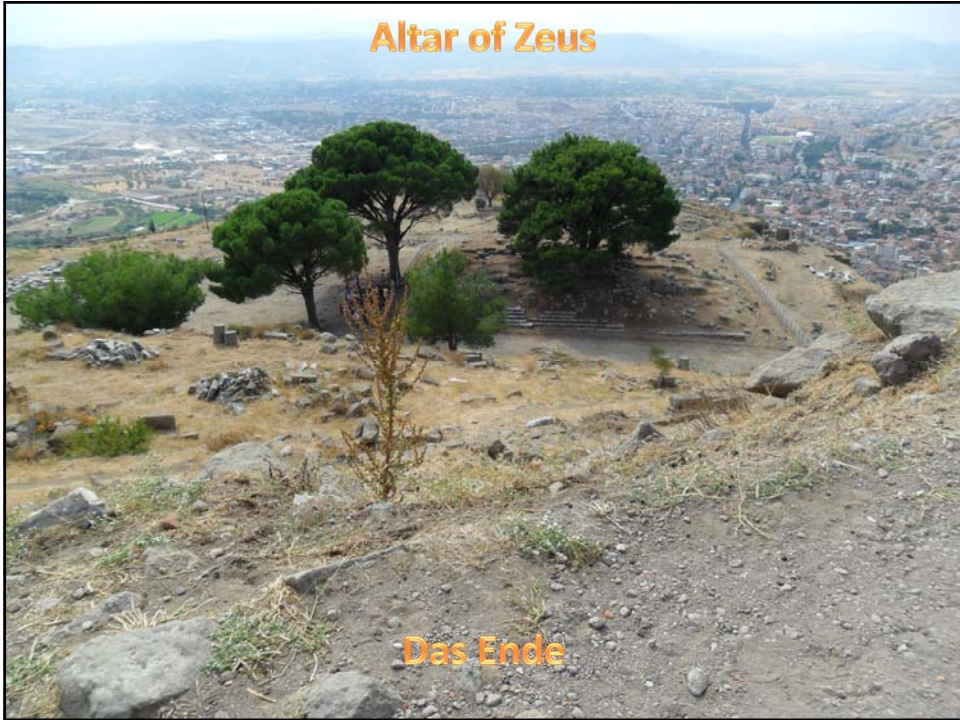


48



Zeppelintribüne, Nuremberg

49



Altar of Zeus

Das Ende

50

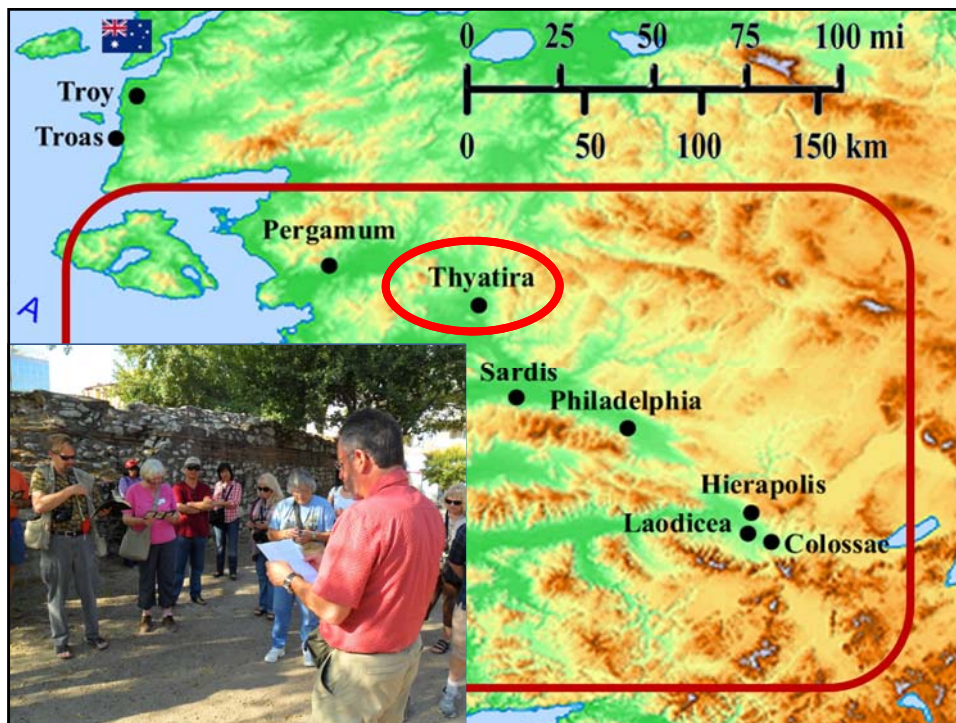


Καὶ τῷ ἀγγέλῳ τῆς ἐκκλησίας  
 To the angel of the church in

# THYATIRA

Revelation 2:18-29

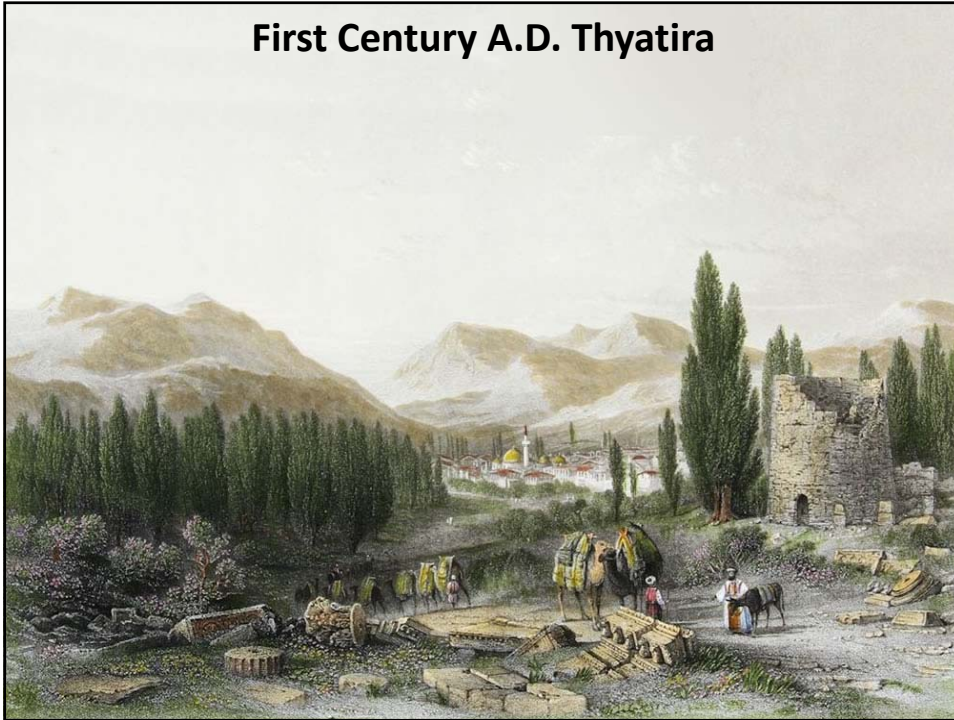
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52



## First Century A.D. Thyatira



53

## First Century A.D. Thyatira

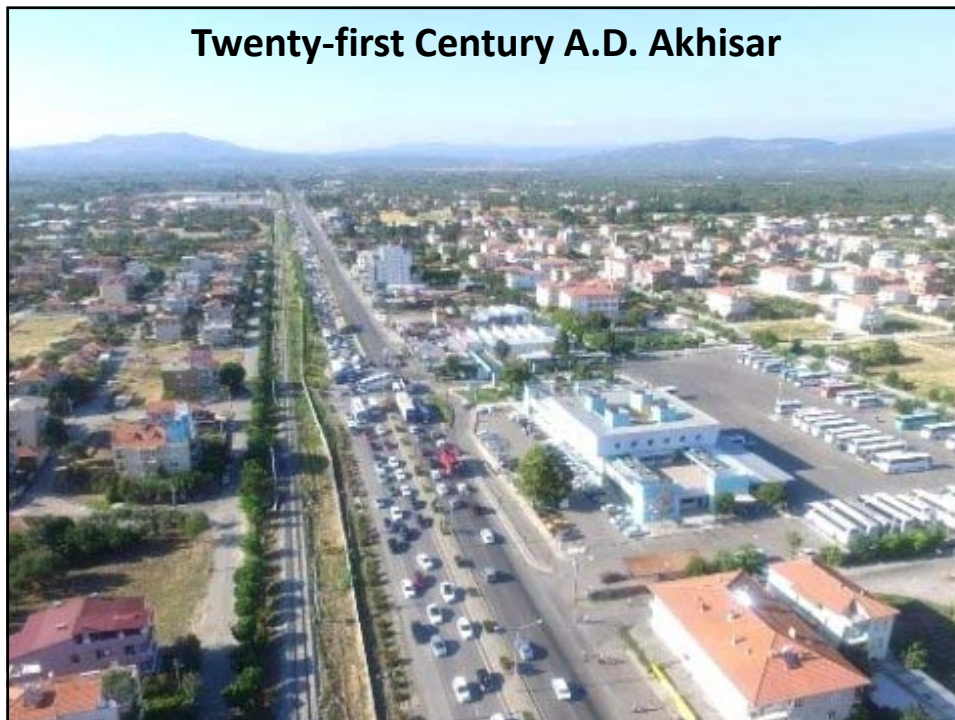
Ancient military outposts guarded the junction of three roads leading to Pergamon, Sardis, and Smyrna since 3000 BC. It had various names, including Semiramis, and was a tripwire for Pergamon, which fell to the Persians and then to Alexander the Great. The city was then tossed between his feuding generals until 301 B.C., when Seleucus I Nicator defeated Lysimachus. Advised of a new baby, he renamed the town "Thyatira" (Greek for daughter).

Growing in commercial importance, Thyatira became a well-known centre for trade guilds. Membership was compulsory. These corporate bodies were each under the patronage of some pagan deity, and all proceedings, feasts and orgies commenced with paying homage to the patron god or goddess. Inscriptions identify guilds for

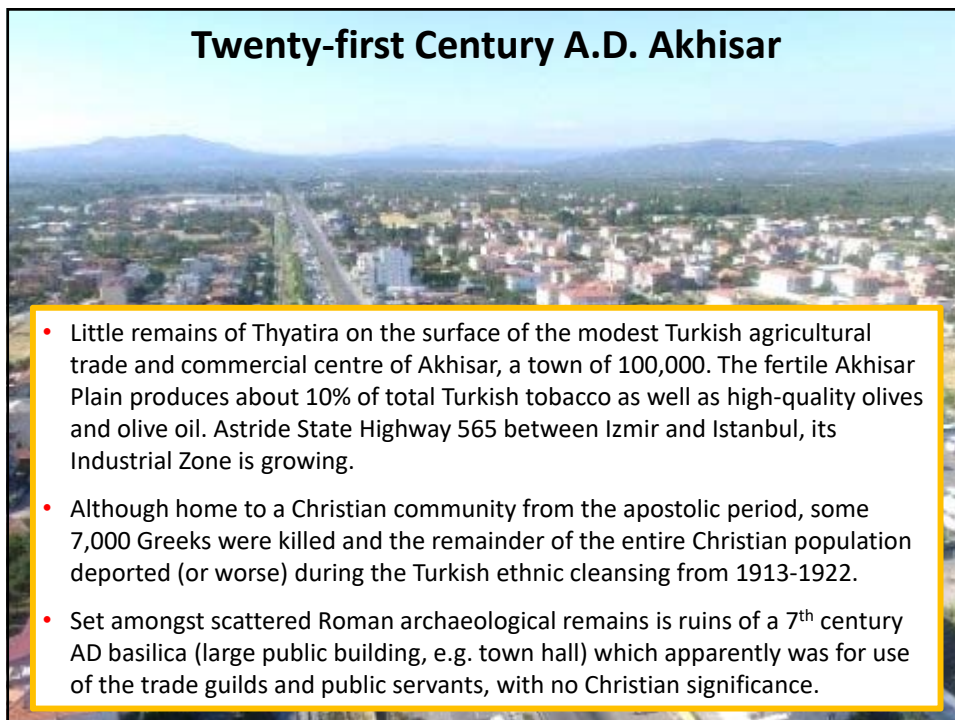
Thyatira was known for its purple dyes, which colour only royalty could wear. The first European convert was Lydia, a wealthy sales rep for Thyatira in Philippi (Acts 16:14,15).

Danger to believers in Thyatira did not arise so much from Roman or Jewish persecution as from corruption within the *ekklesia* itself—all the harder to deal with.

54



55



- Little remains of Thyatira on the surface of the modest Turkish agricultural trade and commercial centre of Akhisar, a town of 100,000. The fertile Akhisar Plain produces about 10% of total Turkish tobacco as well as high-quality olives and olive oil. Astride State Highway 565 between Izmir and Istanbul, its Industrial Zone is growing.
- Although home to a Christian community from the apostolic period, some 7,000 Greeks were killed and the remainder of the entire Christian population deported (or worse) during the Turkish ethnic cleansing from 1913-1922.
- Set amongst scattered Roman archaeological remains is ruins of a 7<sup>th</sup> century AD basilica (large public building, e.g. town hall) which apparently was for use of the trade guilds and public servants, with no Christian significance.

56

### Thyatira, the corrupt church

<sup>18</sup> “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write,

‘These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: <sup>19</sup> “I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and *as* for your works, the last *are* more than the first.

<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. <sup>21</sup> And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.

<sup>22</sup> Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. <sup>23</sup> I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

57

### Thyatira, the corrupt church

<sup>24</sup> “Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden. <sup>25</sup> But hold fast what you have till I come.

<sup>26</sup> And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—

<sup>27</sup> ‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels’— as I also have received from My Father; <sup>28</sup> and I will give him the morning star.

<sup>29</sup> “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’

58



## Thyatira, the corrupt church

Name	✓
Title	✓
Commendation	✓
Concern	✓
Exhortation	✓
Promise	✓
Appeal	✓
Promise	-

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<sup>29</sup> "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

59

## The Title of Christ

<sup>18</sup> "These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass:"

The principal deity of Thyatira was the ancient Lydian sun-god Tyrimnos (Tyrinnaeos) who was identified with the Greek sun-god Apollo. During Roman times the worship of Apollo (Tyrimnos) was joined with the emperor worship cult.

Addressing the city of the "sun-god", Jesus introduced Himself as "the Son of God" (the only time in Revelation this title is used). The title also contrasts with Jezebel, one of whose titles was "queen of heaven" (Jeremiah Chaps. 7, 44).

Jesus asserts His power and authority for judgment by "eyes like fire ... feet like brass," both biblical symbols of judgment!

**BUT WAIT! THERE'S MORE!**

60

Thyatira was earlier named "Semiramis," the Greek name of Sammu-Ramat, the Lydian-Babylonian wife of Shamshi-Adad V (r. 823-811 BC), who succeeded him to the throne of Assyria (r. 811-806 BC) holding the throne for their son Adad Nirari III.

Greek historian Diodorus wrote that Semiramis convinced her husband to give her power just for five days. He agreed and she then had him executed.

Other ancient accounts combine Semiramis' reign with myths and legends relating to mother goddesses Isis of Egypt, Astarte of Phoenicia, and Ishtar of Akkadia (aka the Sumerian Inanna). In time, the historical queen became conflated with the mythical, semi-divine, Semiramis.

Of lesser importance was Boreitene, a goddess identified with Artemis, the sister of Apollo. Thyatira also paid homage to the goddess Sambethe, a Sibyl (from the Greek sibylla, prophetess) who claimed to speak for Apollo.



61

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62

**Myth 1:** Egyptian Isis loved her brother Osiris, who was chopped up by jealous brother Set. Isis collected enough parts to partially resurrect him and, magically drawing seed from his body, gave virgin birth to the child-god Horus, while Osiris assumed duties as the sun-god. The semi-pagan Christian religion of Rome drew upon the image of Isis and the child-god Horus for the depiction of the Madonna with the Christ child.



**Myth 2:** Ishtar loved Tammuz, slain by a wild boar. So Ishtar descended into the underworld to resurrect him. Ezekiel 8:14 uses women weeping for Tammuz in the Temple as the epitome of abominations.

**Myth 3:** Nimrud (Ninos) died and became sun-god. Widow Semiramis miraculously became pregnant by him and son Tammuz was born (picture at left), whom Semiramis claimed to be the resurrected Nimrud.

63



- 200, Church Father Irenaeus referred to Mary as "the cause of our salvation."
- 431, Marian Dogma 1. Mary is the "God-bearer"-*Theotokos* (Council of Ephesus).
- 1603, Marian Dogma 2. Mary's Perpetual Virginity (Clement VIII, *Dominici gregis*)
- 1854, Marian Dogma 3. Mary's Immaculate Conception (Pius IX, *Ineffabilis Deus*)
- 1894, Mary is Mediatrix of all Graces (Leo XIII, *Iucunda Semper Expectatione*)
- 1950, Marian Dogma 4. Mary's Bodily Assumption (Pius XII, *Munificentissimus Deus*)
- 1964, Advocate, Auxiliatrix, Adjutrix and Mediatrix (Vatican II, Paul VI, *Lumen Gentium*)

64



## Commendation

<sup>19</sup> “I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last *are* more than the first.”

Works → Works

Love → Love

Service → Service

Faith → Faith

Patience → Patience



65

## Concern

<sup>20</sup> “Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess,

Giving the Thyatiran prophetess the anonym “Jezebel” associates her with the OT Queen Jezebel, with whom she shares traits:

- Both introduce pagan influences,
- Both commit sexual immorality,
- Both are depicted as goddesses or goddess-representatives<sup>1</sup> (*Jezebel* means “priestess of Baal”), and
- Both have a prominent *negative* role among God’s people.

66

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- Both have a prominent *negative* role among God’s people.

Later we will see significant parallels between Queen Jezebel and the Great Harlot, and hence a relationship among the three.

NOTE 1. 2 Kgs 9:30-37

67

## Concern

<sup>20</sup> “Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

- Thyatira’s chief sin was **tolerance!** Good works can’t compensate for tolerance of evil.
- They permitted a false prophetess to influence them and lead them into compromise with Roman religion and idolatry.

68

## Concern

<sup>20</sup> “Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

- Thyatira’s chief sin was **tolerance!** Good works can’t compensate for tolerance of evil.
- They permitted a false prophetess to influence them and lead them into compromise with Roman religion and idolatry.

First century Christians faced a complex dilemma:

1. Emperor cults required sacrifice to Caesar, forbidden by God.
2. Judaism was recognised as a pre-existing religion by Rome.
3. Christians could not affiliate with a synagogue as a way out of emperor worship as it was seen as “backsliding”.
4. Hence, they were warned to be “faithful even unto death.”

69

## Concern

<sup>20</sup> “Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. <sup>21</sup>I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. <sup>22</sup> Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. <sup>23</sup> I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts.”

- Jesus saw that many were too proud and unwilling to repent.
- He threatened to make an example of them to *all* believers.

70



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“And I will give to each one of you according to your works.”

**“AND I WILL GIVE TO EACH ONE OF YOU ACCORDING TO YOUR WORKS!”**

71

## Concern

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“And I will give to each one of you according to your works.”

- Often the harshest punishment is to give them what they want!
- They want adulterous fornication? Fine, here come STDs, and pestilence, tribulation, and death (physical and spiritual). Enjoy!
- But the door isn't fully shut, for He says “unless they repent...”

72

## Exhortation

<sup>24</sup> “Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden. <sup>25</sup> But hold fast what you have till I come.”

The “depths of Satan” refers to the mysteries, rituals or special teaching to an inner group common to pagan cults.

73

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The “depths of Satan” refers to the mysteries, rituals or special teaching to an inner group common to pagan cults.

- No special demands were made to believers, other than to continue to hold fast in their resistance to evil.
- “Till I come” refers to Christ’s return for His people, when He will reward them for their faithfulness (see Rev. 3:3; 16:15; 22:7, 17, 20). This is the first mention in Revelation of the Lord coming for the church, called the rapture (see 1 Thess. 4:13–18). In contrast, the reference in Revelation 1:7 is to Christ’s return to earth in judgment, to defeat His enemies and establish His kingdom (see Rev. 19:11).

74

## Promise

<sup>26</sup> And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—<sup>27</sup> 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels' — as I also have received from My Father;

1. The faithful remnant will reign with Christ (Rev. 20:4) on earth; cf, Jezebel tried to seek power over the nations.
2. "Works" – Greek ἔργον (G20141 érgon, er'-gon); from ἔργω érgō (v. to work); v. to toil (as an effort); n. business, employment, enterprise, undertaking
3. Rebellious nations will be broken as defective clay pots were with a rod of iron (Psalms 2:8–11). "Ask of Me and I will give you the the nations *for* Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth *for* Your possession.... Now therefore, be wise, O kings; be instructed, you judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling."



75

## Promise

<sup>28</sup> [<sup>26</sup>he who overcomes...] and I will give him the morning star.\*"

Jesus Christ	Satan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overcomers will share the "morning star"* (Jesus: 1 Pet 1:19; Rev. 2:28, 22:16, 24:17).</li> <li>• The Jewish morning star was the constellation <i>Pleiades</i> and the evening star was Orion. (Job 28:31; Amos 5:8).</li> <li>• Angels before the fall were all morning stars (Job 38:7).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satan (H1966, הֵיִלֵּל, hêylêl) means light-bearer or shining one; Lucifer ("lucem ferre") was the Latin name of Venus, the brightest star.</li> <li>• Satan in LXX, Luther, Targum is <i>stella lucinda</i>, "bright star."</li> <li>• Pagans called Venus <i>Morning Star</i> at sunrise and <i>Evening Star</i> at sunset.</li> </ul>

**\*CAUTION:** Some modern translations (NIV, etc.) mix these metaphors up:

- "How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, son of the dawn!" NIV (pagan)
- "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!" NKJV, KJV

76



## Appeal

<sup>29</sup> "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

**SHE WHO HAS  
AN EAR,  
LET HER HEAR**

77

## Overview of Design

	Ephesus	Smyrna	Pergamos	Thyatira	Sardis	Philadelphia	Laodicea
Name	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Title	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Commendation	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Concern	✓	✗	✓	✓			
Exhortation	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Promise	-	-	-	✓			
Appeal	"He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the Churches"						
Promise	✓	✓	✓	-			

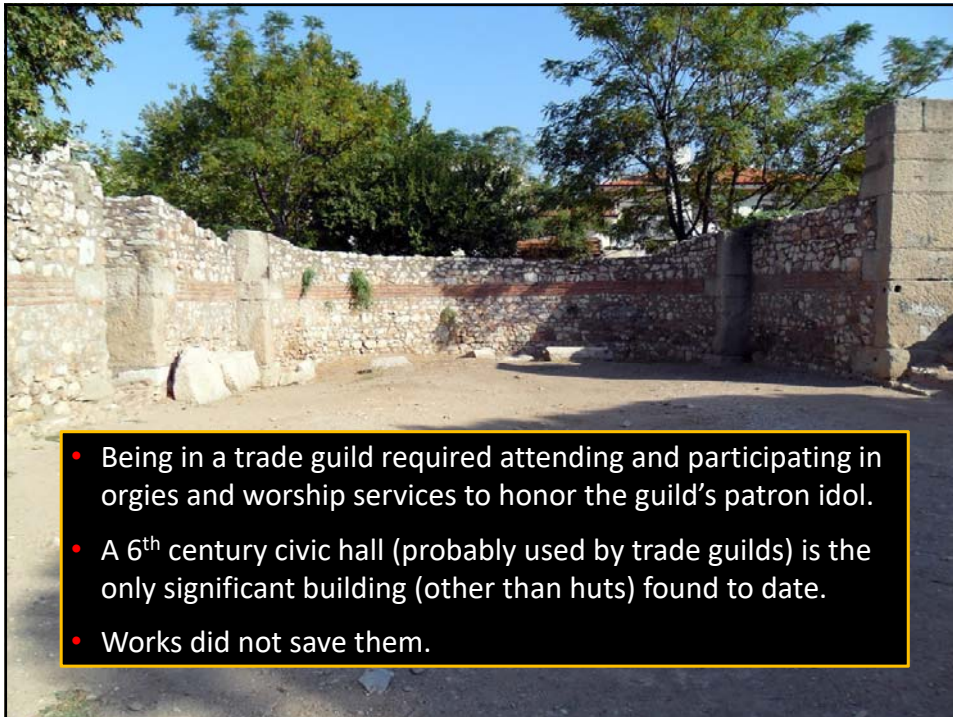
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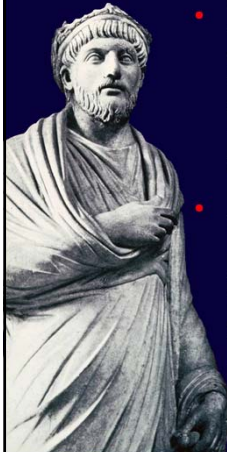


- Being in a trade guild required attending and participating in orgies and worship services to honor the guild's patron idol.
- A 6<sup>th</sup> century civic hall (probably used by trade guilds) is the only significant building (other than huts) found to date.
- Works did not save them.

81

## In the beginning

- When Julian (r. 361-363) became Western Roman Emperor, polytheistic Hellenistic paganism was still more popular than Christianity. Julian hated Christianity. While pagans tended to tolerate other religions, Julian stripped Christians of their privileges, powers, and rights because it held to one faith. Neoplatonic Hellenism again became the official state religion.



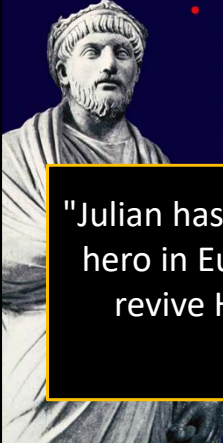
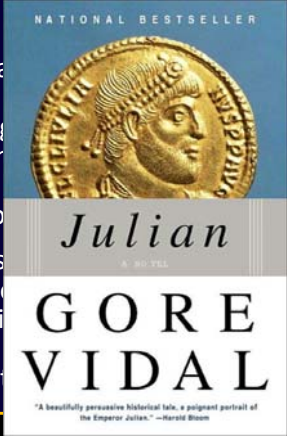
- But Julian the Apostate took an elitist view of Hellenism, believing religions best left to philosophers, clergy and scholars. He held personal ascetic views, so his acceptance of polytheism was more business as usual than revival. Christianity, by contrast, retreated underground to its roots.
- Julian died in 363 at the Battle of Samara against the Persians. He was succeeded by the nominal Christian Jovian rather than the moderate pagan, Secundus Salutius who didn't want the promotion. Christianity re-emerged and not only became the dominant religion but bishops exerted civic authority while secular leaders jockeyed for power.

82



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"Julian has always been something of an underground hero in Europe. His attempt to stop Christianity and revive Hellenism exerts still a romantic appeal."

Gore Vidal in *Julian*

83

### The Battle of Thyatira, 366 AD

- Following the death of Julian the Apostate, the last emperor of Constantine I's direct line, civil government crumbled. The  **Battle of Thyatira**  was fought in 366 at Thyatira between the army of new Eastern Roman Emperor Valens and the army of Procopius, the last known cousin of Constantine I, and his general Gomoarius.
- The defeat of Gomoarius at Thyatira so demoralised Procopius and his remaining army that, when Valens reached Procopius and his troops at Nacoleia, Procopius' troops deserted. Procopius surrendered and was promptly imprisoned and then assassinated.

84



## Enter Theodosius I

- Emperor Theodosius I (r. 379-395) ultimately emerged as a strongman.
- He issued the decree "*Cunctos populos*" on 27 February 380, declaring Nicene Trinitarian Christianity to be the only legitimate imperial religion and the only one entitled to call itself Catholic. Other Christians he called "foolish madmen."
- The Roman Catholic Church was born.
- He ended state support for traditional polytheist religions and customs.
- Theodosius I then convened the Council of Constantinople in 381 to define orthodoxy. Christian persecution of pagans by the newly constituted Roman Catholic Church began almost immediately.