

# **Revelation 2**

Review:

**Author?** Apostle John

**What do we already know about his life?**

-*"Disciple Jesus loved"*

-Took care of Mary, the mother of Jesus

**To whom was the book written?** The 7 churches in the Roman province called "Asia" (today called: Asia Minor or the country of Turkey)

**When were these things to take place? Shortly**

Remember 2 important principles:

1. Colossians was written to the church at Colossae – there was nothing in the book of *Colossians* that did not apply to the church at Colossae, and it applies to us as we try to live the Christian life and as we face the problems that Paul dealt with in that letter

-Therefore, everything in *Revelation* first applied to the 7 churches of Asia

-The book applies to us today when we too are undergoing persecution

2. Apocalyptic literature

-*Joel 2.28-32* – See *Acts 2*

-*Jeremiah 4.23-26* – about the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

-*Jeremiah 31.31-34* – See *Hebrews 8.8-12*

-*Isaiah 2.2-4* – swords to plowshares, etc. – very apocalyptic language

-It is a highly symbolic language that was used by the Old Testament prophets and by John here

**Why write in this apocalyptic style?** In periods of persecution, oppressors could not understand the symbols

Review of Revelation 1

-**The technical name for v 3?** Beatitude

-**How many beatitudes did John include in this book?** 7

V 9 -10 – **How does John describe himself?** V 9 – Your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation....

V 12-16 – **Description of Jesus, according to John?**

-**7 stars?** 7 angels to the churches

-**7 lampstands?** 7 churches in Asia Minor

**Revelation 2.1-7** – The letter to the church at Ephesus

**V 1** – **When was the church at Ephesus established?** On Paul's Third Missionary Journey

-**Read Acts 19.23-41**

-Remember the riot there – Demetrius and friends were selling images of the goddess Diana (Artemis)

Four part pattern to these 7 letters:

1. A general description of Jesus

2. The good qualities of the church are discussed

3. The weaknesses of the church are discussed

4. The blessings and promises of Jesus for that congregation

**V1** – Who is the "One"? Jesus

**V 2-3** – The good qualities of the church at Ephesus?

- Good deeds
- Toil and hard work
- Perseverance – hanging on
- Could not endure evil men
- Tested men calling themselves "apostles" – many fakes

**Remember that Paul began so many letters calling himself an apostle**

- There were many fakes late in the first century
- Perseverance – they had endured for their namesake Jesus Christ
- They had not grown weary, but had remained faithful

**V 4** – Weaknesses of the church?

- They had left their first love
- Explain?** Their initial burst of enthusiasm had died down

**V 5** – What did they need to do? Repent

- Would there be consequences of not repenting?** Yes

**V 6** – Parting compliment? You hate the Nicolaitans (see *Rev. 2.15* also)

- See *Acts 6.5* – Nicolas – theory: he began some kind of false teaching

**Summary?** So much against false teachers, but they lost their enthusiasm for Christ

**V 7** – They had to overcome their problems

**Revelation 2.8-11** – The letter to the church at Smyrna

**V 8** – Identity? Jesus – must have been encouraging to the Christians at Smyrna

- Smyrna was located about 40 miles north of Ephesus

**V 9** – How are they described? Poor (in money), but really rich in spirit

- Their main opponents in Smyrna?** The Jews
- Read Acts 13.50-52** – Paul was frequently persecuted by the Jews
- Some sources say that Jewish services in the First Century contained a curse on Christians
- Paul's put-down for the Jews?** A synagogue of Satan

**V 10** – Persecution for how long? 10 days

- The advice of Jesus to the church at Smyrna?** Remain faithful until death

**The reward?** Crown of righteousness - **Read 2 Timothy 4.8**

**Revelation 2.12-17** – The letter to the church at Pergamum

**V 12** – Description of Jesus? Two-edged sword (*Rev. 1.16, Eph. 6.17*)

**V 13 – Description of the town? Satan's throne**

- The temple to Zeus was located there (now reconstructed in a Berlin museum)
- Also, the temple of Asculapius (snake on cross) – symbol for paramedics today
- But a symbol for wickedness later in the book of *Revelation*
- Compliment?** They had not denied the faith, when Antipas was killed
- Other martyrs in the first century?** Stephen (*Acts 7*), Apostle James (*Acts 12* – killed by King Herod)
- The Apostle Peter (*John 21*)
- The Apostle Paul (*2 Timothy 4*)

**V 14 – Problems with the church at Pergamum?**

- Numbers 22-25* – Balak (king of Moab) had hired Balaam to try to curse the Jews
- Two specific problems at Pergamum?** Eating meat offered to idols, and committing fornication

**V 15 – Also they tolerated the Nicolaitans**

**V 16 – Instructions of Jesus? Repent**

- How would Jesus attack the false teaching?** With the Bible

**V 17 – Difficult to completely understand**

- Hidden manna = pot of manna in the Ark of the Covenant (*Exod. 16.32, Heb. 9.4*)
- White stone = like a ticket
- New name = name which God gives us [in heaven]

**Revelation 2.18-29** – The letter to the church at Thyatira

**V 18 – Identification of Jesus?** A reference back to *Rev. 1*

**V 19 – Good points about this church?**

- Some improvement recently

**V 20 – Specific problem?** A lady false-teacher

- An Old Testament reference to Jezebel, the wicked wife of Ahab

**V 21-22 – If no repentance, what will follow?**

**V 23 – Further punishment?** Death

**V 24 – The "deep things of Satan"?** Knowledge of Satan worship, magic words, etc.

**V 25 – Instruction to the faithful Christians at Thyatira?** Hang on – don't give up

**V 26 – What was required for members of the church at Thyatira to be saved?**

1. To overcome the false doctrine there

2. To keep the deeds (live a faithful life)
3. Until the end (not to give up)

**What denominational doctrines are refuted by this one verse?**

1. Faith-only (they had to "keep" the "deeds" that Christ required of them)
2. Once-saved-always-saved – "until the end"

**V 27 – When did Jesus receive authority from the Father?**

-After his resurrection from the dead – **Read Matt. 28.18-20**

**V 28 – What is the morning star? Venus (it appears in the western sky on summer mornings)**

-It is still called the "morning star" today, although it is technically not a star, but a planet

**V 29 – Jesus commands us to listen to what is being said the 7 churches of Asia (even though this was written 2000 years ago)**

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