



Jesus sent seven interesting letters to seven churches after He went back to heaven. We already learned about the first two. Now we will look at the next three.

- 1 To whom was this third letter written?
Revelation 2:12 "And to the angel of the church in _____ write, 'These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword.'"
 - 2 What does the sharp, two-edged sword represent?
Hebrews 4:12 "For the _____ of _____ is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword."
- The Word of God is like a sharp sword. Do you think this church was going to need the Word of God? Let's keep reading the letter.
- 3 **Revelation 2:13** "I know your _____, and where you dwell, where Satan's _____ 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."
- Was the church of Pergamos in a very good location? No! It must be quite wicked around Satan's throne. So we can expect there to be martyrs for Jesus at that time.
- 4 What did Jesus say next?
Revelation 2:14, 15 "But I have a few things _____ you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of _____, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. Thus you also have those who _____ the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate."

Who was Balaam? Balaam was a prophet who became covetous. A king offered Balaam a lot of money if he would curse Israel. (Numbers 22:5-7.) Balaam couldn't do that, but he thought of another way to get the reward he wanted. He enticed many of God's people to sin, so God couldn't bless and protect them anymore.



Balaam represents church leaders who are willing to lead church members into sin so they can have more money for themselves.

What is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans? We learned about this teaching in our last lesson. Remember, they taught that people only have to "believe" in Jesus, but don't need to let Him change their lives.

They did not think that keeping God's Ten Commandments was important.

- 5 What was the difference between the church of Pergamos and the church of Ephesus?
 - a. Ephesus allowed the Nicolaitan doctrine in the church, but Pergamos hated it.
 - b. Pergamos allowed the Nicolaitan doctrine in the church while Ephesus hated it.
 - c. Both churches hated the Nicolaitan doctrines.
 - d. Both churches loved the Nicolaitan doctrines.

- 6 What did God warn the church of Pergamos?
Revelation 2:16 " _____, or else I will come to you quickly and will _____ against them with the sword of My mouth."

Jesus wants to help this church repent. But if they do not repent, He will fight against them with the sword of His mouth.

- 7 Do you remember what the sword represents?
Ephesians 6:17 "the sword of the Spirit, which is the _____ of _____."



The letter to this church describes a time when people especially needed the Word of God.

Remember, Jesus said they lived near Satan's throne. Satan was trying to deceive more and more people, and he was trying to hide the truth.

- 8 What did Jesus promise the overcomers?
Revelation 2:17 "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 _____ to eat. And I will give him a white _____, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it."

Manna was the food God gave the Israelites to eat in the wilderness for forty years. (Exodus 16.) It is a symbol of Jesus' words which we need every day, just like we need food every day. (John 6:48, 51, 63.) We find Jesus' words in the Bible. What a special gift this book is!



- 9 Jesus also promised a white stone to the overcomers. What is written on that stone?
Revelation 2:17 "I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new _____ written which no one knows except him who receives it."

Jacob needed a new name. His name meant supplanter, and he lived up to his name when he took the birthright from his brother, Esau.

 **Supplanter: Someone who takes what belongs to someone else through force or trickery**

Jacob truly repented of his sins, and God changed him into a kind, honest man. The name "Jacob" did not fit his character anymore. So God gave Jacob a new name, Israel, which means "triumphant with God." And that's how he is remembered today.



If you allow Jesus to help you overcome Satan, you will also get a new name in heaven. This name will signify your new life in Christ and will be a special name just between you and Jesus.

Let's open the fourth letter Jesus wrote.

- 10 How did Jesus describe Himself in His letter to Thyatira?
Revelation 2:18 "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, 'These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of _____, and His feet like fine _____.'"

Eyes like a flame of fire. Have you ever seen eyes like a flame of fire? If you have done something wrong, you might feel like your parents can see right through you. The wicked feel like hiding when Jesus looks at them. (Revelation 6:15, 16.) But the righteous love Jesus and want to be with Him.

When Jesus looks at you, either you will feel like running to Him or away from Him. Your response depends on whether you love Jesus or your sins.

Feet like fine brass. Fine brass is brass from which all the impurities have been removed by a hot fire. Jesus has always been with His faithful people in the "fire" of trials and persecution. Do you remember how He was in the fiery furnace with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego? (Daniel 3.)

- 11 Let's keep reading the letter:
Revelation 2:19, 20 "I know your _____, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first. Nevertheless I have a _____ things against you."

Jesus praised this church for their good works. Then He gave them a rebuke and a warning they needed very much.

- 12 What was this church doing?
Revelation 2:20 "You allow that woman _____, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols."

A true friend will talk to you plainly and tell you the truth—not just what you want to hear. Jesus loved the church of Thyatira. His love led Him to tell them the truth: there were some very wicked things occurring in the church.

- 13 Why did Jesus mention Jezebel? Who was she?
1 Kings 16:31 "And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him [King Ahab] to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife _____ the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him."



Jezebel was a wicked queen who led God's people, Israel, away from God into worshipping idols, including the one called Baal.

14 Revelation, like Daniel, is full of symbols. What does the woman, Jezebel, symbolize? What kind of church do you think Jezebel represents?
Pure church / Disobedient church



15 To what does God compare His pure church?
Jeremiah 6:2 "I have likened the daughter of Zion to a lovely and delicate _____."

16 To what does God liken a disobedient church?
Hosea 3:1 "Then the Lord said to me, 'Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing _____, just like the love of the Lord for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans.'"

A "lovely and delicate" woman represents God's faithful people, His pure church. Unfaithful people, or a corrupt and sinful church, are represented by an impure woman who is not faithful to her husband.

So a woman in Bible prophecy represents a church. We will see this symbol again in future lessons.

Sadly, the main church system of Thyatira was leading God's people away from Him into worshipping idols. What time did this church represent?

Let's look at a big clue. This church was given "time to repent of her deeds."

While Jezebel reigned with Ahab, the prophet Elijah came with a message from God. Elijah proclaimed that there would be no dew or rain for a certain period of time. Through this judgment God gave Israel time to repent of her idolatry.

17 How long did this time last?
Luke 4:25 "The heaven was shut up _____ years and _____ months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land."

18 How many months are in 3½ years? Let's do the math:

12 months/year
x 3 years
= _____ months
+ 6 months (½ year)
= _____ months



Bible prophecy mentions a time of this same length in several places. (Daniel 7:25; Revelation 11:2-6; 12:6, 14.) It is described in three different ways:

- 42 months
- 1,260 days (42 months x 30 days)
- Time, times, and half a time. (1 year + 2 years + ½ year)

These all refer to the same time period. So Thyatira must be the church of papal Rome, the little horn power.

19 What did Jesus say to those who were faithful in the time of Thyatira?
Revelation 2:24, 25 "Now to you I say, and to the _____ 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. But hold _____ what you have till I come."

Please understand that the Roman Catholic Church, as a church system, became corrupted. But according to this passage, did God still have true followers in that church? Yes!



Some Christians remained faithful to God during the 1,260 years of papal power. They suffered terrible persecution, and often had to hide in the mountains so they could worship God the way the Bible said.

Near the end of that 1,260 years of darkness, the light of truth began to dawn when the Protestant Reformation began. During this time, many men tried to reform the Catholic church. They wanted the church to go back to following the Bible alone instead of the traditions and man-made rules of popes and priests. Maybe that's why Jesus encouraged them by saying their last works were better than their first.



20 What did Jesus offer to those who overcome?
Revelation 2:26-28 "And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give _____ over the nations—'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; and I will give him the morning _____."

21 Who is the morning star?
Revelation 22:16 "I, _____, ... am ... the Bright and Morning Star."

Jesus offered Himself to this church as the only solution to all their problems.

The first reformer was named John Wycliffe. The Roman Catholic Church had kept the Bible in Latin, but most people couldn't read that language. So almost no one really knew about Jesus and His love and power. Interestingly, Wycliffe is often called the "Morning Star of the Reformation" because he translated the Bible into English so people could read it for themselves. The light of God's Word was beginning to lead people out of the 1,260 years of papal darkness. "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105).

Let's open one more letter from Jesus. It is to the church of Sardis.

22 What was wrong with this church?
Revelation 3:1, 2 "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you are _____, but you are _____. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God."

23 Did Jesus have anything good to say about Sardis? _____

Jesus told Sardis to "be watchful." Being watchful reminds us of what Jesus warned Peter to do in the garden of Gethsemane. (Mark 14:37, 38.) Remember, Jesus knew how weak Peter really was and warned him to watch and pray.

Jesus also told them, "Strengthen what remains." Do you remember the story Ms. Tina told of cutting a tree way back to its stump to save its life? Jesus is saying the spiritual condition of this church is very desperate. The little bit of life that remains needs to be strengthened.

24 What else did Jesus ask them to do?
Revelation 3:3 "Remember therefore how you have received and heard; _____ fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a _____, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you."



What had Sardis received and heard? Toward the end of the 1,260 years of papal dominion, Protestant reformers brought light into the world by teaching truths from God's Word. God wanted this church to hold fast to these truths.

 **"Protestant" comes from the word "protest."**

And there was much more light to shine from the Bible, which the first reformers didn't see yet. God wanted people to keep studying the Bible and learning truth like the godly reformers had done. But instead, most people felt content to believe whatever their favorite teacher had said. That's how many of today's churches were started. The Lutherans followed Martin Luther, the Calvinists followed John Calvin, the Methodists followed John and Charles Wesley, and so on.

25 What did Jesus say about the few people in this church who were faithful?
Revelation 3:4 "You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in _____, for they are worthy."

26 What did Jesus promise the overcomers?
Revelation 3:5 "He who overcomes shall be clothed in _____ garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels."

How wonderful it is that Jesus wants to take our filthy clothes (sins) and give us the beautiful garment of His perfect life! In lesson 3, we learned about this amazing trade that Jesus wants to make with us.

27 Jesus ended His letter to Thyatira just like the other letters: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Revelation 3:6). Are you willing to listen to Jesus? _____



Answers

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Pergamos | 7. Word / God | 14. disobedient church | 21. Jesus |
| 2. word / God | 8. manna / stone | 15. woman | 22. alive / dead |
| 3. works / throne | 9. name | 16. adultery | 23. no |
| 4. against / Balaam / hold | 10. fire / brass | 17. three / six | 24. hold / thief |
| 5. b | 11. works / few | 18. 36 / 42 | 25. white |
| 6. repent / fight | 12. Jezebel | 19. rest / fast | 26. white |
| | 13. Jezebel | 20. power / star | |

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