**THE REVELATION**

**An Outline for**

**Chapter Two**

**May 22, 2020**

Reference Rpt. 5992.

**Chapter 2:**

Intro by referencing from Chapter One

***EPHESUS***

**Vs. 1**

**Ephesus** has the thought of desirable or first.

Desirable because the doctrine was at its purest. Desirable because of the initial love and zeal of the brethren. It was first because obviously its beginning of church history. Interestingly, even the literal city Ephesus was considered the chief city of what would become known as Asia Minor.

**Messenger:** St. Paul, probably converted in 34 A. D. and martyred 64-68 A. D. under Nero.

Paul’s love and zealous sacrifice for the Lord’s cause and the brotherhood is unsurpassed.

From the book of Romans to Revelation is 137 pages. Paul wrote 98 or over two thirds.

Jesus used Paul to convey to us the ecclesia arrangements, marital and family relationships, the mystical body of Christ, the details of justification, the resurrection, baptism, the covenants, the Tabernacle symbolisms, the relationship of the natural seed (Israel) with God throughout the Gospel Age and following, and so much more.

Paul’s natural and spiritual qualifications were both unique and natural. He was educated in Roman law and language. He was educated in the Jewish religion by the leading Rabbis of his time. His spiritual education started when he was chosen by Jesus to be his 12th apostle and given a special glimpse of Jesus in glory. He received special revelations of the Millennial Age, among other things. He was tutored by Jesus through revelations (Gal. 1:11, 12). He had miraculous gifts in abundance. His intellectual understanding of doctrine was wonderfully balanced with his deep humility. (1 Cor. 15:9: “least of all the apostles;” Eph. 3:8:”less than the least of all saints”) His undying love for the brethren through thick and thin is expressed in 1 Cor. 1:15: “the more I love the less I am loved.”

Paul words his responsibility this way: “That which cometh upon me daily, the CARE OF ALL THE CHURCHES.” 2 Cor. 11:28

Jesus specially chose Paul to be his witness. Acts 9:15: “He is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles, and Kings and the children of Israel.”

Even St. Peter acknowledged Paul’s depth of understanding and recommended Paul’s teachings. 2 Peter 3:15, 16

Bro. Russell in F-215 states: “The church could better afford to lose the testimony of any or all of the other apostles than to lose the testimony of this one.”

In R. 3156 Bro. Russell brings out that in many respects Ephesus was the scene of the apostles’ most successful work. He was there about 3 years and it is either directly or indirectly that all the other congregations in nearby places (the 6 other cities that would be used here in Revelation) had their start.

Even Jesus’ salutation to this church, “he who walks in the midst of the 7 golden lampstands,” suggests the high priest. And hasn’t Paul been the one to tell us about Jesus as our great High Priest of our profession? Touched with the feelings of our infirmities…

**Holdeth the 7 stars in his right hand**

Note 3:1 as well. This is mentioned twice for emphasis. Notice Jesus’ watch care for his church by sending his special messengers, guiding lights or luminaries!

**Who walketh in the midst of the 7 golden lampstands**

Jesus, though absent during the first 6 stages of the church’s development, is nevertheless ever cognizant of every aspect of our development and experiences. As he said before his ascension: “Lo I am with you alway.”

**Vs. 2**

**I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience**

I KNOW YOU! I know you collectively and individually! This again demonstrates Jesus’ personal attention.

What works, labor, patience? Please read 1 Thess. 1:3: “Remembering without ceasing your works of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father.” Yes, works of Faith, labor of Love, and patience of Hope.

They had started at Pentecost with about 500 brethren and by 70 A. D. had tens of thousands. Now, that’s some work and labor! They worked to spread the Gospel without and labored to encourage one another within. Note Acts 2:44: And all that believed were together and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, as every man had need.

**And how thou canst not bear them which are evil**

Of this we have several notable examples:

Acts 5:1: Ananias and Sapphira, who were liars.

Acts 8:18: Simon, the unrighteous of heart.

Acts 13:8: Elymas, the sorcerer

1 Tim. 1:20: Hymenaeus and Alexander, the blasphemers.

Having the gift of being able to discern the spirit (1 Cor. 12:10) enabled the fledgling church to keep itself, by and large, pure from these various deceivers and abusers of the church.

**And has tried them which say they are apostles and are not, and found then liars**

Please turn to 2 Cor. 11:3, 4; 13-15. Elaborate.

There are only 12 apostles of the Lamb. (Rev. 21:14) Yet, others joined themselves to the church and claimed to be either apostles or their successors. It wasn’t long afterward that the false doctrine of Apostolic Succession took hold, supplanting Jesus’ personal choices.

**Vs. 3**

From ***Today’s English Version:*** “You are patient, you have suffered troubles for MY sake, and you have not given up.” This especially refers to the many persecutions for Jesus’ sake that they endured, first from the Jews and then from the Romans. A cheerful endurance is best summed up by Acts 5:40, 41: “After being beaten…they departed from the presence of the council, REJOICING THAT THEY WERE COUNTED WORTHY TO SUFFER SHAME FOR HIS NAME.”

**Vs. 4 & 5**

Jesus’ admonition: read these verses. Some had left or fallen from their lofty spiritual attainment. Their first love, their first flush of being inwardly absorbed with their Lord and Saviour had diminished with some. As in any relationship, with the passing of time, one can take another for granted. As the ecclesia arrangement, doctrinal debates and various earthly concerns increased, imperceptibly the amount of time they spent in heart communion with their betrothed decreased. Communion with Jesus must ever hold a higher place than service for Jesus. Do we realize it? ***The New English Translation*** words is thus: “But here is what I have against you. You do not love ME now as you did at first.”

**Repent and do the first works**

Apparently this cooling of ardor lead to a decrease in their activity as well, the very works Jesus had commended them for. Paul had warned the brethren of such in the letter to the Hebrews. Heb. 10:32: “But call to remembrance the former days in which, after ye were illuminated ye endured a great fight of affliction.”

**Vs. 5**

The phrase “I will come to thee” demonstrated that the Lord was absent from the earth’s atmosphere. The word “quickly” is not found in the Sinaitic or Alexandrian manuscripts and the Vatican 1209 lacks the entire book of Revelation.

**Remove thy lampstand**

They would no longer be found worthy to be part of the church, therefore not worthy of his loving guidance. It also would mean the loss of light previously enjoyed.

**Vs. 6**

“Nicolaitanes” seems to mean “conquer” and “people.” This seems to refer to the later development of dividing the church into a clergy and laity system, which exalts one group of believers over another and has proven itself spiritually devastating to all involved. In Matt. 23:8, 9 Jesus said, “Be ye not called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your Father upon the earth, for one is your Father which is in heaven.” While the apostles were alive they could hold this depraved sentiment in check, even though its spirit had started to spring up even then. The Apostle Paul stated in 2 Thess. 2:7: “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work.”

**Vs. 7**

**Ear to hear**

This shows that the messages, etc., to the 7 stages of the church are profitable for all who will heart-listen to the instructions of Jesus through the holy spirit. In John 16:13 & 14 we read: “Howbeit when the spirit of truth is come, it will guide you into all truth, for it shall not speak of itself, but whatsoever it shall hear, that shall it speak and it will shew you things to come. It shall glorify me for it shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you.”

**What the Spirit saith unto the churches**

This refrain is spoken to all 7 churches. It suggests (read Rev. 4:5) this might represent the perfect doctrine or teachings of God through the holy spirit, and through Christ Jesus. Just as the truth causes divisions and trouble, this is pictured by the thunders. Truth enlightens, hence the lightnings. Truth also brings about controversies, the voices.

**I will give thee to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.**

Not a literal application but symbolic.: The precious hope of having life eternal in a beautiful condition or surroundings and in perfect harmony and communion with our Creator. Psalm 16:11: “Thou wilt show me the path of LIFE. In your PRESENCE is fulness of JOY. At thy right hand there are PLEASURES FOR EVERMORE.”

***SMYRNA***

**Smyrna** means “bitter.” It comes from the same root word as Myrrh and is so translated several times in the New Testament. Myrrh in Matt. 2:11 is the same word, for example, as one of the gifts from the wise men. Bro. Russell (R. 3703) says it represents submission. Sufficient to say that the period from 70 A. D. through 313 A. D. was a time when the church was submissive through the bitter experiences that they underwent, from continuing persecutions from Jews and the increasingly violent persecutions from the pagan Roman Empire.

**Messenger:** We believe the messenger to this church was St. John. After Paul, he was the most prolific author in the New Testament. He lived up until 100 A. D., being the longest lived apostle. Paul refers to John as one of the pillars of the church. (Gal. 2:9) As Jesus chose John to care for his mother, and to give his Revelation, we see a special servant.

Regarding John’s uniqueness, on page F-223 Bro. Russell states, “The apostle John however was the most remarkable seer, or prophet, of all the apostles. His visions, constituting the book of Revelation, delineating in the most remarkable manner, the things to come.”

**These things saith the first and the last**

Jesus as the Logos is God’s ONLY BEGOTTEN SON! John so says 5 times. Paul once. John starts his Gospel account with the creation of the Logos in the beginning. It seems like an indicator that John was the messenger to this church.

Jesus was the first and only direct creation by God Himself. This, in effect, makes Jesus the first and the last. We learn in Col. 1:16 that “by Jesus were all things created.” Note also in Rev. 3:14. “Beginning of the creation of God” is a similar thought. Both argue against the false teaching that Jesus and God are one and the same, co-eternal and co-equal.

**Which was dead and is alive**

Jesus was also the first begotten from the dead. Col. 1:18

John was the only Apostle to be an EYE WITNESS OF OUR LORD’S DEATH AND RESURRECTION. Read John 19:34, 35; 20:1-8.

In this phrase we have a note of sympathetic understanding mixed with hope for this church. Jesus died cruelly and because of his faithfulness was made alive in his resurrection to the divine nature.

**Vs. 9**

**I know thy works and tribulation**

Again, a personal I KNOW. Jesus personally appreciated their good works of faith and also felt their sufferings in their persecutions.

The good work of spreading the Gospel throughout the Roman Empire started by the Ephesus Church, continued and increased during this period. The Roman persecution of the Church was much more brutal and larger in scope than that of the Jewish persecution. We would not read of such persecutions on such a mass scale again until the period of the Inquisitions.

**Your poverty (but thou are rich!)**

The true church was temporally poor, either through sharing with others or, quite often, having their land and belongings confiscated by their many enemies. Yet, Jesus adds, “but you are rich.” They were rich in spiritual things, rich in faith, rich in heavenly treasures. 1 Tim. 6:18, “They that do good, that they be rich in good works.” Prov. 10:22, “The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich.” James 2:5, “hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom.”

Their temporal poverty is the CROSS, their spiritual prosperity is the CROWN!

**I know the blasphemy…**

These Jews are counterfeit spiritual Israelites (Roms. 2:28, 29; Gal. 6:16), imposters of God’s people. In other words, tares and hypocrites! The blasphemy is that they claim to be sincere spiritual Israelites! Synagogue: a gathering together or an assembly. So Satan has, during this 2nd stage of the church, sown and grown a tare class of imitation Christians to infiltrate the Church of Christ, thus causing great havoc for the true believers by lowering every standard of the faith.

Note Rev. 3:9.

**Vs. 10**

**Fear not…**

Read Matt. 10:16 onward. Elaborate.

Focus on our glorious reward, our glorious Savior’s example Hebs.12:2, 3.

The devil: Satan working through the Pagan Roman civil authorities. 10 days is 10 years of extreme persecution inaugurated by Diocletian and terminated by Constantine with the edict of Milan which granted religious tolerance for all, 303 A.D. – 313 A.D.

**Faithful unto death**

This is where we get our cross and crown emblem (Luke 14:2; James 1:12), with the victor’s wreath and the jewels of God (Malachi 3:17) . But note: Jesus said “I was dead and am alive.” Here faithfulness (unto death) gets life!

**Vs. 11**

The same refrain as in vs. 7, then: “shall not be hurt of the second death”. Reward of immortality implies that their testing of this life is all that is required.

Note: the word “I” appears 50 times in chapters 2 & 3. It remarkable how Jesus demonstrates his intense personal interest in his developing bride!

***PERGAMOS***

**Vs. 12**

Pergamos means “earthly elevation”. It was during this period (313-1157), that Pagan Rome converted outwardly to a form of nominal Christianity, starting with Constantine (323 A.D.). During this time Church Councils developed and they set standards for beliefs and practices. The first in 325 A.D., was convened by Constantine to resolve the Arian controversy, the outcome being decided by the emperor, that God and Jesus were of the same substance, hence they were equal. Later, the trinity became doctrine. The Papacy became fully “set up” ( Daniel 12:11) by Justinian I (539 A.D.), and Charlemagne (aka Charles I or Charles the Great), was crowned by the Pope as Emperor over the so-called ‘Holy Roman Empire” (December 25th. 800 A.D.), which lasted in a sense, a thousand years (1799).

Note that this is the longest Church period 844 years.

Arius was the messenger to this Church period. A was a presbyter (an elder), in Alexandria, Egypt. He was widely considered to be scholarly and morality upright. He declined the office of Bishop, because he was opposed to lordship in the Church.

He was the premier figure in the controversy of his era, that God the Father and Jesus the Logos, were of the same substance, hence, making them equal in nature, both being divine nature. He opposed this view and believed that the Logos, Jesus, was the direct creation of God, and so inferior to God himself, the Son of God. This was consider the “great heresy, Arianism”.

He was excommunicated in 321 A.D., and yet his views continued to spread and be accepted. Finally, Emperor Constantine called for a Church Council at Nicea in 325A.D. to try to bring about a peaceable settlement in order to stablish the Empire.

The ensuing debates at the Council of Nicea largely pitted Arius (who was remembered as “having scripture and reason” on his side), versus Athanasius who was a loud orator. Eventually, Constantine decided on the side of Athanasius and the co-equality of God and the Logos and Arius was banished.

Sometime later, Arius was called back to Rome to be re-instated, but died mysteriously on route, many believe he was poisoned. We think that the events surrounding this Council of Nicea in 325 are symbolically portrayed in Rev. 12:3, 4.

**…he which hath the sharp sword with two edges.**

 The word of truth. 2 edges could be the Old and New Testaments or it might represent that when one use the sword of truth against errors, the other edge is pointed toward ourselves, always to remind us to be humble and self-examining. This is the era when excommunication (compare Rev. 6:4), was established and used to threaten and silence those who opposed the Church hierarchy, this of course shows the *misuse* of the sword.

Compare Rev. 1:16; 2:16.

**I know thy works (repeat), and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is…**

 The faithful strove against all the tremendous errors that developed in this era: trinity, Mariolatry, the mass, Church councils led by civil leaders, Pago-Christianity with immortality of the human soul, hell of torments, the rise of Clergy / laity, Popes crowning kings, etc.

 The true Church was now being engulfed by the Tare Class, nominal Christians. The change of the Empire from paganism to outwardly Christian resulted in them dwelling (being in), the same place (the nominal Church), where Satan (the enemy of God), throne is (Pagan Rome becomes Papal Rome). Compare Rev. 13:1,2,4.

**And thou holdest fast my name and has not denied my faith…**

During this period of so many great changes in doctrine and practice of Christian life, the faithful disciples of Jesus did not give into the seductive influences of prestige or assimilation into a nominally Christian society. They maintained the simplicity of following Jesus and harkening to his words of instruction.

**In those days wherein Antipas my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.**

 “Anti” means “against” and “pas” means papa or father. Against father symbolizes those who withstood the introduction of Popes (in the West) and Patriarchs (in the East) in the Church, remembering what Jesus stated in Matt. 23:9.

Being slain means that eventually the use of the title “father”, became popular and institutionalized.

**Vs. 14**

**But I have a few things against thee…**

Jesus gives a warning to the faithful, but it well describes the gross errors of the nominal believers.

**…because you have there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel to eat things sacrificed unto idols and to commit fornication.**

 (see Rpt. 5322). Consider Num. 22:1-6, 25:1-3; 31:8, 6. II Pet. 2:15, 16; Jude 11.

As Balaam sought to be consider both a holy prophet of God and to attain material gain or wealth from a heathen king, so too many leaders in the nominal Church desired to blend pagan practices with Christian concepts and have the material rewards as well as to continue their positions in religious matters. This resulted in spiritual fornication of uniting religion with civil powers, of uniting religious ceremonies with formerly pagan rites.

**Vs. 15**

**So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.**

 Compare vs. 6. What was in the Ephesus stage a tendency, now had developed into Church practice, clergy / laity. Note, that not all had succumbed to this error, but many had. Satan finds it easier to work through a fewer number of leaders to mis-direct the Church, than to try to mis-direct the mass of believers individually.

**Vs. 16**

**Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.**

 Note again the “sword of my mouth” (vs. 12 and references).

We see that Jesus uses “thee” which means the true Church and “them” which would be the nominal Church. It does denote a warning, Jesus is AWARE of what is being done in and to his Body members! He will return, an encouragement to be urgent in one’s spiritual development.

And by the conclusion of this long period of warfare against all the overwhelming errors and the setting up in power of Papacy, and Greek Orthodoxy (Rome with the Popes and Constantinople with the Patriarchs), the Lord would send relief in the form of the next Messenger Peter Waldo, who would have the four Gospels translated and produced in French, the language of the common people, as opposed to the Latin translation that was only available to the clergy (i.e. monks, priests, bishops and the like).

**Vs. 17**

**He that hath an ear…**

 Same message to each Church stage.

**…to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna…**

 In the Tabernacle, in the Most Holy, inside the ark of the Covenant, one of the three items was the golden bowl of manna. This symbolized the aspect of *immortality of the divine nature.* This is/was a promise held out to all the faithful.

Note that when the ark of the Covenant was placed inside the Temple that Solomon built, the only thing left in the ark was the tables of stone containing the ten commandments or Law of God (Exo. 16:33; Hebs. 9:4; I Kings 8:6-9).

**…and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.**

White represents purity, or in ancient times approval or accepted, a black stone being used to show rejection or being judged against.

On this stone of approval is a new name, it may be the Father’s family name (Rev. 14:1), perhaps the Bridegroom’s name (Rev. 3:12).

Only known by the receiver, this might mean that it is a unique name that might denote a special trait that Jesus particularly appreciated in his Bride member.

Perhaps it means that as the natural man cannot receive the things of the spirit of God (I Cor. 2:4), so the faithful are only really interested in their spiritual relationship to God and Jesus.

Compare Rev. 19:12.

***THYATIRA***

**Vs. 18**

**And unto the messenger of the church in Thyatira write:**

The name Thyatira means “sweet perfume of sacrifice” or “sweet savor of labor”.

This period has the most verses – 11. It is the not the longest period of time Church (1157 – 1367, 210 years, more on this shortly), but it did experience the zenith of the Papacy’s terrible power and persecution.

A necessary side-bar on reckoning the period of time for this Church (#4) as well as #5 and #6.

In verse 21 we read “And I gave her space (Grk. Chronos – “time” see Diaglott and NAS), to repent of her fornication and she repented not.”

A “time” = 360 symbolic days or 360 literal years (Ezk. 4:5, Num. 14:34).

1157 plus 360 years brings us to 1517, the year that Martin Luther nailed the famous 95 thesis to the door at Wittenberg Castle Church. This is marking the beginning of the Reformation. This would be the date we start the #6th. stage of the Church.

Also, in Rev. 9:1, 5, 10, we read that during the sounding of the 5th. Trumpet (same time period as the 5th. stage of the Church), we have a “5 months” time period. A month is 30 days, hence 30 x 5 = 150 years.

If we end this 150 years of the 5th. stage of the Church in our already pre-determined date/event of 1517 that starts the 6th. stage of the Church, then the 5th. stage of the Church would begin in 1367 ( 1517 minus 150 = 1367).

Thus we have the time periods for stages #4, #5 and #6 determined. This also helps us to understand the synchronizations between the 7 stages of the Church with the 7 Trumpets.

To summarize:

1st. stage of the Church could not begin before Pentecost in 33 AD.

2nd. stage of the Church ends in a “ten days” (10 years), period 303 – 313.

3rd. stage of the Church starts at the end of the 2nd. hence starts 313.

4th. stage of the Church has a 360 year period: 1157 – 1517.

5th. stage of the Church is a 150 year period: 1367 – 1517.

6th. stage of the Church starts in 1517 and lasts until the Harvest begins 1874.

 7th. stage of the Church begins with “I stand at the door and knock” Rev. 3:20, indicating Jesus’ return in 1874 and continues throughout the Harvest time until the Church is complete.

These points taken together demonstrate a very convincing and satisfying alignment for our 7 Church, 7 Seals and 7 Trumpets periods of time.

**Vs. 18 continued:**

**…unto the messenger…**

Peter Waldo (died 1217), a wealthy merchant, who in his lifetime methodically gave away or distributed his wealth (reminds us of Br. Russell), who had a simple faith in the Scriptures being the true religious authority, above any Popes or other Clerics, in determining our doctrines and practice. He rejected purgatory, prayer to dead saints or images, indulgences and the priestly class (those of the Nicolaitans).

In 1160 he paid to have portions of the Bible (mainly in the Gospels), written and distribute in the common language of the people – French.

He would criticize the Clergy Class at the peril of his own life.

In 1179 he formed lay order of evangelists who did not own property and who were celibate men (therefor unencumbered with earthly cares), to travel in pairs to declare the truth from Scripture among the common people, which brought the wrath of the Papal authorities. They were know as “the Poor Men of Lyons {France}”.

As this movement continued to grow, they eventually became known at the “Waldenes” or “Waldensians”. They spread into Italy taking refuge in the Alpine Mountains and valleys.

Some events during this period of time:

1096 – 1291 – the Crusades. Pope Urban II conscripted all classes of society to join the movement to free the “Holy Land” from the Mohammedans. Ultimately failed.

1163 – Council of Tours. Determined that heretics (Waldensians and Albigenses),

Should be tracked down, imprisoned and their belongings confiscated.

Note: Albigenses were already in existence when Br. Peter Waldo came on the scene. They shared a very similar rejection of Papal authority and hence suffered in the persecutions together. The Albigenses had different names in differ countries. Albigenses was there name in France.

1179 – Third Lateran Council. Declared Anathema against the Albigensian heretics and censured Br. Waldo for sending out lay preachers (reminds us again of Br. Russell sending out the Pilgrims and Col-Porters).

1184 – Council of Verona. Decreed that both heretics and those protecting them to be condemned, exiled and their properties confiscated.

1198-1216 (18 years), reign of Pope Innocent III, most powerful of Popes. Claimed title “Vicar of Christ” and the right to depose kings. Forbade reading the Bible in the common language. Father of the Inquisition Church trials for the detection and punishment of heretics. Order the mass extermination of Albigenses.

**…these things saith the Son of God…**

A very direct statement of who is addressing the true saints. During this period the usurpation of the Popes reached it depths of blasphemy, even claiming to be the Vicar of Christ.

**…who has eyes like a flame of fire… NAS**

As in 1:14. Piercing insight to the lives of his brethren, no matter what dungeon or remote places they might have fled to or be confined.

**…and his feet are like burnished bronze says this:**

As in 1:15. Suggesting a refined character through persecution and hardship – like metal in a furnace. Feet members on earth throughout the Gospel Age, as the members of the Body of Christ. Head and Feet members on earth share similar sufferings, but if patiently endured, they are made the stronger and more beautiful.

**Vs. 19**

**I know thy works, and your love and faith and service and perseverance and that your works of late are greater than at first.**

Once again the reassurance of Jesus’ knowing them and he is cognizant of both their faithfulness in spreading the Truth and in their rejection of Nominal errors.

They lived their faith -service – being willing to suffer in their disseminating of Scripture.

Perseverance during the Inquisition.

Later works greater than at the first – yes, as the Inquisition grew in horror and spread to the civil powers doing the will of the Popes in trying to vanquish the so-called heretics (our brethren), yet they persevered, they pressed on. No real relief would come until the next period of the Church, though more so in the Reformation still over 3 centuries off.

**Vs. 20**

**Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferers 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.**

Jezebel (I Kings 16:31, 19:1,2; 21:25). The name Jezebel means “chaste” and how unchaste a woman she was and also pictured.

In Rpt. 3407 Br. Russell suggests her father was a chief priest in Zidon and that this might represent how Papacy (Jezebel), had its roots in Paganism.

Papacy forces it’s false teachings both in doctrine and in practice, upon the Lord’s saintly ones. The seduction is to align the Church with the civil, temporal powers. In fact, the Church more successfully than ever before to bring the kings under the Popes influence to do their will, particularly in persecuting Papacy’s enemies, the heretics.

This has become known as the doctrine of Church and State, an illicit union indicating a Harlot woman, not a Virgin woman as the future Bride of Christ was intended to be.

The eating of things offered to idols – adopting and institutionalizing what had been pagan worship as now part of the Christian practice. This was possible because of the banning or outlawing of the reading of the Bible in the common language of the people.

We look back to vs. 14 where we had read this during the previous stage of the Church, and here the Papacy continues to increase each of these different errors and to make them all the more entrenched, that if anyone teaches contrary, the arm of the State would persecute and punish all such.

Note: 4 stages of the rise of the Nominal Church, and the last 3 stages of the Church to bring down the Nominal Church.

**Vs. 21**

**And I gave her space (Grk. Chronos, “time”), to repent of her fornication and she repented not.**

As we have already considered above, this time – 360 years from 1157 to 1517 or to the Reformation proper. The LORD is demonstrating that He foreknew that Papacy (Jezebel), would not willingly change her erroneous teachings. It is when we remember that the Papacy, the Anti-Christ, is Satan’s greatest deception, making a mockery of God, Jesus and Truth.

**Vs. 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.**

The LORD is prophesying that in the future their wicked deeds of Church and State Union and cooperation will receive of His retributive judgements, they shall not escape. We refer to these false Systems, although they are made up of blinded individuals.

**Vs. 23**

**And I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins (minds) and hearts, and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.**

Her is mother Harlot Papacy, her children are the Protestant Churches that imitated her practice of Fornication for hire, harlotry – Church and State affiliation. See Rev. 17:1 – 5.

Kill with death – the Protestant Denominations depicted as the False Prophet (the vitalized Image of the Beast), are destroyed with her in the future pictured in Rev. 19:20.

The Lord with the eyes like flaming fire, does know the motivation of each and all, even as he did the Scribes and Pharisees of his days in the flesh, but like them, it is the entire false systems that shall be destroyed. Individual responsibility to conscience will be dealt with mostly in the fulness of the Kingdom.

**Vs. 24**

**But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them – I place no other burden on you.**

The Lord addresses his faithful who lived during this time, those that rejected the Papacy’s errors.

The deep things – the mysteries of Satan. So much of Papacy’s errors, practices and even pomp and ceremonies had their origin in the “mystery cults” of ancient Babylon and Egypt. Things like the trinity, Mary the mother of God, and so much more. See Hislop’s book “The Two Babylons”.

We note that the Lord has this mocking phrase “as they call them”, they are NOT the deep things of God’s truth.

The Lord was not expecting the faithful, persecuted Church to be able to reform the mighty Nominal Church in the height of their power. No, this have to wait for the last three stages of the Church. In Rev. 8:13 we read of the three woes, which are the last three Trumpet blasts. See Rev. 9:12, 14.

**Vs. 25**

**But that which you have already, hold fast till I come.**

The Lord both encourages the saints to hold fast to the truths and practices they have won through much difficulty and persecution. Brethren, think about how frightening a time that must have been our brethren living then!

Jesus encourages them to hold fast, he will return!

**Vs. 26**

**And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations.**

This reminds of 2:10 – be thou faithful unto death…continue to persevere as he mentions in vs. 19.

Part of the promised reward to the faithful is that in the time of his return, at the end of the Age, these victors would then in the position as Kings and Priests, to judge over and participate in the LORD’S judgements that will remove the nations as powers, remove the false Churches and in the end, free mankind from the superstitious errors of the Dark Age.

**Vs. 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.**

These promises continue to show that the reward will include a REVERSAL of the ruling powers, from the Counterfeit Kingdom (Papacy and earthly kings) to the true, the real Kingdom (The Christ, Head and Body).

Iron can symbolize the Law of God. The true Kingdom is based upon the Law of God and it’s just retribution.

This breaking to pieces of the systems will result in a humbling of those individuals who are properly exercised.

The ultimate authority is God, Jesus’ Father and our Father. Note the point of difference in authority of power, God of course being superior. Jesus needed to be given this authority, indicating that he did not have before.

**Vs. 28**

**And I will give him the morning star.**

Two suggestions:

1. The faithful will be given the true “light” of truth, even as a star gives light, as opposed by the false light of Papacy (II Cor. 11:14).
2. The faithful get to be the Virgin Bride of Christ and get this blessed relationship with him as their reward.

**Vs. 29**

**He that that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.**

As with each stage of the Church, the message concludes with this simple admonition to listen with one’s heart and mind to the truths due in their time.

End.