

- Revelation

- The Church at Thyatira

- **ORIENTATION:**

- **Thyatira** is the ancient name of the modern Turkish city of Akhisar ("white castle").
- It lies in the far west of Turkey, south of Istanbul and almost due east of Athens.
- Although it is about 50 miles from the Mediterranean, it would have been closer in ancient times, as the sea has retreated some.

- **EARLY HISTORY:**

- It was famous for its dyeing and was a center of the indigo trade.
- Among the ancient ruins of the city, inscriptions have been found relating to the guild of dyers in the city.
- More guilds are known in Thyatira than any other contemporary city in the Roman province of Asia
- The "Trade Guilds"
 - wool-workers,
 - linen-workers,
 - makers of outer garments,
 - dyers,
 - leather-workers,
 - tanners,
 - potters,
 - bakers,
 - slave-dealers
 - bronze-smiths
- In order to be prosperous, one would have to join a guild of their particular trade.
- By joining a guild, you were automatically associated to their practices.

- o Each guild would worship the "God" or "Goddess" of their trade.
- o There would be pagan rituals that members of the guild would be required to participate in.
- o They included:
 - Worshipping the idol of the trade.
 - Festivals
 - Orgies
 - Eating what was sacrificed to the particular idol.
- o Each guild would worship the "God" or "Goddess" of their trade.
- o When the fun began, you couldn't walk out unless you wanted to be ridiculed or persecuted.

- **THE CHURCH:**

- o The Apostle Paul and Silas might have visited Thyateira during Paul's second or third journey, although the evidence is entirely circumstantial.
- o While in Philippi, Paul and Silas stayed with a woman named Lydia from Thyateira, who continued to help them even after they were jailed and released.

- **THE LORD'S SELF-DESIGNATION (18)**

- o "The Son of God"

- "Who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass"
 - Eyes like a flame discussed in John's introduction.
 - Fine brass is the same word used in the first chapter.
 - Appealed to them as being one of the trades.

- **COMMENDATION (19)**

- o For their works, love, service, faith, and patience

- o Their last works are more than the first

- Their works were growing in quantity and quality (2 Pet 1:5-8) (2 Pet 3:18)
- The opposite of Ephesus who's works degraded

- **CONDEMNATION (20-24)**

- o They allow that woman Jezebel

- They tolerated the conduct by letting her have her way
- They didn't recognize her for what she was.
 - A false teaching
 - A seduction to idolatry and fornication.
 - NOT a literal person but the practice of the trade guilds.

- They probably rationalized their conduct.
- Who calls herself a prophetess
 - Speaks as one having divine power or knowledge
 - To teach and beguile His servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.
 - They were enticed by the guilds to either practice immorality or be associated to it.
- Whom the Lord had given time to repent of her sexual immorality, but she did not.
 - There was enough time with the teaching to repent.
- The guilds, like Jezebel did to Israel, could corrupt Christians physically and also spiritually.

- **WARNING:**

- He will cast her into a sickbed.
 - The bed of the fornication will be the bed of suffering
 - The sin will be the cause of the sickness.
 - One cannot commit sin and not be a sinner and escape the consequences.

- o Those who commit adultery with her will have great tribulation,
 - Those who follow her teaching will suffer with her.
 - They will all suffer punishment together.
 - **What was the consequence of OT Jezebel?**
- o Unless they repent
 - Turn from the evil to escape the suffering.
- o He will kill her children with death;
 - NOT literal children (Therefore not a literal Jezebel).
 - Those who are products of the teaching (Offspring)
 - They will be destroyed
- o and the churches will know that He searches the minds and hearts.
 - Reins translated means Kidney.
 - Nephros - kidneys, loins used of the inmost thoughts, feelings, purposes, of the soul
 - It shows that nothing is hidden from the Lord

- o He will give to each one according to their works
 - Everyone will account for themselves (2 Cor 5:10; Rom 2:6)
 - Their works both good and bad
 - Everyone will account for themselves NOT others
- o For those in Thyatira who do not follow her doctrine,
 - Singles out one group of people not two as the KJV implies.
 - Those who have remained faithful to the Lord by resisting Jezebel
- o or have not known the depths of Satan, as they call it,
 - The depths of filth that the teaching had lead to
 - Idolatry
 - Fornication
- o He places on them no other burden. (Acts 15:23-29)
 - As in the scripture reference, the burden they were under was necessary.
 - The pressure to join the guild
 - The pressure to engage in the sins of the guilds.
 - The lack of prosperity
 - Persecution

- **EXHORTATION AND PROMISE (25-29)**
 - Hold fast what they have
 - Hold fast to the truth of the gospel.
 - Hold fast the teaching that would help them stand firm.
 - till He come.
 - In context, probably refers to his coming judgment on Jezebel and her children
 - Not to His second coming....
 - To him who overcomes
 - Overcomes the system of Jezebel (trade guilds)
 - and keeps His works until the end...
 - Obeys the Lord's commands until His judgment.
 - He will give power over the nations,
 - Because we are His we will...
 - Share in the rewards of the victory over His enemies.
 - Not as in a literal rule over material nations as some believe.
 - No such kingdom is supported in scripture

- o and he shall rule them with a rod of iron
 - A kings scepter or a Sheppard's staff
 - Absolute, invincible rule.
 - As Christians, we share in that invincible kingdom
- o as vessels of a potter they will be shattered into pieces. (Psalm 2:8-9)
 - When the rod strikes the pottery, it will shatter.
 - With potters as a trade, this would be something they were familiar with.
- o To him who overcomes and keeps His works until the end...
 - Just as He received from the Father
 - Just as He received authority from His Father, he will share with those who overcome.
- o He will give the morning star
 - Breaking dawn
 - The coming end to a dark night
 - Hope in a new day!
- o Hear what the Spirit says to the churches

- **LIFE APPLICATION:**

- Can the Lord commend us for our works the way He did Thyatira?
- Who is Jezebel today?
- What things would cause us to compromise our faith...
 - To get ahead in the world?
 - To satisfy our desires?
- Are we tolerating sin among us?
- What are we required to do about it?
- Consequences of sin.
 - Spiritually?
 - Physically?
 - Emotionally (Combo of both)?
 - False doctrines...?
- Is there any less condemnation for those who follow than for those who teach?
- Jesus promises....
 - Hope
 - Victory
 - Assurance that He will put no more burden than we already have...if we hold fast.....