

Wednesday in the Word  
Digging Deeper  
May 4, 2022  
Pergamos

Revelation 2:12-17 KJVS

[12] And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; [13] I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is : and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. [14] But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. [15] So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. [16] Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. [17] He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

We will take this apart as it unrolls before us. Remembering that John wrote in the code of symbolism it is important to look through God's Word to best understand His meaning. We begin in verse 12 where Christ describes Himself as having a sharp two edged sword. Historically the symbolic reference here is that of the Word of God, the only weapon needed to defeat the enemy, the judgement of God; The two edges speak of His Word saving sinners yet punishing evil. Hebrews 4:12, Revelation 19:19, 21. This devastating weapon became the standard sword of the Roman Legionaries from the 2nd century BC as its relatively short and double-edged blade made it ideal for cutting and thrusting in the confined space of hand to hand combat on the ancient battlefield. The short blade of the Gladius Hispaniensis made it an ideal weapon when soldiers were closely engaged with the enemy and gave its carrier a distinct advantage over an opponent armed with an unwieldy and heavier, longer-bladed sword who had no space in which to swing his blade. Our Savior in battling the Evil One is bold to fight up close and fierce in judgement. We cannot fight the devil. Jesus alone prevails. 1 John 3:8, Revelation 12:9, 20:10. In verse 13 we read of Satan's seat. Pastor has described for us the architecture devoted to such worship. Satan lost his original seat in the Heavens. Isaiah 14:12-15. He has desired Christ's throne ever since. Judges 2:12-13, Deuteronomy 18:10-12, 2 Corinthians 4:4. All false gods are rooted in Satan. 2 Corinthians 11:13-15. Jesus praises the church in Pergamos for honoring His Name and standing in His faith and speaks well of Antipas, His martyr. Speaking of him in an article on Conservapedia.com "His witness to the Lord Jesus Christ by word and deed and miracles of healing began turning the people of Pergamum from offering sacrificial worship to idols that can neither see, nor hear, nor move, nor breathe. The pagan priests complained vehemently that he was misleading the people by causing them to commit apostasy from their faith in their ancestral gods by his personal example of moral and spiritual virtue, the firmness of his faith in his God, and his constant preaching about Jesus the Anointed One. When they demanded that he stop, he refused. He would not submit to their demand to stop preaching

Christ and offer sacrifice to the idols. They became enraged and dragged him to the temple of Artemis, and there they threw him into a glowing, red-hot copper or brazen metal bull where they normally put their sacrifices to the idols to cast demons out of their own people. He loudly prayed God to receive his soul and strengthen the faith of the Christians, and begged God to forgive those who were inflicting on him this torment. He then departed as peacefully as if he fell asleep. It is said that he died during the persecutions under Nero or Domitian sometime after A.D. 68, according to the majority of biblical scholars most probably about the year 92." This where Satan dwelt according to Jesus. It appears Satan still dwells in so many locations where Christians suffer around the world. Is He living and operating today in America? As we study the End of Days we will see that persecution will increase among us. Revelation 6:9-11, 2 Timothy 3:1-4. In verse 14 the Lord changes His tune. He loves us and commends our work and sacrifice but he will not tolerate our sin or apathy. He mentions Balaam whose poor behavior we find in Numbers chapters 22-25. Too much to detail here but in class we may scan these passages to see how he jumped ahead of God to bless and curse while considering financial gain and then led Israel astray in immorality through His foolish council. This found in Deuteronomy 31. Seven biblical writers tell of the errors of Balaam. He seemed to want to do right by God but his motives were selfish and deceptive. The results of his compromising efforts led to plague for Israel. For further study; God was angry with Balaam because he went to Balak (Numbers 22:5-7,22). Moses said Balaam gave evil counsel that brought a plague on Israel (Numbers 31:14-16). Balaam had wanted to curse the children of Israel, to be paid the hire (Deuteronomy 23:3-6). Balaam was killed by the Israelites in the days of Joshua (Joshua 13:22). The Lord recalled Balaam's sin in Joshua's farewell speech (Joshua 24:8-10) Recalled again through the prophet Micah (Micah 6:5) Re-visited in Nehemiah's time (Nehemiah 13:1-3). Peter recalls how Balaam "loved the wages of unrighteousness" (2Peter 2:15-16). Similarly Jude recalls how "for pay... the error of Balaam" was committed (Jude 1:11) Jesus recalls how Balaam "Kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality" (Revelation 2:14). We must ask ourselves if we are compromising or faith with worldly pleasures or if we succumb to the idolatry of gain. Some in Pergamos also supported the Nicolaitan doctrine who compromised with the local worldly society separating spirit and flesh in such a way as to be able to keep spiritually pure while allowing sinful fleshly pleasure. It's your flesh being ordered according to the Spirit? This too is a concept that pervades our modern culture. Many purport to be believers but live in sin and are unashamed to do so. Jesus hates this. He threatened to remove the candlestick of the Ephesians (Revelation 2:5) and He now threatens Pergamos similarly to repent or He will fight against them according to His Holy Word. Verse 16. For all His love we are seeing that our Lord still hates our sin. Does your life need to be cleaned up? 1 John 1:9. Finally, in verse 17 Jesus is looking for overcomers. Remember, nikaō; to carry off the victory, come off victorious over sin. We cannot settle for allowing stubborn sin to remain in our lives. Overcome! Be victorious by never quitting the battle against sin and trusting in Christ, the Victor. This results in the Hidden Manna. Remember the Seder dinner. The Hidden Manna is Christ. He was dead, now alive. His resurrection guarantees ours! He fed Israel in the wilderness and now, fully alive forever more He feeds us the food of eternal life. We are granted the White Stone of Heaven's admission. Our ticket to heaven. On it, His Name or ours? Isaiah 62:2, Matthew 16:16-19.