The Seven Churches of Revelation - Smyrna, Pergamum & Thyatira

CLEAN TRANSCRIPT | ALL SEVEN ORIGINAL CHAPTERS

Finding the Ancient Path | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kwyJN3Sgmfo

Chapter 1: Introduction and geography

Amen. Okay, guys. Well, here we are on the seven churches of Revelation. We're going to continue our study in this today and um and pick up one more week next week as we finish it out. I was sharing before the fellowship here before we started that Thyatira could be a a uh a lesson all by itself because it's so dense, but we're going to get through half of it uh today. But hopefully you guys are learning stuff here and you're enjoying these. I I love uh hearing from uh you via email and and uh on YouTube and the things that you're learning. So that's really awesome. It inspires me. It encourages me and I'm just glad that you're here whether

virtually or in person. Let's jump into this. Wanted to show you this map for a couple of reasons. one to get kind of a visual understanding of where the churches are or where they I should say were back in the day. You can see that they are all kind of bunched together uh in that region of of quote unquote Asia. And um an interesting study if you ever want to get into it is as you look at that picture you can see the seven churches highlighted in yellow and red. You can see Patmos where John was as he saw these visions and and wrote these letters. But that you also see where Galatia is in in reference to the other churches as well as Colossae. And it makes

you wonder, at least I did, why why weren't they included in the list of these weward churches? Of course, they weren't all weward, but they had their challenges. We know that there was a group in Galatia. There was a group in Colossae, but they weren't highlighted to the seven letters to the seven churches. And maybe that's just because the Lord loves number seven. It's it's a it's a number of completion in the Bible and uh who knows but it's an interesting study nonetheless. But here's what I wanted to show you in this section here. These seven churches are located in a natural circular route along Roman roads in Asia Minor. They form a clockwise loop starting from the coast at Ephesus and moving inland following established

postal and travel routes in the Roman province of Asia. So this wasn't just happen stance. This was intentional. There there were roads connecting these cities. But more interestingly, the order of the churches reflects a path that a messenger might take or would physically travel with the scroll in his hand as he's maybe carrying a scroll of the Torah or he's carrying letters from other prophets or Paul perhaps that would you would follow this path making this this information deliverable and readable in sequence. When you look at Revelation 1, it lists the churches in the same order in which the letters are dictated, which to me uh is a is a really good nod to the validity of these churches being not just allegorical,

but actual physical churches. So, I wanted to give you that visual just so you can kind of understand uh where we're at and what we're talking about. So, let's start our discussion today with the church in Smyrna.

Chapter 2: Church in Smyrna

We see in Revelation two and to the angel of the church in Smyrna, write these things say the first and the last who was dead and came to life. I know your works, tribulation, poverty, you are rich, and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear any of those things that you're about to suffer. Indeed, the devil's about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation 10 days. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.

So where do we start here? Well, wanted to start there. We talked in our last lesson about the fact that Yeshua is very much aware of the good things that we are doing and the lives that we are leading as much as he is aware of the things that are not so good. But here he says, I know your works. which is, as we've talked about in the past, a word of obedience, not just individual works, but the fact that they are being obedient to Torah, to the teachings of Yeshua. I know your obedience. I know your tribulation and your poverty. Now, I want us to stop here for a second and ask this question. Maybe Glenn, since you're sitting here next to me and everybody else is muted, you can give me your thoughts. How do

you think this lifestyle that these people in Smyrna were going through could have been interpreted by these believers? What lifestyle? Well, they were obedient, yet they were dealing with trials and they were broke. How could that have been interpreted by them? Well, given the fact that all of these churches, like you said, were were in a circle, there would be no reason to stay in a place that was uh broke as far as the economy. They would go to the more prosperous areas and be prosper. So, my interpretation of this is that it's spiritually spiritual poverty. Okay? spiritual poverty. Well, that's possible. As I was reading this, I related somewhat to these believers because there have been times in my life where I thought I was I'm a pretty good guy. I'm a pretty good believer. I'm

obedient. But why in the world am I dealing with all this tribulation? Why in the world am I broke all the time? And that place when a person is in that place some questions can arise and I have a list here maybe they thought they were failures in the faith why well because a lot of people when they deal with trials they deal with poverty they think somehow that it's directly tied to the quality of their faith or the lack thereof and so maybe they felt like failures and I'm sure many of you can relate to that feeling as Well, maybe they thought they were doing something wrong because again, as performanceoriented human beings, when we perform well, but get something back that's not good, you know, maybe maybe they thought they're they're doing something wrong. Yeah. Shame and guilt.

Maybe they thought that Yehovah wasn't hearing their prayers. I've been there. Yeah. or Glenn number two says or perhaps they thought they deserve what's going on. But we've been there. We've experienced this where we're tempted to think that he's not even hearing our prayers because if we're in tribulation and we're in pro poverty, we're probably praying about these things, right? Or maybe we think he's disciplining us. But this is all discipline or he's not happy with us or worse he has forgotten us or he's forgotten me. Why why am I trying so hard to be obedient but I'm still dealing with this tribulation these troubles. Tribulation is a broad term and that list applies to spiritual and physical. Explain that Glenn and you have to speak up.

Okay. I'm I'm just saying that uh you know whether whether one interprets this as spiritually uh broke or physical or physical that whole list applies to both. Yeah. Because if you know our our connection with Jehovah is precious and we when we don't feel that connection we feel disconnected uh then that can lead to all kind of physical ramifications as well.

[Music]

Yeah. So all these things could be going on with the church there. They could have been feeling some or all of that because of where they were at. But what does he say? Let's look closer to the text. He says, "I know." He's aware of it. He's not just aware of the conditions. He's aware of how you may be feeling. about those conditions. I know your works. I know what's going on in the city. I know the people you're dealing with. I know you're broke. He's aware of it. And sometimes we we have to be reminded of these things in our life that he hasn't forgotten us. It's not that he's not happy with us. There may be some disciplining going on there. He's definitely hearing your prayers.

You may or may not be doing something wrong, but which of us can ever say that we're always doing everything right. No, for me, he says, "You are rich. I know all these things." But then he tells them, "In spite of all these things, you are rich." which is a matter of what, Glenn? Number two, perspective. And guess what? The perspective we choose to have is a perspective that we have chosen to have. Okay, I know that sounds repetitive or redundant, but there's a great deal of wisdom in that statement. The perspective you choose to have is your choice. It's a perspective you have chosen to have. Not all the time based on scripture, but based on feelings, based on emotions, or

based on the fact that the enemy is taking advantage of all these things that you may be feeling or thinking about when you're in this situation. How do I know that? Well, because he goes right on to say it, right? Because in worldly terms they were losers in their mind, but in spiritual terms they were full of faith, righteousness, and heavenly reward. Suffering is not failure. Suffering is testing. And we're going to talk a little bit more about that in a moment. And faithfulness through suffering is a crown. So perspective There's been many times in the course of our life where we have suffered for one thing or another. I have several that come to my mind even now as do you.

But perspective matters and we have to be reminded sometimes over and over again through the course of our life that suffering is not failure. It's it's a testing and it's a very important test that we're going to look at here in a second. But I wanted to make a few points on this whole being poor business. In James 2, we see this before I I read James 2. Why I I I felt the need to talk about this momentarily in this point for a reason. Especially for those of us in the United States, those of you who live in Pakistan or or India or some other country may not resonate with what I'm about to say. But in the American churches, American believers,

there is a um a huge draw to want to be successful, to want to have money, to want to have part of the American dream, to want to be well off, to want to have lots of disposable cash. We all feel that pressure, that inner desire that we have. And yet the scriptures tell us something very interesting. Listen, my beloved brethren. Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and hes of the kingdom which he promised to those who love them? What are the implications of those words? Glenn number two. Well, when you know when when you look at the bank accounts of the politicians of the world and you compare uh working folk to those, even though God provides enough for us to to live if if we're

willing to follow his law and work, he doesn't call people, you know, that they're that are billionaires and or I haven't seen it. I've known a, you know, u hundreds and hundreds of people who follow Torah, but none that were filthy rich. No. Yeah, I I totally understand that. Totally agree. But as I'm looking at this verse, I couldn't help but see almost an equation here. He's chosen the poor to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. So what what is the natural implication of that verse for me? I go, okay, if you're if if you're going to be rich in faith, you can't be rich in the world. Is that what it's saying? You also have poor in spirit. Yeah. Poor in spirit.

But I that's what I that's what I see when I read verses like this. You know, if you're going to be rich in this world, can you be rich in faith as well? Well, I don't know. Can you? Yes, we should examine that. Well, Job faith was his biggest issue. Faith in who he, you know, really knowing uh who Yehovah was. Look at Solomon. Solomon started out with an immense humility. Didn't end up well with him. Yeah. Right. So, I think we have to stop and consider these words a little bit more. Luke 6:20. Then he lifted up his eyes toward his disciples and said, "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God." So why are the poor blessed?

Notice he never said, "Blessed are you rich, for yours is the king." Why? I mean, he not only didn't say, "Blessed are you rich for yours is the kingdom of God." The spirit made a made a decision that this was in the Bible. He wanted us to know this. Blessed are you poor for yours is the kingdom of God. So I ask the question, why are the poor blessed? You keep reading. You keep studying this 1 Corinthians 1. For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. Hm. God has chosen the weak things of the world that no flesh should glory in his presence. And I think that's the tendency of man.

When we get rich, when we get wealthy, we get to a point as the scriptures say that my hands brought this. My character, my determination, my discipline, my, you know, my passion, my ambition all provided this for me. And that's what you tell people. That's what you go on circuits and become gurus to tell people. That's what you tell your children. when in fact God gives wealth. So to me the answer is clear. Why? Why are the poor chosen to be rich in faith? Well, because when you have nothing else to depend on, when you don't have money to lean on or Yeah. It makes you humble and it makes you more dependent on the father. Personal story. I was sent out on a mission team when I was 20, I don't know, 22 years old, 23 years old into a city where I knew

nobody. It was a new city to me. I didn't know anything about this city. And other believers were flown in from all around the nation to the same location to be a part of that mission team with me. I didn't know them. They didn't know me. We all lived together in the same house for a couple of months until we got, you know, on our feet. But that was a moment in my life when I didn't have money. I went to this mission field with $30 in my pocket. And so I didn't have wealth and and I felt very alone because I didn't know these people. But I can also tell you it was a time in my life where I felt like I was the closest to the father one of those times because when I

went out to pray, I felt like he was the only one who knew me. And that's that's the spirit of what I think I'm reading here in these scriptures about being poor. When you don't have anything else to depend on, then you depend on him. you lean on him so that no part of your flesh can glory in your condition. So I just wanted to toss that out. Yep. Okay. Okay. I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and not but are a synagogue of Satan. Let's talk about the synagogue of Satan here for a

moment. A lot of conjecture out there. A lot of people who want to toss around ideas. But here here he says those who claim to be Jews but are not. Okay.

What's going on? Well, if I was to interject my own two cents into that into that statement, not that I want to rewrite scripture just based on what I know from the word, I would rewrite it to be this. Those who claim to be Israel but are not. Okay? Not necessarily those who claim to be Jews or or or not. Remember who's talking here. We're talking about an apostle. We're talking about John. And why do I think this? Well, because by this time in history, the word Jew became synonymous with what you and I know as the true Israel of God, just as the word Christian has become synonymous with someone who is quote unquote born again in today's vernacular. They're kind of one and the same.

And we we know this because of a couple of verses. Here's one of them. Romans 2. For he is not a Jew who was one outwardly. What's he talking about there? No, he's talking about the believer. He's talking about the the Israel of God. The Jew who had come to faith in Christ. He is a Jew or Israel believer who is one inwardly. So what are we talking about here then? If that's the case, he's talking about people who claim to be believers, who claim to be a part of the Israel of God and are not. And Yeshua calls this a blasphemy. Those who claim to be believers, carry the monle of faith, call themselves Christians, go to church, but they are

not what they profess. Now, we've all seen this person. We've all known this person. Some of us may have been this person in the past, but these people were the tears. I think it ties to the parable of the tears. Well, where where do I read that before, Glenn? That's in the Bible. Yes. These are the tears. These are the people who look like, act like, talk like one of you guys, one of the faithful, but they're not. And I might call these people misguided or mistaken, but in reality they are a synagogue or a church of Satan and don't even know it. Planted by the ads. Yes. Planted by the adversary. Glenn number two and I were having dinner this week with David Baronson who was in town

for work. So the three of us went out to have dinner and we of course we talked about holy things. It was great. It was great. Had some good Chinese food. But you know, it dawned on me in that conversation that sometimes Yeshua has some pretty strong words to say about people or about situations. This being one of them. You know, we we remember from the gospels how he called Pharisees brood of vipers and snakes. And here he's talking about the synagogue of Satan. Some sometimes I think, and this might be a lesson for us, maybe not. This is just my opinion. We'll talk about it afterwards. Uh sometimes I think Yeshua has the right or the authority to say these things to people where I don't and I shouldn't.

Yeshua is saying that these people who call themselves believers but aren't aren't just misguided or mistaken. They are the church of Satan. He gets to say that. I should not walk into a group of people and say that. And that's just my two cents. You should be afraid to do that. Yeah. Yes. You don't want to be inviting persecution. You want it to come from your godly life, but not from the things that you say with an uncontrolled tongue. You think that's accurate, Glenn? Number two. Okay. Glenn number two says, "Amen." All right, let's continue. So, he says, "Don't do not fear. Do not fear

Chapter 3: Faith and suffering

any of those things that you're about to suffer because despite how many of how how you may already be feeling that Yehovah has left you, remember that the previous slide, despite you feel all that, well,

guess what? You're going to prison and some of you may die. I mean, thank you, Yeshua. I'm already feeling all these things." But he continues to tell us not to fear what's going to happen. You, some of you are going to prison. You're already having troubles. You're already broke. You're dealing with false believers, but you're also going to prison. And who is doing all this? God. No, the devil is. But what is the reason? Here again is perspective. I want to keep taking this back to perspective as it pertains to the Smyrna church.

The Bible says the devil is about to throw some of you into prison that you may be tested. Tested? Who's doing the testing? Satan? No. Yah is doing the testing. Satan's purpose is to create pain, confusion for a person daring to reject his ordered system. And by the way, that's what we do as believers in the way, followers of the way. We reject the ordered system of the evil one. That's what these believers were doing. And his purpose is to cause them pain and confusion. But Yehovah's purpose in that very same pain and confusion is to test. The question is, can you and I have this wisdom in the moment or do we get too caught up in the pain and the confusion?

It's important for us to have that clarity in the moment of our pain, in the moment of our confusion, because it is a test. Is Satan involved? Yep. But is the father also involved? Yes, he is testing us. Testing what? And here's a big one, guys. If you can be faithful even to death within this ordered system. Now, you and I being Americans and many of us never having lived or served outside the borders of the United States may not know exactly what it means to be faithful to the death within the ordered system of the world. And depending on your age, you may never have to be faced with this ever in the course of your life. But it's coming.

It's coming for some of us. Some of us will be alive when the day arrives that our life is put in in peril because of what we believe. People are dealing with this today in other countries. And he he being Yeshua is testing to see if you can be faithful like he did with Job. Just like he did with Job. Glenn number two says, let's talk about tribulation for a moment. John 16, these things I have spoken to you that in me you may have peace. Amen. In me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. That's a promise. Right. Amen. That's not you might. You will. So when it happens, it shouldn't really surprise us. We as believers are not immune from time and

chance in this world. We will have tribulation, but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world. Okay. When I read that, I had some questions. But first, in the context of John 16, the word world in the Greek cosmos refers to this present fallen system under the dominion of sin, opposition to God's satanic influence. Yeshua says he's overcome that, meaning he has resisted his temptations, stood against this hatred, its rejection, obeyed the father perfectly within a hostile world, and he would ultimately defeat Satan through the cross. Right? That's what it means when he says,"I have overcome the world." My question is, "Why am I supposed to be cheerful that he has overcome the world?" My wife is laughing at this question. But maybe it's just me, Glenn. Maybe I see things in the scripture sometimes that other

people don't see. But I have to ask the question, why? Why am I supposed to be cheerful that he has overcome the world? because we overcome the world through Christ. Okay. First John five. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. That's was what Glenn number two just said. And this is the victory that has overcome the world. Your faith. Who is he who overcame the world? But he who believes that Yeshua is the son of God. So you can see how all of this ties together, right? You can draw these lines from one thing to the next to the next and it always makes a perfect circle. And when you

break down things like this when you're looking at say at the church in Smyrna and you start asking these questions, man, you get a fuller picture. Yes, he's testing their faith.

Yes, they're going to have tribulation. Yes, we're going to be broke. Yes, we're going to be poor. Yes, Satan is involved. But it's all a test because why? Because he wants to give you the crown of life at the end of the day. That's the goal. He wants you to have the crown. Okay, let's talk briefly about this. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death. Gl number two. What's the second death? The second death is the death that is permanent. Okay. Overcomes. We have to overcome just like Christ overcame. To him who overcomes. That's in all of the messages to the churches. Yes. It is the second death. That's the lake of fire. The lake of fire. So I I thought we should take a moment just to touch on this.

I want you to see this image. This image is my creation because we learn in the scriptures that Yeshua when he comes is coming with fire. that every vision of Yeshua in his glory has has included fire and lightning. And the lake of fire, I like to romanticize this a little bit if you will. So bear with me. When I think of the lake of fire, I don't think that it's a lake of lava. I honestly think like it is depicted in this image that the fire that emanates from his presence kind of surrounds him like the trains of his robe. And we are all going to be exposed to it. All of us. The scriptures say we're going to be tested by fire. Those who pass the test continue to live. Those who fail the test experience the second death.

Let's talk about it for a moment. Isaiah 66.

Chapter 4: The second death

For behold, the Lord will come with fire and with his chariots like a whirlwind to render his anger with fury and rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword the Lord will judge all flesh. So here again we see that fire is a part of the judgment process. 1 Corinthians 3. If anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver or precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear. For the day will declare it because it will be revealed by fire. And the fire will test each one's work of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone is work is burned, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved. Yet so as through

fire. 2 Thessalonians 1. When the Lord Jesus is revealed from the heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Yeshua. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction. And the word from there is a is a not so awesome translation. The word is oppo or arto. And instead of from it really should say because of or by virtue of the presence of the lord. So if we read that it should say these shall be punished with everlasting destruction because of the presence of the Lord and because of the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power when he comes in that day. So there is something about his presence obviously that no man can stand

in front of no man who has not received his new body. Right? Only those who have received their new body can stand before him. Uh but I go into great detail on this in my lesson in hell uh fairy tales versus the Bible. So if you want to be a part of that or watch that deep dive, go back and check that. But when he says you will not be hurt by the second death, I believe it's because anyone who is not found written in the book of life, anyone who has not been faithful to him will be hurt by the second death, as Glenn

rightly stated, is the lake of fire that emanates from his presence. and they will go into it and experience a second death. I don't believe eternal damnation is for every non-believer.

I believe eternal damnation or eternal fire is reserved for Satan, the Antichrist, the false prophet, and those who take the mark. The rest experience a second death, and they're just gone. That's my two cents. If you want to argue that point, please argue that point in my lesson on hell and not necessarily this lesson. Okay, let's jump into Pergamum. Lynn, did you have anything to say to that in regard before we go to Pergamum?

Chapter 5: Church in Pergamos

I was going to just ask you and you know, we can talk about it tomorrow, but uh how do you tie the first part of Daniel 12 into Oh, that's yeah, that's a great question, but obviously we're not going to be able to do that here. Okay, Pergamum and the temple of Caesar. Let's look into this one here. First, high upon a hill, ancient Pergamum was a seat of political power, religious influence, and spiritual compromise. Known in revelation as the place where Satan's throne is. It houses the towering altar of Zeus and the imperial cult of Caesar worship. Both symbols of idolatry were enforced by the state. Pergamum or Pergamum depending on the translation that you have serves as a prophetic warning of

what happens when the assembly of believers becomes entangled with worldly authority, tolerating false doctrine, trading faithfulness for favor. It is a type of the compromised church blending with truth or blending truth with corruption at the highest places. Pergamum was not just pagan. It was the epicenter of imperial religion blending politics, healing cults, and idolatries. And we start here in Revelation 2 again where he says, "I know your works." Just like he said with Smyrna, he is aware. He's aware of them. I know your works and where you dwell. That's to me is another way of him saying, "I know how well you've done considering where you are." Right? If we were to put that in today's language, u which is awesome because again, it reminds us that Yeshua is very much aware of our conditions. In this case,

it's where Satan's throne is. Now, do you have anything to say? Do you have an opinion on this, Glenn? Number two, before we jump into this, well, I I' I've seen pictures of um the idol that was there and now it's somewhere else. Mhm. And it is very satanic looking. Okay. Okay. Uh, and um, you know, I'd just take it as where Satan's throne is, is where he's surrounded by people that really buy in to him, worship him, not necessarily in name, but um, that's what I take it. Okay. So, maybe metaphorical. Yeah. Meaning not as actual throne, but kind of what you're saying. Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Both. Okay. Both. There there's videos out there I'm bring I'm bringing this up for a purpose on Facebook on Tik Tok that

say they know where Satan's throne is according to Revelation 2. It's in Geneva. The same place where Antipas was martyed at the temple of Apolon. That's what these videos say. Is that the case? This is horse hockey. If you've seen those videos, just blow it off because it's horse hockey, as my grandma used to say. There's no biblical or historical record of any temple of Apollon existing anywhere. Look it up. You're not going to find a historical record of a place called the Temple of Apolon. Secondly, the Bible tells us that Antipas was martyed in Pergamum, which is now Bergama, Turkey, which is 1,500 miles from Geneva. Okay, so just a little side note here for some of you, when you see stuff like

this on YouTube, on Facebook, on Tik Tok, on Reddit, whatever, you just have to research it. you have to test it, right? So, if that's not the case, then the question is what does it mean? What does it mean that

Satan's throne is there? Well, the great altar of Zeus was there and it was a literal monument. Historical fact about that is Pergamum was home to a massive altar to Zeus the savior which sat high on the acropolis overlooking the city. The altar was 40t tall and shaped like a throne with steps leading up to it giving the visual appearance from the city of a great chair or throne. Let me show you that image again. This is an image of what um ancient the ancient city would have looked like. And from a distance, if you look up, it kind of

gave the look of a throne. But it was called Satan's throne. Not just because of the way it looked, but because of what was there. It was, as I said, it was kind of the epicenter of uh pagan worship, the center of emperor worship as it were. Pergamum was the first city in Asia Minor that was granted permission to build the temple dedicated to Augustus Caesar in 29 BC. It's made the official regional center of emperor worship and they demanded citizens to offer incense to Caesar and call him Lord which was obviously a direct challenge to the lordship of Yeshua. So that's what I think it means when he says where Satan's throne is. It was not a happy place to be. The phrase is

repeated in the same verse twice, possibly to emphasize that this is not just where Satan's influence is symbolically present, but where his influence is entrenched. I think it indicates an ongoing active oppos opposition to the truth, particularly targeting the faithful remnant like Antipas. Now, to Glenn's point, it was both allegorical and literal, or I should say metaphorical. And literal in that was there an actual throne there where Satan sat? No, I don't think that's the case. but because of its influence in pagan emperor worship and other things that it really was like that's where Satan spent most of his time and I think uh I think that's probably what it means for it to be you want to say something Glenn yeah the word Apolon means destroyer

and it is elsewhere uh used as a name for Satan Yep it is indeed it is okay. Let's move on.

Chapter 6: Doctrine of Balaam

The doctrine of Balaam. Revelation 2. I have a few things against you because you have there are those who hold to the doctrine of Balaam who taught Bailo to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit sexual immorality. Okay. Balaam's teaching and this is from my book and I apologize. I'm not trying to give uh you know make uh shameless plugs for my book. It's just that I've read I've written so much about this already that I thought let me just copy and paste instead of trying to you know say everything again. Balaam's teaching was an appeasement to the nation's practices to achieve his selfish goals. In other words, he did not mind bending or twisting the commands of God if it meant that he could satisfy his

selffocused ambitions. In Balaam's case, this included enticing the men of Israel to sin with female Bol worshippers in the act of se sexual immorality, which was their act of worship. So what am I saying in that paragraph? Well, this is where we have to step back, sit back and kind of apply this to ourselves. For Balaam, he had a goal in mind. He had things that he wanted to accomplish. He wanted certain blessings to come his way and he couldn't curse Israel and we know the story. And so instead of accomplishing his ends by cursing Israel and not being able to curse Israel, he kind of went through the back door, if you will, he kind of took a shortcut for him to get to his desired goals.

by causing Israel to worship Maul via sexual immorality with these other women. Okay? Took shortcuts. He ignored certain things. And that's a challenge for us because the word of God has some

very strict directions as it pertains to our lifestyle. Be it Shabbat or be it other things. And it's important for us that we don't ever take the time to entertain thoughts of how we get around such instruction. There is a verse in the New Testament, Galatians, that says God will not be mocked. You you if you do it, you won't get away with it. It won't happen. Listen again. So that's right. So how is Balaam's sin revealed in churches today? You have any thoughts on that, Glenn? Oh, the first one cames to mind is um the Joel Olstein uh gospel of prosperity.

Okay. Yeah, we see that a lot. The doctrine of Balaam is a theological principle of compromise under the guise of peace, relevance or gain. Modern churches can have can and have committed this sin in several ways. And let me just break that down. promoting moral compromise. They can teach false doctrines or tolerate false doctrines under the banner of unity and or tolerance. Looking at that statement, Glenn number two or my wife who was sitting there as it pertains to a church, have you seen the toleration of or the teaching of false doctrines under the banner of unity or tolerance? I I think when you said that of the uh alphabet folks, explain. GB Y. Oh. Oh, okay. Yeah, those alphabet folks. Okay. Yeah. Come just as you are. Yes.

Uh the LGBTQ uh and however many other letters they have, they are always welcome in a church, but sometimes they don't they're not challenged. They're not called to repent because they want to love. I see this all the time. I I saw it in my own congregations where certain things weren't said in in love. Of course, that's always a given. Anytime I talk about this kind of stuff, you should understand that we should always approach it with love to a person. Things were not said to a person as they should have been said because, oh gosh, you know, let's just love him or let's just keep the peace or, you know, uh, you're no better than he is. That's that's the worst one. I think brothers not challenging brothers or sisters not challenging sisters

because they're no better than the person that they want to challengees. Example, the sin of impurity or lust as expressed in pornography or the internet or whatever. One brother may struggle with that, but when he sees another brother struggling with it, he doesn't call him out. He doesn't get in his life. He doesn't teach because gosh, I'm guilty, too. Right now, that's just one issue. Extrapolate that out to every possible issue known to man. If we take that position, then nobody ever gets discipled. Nobody ever gets help through their sin because we're all guilty. We're just the blind leading the blind. No, that's not the truth. Even though I struggle with something, I need to help my brother who also struggles with it. In turn, that helps me overcome my struggles with it.

Again, a little deeper than I wanted to go here in this point, but promoting moral compromise happens in groups of believers. synchronism with the world systems allowing political ideology or nationalism to infiltrate and replace biblical faithfulness. Some years back before I left Babylon as it were, our churches were being infiltrated by things like Black Lives Matter and where there was complete unity between whites and blacks for 35 years. Now all of a sudden there was disunityity because this was allowed to come in and it was it was terrible and it had you know the brothers that brought it in all had good intentions. They all had good hearts but they didn't know the truth uh about a lot of things and then it end up dividing the church.

So this stuff happens even today. Compromise altering messages to avoid offense thereby securing donations growth in public favor. What do I mean by that? Gland number two where the preacher holds back. Yeah. Preacher holds back the teacher whoever whoever is the guy is the pastor, the preacher, the the teacher holds the truth back because they're afraid some people are going to get up

and walk out. Right? Whoever brings a brother back. Yes. Multitude of sins. Yes. But if you let it float. Yes. You're approving it. Yes. What does that say? Show me the incentive and I'll show you the outcome. Another point I made in my book because I saw this happening in so many different places. When your incentive is income, if I lose a hundred members,

that's a hundred donations. That's a hundred tithes. Call it whatever you want to. It's a 100 that's that's a certain amount of money that's no longer coming into the church week every week. Show me the incentive and I'll show you the outcome. You can apply that statement across the board in so many different ways. And you should, anytime you're dealing with situations like this, you should ask yourself, what's the incentive here? And if you can see the incentive, then you can see the outcome. And it just goes back all the way to the days of Pergamum. We're holding things back. We're we're tolerating things, accepting things for one reason or another, and Yeshua was calling it out.

Chapter 7: Thyatira and false prophecy

Okay, here we are. Thyatira to the angel of the church in Thyatira. Write these things say the son of God who has eyes like a flame of fire and his feet like fine brass. I know your works love, service, faith, and your patience. And as for your works, the last are more than the first. Nevertheless, there's that word again. Nevertheless, I have a few things against you because you allow that woman Jezebel who calls herself a prophetus to teach and seduce my servants to commit sexual morality and eat things sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent of her sexual morality and she did not repent. Indeed, I will cast her into a sick bed and those who commit adultery with her into

great tribulation unless they repent of their deeds. Now in the Greek that word isn't there. It's her. Which is an interesting thing, isn't it? Unless they repent of her deeds, which means what? They were doing her deeds, right? Or approving or approving of them. Yes. I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am he who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works. Now to you I say and to the rest 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 fast what you have till I come. And he who overcomes keeps my works to the end.

To him I will give power over the nations. He shall rule them with a rod of iron. They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessel. as I also have received from my father and I will give him the morning star. He who has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the churches. So, as I said, there's a lot here, but I wanted to start here. He says, "As for your works, the last are more than the first." But it's another way of saying meaning they were better, right? They've improved. They've improved. They've matured. They've gotten better at their obedience. Right? Which is an encouraging thing to hear from the Lord, right? I mean, which one of us wouldn't want to hear that uh from from Yeshua.

Meaning that where you are today is a lot better than where you were before you started. It was an acknowledgement that their deeds, their love, their service, their faith, their and patient endurance had increased over time. Unlike Ephesus which had declined in devotion, my attire was maturing in obedience. Yet, nevertheless, the spiritual growth was shadowed by a glaring contradiction. They tolerated that woman Jezebel. Though their outer works multiplied, their discernment had dulled. And that's tricky too because a lot of people can be overly focused on obedience to where they are missing certain things happening right under their noses. Which means we have to have balance in our life. You know, we've got to be balanced with obedience, love, faith, discernment, wisdom, understanding.

and and they weren't they were doing great when it comes to their obedience, but somehow while they were all focused on who's doing what and who's not doing what, this woman Jezebel snuck in and began to do what she did. So again, I asked this question, what does this look like in today's churches? False teaching is perhaps cloaked in sin. in spiritual language which tends to ease the conscience of the believers who may not know the difference. Maybe she held influence or charisma and challenging her could have meant risking division or persecution from within. Thus, the church that excelled in love and service failed in one essential point. They lack the courage to confront deception within their own camp. And again, I've seen this, as I'm sure,

Glenn, you probably have seen this in a body of believers where a certain teaching arises, has an origin somewhere in some man or some woman. And you know what? Now that I'm on this, let me just say this. As I look back at my own history in leading churches and confronted situations like this, it was always because of a man or a woman who quote unquote had their ministry. This was my ministry. Yes, I'm in your church, but it's my ministry, right? It's my little separate thing. Almost as if they had appointed themsel appointed themselves a subministry leader that I or nobody else appointed them to. You've seen this? Yeah. I I don't think that this woman uh that her literal name may have been

Jezebel. I think that's a reference to Ahab's wife who brought idolatry into Israel. Yeah. And which was her own ministry. Yeah. Exactly. I think you're absolutely right. No, I don't think that Jezebel lived in the church in Thyatira. I think it's the spirit of Jezebel that Yeshua is talking about in this individual or in this situation. I agree with you. But we've seen this, right? These self-appointed ministry leaders. And what does the scripture tell us about this person? Is Isabel Isabel Jezebel? She called herself a prophetus. Right. It was her ministry that was somehow separate and different from what was going on in She wants a personal following. That's right. She wanted a personal following. So that was going on. Or worse, maybe in the name of love and service. This talking about the church

again. Maybe in the name of love and service, they gave her a pass or just looked the other way. And I've seen this, too. Oh, yeah. I've seen brothers and sisters look the other way in the spirit of love when they shouldn't have, when they should have done something about it, said something about what was going on. When you don't do that, then that little issue, whatever it may be, grows into something big. And before you know it, you've got a submovement within the body of believers. Uh again, on another side note, let me just say this. This little thing that we have here on Zoom, we have anywhere from 30 to 60 people depending on the day of people showing up from all over the world.

This is not my group. This is not my church. I don't consider what's happening here, my church, to be my Ed Doss's church. Am I amongst the eklesia? Yeah, I do believe that. But I am not the gatekeeper of truth. In my older days, if someone said something that I didn't agree with, I would call it out on the spot and we would have it out right then and there until some of us somebody submitted. I've learned the folly in that approach because a lot of times I was the one that was wrong, but because I wanted to be the gatekeeper, I wouldn't allow myself to be wrong in my pride. Now, since the day that I realized that I was law wrong about the holy law of God for

35 years, that was such a humbling moment for me that I refuse to be dogmatic about anything that I thought I knew. And to that end, I will always listen to the things that you have to say. Even if I don't initially agree with it, I want to ponder it. I want to test it. Very rare will be the time where you will hear me actually challenge something that somebody says unless it's just so satanic or so off the reservation that it requires it. Right. But these people weren't doing that in the spirit of love. They were

looking the other way. Glenn number two. Yeah. I just wanted to point out that uh the sin of Jezebel is not very different than the sin of Balaam.

Well, yeah. I mean, that comes up too in his lessons to the churches or his letters to the churches. Yeah. So, she calls herself a prophetist to teach and seduced. There's two things here, two items that are worth discussion. And this will probably, I think, my last slide. The fact that she calls herself a prophetist, which we just briefly discussed. And two, the role of New Testament prophets as opposed to the Tanakh. It's a question that we have to answer because the New Testament says there will be prophets. How are they different from say Jeremiah or Ezekiel or Isaiah? Are they different? We're going to find out when we're talking when we're talking about prophets uh especially those in the Old Testament.

They were validated as we know by divine commissioning. It was a direct calling if you will, right? The first and most essential feature was a divine call initiated by Yehovah, not by the will of the prophet or the people. Again, why are we talking about this? Because this person, this Jezebel called herself a prophetist. We have to look at this. Is it even possible to be a prophetist in that day and in that time? So when we look historically, biblically, prophets were called divinely by the father and not by the will of the prophet. We have examples of this. Moses in Exodus 3 uh 3:es 4-12 where God called him from the midst of the bush. I will send you to Pharaoh. We have Isaiah

whom shall I send? Go and tell this people. There was interaction there. There was the father directly dealing with Moses, Isaiah. We see Jeremiah, before I formed you, I sanctified you. I ordained you as a prophet. Don't be afraid. I have put my words in your mouth. So, we see this over and over in the scripture. Ezekiel, son of man, I send you the children of Israel. You shall say to them, thus saith the Lord. Now those five words are the most dangerous words any human being could ever utter because if it doesn't turn out because if it's not the words of the Lord that you are uttering you are a false prophet. Amen. These men were given the authority to say, "Thus saith the Lord." Why?

Because they were just repeating everything that Yehovah just told them. Right. That's right. True prophets did not appoint themselves. The call was supernatural and clear often accompanied by visions, theophanes or the word of Yah coming directly to them. So what is the difference then between Old Testament prophets and New Testament prophets? Prophets in the Tanakh or prophets in the British. How do we know the difference? Well, let's look at this. The big old T on the left stands for Tanakh in case you were wondering. In the Old Testament, in the Tanakh, Yehovah spoke directly to prophets. Numbers 12. If there is a prophet among you, I the Lord make myself known to him in a vision. I speak to him in a dream. Not so with my servant Moses. I speak with him face to face. So

they functioned as direct spokesmen to Israel, often saying things like, "Thus saith the Lord." Now guys, we all have dreams. Right? Some dreams are more vivid than others. Some are more memorable than others. Sometimes we have a dream or a nightmare freaks us out in the middle of the night. We wake up, can't remember a thing about it. Right? Sometimes we do remember bits and pieces of it. We all have these things. When the scriptures tell us that the Lord spoke to these men in a dream, in a vision, this was like no dream or vision you've ever had, no dream or nightmare, I should say. Okay? When the Lord speaks to you in a vision or in a dream, it's lifealtering and it's something you don't wake up forgetting. So it's a little different.

We have to understand that. But that's what happened in the Tanakh. Yahovah spoke directly to the prophets in the British or the new New Testament. The revelation comes through the sun. Hebrews 1. God at various times and in places or sorry various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets has in these days spoken to us by his son. So here the writer of Hebrews is drawing a distinction between those days, those days being the Tanakh and these days now under the new covenant being that then it was through prophets now through his son. The word became flesh. The word that the that the prophets of old were speaking were the direct words of Yehovah.

But in Christ, those very words became flesh and dwelt among us. And he showed us how to walk, how to live, how to pray, how to serve. He was a visual physical example of what it means to follow instruction or follow Torah. So the question is what is the purpose of a new covenant prophet then? Because we see in scripture places like Ephesians 4 that these people still exist and he himself gave some to be apostles and some prophets, some pastors and some teachers. We see this in scripture. 1 Corinthians 12, God appointed these in the church. First apostles, second prophets. So now we have prophets showing up in the new covenant. So the question is what does that mean for them, right?

Fact is these prophets under the new covenant didn't receive new Torah. What do I mean by that? Well, number two, when Moses was receiving what he received, that was brand new Torah. That was brand new instruction that would eventually become the Torah for us, right? Written. But for him, it was new. That's not happening under the new covenant. Their purpose is primarily to exhort. Exhortation, edification, and comfort. 1 Corinthians 14. He who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. He who speaks in the tongue edifies himself. But he who prophesies edifies the church. So here we see in verses like this, the purpose of a modernday prophet has changed somewhat. Can this prophet, this new covenant prophet say the words, "Thus saith the Lord." Yes or no.

Only when he's quoting the Old Testament. That's right, Glenn. Number two, Neil. Yes, he can, but only if he's quoting directly from the scripture or she. Thank you. Prophetus. Do we have prophetesses in the scripture? Well, yes. What about Agabus, Anna, and John the Baptist? When you read your scripture, we see that all three of these people who were called prophets or prophetesses had some special abilities, didn't they, in their sight, in the things that they saw? Does that mean that New Testament prophets have that sight of seeing the future? Not necessarily. Why not? Well, I'm going to tell you why. Okay. Okay. I'm going to tell you why. What's going on? I see. I don't I don't believe my my personal point here is I don't

believe L number two and Joy that modern day prophets have the ability of foresight of sight of looking into the future as Agabus did, as Anna did, as John the Baptist did. I believe their purpose is to preach what is already written. Okay? And therefore, thus sayaith the Lord based on what is written. But we have to ask the question, what about Agabus and because they were in the new covenant. They're in scripture. They're in the book of Acts. They're in the Gospels. That's new covenant. What about them? Well, the answer is simple. These three functioned as prophets under the old covenant framework before the new covenant was ratified by the blood of Christ. And they continued to operate in that prophetic gift into the new covenant era making them transitional

transitional figures. Meaning what? They were bleedovers. Yeah. They were prophets in the true sense of a prophet before the death, burial, and resurrection. They lived through that time. So they were transitional prophets. Now with them that title, that ability, that gift died with them because we now had the son who was the final revelation of all prophecy, right? And of course, the word would follow

another exception. So that's it, guys. Uh that's half. We're we've gone through half of Thyatira. We're going to go through the other half in a second and in the next next week hopefully get through it all. But um man, what do you think? What are your thoughts? Number two, go ahead. Jump in there. Well, there's one exception to your list. Okay.

That was this guy that wrote the book of Revelations. John John the Apostle. Yes, he is definitely an exception. But even even he is transitional, right? because he was alive before, during, and after. Came way after. Yes, that's true. That's true. Okay, let's see, guys. Thoughts, questions? Um, I think uh Gordon had something he wanted to share before I shut him down. Cordon, did you want to say anything or No. Hey everyone, Shabbat shalom. Um I think one of the things that I wanted to kind of go back earlier and that's one of the things I wanted to say is I think when we were describing actually in uh permanent rich I think that can be defined based upon sometimes where we

are more often than what's going on like I know that basically like um like we have a brother uh we have a brother in Afghanistan and we have another brother in India and like the version of in America is actually very high considering those standards across all boards. So, you know, it's it's kind of hard for even say a homeless person to basically say, well, I'm poor when if there's like a food pantry nearby or if there's basically, you know, a soup kitchen as far as that goes or even library of actually going there reading books all day long and looking at Wi-Fi and other stuff and even like basically almost free cell phones and other stuff. I think it's it's it's hard to determine what is rich considering based upon the perspective of what one is. And you

know, I mean, I I'm grateful that I have a job and I'm certain that we all have jobs here, but it's just one of those things where it becomes one of those things of perspective at the end of the day. And I think often times, you know, I mean, we complain more about traveling on an airplane and uh about the fact that the Wi-Fi isn't working great and yet we're flying over 500,000 ft in the air complaining that the Wi-Fi isn't working the best of our specifications. So, I I I think it kind of says a lot about how we are as a society. And the other thing I wanted to just mention in Pergamum, there's no building for Peramin. In fact, I did some research one time and everyone says it's in

Geneva. The Germans um during Hitler's time actually moved a lot of the stones and everything of that nature from uh where Pergamin was and they put it in Berlin. And I sent you a uh a text message about that on your phone. It has a reference from the University of Chicago. So, it's not just basically a Wikipedia search or something. So that's my two cents. Thanks and thank you. Appreciate you. Okay, somebody else. Go ahead, Cynthia. Okay, first confession. Um, I married a Roman Catholic and I knew nothing of Roman Catholicism. Nothing. And as I began to learn it, I was shocked. And um I nobody wants to speak out against all the false teachings in Roman Catholicism. Everybody says, "Oh,

they're believers like us." And I I differ. I'm like, "You don't know what they believe." I'm sorry. Well, amen. Thank you. Thank you. I appreciate that your comment as always. Somebody else has to have a comment or a question after all that stuff. Uh, David, everybody, shabbat shalom. Um, sorry I was late, Ed. Um, I I think you were in the church where you were talking about how it was the self-appointed prophet Tess, right? Um, and and you started talking about this whole concept of people's their own ministry, right? Um, I don't think in itself there's anything wrong with having quote unquote your own ministry, right? I mean, that is uh, you know, having people with either specific gifts or people that identify a

specific need within the church uh, that they want to go and they want to serve uh, is absolutely, you know, acceptable and and, you know, you have deacons that perform that function. deacons. Um, I think that the the focus here was that she was enticing them and seducing them to sexual immorality. Right. Right. So, I think it's it's really more the purpose of what that quote unquote little ministry is versus uh just the whole concept of like this own little uh subivi subdivision within the church, right? Uh, I know that we probably could have been and I'm sure we were accused of having our own quote unquote little ministry and that's what we saw it as actually. It was to some extent our ministry of uh

sharing with people the things that we've been learning and sharing with things with people uh or sharing with people the things uh regarding the Old Testament uh that we were learning and the things that we believed in. right now. Some that was contrary to what the uh general church was teaching and and therefore we were kind of you know shown the door. Uh so yeah, so all that to say I think that that you know this whole concept of a a separate little ministry or servant within a group is not uh non-biblical. It's more what is the purpose and whether it is uh promoting and trying to strengthen and edify and build up the church versus uh promoting sin. Yep. Amen, David. And I completely agree with you. Thank you for sharing that little oversight of mine. Yeah. I didn't mean to I didn't mean by any means to

say that you can't have a ministry within a group of people. Uh but as long as it is of God and edifying the people. Yeah, totally agree. Okay. Uh let's see. Paul and Lori. Oh, shabbat shalom everyone. Um this doesn't come from me, but um there's a series um put out by the daily bread ministries on the seven churches on Asia Minor and they go into it from a Christian standpoint. uh but it gives a lot of history to each town and it's it's each uh segment is about a half hour long and um I found it quite interesting to listen to uh one of the things that they were talking about was talking about the uh poor but yet rich

and um out of that one they sort of say it's um they're rich in their spirit as opposed to financial riches because the town was uh fairly poor and of course they were suffering tremendously but Um, we've watched that series a couple times now and um, I thought it'd be a benefit for everyone from a historical standpoint to have a little bit of a background to these churches as we go through them. Yeah. Amen. And by the way, bro, if you've got a link or something that you can post in chat uh, or or some instruction on how people can watch that. Um, yeah, I I tossed around the idea of giving you guys tons of historical background about each city,

but my lessons were already really long and I didn't want to uh I didn't want to make them go too too crazy long, but thank you Paul and Lori for that. Okay, Luke. Hey, Ed. Shabbat shalom. Um, poor but rich in spirit. Um, you know, I came to the foot of the cross five years ago and I basically lost everything that I that I had uh in that time. Uh, and I'm not sure why, but I guess the Lord was humbling me. I'm not I I I I I don't have an answer, but I have never gone without a meal unless I'm fasting. All my bills are paid. I got two cents in the bank. But I feel so blessed because I rely strictly on

him from the moment I wake up to the moment I put my head on that pillow. praying three times a day in the morning, lunch, and at night before I go to bed. It It amazes me how he provides for me. I have not made a single inquiry about work in these five years, but yet my phone rings. people I've never met that are friends of friends that I've done work for and it just I mean I'm booked out for the next three months right now and it just amazes me how he provides. So I just I just Go ahead. No, I was just going to say that's a that's a that's a great fulfillment of Yeshua's promise in Matthew 6 if you seek him with all of your heart that all these things will be

taken care of. And that's that's there's there's a lot of truth to that. If you can trust in his words, his promise, then that is definitely the case. And you don't have to have um a deep bank account to feel blessed. So yes, I thank you so much for that, Luke. Okay. Um, anybody else here before we call it a day? I was just gonna uh comment on Luke share uh you know the you know your the spirit of the 23rd Psalm is exactly that. We have everything we need including uh God's mercy. Amen. Amen. Uh, listen real quick just before I sign off here. Some of you have reached out to me and said, "Hey, how do I um how do I send money or help to brother ASF and his endeavors in um in

Pakistan? Um, it's it's real simple. I use uh Western Union. It's the simplest way for me at least. There's an app you can download. uh I can provide you with his credentials. Um so if you wanted to send something to him or I think the garrisons can too, they they u they're they're they're sending things to uh to ASF as well. Um super simple. I was hoping to have an easier platform set up on uh the website, but that's not been able to happen for a lot of different reasons. But um next week we'll finish Thyatira and go into the other churches. Hopefully we'll finish up next week. And uh as always if you guys have ideas, thoughts, questions about things you want to look at, teach, study, discuss, let me know. I have a long running list. Glenn number two says he's got an idea that he's going to

share with me tomorrow morning when we have breakfast together. Uh so I'm looking forward to that. Uh guys, have a fantastic weekend and a peaceful Shabbat and uh we'll talk to you next time. Thank you guys. Have a great week. Thank you very much. Thank you Shalom family. Thank you very much everyone.