

Revelation

Chapter 2:12-17

The Church at Pergamum

Revelation 2:12-17

12 “And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write:

The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this:

Revelation 2:12-17

13 'I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

Revelation 2:12-17

¹⁴ But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit *acts of immorality*.

Revelation 2:12-17

15 So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

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¹⁶ Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.

Revelation 2:12-17

¹⁷ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give *some* of the hidden manna,

Outline of Scripture

Genesis 1-11 – Creation, Sin, Nations

Genesis 12-50 – Birth of Israel

Exodus-Malachi – Messiah is Coming

(**Gospels**) Matthew-John – Messiah is Here

(**History**) Acts – Church Age/Messiah Revealed

(**Epistles**) – Doctrine/practice how we are to live

Revelation – The Conclusion of all things

Revelation Review

Title: Apocalypse – the unveiling

Blessing: Revelation 1:3

Outline: Revelation 1:19

Four Levels of Application

1. Local: Actual churches in John's day with
The actual problems described
2. Universal (correction): “to the churches”
3. Personal (homiletic): 'he that hath an ear”
4. Prophetic: lays out church history

Seven Letters - Structure

1. Name of the church
2. Title Jesus Uses
3. Commendation – what’s good
4. Concern – what’s bad
5. Exhortation – what to do
6. Promise to the Overcomer - unique
7. “He that hath an ear, let him hear”

Name of Church	Title of Christ	Represents	Commendation (Good News)	Condemnation (Bad News)	Exhortation (what to correct)	Promise to the Overcomer	The Closing
Ephesus (Desired One)	Jesus as High-priest	Apostolic (Pentecost-100 AD)	Works, patience, righteousness	Left first love	Repent/turn from it	Eat from Tree of Life	“He who hath an ear”
Smyrna (myrrh-death)	The eternal one	Persecuted (100-313 AD)	I know your works, persecution, poverty	none	remain faithful	no second death	
Pergamos (mixed marriage)	Bringer of truth	Unequally yoked (314-590 AD)	Kept the faith	Doctrine of Balaam and Nicolaitans	Repent/turn from it	Eat hidden manna, white stone, new name	
Thyatira (Continual labor/sacrifice)	The Judge	Medieval Church (590-1517 AD)	Good works, love, service, faith, patience	will go into tribulation	Repent/turn from it	Power over nations, rule with Christ	
Sardis (remnant)	Omniscient One	Reformation Church (1517-1700)	None	You are dead	Be watchful, strengthen, repent	Name not blotted out, confess before my Father	
Philadelphia (Brotherly Love)	Holy and true One	Missionary Church (1700-1900 AD)	Openly confess the Word and the Incarnation	none	None/hold fast	pillar in temple, new name, kept from tribulation	
Laodoea (Rule of the People)	Faithful and true witness	End-times Church (1900-today)	None	Lukewarm, wretched, naked, poor, blind	Be zealous, repent	Sit with me on my throne	

First Two Churches

Church One: **Ephesus**
(Desired One) – Lost First Love

Church Two: **Smyrna**
(Myrrh): suffering/death
persecuted church

First Two Churches

Church One: **Ephesus**

Repent/Return – Eat Tree of Life

Church Two: **Smyrna**

No Condemnation - -no 2nd death

First Two Churches

Ephesus: Apostolic Church
(A.D. 33-100)

Smyrna: the Persecuted Church
(A.D. 100 – 313)

Revelation Review

- Ephesus:** good on doctrine, good on works
BUT lost their “first love” (worship not just works)
- Smyrna:** 'myrrh' (death) – nothing negative
said about them. The church closest to
Jesus is suffering
- Pergamos:** City of the serpent

Revelation Review

Ephesus: great political center

Smyrna: great commercial center

Pergamum: great religious center

Third Church

Pergamos: Church Joined to the
World
(A.D. 314-590)

Revelation 2:12-17

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The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this:



TURKEY

- PERGAMOS
- THYATIRE
- SARDIS
- PHILADELPHIA
- SMYRNA
- EPHESUS
- LAODICEA

- Edirne
- Istanbul
- Gebze
- Kocaeli (İzmit)
- Sakarya (Adapazarı)
- Ereğli
- Bursa
- Çanakkale
- Samsun
- Çorum
- Sivas
- Kayseri
- Konya
- Antalya
- Adana
- İçel (Mersin)
- Ceyhan
- Gaziantep
- Malatya
- Elazığ
- Şanlıurfa
- İskenderun
- Antioch

GREECE

GREECE

Mediterranean Sea

CYPRUS

The Seven Churches of Revelation



Macedonia

Galatia

Greece

Asia Minor

Corinth

Antioch

Patmos

Pergamum

Thyatira

Sardis

Smyrna

Philadelphia

Ephesus

Laodicea

Cyprus

Byblos

Sidon

Tyre

Nazareth

Mediterranean Sea

Crete

Jerusalem

Bethlehem

Alexandria

Pergamos

Per: mixed/objectionable

Magos: marriage (spiritual harlotry)

ALSO: '**pergo**' (from the word Pergamos), means the heights
(Satan's throne)

The City of Pergamos

- Satan loves the high places – trying to counterfeit the Lord God (Psalm 78:69)
- Took Jesus to a high mountain to show Him all the kingdoms of the Earth (Matt. 4:8)
- Tried to ascend to “the heights” of God’s throne (Isaiah 14:13)
- Corrupted Israel with the “high places” (Psalm 78:58)

Pagan Influences

Altar of Zeus, the father of the gods (Satan)
Shrines of Apollo the sun-god, Aphrodite
(goddess of love), Aesculapius the god of
medicine, Cybele the Phrygian nature
goddess.

At the Agora were statues of Poseidon the
sea-god, and Demeter the goddess of corn.

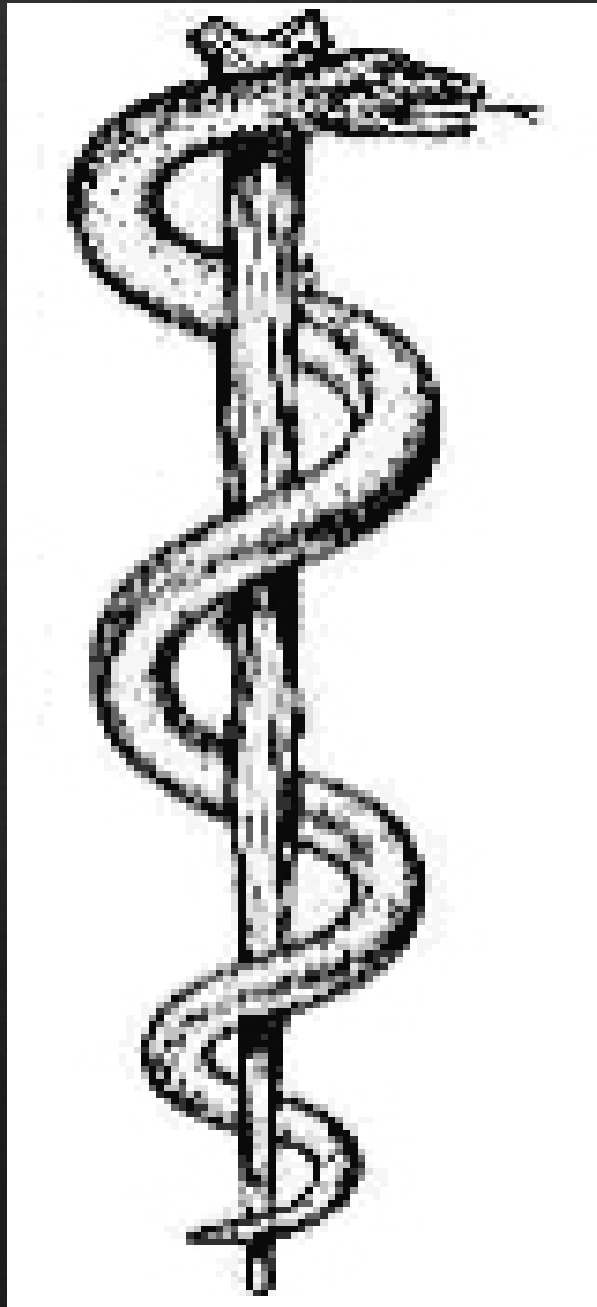
The City of Pergamos

Modern city in Turkey = 'Bergama'
Pop. 50,000 – ancient times 200,000

The City of Pergamos

Lower city

Temple of **Aesculapius**, the god of healing – had the power over death (Satan's lie – you surely shall not die) counterfeited by Satan from **Numbers 21** (2 Kgs 18:3-4; John 3:14-15)







CADUCEUS

VS.

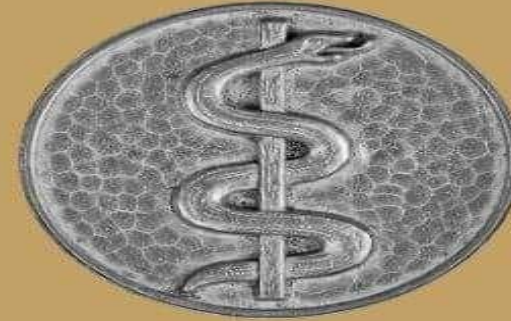
ROD OF ASCLEPIUS



The Caduceus is the traditional emblem of the Greek god Hermes, messenger to the gods (equivalent to Roman Mercury). He is the patron of thieves, merchants and travelers.

The Caduceus features two snakes entwined around a staff with wings.

The symbol represents Hermes, fertility, rebirth, rejuvenation, harmony and balance.



The Rod of Asclepius is the symbol of Asclepius, the Greco-Roman god of healing and medicine.

This is the correct symbol of medicine, featuring a single snake wrapped around a staff.

The staff may symbolize authority and the snake symbolizes rebirth, healing and rejuvenation.

2 Kings 18:1-4

2Ki 18:1-4 In the third year of Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel, Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, king of Judah, began to reign. He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years in

2 Kings 18:1-4

Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abi the daughter of Zechariah. And he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done. He removed the

2 Kings 18:1-4

high places and broke the pillars and cut down the Asherah. And he broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it (it was called Nehushtan).

John 3:14-15

And *as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness*, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

The City of Pergamos

Lower city

Spring-fed bathes for healing (water of life – inhabitants constantly pursued health)

Luxurious and indulgent city

“Wealth is useless without your health” (Bill Gates)

The City of Pergamos

Upper City – 4 Temples on top

Zeus – the chief god (Satan)

Athena – (Athens) Zeus daughter;
goddess of wisdom, war.

Dionysus: goddess of wine, fertility,
religious ecstasy.

The City of Pergamos

Upper City – 4 Temples

(4) Temple for Emperor worship

The Church of Pergamos

Church that is mixed with the world (the compromise of truth).
Ephesus had lost its first love,
Smyrna suffered from internal and external persecution – yet both

The Church of Pergamos

churches maintained their **doctrinal integrity** and lived it out. Pergamos is different: corrupted internally by **false teaching**. (compromised w/ the world's values).

False Teaching in the Church Today

False Doctrines in The Church today

- **Evolution** (you are your own god, doubting God's Word from Gen. 1 and following)
- **Hyper-grace**: Don't condemn sin – It's offensive/legalistic (Lk 17:3; 1 Tim. 5:20)
- **Ecumenical Movement**: Unity is more important than doctrine (2 Tim. 4:3-4)

False Teaching in the Church Today

- **Social Gospel:** we should work with anyone “pro-family” or “pro-life” (2 Cor. 6:14-17)
- **Headship:** Female Pastors/teachers over men [not enough men] (1 Tim. 2:12; 1 Tim. 3:2)
- **Prosperity Gospel:** God wants his children to be financially prosperous (Mt. 6:19-20; 8:20; Lk 18:22). If you have enough faith God will give you whatever you ask (James 4:3; 1 Jn. 5:14)

False Teaching in the Church Today

- **Syncretism:** Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, 7th Day Adventists, Roman Catholics - the belief that all these are members of legitimate Christian churches. (Rev. 22:18)
- **Universal reconciliation, scripture/relevant, no hell, deification man, planet-worship**

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The Sharp Two-Edged Sword

Eph 6:17 - “the Word of God”

Gen. 1:3 - God created all life and all matter with the spoken word

Gen. 11:7 - The word (language) was used by God as judgment at Babel (confusion)

Sharp Two-Edged Sword

Isaiah 49:2 – He made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow; in his quiver he hid me away.

Sharp Two-Edged Sword

John 1:1-3 – Jesus Christ - the
living Word

Hebrews 4:12 – Living/active

Two-Edged Sword

His Word **Stands Forever:**

(Matthew 24:35; 1 Peter 1:25;
Isaiah 40:8)

The symbol of the Roman
proconsul was a sword (peace
thru strength)

It's more important God's people
fear (respect) His sword rather
than man's

Revelation 2:12-17

13 'I know where you dwell,
where Satan's throne is; and you hold
fast My name, and did not deny My
faith even in the days of Antipas,
My witness, My faithful one, who was
killed among you, where Satan dwells.

Where Satan's Throne Is

(1) **Babylon**: Nimrod – first world dictator (Bab-el: Mystery Religions – Rev. 17)

When Cyrus conquered Babylon the priests of the “Mystery Religion” migrated

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Where Satan's Throne Is

(2) **Tyre**: Ezekiel 28:11-19 (some of the strongest prophetic condemnations in Bible for Pride, sexual sins, idolatry)

(3) **Pergamos**: Revelation 2:13

Where Satan's Throne Is

- (4) Later migrates to Rome
- (5) Berlin, Germany

Where is his throne now?

It will return to **Babylon** in the tribulation (Zechariah 5:5-11)

Satan is called the “god of this world”
(2 Cor. 4:4),

“prince of this world” (Ephesians 2:2), and

the “ruler of this world” (John 12:31).

Demons are not omnipresent. They have locality, areas of responsibility, rank in power.

Demons confined to river Euphrates

Daniel 10 – they are territorial

Job – under restriction - accountability

Demoniac at Gadara



Altar of Pergamos

The altar is 125 ft. by 115 ft. and is 50 feet tall. Altar of Zeus, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Located 800 feet above the plain and towered over the 'lower' city of Pergamos.

Where Satan's Throne Is

Currently in Museum Island in Berlin:
Discovered in Turkey by the German
archaeologist Carl Humann circa
1880. Adolf Hitler ordered it taken
down brick by brick and moved to
Berlin in the 1930's.





Where Satan's Throne Is

The Pergamon altar served as the inspiration of Albert Speer for the Nuremberg stadium used by Adolf Hitler and the Nazis. It also served as part of the design for Vladimir Lenin's tomb in Red Square.



Where Satan's Throne Is

Barrack Obama was so impressed by the altar when he visited Germany that he had a copy made for his DNC Acceptance Speech in 2008 in Denver, Co. (Barrack Obama/Joe Biden).



Satan's Throne

President Erdogan in Turkey wants it back – the Christians in Berlin continually pray he gets it back. (I don't believe his throne resides in Berlin any longer however.)

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Who is Balaam

Not a Jew

- 1) soothsayer – Joshua 13:22
- 2) from Mesopotamia – Deut. 23:4-5
- 3) from Euphrates (modern Iraq – Babylon)
– Num. 22:5; 23:7

Balak – King of Moab, hires Balaam to come and curse Israel.

Teaching Balaam

Balaam asks God's permission –

God says DON'T go

Eventually goes – famous Balaam's
donkey scene

Refuses to curse Israel but tells Balak
how to corrupt Israel (so God curses)

Teaching Balaam

- 1) the “**doctrine**” of Balaam”: mixed marriage, sexual immorality (**Rev. 2:14**)
- 2) the “**way**” of Balaam: sold his gift for money (used God's gift for self) (**2 Peter 2:15**)
- 3) the “**error**” of Balaam: give up eternal treasure for temporary gain (**Jude 11**)

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15 So you also have some who
in the same way hold the
teaching of the Nicolaitans.

Nicolaitans

Rev. 2:6 – “works” of the Nicolaitans, now in Pergamos, “teaching” (doctrine) of the Nicolaitans.

Nicolaitans

This issue is a demonic structure within the church which actually creates barriers to God's people drawing closer to Him and growing in intimacy. It is a method of keeping people who desire a deeper spiritual relationship with God merely dependent on other human beings.

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Revelation 2:12-17

and I will give him a **white stone**, and a **new name** written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.'

Who Are the Overcomers

1 John 5:4-5 – “For whoever has been born of God **overcomes** the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world: our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but the one who believes that Jesus is *the Son of God*?”

Marks of a True Church

Ephesus: Love for God, the brethren
and the lost

Smyrna: bearing up under
persecution/suffering for His name

Pergamum: separation from sin/false
doctrine/the world

Ten historical periods of persecution under future Roman Emperors

- 54-68 Nero (Paul beheaded; Peter crucified upside-down)
- 95-96 **Domitian (John exiled)**
- 104-117 Trajan (Ignatius burned at the stake)
- 161-180 Marcus Aurelius (Polycarp martyred)
- 200-211 Septimus Severus (killed Irenaeus)
- 235-237 Maximinus (killed Ursula and Hippolytus)
- 249-251 Decius
- 257-260 Valerian
- 270-275 Aurelian
- 303-313 **Diocletian (Worst of all)**

Ten historical periods of persecution under future Roman Emperors

313 AD – Constantine: Moved capital of empire from Rome to Byzantium (Constantinople/Istanbul). He issued Edict of Milan (religious toleration), ordered the Nicaea Council, worship on Sunday's, no work for slaves