

CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE STUDY
LESSON 586

Revelation
Lesson # 6

Intro

- **How should people outside the church see those inside the church?**
- **What does it mean to compromise?**
- **What do these 2 questions have to do with our witness?**

1. *Who is Chapter 2. 12-17 written to?*

• **The Angel of the Church at Pergamum?**



What can you find out about Pergamum at the time of this letter?

- Pergamum → RSV & ASV
- Pergamum → Neuter form of the name
- Pergamos → The Authorized Version
- Pergamos → The feminine form of the word
- In the ancient world – known by both
- Pergamum was the most common

What can you find out about Pergamum at the time of this letter?

- **Not on any main roads**
- **Historically the greatest city of Asia**
- **Pergamum had been the capital for 400 + years [since 282 BC]**
- **Built on a tall conical hill – dominated the valley**
- **From the top the Mediterranean Sea could be seen 15 miles away**

What can you find out about Pergamum at the time of this letter?

- **Not a great commercial city like Ephesus/Smyrna**
- **Library held 200,000 parchment rolls**
- **2nd only to library of Alexandria**
- **A great religious center of world**
- **Held 2 famous shrines**
- **Said to be the place of “Satan’s Seat”**

What can you find out about Pergamum at the time of this letter?

- **Center of Caesar's worship in Asia**
- **Pergamum →**
- **Perg = same root word for perjury – lying / mixing up**
- **Gamum = or amos –tied to word marriage**
- **From it we get the same root word for bigamy & polygamy & monogamy**
- **ERGO – Pergamum = mixed marriage**
- **On the outside – seen as OK – inside mixed - compromise**

3. *What is said of who the letter is from?*

- **“These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword. ¹³ I know where you live—where Satan has his throne.”**
- **A double edge sword cuts both ways**
- **There is judgement for the unbeliever AND the believer**
- **Does this mean we lose our salvation?**
- **Not necessarily – but lose our effective witness**

3. *What is said of who the letter is from?*

- **“These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword. ¹³ I know where you live—where Satan has his throne.”**
- **A double edge sword cuts both ways**
- **In Roman Gov't – Roman Goverenors were divided into 2 groups – those with right of the sword and those not**
- **Having the right of the sword gave them the power of life and death**

In Revelation 2. 8-13 - Satan is mentioned twice - what is said and what do they infer?

- **“¹³ I know where you live—where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, not even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city—where Satan lives.”**
- **Satan is not omnipresent – everywhere at one time**
- **Job 1. 7 & 2. 2**
 - **“The LORD said to Satan, “Where have you come from?” Satan answered the LORD, “From roaming throughout the earth, going back and forth on it.”**
- **He can travel fast, but not be everywhere at once**
- **Zeus is considered the greatest of all Greek & Roman gods & his main temple is in Pergamum**

6. *See what you can find out about Antipas [vsv13]*

- **Antipas**
- **Put to death – crime = being a Christian**
- **He was lost in history, but Jesus remembered his name**
- **Will He not also remember ours?**

What was the charge against Pergamum?

- **“¹⁴ Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: There are some among you who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin so that they ate food sacrificed to idols and committed sexual immorality. ¹⁵ Likewise, you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.”**
- **“You have people...” – not everyone**
- Jesus references the Old Testament story of Balaam and Balak
- The text says these guys caused the Israelites to sin by "eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality".

8. Read thru Numbers 22-24 – Who were

- **Balak was the king of the Moabites (Numbers 22. 4)**
- **Balaam was an independent, non-Jewish "wizard for hire"**
- **He had the power to bless or curse people with his words**
- **His power must have been legitimate or else King Balak wouldn't have hired this guy in the first place**
- **Balaam had the power to "channel God" and repeat His words**
- **He would bless the Nation of Israel even though King Balak wanted him to curse the Israelites**
- **The story of Balak and Balaam is told in Numbers 22 - 24**

9. What was the problem – concerning Balak and Balaam - in Pergamum?
- In this story the Israelites, who were in the millions, left Egypt and are now wandering through the desert
 - King Balak is the leader of a nation of Moabites
 - With so many Israelites approaching his territory, this was a threat
 - As opposed to raising an army, it would be cheaper and save many lives if an effective "wizard" could curse them
 - King Balak offered big bucks to Balaam the wizard to curse the Israelites
 - The problem is Balaam knew his source of power came from God
 - He didn't want to kill the goose that laid the golden eggs, so no matter how much money King Balak offered him, Balaam only spoke whatever God said to speak

9. What was the problem – concerning Balak and Balaam - in Pergamum?
- Balaam gave separate speeches reiterating what God said to him and blessed the nation of Israel
 - After the first blessing, King Balak offered this guy more money to change his mind - That didn't work
 - After the second blessing, King Balak offered him even more money - That didn't work
 - Balaam understood the source of his power, and wouldn't jeopardize that power for any amount of money

9. What was the problem – concerning Balak and Balaam - in Pergamum?
- The key plot point that ties to Revelation:
 - Balaam gave three speeches praising and blessing the Nation of Israel in Numbers Chapters 22-24
 - The opening of Chapter 25 mentions Israelites taking Moabite women as wives and "before they knew it" - were worshipping the Moabite gods
 - Remember Balak was a Moabite king
 - What we don't discover until Numbers 31. 16 is that it was Balaam's idea to persuade the Moabites to put their pretty women out where the Israelite men could see them – it went downhill
 - Just because someone like Balaam is given a gift from God and even repeats God's words, he is not necessarily obedient to God's will!

9. What was the problem – concerning Balak and Balaam - in Pergamum?

- **The Scriptures did not say Balaam was reincarnated and is now living in the Pergamum Church**
- **Jesus said that the same type of teaching that Balaam did, is going on, here in this church**
- **False teachings are being introduced and mixed with truth**
- **Christians have to have a balance of love for each other - but at the same time, have zero tolerance for false teaching**
- **Sin cannot be tolerated in the church – It's not about being perfect**
- **It is about confessing sins when they are committed and helping each other live more like Jesus**
- **That is how to avoid compromise in the church**

10. *What is said in verse 16 and what are the implications for the church at Pergamum?*

- **“Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.”**
- **“them...”**
- **Jesus says He will fight “them”**
- **Jesus' children or “sheep” - Jesus is the Good Shepherd that protects His flock (John 10. 11 & 10. 14)**

11. *What do the following say that might help us understand verse 16*

- **Hebrews 4. 12 –**

- **“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”**

- **Ephesians 6. 17 –**

- **“Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”**

- **Acts 4. 12 –**

- **“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.””**

12. *This section ends with 2 promises – what are they*

- **“Hidden manna” –**
- **A jar of manna was placed in the Ark** Exodus 16. 33
- **What does Exodus 16. 11-15 add to this –**
- **When the Israelites had no food – God provided**
- **The memory of manna was carried forward**
- **What does John 6. 31-35 add –**
- **“Jesus said, I am the bread of life...”**
- **We even carry it into our Sacrament of communion**

“a white stone with a new name on it” –

- What does Revelation 3. 5 add –

- **“The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels.”**

- be dressed in white rainment

- What does Revelation 7. 9 add –

- **“After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.”**

- be dressed in white robes

“a white stone with a new name on it” –

- What does Revelation 19.8 add –
 - **“For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.”**
- **be dressed in white linens**
- What does Revelation 20. 11 add –
 - **“Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. ”**
- **Great white throne of God**

“a white stone with a new name on it” –

- **What does Revelation 3. 12 add –**

- **“The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name.”**

- **New Jerusalem**

- **What does Revelation 5. 9 add –**

- **“And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.”**

- **The new song**

“a white stone with a new name on it” –

- **Could be man**
- **The Risen Christ is promising His faithful → all things new – with the purity of heaven**
- **The white stone = man recreated in God’s image**
- **Could be man receiving a new name**
- **Abram → Abraham**
- **Saul → Paul**
- **Jacob → Israel**
- **New name = new status**

13. So – what was the compromise in Pergamum?

- **False Teaching**
- **Like Ephesus – lost their first love**
- **Jesus**