

*Pergamos – Men Conquer and Rule*

The Seat of Satan...

Before we examine what Yahushua had to say about the assembly, or “church” that would serve as the “seat of Satan,” please remember that these open letters should be analyzed the same way we reviewed Genesis one. Three perspectives are evident in the one account.

First, there is the obvious historical context. Seven actual assemblies, located within a relatively short distance of each other, all in the Roman province of Asia, in today’s western Turkey, displayed seven different spiritual profiles. By cracking open our history books we will discover why these specific, and otherwise insignificant, assemblies were called out for examination.

Second, as with all of Yahuweh’s prophecies, there are important lessons for every local *ekklesia*, and indeed every called-out individual. The conditions praised and scorned coexist side by side. We can scrutinize our lives in the light of these letters, to assess whether *we* are being commended or chastised.

Third, there is a prophetic element. Each assembly represents a broad period of church history. Yahushua’s commentary presents their most salient manifestations, good and bad, over the course of the past 2,000 years. However, there are echoes of each of these assemblies in evidence simultaneously throughout the age, just as there were in John’s day.

As we discovered in the last chapter, we can date the Smyrna era precisely because it speaks of “ten days” of persecution, a condition that began under Nero in 67 CE and culminated under Diocletian in 303 CE. The Pergamos chapter begins nine years later with the emergence of General Constantine in 312 CE. Yahuweh is crediting him with establishing a hierarchal religion that would serve as the seat of Satan’s influence.

Pergamos was forty-five miles north of Smyrna. It was the Sin City of its day—one of the most religious places on earth. The people were known as “the

temple-keepers of Asia.” The largest shrine belonged to the Grecian sun idol Zeus, but the city was acclaimed for being the headquarters of the serpent god, Asklepios. I suspect they recognized that the sungod and the serpent represented the same spirit, but they might not have known that they both were *kleptos*—Greek, for “those who steal men’s souls.”

In this religious haven, the favorite spirit of the people was Bacchus, the Greek god of carousing, drinking and orgies. Bacchus modeled many of Osiris’ traits who was in turn based upon the sungods Adonis, Ba’al, Bel, and Tamuz, digressing in time from the Egyptians to the Phoenicians, Assyrians and Babylonians. Satan has always found it handy to change his names and disguises. It’s easier and more beguiling than changing his nature. Today, Catholics commemorate the Babylonian pagan rite of Lent, by celebrating the Bacchanalia under its new name “Mardi Gras.” Lent itself is based upon the Babylonian practice of weeping for Tammuz—the Son of the Sun.

As we shall see as we journey into the Messiah’s letter, the initial doctrines of Roman Catholicism become clearly evident in Yahushua’s words. Moreover, from this point on, the Roman Catholic Church began to live up to its name, becoming “Universal.” They became by default, the only possible candidate for God’s scathing indictment. By the time Constantine had finished converting Mithraism—the violent and politicized sungod religion—into Christianity, there were no other significant churches to kick around.

Alright, now that we are more cognizant of who Yahushua must be talking about, it time to recall an old enemy. Remember the Nicolaitanes, those whom the Ephesus Assembly kept at bay? Well, the Pergamosians wasn’t so conscientious. They not only ignored Yahuweh’s advice, failing to expose and condemn them and their false doctrines, they accepted and endorsed their spirit of universalism. The “church” was poisoned with false teaching (corrupting the mind), sexual immorality (corrupting the body) and Gnosticism (corrupting the soul). The Nicolaitane’s hierarchal class of clerics became commonplace. Even their names—popes, cardinals, priests, monks, and nuns—and their costumes—black, white, and red robes and hats—were borrowed from a pagan past. These politicized clerics used religion and politics to rule over the populous. While these concepts were born in the demonic cesspool of Babylon, Pergamos marked the place in which Yahuweh’s Called-Out Assembly was first poisoned by Satan’s caustic brew. The Babylonian deceptions Halal ben Shachar had so carefully concocted, seasoned, and stirred as his counterfeit religion would be amalgamated into Christendom courtesy of a demon possessed pagan sungod worshiper named Constantine during the Pergamosian era.

Yahuweh’s disdain for a politicized and hierarchal clergy is something about which most Christians remain unaware. The Nicolaitane doctrine that He will

again condemn in Pergamos literally means “to conquer and rule over the people.” Today, and for nearly 1,700 years, a clerical chain of command has formed the basis of Roman Catholicism. And it began during the Pergamos period.

In the apostolic era, all anointed leaders were elected through democratic process. Ordinary lay folk voted for other ordinary lay people using a system of black and white stones. Moreover, everyone who served had a job and earned a living doing something else. There were no full time clerics. The priesthood and pastors are a legacy of Roman Catholicism, who in turn borrowed the scheme from the Babylonians, Egyptians and Nicolaitans.

In the latter years of the Pergamos assembly, the Nicolaitanes made a successful bid to completely overthrow the laity. At the Roman Senate of 499 CE, twenty-five full time clerics signed in as Cardinals. Pope Symmachus, who was crowned as if he were king, endeavored to get rid of political opponents and lay siege to universal power by excluding the Senate and ordinary laymen from voting and holding office. He established a law that said only the clergy of Rome could elect a pope. In time, these men would claim absolute and supreme imperial power over everyone within their grasp. A council of bishops would declare the pope to be above mere mortals. The religious, political, intellectual, and economic oppression of the Dark Ages was the result.

The corruption of the Anointed Way began in earnest in 312 CE when the Roman General Constantine claimed to have seen a sign in the sky, motivating him to aspire to the imperial throne. Thus dawns the Universal Era of church history. The vision the general claimed to have seen was a fiery cross superimposed in front of the sun. He attests to hearing a voice cry out: “In this sign, conquer.” Ignorant of the symbolism, Catholics believe that this miraculous signal formed the basis of Constantine’s conversion to Christianity, leading to the birth of the Roman Catholic Church. Yet history confirms an entirely different conclusion. Constantine’s coinage continued to be emblazoned with crosses in honor of Mithras, the Unconquerable Sun (*Sol Invictus*). The voice was *Satanas Diabolos*.

As an interesting historic note, Constantine’s conversion occurred precisely 300 years before Satan would inspire Muhammad to lead Muslims in jihad against all mankind. Men of similar character (actually, lack thereof), one was to corrupt the message of Yahushua while the other was to repudiate it. One religion was for the confused, the other for the comatose. Both arose and thrive by oppression in milieus of ignorance and indoctrination. No informed rational person could possibly tolerate either.

And that is the lesson for us today, in this era in which evil has a Trinity. In addition to the religion of the confused (Catholicism) and comatose (Islam), we have a religion for conceited collectivists. The religion of man is known by many names: Communism, Socialism, Fascism, Secular Humanism, and the New World Order. It parades under the slogans: Human Rights, the Rights of Man, the Dignity of Man, Humanism, Reason, Enlightenment, Political Correctness, and Social Democracy. These manifestations of evil—Confused, Comatose, and Conceited—share many things in common. The leaders of all three strive to control people. Their *modus operandi* is deception and indoctrination. They prevail because the populous is ignorant and apathetic.

Conquering people is the antithesis of the message taught by Yahushua but it is consistent with that of the Nicolaitans—the people and principles Yahushua hates. Moreover, there are no “crosses” in Scripture, so there must have been another basis for Constantine’s symbolism. The Greek word *stauros*, meaning “upright pole” was changed to the Latin *crux*, for “cross” by the Roman Catholic Church in their Vulgate to serve Satan and legitimize Constantine. The first religious use of a cross was for Tammuz, the Babylonian Son of the Sun. Catholics still celebrate his birthday every Christmas.

Crosses attached to or superimposed on circles were the most common Satanic symbols in pagan religions. The Egyptian Ankh, the Hindu Swastika, the Druid “Peace Sign,” and the Roman *Chi Rho* are all examples. The scientific symbol for “woman,” a circular sun with an external cross, was first used in Babylon to designate the “Mother of God.” The biological male designation, a circle with an arrow emanating from it, is also of Babylonian origin. It signified the sun, represented by the circle, sending a ray, represented by the arrow, out to Mother Earth, impregnating her at the Festival of Ishtar, celebrated on the Sunday nearest the Vernal Equinox. True to the faith of Constantine, Catholics celebrate the Sun’s achievement each year on Easter Sunday, nine months before the Sun God’s nativity on December 25<sup>th</sup>.

There are several explanations for the origin of the cross in Satanic sun god lore. It represented the first letter of Tammuz’s name. And the sun “crosses” the equator at the Vernal Equinox, the day the Babylonians believe the sun impregnated mother earth giving birth to Tammuz nine months later at the Winter Solstice. Pagans celebrated Easter Sunday by baking sun-shaped rolls with crosses cut into them. The custom continues with the baking of Hot Cross Buns today. Constantine, and his “Sign of the Cross,” ritualistically imitated by all Catholics today, elevated the Satanic symbol to universal acclaim.

As bad as all this is, it only gets worse. The High Priest of the astrological fertility cult the Magi brought from Babylon to Pergamos held the title of “Chief Bridge Builder,” meaning “the one who spans the gap between mortals and gods.”

In Latin this title is written "*Pontifex Maximus*" or *Pontiff* for short. In keeping with the arrogance of the Caesars, it was adopted by Constantine in 325 CE. The emperor also called himself "the Vicar [the person who is authorized to perform the functions] of Christ." This too was contrary to Scripture because Yahushua alone is the bridge between man and God. He said, **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the Messiah Yahushua."** (1Timothy 2:5)

In a move that many see as positive, Constantine declared an end to Christian persecution. Forgetting for a moment that persecution actually ended under Diocletian in 303 CE, twenty years before Constantine became Emperor, the announcement was counter productive. It effectively ended the effectiveness of the martyrs' witness—a testimony which had by then inspired an awesome number of Greeks and Romans to abandon paganism and follow The Way. Recognizing their numbers and growth, Constantine's edict was designed to consolidate his power. There is no better way to control the masses than to claim the authority of God. That is why he declared that Christianity was the official state religion—a religion he himself was to officiate. Never mind that Yahuweh never intended His covenant relationship to be a "religion," much less political. But the Devil and his disciple had other plans.

As the last Smyrna Epoch persecution took place, it was almost as if Satan grumbled to himself, "This isn't working. I need a new strategy." Under pressure, the Anointed Assembly had *not* died out; it had grown stronger. It was hard to seduce hypocrites and heretics to corruption when false illusions cost more than the breath it took to profess them. Persecution kept the false prophets at bay, but the politicized church opened the flood gates of hell. So, Halal ben Shachar, the Arrogant Morning Star (a.k.a. the sun god), figured, if murder and mutilation wouldn't prevail against the *Ekklesia*, maybe *success* would. So he had his pal Constantine "convert" to "Christianity," and, as Roman emperors were wont to do, he issued an edict that made the Roman world a Christian domain. The reason "converted" is in quotes is because Constantine actually converted Roman paganism, called Mithraism, into Christianity, rather than converting himself. The legacy of that solitary act has cursed us all, even to this day.

While the Called-Out Assembly came out of the catacombs, the celebration was short lived. Constantine had no intention of actually letting Yahuweh prevail over him—he was the emperor of Rome, after all. Besides, economically and socially, paganism would have to be accommodated for the Roman economy to flourish. So he dressed up the old celestial holidays in new, "Christian" costumes. It's called syncretization, but what it meant is that the most vital Scriptural truths were surrendered to Satan. Forgetting Tabernacles, the Winter Solstice Festival that commemorated the son of the sun god's birthday in pagan Babylon, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, was renamed Christmas. The Church kept the pagan tree and

its decorations, the yule designation, mistletoe, circular wreaths symbolizing the sun, and the exchange of presents. Simultaneously, they forget Passover, replacing it with the Babylonian-derived fertility bash, Ishtar. It had always been celebrated on the Sunday nearest the spring equinox so that nine months later, the Son of the Sun could be born. This purely pagan abomination was syncretized by the Roman Catholic Church to commemorate “Christ’s” resurrection. (In actuality, Yahushua’s resurrection occurred before sunrise so it was late on the Sabbath and not the morning of the first day of the week.)

Satan being disingenuous, not stupid, had his Catholic cronies corrupt the Passover message by attributing the resurrection to Babylon’s most important festival. So arrogant were they, the “Church” didn’t even bother changing the name, day, or symbols for Easter. And sadly, Protestants were no less cooperative. The authorized and thus politicized clerics who translated the King James Bible actually replaced the name “Passover” with “Easter” in their “Bible.” Both Catholics and Protestants retained the Babylonian cross, designating when the sun crossed the equator of mother earth at the equinox. Both encouraged the slaughter and consumption of swine, known today as the Easter Ham, although it was expressly forbidden in the Old Covenant and specifically denounced in Isaiah 65. Both encouraged their faithful to scoff at Yahushua’s sacrifice by teaching children about the Babylonian fertility cult’s “Easter Bunny,” a rabbit whose “eggs” were dipped in the colors of spring. It was perfect in a demonic sort of way.

Forgetting the Fourth Commandment and it’s spiritual, historic, and prophetic significance, Constantine, the founder of Catholicism, condemned the Sabbath at the dawn of the Pergamos Era, making worship on that day a capital offense. He wanted his idol, Mithras, the sun god, worshiped on Sun-days. While many have filled entire books with Constantine’s satanically inspired perversions of Yahuweh’s teachings, I simply want to provide a sampling.

Here is an interesting one: Constantine’s historian, Eusebius, recorded the following imperial edict in 321 CE, “All things whatsoever that it was the duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord’s Day.” Ba’al must have been pleased. Then he called Sunday “*Sol Invictus Mithras*”—“the day of the Unconquerable Sun, Mithras.” Under penalty of death he decreed that all within his empire must cease work on Sun-Day to honor the sun god. America’s Blue Laws are an abominable legacy.

Forgetting that Rome murdered the Messiah, and forgetting that Yahushua was a Yahuwdy, Constantine at Satan’s urging went on to say of the chosen people: “We will have nothing to do with the cursed wretches who killed our Lord—nothing in common with the hostile rabble of the Yahudim.” And with that blow the Torah was replaced by the edicts of man. The foundation of Yahuweh’s

message, the four thousand year old prophetic witness that had provided mankind's lone light was extinguished. To have "nothing in common with the Yahudim" is to exclude salvation as it comes through the generosity of Yahushua, a Yahuwdy. With this edict, all Catholics and all who follow their guidance would be damned, as mankind's only chance of forming a relationship with Yahweh had been designated illegal by a religion.

Satan left another fingerprint on Constantine's quote. The "Lord's Day" is Satan's day. The name of the sun god worshiped by the Phoenicians and Babylonians, Ba'al, means "Lord." For example, the Babylonian's observed the Ba'al Beriyth, known as the "Lord's Covenant." Lord/Ba'al and his alias' Adonis, Tammuz, Osiris, and Bacchus, were prototypes and forerunners of Mithras. Halal ben Shachar, the pretend sungod, wanted to lord over men—possessing an attitude and ambition he shared with the Catholic clergy. Tying it all together, Ba'al was worshiped in the likeness of a bull, a golden calf with a circular sun disk between his horns. And that leads us right back to Easter Sunday, the day the sun crosses the equator at the vernal equinox. Each year when that happens the sun is in the constellation of Taurus—the bull.

The prophet Jeremiah, speaking for Yahuweh, revealed God's perspective on this subject. The mystery religion of Lord/Ba'al had spread from Babylon to Yisra'el. There it had been accepted by some and tolerated by others, leaving the chosen people in a state of decay. Yahweh begins by contrasting His relationship to the politicized religious schemes of men. **“I am a God/'Elohiym of (min) close personal relationships (qarob – approachable and timeless kinship),’ declares Yahuweh, ‘and not a Deity/'Elohiym of distant separation (rachowq – remoteness).’ ‘Can a man conceal himself from Me, hiding secrets that I do not see (ra'ah – observe, consider, and attend to)?’ declares Yahuweh. ‘Do I not fulfill abundantly, accomplishing a satisfactory confirmation (male – completely satisfy and proclaim sufficiently) in the heavens (samayim) and earth?’ proclaims Yahuweh.”** (Jeremiah 23:23-24) Yahuweh has amply demonstrated His existence in the cosmos with the enormity of its magnitude and on earth with the complexity of its life. He has made Himself known sufficiently through His Word and the witness of His people. And He has proven that He inspired what we are reading by fulfilling abundant prophecies.

Yet mankind, self-serving and self-reliant has elected to deceive, destroy, and damn in an ill-fated quest for sex, power, and money. False prophets have become as deadly as they have become ubiquitous, as ignorant and they are arrogant. They occupy our statehouses, media houses, educational institutions, businesses and sanctuaries. There is no escaping them or their schemes. **“I have heard (shama' – received the news and reports of) enchanters ('ashaph – sorcerers and magicians), prophets who speak avowing ('amar – revealing their hearts and**

minds, arrogantly boasting, inferring, promising and commanding) **falsely** (*sheqer* – with misleading lies and deceptions, mistaken beliefs, disappointing falsehoods, deceit, fraud, and irrational vanity) **in My name saying** (*'amar*), **“I have a dream. I have a dream** (*chalam* – a restoring revelation that will make us strong!)” **When and for how long** (*matay 'ad* – to what degree, end, or purpose) **shall this be** (*yesh* – exist) **in the hearts and minds** (*leb* – inner nature, inclination, understanding, and thinking) **of prophets who communicate deceptively** (*sheqer* – who verbally convey misleading lies and deceptions based upon mistaken beliefs which will disappoint, who convey falsehoods, frauds, and irrational vain shams)? **For how long and for what purpose** (*matay 'ad*) **will the spokesmen and heathen prophets** (*nambiy'*) **of treachery deceive** (*tormah* – of fraud and deception delude; from *ramah*, an elevated place or position of illicit religious worship which beguiles and betrays, treacherously tricking) **their hearts and minds** (*leb* – inner natures, inclinations, understandings, and thinking)?” (Jeremiah 23:25-26)

There is no doubt Yahuweh knows us. He is under no illusions. Too bad the same cannot be said for humankind. Look at what we have done to ourselves in spite of Yahuweh’s prophetic warning. **“They invent and scheme** (*chashab* – calculate, fabricate, plot, and contrive, reckoning and imputing devices, planning to determine value and values) **to cause My family** (*'am* – people, specifically Yisra’el) **to forget and ignore** (*shakach* – mislay and become oblivious to) **My personal name** (*shem* – proper designation, reputation, renown, information, title, honor, character, authority, and position) **by their dreams** (*chalowm* – series of feelings, images, and revelations) **which through relationships and associations** (*'asher*) **they relate and recount** (*capfar* – rehearse, declare, and record; officially enumerating in written material) **to mankind** (*'iysh*), **to friends, neighbors, companions, fellow citizens and associates** (*rea'*). **Sadly broken and cowed through intimidation** (*ka'ah* – to have one’s resolve and courage subdued and destroyed; to be disheartened and discouraged) **as their fathers ceased to care about, forgot and ignored** (*shakach* – mislaid, allowing to wither, becoming oblivious to) **My name because of Ba'al** (*Ba'al* – the proper name of the supreme male sungod divinity of the Babylonians, Phoenicians, Canaanites, and now Israelites meaning Lord, Owner, and Master)?” (Jeremiah 23:27)

Proving Yahuweh right, the translators of every popular English Bible carelessly and inaccurately replaced Yahuweh’s personal name with “LORD” and yet carefully and accurately transliterated Satan’s moniker as “Ba'al.” These clerics, scholars, and pastors demonstrate a greater respect for the Adversary than they do for the Creator and Savior.

*Re'a*, meaning “fellow countrymen, neighbors, ethnic groups, companions, and associates,” also implies people of “like mind, reasoning, and thought.” As such it speaks to the West today, people who have been conditioned to think and respond collectively, embracing diversity and multiculturalism as an interrelated family of man. In that the same two Hebrew letters (ר' א) also signify “evil, wickedness, rotten ugliness” and “immorality,” we have a good idea of what Yahuweh thinks of man’s replacement morality—political correctness.

This passage also explains the what, how, and why of the Catholic Church’s egregious and destructive deceptions during the Pergamos period. They not only mislaid Yahuweh’s name, causing mankind to forget the proper designation of their Creator and Savior, though their associations with governments and academia, they caused men to cower under their intimidating ruthlessness, misleading countless souls to their temporal and eternal doom and damnation. Each and every pope from Constantine to this present day has been a “false prophet, an enchanter who avowed that which was not true, revealing their hearts and minds, arrogantly boasting false promises, misleading lies, mistaken beliefs, and irrational vanities.”

There is no greater testament to this than Emperor Constantine’s most fatal blow to humanity. It occurred at the much politicized and ruthlessly commandeered Nicene Council in 325 CE. There, the “unification of doctrines” created the Roman “Universal,” or “Catholic” Church. Forgetting that Jerusalem was, and always will be, Yahuweh’s beloved and set-apart city, these men in their lust for power, selected Constantinople and then Rome. Never mind that Rome allies with the Antichrist in Revelation, or that the fourth beast of Daniel’s prophecy was Rome, or that Rome was the most militaristic and pagan of nations, the most morally perverse place on earth, the nation which crucified the Messiah, the nation which ruthlessly savaged Yahuweh’s chosen people, the nation which devastated and then renamed the Promised Land, calling Yisra’el, *Palistina*. “Catholic” was no better. The name was derived from the Latin *catholicus*, meaning “universal,” signifying the “Church’s” universal authority. And recognizing that “Church” is based upon the name of a pagan sun deity, the supreme deity of the Romans, Constantine’s Council was a universal abomination.

With Pergamos, Satan had found “Christianity’s” Achilles heel. The “Church” embraced the very thing Yahushua had commended the assembly at Ephesus for resisting: the Nicolaitan heresy and the doctrine of Balaam—compromise, human dominion, and overt Satanism. Starting with Constantine, the Roman Catholic Church swallowed these poisons whole. By accommodating pagan rites into the liturgy of the Church, a *religion* was born. The intimate, eternal, and loving

personal relationship Yahuweh desired was scrapped for a stifling and deadly dogma.

For the Pergamosians, good works remained a priority, out of habit, at least for a while, but the rationale for them was on its way out. Love was being replaced with duty, truth with deception, choice with compulsion, and relationship with religion. The time historians paint as Christianity's brightest hour was the *Ekklesia's* darkest.

Within this "religious" context, the God who pronounces judgment and absolves from judgment instructed John to write: **"To the messenger of the out-calling (*ekklesia*) in Pergamos write, 'These things relates He who holds the swift and sharp (*oxus* – keen and quick) double-edged (*rhomphaia* – dual mouthed) spear (*distomos* – lance worn on the right shoulder; that which pierces the soul; from *stoma*—mouth, by implication language [always used in reference to judgment]): I see and know (*eido*) the household (*oikeios* – the family, adherents, and community) where (*pou*) you reside (*datoikeo* – dwell and are governed), the location where (*hopou* – the cause, case and rationale of; from *hos*, meaning who and what, and *pou*, meaning the place where) the Adversary Satan's (*Satanas* – the Accuser's, the one who opposes, the evil spirit's) seat of power (*thronos* - throne) is."** (Revelation 2:12-13)

Yahushua begins by calling the most religious place on earth the seat of Satan's power. According to God there is a direct correlation between religion and the Devil. The Adversary uses the universalism conceived by Constantine during the Pergamos period to deceive, destroy, and damn the unwary. Prophetically, Catholicism has just been called "Satan's Household."

In the context of time, this indictment is especially chilling. There is no denying that the Pergamos period coincides with the end of Christian persecution spoken of in the Smyrna letter and the birth of the hierarchal church of compromise addressed in this epistle. Therefore, Catholicism is the lone candidate for this indictment. The One who holds the lance capable of piercing souls says of this assembly and its adherents, "You live and are governed by the people and place where Satan does his bidding." Prophetically, Catholicism is being called a community of and for demons.

So in this most hellish place and time, the Redeemer reminds us of Jeremiah's admonition. **"You have the power to accomplish through and are received by way of (*krateo* – are strengthened and are possessed by carefully and faithfully holding fast to) My proper name (*onoma* – deriving benefits through remembering, mentioning, and using the authority associated with My name). Do not disavow or contradict (*arneomai* – reject, refuse, abrogate, or deny) your conviction in the truth (*pistis* – trustworthiness and reliability) of Me (*mou*),**

**even also (*kai*) in the days in which Antipas was My trustworthy and trusting (*pistos*) witness (*martus* – genuine example and martyr), who was killed beside you (*para* – among you in opposition, holding a contrary view), where (*hopou* – the cause, the case, and the *raison d'être*) of the Adversary Satan (*Satanas* - the accuser who opposes) dwells, influences, pervades, prompts, and governs (*katoikeo* – permanently resides and is present).” (Revelation 2:13)**

The Pergamos *ekklesia* earned but a solitary line of praise, one that was more useful advice than a commendation. And it was for something we “Christians” no longer understand or do: “how to rely upon and use the power and strength” of Yahushua’s “name.” Not one in a thousand “Christians” even knows Yahuweh’s name. We have had done to us, courtesy of the Catholic Church, what the Jews of Jeremiah’s day had done to them by way of their priests. Men have schemed to cause us to forget that salvation, relationship, and life all flow from a singular source: Yahuweh and His redemptive manifestation, Yahushua.

The second lesson is that “trust” in the “trustworthiness” of Yahushua is what is essential, not our faith or even our faithfulness. To receive His gift of eternal life, to be productive as a witness, we must not disavow or contradict, reject, refuse, or deny the truthfulness and reliability of Yahushua.

Third, conviction, when it’s grounded in truth, makes one a worthy witness. Antipas was trustworthy because he was trusting, and for no other reason. Antipas, whose name means “in opposition to the fathers,” was a contrarian and thus antiestablishment. His example was worthy of Divine acclaim because he opposed the religious influence and pervasive government of Satan that was evolving in his presence. This is the third time in just three letters, that Yahushua has praised what the world condemns: intolerance.

And finally, this prophetic indictment of the Roman Catholic Church is even more stinging than the last. The Pergamos period marks the time in which a “pervasive and influential governing authority” began to “permanently reside in the presence of the people” in open opposition to those with the conviction to witness to the truth. For over a thousand years since the founding of Roman Catholicism by Constantine, they have condemned all who have dared expose their deceit, calling Yahushua’s *martus* “heretics,” and then killing them.

The doctrine of the Balaam, discussed in this next passage, can be found in Numbers chapter 22-25. It is also covered in Second Peter, a letter that will form the basis of our next chapter. Admonitions against the religion of Lord/Ba’al form the basis of Hosea and Jeremiah. Scripture tells us that Balaam was a pagan priest who practiced witchcraft in Babylon. He was hired by Balak, king of Moab, to curse the Israelites. When Yahuweh restrained Balaam, his shrewd and wicked religious clerics invited the Yahudim to the licentious feast of Baal-peor. We find

the results of this evil assembly in the verse: **“Yisra’el remained in Shittim** (*sitiym* – those who hate, are opposed, and bear a grudge, cherishing animosity, resisting and acting adversarially). **The people** (*‘am* – family) **became profane, defiled, desecrated and polluted** (*halal* – pierced and wounded, disrespectful and irreverent, acting dishonorably) **committing acts of fornication, becoming harlots and whores** (*zanah* – as and with unfaithful religious cult prostitutes) **in sexual intercourse with** (*‘el*) **the daughters** (*bath* – the young girls) **of Moab** (*Mow’ab* – a son of Lot by his eldest daughter; meaning from her father). **And they called** (*qara’* – summoned and invited) **the people** (*‘am* – family) **to the sacrifices** (*zebach* – offerings of animals killed and presented as an act of worship, expiation, or propitiation to a deity) **to their gods** (*‘elohiym*). **And the people ate and bowed down, prostrating themselves in homage** (*shachah*) **to their gods. Yisra’el joined** (*tsamad* – attached herself and became bound together with, shared common beliefs and worshiped) **Ba’al-Pa’owr** (*ba’al pa’owr* – the Lord’s wide and gaping opening). **Yahuweh’s anger was kindled against** (*harah* – became hot and furious, burning against) **Yisra’el.”** (Numbers 25:1-3)

*Ba’al* (Lord), *Bel* (Lord), *Ba’al-Pa’owr* (the Lord’s Opening), and *Ba’al-Beriyth* (the Lord’s Covenant) are derivations and expansions on Halal’s name and title, “Lord”—which may be why the basis of his name, “*halal*,” was imbedded in this passage. In this light it’s hard to fathom why every English Bible erases Yahuweh’s personal name from the text He inspired and replaces it with the name of the false god the real God just condemned.

The doctrine of *Ba’al* is for those who dwell in *Shittim*—“the place where God is opposed and hated, the place of the adversary who bears a grudge.” Satan found one of mankind’s biggest weaknesses, a gaping hole he could exploit—sexual perversion. It is little wonder that the Socialist Secular Humanists advocating Political Correctness and the New World Order, advocate licentiousness. But be forewarned. If you choose to defile yourself irreverently, committing acts of fornication in accordance with man’s revised morality, bowing down to their false gods and errant doctrines, and share their beliefs, you will be seen as having joined them. Attached to them, you will share their fate, enduring Yahuweh’s anger.

Now that you know who the players are, and what’s at stake, here’s what Yahushua said next to the Pergamosians. As I have suggested several times in the past, I encourage you to read the bold text of these next two verses through first, prior to considering the full implications of each word.

Yahushua transitions from His lifesaving advice to the name of the adversary in a single word: **“In opposition** (*allah* – as the antithesis and on the contrary) **I hold** (*echo* – possess, have, and view) **a few things against you, because you**

**hold fast to** (*echo* - have relations with, are possessed by, and are joined to) **that place where** (*ekei*) **the control and power of** (*krateo* – the ruling Lords and Masters possess, obtain, seize, manipulate, and retain) **the doctrines and teachings** (*didache* – public religious instructions) **of Balaam** (a transliteration of the name of the false and demonic Babylonian prophet) **are taught** (*didasko* – delivered as a discourse from an official teacher, preacher, or politician). **Balak** (the Moabite king) **throws** (*ballo* – scatters not caring where something falls, acquiesces regardless of the result) **a snare** (*skandalon* – the trigger of a trap, a stumbling block that leads to entrapment and death, an impediment placed in one’s way) **in front of** (*enopion* – in the presence of, before and against) **the children of IHA** (placeholder for **Yisra’el**, meaning, those who endure with and are empowered by God) **to eat things sacrificed to idols** (*eidolothuton* – compound of *eidolon*, an image or likeness, real or imaginary, and *thuo*, to sacrifice), **and to commit prostitution, engage in immorality, and practice idolatry** (*porneuo* – sexual acts with harlots, fornication, the defilement of the body for money, indulgences, the worship of false gods, and fertility cult religious practices). **Indeed** (*kai*), **in this manner** (*houto*) **you likewise** (*homoios* – similarly and in the same way) **regard, possess and hold** (*echo* – have relations with and join, wearing the garb of) **those who are empowered by and gain custody over people through** (*krateo* – control and oppress by way of, seize power and rule through, grabbing and maintaining possession by means of) **the teachings** (*didache* instructions and doctrines, the religious assemblies) **of the Nicolaites, who and which** (*hos*) **I hate** (*miseo* – abhor, detest, oppose, and persecute).” (Revelation 2:14-15)

Had there been any doubt, it has now been eliminated. The doctrine of the Nicolaitans, the people and dogma Yahshua hates, has been defined in unequivocal terms. So that we wouldn’t miss the connection between the Whore of Babylon and the Nicolaites, Yahshua used two different words to convey “in like manner” and “similarly.” The name Nicolaites, which means “to utterly vanquish the laity and obtain superiority over people through opposition and conquest” has been linked directly to the prophets of Ba’al and thus to Satanism, to the politics of power and control, to the religious rites of the Whore of Babylon, to purposeful deception and false teaching, to oppression, idolatry, and immorality. Yahshua has connected the dots for us, defining that which He despises. The Nicolaites embraced the errors of Lord/Ba’al and his Babylonian sungod religion. Those who advocated these doctrines caused people to stumble, ensnaring and entrapping them. They promoted sexual immorality and idolatry as human rights. They coveted sex, money, and power and trampled over people in the name of religion to acquire what they craved.

*Krateo* isn't a pleasant word. What little was left to our imagination, was illuminated by its use in connection with the human and satanic schemes Yahuweh abhors. It is most often translated "to seize power and arrest people, to take, restrain, and hold others in submission." According to the Greek poet Homer, *krateo* means "to possess power through strength, to have the power to control and lord over people." It is used of political, religious, and military officials who "gain the upper hand through conquest." Such people "control the masses by imprisoning their opponents." Those who *krateo* believe "they have the right to possess people, places, and things." As such, *krateo* is the foundation of today's three greatest menaces: Communism, Catholicism, and Islam. Under Weishaupt's and Marx's banner, Mao, Lenin, and Stalin murdered 70 million people in their conquests of control. Constantine's "Under this sign conquer" and Muhammad's "I have been made victorious through terror," all speak to man's lust for power and control.

In His letter to those enduring the Pergamos period, Yahshua focused on false teaching—just as He had done with Ephesus and Smyrna. Bad ideas are a much bigger problem than bad behaviors because one not only leads to the other, false doctrines separate us from Yahuweh. Our Creator is intolerant of false teachings and false teachers. In this regard, the Greek word "*echo*" is interesting. If one has relations with those who retain and use the words of false prophets, they will come to hold them too. If one even associates with those who proclaim false religions, they will echo their deceptions. They will become a victim of their quest for power and control.

I also find it interesting that the word which defines the moral meltdown of mankind today, "*porneuo*," is directly associated with idolizing the wrong thing, indulging the flesh rather than celebrating the spirit. All of it is Satanic—born and bred in Babylon by the Devil himself. Halal wants to be Ba'al, Lord and Master. He lies so as to snare us, creating a stumbling block that leads to death and destruction, to *proneuo*, hoping that we will *echo* the false notions that Yahuweh detests.

Yahushua's warning to those caught in the web of religious, political, and societal lies is unequivocal. "**Therefore** (*oun* – consequently, these things being so, indeed as a result) **change your way of thinking** (*metanoeo* – reconsider and amend your ways, change your mind and adjust your attitudes), **or** (*de* – moreover, or then) **otherwise** (*ei* – but if not) **I will appear** (*erchomai* – come forth and become known) **to you suddenly** (*tachu* – quickly and momentarily without delay) **and will be engaged in a war, fighting, quarreling, and disputing** (*polemeo* – battling) **with** (*meta*) **him or her** (*autos* – as a unique individual, distinct and set apart from others) **with piercing and cutting words**

(*rhomphaia stoma* – sharp language, a biting tongue, the lance of the mouth, and spearing speech).” (Revelation 2:16)

This is directed at those who simply *echoed* or clung to the false and oppressive teachings of Universalism, better known as Catholicism. Man has been put on notice. Death will come quickly and when it occurs, those individuals who opted for religion instead of relationship will appear before an unrelenting God. His words will pierce his or her soul. There will be no excuses in this dispute. None of man’s pleas will help: “I went to mass.” “I supported the church.” “I said my prayers.” “I tried my best and led a good life.” Yahuweh’s sharp and hostile words will cut through all of this, leaving the victim of religion finding themselves on the wrong side of the law.

The value of close Scriptural scrutiny becomes especially evident when we consider Yahushua’s parting comments to the Pergamos *Ekklesia*. English Bibles render “*leukos psephos*” as “*white stone*.” While that is a permissible rendering, it misses the entire significance of Yahushua’s message. **“He who has the ability to listen, let him hear what the IINA (placeholder for *ruach*, meaning Spirit, from the Greek *pneuma*, meaning spirit) says to the *ekklesia/out-calling*. To him who overcomes and prevails I will give manna (*manna* – a transliteration of the Hebrew *man*, or bread for heaven) in secret to eat. And I will give (*didomi* – grant and bestow, furnish and deliver, reach out, extend, and present a present to) him a light (*leukos* – that which is bright and brilliant, dazzling and shining white, radiant and gleaming) acquittal stone and invitation (*psephos* – a white rock which was used in courts to designate a favorable verdict; a rock used as an invitation to a feast; from *pselaphao*, meaning to seek after, touch and feel the token of a person), and upon (*epi*) the acquittal stone (*psephos* - invitation) a new and distinctive (*kainos* – renewed, more valuable, impressive, and superior) name (*onoma* – character, authority, rank, resolution, and advantage associated with the personal moniker) in written words engraved (*grapho* – expressed and described in writing) which (*hos* – who) no one (*ouden*) knows (*oida* – appreciates and understands, is aware of, recognizes and can be sure of) save (*eime* – except) him who takes hold of it (*lambano* – is offered, receives, accepts, associates with and holds onto [Him]).”** (Revelation 2:17)

A “token” is a “symbol, an outward sign, an indication, a characteristic, an expression, or manifestation of someone or something that distinguishes them.” All three of Yahuweh’s favorites are included in this list. He is the “Rock of our Salvation.” He is “Light.” He is “the Word.” Because *psephos* was used as an “invitation to a banquet” it is Yahushua’s ticket to paradise.

There is some dispute as to whether Yahushua said *oida*/knows or *oikeios*/family member, relative or household in this verse. The oldest texts show a blending of these words. And in a way, it makes no difference. To know the

“most valuable, impressive, and superior name” is to know Yahuweh because Yahuweh is the name of whom Yahushua was speaking. To know Yahuweh is to become a member of His eternal family, to become a son or daughter of God, and to live in His household.

Speaking to the Philadelphian Assembly of renewed souls who have become upright pillars in Yahuweh’s Tabernacle in Revelation 3:12 through the gift of salvation, Yahushua says that He will write Yahuweh’s name on them. This is consistent with the Old Covenant where Isaiah reveals: **“So therefore** (*ken* – this is right, just, honest, verifiable, correct, and true), **My family** (*‘am* – relatives) **shall know** (*yada’* – possess an awareness of and information regarding it that focuses on relationship, be acquainted with it in a relational sense, discern and recognize) **My name** (*shem*).” (Isaiah 52:6)

Similarly, the conclusion of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Psalm confirms as much: **“The entire world shall return and be restored** (*shuwb* – turn around and think differently, reestablishing Spiritual relations, refreshed and renewed) **thinking about, paying attention to, recalling, and confessing** (*zakar* – being brought to remembrance so as to declare, recite, proclaim, and commemorate) **Yahuweh.... Posterity shall serve Him, and it shall be recorded and recounted** (*saphar* – inscribed and proclaimed) **to the foundation of the Upright One** (*‘edon*), **for a place to dwell over time** (*dowr* – a house, dwelling place, and tabernacle). **They shall come conspicuously announcing, exposing and declaring** (*nagad* – explaining and manifesting) **His vindication** (*tsadaqah* – declaration of innocence) **to a family** (*‘am*) **that shall be born that He has accomplished** (*asah* – instituted and bestowed) **this.**” (Psalm 22:27, 30-31)

In the Torah, the same message comes through loud and clear: **“By the greatness and magnitude** (*gadawl*) **of Your sacrificial Lamb** (*zarow’a*), **they** [the Lord/Ba’al serving adversaries] **will be silenced** (*damam*). **Now and forever** (*‘ad* – eternally and continually throughout time) **the Rock** (*‘eben* – the stone which establishes and restores) **passes over** (*‘abar*) **the family** (*‘am*) **of Yahuweh, eternally** (*‘ad*) **passing over** (*‘abar*) **the family** (*‘am*) **whom** (*zu*) **You acquired by purchasing them in a redemptive act** (*qanah*).” (Exodus 15:13)

Do you *yada’*/know Yahuweh? Are you part of His *‘am*/family? Have you been *qanah*/redeemed by the *zarow’a*/sacrificial lamb? Are you *tsadaqah*/vindicated? Are you *shuwb*/restored? Do you serve the *‘edon*/upright one? Do you *zakar*/confess Yahuweh’s *shem*/name? Or are you religious, swimming in the cesspool of the Church?

If Yahushua were addressing a letter to you, would it include commendation or condemnation? Would you be Ephesian or Pergamosian? The answer is based

entirely upon what you understand, who you know, what you trust, who you rely upon, what you condemn and what you commend.

Sadly, more than a billion people are still living under the influence of Pergamos. The Church born under Constantine is as it has always been: the seat of Satan's power. But the emperor wasn't the last bad influence on the assembly. A new epoch begins in 606 CE, with the crowning of Boniface III, the first united and universal *Pontifex Maximus*. As we shall learn, he raised the stakes, kicking God out of the Church, he invited Satan in. The Dark Ages followed.

Some Catholics will protest that it isn't fair to pin all of this Satanic stuff on them. But Yahushua's description fits them perfectly in every respect, right down to the most incriminating details. Constantine's creation did everything Yahushua's rails against, incorporating one Babylonian scheme into the Church after another, and he did them precisely when God said he would. So that being historically irrefutable, Catholics are left to protest that if it weren't for them there would have been no church. But that's simply not true. The Way grew faster and was healthier before Constantine than after him. The General turned Emperor adapted and then adopted Christianity as the state religion because he would have lost control had he not done so.

And that is the bottom line. Religion has always been about control.