



A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION



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REVELATION

CHAPTER 2C

COMMUNITY BIBLE STUDY



Verse 9- *'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the slander by those who say they are Jews, and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.*

I know- The Lord had personal knowledge as He suffered too.

your- (singular possessive pronoun)- I know each of your individual tribulation and poverty.

tribulation- (*thlipsin-* weight or pressure) Not the Great Tribulation, but daily tribulation.

Verse 9- *'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the slander by those who say they are Jews, and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.*

Poverty- There are two words for poverty:

- *penia*- having nothing extra
- *ptōcheia*- abject poverty of a beggar ✓

*Their poverty led to tribulation, but they were rich spiritually
(2 Corinthians 6:10)-*

... as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing and yet possessing all things.

Verse 9- *'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the slander by those who say they are Jews, and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.*

They were a poor rich church in contrast to Laodicea which was a rich poor church. It could be that the Jews in Smyrna took their possessions, even though they were already poor.

Hebrews 10: 34- *For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and **accepted joyfully the seizure of your property**, knowing that you have for yourselves a better and lasting possession.*

Verse 9- *‘I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the slander by those who say they are Jews, and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.*

slander- (blasphēmian) Slandering the people of God is one form of blasphemy against God.

John 8:44- Jesus responds to the Jewish claim to be “*the children of Abraham*” by stating, “*You belong to your father, the devil.*”

Verse 9- 'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the slander by those who say they are Jews, and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

In Acts, the Jews often caused more trouble than the Roman authorities (who reacted to the complaints of the Jews).

Romans 2:28-29

For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from people, but from God.

Verse 9- 'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the slander by those who say they are Jews, and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

Synagogue of Satan- Mentioned in Smyrna and in Philadelphia. These are **unbelieving Jews** who were persecuting Christians. Instead of a synagogue of God, they were being used of Satan.

Seat of Satan- John writes of the "Seat of Satan" at the church in Pergamum where **unbelieving Gentiles** were persecuting the church.

Verse 10- Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Do not fear- Don't be afraid of anyone or anything.

Behold- Used 26 times in Revelation and six times in the seven letters. This is used to draw attention to a crucial point.

devil- *dia* (through or across) + *ballo* (throw) = the accuser is about to throw (*ballo*) some into prison.

Verse 10- Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

ten days- The “ten days” in Revelation 2:10 may refer to:

- Ten persecutions that began with Nero and ended with Diocletian at the end of the third century, spanning 300 years.
- The brief nature of their imprisonment.
- The completeness of time.

The length of their tribulation will be no longer or shorter than the Lord allows.

Verse 10- *Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*

The importance is not the ten days, but the fact that there will be an end to the tribulation, however long, meaning that they would be put to death for their faith (*“be faithful unto death.”*)

Crown of life- (grammatically, a genitive of apposition- “crown which is life.”)

Verse 10- Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

The Romans didn't like to keep ordinary people in prison for an extended period.

Most prisoners were awaiting trial or execution, like Paul's two-year house arrest in 60-62 A.D. Life in prison was not an option and viewed as a unnecessary waste of resources- they would usually just execute you.

Some Roman methods of execution included:

- Beheading
 - Strangling
 - Boiling in oil
 - Being cast from a great height
 - Being buried alive
 - Drowning
 - Death by beast
 - Sewn in sack with wild animals
 - Beheading
 - Stabbing
 - Crucifixion
-
- Some elites were given the option of suicide

Verse 11- *The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.'*

Literally- *by no means* will they be hurt by the second death.

second death- It is the "lake of fire," the final eternal "death" beyond the mere physical death that ends this life.

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." Revelation 20:14

7 CHURCHES IN REVELATION

Ephesus
Smyrna
Pergamum ✓
Thyatira
Sardis
Philadelphia
Laodicea



Let's Review...

	Ephesus 2:1-7	Smyrna 2:8-11	Pergamum 2:12-17
Commendation (I know your...)	Good works, labor, patience	Works, tribulation, poverty	Hold firmly to My name, did not deny My faith
Condemnation	You have left your first love	No condemnation	Hold the teaching of Balaam and Nicolaitans
Counsel	Remember from where you are fallen and repent	Fear not. Be faithful.	Repent or I will wage war
Challenge	Will give to eat of the tree of life	Will not be hurt by the second death	Will give some hidden manna and a white stone



PERGAMUM (BERGAMA)

Pergamum (Bergama)

- Pergamum is not mentioned specifically elsewhere in the Bible.
- Maybe Paul came close-by on his second missionary journey when he was in Mysia (Acts 16:7-8).
- Mentioned possibly in Acts 19:10- *“all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.”*
- Capital city of the Pergamum empire.
- 336-323 B.C.- Alexander the Great spread Greek language.
- 150 B.C.- The Pergamum alter was built.

Pergamum (Bergama)

- 133 B.C.- King Attalus III gifted the Pergamum empire to the Roman empire in his will (strategically important for Rome)



- This gift was important in bridging the Middle East and West for the spread of the gospel.

Pergamum (Bergama)

- Many gods were worshiped in Pergamum-
- Alter to Zeus/Jupiter
(King of the gods)

(Moved to Berlin by Carl
Humann in 1878- Open to the
public in 1930) Seat of Satan?
Most popular museum in Germany
Visited by over a million people each year



Pergamum (Bergama)

- Many gods were worshiped in Pergamum-
- Temple of Dionysis/Bacchus (god of wine and revelry)



Pergamum (Bergama)

- Many gods were worshiped in Pergamum-
- Temple of Athena/Minerva (goddess of war/wisdom)

Oldest temple on
The acropolis



Pergamum (Bergama)



- Many gods were worshiped in Pergamum-
- Trajan's temple
(Imperial cult- Augustus was the first emperor to call himself a god, Julius Caesar's great nephew)



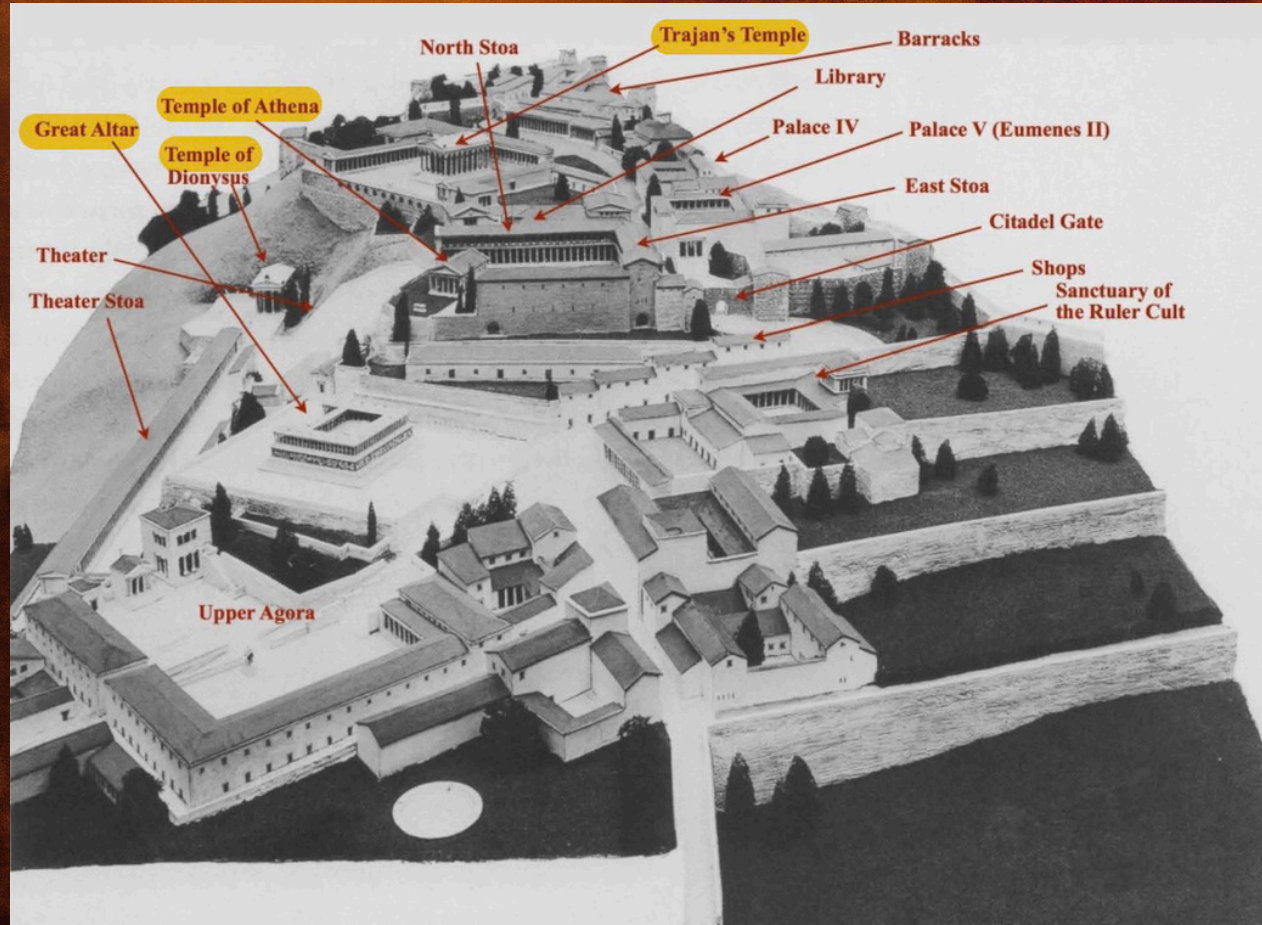
Pergamum (Bergama)

- All four temples
Were on the
Pergamum Acropolis

acro – summit

polis – city

1300 feet above rest
of the city
("City at the top")



Pergamum (Bergama)

- Sanctuary of Demeter/Ceres
(goddess of grain/harvest)- She provides daily bread



Pergamum (Bergama)

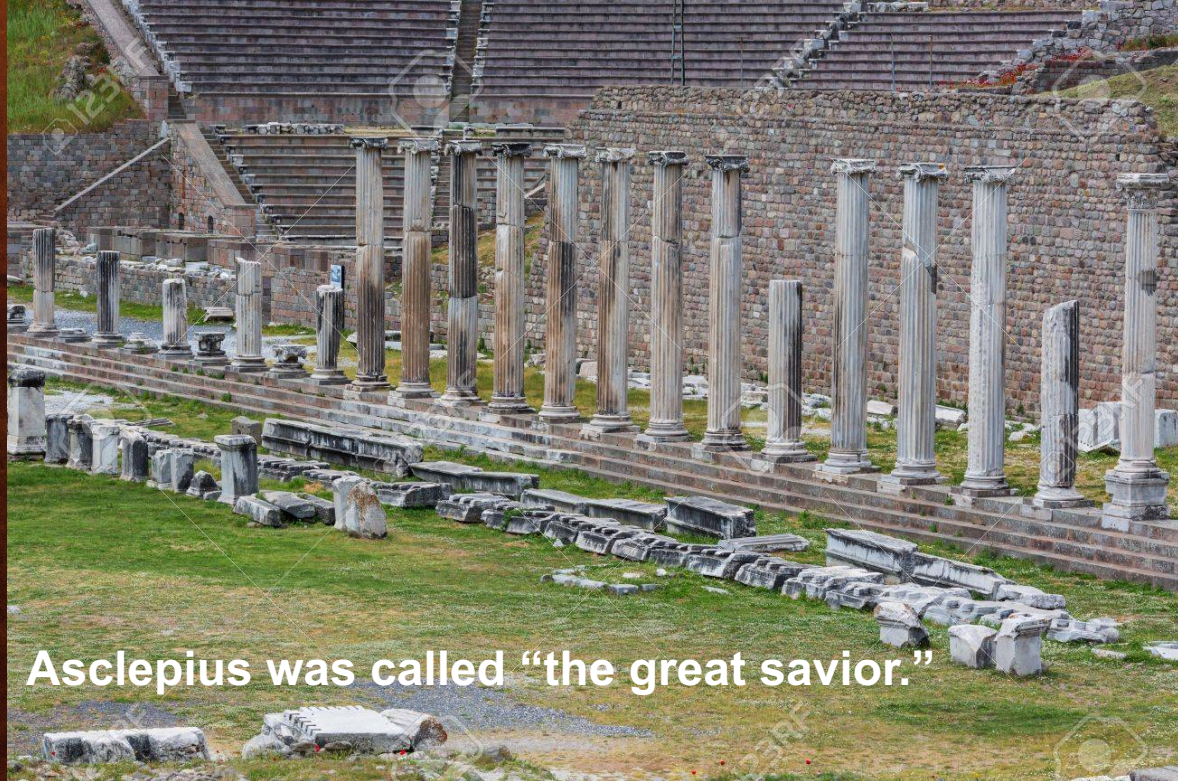
- Temple to Asclepius (god of medicine)
Snake (rebirth) was his symbol



The Rod of Asclepius



The Staff of Hermes



Asclepius was called “the great savior.”