

UNVEILED!

**The Ancient Secrets of Daniel &
The Revelation of Jesus Christ**

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The Ancient Secrets of Daniel & The Revelation of Jesus Christ

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Underscores in the Biblical texts are added for emphasis. Brackets are added outside the text for clarification or optional translations.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

CHAPTER 2

2 “To the angel of the church of Ephesus write,

‘These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: ² “I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; ³ and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary. ⁴ Nevertheless I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵ Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. ⁶ But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

⁷ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”

⁸ “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write,

‘These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: ⁹ “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and *I know* the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰ Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

¹¹ “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.”

¹² “And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write,

‘These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: ¹³ “I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne *is*. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. ¹⁴ But I have a few things

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against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. ¹⁵ Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. ¹⁶ Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

¹⁷ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives *it*.”

¹⁸ “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write,

‘These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: ¹⁹ “I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last *are* more than the first. ²⁰ Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. ²¹ And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. ²² Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. ²³ 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.

²⁴ “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. ²⁵ But hold fast what you have till I come. ²⁶ And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—

²⁷ ‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron;

They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels”—

as I also have received from My Father; ²⁸ “and I will give him the morning star.

²⁹ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’ (Revelation 2:1-29 NKJV)

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Insights

Jesus commends the **Ephesian** congregation for recognizing the false apostles who would have led them astray from the true doctrines of salvation. Though they called themselves apostles, they were liars. They are among us today, leading congregations and audiences to believe contradictions of the Bible's statements. When lies are mixed with the truth, multitudes believe them.

Many scholars think no one can know the truth; rationalizing, embellishing, or overlooking the inspired words, they teach their opinions; the Ephesian church spotted and renounced them.

Persevering in good works, the Ephesians served God yet had a serious problem; the Lord was displeased; they'd left their first love. We are called for the power of the Spirit who impacts the world through us by His words and actions; our reliance on Him is vital to every good work. They'd fallen out of relationship with Him, comparable to the contrast of Martha's busyness and Mary's attentiveness (in Lk. 10:38-42).

Do we look for Him in the Scriptures, quietly sitting at His feet? Has the fire in our hearts turned to ashes by the things that distract us from Christ? If we take time to serve others and share the gospel, do we also invest time in prayer, giving thanks? Do we live with Him? Do our *ears to hear* His Spirit's voice?

Jesus warns us to return, or He'll move our lampstand from its place—a strong admonition! What would our nation be like without the church? *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works ... (2:5)*

After our new birth, we received His words and revelations of the Spirit, and we wanted to tell everyone. But soon we turned to men and saw Jesus second-hand through their eyes. Distanced from the truth, we believed what we were told. He wants us to believe and share the true gospel, discipling others as He did by the very words we often shun. He told the Ephesians to repent.

Jesus hates elitism just as they did; that wasn't their error. [Gr.: *Niko+laos+ton*, is translated, "power over people."] ¹¹² Elitism is *anathema* to Christ who set a standard for His disciples, humbly serving God and others. But in all the Ephesians' good works, they had neglected their personal relationship with the Lord.

His blood removes our sin and guilt, and He fills us with His righteousness. He opens our eyes and ears to see and hear. When

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we receive His words, He writes them in our hearts; then we live by them. Its ongoing process is for our sanctification by faith in the truth. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. (2:7)*

Yeshua urged believers in **Smyrna** to live and walk in the Spirit, enduring to the end. Some who said they were Jews were liars, persecuting the Jewish believers, *speaking evil of them*; others were telling them to return to Moses. Those who misled, slandered, or even killed them, were a *synagogue of Satan. (2:9)*

On Pentecost thousands of Jews, even many priests, repented and believed in Yeshua. Believers doing mighty works infuriated the religious leaders but went on to win more Jews to repentance, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey His commands.

The Synagogue of the Freedmen falsely accused Stephen, a godly saint who'd testified to the Sanhedrin, the tribunal that led him out of the city and stoned him. Before his conversion Saul witnessed it, holding their coats as they killed him. (Acts 6:1-8:3)

On a road to arrest believers in Damascus, Saul was arrested by God, chosen to find the gospel in the scrolls and open the new covenant from the Hebrew Scriptures. Saul, aka Paul, would win gentiles to Jesus Christ, but he never forgot the Jews who hadn't yet believed. Though the *synagogue of Satan* disdained Jewish believers, Paul often reasoned with Jews in the synagogues on the weekly Sabbaths. (Acts 18:4)

The Greek word is *sunagogé*, a congregation, or gathering. The first church was a *sunagogé*. (Jas. 2:2, translated *assembly*) The first gatherings of believers met on the Sabbath in synagogues, starting with "congregations" in Jerusalem. (Acts 13:42-3) Like the church, a synagogue was its people, not just a building.

Persecution against the Jerusalem assemblies sent its saints into Judea and Samaria; then to the nations where Jews and gentiles believed. They confirmed the gospel by miracles, signs, and wonders, winning anybody to Jesus, unaware that Peter, with a commission to the Jews, had won gentiles too. (Gal. 2:7-8).

³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed, *separated* from Christ for the sake of my countrymen, my kinsmen according to the flesh, ⁴ who are Israelites, to whom

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belongs the adoption as sons and daughters, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the Law, the *temple* service, and the promises; ⁵ whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. (Rom. 9:3-5 NASB)

Many Jews hate Yeshua out of ignorance, indoctrination, or blindness as Paul had. People are taught to hate Jews; others loathe Christians; atheists hate God. Haters slander those they hate and spread their lies to others, but the Son of God tells us to love our enemies. He unites people of diverse colors, languages, nations, and ethnicities and impacts cultures by Christian love.

Some Jews respect Jesus; some believe in Him though their families reject them. By denigrating Jesus Christ who came in His Father's name, the Jews profaned the holy name of God, and for this He scattered them for two thousand years. The apostate church persecuted them for centuries because they crucified the Savior, but Roman hands made His crown of thorns, hammered nails into His hands, and pierced His side; yet the grace of God is available for all of us to take away our sins by His atoning blood.

After Pentecost (Acts 2), Jewish believers returned to their lands; some met together in Rome. After the city expelled Jews for dividing her culture, her economy fell, and she reinstated them. They rejoined her now gentile church. Correcting them all, Paul taught them their parts in the olive tree.¹¹³

⁹ And David says,

“MAY THEIR TABLE BECOME A SNARE AND A TRAP,
AND A STUMBLING BLOCK AND A RETRIBUTION TO THEM.

¹⁰ “MAY THEIR EYES BE DARKENED TO SEE NOT,
AND BEND THEIR BACKS CONTINUALLY.”

¹¹ I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? Far from it! But by their wrongdoing salvation *has come* to the Gentiles, to make them jealous. (Rom 11:9-11 NASB)

Since Yeshua makes us one, we must not be divided by a kosher table—it's a trap! We're not under the law anymore, but are free to make choices. *Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of*

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sin. (Rom. 3:19-20) After the broken covenant, Jesus made all foods clean to introduce the change in covenants. (Mat. 15:17-20; Mk. 7:14-23; Acts 10:15; 15:22-29) When false brothers instructed Jewish believers to return to Moses, Paul reproved them. What had separated Jews from gentiles had not made them righteous; only the Holy Spirit can do that, and God is glorified by Him.

Abram acted in faith by leaving his home for an unknown land; by a war against five kings, and by tithing to Melchizedek. Begetting a son and giving him up, he obeyed God by the fear that perfected his faith; thus, his faith succeeded by his fear of God. Isn't it in the Word? (Gen. 22:9-14) Search it out.

²⁰ You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? ²¹ Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? ²² You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. ²³ And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. ²⁴ You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone. (Jas. 2:20-24 NIV; cf. Gen. 15:6)

Paul addresses Smyrna's poverty and suffering though they are spiritually rich. He doesn't lecture them about prosperity but encourages them in all their tribulations and poverty. We're to be content unless we are truly in need; then we should pray for a blessing, giving thanks, expecting it before it arrives. If we suffer for the faith, we're told to rejoice and endure to the end to gain the crown of life. The victories are spiritual before they appear.

Smyrna's church was persecuted and put to death, but Jesus said, *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.* (Rev. 2:11) He goads us on, encouraging and warning us.

To the assembly in **Pergamos**, the Word penetrates our own hearts and souls; it's a weapon against sin; we should be careful to listen to it: *For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* (Heb. 4:12)

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We live by faith in His words through the Spirit. All who are under the law are obligated to keep the law, but it condemns them since they can't, making them slaves to guilt till they turn from sin and call out to God for His great mercies; that's how the law works as a school master. Now Christ has taken our place in judgment and has sent His Spirit to make us holy and blameless. (Rom. 8:9-17; Jn. 15:1-11) He makes living a righteous life our desire by a new nature. Walking by faith should become a habit.

In ancient times, the king of Moab hired Balaam to curse the Israelites, but God refused to curse them, making him bless them instead. (Num. 22–24) [Soothsayers are for hire, not prophets.] The prophet apostatized by contriving a way for God to curse the Hebrews. He knew God would destroy them if Balak were to lure them with idols and sexual immorality, and he advised him to do so. (Rev. 2:14; Num. 22; 25:1-18; 31:15-16) Israel paid a high price in the desert, but not all died; they'd been chosen by God.

Some so-called prophets draw their followers into lethargy by pleasing them, but a true prophet turns people from sin to righteousness by the warnings God gave us with *ears to hear*. By leniency on sin, a false prophet only proves he is a deceiver.

Pergamos was in the Roman province of Asia where Greeks called themselves “Babylonian kings.”¹¹⁴ Tradition says Antipas was baked to death in an idol by its worshipers in the city while he sang praises to God, enduring to the end.¹¹⁵ *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. (Rev. 2:17)* [Gr.: *nikaō*, conquer; *eime*, “saving,” means “if not/except.”]

To the angel of the assembly in **Thyatira**, Jesus twice names their works, saying the last were greater than the first; however, though they had done good deeds, some of them ignored sexual sins and idolatry. He'd send great trials unless they'd repent.

His servants were sexually immoral with a prophetess. Not all His servants obey God; some are worse than the world. Christ made sickness her bed and killed her children. He's a Lamb but a Lion to hypocrites. May we go on sinning? Repent or be judged:

²¹ And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. ²² Indeed I will cast her into a

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sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. ²³ 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. (Rev. 2:21-23 NKJV)

Yeshua considers our thoughts: *I am he which searcheth the minds and hearts* (in 2:23). We condemn ourselves by living in sin, but if we judge ourselves and repent, He's there for us. If we don't repent, we can harden our heart till we're reprobate. Only faith can return us to righteousness; let's not test it.

⁹ No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God. (1 Jn. 3:9 ESV)

Some are born of God; some are not. The prophetess' words were accepted by those who relished immoral ideas, but Jesus said, *I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.* (Mat. 5:28) If the Word is in us and we remain in Him, we're His forever, but words motivate actions, and their deeds prove our faith; therefore, what we believe decides our destiny.

The Spirit searches our hearts—how we think, speak, and behave, based on what we receive or reject. His words teach us to grow in knowledge; to resist sin; to supernaturally minister to His body as Christ in us, and to destroy the works of the devil. (Lk. 21:14-15; Ti. 1:9; Acts 10:1-11:18) By confessing our sins to God, we're cleansed and are empowered to overcome them.

Some saints in Pergamos kept themselves holy, rejecting the prophetess' impure teachings. The Lord commanded them to get rid of her and hold onto good works till His return, but would the others be rid of her words?

If our thoughts oppress us, we're not in sin, but our flesh seeks to enslave us till we put its sins to death. That's the carnal man's cry for help in Romans 7, resolved by focusing on the Spirit and resisting the mind of the flesh. The Holy Spirit is life, but the nature of the flesh is death. If we live by faith, we must also train our minds and their thoughts by faith. (Rom. 8:5-17)

The Scriptures broach the topic of sexuality with its required moral standards. Like salvation, it has responsibilities. Have we

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abused the gift by following our lusts and hiding under grace as we sin? Sexual immorality is not sanctified by marriage. If we let immoral ideas fester, we'll be lost in our unbelief. God sees us but is unseen while the lure of sin disregards His presence.

Sexuality and love unite a man with his wife physically and emotionally. It's the purpose of their wedding. We can't divorce love from sexuality and find fulfillment; their completion comes by the union of the two in marriage.

We might be teachers who aren't free ourselves. Churches bring people into community by similar beliefs, but only the truth makes us holy, not our agreements. If we're only willing to receive what we want to be true, we'll refuse the cross but expect its benefits. Living by faith in the Word, we put the nature of sin to death by the cross, binding us to His righteousness, and by the same cross, we rise to life in Jesus Christ our Savior. Now we take up the cross and die to the flesh, choosing life over death.

How can we live apart from good works? Will He say, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant. ... Enter into the joy of thy Lord?* (Mat. 25:21) or will it be, *Depart from me, you that work iniquity?* (from Mat. 7:23) Don't bet your life on grace without works, and don't trust in works except those by the Holy Spirit.

Revelation is prefaced by the spiritual issues in the church in order to prepare her for the end. Finding purity and peace of mind is like all other spiritual battles: by faith in the Scriptures, in the fear of God, we confess our sins to Him, persevering till we're free of them. *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* (1 Jn. 1:9)

Whether the victory comes in time or instantly, our faith is rewarded by leaving the past and pressing on to the future. After confessing our sin, we mustn't dwell on our remorse, but move forward. Regrets prevent our trust in His forgiveness; they drive us down but don't draw us closer. Constant regret is a dangerous place; we could stay there for years, but Christ calls us to move forward with thankful hearts because we're forgiven.

Are we neglecting His Holy Spirit, insulting His grace, and gambling away our covenant with God? Have the churches been falling away? Could we break the seal? Would we? Christ in us is our only hope of glory. His warnings must not be ignored. His

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truth sets us free, so let's choose the truth by faith in His words. *If we deny him, he will deny us. (2 Tim. 2:12)* The wise are trained watchmen on the wall who see the horsemen riding:

²⁶ “And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—

²⁷ ‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron;
They shall be dashed to pieces like
the potter’s vessels’—

as I also have received from My Father;²⁸ and I will give him the morning star. (Rev. 2:26-28 NKJV)

The morning star is like the Alpha and Omega as the first light of the morning and the last out at night.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

CHAPTER 3

3 “Write to the angel of the church in Sardis:

“The One who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars says: I know your works; you have a reputation for being alive, but you are dead.² Be alert and strengthen what remains, which is about to die, for I have not found your works complete before My God.

³ Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; keep it, and repent. But if you are not alert, I will come like a thief, and you have no idea at what hour I will come against you.⁴ But you have a few people in Sardis who have not defiled their clothes, and they will walk with Me in white, because they are worthy.⁵ In the same way, the victor will be dressed in white clothes, and I will never erase his name from the book of life but will acknowledge his name before My Father and before His angels.

⁶ “Anyone who has an ear should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.

⁷ “Write to the angel of the church in Philadelphia:

“The Holy One, the True One, the One who has the key of David, who opens and no one will close, and closes and no one opens says:⁸ I know your works. Because you have limited strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name, look, I have placed before you an open door that no one is able to close.⁹ Take note! I will make those from the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews and are not, but are lying—note this—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and they will know that I have loved you.¹⁰ Because you have kept My command to endure, I will also keep you from the hour of testing that is going to come over the whole world to test those who live on the earth.¹¹ I am coming quickly. Hold on to what you have, so that no one takes your crown.¹² The victor: I will make him a pillar in the sanctuary of My God, and he will never go out again. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God—the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God—and My new name.

¹³ “Anyone who has an ear should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.

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¹⁴ “Write to the angel of the church in Laodicea:

“The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Originator of God’s creation says: ¹⁵ I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were cold or hot. ¹⁶ So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of My mouth.

¹⁷ Because you say, ‘I’m rich; I have become wealthy and need nothing,’ and you don’t know that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked, ¹⁸ I advise you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire so that you may be rich, white clothes so that you may be dressed and your shameful nakedness not be exposed, and ointment to spread on your eyes so that you may see. ¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and discipline. So be committed and repent. ²⁰ Listen! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and have dinner with him, and he with Me. ²¹ The victor: I will give him the right to sit with Me on My throne, just as I also won the victory and sat down with My Father on His throne.

²² “Anyone who has an ear should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.” (Revelation 3:1-22 HCSB)

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The Christian community in **Sardis** was comfortable with an appearance of piety but was privately defiled. Outwardly, some of us look like fine people though we’re not alive and growing, but are dead and dying. God knows the secret thoughts of our hearts yet cleanses us when we confess our sins.

If we refuse to yield to His words, unless we repent, we’ll be lost forever. If we live for ourselves and not for God, perhaps we’ve never known who Him; we should read the Word every day, keeping Him in mind. He works through His words; when we live by faith, we fulfill them.

If our hearts are open to the Lord, we overcome by the truth that sets us free, and our names **are not** erased from the Scroll of Life. We’re rewarded for our faith on **the last day** when hypocrites cry out, “Lord, didn’t we prophesy, cast out demons, and do great works in your name?” and He replies, “I don’t know you,” and orders them out. (Mat. 7:21-3) Why wouldn’t He know them? Like the Ephesians, they’d left their first love. Yeshua says, *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life,*

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which is in the midst of the paradise of God. Trusting in His Spirit who works in us, we bear His fruit, not by mortal strength. (Gal. 5:22-6) To the few with clean clothes in Sardis, He says,

⁵In the same way, the victor will be dressed in white clothes, and I will never erase his name from the book of life but will acknowledge his name before My Father and before His angels. (Rev. 2:5 NKJV) [Be the victor!]

Yeshua addressed the **Philadelphia** church, which kept His command to endure. He opened a way for them to escape the hour of trial, the wrath, that's coming to the earth. (1 Cor. 10:13)

Opposing the apostles, a *synagogue of Satan* pretended to be true Jews but denied the prophets' words. Paul and Silas went to Berea where Jews were nobler than in Thessalonica. The Berean Jews listened with interest, searching the Word daily, but Thessalonian Jews persecuted Jewish believers there. (Acts 17:1-12)

Some of us confess the faith but hold onto Mosaic law; but a new covenant is even unlike Abraham's where circumcision and tithing were required; like the law, circumcision lost its meaning, and as Jesus said, kings do not tax their children, but God loves a cheerful giver. Neither the fathers nor the apostles kept the six hundred thirteen laws, which remain to convict sinners.

All former covenants are replaced by the new one. Superior to the others, it's based on the power of the indestructible life of Jesus Christ. The new covenant empowers us to live by our faith in Him. (Jer. 31:31-32; Mat. 17:24-27; Heb. 7:11-22; Gal. 5:1)

Believing in Yeshua isn't rigid or impersonal. He writes His commands in circumcised hearts. His Spirit leads, walks beside, and has our backs, *saying, This is the way, walk in it (from Is. 30:21)*. We who overcome are pillars in the true Sanctuary; keeping His command to endure, we obtain the high calling as one together in Jesus Christ at the right hand of God. (Rev. 3:12)

The church in **Laodicea** is materially wealthy but spiritually impoverished, lukewarm, not zealous to serve. Giving thanks for her prosperity, she's unaware of her poverty. Loving this world is not loving God. Unless we repent, He'll remove the church from our nation, vomiting us up for straddling our affections. By our denial of the truth, we're lukewarm, distasteful to God.

Many of us are idolaters who want God our way: *They that make a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable*

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things shall not profit; and they are their own witnesses; they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed. ... ¹⁸ *They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, and they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand. (Is. 44:11, 18)* He shuts the eyes of idolaters. If we don't understand His inspired words, He has shut our eyes because of our idolatry. We make Him out to be like us, but God is not like us; His righteousness is true; He is faithful to His words.

If He showed wrath to the Jews who were in disobedience, what will He do about us who claim their heritage but compromise Christ's righteousness? Let's recall the moment we vowed our lives to Him and rediscover it. (Rom. 10:1-17; cf. Dt. 30:9-20)

¹⁹As many as I love, I rebuke and discipline. So be committed and repent. ... ²¹The victor: I will give him the right to sit with Me on My throne, just as I also won the victory and sat down with My Father on His throne. (Rev. 3:19, 21 HCSB)

Less is expected of new believers than of teachers, pastors, prophets, apostles, and of us who have believed for many years. If we've not been changing, then we've neither been believing nor growing. In that case, we have been the false teachers, false prophets, false apostles, or false believers and must repent.

Yeshua was speaking to all congregations, not just to seven. Like the Laodiceans, churches [or believers] who think they are strong and spiritual are weak and carnal, living in vanity. The Spirit calls us to be alert, ready for the Lord at all times.

Jesus knocks at our heart's door to speak with us. If we keep turning away, shutting the door, we could die in our sins; but if we open up and welcome in His words, He renews His sheep who hear His voice. This is the hour. Wake up!

Walking in His Spirit daily, we choose goodness and live in humility; showing mercy with grace, we love. We live by our faith, not by what we see. (Hab. 2:4; Gal. 3:11-14; Heb. 10:35-39) In the end, words reveal the contents of our hearts, telling if we live by the Spirit or by the flesh.

¹² He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

¹³ And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. (Lk. 19:12-13)

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

CHAPTER 4

4 After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."² At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.³ And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and ruby. A rainbow that shone like an emerald encircled the throne.⁴ Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads.⁵ From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God.⁶ Also in front of the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal.

In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back.⁷ The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle.⁸ Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying:

"Holy, holy, holy
is the Lord God Almighty,
who was, and is, and is to come."

⁹ Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever,¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say:

¹¹ "You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they were created
and have their being."
(Revelation 4:1-11 NIV)

The Revelation

Insights

John hears a voice that alerts and transports him to heaven where he observes the Lord God Almighty, seated on a throne. Every day supernatural ones observe us, and angels minister to the saints according to the will of God, yet we're oblivious.

He knows the intentions and inclinations of our hearts and cares for our lives although we're often unaware of His presence. Heroes of the faith are watching us as angels guard us all the day and night. (Heb. 11:1–12:1) God gives us our every heartbeat, every breath, continuously restoring our body's cells, speaking silently to us; we call it intuition. He is unlimited whose Essence is Spirit; His ways are unsearchable though He is discoverable.

Jesus said, *Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?* (Mat. 7:15-16) We are blind to our own faults, but our words and deeds reveal them. *The LORD is a refuge to those who fear Him.* (Ps. 91:1-2)

We must be alert. The Lord will come for each of us when we least expect Him. From the babe to the aged, we'll wake from our sleep to fall at His feet when everyone gives account of himself and only those of us who have lived by faith are chosen; thus, His Kingdom is always at hand.

The *living creatures* (chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, 14:3; 15:7, and 19:4) are not the same as beasts (in 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, and 20). In Greek *zoon* means creatures with life, or *zoe*. In Revelation they are distinguished from the wild beasts, which have fallen from heaven with the scarlet beast, Satan. *Zoon* are filled with vitality, worshiping in heaven; whereas *therion* are fallen out of heaven as wild beasts that rise out of the sea, the abyss, the bottomless pit, or the earth. [Gr.: *therion* is used for wild beasts; *zoon*, for living creatures or living beasts.]

In chapter 5 the living creatures sing a song that had never been sung as the elders join them to worship the Lamb who has ransomed humankind by His blood. (5:9)