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By Dan Maines

## **Revelation 2**

### **Revelation 2:1**

"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this:"

† Christ's authority over His churches is absolute. He walks in their midst, observing their works.

† Ephesus was a great city with the temple of Artemis, as noted by Strabo (Geography 14.1.20). The church faced pressure

from paganism.

### **Revelation 2:2-3**

"I know your deeds and your labor and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil people, and you have put those who call themselves apostles to the test, and they are not, and you found them to be false; and you have perseverance and have endured on account of My name, and have not become weary."

† The Ephesian church was commended for discernment and endurance. False apostles were exposed, reflecting Paul's warning in Acts 20:29-30.

### **Revelation 2:4-5**

"But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and I will remove your lampstand from its place-unless you repent."

† Orthodoxy without love is incomplete. Their danger was loss of Christ's presence, symbolized by removal of the lampstand.

### **Revelation 2:6**

"But you have this, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate."

† The Nicolaitans promoted compromise with idolatry and immorality. Early fathers such as Irenaeus (Against Heresies 1.26.3) condemned their practices.

### **Revelation 2:7**

"The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who overcomes, I will grant to eat from the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God."

† The promise to overcomers restores access to the tree of life, lost in Eden but regained in Christ.

### **Revelation 2:8-9**

"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this: 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."

† Smyrna faced slander and poverty but was spiritually rich. Opposition from hostile Jews is identified as satanic.

† Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna, was later martyred there (Martyrdom of Polycarp 12-15), showing the endurance of this church.

### **Revelation 2:10-11**

"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 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."

† The "ten days" signify a short, defined trial. Faithfulness even to death secures the crown of life.

† The second death is eternal separation from God, which overcomers escape.

### **Revelation 2:12-13**

"And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this: I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; and you hold firmly to My name, and did not deny your faith in Me, even in the days of Antipas, My faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells."

† Pergamum was a center of emperor worship, called "Satan's throne."

† Antipas, an early martyr, bore testimony there.

### **Revelation 2:14-15**

"But I have a few things against you, because you have some there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit sexual immorality. So you too, have some who in the same way hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans."

† The teaching of Balaam symbolized compromise with idolatry and immorality. Like Israel of old, some in the church were seduced into sin.

### **Revelation 2:16-17**

"Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will wage war against them with the sword of My mouth. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows except the one who receives it."

† Repentance was urgent. The sword of Christ's word judges compromise. The white stone symbolized acquittal in ancient courts, and the hidden manna represented divine sustenance.

### **Revelation 2:18-19**

"And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this: I know your deeds, and your love, and faith, and service, and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first."

† Thyatira was commended for growth in love and service, unlike Ephesus.

### **Revelation 2:20-21**

"But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her sexual immorality."

† Jezebel symbolized corrupt teaching within the church. Just as the Old Testament Jezebel corrupted Israel, so false teachers corrupted Christ's servants.

### **Revelation 2:22-23**

"Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. And I will kill her children with plague, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds."

† Christ's judgment upon false teachers reveals His omniscience and justice.

### **Revelation 2:24-25**

"But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them-I place no other burden on you. Nevertheless what you have, hold firmly until I come."

† The faithful remnant was to resist compromise and hold fast until Christ's imminent coming in judgment.

### **Revelation 2:26-29**

"The one who overcomes, and the one who keeps My deeds

until the end, I will give him authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are shattered, as I also have received authority from My Father; and I will give him the morning star. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

† Overcomers share in Christ's authority, fulfilling Psalm 2:8-9. The "morning star" symbolizes Christ Himself (Revelation 22:16).

### **How it applies to us today**

- † Christ walks among His churches still, observing and judging.
- † Love and truth must remain together, neither cold orthodoxy nor corrupt compromise honors Him.
- † Faithfulness under persecution leads to the crown of life.
- † His promises belong to overcomers who endure in truth and obedience.

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

### **Source Index**

- † Strabo, Geography 14.1.20 – Ephesus and temple of Artemis
- † Irenaeus, Against Heresies 1.26.3 – Nicolaitan practices
- † Polycarp, Martyrdom of Polycarp 12-15 – martyrdom at Smyrna
- † Josephus, Antiquities 18.6.5 – emperor worship in Asia Minor
- † Chrysostom, Homilies on Revelation – Christ judging His churches

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