

NOON BIBLE STUDY: REVELATION 2: THYATIRA

REVELATION 2:18-29 — THYATIRA

THYATIRA IS MENTIONED ONLY ONCE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT BEFORE THIS RECORD. PAUL ARRIVES IN PHILIPPI AND AT HIS FIRST GATHERING AND TEACHING OPPORTUNITY, HE MEETS A WONDERFUL WOMAN NAMED LYDIA:

ACTS 16:14 - A WOMAN NAMED LYDIA, FROM THE CITY OF THYATIRA, A SELLER OF PURPLE FABRICS, A WORSHIPER OF GOD, WAS LISTENING; AND THE LORD OPENED HER HEART TO RESPOND TO THE THINGS SPOKEN BY PAUL.

LYDIA WILL RESPOND TO THE GOSPEL AND SHE AND HER HOUSEHOLD WILL BE BAPTIZED, BECOMING THE FIRST CHRISTIANS OF MACEDONIA. THE DESCRIPTION OF LYDIA FROM ACTS ACTUALLY GIVES US SOME INSIGHT INTO THE HISTORICAL SETTING OF THE CITY OF THYATIRA. FROM MOST ACCOUNTS, THYATIRA WAS NOT A POLITICALLY OR MILITARILY SIGNIFICANT CITY. THYATIRA WAS KNOWN FOR ITS ECONOMICS, JUST LIKE LYDIA, THE SELLER OF PURPLE FABRICS WAS.

"THYATIRA WAS A PROSPEROUS COMMERCIAL CENTER. IT WAS THE MANUFACTURING AND MARKETING HUB OF THE ROMAN PROVINCE OF ASIA...THERE WERE GUILDS FOR WOOL WORKERS, LINEN WORKERS, MAKERS OF OUTER GARMENTS, DYERS, LEATHER WORKERS, TANNER'S, POTTER'S, BAKERS, SLAVE DEALERS, BRONZESMITHS AND SHOEMAKERS. WHICH MEANT NO ONE COULD POSSIBLY "MAKE IT" FINANCIALLY IN THAT CITY UNLESS HE WAS A MEMBER OF ONE OF THOSE GUILDS. NOT TO JOIN A TRADE GUILD MEANT RISKING FINANCIAL LOSS...MEMBERSHIP IN A TRADE GUILD REQUIRED PARTICIPATION IN THE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES OF THE GUILD. THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN PROBLEMATIC FOR MANY CHRISTIANS BECAUSE SUCH SOCIAL ACTIVITIES WERE INEXTRICABLY TIED UP WITH THE WORSHIP OF OTHER LORDS." (DARRELL, W. JOHNSON, "DISCIPLESHIP ON THE EDGE," PAGE 88)

APPARENTLY THESE GUILD MEETINGS WOULD DEVOLVE INTO A MIX OF DRUNKEN RELIGIOUS PRATICES AND SEXUALLY CHARGED BUFFETS. NOT A GREAT SITUATION FOR A CHRISTIAN LOOKING FOR A UNION JOB.

RELIGIOUSLY, "THYATIRA WAS THE CENTER FOR THE WORSHIP OF APOLLO, THE GOD OF SUNLIGHT, ALSO CALLED HELIOS. IN FACT, APOLLO WAS THOUGHT TO BE THE "DIVINE GUARDIAN" OF THE CITY. HE WAS THE PATRON GOD OF MANY OF THE CITY'S TRADE GUILDS AND WAS REGULARLY HONORED AT GUILD FUNCTIONS. (MYTHOLOGY TAUGHT THAT APOLLO WAS THE SON OF ZEUS, WHO WAS THE KING OF ALL THE OTHER GODS). FURTHERMORE, WE KNOW THE PEOPLE OF THYATIRA BELIEVED THAT THE ROMAN EMPEROR WAS THE INCARNATION OF APOLLO. IN THAT CITY BOTH APOLLO AND (EMPEROR) WERE NAMED "SON OF ZEUS" AKA "SON OF THE HIGH GOD." THE EMPEROR OF THE TIME, DOMITIAN, NAMED HIS SON "SON OF GOD" AND ON HIS COINS DOMITIAN'S SON IS PORTRAYED HOLDING SEVEN STARS." (JOHNSON, PAGE 87-88)

AND SO, HOW WONDERFUL IS IT THAT THE FIRST WORDS THE THYATIRAN CHURCH WOULD READ FROM JESUS WERE THIS:

"THE SON OF GOD, WHO HAS EYES LIKE A FLAME OF FIRE, AND HIS FEET ARE LIKE BURNISHED BRONZE, SAYS THIS..." (REV. 2:18)

THIS IS THE *ONLY TIME* IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION THE PHRASE "SON OF GOD" IS USED.

REVELATION 2:19 - WHAT CHRIST KNOWS...

UNLIKE EPHESUS, THYATIRA HAD BEEN DOING BETTER IN LOVE, FAITH, SERVICE AND PERSEVERANCE THAN THEY HAD IN THE PAST. THIS IS AN EXCELLENT THING TO BE COMMENDED FOR! HOWEVER, JESUS DOES HAVE CONCERNS THAT HE WILL ADDRESS.

REVELATION 2:20-23 - BUT I HAVE THIS AGAINST YOU...

APPARENTLY THE CHURCH OF THYATIRA HAS BEEN LED ASTRAY BY A WOMAN WHO CLAIMED TO BE A PROPHETESS. THAT'S NOT A SMALL CLAIM: TO BE A PROPHETESS IMPLIES YOU CLAIM TO SPEAK FOR GOD. THE RESULT OF HER TEACHING WAS LEADING PEOPLE TO COMMIT ACTS OF IMMORALITY AND THE PARTICIPATION OF WORSHIP OF IDOLS (BY EATING FOOD SACRIFICED TO THEM). FOR HER DECEPTION TO BE EFFECTIVE, IT PROBABLY DIDN'T SOUND LIKE: "HEY EVERYONE LET'S WORSHIP IDOLS." IT WAS SUBTLE, PROBABLY GRADUAL, AND LIKELY COMPELLING. AS WE HAVE SEEN BEFORE, THESE TWO SINS WERE COMMON IN THE ANCIENT WORLD AT THIS PERIOD. SEXUAL IMMORALITY AND ENDULGING IN PLEASURES CENTERED AROUND THE RELIGION OF FALSE GODS WERE PREDOMINANT FORMS OF WORSHIP IN THIS REGION, AND AS WE DISCOVERED ALREADY, WERE A PART OF THE CULTURE OF THE ECONOMIC AND MANUFACTURING WORLD.

JESUS CALLS THIS FALSE PROPHETESS "JEZEBEL". JEZEBEL IS IN CONTENTION FOR THE WORST PERSON SPOKEN OF IN THE ENTIRE BIBLE. SHE WAS THE WIFE OF KING AHAB OF ISRAEL AND WAS ROTTEN TO THE CORE. SHE GUIDED HIM AND THE NORTHERN KINGDOM OF ISRAEL INTO DEEP IDOLATRY AND SIN. SHE SPREAD BAAL WORSHIP THROUGHOUT THE LAND AND VIOLENTLY OPPOSED YAHWEH AND HIS PROPHETS (MOST NOTABLY ELIJAH).

HERE'S HOW THE OLD TESTAMENT DESCRIBES AHAB AND JEZEBEL'S REIGN:

1 KINGS 16:29-33 (NLT) - AHAB SON OF OMRI BEGAN TO RULE OVER ISRAEL IN THE THIRTY-EIGHTH YEAR OF KING ASA'S REIGN IN JUDAH. HE REIGNED IN SAMARIA TWENTY-TWO YEARS. 30 BUT AHAB SON OF OMRI DID WHAT WAS EVIL IN THE LORD'S SIGHT, EVEN MORE THAN ANY OF THE KINGS BEFORE HIM. 31 AND AS THOUGH IT WERE NOT ENOUGH TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF JEROBOAM, HE MARRIED JEZEBEL, THE DAUGHTER OF KING ETHBAAL OF THE SIDONIANS, AND HE BEGAN TO BOW DOWN IN WORSHIP OF BAAL. 32 FIRST AHAB BUILT A TEMPLE AND AN ALTAR FOR BAAL IN SAMARIA. 33 THEN HE SET UP AN ASHERAH POLE. HE DID MORE TO PROVOKE THE ANGER OF THE LORD, THE GOD OF ISRAEL, THAN ANY OF THE OTHER KINGS OF ISRAEL BEFORE HIM.

1 KINGS 21:25-26 (NLT) - (NO ONE ELSE SO COMPLETELY SOLD HIMSELF TO WHAT WAS EVIL IN THE LORD'S SIGHT AS AHAB DID UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF HIS WIFE JEZEBEL. 26 HIS WORST OUTRAGE WAS WORSHIPING IDOLS JUST AS THE AMORITES HAD DONE-- THE PEOPLE WHOM THE LORD HAD DRIVEN OUT FROM THE LAND AHEAD OF THE ISRAELITES.)

"JEZEBEL, LIKE BALAAM, WAS IN THE THE OLD TESTAMENT STORY AN OUTSIDER WHO SEDUCED GOD'S BRIDE INTO UNFAITHFULNESS...IN THYATIRA A PARTICULAR WOMAN TAKE ON BOTH THE EVIL CHARACTER OF JEZEBEL AND THE PROPHETIC ROLE OF BALAAM, AND BEGINS TO TEACH, AS IF FROM GOD, NEW 'DEEP THINGS' WHICH SOME MEMBERS OF THIS TRONG AND LIVELY CHURCH ARE ONLY TOO WILLING TO EXPLORE." (MICHAEL WILCOCK, "THE MESSAGE OF REVELATION", PAGES 49-50)

IF JESUS CALLS YOU "JEZEBEL" THAT'S A PRETTY BIG DEAL AND SERIOUS ACCUSATION. SO WHAT ELSE DO WE KNOW ABOUT THIS WOMAN?

"I GAVE HER TIME TO REPENT" - BUT SHE DOESN'T WANT TO.

THIS WOMAN MUST HAVE BEEN SOMEONE WHO JESUS LOVED AND WHO SENT WARNING AND A CALL FOR REPENTANCE TO. BUT AFTER A PERIOD OF TIME, IT WAS CLEAR TO HIM THAT SHE WAS UNWILLING TO REPENT AND NOW JESUS WARNS THE CHURCH OF HER EVIL.

JUDGMENT COMING UPON HER...

HER LACK OF REPENTANCE IS NOW BRINGING JUDGMENT. HER JUDGMENT WOULD MANIFEST ITSELF IN A SICKNESS WHICH WOULD ALSO AFFECT THOSE WHO COMMITTED ADULTERY WITH HER. THOSE WHO BELIEVED HER TEACHING WERE THOSE WHO "COMMITTED ADULTERY" WITH HER AND THE RESULT OF THEIR "ADULTERY" WAS THE PRODUCING OF "CHILDREN" WHO WERE THOSE WHO FOLLOWED HER TEACHING. THOSE WHO DID THIS WILL BE "KILL(ED) WITH PESTILENCE" AS A RESULT. THIS MAY BE A LITERAL DYING AS RESULT OF THEIR SIN OR IT MAY ALSO BE THAT BECAUSE OF THE JUDGMENT UPON HER AND THOSE WHO FOLLOWED HER, JESUS WOULD STOP ANY MORE "CHILDREN" (OR FOLLOWERS) FROM BEING MADE.

THIS IS A STERN AND DIRECT WARNING FROM JESUS. THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE FULL PICTURE OF WHO JESUS IS. MEEK AND MILD, WELCOMING THE SINNER, AND FIERCE AND FIERY AGAINST THOSE WHO REBEL AGAINST HIM AND TURN OTHERS ASTRAY. YET YOU SEE BOTH SIDES OF THE TRUE CHRIST HERE EVEN IN THIS PASSAGE - HE DECLARES THAT THOSE WHO HAVE FOLLOWED HER TEACHINGS ARE GOING TO BE THROWN INTO "GREAT TRIBULATION", "UNLESS THEY REPENT OF HER DEEDS (V. 22). EVEN IN THE INTENSITY OF HIS WARNING, THERE IS A CHANCE TO BE FORGIVEN.

WHY JUDGMENT?

THE END RESULT OF THE JUDGMENT UPON JEZEBEL AND HER CHILDREN FOR THE CHURCH WAS THAT "ALL THE CHURCHES WILL KNOW THAT I AM HE WHO SEARCHES THE MINDS AND HEARTS..."

THIS IS AN AMAZING STATEMENT FROM CHRIST. IN OTHER WORDS, HE WASN'T GOING TO LET HER GET AWAY WITH HER EVIL. HE WAS GOING TO BRING JUDGMENT UPON HER, BEFORE THE DAY OF JUDGMENT IN THE END, TO SHOW THAT HE KNOWS WHAT IS GOING ON AND SEES WHAT IS HAPPENING. THIS IS FASCINATING. WE DO LIVE IN A WORLD WHERE A LOT OF EVIL GOES UNPUNISHED, THIS SIDE OF ETERNITY. WE KNOW THAT IN THE END EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE SORTED OUT AND NO EVIL PERSON WHO DIED THINKING THEY WERE RIGHT WILL REMAIN THAT WAY.

HOWEVER, THERE ARE SOME INSTANCES WHERE JUDGMENT COMES EARLY, AND ESPECIALLY IN CASES WHERE GOD'S PEOPLE, OR GOD'S REPUTATION IS INVOLVED. IN THIS CASE, JEZEBEL'S DEEDS ARE GOING TO BE EXPOSED AND SHE WILL BE DEALT WITH. WE HAVE PROBABLY ALL SEEN INSTANCES WHERE MEN OR WOMEN WHO CLAIM TO SPEAK FOR GOD BUT ARE LIVING DOUBLE LIVES ARE BROUGHT DOWN. PASTORS WHO ARE USING TITHES FOR THEIR OWN GAIN, CHURCH LEADERS WHO ARE COMMITTING ADULTERY, REPRESENTATIVES OF GOD WHO ARE ABUSING CHILDREN, CHURCHES WHICH ARE FILLED WITH ALL KIND OF EVIL - ARE EXPOSED AND BROUGHT DOWN. WE HEAR ABOUT THIS ON THE NEWS OR IN CHRISTIAN PUBLICATIONS AND WE ARE SAD TO SEE HOW THESE PEOPLE HAVE FALLEN.

BUT WHAT IF WHAT WE DON'T SEE AT FIRST IS THAT THIS MAY BE CHRIST'S DOING. BRINGING JUDGMENT UPON THOSE WHO CLAIM TO SPEAK FOR HIM WHO DO NOT, AND REBUKING THOSE WHO CLAIM TO REPRESENT HIM, BUT DO NOT. WE SHOULD MOURN THEIR EVIL AND SIN BUT ALSO TAKE AWAY THAT JESUS REMAINS THE ONE WHO "SEARCHES THE MINDS AND HEARTS..."

1 PETER 4:17A - FOR IT IS TIME FOR JUDGMENT TO BEGIN WITH THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD:...

REVELATION 2:24-25 - REBUKE, BUT NOT FOR ALL...

THIS REBUKE FROM JESUS WAS NOT FOR EVERYONE IN THE CHURCH. SOME PEOPLE DIDN'T FOLLOW AFTER "JEZEBEL'S" FALSE TEACHING. THOSE FOLKS ARE COMMENDED AND TOLD TO HOLD FAST WHAT THEY HELD TO UNTIL HE CAME. JUST BECAUSE THEY WERE DOING WELL AT THE MOMENT, DIDN'T MEAN THEY COULD EASE UP. IN FACT THEY PROBABLY NEEDED TO HOLD TIGHTER.

THYATIRA GIVES A UNIQUE WINDOW INTO SOME OF THE REALITIES OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

1 - EACH CHURCH IS DIFFERENT - EPHESUS WAS STRONG AGAINST FALSEHOOD BUT LEFT THEIR LOVE BEHIND. THYATIRA WAS GOOD AT LOVE BUT WAS TOLERATING FALSEHOOD. EPHESUS STARTED WELL BUT WAS OFF TRACK OF LATE. THYATIRA DIDN'T START AS WELL BUT WERE CURRENTLY ON TRACK. EVERY CHURCH HAS THEIR OWN UNIQUE STRENGTHS AND UNIQUE WEAKNESSES. WE SHOULD NOT COMPARE OURSELVES TO OTHER CHURCHES BUT HOLD UP CHRIST AS OUR EXAMPLE AND HIS WORD AS OUR STANDARD. WE SHOULD CELEBRATE WHAT OTHER CHURCHES ARE DOING WELL AND CULTIVATE A HEART TO STRENGTHEN WHAT IS WEAK IN OUR OWN CHURCH RATHER THAN POINT OUT THE WEAKNESSES IN OTHERS.

2 - EACH CHURCH IS DIVERSE - AFTER A LENGTHY DESCRIPTION OF THE EVIL "PROPHETESS" WHO WAS MISLEADING THYATIRA AND THE EVIL THAT WAS ASSOCIATED WITH THAT WORK, JESUS SAYS "TO THE REST WHO ARE IN THYATIRA, WHO DO NOT HOLD THIS TEACHING....I PLACE NO OTHER BURDEN ON YOU." IN OTHER WORDS, WITHIN THE SAME CHURCH WERE PEOPLE WE WERE TOLERATING FALSEHOOD AND THOSE WE WERE NOT. AND JESUS KNOWS THE DIFFERENCE. AND HE ADDRESSES THESE ISSUES DIRECTLY TO THE PEOPLE TO WHOM THEY CONCERN.

3 - EACH CHURCH IS A COLLECTIVE OF INDIVIDUALS - THE CHURCH IS A WHOLE GROUP MADE UP OF INDIVIDUAL PARTS. JESUS LOOKS AT THE CHURCH AS A WHOLE BUT ALSO AT EACH INDIVIDUAL MEMBER AT THE SAME TIME. HE ADDRESSES "JEZEBEL" DIRECTLY AND THEN THOSE WHO FOLLOW HER TEACHING. HE SAYS AFTER WARNING THEM ABOUT HER EVIL TEACHING "I WILL GIVE EACH ONE OF YOU ACCORDING TO YOUR DEEDS". EVEN WITHIN OR AMONG A CHURCH, WE ARE INDIVIDUALLY JUDGED AND KNOWN BY CHRIST. THE CONNECTION TO THE COMMUNITY IS CRITICALLY IMPORTANT IN MANY WAYS, BUT AT THE END OF THE DAY, WE STILL STAND ALONE BEFORE THE THRONE.

A BIG QUESTION TO ASK WHEN ASSESSING FALSE TEACHING IS HOW IT AFFECTS SOMEONE'S RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. THERE ARE SOME DOCTRINES AND SOME INSTANCES WHERE THE DOCTRINE IS UNBIBLICAL AND SHOULD BE ADDRESSED, BUT FROM A PRACTICAL STANDPOINT THE DOCTRINE IS NOT INTERFERING WITH THE PERSON'S DEVOTION TO AND RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

FOR EXAMPLE: THERE REALLY ISN'T A CLEAR ANSWER FROM SCRIPTURE WHETHER OR NOT OUR BELOVED GOLDFISH BUBBLES IS GOING TO BE RESURRECTED TO ETERNAL LIFE IN THE COMING KINGDOM OF GOD. THE QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT THERE ARE ANIMALS IN THE AGE TO COME IS CLEAR AND EMPHATICALLY, "YES". WE ALSO KNOW THAT THERE WILL BE NO MORE PAIN, SORROW OR SUFFERING IN THE END. ONE COULD CONCLUDE THAT PERHAPS IN GOD'S GOOD LOVE AND KINDNESS, BELOVED BETS LIKE BUBBLES THE GOLDFISH WILL BE THERE. BUT IN TRUTH, THE BIBLE DOESN'T GIVE EXPLICIT ANSWERS.

SO IF MY CHILD THINKS THAT HE WILL SEE BELOVED BUBBLES WHEN CHRIST COMES BACK, THAT'S PROBABLY NOT SOMETHING HE NEEDS TO REPENT OF. HOWEVER, IF HE GROWS UP AND STARTS PREACHING HIS ASSUMED IDEA AS GOSPEL TRUTH, THAT WOULD BE PROBLEMATIC. IF HE SETS UP A SHRINE IN HIS BATHROOM IN MEMORY OF BUBBLES AND STARTS EACH DAY WITH A PRAYER TO BUBBLES, THAT'S NOT GOOD. IF HE TALKS MORE ABOUT BUBBLES THAN HE DOES CHRIST, WE PROBABLY NEED TO HAVE A CONVERSATION.

I KNOW PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE UNBIBLICAL TEACHING BUT WHO STILL CONFESS JESUS AS LORD AND LIVE FOR HIM FAITHFULLY EACH DAY. I STILL WANT TO ENGAGE WITH THOSE FOLKS WHEN OPPORTUNITY ARISES ON MATTERS OF BIBLICAL TRUTH, BUT I ALSO KNOW THAT PRACTICALLY SPEAKING THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IS (FROM WHAT I CAN OBSERVE) UNHINDERED. IT WOULD BE WRONG TO MAKE A SWEEPING STATEMENT THAT "ALL _____ ARE GOING TO HELL" FOR YOU DO NOT KNOW EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES _____.

AS A GENERAL PRINCIPLE WE SHOULD HOLD FORTH BIBLICAL TRUTH, HELP DISCERN RIGHT FROM WRONG, AND REMAIN HUMBLE AND TEACHABLE ALONG THE WAY. WE NEED TO DISCOVER HOW TO REMAIN LOVING WHILE WE TAKE SERIOUS THE NEED FOR TRUTH. WE NEED TO DISCOVER HOW TO TAKE SERIOUS THE NEED FOR TRUTH WHILE WE REMAIN LOVING.

WE KNOW LOVE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT, BUT WE NEED TO DEVELOP THE SPIRITUAL MATURITY TO DISCERN. IN FACT, IT IS A QUALITY OF LOVE TO "REJOICE WITH THE TRUTH" (1 CORINTHIANS 13:6). IT'S TOO COMMON THAT WE TEND TOWARDS ONE OR THE OTHER AND IN SUCH CASES, WE NEED TO HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES AND REPENT.

REVELATION 2:26-29 - TO HIM WHO OVERCOMES...

HERE OVERCOMING IS PAIRED WITH KEEPING "MY DEEDS UNTIL THE END (2:26)." WHEN JESUS OPENED HIS MESSAGE TO THYATIRA, HE COMMENDED THEM FOR THEIR DEEDS AND LOVE AND FAITH AND SERVICE AND PERSEVERANCE (2:19). AS HE CLOSES HIS LETTER TO THEM HE ENCOURAGES THEM TO KEEP THOSE DEEDS UNTIL THE END. THEIR FAITHFULNESS YESTERDAY WAS NO GUARANTEE OF FAITHFULNESS TODAY AND FAITHFULNESS TODAY WAS NO GUARANTEE OF FAITHFULNESS TOMORROW. TO OVERCOME, WE KEEP THOSE DEEDS, UNTIL THE END.

AND FOR THOSE WHO DO, "AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS...WITH A ROD OF IRON" WITH THE AUTHORITY OF GOD HIMSELF! WHOA. THIS IS A REFERENCE TO AN IMPORTANT MESSIANIC PSALM, PSALM 2 WHICH SPEAKS OF THE MESSIAH'S AUTHORITY IN THE END.

PSALM 2:2, 4, 6-9 (NLT) - THE KINGS OF THE EARTH PREPARE FOR BATTLE; THE RULERS PLOT TOGETHER AGAINST THE LORD AND AGAINST HIS ANOINTED ONE. 4 BUT THE ONE WHO RULES IN HEAVEN LAUGHS... 6 FOR THE LORD DECLARES, "I HAVE PLACED MY CHOSEN KING ON THE THRONE IN JERUSALEM, ON MY HOLY MOUNTAIN." 7 THE KING PROCLAIMS THE LORD'S DECREE: "THE LORD SAID TO ME, 'YOU ARE MY SON. TODAY I HAVE BECOME YOUR FATHER. 8 ONLY ASK, AND I WILL GIVE YOU THE NATIONS AS YOUR INHERITANCE, THE WHOLE EARTH AS YOUR POSSESSION. 9 YOU WILL BREAK THEM WITH AN IRON ROD AND SMASH THEM LIKE CLAY POTS.'"

THIS PSALM PROPHETICALLY DECLARES THAT YAHWEH WILL INSTALL HIS KING TO RULE THE NATIONS WITH POWER AND AUTHORITY. THIS KING WILL NOT ONLY BE ANOINTED BY GOD, HE WILL BE THE SON OF GOD! THROUGH REVELATION 2:26-27, THE **SON OF GOD** NOW OFFERS SOME OF THAT AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS TO THOSE WHO ARE HIS PEOPLE. READ THAT AGAIN: THE ~~TRUE~~ SON OF GOD NOW OFFERS SOME OF THAT AUTHORITY TO THOSE WHO ARE HIS PEOPLE. THE AUTHORITY AND THE POWER RESTS NOT WITH THE SUN GOD APOLLO OR HIS SO-CALLED SON, DOMITIAN, BUT WITH JESUS, THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD..

OH AND THE TRUE SON OF GOD IS GOING TO GIVE THEM THE MORNING STAR TOO.

APOLLO, THE MAIN DEITY WORSHIPED IN THYATIRA, WAS SAID TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RISING OF THE SUN EACH DAY. APOLLO WAS THE "SON OF ZEUS", THE HIGHEST GOD IN THE PANTHEON AND HIS JOB WAS TO PULL THE SUN ACROSS THE SKY BY PULLING IT BEHIND HIS CHARIOT.

SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING THE TIME THESE CHRISTIANS ARE LIVING IN WAS INCREDIBLY DARK - BUT THE SEASON OF FALSE JEZEBEL'S INFLUENCE MUST HAVE BEEN ESPECIALLY DARK. AND HERE JESUS SAYS "FEAR NOT, THE MORNING STAR, AKA THE SUN, WILL SHINE AND BRING BLAZING AND ETERNAL LIGHT. LATER IN REVELATION, THIS PHRASE "MORNING STAR" IS REPEATED. THOUGH I HESITATE TO JUMP AHEAD, IT'S WORTH HIGHLIGHTING HERE:

REVELATION 22:16 - "I, JESUS, HAVE SENT MY ANGEL TO TESTIFY TO YOU THESE THINGS FOR THE CHURCHES. I AM THE ROOT AND THE DESCENDANT OF DAVID, THE BRIGHT MORNING STAR."

IF THE CHURCH WAS CONFUSED AS TO WHAT THE MORNING STAR MEANT IN 2:28, BY THE END OF REVELATION IT WOULD BE MADE CLEAR. JESUS *HIMSELF* IS THE BRIGHT MORNING STAR. HE PROMISES THOSE WHO OVERCOME TO BRING GLORIOUS LIGHT TO THE EARTH AND DISPEL, FOREVER, THE DARKNESS. THIS LIGHT COMES WHEN HE RETURNS BECAUSE HE IS THE LIGHT.

REVELATION 21:10, 23-27 - AND HE CARRIED ME AWAY IN THE SPIRIT TO A GREAT AND HIGH MOUNTAIN, AND SHOWED ME THE HOLY CITY, JERUSALEM, COMING DOWN OUT OF HEAVEN FROM GOD,...23 AND THE CITY HAS NO NEED OF THE SUN OR OF THE MOON TO SHINE ON IT, FOR THE GLORY OF GOD HAS ILLUMINED IT, AND ITS LAMP IS THE LAMB. 24 THE NATIONS WILL WALK BY ITS LIGHT, AND THE KINGS OF THE EARTH WILL BRING THEIR GLORY INTO IT. 25 IN THE DAYTIME (FOR THERE WILL BE NO NIGHT THERE) ITS GATES WILL NEVER BE CLOSED; 26 AND THEY WILL BRING THE GLORY AND THE HONOR OF THE NATIONS INTO IT; 27 AND NOTHING UNCLEAN, AND NO ONE WHO PRACTICES ABOMINATION AND LYING, SHALL EVER COME INTO IT, BUT ONLY THOSE WHOSE NAMES ARE WRITTEN IN THE LAMB'S BOOK OF LIFE.

NO MORE UNCLEAN THINGS, NO MORE ABOMINATIONS, NO MORE LIES, NO MORE JEZEBEL. NO MORE FAKE GODS, NO MORE FAKE SONS OF FAKE GODS, NO MORE FAKE KINGS RULING WITH FAKE AUTHORITY - THE REAL THING IS COMING AND IT WILL BE A SIGHT TO BEHOLD. THE NIGHT IS ALMOST OVER. SO, HOLD ON, STAY FAITHFUL, UNTIL THE SUN BEGINS TO BREAK THROUGH.