



REVELATION 17 – PERGAMUM: SATAN'S THRONE

Dr. Leon L. Sanders
Revelation 2:12-13

PERGAMUM'S SIGNIFICANCE

- Pergamum {*Fortress*} rocky prominence commanding inland valley-roads
- Situated near *old* Troy
- Home to Asia's Roman Emperor Worship center
- Library rivaled Alexandria's
- Lent its name to animal-skin books: Parchment {English}



PERGAMUM HISTORY: MAJOR METROPOLIS

- Pergamum not a backwater town but a commanding citadel guarding the interior of Asia {Anatolia: East}
 - Its plateau boasted the Altar of Zeus which overlooked the Acropolis and Library
 - Also boasted temples to Dionysus, Athena, and Demeter
 - Asclepium {healing center} spawned Galen who rivaled Hippocrates in *holistic medicine*
 - Large Jewish community lived here; within 40 years Pergamum elders would write to the Emperor defending the fealty of the Jews to the State
- Pergamum's citizens could appeal to long, proud history of reliance on their various religions versus Christianity which taught the only One True God

PERGAMUM: PRESENTATION OF CHRIST

- Christ reveals Himself to the episkopos as wielder of the sharp two-edged sword {τὴν ῥομφαίαν τὴν δίστομον τὴν ὀξεῖαν}: Offensive weapon
 - Not to be confused with Christ's two-edge sacrificial knife {μάχαιραν δίστομον} used to *examine* us {Hagiazō Process}; separating our flesh from our *New Nature* (He 4:12)
 - Christ defends His True church, faithful believers, through His Word {Sword}
 - Antipas {Like the Father} died for the faith; whether by legal action or mob rule, such as occurred in Ephesus nearly murdering Paul, not stated {Condoned} (Ac 19:23-35)
- But Christ does not excuse His believers who dabble in Satan's error
 - He chastens those whom He loves: Then and Now (He 12:5-8)

PERGAMUM: BELONGS TO SATAN

- Two references to Satan at Pergamum {Duality}
 - Satan's Throne: Metaphor probably related to Pergamum's commanding citadel
 - Satan Dwells: Pergamum less open to the Gospel, more given to ignorance (Ro 1:18-28)
- Pergamum
 - Ephesus: Under pressure, Christians begin slide embracing worldly *wisdom*
 - Smyrna: Faced with the same pressures, these Christians chose to endure tribulation rather than lose their *first love*, Christ
 - Pergamum: Reveals Satan's most potent weapon against Truth; basis of his *throne* of power which is why he *dwells* there {Various religions-philosophies are symptoms}

PERGAMUM: DEFENDED BY CHRIST

- Christ does not use force like Satan {Intolerance}: He allows sinners to go their way {Tolerance} until the Judgment {Accountability} (Ro 1:18-28; Re 19:15)
- Satan, sinners, insecure in their *knowledge*, murder those who peacefully bring the Gospel of Life; demonstrated since Cain murdered Abel (Ge 4:3-8; Jn 8:44)
- These same forces are at work today in families, churches and nations dividing while *promising* unity; proclaiming tolerance while justifying intolerance...Death
- Our next lesson reveals Satan's Throne as the *prince of the power of the air* who seeks to emulate Christ's sword of His Word (Ep 2:1-2)