

TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES IN ASIA

PERGAMUM

SMYRNA

EPHESUS

THE
PERGAMUM
LETTER

Christ's Portrait

He Who Has the Sharp Two-Edged Sword

- Out of His mouth — **Revelation 1:16**
- Judgment connected with His word.

A sword that discerns, divides, and destroys —
Hebrews 4:11-13

Christ's Praise

Their Works — they were an active church.

- *“and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is”*
 - Throne — “by metonymy, for what the throne stands for *dominion, rule, kingly power, sovereignty*” (ALGNT)

They Hold Fast to Christ’s Name

- Divine Nature (1:17); Rule (1:5); Authority (Acts 5:29)

They Do Not Deny Christ’s Faith

- Jude 3; 1 Timothy 6:20-21; Colossians 2:6-7

They Do This Despite Great Persecution (v. 13)

Christ's Protest

“a few things...” — they were an active church.

- **“few”** (numeric) — not minimizing, but rather strengthening the severity of the protest.
- **“have those”** — denoting fellowship.
- **“YOU have there THOSE”** — distinction.
 - They **“hold fast”** (*krateō*) to Christ, but they have there those who **“hold”** (*krateō*) to error. (cf. Galatians 5:9; 2 John 9-11)

Christ's Protest

They Have Those Who Hold the Doctrine of Balaam

- *“the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before...Israel”* — i.e. Balaam's teaching was given to Balak who used it as a stumbling block to Israel.
- The account of Balaam — **Numbers 22-24 (24:1, 10-11)**
- Israel's rebellion — **Numbers 25:1-3, 6; 31:16**
- **A DOCTRINE OF FALSE SECURITY** (cf. Num. 24:10, 12-13)
— “I tried to have Balaam curse you, but he couldn't no matter how hard he tried. You're safe no matter what as God's covenant people!” (cf. **2 Peter 2:18-22; Jude 4**)

Christ's Protest

They Also Have Those Who Hold the Doctrine of the Nicolaitans

- The Nicolaitans and their doctrine is lost to history, but it is paralleled to that of Balaam.
- “*Thus*” — *houtōs* – “in this way (referring to what precedes or follows)” (STRONG)
- A doctrine which offers false security that leads to immorality and unfaithfulness.

Christ's Prescription

Repent

- Of what? — They do not hold Balaam's doctrine, nor the Nicolaitans'. (v. 13)
- **Their sin is one of tolerance** — they do not actively support the doctrine, and they are not active in immorality, but they have not dealt with those who hold the error.
- Repent by practicing discipline — **1 Corinthians 5:1-8;**
Romans 16:17-20
- They were not far from advancing to total compromise like Thyatira.

Christ's Prescription

Repent Or He Will Come and Use His Sword

- *“fight against them”* (v. 16) — I.e. those who hold the doctrine of Balaam.
- His coming will include discipline for the church who had been tolerant — **1 Corinthians 4:18-21**

Christ's Promise

He Will Give the Hidden Manna to Eat

- Manna in the wilderness, portion kept in the ark as a memorial — **Exodus 16:32-33; Hebrews 9:4**
- Divine sustenance fulfilled in Christ — **Deuteronomy 8:3; John 6:32-33, 35**
- By repenting, they would experience growth and nourishment that was hindered by the tolerance. (**cf. James 1:21**)

Christ's Promise

He Will Give a White Stone with a New Name Written On It

- Many interpretations — acquittal, freedom, victory, admission.
- **White** — purity, victory.
- **New name** — in relation to the One who gives the stone, fellowship with Christ.

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