

Eyes Like Blazing Fire (*Thyatira*)
Revelation 2:18-29 on August 21, 2022
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Please read Revelation 2:18-29 before going further in this transcript.

Today we're diving back into our series on the book of Revelation and we're going to look at Jesus' letter to the church in Thyatira.¹ "Thyatira was a major inland city in Asia, and its location made it an ideal commercial center."² Over the centuries, Thyatira proved to be a strategic military crossroads, which of course caused it to be fought over constantly by warring nations, so it got beat up on over and over again.³ As I was studying this week, I ran into multiple scholars who consider Thyatira the least important city out of the seven, and yet... it is the longest letter of the seven.⁴ So it was certainly important to Jesus. My wife Debbie and I had the opportunity to visit Ancient Thyatira during my sabbatical. Most of what remains of Thyatira is contained within just one city block.



Thyatira Apsidal building



One of the reasons that the Ancient City of Thyatira remains a bit of a mystery

Thyatira rebuilt columns



to us today, is that most of it lies BENEATH the city streets of modern-day Akhisar.⁵ If you look closely in the backdrop of these pictures, you can see modern apartment buildings. (Obviously, it's a lot harder to study and learn about a city, when it's underneath another city).⁶

¹ "thigh uh TIGH ruh" W. Murray Severance and Terry Eddinger, *That's Easy for You to Say: Your Quick Guide to Pronouncing Bible Names* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997), 157.

² Ege Yayinlari & Mark Wilson, *Biblical Turkey*, 3rd ed., Zero Produksiyon, Istanbul, 2014, p. 321.

³ See Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, p. 151.

⁴ See Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, p. 151.

⁵ "AAK he sar" <https://www.howtopronounce.com/akhisar>

⁶ This is mentioned on a sign I saw at the ancient site.

The picture on the left shows the “Apsidal building.”⁷ Some people have speculated that this administrative building from the 6th century AD may have once been used as a church building, but we can’t really be sure of that without further research and discovery.⁸ Either way, it’s proven helpful in locating the site for the Ancient city of Thyatira.⁹ The picture on the right shows some rebuilt columns, parts of which are from the original material and parts of which had to be reconstructed with modern materials. These columns once marked the entrance to a Roman Street.^{10 11}

The name “Thyatira” may ring a bell for some of us. The Apostle Paul was in Philippi, during his 2nd Missionary Journey, when he met a woman from Thyatira. Acts 16:14 records, “One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul’s message.” Now, this happened about 45 years before Jesus’ letter to Thyatira¹², but it illustrates the fact that Thyatira was a significant center for the clothing and fabric industry. There’s also evidence that it was an agricultural center, and was known for its copper smithing industry.^{13 14 15} (Copper smithing is simply making things from copper and other alloys, including bronze.)¹⁶

Revelation 2:18 begins, “To the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These are the words of the Son of God, whose eyes are like blazing fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze.” “Feet like burnished bronze” would have caught the attention of people from Thyatira who were familiar with this alloy. Now the title “Son of God” might not grab our attention at first, but this is actually the ONLY time in the ENTIRE book of Revelation, where that title is used. Jesus is reminding them of who He is, in light of the fact that Thyatira’s primary god was Apollo. Not only was Apollo the sun God, “S U N,” but he was also the son of Zeus, “S O N,” as in the “son of god.”¹⁷ So Jesus is reminding His followers in Thyatira, that He is the one and only, “SON of God” that they should look to! The description of Jesus with “eyes like blazing fire” refers to His “penetrating insight.”¹⁸ It’s a way of portraying

⁷ “APP sih dahl”

⁸ See Ege Yayinlari & Mark Wilson, *Biblical Turkey, Corrected 3rd ed.*, Zero Produksiyon, Istanbul, 2014, p. 323.

⁹ See Ege Yayinlari & Mark Wilson, *Biblical Turkey, Corrected 3rd ed.*, Zero Produksiyon, Istanbul, 2014, pp. 321-323.

¹⁰ See discussion by Ege Yayinlari & Mark Wilson, *Biblical Turkey, Corrected 3rd ed.*, Zero Produksiyon, Istanbul, 2014, p. 323.

¹¹ All of this lies within a fenced in area. We were blessed to have a local security guard give us a very informal tour.

¹² This is based on a date of writing for Revelation around 95 AD and Paul’s 2nd Missionary Journey occurring around AD 50. (See *chart in NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 1845.)

¹³ This is mentioned on a sign I saw at the ancient site.

¹⁴ See Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, p. 151.

¹⁵ “The ‘polished bronze’ was an alloy of copper and zinc, a purer and more refined type of brass manufactured by the local guild for the military at Thyatira.” Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, p. 153.

¹⁶ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coppersmith>

¹⁷ See discussion in Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, pp. 152-153.

¹⁸ See Revelation 19:12. *The NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 2151 footnote on Revelation 1:14.

Jesus' divine ability to see right into our human souls.^{19 20 21} We'll come back to this...

Jesus gives the church in Thyatira a nice commendation in Revelation 2:19, "I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first." So overall, Thyatira is a pretty healthy local church; they loved God and one another, that had faith in God and trusted in Him. They were actively serving one another by caring for each other and helping one another. And they were persevering despite the persecution that surrounded them.²² In fact, verse 19 highlights the fact that they were "doing MORE" than they did at first.

Even so, Jesus then confronts them in Revelation 2:20, "Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols." Now, "Jezebel" may not have been her actual name; it was more likely a way of identifying a particular woman in the church who resembled the Jezebel from the Old Testament.²³ In other words, as the original audience heard this letter read in their church in Thyatira, they would have immediately thought back to OT Jezebel. So a brief refresher on the Old Testament Jezebel may help us better understand what's going on in the church at Thyatira.

We learn about Jezebel, and her husband, the evil King Ahab, in 1 Kings 16:31, "[King Ahab] not only considered it trivial to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat²⁴, but he also married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal²⁵ king of the Sidonians²⁶, and began to serve Baal and worship him."²⁷ In other words, Jezebel led the KING of Israel to serve and worship false gods, along with the subjects of the northern kingdom who followed

¹⁹ "to the core of the human situation.... Include also the fierce judgment of the God who knows and acts against those who disobey him." Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 2002, p. 90.

²⁰ Revelation 4:6 says, "...In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back." "Covered with eyes," demonstrates that "nothing escapes their attention." *The NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 2156 footnote on Revelation 4:6.

²¹ 2 Chronicles 16:9 declares, "For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him...."

²² See discussion by Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, pp. 154-155.

²³ You see, in the book of Revelation, as John records the visions he's receiving, he often refers back to the Old Testament without citing a particular chapter and verse. This is the same kind of thing that happened with Balaam, when John wrote down Jesus' letter to the church in Pergamum. "Balaam and Jezebel were the quintessential false prophets in the Old Testament who caused the Israelites to sin. These names...served as code words for the contemporary false teachers who advocated compromising behavior...." Ege Yayinlari & Mark Wilson, *Biblical Turkey, Corrected 3rd ed.*, Zero Produksiyon, Istanbul, 2014, p. 322.

²⁴ "NEE bat" W. Murray Severance and Terry Eddinger, *That's Easy for You to Say: Your Quick Guide to Pronouncing Bible Names* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997), 121.

²⁵ "eth BAY uhl" W. Murray Severance and Terry Eddinger, *That's Easy for You to Say: Your Quick Guide to Pronouncing Bible Names* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997), 66.

²⁶ "sigh DOH nih uhns" W. Murray Severance and Terry Eddinger, *That's Easy for You to Say: Your Quick Guide to Pronouncing Bible Names* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997), 149.

²⁷ Learn more about Baal here: <https://www.gotquestions.org/who-Baal.html>

him. Later on 2 Kings 9:22 refers to... “all the idolatry and witchcraft of your mother Jezebel.”²⁸ And when the Old Testament Prophet Elijah has his epic showdown up on Mount Carmel, against the prophets of Baal, 1 Kings 18:19 tells us that “...the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal ...[ate] at Jezebel’s table.” So the Old Testament Jezebel had a wicked reputation for supporting false teachers and for misleading God’s people into idolatry. Now, in the book of Revelation, this “New Testament Jezebel” is a false prophet in the church at Thyatira who is deceiving other people in the church “into moral and religious compromise.”^{29 30}

With this in mind, let’s take another look at verse 20, “Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols.” So Jezebel called herself a prophet, meaning she considered her teaching to be a direct message from God.^{31 32} Clearly it was not from God, because her teaching was leading God’s people into sin. Now, similar to the other cities of its day, Thyatira also had trade guilds that were closely connected with pagan ritual and worship. Scholar Mark Wilson writes: “Trade guilds, like those found in Thyatira, would hold their banquets in the pagan temples. After eating, the diners often engaged in sexually immoral acts on the couches.... Apparently in... Thyatira some of the Christians still clung to their membership in the pagan guilds and shared in the fellowship of the ritual meal. ...this spirit of compromise threatened to undermine the purity and sanctity of the Christian congregation....”^{33 34}

1 John 4:1, 5-6 warns, “Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ...5 They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us....” Rather than testing Jezebel’s teaching, the church in Thyatira was tolerating it. They were allowing it to go on, allowing her to mislead God’s people into sexual

²⁸ See also 2 Kings 9:30-37 and 1 Kings 21:23.

²⁹ *The NIV Zondervan Study Bible*, 2015, pp. 2592-2593 footnote on Revelation 2:20.

³⁰ “The name is used here as an epithet for a prominent woman IN the congregation who undermined loyalty to God by promoting tolerance toward pagan practices.” *The NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 2153 footnote on Revelation 2:20.

³¹ Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, p. 156.

³² In Matthew 24:11 Jesus warned, “and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people.”

³³ “...Paul wrote unequivocally, “You cannot have a part in both the Lord’s table and the table of demons” (1 Corinthians 10:21).” Ege Yayinlari & Mark Wilson, *Biblical Turkey, Corrected 3rd ed.*, Zero Produksiyon, Istanbul, 2014, p. 322.

³⁴ Thyatira had lots of important trade guilds, each of which had their own patron gods and frequent feasts in their honor. So, once again, the Christians in Thyatira felt immense pressure to participate not only in the meals but also the religious practices of these guilds. These guilds were the heart of the social and commercial life of the entire city. “To refuse to participate meant the loss of both goodwill and business.” See discussion by Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, p. 152.

immorality and idolatry. They were permitting it, rather than taking “an active stand against [it]!”³⁵

And so, Jesus takes matters into His own hands. As God has done many times throughout human history, He calls this false prophet to account. In Revelation 2:21-22 Jesus says, “I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. 22 So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways.” The word “unwilling” is in the present tense here, meaning that ongoing attempts have been made to help Jezebel “get right with God.”³⁶ But she’s either ignored those opportunities to repent, or she’s openly rejected them. By the way, this immorality and adultery should be taken both literally and metaphorically for the “spiritual unfaithfulness” of worshipping other gods.^{37 38} So it wasn’t just about the physical behavior, it was also about the spiritual attitude of devoting themselves to other gods.

Verse 22 is a bit jolting: she’ll now be cast on “a bed of suffering.”³⁹ There’s actually a play on words here, since the Greek word for bed can refer to “a bed of sickness and pain” but also to “a dining couch,” like the kind used at the pagan feasts. So this “bed” was the very location where the idolatry had been occurring.⁴⁰ In other words, God’s response to her sinning on a bed of immorality, was to cast her onto a bed of suffering. She’s been given time to repent, now that time was up. This would also SOON be true for those who were joining her, unless they repented of her ways. You see, they still had just a little time left. Now, verses like these remind us of the reality that God SOMETIMES confronts our sin through physical sickness and disease. For the church in Thyatira, at this particular time in history, intense physical suffering was imminent for those who did not repent of this evil behavior. However, this does not mean that all physical sickness and suffering is necessarily the result of our own personal sin, but it does mean that sometimes there can be a direct connection to spiritual discipline.^{41 42} Let’s be clear though, this is only true some of the time, not all of the time. For example, let’s keep in mind that Job in the Old Testament suffered greatly but it was not related to his personal sin, despite what some of his

³⁵ Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, p. 155.

³⁶ Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, top of p. 158.

³⁷ See Hosea.

³⁸ This immorality was not only literal but also a metaphor for spiritual unfaithfulness to God. As Grant Osborn notes, “Jezebel’s willingness to participate in pagan religious practices was to ‘commit adultery’ against God.” Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, p. 158.

³⁹ κλίνη = “a place for those who are resting (Ps 6:7), suffering (Gen 48:2; 49:33), or dining (Ezk 23:41). ① bed, couch... Rv 2:22 (a lingering illness as a divine punishment. (William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 549.)

⁴⁰ See discussion by Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, top of p. 159.

⁴¹ See 2 Chronicles 16:7-12 and *The NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 2153 footnote on Revelation 2:22.

⁴² We’ve talked about this before in relation to the Lord’s Supper. 1 Corinthians 11:29-30 warns, “For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep.”

well-intended friends might have said. We know that there was much more to his story, that Job's suffering was a part of God's bigger plan, and it was not the result of his personal sin.

We should also keep in mind that the heart of Jesus' warning to the church in Thyatira, was a loving rebuke. Even though this may seem a little harsh to our modern sensibilities, the imminent judgment referred to in this letter, is ONE FINAL attempt, by a loving and gracious God, to turn these people back from their sin. God will do whatever it takes to get our attention and to turn us back to Him.⁴³

With this in mind, let's take a look at the very next verse. Revelation 2:23 says, "I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds." This is even more jolting than verse 22, "I will strike her children dead." While this could certainly be a reference to Jezebel's actual physical children, it seems more likely from the context, that it's a reference to her "spiritual children." So it's probably referring to those who followed Jezebel's teachings and viewed her as a "spiritual mother" of sorts.⁴⁴ Here's the thing that the church in Thyatira needed to realize, those who had fully devoted themselves to Jezebel's teachings, and had gone so far as to become her "spiritual children," were in grave danger. The wages of sin is death, and that's exactly what Jesus was about to deliver. As a holy God, this is well within His rights. In fact, it is just and fair and right for Jesus to judge our sin according to His standards, not ours. Throughout the Bible, God's judgment on sin takes many different forms, but the ultimate judgment, of course, is death and hell. And that's why all of us needed Jesus to come and pay for our sins on the cross, so that we could be rescued from its horrible consequences.

Revelation 2 makes it abundantly clear that Jesus has given them ample time to repent, but now the day of reckoning has come. Jesus explains why He is doing this in Revelation 2:23, "...THEN all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds." "Then ALL the churches will know." You see, each of the 7 churches got to read the other church's letters. So not only did they need to pay attention to their own letter, but there was much that they needed to learn from each other's letters. In fact, it's interesting to note that all 7 letters to the churches end with the familiar words, "Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches."⁴⁵ ChurchES

⁴³ And we should care about the people in our church enough to lovingly call them back to the Lord. There are examples of this all throughout Scripture. 1 Corinthians 5:5 says, "hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord."

⁴⁴ See *The NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 2153 footnote on Revelation 2:23.

⁴⁵ "The one having ears, let him hear" is based on virtually the same wording in the Synoptic Gospels, which itself alludes to Isaiah 6:9-10..." G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New

plural. This is particular phrase is intended to make every listener's ears perk up and listen! But it also does something else, it reminds us that in just about every local church, there is a mixed audience, and not everyone will necessarily respond positively to Jesus' words and warnings.⁴⁶ In other words, some of those assembled at the church in Thyatira may not have been genuine believers. So Jesus is warning everyone, believers and non-believers alike.⁴⁷ Jesus' rule and reign is one of great glory and power, and it will include judging between right and wrong, between truth and error.

The application of this message to our own lives is pretty straightforward: if there is sin in our life that we need to repent of, we should do it today. Don't wait. Verse 23 also reminds us that Jesus is the one "who searches hearts and minds." As we talked about earlier, Jesus does this searching with His "eyes like blazing fire," with His penetrating insight. Even now, He can see into each of our hearts, and He knows each of our behaviors.^{48 49} In Verse 23 Jesus says, "I will repay each of you according to your deeds." Let's be clear, this is NOT saying that we're saved by our good deeds. What it is saying, is that our deeds matter, because they reveal our hearts, Our deeds reveal whether we're following Jesus or whether we're following the wicked ways of this world. Being judged "according to our deeds" is found all throughout the Bible. Jesus teaches this, and so do Peter, Paul, and John.^{50 51} There's no way around this, God cannot be fooled, and He will not be mocked. So again, it's not that our deeds can save us, but they do confirm or deny our faith in Jesus.

Romans 2:4-8 says it this way, "Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance? 5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.

International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, Cumbria: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1999), 234.

⁴⁶ "In the Gospels this exhortation is a formulaic exhortation to heed the message of the symbolic parables. ...the exhortation assumes a mixed audience, of which only a part will respond positively." G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, Cumbria: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1999), 234.

⁴⁷ "The Christians in Asia are to understand that Jesus will do battle in this manner not only against the evil nations (19:15) but also against all those among the churches who compromise their faith (2:16)." G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, Cumbria: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1999), 212.

⁴⁸ Consider how the LORD describes Himself in Jeremiah 17:10, "I the LORD search the heart and examine the mind, to reward each person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve." 1 Kings 8:39 declares, "...deal with everyone according to all they do, since you know their hearts (for you alone know every human heart)." Proverbs 21:2 reminds us, "A person may think their own ways are right, but the LORD weighs the heart." In Revelation 2:23 Jesus says, "I will repay." In other words, Jesus not only sees what's going on with His penetrating gaze, but He will judge it accordingly.

⁴⁹ When verse 23 mentions our "hearts and minds," it's referring to the very core of our inner being. See Greek grammar notes by Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, p. 161.

⁵⁰ See 1 Peter 1:17. "Judgment based on works is taught by Jesus (Mt 16:27) and Paul (Ro 2:6), as well as John (Rev 18:6; 20:12-13; 22:12)." *The NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 2154 footnote on Revelation 2:23.

⁵¹ See notes on the "law of retribution" by Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, pp. 161-162.

6 God “will repay each person according to what they have done.” 7 To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. 8 But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.”

Fortunately, Jesus’ letter to the church in Thyatira ends with some wonderful words of encouragement. Revelation 2:24-25 says, “Now I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan’s so-called deep secrets, ‘I will not impose any other burden on you, except to hold on to what you have until I come.’”⁵² ⁵³ ⁵⁴ You see, not everyone in the church in Thyatira had been duped! In fact, many of them had not been, and they’re encouraged to “hold on” to the deeds from back in verse 19, to keep up their “love and faith,” their “service and perseverance.” Jesus goes on in Revelation 2:26-27, “To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations —27 that one ‘will rule them with an iron scepter and will dash them to pieces like pottery’—just as I have received authority from my Father.”⁵⁵ Jesus is reminding His faithful followers that that they are going to reign with Him for eternity. In other words, Jesus is the kind of king who shares His “authority, victory, and kingdom rule” with His followers.⁵⁶ ⁵⁷ ⁵⁸ So it’s not that we’re making our own victory, but we will most certainly share in Christ’s victory.⁵⁹ So let’s be encouraged, there is a final victory for those of us who HOLD ON, who DO GOD’S WILL to the very end.

⁵² Verse 24 points out that her teaching included “Satan’s so-called deep secrets.” When Satan is at work, we can be sure that his work will include deception. He is a great deceiver. So it wouldn’t be surprising if her teaching included some kind of a twisting of Christian liberty, that idols are really nothing, that food is just food, and that a little sexual immorality isn’t going to hurt anything. Read 1 Corinthians 8:4-13 and see discussion by Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, p. 157.

⁵³ “Satan’s so-called deep secrets” seems to have eventually led the gnostic false teachers to suggest that “in order to defeat Satan one had to enter his stronghold, i.e., experience evil deeply.” (*The NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 2154 footnote on Revelation 2:24.) Although we can’t be certain that this kind of thing was going on at this time in history in Thyatira, it’s certainly possible that there was a similar line of reasoning.

⁵⁴ This may be a sarcastic comment on Jezebel’s claim of supposedly knowing ‘deep secrets.’ Or, it may have been that Jezebel “taught that Christians should participate in those activities and experience the ‘depths’ of paganism in order to show their mastery over it.” See further comments by Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, pp. 162-163.

⁵⁵ Verse 28, refers to “the morning star” but “no one seems quite sure what this means.” (Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, pp. 167-168.) Later on in Revelation 22:16 Jesus describes Himself as “the bright Morning Star.” This idea of Jesus as the Morning Star can also be traced back to Numbers 24:17, where it was a Messianic symbol. Now, in verse 28, Christ announces that He will share this Messianic Kingdom with His victorious and faithful followers. (See Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, p. 168.) It’s worth noting that the planet Venus is visible in the MORNING sky and looks like a STAR, even though it’s actually a planet. “Roman legions carried the symbol of Venus on their banners to depict Roman invincibility. In this context, Christ would be saying that the only final sovereignty and power lay with himself and his victorious followers.” (Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, p. 168.) 2 Peter 1:19 says, “We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.”

⁵⁶ *The NIV Zondervan Study Bible*, 2015, p. 2593 footnote on Revelation 2:26.

⁵⁷ “The basis of our participation in the messianic victory is our participation in his messianic power.” Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker, 2002, p. 167.

⁵⁸ Back in Revelation 1:6 it says that Jesus “has made US to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father.”

⁵⁹ Ephesians 2:6 tells us, “And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.” In Revelation 3:21 Jesus says, “To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne.” 2 Timothy 2:12 promises that “If we endure, we will also reign with him....”