

## **introduction**

What is the hardest time you have ever gone through as a Christian. As a believer?  
What have you lost becoming a Christian?., what do you face being a Christian?  
What is your hope as a Christian?

## **Revelation. 2:25**

Revelation is a book full of beautiful imagery and symbolism.

## **Background**

One would have to read it in the context of the first century church and know all the events that were happening at the time so that this imagery and symbolism can make sense.

We must not read too much into it and we must remain true to the text to get the principles taught.

## **Author**

It is generally agreed upon that John the apostle Was The author of this book in his final years on earth. He was exiled to the Island of Patmos amidst great adversity and persecution of the church.

Believers, those for whom this apocalypse was written were being severely and bitterly persecuted. Their blood was being poured out... (6:10, 7:14). Some were Pining away in some dingy dungeons or were about to be imprisoned. They were suffering from hunger, thirst or famine.. Some had been cast before wild beasts (6:8), several had been beheaded. ... The Roman government encouraged persecution. It's emperor-worship inspired false religion. It's capital, the center of lust.... False teachers and sects were troubling the church...

## **Why did he write it ?**

The purpose for writing this book for John must have been very personal. He felt the heart of God on that island and God came through with a message of **hope** one more time. Christ the Hope of Glory is portrayed in his magnificence as the Supreme victors. The ultimate conqueror.

In Chapter one, He appears to John and identified himself Saying

“Do not be afraid. I **am the First and the Last. I am the Living One;** I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

Revelation 1:17-18

William Hendricks says,

" the theme of this book is stated most gloriously and completely in these words. 'these (the beast, the dragon, Babylon, and the false prophet that represent world systems, rulers, forces and philosophies opposed to the rule of God and His Kingdom) shall war against the lamb and the lamb shall conquer them for He is the Lord of Lords and king of kings and they also shall conquer that are with him called, and chosen and faithful' " Rev. 17:14.

On that final day, we look forward to the consumption of the creation and the creator. We have hope in the victorious union out of reconciliation with the world and the lamb..

With the beast and his armies defeated (ch 19), Satan's rebellion crushed (ch 20), and sin obliterated, death and Hades cast into the lake of fire... a beautiful picture of a new heaven and a new earth is painted in this epic vision.

Vs 4 says " God himself will wipe away every tear from their eyes, there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.

. Jesus , the one on the throne declares in 21:5 ".... Behold I make all things new"

In Vs 6 Jesus, he who seats on the throne says " it is done. I am the Alpha and Omega... I will give of the fountain of life freely to him who thirsts"

Vs 22 describes the city built by God himself... It needed no sun because God himself in all his glory illuminated it... The Lamb was it's light.

This is the hope of Glory. With Christ in us, We get to see This is the mystery that Paul says was revealed among the gentiles. You and me.

For we were once enemies of God, opposed to his rule and reign. Defeated by our sinful desires.... Yet he reconciled us back to him. Those who call him Lord and Savior.

### **So today's theme verse is rev. 2:25.**

John is writing to the seven churches in the major cities in Asia minor. Churches in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodecia and...

In this particular chapter, he is writing to the church in Thyatira. We will spend some time here.

He commends the church for their love, service, faith and patience. (vs19) they were a relatively good church. Kind of like ours. We do the work. We put in effort.

Jesus however had a few things against this church.

### **1. The woman Jezebell:**

She represented False teachings since she called herself a prophetess. If you read 1Kings18 and 2Kings 9:22 , you see that Jazebell became an iconic name for evil, transgression, wickedness and idolatry. She became a proverb for men not to indulge with jezebell like figures.

She propergates "prostitution " among the servants of God. This was the idolatry the false teachings have lead to.

Do we have Jezebells today... Women that cause men of God, sons of God to falter into idolatry.?

It is representative of an idolatrous heart opposed to God, far removed from his rule and kingdom.

Jezebel is the heart that is cultic, having a form of Godliness because of some power... But never the power of God.

### **2. Vs. 23Her children :**

disciples were also referred to as children. Those that learnt and reproduced her teachings, her wickedness. It is all they know.. It's what they are made off. God will do away with it all.

They think that deep knowledge and deep understanding is the only way one can bring about a spiritually heightened sense of awareness and power. This Gnosticism was prevalent and John wrote the first letter to oppose this philosophy.

**Today..**

Power, sex and money are the greatest idols but these serve an even greater god we worship. This god has ruled man from the beginning of time. sacrifices have been made to him through the annals of history and to this day, we still sacrifice people, things and places at the alter of this god.

Churches are full of this god these days. Even here. We have more idol worshippers in this church than we do the true worshipers of God.

We worship this god when we wake up, we adorn this idol all through the day and we rest thinking/pondering on this idol...this god. Few have recognized this idol and even fewer overcome him. We see this God everyday in everything and we still don't recognize him.

This God is self. Yes. Power, sex and money serve self. We come to church to feel good about ourSELVES. we fight and scuffle to appease self. We think of others less than ourselves.

We want self to feel good, live large and go big, and at whatever cost, remain comfortable while at it.

**Dying to self... Killing this god,** eliminating this Jezebel is pershasps our life's mission.

Jesus said, in Luke 9:21, "... **Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.** For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it."

This is how we die.... Remove all selfishness, self-centeredness, self absorption, self awareness, self actualisation, self promotion, self lifting, self sustaining...

Replace self with Christ. Let him redefine who you are...

The reason we are pursuing self is because **our identity** is corrupted but the world, defined by brokenness, wrought with sinfulness...

Paul got this right when He said In Gal2. 20 "for I am crucified with Christ. I died with Christ. It is no longer I that lives but Christ lives in me. The Life I live now, I live by faith in Christ Jesus.

## **Finally,**

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.'

Revelation 2:24-25.

Hold on to what? You may be asking? What is it I have?

I have no money, my rent is due, loans are killing me, people hate me, life is just hard.... What do I hold on to?

Remember the picture?

Behold, I make all things new.

I am the alpha and the omega,

I will give of the fountain of the water of life, to whomever thirsts.

Come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest.

Are you among those, for whom jezebel is the description of your heart? Have you idolised money, sex and power... Have you fed the idol of self...

It is time, Christ the Hope of Glory beckons you... Come to me, I will give you rest...

Are you lost in the world, tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine and every false prophet that has robbed you of your money, your dignity, your peace....

Have you been given a false hope, One that is steeped in material gain and mystical powers?

Christ the Hope of Glory beckons you...

Hold on to what you know.... What do you know?

This:

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

8. See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.

For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority.

Colossians 2:6-10

It is all about Him. When all else has failed, remember Him.

The ancient of days. The Victor Of old. The master of time. The King of Kings the Lord of Lords. The Alpha and Omega. The Lamb upon the throne... Set your eyes on him... Come to him.

Rest. Rest. Rest.