Revelation 2 and 3

2020

### Prayers

† Blessed is our God always, as it is now, was in the beginning, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. ... in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Through the prayers of our holy Ancestors, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen. Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

† Εὐλογημένη ἡ Βασιλεία τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος, νῦν καὶ ἀεί, καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν.

† Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, You are everywhere and fill all things, Treasury of blessings, and Giver of life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

† Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us (three times).

† Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it is now, was in the beginning, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

“εἰ οὖν ὑμεῖς πονηροὶ ὑπάρχοντες οἴδατε δόματα ἀγαθὰ διδόναι τοῖς τέκνοις ὑμῶν, πόσῳ μᾶλλον Ὁ Πατὴρ Ὁ ἐξ Οὐρανοῦ δώσει Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον τοῖς αἰτοῦσιν Αὐτόν.” — Luke 11:13[[1]](#footnote-1)

“Ὁ θεός, ἱλάσθητί μοι τῷ ἁμαρτωλῷ.” — Luke 18:13[[2]](#footnote-2)

“Ἰησοῦ, μνήσθητί μου ὅταν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου.” — Luke 23:42[[3]](#footnote-3)

“David ascended in the Ascent of Olives, ascending and weeping, with head covered, he went barefoot; and each person with him covered his head, so they went up, ascending and weeping.” — 2 Samuel 15:30 LXX

“The sowers will reap in joy. The ones going, went and wept, casting their seeds; yet, the ones coming, will come in exultation, carrying their sheaves.” — Psalm 125:5-6 LXX [126:5-6][[4]](#footnote-4)

“Send away your bread on the surface of the water: because, in a multitude of days you will find it.” — Ecclesiastes 11:1 LXX

“Indisputably great is the good-worship mystery: Who was clearly displayed in [the] flesh; Who defended righteousness in [the] Spirit; Who was witnessed by messengers; Who was proclaimed internationally; Who was believed cosmically; Who was taken up in Glory.” — 1 Timothy 3:16

“…: for, when prophecy came, not by human will: but, being carried by [the] Holy Spirit, humans, spoke from God.” — 2 Peter 1:21

“These [Bereans] were better-begotten than the [people] in Thessaloníki; who welcomed the Word with all enthusiasm: daily examining the writings if He might have it so.” — Acts 17:11

“Similarly, younger people, be submitted to [your] elders; all of you be clothed with humble mindedness toward one another: because, ‘God opposes [the] proud; but, gives grace to the humble.’[[5]](#footnote-5) Therefore, be humbled under the strong hand of God, so that He would exalt you in due time: casting all your care on Him: because, He cares about you.” — 1 Peter 5:5-7

Be clothed with poverty, Peter says: for: humility and poverty are very close synonyms.

### Introduction

“I know that with my arrival[[6]](#footnote-6) fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the little flock. Out of you yourselves men will stand up, speaking well established perversions[[7]](#footnote-7), to wrench away the disciples after themselves.” — Acts 20:29-30

“For, [though] walking about in flesh, we do not soldier according to the standard of flesh: for, the armaments of our soldiering [are] not fleshly, but powerful in God for destroying bastions... destroying [corrupted] reasoning, with every arrogance rising against the knowledge of God, capturing every thought in the obedience of Christ.” — 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Warnings to Elders   
and their Churches

### Revelation Chapter 2

Verses 1-7

“To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These things says He Who holds the seven stars in His right hand; Who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know your works, labor, and patience: how you cannot bear those who are evil; you have tested those who say they are apostles, and are not, and have found them liars; you have borne, and have patience, and for my name’s sake have labored, and have not fainted. Nevertheless, I have something against you, because you have left your first love. So, remember where you fell, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come to you quickly, and will remove your lampstand out of its place, except you repent. But you have this, that you hate the deeds of the Dominators, which I also hate. They who have ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches: To the overcomers,[[8]](#footnote-8) I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” — Revelation 2:1-7

This passage reveals the first threat to the Presbyters, the Elders, the Angels of churches: those who are called and ordained to teach the Scripture. This is their greatest threat, that they might lose their first love: that in studying and teaching Scripture, they might fall in love with the Bible and forget the God Who gave us that Bible. Our first love is our love for God; our second love is our love of neighbor: the Bible is subservient to both God and neighbors. We must keep our priorities in the proper order.

A second threat is also revealed, the quest for power by the Dominators. This temptation is always present: the temptation to promote the kingdom of God by force, rather than by the way of the Cross. The temptation to replace Christ with Constantine… with Justinian.

### Revelation Chapter 2

Verses 8-11

“To the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These things says the First and the Last, Who was dead, and is alive; I know your tribulation, and poverty, (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews, and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which you will suffer: behold, the devil will cast some of you into prison, that you may be tested. You will have tribulation ten days: be faithful unto death. I will give you the crown of life. They who have ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches: The overcomers will not be hurt by the second death.” — Revelation 2:8-11

A third threat to the Presbyters, the Elders, the Angels of churches: those who are called and ordained to teach the Scripture is the very human fear of humiliation. Christians must embrace poverty, suffering, and death… and own them as their own personal treasure.[[9]](#footnote-9)

The words, “I know”,[[10]](#footnote-10) also introduce a fourth threat, the Judaizers, the same group of liars who claimed to be apostles in verse 2. Yes, there are false Jews: those claiming to be Christians, who are not Christians; and those who reject Christianity altogether. A true Jew is a sincere Christian.[[11]](#footnote-11) As a consequence, nearly all of civil and clerical life has been infiltrated by Judaizing spies and sowers of discord. Here is satanic attack at its most alarming state. This fact establishes a theme that will only escalate throughout the rest of Revelation.

A fifth threat, a fear of the second death, of Hell, the Lake of Fire, is real enough. We escape Hell by clinging tightly to the Spirit, as He teaches us Christ and the Father: it is the Spirit Who prevents our failure as we face and experience death with all its struggles.

### Revelation Chapter 2

Verses 12-17

“To the angel of the church in Pergamos write: These things says He Who has the sharp two edged sword; I know where you live, where Satan’s throne is. You hold fast to My Name. You have not denied My faith, even in the days of Antipas, My faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan lives. But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold fast to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication. Thus, you also have those holding fast the teaching of the Dominators in the same way…. So, repent; or if you do not… I am coming to you quickly. I will war with them by the sword of My mouth. They who have ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches; To the overcomers, I will give to eat of the hidden manna. I will give them a white stone. On the stone a new name has been written, which no one knows except [its] receiver.” — Revelation 2:12-17

A sixth threat looms large before the Presbyters, the Elders, the Angels of churches: those who are called and ordained to teach the Scripture…. Satan himself lives in their town.[[12]](#footnote-12) Satan has a synagogue in Smyrna; His bishopric is headquartered in Pergamos. Satanic attack is no laughing matter: it often takes the form of Judaizing.

A seventh threat is that another Christian, Antipas, was murdered there. We all fear death to some extent. The even more onerous duty is that of explaining death to the family and congregation. After imprisonment and as much as ten or more days of torture (verse 10) the sweet blessing of death finally arrives.

An eighth threat is the temptation to become involved in idolatry, which is exactly what Acts 15 forbids. Here, the Judaizers are cast as aping the behavior of Balaam, who was rebuked by his donkey, and was later killed for his sin. He convinced Balak to use his most beautiful and seductive women as spies to lead gullible Israelites into fornication and idolatry. Here John suggests that the Judaizers are using the same strategy on Christians.

A reiteration of the second threat is the temptation to take the Law into our own hands and start overthrowing Pagans by force: this is what the name, Nicolaitans, which we have translated, Dominators, truly means. However, we are not called to kill for Christ, we are called to die with Him. The way of the Cross is the only way home.

“For, [though] walking about in flesh, we do not soldier according to the standard of flesh: for, the armaments of our soldiering [are] not fleshly, but powerful in God for destroying bastions... destroying [corrupted] reasoning, with every arrogance rising against the knowledge of God, capturing every thought in the obedience of Christ.” — 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

The hidden manna is Jesus Himself in John 6.

The white stone brings the sixth threat into greater clarity: this was the device Romans used for voting. A vote cast in worship of Caesar, resulted in life. A vote rejecting Caesar, resulted in death: this was very likely how and why Antipas was murdered. The name written in this white stone is probably, Jesus, or else, ***I Am***. Christians throwing in their lot with God are protected against Roman persecution by the power of the Spirit: the Spirit keeps them from buckling under Roman tortures, not from death. John is developing another major theme, a Roman theme, that will continue throughout the rest of the book.

Today, the United States becomes more Rome like every hour. Christians are being tempted to choose between the Kingdom of God and a wide variety of political saviors: many politicians pose themselves as Christ substitutes and/or replacements.

### Revelation Chapter 2

Verses 18-29

“To the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These things says the Son of God, having His eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass; I know your works, love, faith, service, and perseverance. Your last works [are] greater than the first. But, I have against you, that you forgive the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. She teaches and seduces My servants to commit fornication, and to eat [food] sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent. She did not wish to repented. Consider this, I throw her into a bed and those committing adultery with her into great tribulation, if they would not repent of their works. I will kill her children in [second?] death. All the churches will know that ***I Am*** Searcher of reins[[13]](#footnote-13) and hearts[[14]](#footnote-14). I will give each of you according to your works. Now, I say to you, the rest in Thyatira who do not have this teaching, who do not know the depths of Satan, as they say: I do not throw any other burden on you: except, hold fast to what you have till I come. To the overcomers, protecting to the end My works, I will give them authority over the peoples. He will shepherd them with a rod of iron; He will break them as a potter’s vessels: even as I received in parity with My Father. I will give him the morning star. They who have ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” — Revelation 2:18-29

A ninth threat to the Presbyters, the Elders, the Angels of churches: those who are called and ordained to teach the Scripture is the presence of false confessors in the congregation, satanic spies, crypto-unbelievers. There is a temptation to look the other way at deliberate perversions: in this case, the promotion of temple idolatry and all it entails. This is not a matter of buying steak from the meat market at the rear of idol temples; this is full scale involvement in idol worship: with its prostitution, drinking blood, eating strangled meat, satanic orgies. Anyone can repent of these things: but, they must forsake their activities. The name Jezebel is used as a code-word, a trope for the behavior: Jezebel filled Israel, the northern kingdom with Baal worship and Baal priests… she was trampled to death by horses and a chariot for her sin. The overcomers of the Church act with Christ as His Body in spiritually crushing such perversions. Change, among some, who used to faithfully condemn such behavior as satanic, is now creeping subtly into the Church, as that which is satanic is now made acceptable, and even good. We are to love sinners: we must not approve their sins or ours.

This is not only a first century problem. Churches today are filled with unbelievers, false confessors, satanic spies, crypto-unbelievers. Many are Baptized with nothing but water; there is no evidence of the Spirit in their lives: they were never Chrismated or Confirmed — consequently, the Spirit is unknown to them. Moreover, these modernized churches are being filled with all sorts of perversions… as every sense of biblical moral values is forgotten. This neo-idolatry would never think of being involved in a pagan satanic orgy: yet, new satanic orgies are invented every day. You must decide for yourself what constitutes a satanic orgy, and walk away, without making rules for others. A satanic orgy is, first of all, a defect of the heart, not only of the flesh. Where are the Jezebel wannabes in our lives? They can be either male or female… anyone who uses sexual wiles to promote demonic worship.

The overcomers find victory in the life to come: Christian victory is never attained by fleshly warfare. As the heavenly Body of Christ, we join with Him in smashing the belligerence of satanic pagan rebellion as promised in Psalm 2.

“For, [though] walking about in flesh, we do not soldier according to the standard of flesh: for, the armaments of our soldiering [are] not fleshly, but powerful in God for destroying bastions... destroying [corrupted] reasoning, with every arrogance rising against the knowledge of God, capturing every thought in the obedience of Christ.” — 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

### Revelation Chapter 3

Verses 1-6

“To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These things says He Who has the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive. You are dead. Watch. Strengthen the things which remain, which are about to die: for, I have not found your works full before My God. So, remember how you have received and heard. Protect [it]. Repent. So, if you will not watch, I will come like a thief. You will not know what hour I will come upon you. But, you have a few names in Sardis who have not defiled their garments. They will walk with me in white: because. they are worthy. The overcomers will be clothed in white garments. I will never, ever blot their names out of the book of life. I will confess their names before My Father, and before His angels. They who have ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” — Revelation 3:1-6

A tenth threat to the Presbyters, the Elders, the Angels of churches: those who are called and ordained to teach the Scripture is the spiritual death of most of the congregation. Such congregations are often very popular: for, they have a reputation of being alive. The loss of “how [they] received” is a reference to the baptism of the Spirit, which is repeatedly reinforced by the significance of white, baptismal garments. These white baptismal garments are the robes of Christ’s righteousness, which only the Spirit of God has power to give. The majority of the congregation have forsaken the Spirit and forfeited their garments. The second death, appears to have arrived already. Popular party churches rarely exhibit much of the humility of Christ, or the suffering of watching and walking with Him. The way of the Cross is a narrow, toilsome road.

This church is dead; not physically dead: but, spiritually dead… the second death has set in before the first death. Make no mistake, John is laying out the description of a battlefield before us. The adversaries are God, the Church, the Kingdom of God against everything else; named as antagonists are: Satan and demonism, Judaism and Judaizing, pagan idolatry, Dominators or Nicolaitans (Dominators are posers, they often pose as Christians), Rome and all Empires. All of these antagonists are active throughout all of human society from 6/4 BC to 2020, and beyond. These antagonists are shape shifters; they present in different forms; they only look different: they constitute the same evil system they always have. Do not be deceived by their lies.

“Because, our conflict is not against blood and flesh: but, against rulers, against authorities, against world powers of this darkness, against spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies.” — Ephesians 6:12

“Jesus replied, My Kingdom is not of this world; if My Kingdom were of this world, My attendants would have begun fighting; so that, I would not [have been] given over to the Jews: but now, My Kingdom is not from this place.” — John 18:36

### Revelation Chapter 3

Verses 7-13

“To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These things says He that is Devoted, True, Who has the key of David, He Who opens, so no one can shut; and shuts, so no one can open; I know your works… consider this, I have set an open door before you, that no one can shut: because, you have little power. You have kept My Word. You did not deny My Name. Consider this, I will give [those] of the synagogue of Satan, saying they are Jews, when they are not…. But lie…. Consider this, I will make them come and bow before your feet. They will know that I have loved you: because, you have protected the word of My perseverance. I will also protect you out of the hour of peril, which is about to come upon the whole inhabited world, to test those dwelling on the earth. I come quickly. Hold tightly to what you have, that no one take your crown. I will make the overcomers pillars in the temple of My God. They will never, ever leave. I will write on them the Name of My God; the name of the city of My God, New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God; and My New Name. They who have ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” — Revelation 3:7-13

The fourth threat to the Presbyters, the Elders, the Angels of churches: those who are called and ordained to teach the Scripture is revisited. Judaism, is the philosophical system, and Judaizers, are those striving to force Judaism on Christians: not individual Jews…. Judaism is the very seat of satanic worship: it will continue as a theme, a threat, throughout the rest of this twenty-two chapter long book.[[15]](#footnote-15) Over against this threat is the fact of our own weakness: but, He assures us that His strength is perfected in weakness.[[16]](#footnote-16)

Again, this is not about individual Jews: there are good Jews and bad Jews; kind Jews and cruel Jews; Jews who believe and obey Torah, Jews who believe and obey the false Oral Torah, Jews who believe that Gentiles have no right to the protection of Torah… and must be enslaved. According to both John and Paul, the true Jew is a Christian.[[17]](#footnote-17)

This is about the philosophical system known as Judaism, which is promoted by Judaizers. Christianity has no greater enemy, except for Satan himself. John calls these Judaizers liars. The war between God and Judaism has been developing ever since Jacob wrestled with God at Penial;[[18]](#footnote-18) we see it throughout the Prophets, Gospels, and in Acts 15. Doubtless some of the Judaizers abandoned this practice, to become true Christians: others continued as spies, crypto-Jews, infiltrating Church and government, sowing discord, telling lies.

There are those who expect the fulfillment of Jews coming to bow, in this life. We think it is more reasonable to see it as happening in the next life. We see these two chapters (2 and 3) as arming Christians to embrace physical death in obedience to Christ.

What John is unfolding, typifies the persecution and suffering of Christian life: it’s as characteristic of Christians living in the first century as it is of twenty-first century believers. This war against God will intensify down through the ages, until the end of time; we do have a glimpse of the future in Revelation: but the main story is about this war between God and Satan, Christianity and Judaism, together with the involvement of the Roman Empire.

Our status as pillars, with new names, in New Heavenly Jerusalem, are all things we will experience after death: so Revelation also gives us a view into the Heavenly Kingdom of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We see an eleventh threat. As the sun has barely risen, we see on the horizon, a church so physically weakened by the attacks of Satan and his minions, that it is in danger of ceasing to exist physically. No matter, the Church is primarily a spiritual organization: it cannot be exterminated. The humility and suffering of the churches on earth as they seek Christ and the Father by the Spirit, from their catacombs, is of the very essence of the Church. Earthly pomp and show, physical authority and power, domination and politicizing, do not a True Church make. All of these physical glories will perish together with Rome that fostered them.

“For, [though] walking about in flesh, we do not soldier according to the standard of flesh: for, the armaments of our soldiering [are] not fleshly, but powerful in God for destroying bastions... destroying [corrupted] reasoning, with every arrogance rising against the knowledge of God, capturing every thought in the obedience of Christ.” — 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

“Because, our conflict is not against blood and flesh: but, against rulers, against authorities, against world powers of this darkness, against spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies.” — Ephesians 6:12

“Jesus replied, My Kingdom is not of this world; if My Kingdom were of this world, My attendants would have begun fighting; so that, I would not [have been] given over to the Jews: but now, My Kingdom is not from this place.” — John 18:36

“Do not begin in an unmatched-yoking with unbelievers: for, what sharing [have] righteousness and lawlessness? Or, what communion has light toward darkness? Now, what symphony has Christ toward Belial? Or what portion has a believer with an unbeliever? Now, what agreement has a temple of God with idols? For, we are a temple of the living God: as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk about [amid them]. I will be their God. They will be My people. Wherefore, come out from amid them. Be separated, says [the] Lord. Do not cling to an unclean thing. I will also welcome you in. I will be a Father to you. You will be sons and daughters to Me, says Almighty Lord.” — 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

### Revelation Chapter 3

Verses 14-22

To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Ruler of God’s creation; I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot: I wish that you were cold or hot. Therefore, because you are lukewarm, neither cold nor hot, I intend to spit[[19]](#footnote-19) you out of My mouth. Because you say that I am wealthy… I had wealth… I have need of nothing… You do not know that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. I advise you to buy gold having been fired out of fire from Me, that you could be wealthy. White robes too, that you could be clothed… that the disgrace of your nakedness not be exposed. Eye salve, as well, to lubricate your eyes, so you could see. As many as I love, I correct and child train. Be zealous, therefore. Change your mind. Consider this, I stand at the door, and knock. If anyone hears My voice, and opens the door, I will also enter to them. I would dine with them, and they with Me. To the overcomers, I will give to sit with Me in My throne, as I also overcame, and sat with My Father in His throne. They who have ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” — Revelation 3:14-22

A twelfth threat confronts the Presbyters, the Elders, the Angels of churches: those who are called and ordained to teach the Scripture. Every congregation has a portion of unbelievers. This congregation seems to have no believers. If they have been baptized with water, there is no evidence that they were baptized with the baptism of Christ… with the Spirit and with fire. This congregation has gone beyond death, it is a putrid rotting corpse. This congregation cannot honestly say, “Christ is in our midst.”

Still, it is not a hopeless case. Chrismation or Confirmation is necessary. The congregation must be told that they need to pray for the Spirit every day.[[20]](#footnote-20) Falsity or insincerity in a relationship with the Spirit is immediately subject to the second death. In this context, individuals must listen carefully for the Spirit’s voice as He teaches them the Old Testament;[[21]](#footnote-21) they must also obey. In this process of communicating regularly with Christ and the Father, through the Spirit, they are brought back to life. Otherwise, they cannot be saved. If you lose the Spirit, you have lost everything.

“You are not in flesh, but in Spirit, provided that the Spirit of God dwells in you. Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.” — Romans 8:9

Christ is not a disinterested party in this tragedy. He beats on the door with His shepherd’s staff. Will anyone wake up and change their minds about the error of their lifestyle?

### Summary Observations

The sequence of churches is presented as geographical; here it is also seen to be logical. We have gone from churches and presbyters who are severely wounded, but otherwise well, to dead churches, to this rotten corpse of a church. It is hard to imagine a church’s or presbyter’s condition that John has not addressed. We have witnessed an apparently thriving popularity church, as well as the humblest, seemingly insignificant catacomb-like church. It is possible that the geography is merely a trope, part of John’s code to disguise his intentions from persecutors. In any case, whether geographical or logical, or a little of each, John has drawn an excellent composite sketch of church problems for all time; as well as of Christian life for all time: human nature hasn’t changed much… neither have Satan’s tactics. This composite sketch will help us understand what happens in the following chapters.

These two chapters reveal a great deal of John’s ethnic background: the varieties of parallelism, similar to those found in Proverbs, Psalms, and other poetic literature is striking. John uses this to construct a picture of the Church and her adversaries, as well as the role of Presbyters, the Elders, the Angels of churches: those who are called and ordained to teach the Scripture. We could try to sort out each of these poetic themes, and trace it individually through each of the seven churches: but, not here.

We might argue that there are no bishops in the picture: for, the whole emphasis is upon the message, not upon ruling… there is only One Ruler in the picture… Christ Himself… the Spirit is His Vicar.

In a broader scope, we see Christ as the light of the world. He is standing in the center of a circle of lampstands (a circular menorah). His presence ignites the lamps with the flame of the Spirit. As lamps light, the light spreads, new lamps are lit: ultimately, the True Light of Christ spreads throughout the whole world. Part of the risk is not the loss of light, but rather, the loss of local churches. But the light cannot be extinguished, it continues to spread.

Terrifying!

### Revelation Chapters 2 and 3

Conclusion

As with Chapter 1, these remarks draw many, hopefully, valid observations. However, these are only what Revelation, Chapters 2 and 3 are about in a minor key. In a major key, they also are about Christ.

This is the Head of the Church, Who, holds the seven stars in His right hand (verse 2:1a). This is the Light of the World Who walks among all His churches, supplying them with light (verse 1b). This is the All Knower (verses 2, 9, 13, 19; 3:1, 8, and 15). This is the Measurer of the churches and synagogues (verses 2:5, 9, 13, 16, 21, 23; 3:3, 9, and 16). This is the Sword Breather (verses 12 and 16). This is the Hidden Manna (verse 17). This is the Son of God with blazing eyes and brazen feet (verse 18). He has the seven spirits (verse 3:1). This is the Righteousness of the Father (verse 3:5). This the Holder of the Keys, Who, opens and shuts at His own good pleasure (verse 3:7). This is the Truth (verse 3:14). This is the King (verse 3:21).

The Spirit is also prominent here. He is the Life Giver (verse 7). He protects from the second death (verse 11). He gives the Hidden Manna (verse 17). He is the Power Bringer (verse 26). He is the Righteousness Server (verse 3:5). He is the Pillar Maker (verse 3:12). He is the King’s Friend (verse 3:21).

“Conquering now and still to conquer,  
Rideth a King in His might,  
Leading the host of all the faithful  
Into the midst of the fight;  
See them with courage advancing,  
Clad in their brilliant array,  
Shouting the name of their Leader,  
Hear them exultingly say:

“Not to the strong is the battle,  
Not to the swift is the race;  
Yet to the true and the faithful  
Vict'ry is promised through grace.

“Conquering now and still to conquer,  
Who is this wonderful King?  
Whence are the armies which He leadeth  
While of His glory they sing?  
He is our Lord and Redeemer,  
Savior and Monarch divine;  
They are the stars that forever  
Bright in His kingdom will shine.

“Conquering now and still to conquer,  
Jesus, Thou Ruler of all,  
Thrones and their scepters all shall perish,  
Crowns and their splendor shall fall,  
Yet shall the armies Thou leadest  
Faithful and true to the last,  
Find in Thy kingdom eternal  
Rest, when their warfare is past.”[[22]](#footnote-22)

We owe these observations, all, to Frances Jane (Fanny) Crosby.

Revelation 2 and 3 are about Christ judging His Church and local churches spiritually, as they are in all honesty in this world. We will soon be shown what these churches must become. Christ speaks to His Bride, the Church, pictured in the menorah of the seven churches of Asia, perfecting and protecting her.

The churches have always been, and always will be, wheat mixed with tares. The wheat must not yield to the temptations of becoming: either like Judaizers, with endless sets of rules and regulations; or like pagan temples of idolatry, with licentiousness in every form; or like politicized power structures, trampling many under foot; or like wealth hoarders; or like loveless, lifeless technical biblical experts.

The adversaries are God, the Church, the Kingdom of God against everything else; named as antagonists are: Satan and demonism, Judaism and Judaizing, pagan idolatry, Dominators or Nicolaitans (Dominators are posers, they often pose as Christians), Rome and all Empires.

Revelation is the engagement of the heavenly Groom and Bride. Jesus Christ is the suffering servant Groom. The Church must become the humble suffering Bride: she must keep her lamps trimmed and burning.

Amen.

[[23]](#footnote-23)

1. If therefore you, evil rulers, had known to give good gifts to your children: how much more, The Father out of Heaven will give [the] Holy Spirit to them [if] they ask Him? [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. God, let me be pardoned, the sinner. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Jesus, let me be remembered when you come in your kingdom. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The name, Jezreel (יִזְרְעֶ֑אל) means God spreads or scatters; in its positive connotation, it paints a picture of God sowing seed on the earth. In its more negative meaning, it suggests that God is dispersing a gainsaying, wicked people. Matthew 13; Mark 4; Luke 8; Ecclesiastes 11:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Proverbs 3:34 LXX [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Paul refers to his arrival in heaven; which would be a departure from earth. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. These διεστραμμένα are in the perfect passive: the most likely source of these is Jewish fables, such as Oral Torah. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The only difference between a Dominator and an overcomer, since they have the same root word; is that the Dominator seeks victory by physical force and oppression; while the overcomer seeks victory spiritually through prayer, meditation, constant conversation with the Spirit, Bible study, and the like. Make no mistake; this is war: but, it is spiritual war, not physical war. As soon as churches have carried their battles beyond gentle words, they have wandered away from the path of Christ and into sin. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. “I know your tribulation, and poverty….” [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. “I know the blasphemy….” [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Romans 2:29 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. This is probably a disguised reference to a Roman seat of government. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The kidneys were thought to be the seat of base emotions. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. The heart was thought to be the seat of higher reasoning and will. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Revelation 2:9; 3:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. 2 Corinthians 12:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Romans 2:28-29; Revelation 2:9; 3:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Genesis 32:24-31 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Regurgitation or vomiting is an action of the stomach, not of the mouth. This church tastes so rotten that it is spit out to prevent swallowing. The idea that Christ would swallow such a toxic mess is inconceivable to the point of being nauseous and repulsive. Christ is outside of this church, He will have nothing to do with it. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Luke 11:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Luke 24 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. <https://www.lyricsondemand.com/miscellaneouslyrics/christianlyrics/conqueringnowandstilltoconquerlyrics.html?fbclid=IwAR1vLWpn-tCrF42pNJuViTuqwppad-FK97-IPQh0-B08EIWRs9QkQGQvkQY>

    <https://hymnary.org/media/fetch/108210?fbclid=IwAR2sUhs2EdmmhhB2itDLRAEEYtyzzUXJoJ89mEnDwrs45zxvo_NgjIAV3ks>

    <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8p96ZyV0lJI&fbclid=IwAR3XU0FeSkI1eMmFhBqxOzrC9YtAGdlQxHIvg6Qj-4vacc5-_cDVSNnmgUE>

    <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7yBcVm_7G28&fbclid=IwAR3PAOdfXlV7cr1cful8uE7nMoo8MYQl7L4mqK6D_pxIqN0RTfkW8kqfOm4> [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
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