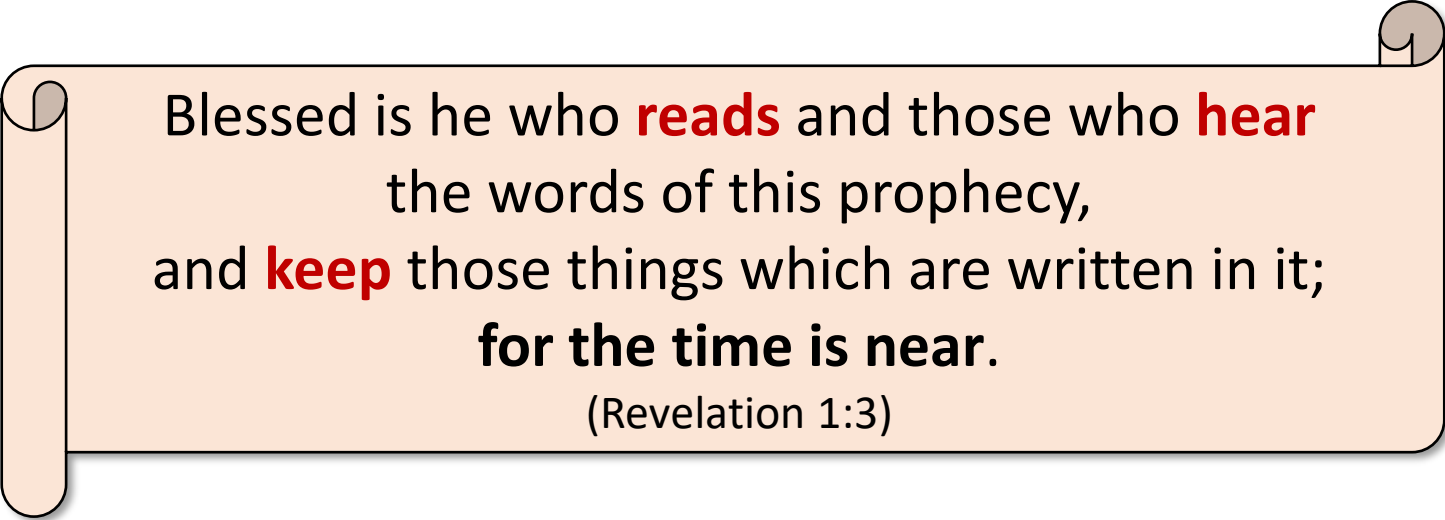




The

Revelation of **Jesus Christ**

5. The Lord's message to the churches - Pergamum



Blessed is he who **reads** and those who **hear**
the words of this prophecy,
and **keep** those things which are written in it;
for the time is near.

(Revelation 1:3)

Overview of the first two sections

Chapter 1

- Introduction
- The first vision – Christ in the midst of the lampstands

Chapters 2 & 3

- **The Lord's messages to the seven churches**



Chapters 4 & 5

- All heaven worships God upon His throne
- The Lamb takes the sealed scroll and is worshipped

Chapters 6 & 7 and 8:1

- The scroll's seven seals are opened



*“Write what you see in a book
and send it to the seven churches...
(Revelation 1:11)*



“Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches...”



- To the angel/messenger of the church in...
- These things says He who...
- **I know your works...**
- Commendation and/or correction, and **guidance**
- The call to hear what is said **to the churches**
- A promise **to each one who overcomes** the local challenges

***To the messenger of
the church in Pergamum
write...***

or Pergamon or Pergamos



Pergamum in history

Pergamum was the seat of a Roman regional assembly. Pliny the Elder (23 – 79 AD) refers to it as the most important city in the province.



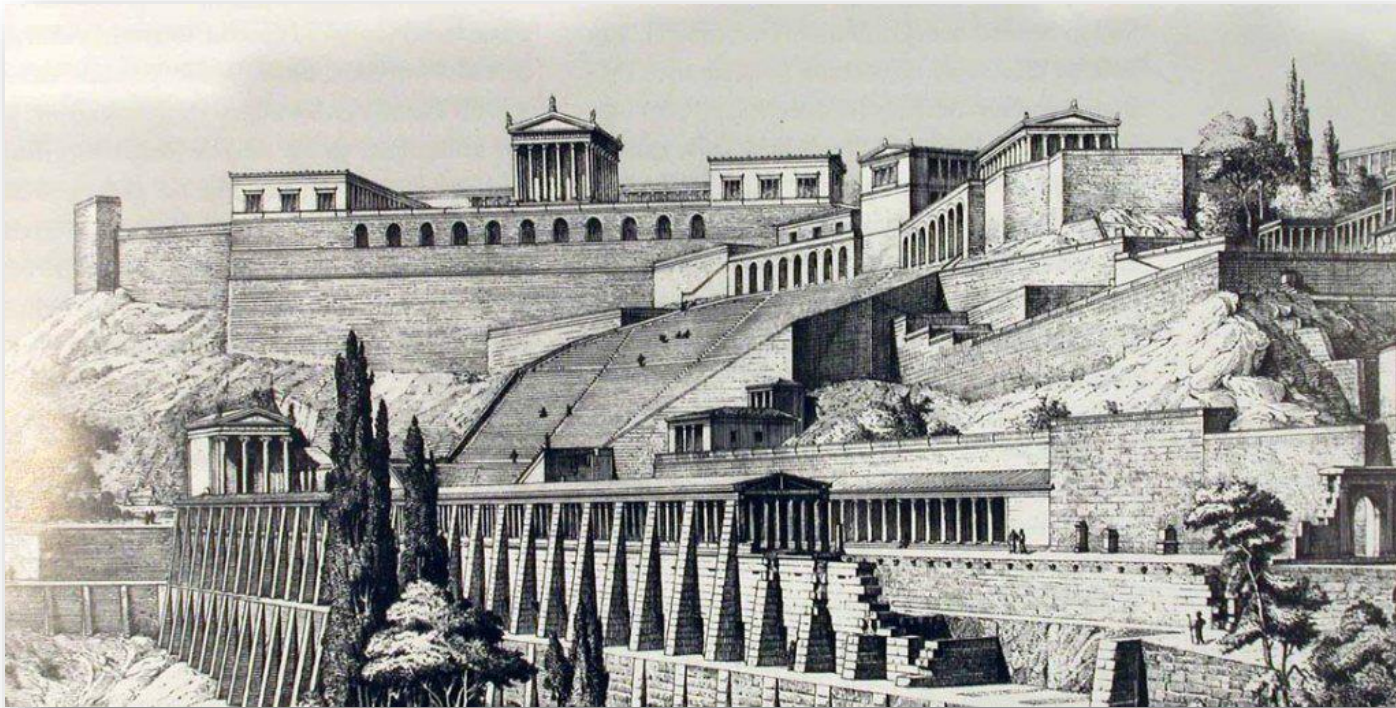
**Pergamum Altar
(in Berlin)**

Asclepius – Greek god of
medicine, healing and
physicians



DIE AKROPOLIS
VON
PERGAMON
RECONSTRUIERT NACH
DEN BISHERIGEN AUSGRABUNGEN
VON F. THIERSCH. FEBR. 1882.

The Pergamum Library



The library, built between 220 and 159 BC, had apparently housed about 200,000 volumes.



The Latin "***pergamenum charta***" was used in ancient Rome to refer to the writing material produced in **Pergamum**. This was eventually shortened to "**parchment**".

Two men...

- **Antipas** – a martyr
 - **Balaam** – a prophet

Two strategies...

- **External threats**
- **Internal corruption**

Or messenger

To the angel of the church in Pergamum write:

These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword...

(Revelation 2:12)

Revelation 1:16
Revelation 19:15,21



I know where you dwell,
where Satan's throne is.

Yet you hold fast My name,
and you did not deny My faith
even in the days of **Antipas**
My faithful witness
who was killed among you,
where Satan dwells.
(Revelation 2:13)

Jesus Christ,
the faithful witness
(Revelation 1:5
and Revelation 3:14)

But I have a few things against you:

you have **some** there
who hold the teaching of **Balaam**,

Numbers 22 to 24

Numbers 25

who taught **Balak** to put a stumbling block
before the sons of Israel,
so that they might eat things sacrificed to idols,
and to practice sexual immorality.

(Revelation 2:14)

The teaching of **Balaam**...

2 Peter 2:15:

Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray.
They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor,
who **loved gain from wrongdoing**...

Jude 11:

Woe to them!
For they ... have **run greedily**
in the error of Balaam **for profit**...



The teaching of **Balaam**...

Come now, curse this people for me,
since they are too mighty for me ...
... he whom you bless is blessed,
and he whom you curse is cursed.

(Numbers 22:6)

The LORD your God would not listen to Balaam,
but the LORD your God turned **the curse**
into **a blessing** for you,
because the LORD your God **loves** you.

(Deuteronomy 23:5)



The teaching of **Balaam**...

...who taught **Balak** to put a **stumbling block** before the sons of Israel...

- To eat things sacrificed to idols,
- To practice sexual immorality.

The women of Moab...
invited the people
to **the sacrifices of their gods**...

and the people **ate**
and **bowed down** to their gods.

So Israel yoked himself to Baal of Peor.

(Numbers 25:1-3)



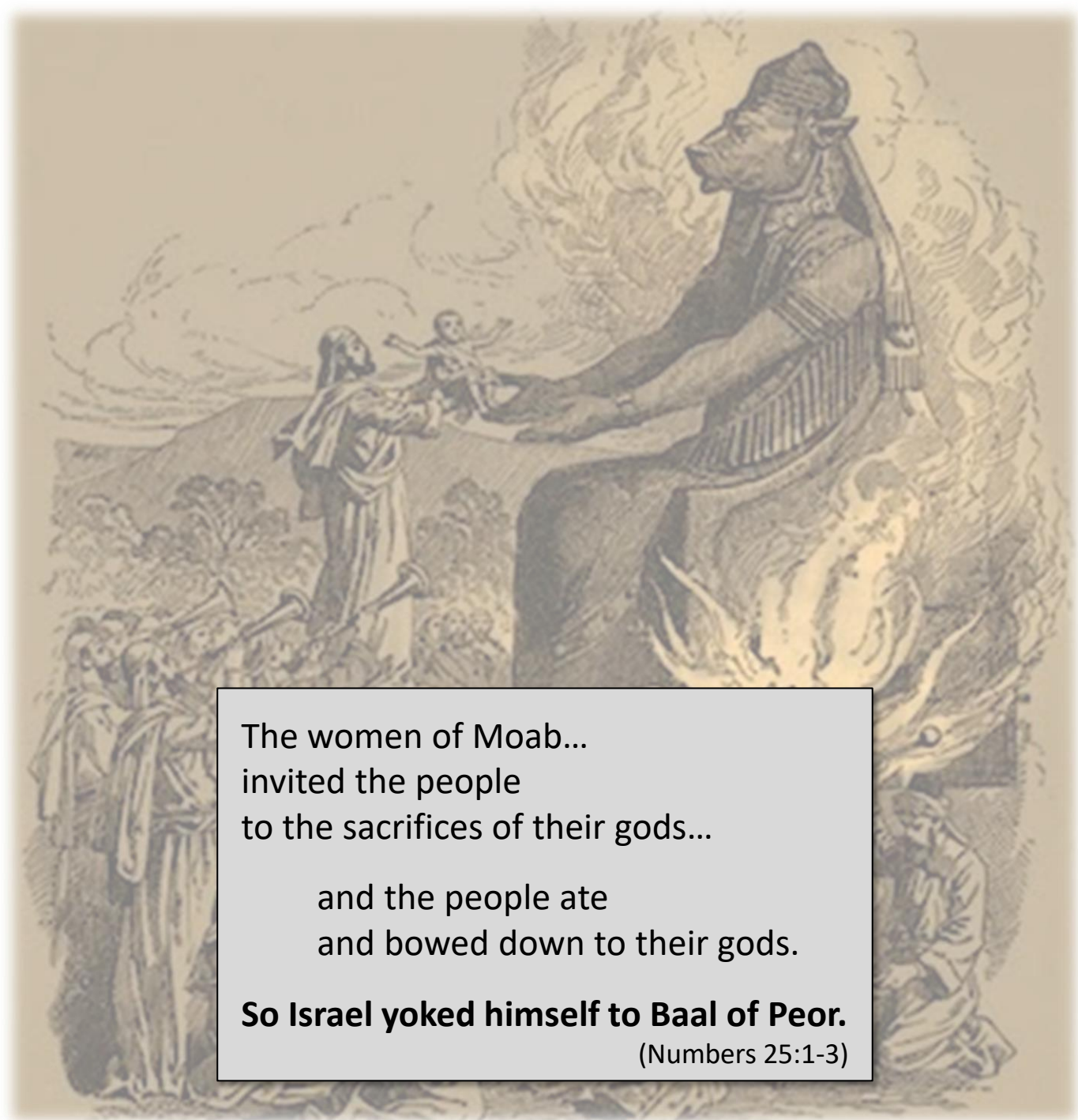
The teaching of **Balaam**...

**What was the witness
of Israel?**



I bore you on eagles' wings
and **brought you to Myself**.
(Exodus 19:4)

This people I have formed **for Myself**;
They shall declare My praise.
(Isaiah 43:21)



The women of Moab...
invited the people
to the sacrifices of their gods...

and the people ate
and bowed down to their gods.

So Israel yoked himself to Baal of Peor.
(Numbers 25:1-3)

The teaching of Balaam...

**What is the witness
of the church?**



You are

- a **chosen** generation,
- a **royal** priesthood,
- a **holy** nation,
- **His own purchased people...**

(1 Peter 2:9)

A detailed illustration in a sepia tone. In the upper right, Balaam is depicted with a human body and a donkey's head, looking towards the left. Below him, a group of people in ancient attire are gathered around a large bowl, possibly engaged in a ritual or meal. The background is filled with intricate, swirling patterns.

**When does the church
lose its testimony?**

When it is

- Without **vision**
- Without **wisdom**
- Without **discipline**

Two men...

- **Antipas** – a martyr
 - **Balaam** – a prophet

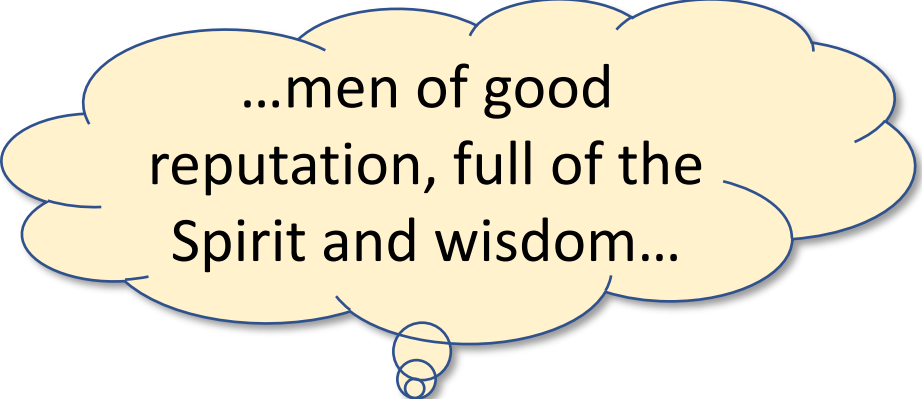
Two strategies...

- **External threats**
- **Internal corruption**

So also you have some who hold
the teaching of **the Nicolaitans.**

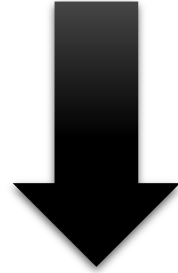
(Revelation 2:15)

The Nicolaitans?



...men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom...

- 1 **Irenaeus** (c. 130-202) wrote that the Nicolaitans followed Nicolas (Acts 6:5) who promoted an immoral lifestyle. So too **Hippolytus** (c. 170-235).
- 2 *Nicolaitan* – in Greek a compound word from ***nikos*** (to conquer or subdue) and ***laos*** (the people). Perhaps an elite group ruling over ordinary believers.



Therefore **repent**.

If not, I will come to you soon
and war against them
with **the sword of my mouth**.
(Revelation 2:16)

If we would judge ourselves,
we would not be judged.
But when we are judged,
we are chastened by the Lord,
that we may not be
condemned with the world.
(1 Corinthians 11:31-32)

Pay attention!

He who has an ear,
let him hear what **the Spirit**
says to **the churches**.

(Revelation 2:17)

A gracious promise...

To **the one** who conquers

Food for the
wilderness journey

I will give some of **the hidden manna**,

and I will give him a **white stone**,

Approval

with a new name written on the stone

that no one knows except the one who receives it.

(Revelation 2:17)

Intimate
fellowship

The **Revelation** of **Jesus Christ**

Revelation 2:12-17

Two men...

- **Antipas** – a martyr
- **Balaam** – a prophet

Two strategies...

- External threats
- Internal corruption

What have we seen?

We do not wrestle against flesh and blood,
but against the rulers, against the authorities,
against the cosmic powers over this present darkness,
against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

(Ephesians 6:12)

The
Revelation
of **Jesus Christ**

He who has an ear, **let him hear**
what **the Spirit** says to ^{*all*} **the churches**.