



The

# **Revelation** of **Jesus Christ**

An overview

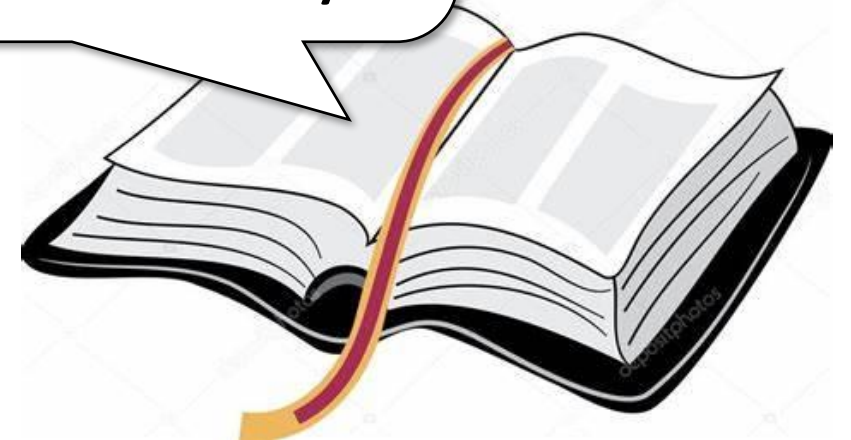
**5. The Lord's message to Pergamum**

“Behold, I am coming soon!  
**Blessed** is the one who **keeps**  
the words of the prophecy of this book.”

(Revelation 22:7)

Why bother with  
Revelation?

Because the Lord Jesus  
**will come**, and we **must**  
be ready for that day.



# Overview of the first section

## 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



# The Lord's messages to the seven churches

*"Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches..."*

(Revelation 1:11)



Pergamos,  
Pergamum or  
Pergamon



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

Ephesus

**Smyrna**

Pergamum

Thyatira

Sardis

Philadelphia

Laodicea

## **Ephesus**

“You have left your first love...”

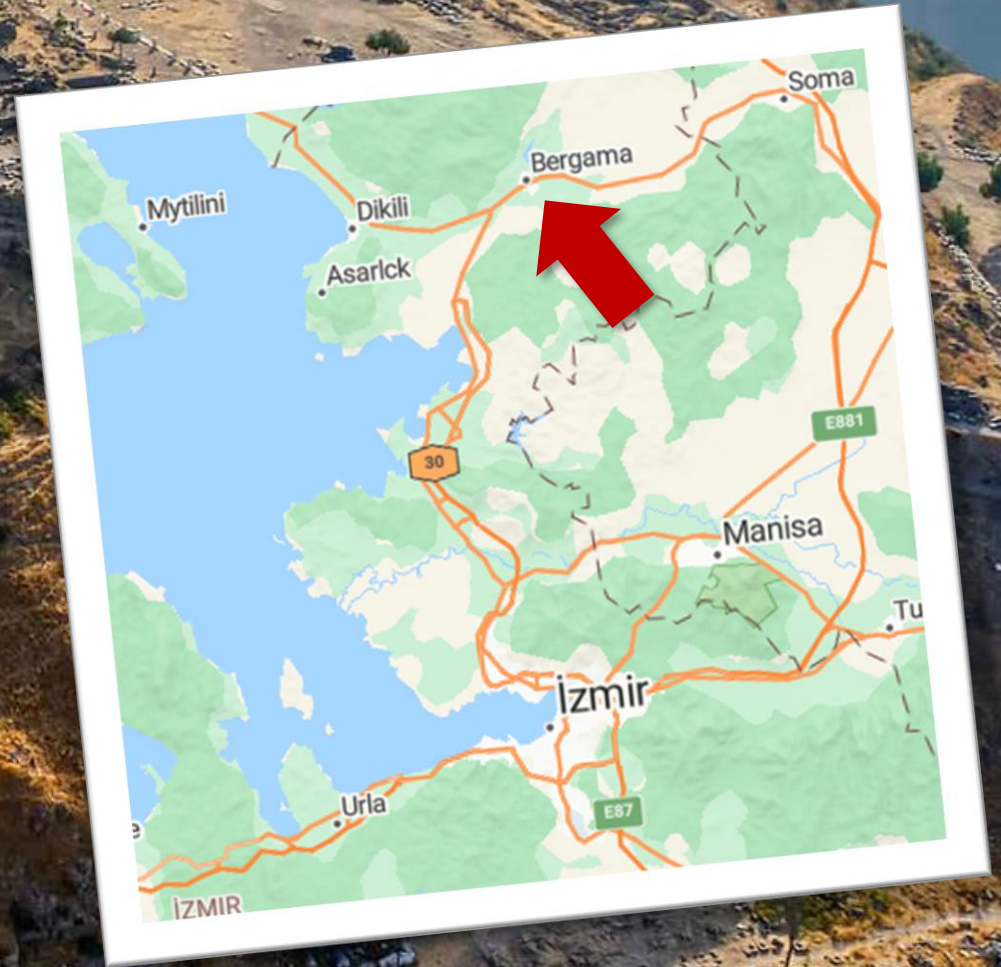
## **Smyrna**

“Be faithful until death,  
and I will give you the crown of life.”

# The Lord's message to Pergamum...

**Revelation 2:12-17**

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



# Pergamum in history

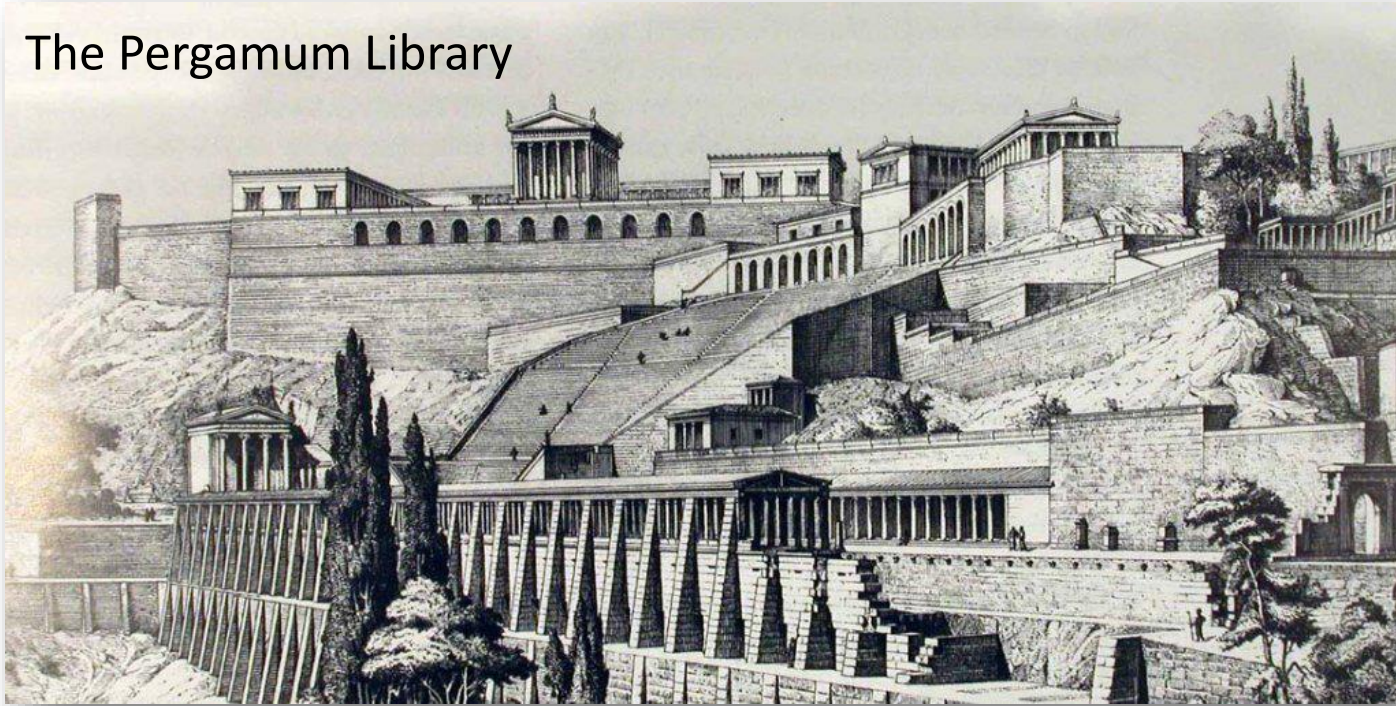
Pergamum was the seat of a Roman regional assembly. Pliny the Elder (23 – 79 AD) refers to it as the most important city in the province.





# Pergamum in history

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**".



**Caesar is Lord**



**Jesus is Lord**

# Pergamum in history



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

# Pergamum in history

## What was it like to be a Christian in Pergamum?

- A few among many
- The weak among the strong
- The unlearned among the learned
- The godly among the idolatrous

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

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)

Faith in the  
Lord Jesus

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

# Who was Antipas?

According to Christian **tradition**, Antipas was a leader in the church at Pergamum.

**The traditional accounts** say that Antipas was **martyred** during the reign of Nero or Domitian, by burning in a brazen bull-shaped altar for casting out demons worshipped by the local population.

*You hold fast My name,  
and you did not deny My faith...*

## 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)



# What do we know about **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)



# What do we know about **Balaam**?

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

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



# What do we know about **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...**

You have ***some*** there who hold  
the teaching of ***Balaam***...

## What is “the teaching of Balaam”?

- He **appeared** to be a faithful prophet.
- But he **wanted** money and rewards.
- **His words** were fine, **his life** was terrible.

Yet this you have: you hate  
**the works** of the Nicolaitans,  
which I also hate.  
(Revelation 2:6)

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

(Revelation 2:15)

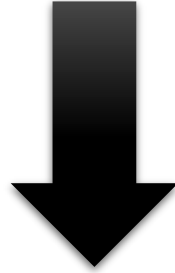
# Who were the Nicolaitans?

But you are not to be called rabbi,  
for you have one teacher,  
and you are all brethren.  
(Matthew 23:8)

*Nicolaitan* – in Greek a compound word from  
***nikos*** (to conquer or subdue) and ***laos*** (the people).

Perhaps they were an elite group ruling over ordinary believers?

*I have a few things against you...*



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.

(1 Corinthians 11:31)

# 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

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

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

with a new name written on the stone

that no one knows except the one who receives it.

Food for  
the inner life

Approval, commendation?

Special fellowship  
with the Lord

(Revelation 2:17)

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

Revelation 2:12-17

## What have we seen?

- Pergamum was **a hard place** to be a follower of Jesus.
- The believers in Pergamum were **willing to suffer** for their Lord.
- They had allowed **hypocrisy** and **error** in their midst.
- This had to be **put right** – quickly!
- **Faithfulness** would be abundantly rewarded.

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

He who has an ear, **let him hear**  
what **the Spirit** says to <sup>*all*</sup> **the churches**.

