

# “The Woman Jezebel: Thyatira”

(Rev 2:18-23)



Truth Matters Church, Inc.

# The Seven Churches of Revelation



# A brief look *in Scripture*: Thyatira



☞ Thyatira is only mentioned 1x apart from Revelation and that is in Acts 16:

Acts 16:13-15 (during Paul's 2<sup>nd</sup> missionary journey; made a stop in Philippi)

Acts 16:13

13 And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to a riverside, where we were supposing that there would be a place of prayer; and we sat down and began speaking to the women who had assembled. 14 A woman named Lydia, **from the city of Thyatira**, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul. 15 And when **she and her household had been baptized**, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.

☞ After we are introduced to Lydia, Paul continued to meet at the place of prayer in Philippi (presumably on the Sabbath day) where we are introduced to a slave girl having a spirit of divination, let's read that account...

# A brief look *in Scripture*: Thyatira



Acts 16:16-21

16 It happened that as we were going to the place of prayer, a slave-girl having a spirit of divination met us, who was bringing her masters much profit by fortune-telling. 17 Following after Paul and us, she kept crying out, saying, "These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation." 18 She continued doing this for many days. But Paul was greatly annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!" And it came out at that very moment.

19 But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the authorities, 20 and when they had brought them to the chief magistrates, they said, "These men are throwing our city (Philippi) into confusion, being Jews, 21 and are proclaiming customs which it is not lawful for us to accept or to observe, being Romans."

# A brief look *in Scripture*: Thyatira



- ❧ After Paul drove the demon out of the slave girl, her masters who no longer can make money off of her fortune telling seized and dragged Paul and Silas and brought their allegations before the chief magistrates
- ❧ After the allegations were brought, Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown into prison and commanded to be placed under protective watch
- ❧ Then we're introduced to a familiar story, the Philippian jailer account
- ❧ At about midnight Paul and Silas sang hymns to God
- ❧ There was a great earthquake unfastening the prison doors and chains
- ❧ The jailer awoke from sleep and supposing the prisoners fled, drew his sword to kill himself, Paul and Silas interjected
- ❧ The jailer utters the famous words "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

# A brief look *in Scripture*: Thyatira



- ❧ Paul and Silas responded their famous words “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household”
- ❧ The Jailer believed and so did his family and they got baptized and were saved
  - ❧ Paul and Silas were cared for and provided hospitality
- ❧ The next day, the chief magistrates gave an order to release Paul and Silas
- ❧ But Paul bothered by their mistreatment asked that they personally send them on their way themselves
- ❧ The chief magistrates appealed to Paul and Silas and asked them directly to leave the city
- ❧ I went through all this to get to  
Acts 16:40 They [Paul and Silas] went out of the prison **and entered the house of Lydia**, and when they [Paul and Silas] **saw the brethren [in Lydia’s house]**, they encouraged them and departed.

# A brief look *in Scripture*: Thyatira



- ❧ Lydia's home was the 1<sup>st</sup> home church in Philippi!
- ❧ I went through all that to say this: it is possible that the church in Thyatira was founded upon the preaching of the apostle Paul – where Lydia and her family were from - and believers began to meet at her house!
- ❧ Interesting Note: “Thyatira” in Greek is Thuateira which means the “city of Lydia” and the only Lydia mentioned in the Bible happens to be from there
- ❧ That's the only mention of Thyatira in the NT, now let's look to what history has to tell us concerning this city...

# A brief look *in History*: Thyatira



- ❧ Thyatira was established under the Attalid dynasty
- ❧ It was eventually integrated into the kingdom of Pergamum
- ❧ Thyatira became part of Rome when the Attalid dynasty ended
  - ❧ Around 133BC
- ❧ Today Thyatira is the modern town Akhisar in Turkey

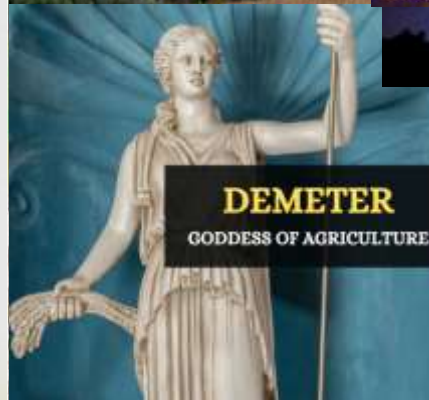




# A brief look *in History*: Thyatira



- Excavations discovered several inscriptions and coins of gods such as Zeus, Artemis, Apollo, Demeter, and Athena
  - An indication that such a variety was worshiped at this city
- A particular coin suggests that a temple was built to Roman Emperor Vespasian



# A brief look *in History*: Thyatira



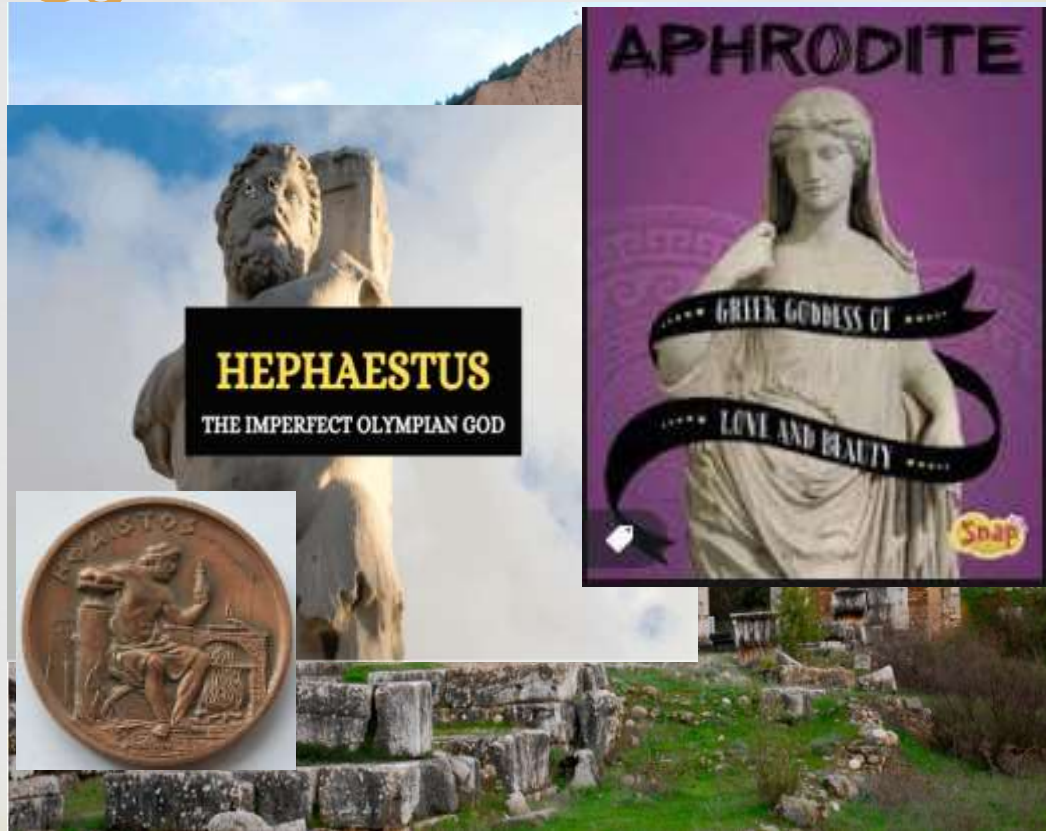
- According to inscriptions found at Thyatira, city had many trade guilds, including wool, linen, baking, slaves, leather, bronze, pottery and dyes
- Just as Smyrna was known for myrrh and Pergamum parchments, Thyatira was known for its dyes, in particular purple dye (Lydia was a seller of purple)
  - Provided an alternative purple dye (madder root) vs. rare purple dye (royal purple dye from the murex snail)



# A brief look *in History*: Thyatira



- More inscriptions found also demonstrate the presence of blacksmiths of bronze
- In fact there was coin with the god Hephaestus (god of blacksmiths and fire) who according to Greek mythology was married to Aphrodite the goddess of love, beauty and sex
- One last thing to note: As we will see, Thyatira also had Jews living there who were influenced by the prophetess Jezebel who promoted lust and sex



# A brief look *in History*: Thyatira



- ❧ So in summary Thyatira much like Ephesus/Smyrna/Pergamum that we've studied thus far was very much influenced by the Hellenistic and was entrenched with many gods, goddesses and Emperor worship
- ❧ Some of which claim to have secret wisdom (deep things of Satan)
- ❧ This helps us understand why Jesus mentions "Jezebel", "eyes like a flame of fire", "feet like burnished bronze", and "broken pottery" which could all very well be descriptive of the characteristics of this ancient city



# Scripture Reading



Revelation 2:18-29 (NASB)

18 “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write:

The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this:

19 ‘I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first. 20 But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. 21 I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality. 22 Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. 23 And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.

# Scripture Reading



24 But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them – I place no other burden on you. 25 Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come. 26 He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, **TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; 27 AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES**, as I also have received authority from My Father; 28 and I will give him the morning star. 29 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

# Exposit 2:18



18 “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write:  
The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and  
His feet are like burnished bronze, says this:

- ✧ “to the angel” appointed over this church
- ✧ “the Son of God” only time in this entire book that Jesus refers to Himself with this title
- ✧ “eyes like a flame of fire” and “His feet are like burnished bronze” we covered what this means in our The Glorified Son of Man study
- ✧ Does anyone remember what these descriptive characteristics mean using Scripture?



# Exposit 2:18



- ☞ “eyes like a flame of fire” we learned are associated with judgment, wrath and destruction
- ☞ “His feet are like burnished bronze” we learned is associated with being holy, set apart, and a memorial offering to God His Father
- ☞ So v.18 is reiterating that Jesus is ready to examine the 7 churches, in this case the church in Thyatira, and render a verdict from heaven through eyes of unquenchable fire by the Son of God who is a most holy and a perpetual memorial offering to God His Father
- ☞ And as we covered in our intro, these were also descriptive characteristics of this city entrenched in idol worship (i.e. Apollo the sun god, Hephaestus the god of bronze and forge)





# Exposit 2:19



19 'I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first.

- ✧ Consistent with how Jesus starts the letters to the 7 churches
- ✧ He first acknowledges their situation (He walked among the 7 lampstands)
- ✧ "I know" (oida) Jesus is fully aware of their deeds (behavior), their love (agapē), faith, service and perseverance
- ✧ "deeds of late are greater than at first" Unlike the 1<sup>st</sup> letter to Ephesus (who left their first love), the believers in Thyatira demonstrated their love and faithfulness by increasing in good deeds

# Exposit 2:20



20 But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

- ❧ “But I have this against you” “but” negates what was said (we all can relate to this in our English vernacular)
- ❧ Their commendation in v. 19 is overshadowed because Jesus said “you tolerate the woman Jezebel” [more on this] for she led
- ❧ “My bond-servants astray” [more on this] because she taught that it was ok and right to commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols

# “you tolerate the woman Jezebel”



- ❧ “you” using our ROEs are the believers in Thyatira
- ❧ “tolerate” is not how we might interpret it in English
- ❧ “tolerate” is aphiemi which means to let go from oneself
  - ❧ A good example is to give in to the lusts of the flesh
- ❧ “the woman Jezebel” we’re all familiar with this name
  - ❧ Probably the most evil female name of all time
- ❧ As we’ve customarily done, let’s look to Scripture to better understand who the original Jezebel was so we can better understand who this Jezebel is that Jesus is referencing

# “you tolerate the woman Jezebel”

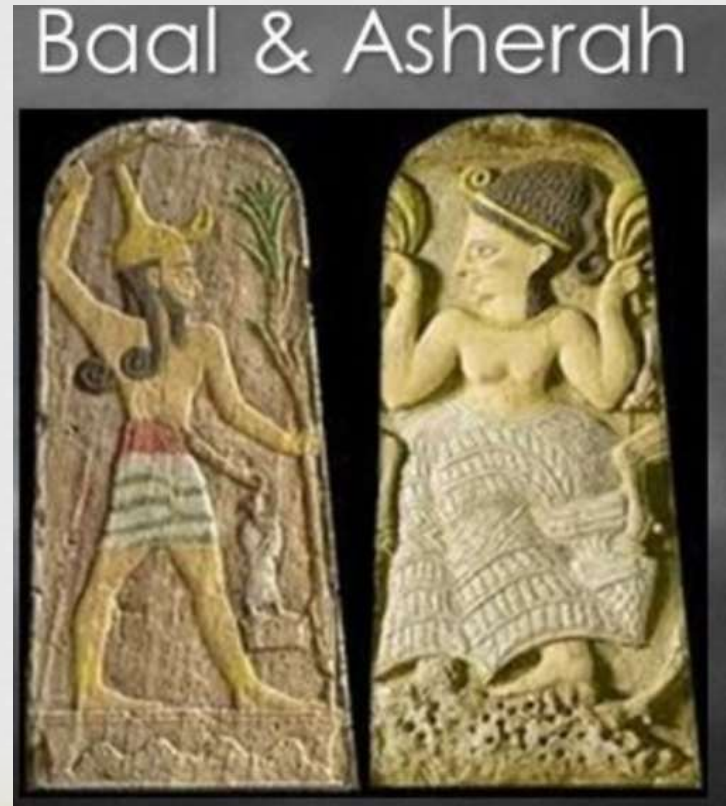


- ❧ The first mention of Jezebel was in 1Ki 16
- ❧ Ahab was the king of Israel (Asa was the king of Judah) at the time
- ❧ The Scripture describes Ahab to have surpassed the sins of the kings before him
  - ❧ Ahab was the most sinful King of all Israel up to that point in time

# “you tolerate the woman Jezebel”



- ✧ It was Ahab king of Israel who married Jezebel and she influenced Ahab to serve and worship Baal (1Ki 16:31)
  - ✧ Carved images
  - ✧ Temple prostitution
  - ✧ Child sacrifice (burn children)
- ✧ Ahab then erected an altar for Baal in Samaria (1Ki 16:32)
- ✧ Ahab also made an Asherah (an image of a fertility (mother) goddess)
  - ✧ Kind of sounds like the Virgin Mary and variation of other goddesses (Cybele, Artemis, Aphrodite) doesn't it?
- ✧ Anyhow, this provoked God to anger



# “you tolerate the woman Jezebel”

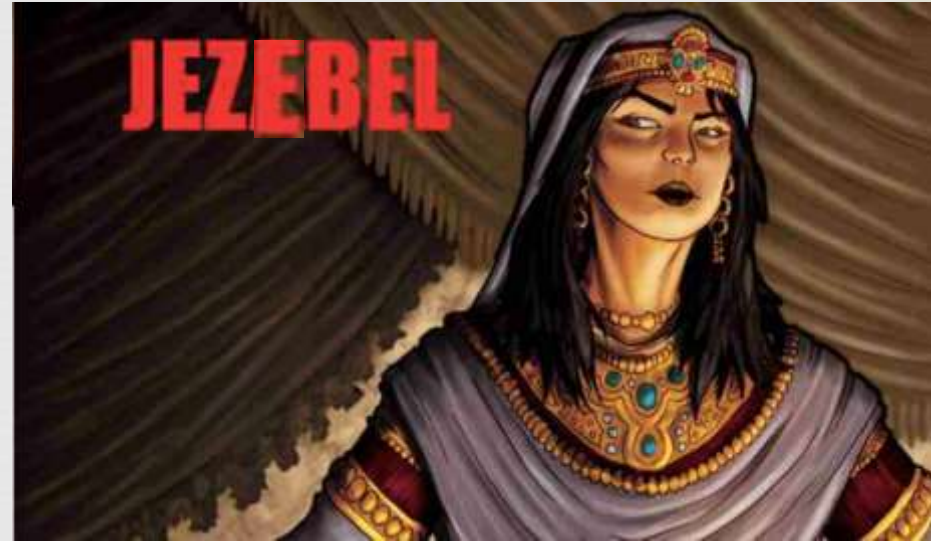
- ☞ It was then Elijah confronted Ahab and pronounced a drought
- ☞ As a result of the drought, there was great famine in the land for 3 ½ years
- ☞ During this time, 1Ki 18 tells us that Jezebel destroyed the prophets of the LORD
  - ☞ Obadiah hid 100 prophets in a cave and provided them with bread and water
- ☞ Then we have the famous showdown between Elijah and the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel (1 man vs. 450)
- ☞ You know the story, Elijah is victorious in this great showdown and the prophets of Baal were seized and killed (drought ends)



# “you tolerate the woman Jezebel”



- ❧ Queen Jezebel gets word that the prophets of Baal were killed and sent a messenger to Elijah to tell him he will be killed
- ❧ Bizarrely Elijah flees for his life
  - ❧ But God is still with him
- ❧ The next time we hear of Jezebel was of her plot to murder a man (Naboth) for his vineyard that Ahab coveted
- ❧ Ahab didn't condemn her for such an evil plot
- ❧ God through Elijah pronounces judgment against Ahab and Jezebel and both will be killed



- ❧ Ahab repents and God postpones his judgment to his son
- ❧ Jezebel is ultimately killed by Jehu who became king of Israel

# “you tolerate the woman Jezebel”

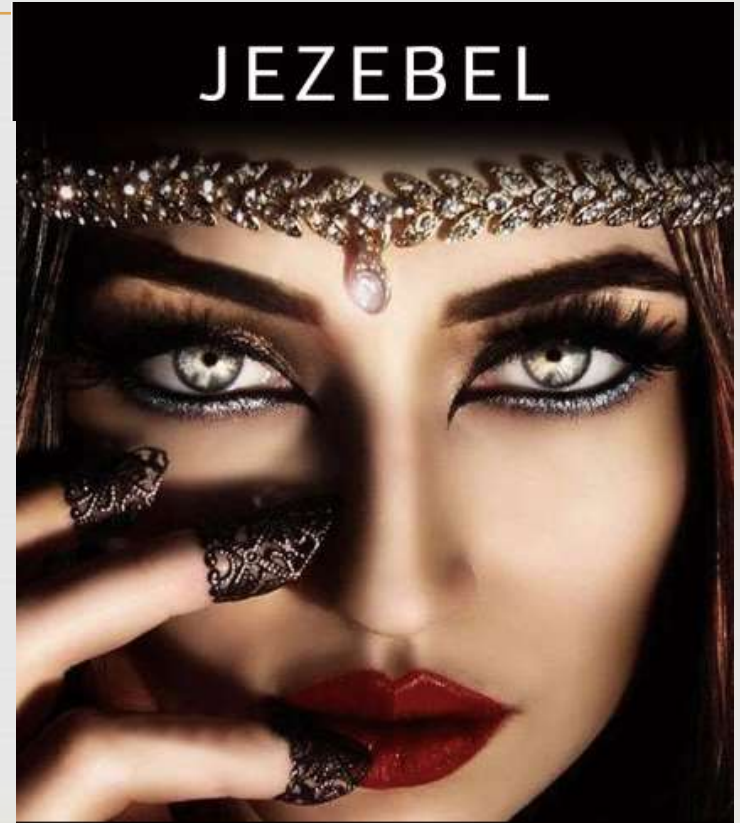


☞ So in summary Jezebel was Queen of Israel who used her position of authority and influence to cause Ahab and the people of Israel to engage in Baal and Asherah worship

☞ Sexual immorality

☞ Eat meat sacrifice to idols

☞ Now back to v. 20...

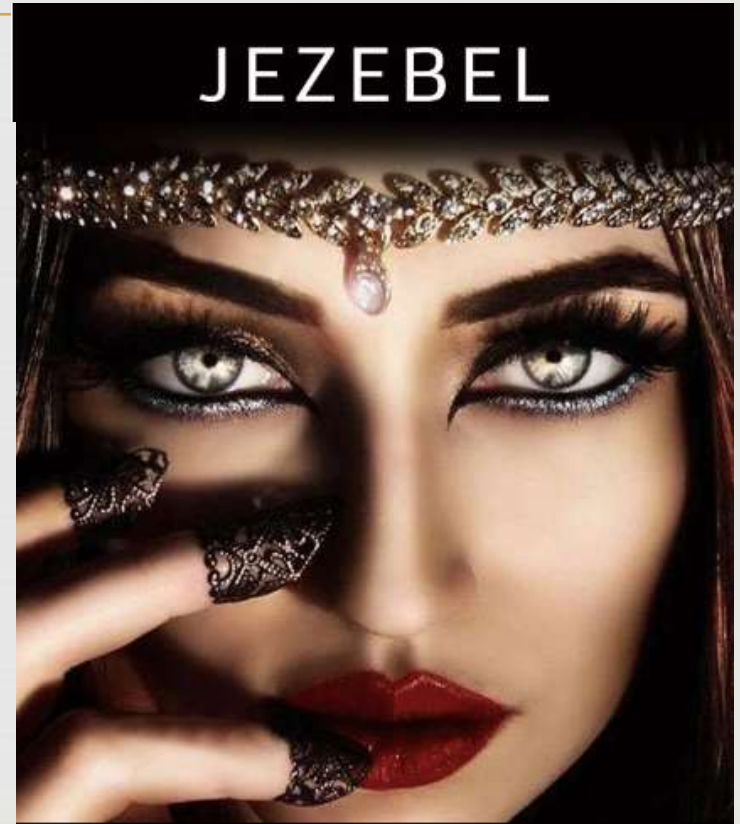




# “you tolerate the woman Jezebel”



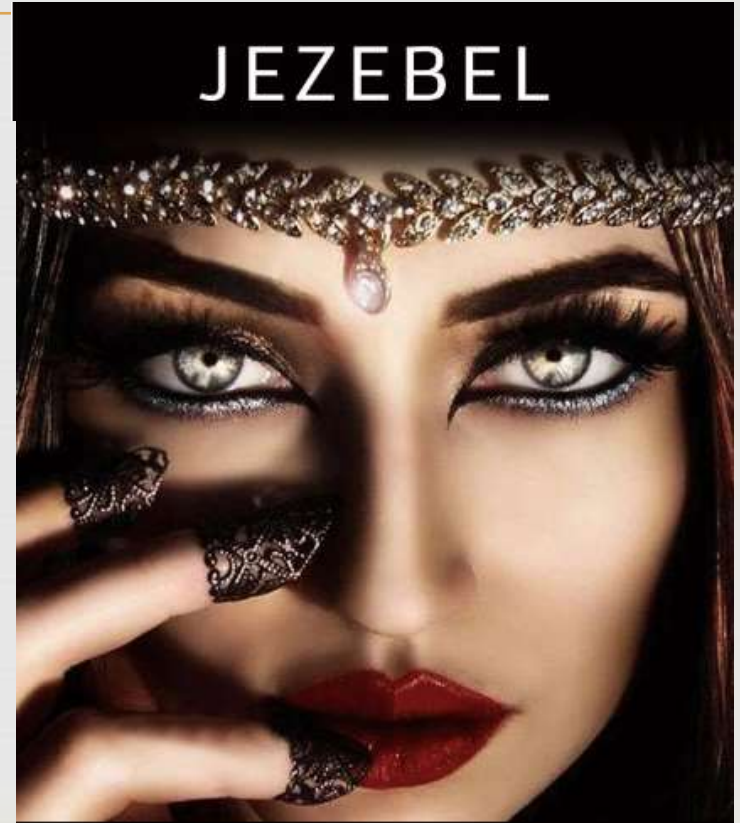
- ☞ When Jesus said  
20 But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.
- ☞ Using our ROEs let's not over spiritualize the text
- ☞ There was an actual woman named Jezebel (NT) who claimed to be a prophetess and taught the same things as the Jezebel in OT



# “you tolerate the woman Jezebel”



- ☞ The Jezebel in the NT (like the Jezebel in the OT) taught and influenced the people of Israel to engage in Baal worship
- ☞ This is precisely what John warned about in 1Jn:  
1Jn 4:1 Beloved, 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.
  - ☞ This would include false prophetesses
- ☞ The NT Jezebel was influenced by the spirit of the OT Jezebel and some “bond-servants” were led astray (lets look at this)



# “My bond-servants astray”



- ❧ “My” possessive noun
- ❧ “bond-servants” is doulos which means slave
- ❧ So v.20 is referring to Jesus’s slaves
- ❧ In Revelation Christ’s slaves that are mentioned are:
  - ❧ The apostle John (Rev 1:1)
  - ❧ Believers in Thyatira (Rev 2:20)
  - ❧ 144K sealed Jews (Rev 7:3)
  - ❧ OT prophets (Rev 10:7)
  - ❧ Two Witnesses/Prophets (Rev 11:18)
  - ❧ Moses (Rev 15:3)
  - ❧ Glorified saints (Rev 19:5)



# “My bond-servants astray”



- ✧ In the NT Jesus’s “doulos” may refer to Jews (mostly), angels, or believers
  - ✧ In most of Jesus’ parables the slaves are referring to the Jews and angels
  - ✧ Believers are least called doulos
- ✧ In v.20, the Jesus’s doulos are Jewish believers in their assembly
- ✧ So with that lets look at v.20 one last time (Catarroja AMP)...



# Catarroja AMP: Rev 2:20



20 But I have this against [certain Jewish believers in Thyatira], that [is] you [have among you those were were given to their lusts provoked by the teaching of] the woman Jezebel [the same spirit of the OT Jezebel], who [a self-proclaimed] prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants [the Jews] astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols [as their forefathers did when the kings of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD and provoked the LORD to anger by worshipping Baal].

✧ Thus, there were Jews among them who professed Christ as Messiah, but also were given into the lusts of the woman Jezebel

✧ Engaged in sexual immorality in the temple worship

✧ Offered and participated in eating things sacrificed to Baal

# Exposit: Rev 2:21



21 I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality.

- ❧ “I” Jesus is speaking in the first Person
- ❧ “her” Jezebel the self-proclaimed prophetess
- ❧ “time to repent”
  - ❧ King Ahab (Israel’s king at the time Jezebel was Israel’s Queen) even repented when judgment was pronounced against them through Elijah
  - ❧ God postponed Ahab’s judgment to his son
- ❧ However, just like the Jezebel in the OT, this NT Jezebel also refused to repent of her immorality
- ❧ As a result, Jesus is pronouncing her judgment in v. 22...

# Exposit: Rev 2:22



22 Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds.

❧ “I” Jesus is still speaking in the first Person

❧ “will throw her on a bed of sickness” [more on this]

# “will throw her on a bed of sickness”



☞ “will throw her (Jezebel)” is in the future tense

☞ This is PROPHECY

☞ “on a bed of sickness”

☞ This a warning of judgment and destruction

☞ To show this I’d like to refer to the Tares among Wheat parable..



# Tares among Wheat



Matthew 13:24-30 (after the parable of the Sower and Seed was explained)  
24 Jesus presented another parable to them (large crowds), saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. 25 But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away. 26 But when the wheat sprouted and bore grain, then the tares became evident also. 27 The slaves of the landowner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’ 28 And he said to them, ‘An enemy has done this!’ The slaves \*said to him, ‘Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?’ 29 But he \*said, ‘No; for while you are gathering up the tares, you may uproot the wheat with them. 30 Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, “First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn.””

# Tares among Wheat



Matthew 13:36-43 (the parable explained)

36 Then He [Jesus] left the crowds and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him and said, “Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.” 37 And He said, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, 38 and the field is the world; and as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one; 39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. 40 So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. 41 The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, 42 and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

# Tares among Wheat



- ❧ TRUTH: We cannot understand Revelation apart from Jesus' parables!
- ❧ "He who has ears, let Him hear" is both a warning and call to learn the truths communicated in Jesus's parables!
- ❧ Remember Revelation is "the prophecy". The entire book is prophecy.
- ❧ Heck, it can be said that the entire book of Revelation is a prophetic parable!
  - ❧ Hence so much confusion, misinterpretation, mishandling
- ❧ To understand a prophetic parable, in addition to having solid disciplines (our ROEs) we need to consider the other parables taught by Jesus!

# “will throw her on a bed of sickness”



- ❧ What drew me to the “Tares among Wheat” parable was the similar language that Jesus “will throw” His enemies into the furnace of fire just like Jesus “will throw her on a bed of sickness”
- ❧ Here was Jesus’s explanation of the Tares among Wheat parable:
  - ❧ The Sower of good seed = Son of Man
  - ❧ The field = the world
  - ❧ The good seed = sons of the kingdom
  - ❧ The sower of the tares = the devil
  - ❧ The tares = sons of the evil one
  - ❧ The harvest = end of the age
  - ❧ The reapers = angels

# “will throw her on a bed of sickness”



- ❧ The Wheat among Tares is an end times prophecy!
- ❧ Jesus told His disciples beforehand of what will take place in the future!
- ❧ At the end of the age, the devil and his sons and all who practice lawlessness will be gathered up and burned with fire
- ❧ So with this truth in mind the truth behind this phrase “will throw her on a bed of sickness” was not only a warning against the Jewish believers in Thyatira who were led astray by Jezebel the prophetess, but a prophetic warning of impending judgment and destruction coming upon those who play harlot with the world during the end times!

# “will throw her on a bed of sickness”



- ✧ Just like the Jews who played harlot with Jezebel's teaching in the NT were judged and killed, the Jews and those who play harlot with the world too will be judged and killed and thrown into great tribulation
  - ✧ Following the blowing of the 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet
- ✧ Those in Thyatira are not to fear the gods (i.e. Hephaestus the god of blacksmiths and fire), but to fear the judgment and destruction by the Son of God who has eyes like a flame of fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze
- ✧ Those in the world are not to fear the sons of the evil one, and his Antichrist, but the one who will throw them and his children (including his daughter Jezebel) into the fiery furnace
  
- ✧ With this warning in the forefront, this transitions nicely into v. 23...

# Exposit: Rev 2:23



23 And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.

❧ “I” Jesus still speaking

❧ “will kill her children” future tense; prophecy

❧ Jesus will kill and destroy those influenced by the spirit of Jezebel and the allure of the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life

❧ “all the churches will know (ginōskō)” not just Thyatira, not just the 7 1<sup>st</sup> century churches, but all the churches up to and including the end times will know (ginōskō) through first hand experience that Jesus will repay His enemies with vengeance and kill them with pestilences and will render to everyone according to their deeds, works, or behavior – whether good or evil