



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Revelation 18:29

"That Woman Jezebel"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] This morning we're turning for our scripture reading to Revelation chapter 2 verse 18 through verse 29, and this as, of course, you know the moment you look at this passage is our Lord's letter to the church at Thyatira. Reading verse 18,

"And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; these things saith the son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; I know thy works, and love, and service, and faith and thy patience, and thy works, and the last to be more than the first," (that probably should be rendered, "and thy last works to be more than the first"). "Notwithstanding, I have," (the Authorized Version has a few things, but that is not in the better manuscripts) "notwithstanding I have against thee, that thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not," (or those of you that have the new American Standard Bible you will know that you have something like, "She does not wish to repent"). "Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death," (that of course probably means pestilence) "and all the churches shall know

that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts," (or better "the hearts and mind").
"And I will give unto every one of you according to your works. But unto you I say, unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power or authority over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

May the Lord bless the reading of his word, and let's bow together in a moment of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for the word of God and for these marvelous letters which have been preserved for us that our Lord wrote to the churches in the Apostles day. And Lord, as we read them, we recognize there are so many things in them that are so relevant to us individually and to the churches of Jesus Christ today. We ask Lord, as we study them today that by Thy grace, we may be enabled to make the proper application to us individually and then to the local assembly.

May our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ's interests improve and grow in our midst as a result of our study today. We pray Thy blessing upon Believer's Chapel and its ministries, its elders, and deacons, and the members, and the friends, and the visitors who are to be with us today or are here today. We pray for them, each one of them, and Father, we pray for the sick. We know there are many who have very difficult things through which they must go, and we pray for them, encourage them. Bless those who minister to them. Give them wisdom and guidance, and supply the needs that exist. We

pray that as a result of our experiences, we may grow in the knowledge of our great Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and be prepared for the life that is before us.

We pray for our Sunday school particularly today, and ask that our teachers may be given wisdom, and may they teach in the power of the Holy Spirit, and may our young people who so much need the word of God in their younger years, by the Holy Spirit, be enabled to understand and to grow in the things of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Bless them richly. May today be a special day for them. And we commit our meeting to Thee now in Jesus’ name. Amen.

[Message] Subject for this morning is, "That Woman Jezebel", words taken from the Authorized Version’s account of our Lord's message to the church at Thyatira.

“The longest letter,” R.H. Charles has said, “is addressed to the least important of the seven cities, but surely not the least interesting.” Thyatira was a church that was suffering a sorcerer, conniving with a crone, and winking at a witch in her midst. The name Jezebel, like our English word, Agnes, is a word that means “pure or chaste” by one etymology. But Ahab's fascinators, for that's what Jezebel was, was characterized by, according to the Old Testament, whoredoms and witchcraft. One cannot understand this letter, I don't think, as well as it should be understood if we do not understand something of the situation at Thyatira.

Thyatira was a commercial city, and that was just about everything that the city was famous for. It was one of the least important of these cities, no doubt about that, but in its guilds was its power, so that the commercial guilds governed the life of Thyatira. That means that anyone who lived in Thyatira was a person who was associated with the business of the city, had to be associated with the business of the city, and was faced with some particular problems because in the ancient guilds they were very much like fraternities or sororities. An individual who was in a guild, and most of the citizens no

doubt were associated with them, had particular meetings in which they got together, discussed their own affairs, and generally had a pretty good time.

One of the things that they did was, they began every meeting, usually, with a sacrifice. And that sacrifice was a sacrifice that was made to one of the heathen deities that they were attached to. And then, of course, even in the invitations references were made to the deities that were to be celebrated in their festivities around the tables. Generally speaking, they began with a cup of wine, but this cup of wine was poured out as a libation and an offering to the gods. So they not only had the sacrificed and the food that they ate was the food that had been sacrificed in honor of some of the gods, but even as they began their meals, there was a reference in their opening grace so to speak, to the Heathen Gods. And then, at the end of the meal, the same thing would take place.

So they were business gatherings in one sense, but in everything in their business gatherings the heathen gods were honored. I'm sure that if we had been there, and had been part of the guilds, it would have been made known to us, in case we raised any question about it, that this was just a form and a ritual through which they went, and therefore, we were not to take it particularly seriously. But nevertheless, that was they did in their meetings. Furthermore, as is often the case, when men get together like this, and they are partaking of the alcohol, and enjoying themselves, what frequently happened was that these feasts degenerated into carousals at which not only drunkenness, but immorality became the order of the day.

Now, if we can understand that as a background, I think we can understand the letter that our Lord wrote to the church at Thyatira much better because the question that arose in Thyatira was compromised with the world. In fact, this letter represents the danger of compromising the holy truth concerning our Lord, Jesus Christ, with the unholy error of the world. And the problem at Thyatira, in that church, was that Thyatira was solid, evidently, largely solid in the face of the sin that took place in these gatherings, in which evidently many of the professing believers were taking part. A few

weeks back, when we were expounding 1 John, one of the passages that has meant something, particularly to me, was the last little section, in which John finishes his letter by saying, "The three things that we know." He said, "We know that whosoever is born of God does not go on sinning," in other words, putting it in language of a confession or a creed, "I believe in holiness."

And then he says, "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in wickedness." Or to put it in the words of a creed, "I believe in the new birth." And finally he said, "We know that the son of God has come, and given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his son, Jesus Christ." Or I believe in the mission, the mediatory mission of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Now you notice the regressive order I commented upon. It's not the order in which we probably would put those things. We would reverse it, and we would say, "I believe in the mediatory mission of the Son of God." I believe in the new birth. And then, I believe in holiness. But the important thing, it seems to me, is that first statement with reference to the church at Thyatira, "We know that whosoever is born of God, does not go on sinning."

So the characteristic of the Christian life is that Christians are individuals who live lives that are not bent on sin. That's not their policy. That's not their character. They fall into sin, of course, they fall into sin, but their lives are not bent on sin. The principle of sin is not the characteristic of their lives. As John Maury used to like to say, "When a person believes in Jesus Christ there is a definitive break in sin," so that a Christian is not a sinner. You see, if we really say that we have salvation then the evidence of it is that our lives are no longer dominated by sin. We are not under the dominion of sin.

Now, I know you may point to the Bible and say, well what about such and such, or what about this individual? It is true that individuals may sin, and in fact, individuals may for a time persist in sin, but in the Christian family discipline begins, and

the discipline may be so severe as to mean that we may lose our physical life. And so, a Christian cannot permanently live in sin. If you see someone, and of course we always are imperfect in our observations that's why we can make no final statements about anyone, but if you see a person whose pattern of life is sin, and it's clearly sin, and there is persistence in sin, and this persistence in sin has continued for years, you can be almost certain, never absolutely certain, we're human, we are fallible, that they are not true believers in Christ, regardless of what they may say by the confession of their mouths.

So the problem at Thyatira was that here is a church that evidently is compromising, to some extent, the holy truth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We remember that the Apostle Paul said, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." So the church is a church in need of counsel from the Lord, and this is his counsel for them. And as we have been doing in these letters we'll begin and go through the letter beginning with the note of the addressee themselves. He writes in the 18th verse, "And unto the angel, or messenger of the church in Thyatira write; these things saith the Son of God." If Pergamum was a city of civil servants and priests, Thyatira is a town of merchants and craftsman. We're not surprised then that the Laura Ashley of the day was Lydia. She was an individual of whom we read in Acts chapter 16 and verse 14, that she was from Thyatira and that her business was the business of dye.

Now, the dye was common in Thyatira was taken from some plants and also some little shellfish. One drop of which was responsible for the purple dye that was so valued by the ancients. In fact, to have one pound of this dye cost about two hundred dollars in our money. So one can see that it's expensive, and Lydia was a merchant lady of some success. She was, according to the Book of Acts in chapter 16 and verse 14 she was in Philippi and carrying on her business. We read there, "And a certain woman, named Lydia, a seller of purple of the city of Thyatira, which worshiped God heard us," so Thyatira as a home, a commercial city particularly dealing with the purple dye.

Now, secondly, the description of our Lord is given in the remainder of this verse, "These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are fine brass." Three factors show that our Lord is not trying to give this church a tranquilizer. He's trying to speak to them, and admonish them in order that they may not fail as evidently they were in danger of doing. First of God, he says, "These things saith the son of God." I think that's rather interesting because in a moment he will quote the second Psalm in which an expression occurs that suggests that our Lord is the Son of God. So he's the Son of God, and that suggests authority. The emperor and the God of Thyatira, Apollo, under the local name of Tyrinnus who was Apollo incarnate according to them, cannot meet the gaze of the son of God. So, "These things saith the son of God." Reminding them that the person with whom they have to do is not the local deity, but rather our Lord himself, and our Lord as the son of God. And he continues and he states, "Who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire."

The penetrating knowledge that characterizes our Lord, and as we look through this letter and think of Jezebel, who was evidently the leader of some of the departure of the truth in that church, he's the one who can see through Jezebel's seductive arguments. And finally he states, "And his feet are like fine brass." Powerful judgment. Brass associated in the Bible often with judgment and his feet, the feet of the Son of God whose eyes are like a flame of fire, are fine brass, reminiscent of the flashing fire in the eyes of fierce Jehu, the burnished brass of the swift, revolving chariot wheels as he drove furiously to Jezreel's judgment in connection with the story of Jezebel in the Old Testament.

Now thirdly, in the 19th verse, we read of the commendation, "I know thy works." And then the remaining nouns spell out the character of those works. "I know thy works, that is love, service, faith." That word, well, let me go on, "Love, service, faith, patience, and thy last works are more than the first." Contrary to emphasis there's a gracious approval of works of the forces behind them, and of the consequences of them, and one

interesting thing to me is that he says, "I know your works, your love." This was in the case of emphasis this was the thing that they had left. They left their first love, but not so Thyatira. There still was a relevant love for him. But there is a complaint, and that follows fourthly in verse 20 and 21,

"Nevertheless, or notwithstanding, I have against thee that thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not."

This is not the first church whose trouble might be traced to someone who was like a witch. You know, we have professing Christian churches that have been started by some who might be called witches. For example, Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy, one who is most closely associated with Christian Science. And then we have Seventh Day Adventism, most closely associated with Ellen G. White. So we're not surprised at this. Unless you think that we're laying special attention upon the women, let's remember how many false churches have started through men. So we're not saying anything special. We're just saying that it pertains to both sexes, and in this case the one who was responsible for the troubles in Thyatira was a female called in my text, "That woman, Jezebel."

Now, who was she? Well, obviously the name is a symbolic name. That was not her real name most likely, but she is looked at as one who represents in Thyatira something that Jezebel did in ancient times in the 9th Century. Jezebel was remembered from Sidon. Her father was a king and so she was a princess, and she was married to Ahab. And she worshiped the Baals or a Baal god, and consequently, as you read the Old Testament, particularly 1 Kings and then even their references to her in 2 Kings, she was an individual who was an immoral person. As later on she was involved in

witchcraft and whoredoms. But, nevertheless, the primary thing that Jezebel sought to do was to erect the worship of Baal into the worship of Yahweh, so that both could be worshiped together in the same worship. In other words, to dilute the once and for all character of the God of Israel, Yahweh, and now worship the Baal along with the Lord God. So she did not wish to eliminate, or at least she did not publicly to eliminate the worship of Yahweh, she just wanted the individuals to worship Yahweh and Baal.

Now, that was a threat of course to the worship of Yahweh. It was a threat to the uniqueness of the doctrine of Yahweh. It was a threat to the uniqueness of the doctrine of the Word of God. One might think, well, that's fair enough. We live in a pluralistic society. You can worship anyone if you want to, and that's supposed to be good, but that's not good for a Christian. So Baal and God. She was Ahab's evil genius because she had evidently such control over him that this was allowed to continue. You know, when you look around you, and you look at the religion's that are about us, the common religions that we know and that we recognize.

Let me just take one. Let's take the Mormons, since they're near at hand. Look south.¹ You can be reminded of them. The Mormons are individuals who claim to be Christians. That is they use Christian terminology. They even use the terminology of "son of God." A Mormon that you meet on the street and you say to him, "Well, you do not believe in the Son of God as a general rule," he will object and say, "Oh yes, we believe that Jesus is the Son of God." But they have a different religion. They have a different worship. All you have to do is to know that they have a different worship is to read their books, read their holy books. What they say is not what their holy books say. So what they would like is to mingle with the Christians and to be regarded as a Christian denomination or a Christian group, but at the same time continue their own worship.

¹ Believers Chapel of Dallas is adjacent to a Mormon temple.

In effect, just allow us to be placed on the same level with Christianity as a pluralistic kind of worship. We would like to have that status. But you see, in Christianity the fundamental fact that Christianity sets forth is that there is one God, that's Yahweh, there is one way of salvation through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In other words, Christianity is unique. It cannot be mixed with anything because if you mix it you destroy its character. Yesterday I came in and read a letter that was addressed to me. I took it home, I think, but in the letter an individual wrote expressing appreciation for some of the taped ministry, and then he made an interesting comment. He said with reference to preaching. He said, "If you preach and you do not say that Jesus Christ is a unique savior you don't have problems. But if you say Jesus Christ is a unique Savior then you have problems." Well, that was very much to the point because you do. Once you talk about the uniqueness of our Lord you have problems because our human nature is such, our sinful human nature is such that we do not like to think that Christianity is a unique truth.

Well, Jezebel evidently believed that one should have the worship of Baal along with the worship of Yahweh, and she did everything that she possibly could to arrange for that. You know, of course, the climactic struggle between Elijah and Jezebel, and the four hundred prophets of Baal, and the four hundred fifty, or the four hundred fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of Thyatira, and the great struggle that took place on Mount Carmel when Elijah, by God's unique authority, overcame the prophets and slew them and established, for a time at least, the fact that the Lord God was the Lord God.

Jehovah's Witnesses would like for the same thing to take place. They would like to be known as those who belong to the Christian company. As a matter of fact, that's why they call themselves Jehovah's Witnesses. But Jehovah's Witnesses are just like the Mormons. What they would like is to have their system of truth established along side the uniqueness of the Christianity that we know.

Protestant Liberalism is much the same thing. They would like for us to recognize that though they deny the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and though they deny the uniqueness of salvation through Christ, and would like in the modern manifestations, Protestantism to affirm a universalism so that everybody is ultimately going to be saved, spreading like wildfire over Christianity, and even that there is no such thing as eternal judgment as the Christian church has believed historically. Some of our leading figures, who are genuine Christians, are dabbling these days with the fact that there is no such thing as eternal judgment.

John Stott has recently begun to dabble a bit in annihilationism; John Wenham, a well-known British Evangelical, also, Phillip Hughes, of Westminster Theological Seminary. All of these men are suggesting that the Christian doctrine's truth, which they have, the Christian churches' doctrine of eternal judgment, is perhaps not true, that we are rather to have some form of annihilationism. It's a rather strange thing that is happening in our Christian circles today. But the tendency to deny the distinctness of Christianity is with us. Jesus said, "Remember I'm the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, but through me."

Now this is Jezebel. But what did she teach? Well, she taught two satanic doctrines. One, she taught that they should commit fornication. Notice the 24th verse,

"But unto you I say, unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden."

But in the 20th verse, "That woman Jezebel, she calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and seduces my servants to commit fornication." These doctrines are the depths of Satan. Was this a reference to sexual fornication? Or was this a reference simply to religious fornication? I think that both are included, but regardless of how we may decide

a question like that, this was fornication. Even if it were simply spiritual, that is a person attaching himself to heathen views. For in the Old Testament that term is used of those who worship the demons, or worship the idols, or worship the heathen Gods, a kind of religious fornication.

So, Jezebel, under the guise of the inspiration of the Spirit, claiming to be a prophetess, is teaching the Thyatiran Christians to commit fornication. It's an achievement. She was teaching to wallow in sin and to have the soul unaffected. In other words, you can sow your wild oats, but since you're a Christian you will not be touched by those things. Gnostics, and evidently those who had views similar to this, believed that evil existed in the physical body, and evil existed in material things, and consequently salvation was something that delivered us from those types of things.

The Germans have a little metaphor, "To touch pitch will bring defilement." But Jezebel evidently did not teach that. Very much like people who teach, of course, if you want to know something you must experience it. If you want to know life you must experience it. And so, in order to know it, and thus to know its evils, one must experience it. But one doesn't have to commit fornication to know that. One doesn't have to kill in order to know murder. The word of God is giving us instruction that is fully sufficient for our needs, but evidently in Thyatira individuals were being defiled by the teaching to commit fornication.

Now, remember in the guilds, this was frequently what happened. Those feasts degenerated into this, and then of course all over the ancient world individuals were attached to the heathen temples, and fornication was one of the ways by which you worshiped a fertility god or goddess. And so in order to worship truly it was said that one must have fornication with some of the temple prostitutes. So evidently all of this is involved in what is happening in Thyatira. And so our Lord speaks very plainly, "I have against thee, that you suffer that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants to commit fornication." And then secondly, "To eat things

sacrificed unto idols." Christ's claims must submit to the commercial claims of the day. Can you imagine the invitation that might read something like this?

Now the God at Thyatira was Tyrimas or Tyrimnos. He was called by both, but he was simply an incarnation of the God Apollo. So you would receive an invitation to the guild's festival, and it would read something like this, "Dine with us at the Temple of our Lord Tyrimnos." Now you can see a Christian involved in the guilds would be unable to answer an invitation like that. We couldn't come and dine with them at the table of the God Tyrimnos. No Christian could do that. But it was said, "Why not do that? After all, it's just a form." But no Christian, no true Christian, according to our Lord's teaching, could do that. You cannot under any circumstances sit down at a table in which the person to be honored is a false God. A Christian cannot do that. His testimony is blighted immediately. And so come dine with us at the table of our Lord Tyrimnos was an invitation that no Christian could accept.

Now, someone might say, "Well, why can you not?" After all, doesn't Paul say that there are no other gods but the god of Scripture? "Those gods are really demons," Paul says. So why couldn't you do that? You have just affirmed your own belief that they're not really gods. There's only one God. So you can sit at the table because they're not gods. You can see the rationalizations that individuals would make, but our Lord, speaking through the apostle to them says, "I have against you, that you suffer this prophethess, this one who calls herself a prophethess to teach and seduce thy serpents to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed to idols."

I can imagine the way in which an individual would respond to this when he was at the table. One of his Christian friends would say to him the next day, "How could you do that? How could you accept an invitation like that? How is it possible for you to sit at the table of quote "My Lord Tyrimnos?" Unquote. And I can see myself, for example, responding. "If you're going to have a job, you've got to do this. If you're going to live, you have to do this. There's no other way to make a living in this town. You've got to

do it. You must do it." The ancient church had a deal with that question just like people today because we tend to do the same thing. We put up with things that are not Christian, because we have to live.

Well, Tertullian, in the 3rd Century, wrote a little book, well, a little work. It was called "On Idolatry", and in it he dealt with that question. He deals with Christians who earn their living by making idols. These individuals had to live. We have to live. We don't believe in these idols that we're making, but we have to make them because they need them. They made statues to the idols. They painted them. They did for the guilders all of the kinds of things that had to do with the idolatry and the like. And when the plea was made to them that as Christians you cannot do this they said, "We have to live. There's no other way by which we can live." But Tertullian indignantly retorted that they should have thought about that before they started doing what they were doing. And furthermore, he then went on to say in his Latin, *Vivere ego* or *ergo habeo*. Do you have to live?

No, you don't have to live, and the ultimate service to our Lord is the ultimate claim upon a Christian's life. We don't have to live. "Must you live", he asks? Elsewhere he says, "There are no musts where faith is concerned." In other words, the ultimate loyalty we have is not to our physical life. Not to the kind of life that we must live here upon this earth. Our ultimate loyalty is to the Lord God, and if it means death that's our ultimate loyalty. The idea you must do this because that's the way it's done here is not a Christian idea at all. And our Lord does not leave any room for anyone who says, "Well I've got to live, so I have to do these things that are contrary to the word of God. I have to set down at the table of my Lord Tyrannos."

Now then, fifthly, the threat follows in verse 22 and 23:

"Behold, I will cast her into a bed," (this is probably a bed of sickness) "and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

And I will kill her children with pestilence; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and the hearts."

So John's role, as he gives the message of our Lord to the church at Thyatira is to plea Elijah's part. And just as Elijah had to contend with Jezebel so our Lord contends with this Jezebel who taught the doctrine that the children of Israel were yielding to in the days of Ahab, that is limping between two opinions, Yahweh as God, Baal as God. Let's have them both, and they were evidently living with it until Elijah challenged Jezebel's prophets, and then on Mt. Carmel, as those eight hundred and fifty profits danced around saying, "Hear us O Baal. Oh Baal hear us from the morning until the evening sacrifice," and then Elijah in effect said, "Let them know who is God." And after his magnificent prayer, and God answering the prayer, and then those events, the children of Israel, the same children of Israel who were limping along with two opinions, two compromising ideas said, "The Lord, he's God. The Lord, he's God."

So our Lord threatens, "It's either Christ or Caesar." Never forget that it's Christ or the false gods. The exhortation follows in verse 24 and 25, "But unto you and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan." The depths of Satan include the compromise by attaching a pluralistic pantheon of gods, and saying, "Pick your god and worship them. We worship them all." "I will put upon you none other burden but that which you have. Hold fast until I come. Hold fast what you have, the old truths, the truths of the word of God." You can just imagine, our Lord is saying, "Look, there's no freedom from the traditional ethics of the word of God. Anything else is the depths of Satan." Someone has said, I think it was RCH Linskey, "That the depths of Satan are terrible of course, but even the shallows of Satan are something that Christians want to avoid."

I can remember when I was in theological seminary, Dr. Louis Sperry Chafer, telling us that one night in the early stages of Dallas Seminary he was walking the streets

of downtown Dallas on Main Street, I believe it was, when the Christian Scientists used to have a reading room down there. Maybe they still have one downtown. But he said he was walking along, and as he stopped, Mary Baker Glover Patterson's book was open in the window, and so he stopped to read it. And he said, "I read it for a while," but he said, "I couldn't make anything out of it." He said, "To me it was just as if you took the dictionary and read it from the back through to the front, upside down." Then he said, "As I was reading it and making nothing out of science and health with a key to the Scriptures." He said, "The Lord's word came to my mind, 'And when he puteth forth his own he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him for they know his voice, and a stranger will they not follow, and flee from him, for they know his voice.'" And he said, "I thank you Lord that I don't understand this. It means nothing to me, but I understand your voice." And finally, the promises are given in verse 26 through verse 29 and they are promises of authority. They are going to reign, and they are going to have a part in our Lord's sovereignty when he comes.

"He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter are broken: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star."

That may be a reference to the coming of our Lord or it may be a reference to Venus, the morning star, but Venus connoted authority. The Roman Legions had Venus' symbol on their banners, authority. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith to the churches."

Let me close with just a comment. G. Campbell Morgan, many years ago wrote this paragraph, "Any doctrine, any philosophy that makes it easy to sin, whether by excusing it, minimizing its enormity, or denying its existence is of hell. And not merely are those held guilty who teach the doctrine and practice the sin, but that church also,

which is not clear and outspoken in its protests against sin. The church that suffers the woman is guilty. Let us, as believing Christians, remember that no compromise with Jezebel's doctrine is acceptable to our Lord.

"Come ye out from among them and be ye separate saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

And one final text,

"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith to the churches."

Believing Christians can have no compromise with the world. There is no, "We must live," to which a Christian must yield allegiance other than our Lord's commands in Holy Scripture.

If you're here today and you've never believed in Christ, of course, you don't have him as Lord and Savior. Your loyalties are not to him, but we invite you. In the light of what our Lord has done for sinners, such as we are, to give your self to him. Accept his lordship. Accept his authority. Desire his authority, and ask him to undertake for you in such a way that he truly becomes your authority, the forgiveness of sins, the justification of life, the status of a Son of God, all of these are blessings that are won for us by the blood of Calvary's Cross, and offered to us upon the simple ground of trust and the satisfaction which Christ has offered in his blood. Come to Christ and trust him. Let's stand for the Benediction.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to thee for these strong words that have come from our Lord. Deliver us from the tendencies of our day to compromise, to yield to the pluralism of our society which seems so popular today. Help us to have wholehearted allegiance to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Be with us through this day, and Lord, if there should be someone here who has not believed in Christ by the Holy Spirit, the true inspirer of spiritual truth, bring them to the knowledge of him who loves sinners and gave himself for them.

For Jesus sake. Amen.