

## REVELATION CHAPTER TWO

Chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation records the period of time that is called the “Kingdom of heaven” or “mystery of God,” as is recorded in Matthew 13 and Revelation 10:7 respectively, which are the seven church ages. This period of time is, for the most part, fulfilled. We are now living at the very end of the Laodicean Church Age, and the Bride saints are outside of it even now.

I want to place a special note by making a brief comment about the parables of Matthew, chapter 13, and the growing together of the wheat and tares, which shows the church as it existed through out the seven church ages. After the Church fell away from the purity of the early beginning, it went into a period of time known as the Kingdom of heaven age. This is the only period of time known by that name. It represents the earthly sphere of Christianity; both true and false, as they existed side by side through this time period. In no other period was it permitted for the Church to exist in this manner.

In the early stage of the Church, God would not allow this condition to exist, as Acts, chapter five so vividly shows. (Acts 5:1-11) For here we see a man and wife, named Ananias and Sapphira, as they tried to bring sin and deception into the fellowship of the saints. Immediately, God exposed their evil ways, and they both fell dead in the presents of the congregation, and fear fell upon all that saw it. That was before the tares were allowed to grow in the same field with the wheat, which was before the Kingdom of heaven begun which permitted such behavior.

So wheat and tares were permitted to grow throughout the seven church ages. But according to the parables of Matthew, chapter 13, there would be a separation at the end time, which is taking place now, and is almost completed at this time. I will not be repeating this as we go though the church ages here, but I thought it would be good to bring it in before we begin our journey through the seven church ages. So with this, let’s approach the seven church ages. Having said thus, we will begin our journey together. Although, we will not deal with the church ages extensively, we want to bring in enough to let the sincere Holy Ghost filled Christians see what has happened since the day of Pentecost up until now, and what is promised for this day.

### The Ephesian Age 53-170

*Verse 1: “Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;”*

Jesus Christ, the same one that was identified in Revelation chapter one, is now identified at the opening of this church age. This church age began about 53 A.D. and ended about 170 A.D.

The first earthly messenger to the Ephesian Age was the Apostle Paul. Some may question this because Paul had already given his life for the Gospel at the time of John's writing in 96 A.D.; but remember, the age started about 53 A.D. while Paul was still living. In fact, Paul started the church at Ephesus; and the other six churches of Asia started from the revival fire at Ephesus, but we will not concern ourselves with the particulars of the local church at Ephesus. However, I do want you to notice the messenger and the time the church started. This is important in order to understand the next thing that I want to bring out about this time period.

Watch real close now as this revelation breaks forth. The Jewish church started on the day of Pentecost in 33 A.D. (Acts 2), but Paul did not start the Gentile Ephesian church until after the Gentiles began to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (our Pentecost - Acts, chapter 10).

When Paul first began to minister forth the Word of Life, he was not in the Ephesian Church Age, because the Ephesian Age had not started. What God did at Pentecost (starting in 33 A.D.) was to call a people out of the Jewish nation to make up the first part of His True Church before the tares could get in. This corresponds to the twelve foundations of the wall of the city New Jerusalem, which city is actually the redeemed Church, the saints of all nations.

Paul went first to the Jews like all the other twelve apostles, but Paul's message did not set very well with the Jews, as God by this time had got, or was in the process of getting, enough of the Jewish people out of the nation to serve His purpose.

Paul preached in the very time that God was dealing strictly with Israel, and as Paul preached to the Jews, he saw God close the door to that part of His Church of offering salvation only to the Jews. He saw God doing a new thing in the earth. (Acts 13:46-49) Paul was the apostle God gave to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13), and he clearly understood this. So when the Jews rejected his message, he went to the Gentiles.

I especially want you to notice here that Paul ministered in part of this time period from 33 A.D. to 53 A.D. He saw God close the door to that little time period before the church ages began in 53 A.D. Paul saw God open the door to the kingdom of heaven age, a period of time that God permitted wheat and tares to grow together, until Christ comes to earth again in an angelic form, in Revelation chapter 10, to separate the tares from the wheat and to perfect the Bride.

Yes, Paul saw one door close, of preaching mostly to the Jews, and another door open, of preaching mostly to the Gentiles and permitting the tares to grow with the true saints. This is the Seven Church Ages. Since Paul was an apostle and ministering at the opening of the church ages, he became the star to the

Ephesian Age, before God called him home in the years of 66 to 68; a two year difference in some histories.

So the apostle Paul became the angel to this first age, and he laid the foundation for the spiritual temple of God, which are His Bride saints.

Verse 2: *"I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:"*

This is the only church age where it is written to the angel that *"thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars."*

At the beginning of this first church, God had an apostle on the scene, and we're coming back to that again in the last days, as God reactivates and reinstates this five-fold ministry. There's going to be a time when God will have a similar ministry that's going to have the leadership of the Lord.

The real Church started out with apostolic leadership and the power of God in it, and she will not line up with anything less than that in this day. Apostles were respected in that day. Today if you say you're an apostle people want to laugh and make fun of it, but that doesn't change the Word of God. God's Word is still right and it reads, *"And He gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;"* (Ephesians 4:11) The five-fold ministry is still right. Man's opinion doesn't change the Word of God. God is moving in this hour in a mighty way.

Thank God for people who will try them that say they are apostles. In this hour we might ask, "How can we try those that say they are apostles?" What would be wrong with us measuring our message by St. Paul's message? He brought the Word of God, so when we begin to talk about one body, one faith, one Lord, the nine gifts of the Spirit working in the Church, the Church with the love of God, all speaking the same thing, with water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, then you can say, "That's apostolic doctrine."

Now, the office of an apostle that has been put back in the Church in this last day has to line up with the Bible, because anything that doesn't line up with the Bible we can't accept. Paul said that *he* laid the foundation for the Church, and that foundation is the writings of St. Paul, as he took what the apostles and prophets before him said about the plan of God.

The Bible says that they tried them that said they were apostles and found them liars. How did they try them? They checked what was said by what Paul taught and found it didn't line up right. So they were liars.

Verse 3: *"And hast borne, and hast patience, and for My name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted."*

Thank God for a Church like that. They had patience and labored for His name's sake and fainted not, even in an age when the name of the age showed the type spirit they had to overcome. The word "Ephesus" has a meaning like *relaxed and drifting*. They got relaxed from the fire (but not all) that St. Paul had when the power of the Living God was among them. They got relaxed and then

they began to drift, but God sent a message to rebuke them and try to call them back to the Word of God, back to the original again. Yet He praised them, those that stayed true, because they had labored and had not fainted, and knew how to try them that said they were apostles.

Verse 4: *"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."*

We need to take heed lest the same thing come upon us that came upon this early church age. We are living in an age when Matthew 24:12 says, *"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."* We are living in the same condition, a Laodicean condition, when the love of God is waxing cold among some of the saints, so let us be on guard every hour.

Verse 5: *"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."*

In 96 A.D. this church that was started by Paul was already fallen, as is clearly stated in verse 5. Christ said He would remove the candlestick, except this age repent.

No age ever made a comeback after they fell away from the original revival that started the age. The removing of this candlestick took place in 170 A.D. and God lit another candlestick for the next age.

Verse 6: *"But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate."*

Notice: the deeds of the Nicolaitans. The word "Nicolaitan" comes from two Greek words, "Nikao," which means *to conquer*, and "Laos," which means *the laity*. This was referring to conquering the laity or taking everything off of the laity and putting it on a priest. Let us not fall into the same trap this church did where they got the pulpit so tight that it produced the deeds of the Nicolaitans.

**The Ephesian elders took so much authority over the laity that nothing could move without their consent, not even the Spirit of God.** God still wants to move in the body with tongues, with prophecy, with interpretations, and with the glory of the Lord blessing the saints. The deeds of the Nicolaitans got into the church and God said He hated it, and He hasn't changed His mind yet. He still hates the deeds of the Nicolaitans when someone tries to bind the laity down. God is going to have a Church that is going to move with the gifts of the Spirit like it did in the days of St. Paul. There is liberty for the children of God.

Verse 7: *"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."*

Notice, they had to have a spiritual ear to catch the message that would give them eternal life, and in each of the seven church ages there were people who ate of the tree of life. This is the promise to the overcomer of that age. Again, this Ephesian Age covered the period from 53 A.D. to 170 A.D.

## The Smyranean Age 170-312

Verse 8: *"And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;"*

The first chapter of the Book of Revelation shows that this is Jesus. He was dead and is now alive. He is the mediator to this fallen church. He identifies Himself in every church age. He walked in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. He was in the church all the way through until the last part, Laodicea, when He is put on the outside.

The angel, or earthly messenger to the Smyranean Age was Irenaeus, a man that stayed true to God in his day. (Note: receiving and agreeing with the late William Branham on Irenaeus being the earthly messenger to this age.)

The word "Smyrna" means *bitter*. This tells us that this was an age of bitter persecution for the saints of the age. Whatever was happening in the church in the city of Smyrna shows us what would happen in the age of Smyrna, as this time period came into being.

In the city of Smyrna, the saints were very poor and subjected to many hard trials, but thank God the true seed of God stayed true to the message that Irenaeus and other true ministers preached.

Verse 9: *"I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan."*

This was an age of great persecution and poverty. Yet, they were rich because they had a revelation. If you've got a revelation of the Word of God, then you're rich in God.

In that day, there were many Jews and synagogues. In this day, we have a lot of different Protestant and Catholic denominational churches that are the synagogues of satan. Also, the same goes for many of the independent churches that claim that they are not denominational (even preach against denominations), but they are still holding on to many of her (Roman Catholic) doctrines and teachings. However, this is referring to an age before any Gentile church denominations started. There were Jewish synagogues all over where the Jews met, but John said they were synagogues of satan, because they had rejected Jesus Christ the Saviour.

Verse 10: *"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."*

These ten days of tribulation referred to a period of ten years of great persecution. The saints of God were martyred by the Romans by the thousands, but God told them to fear none of these things, but to be faithful unto death and He would give them a crown of life. Notice, He did not say, "Until death," but, "Unto death."

Verse 11: *“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.”*

This “second death” shows the inward man will die and go out of existence unless we get God’s own life, which is the only eternal life that there is. **This is why hell cannot be eternal. One would have to have eternal life to be in hell eternally,** but death and hell is cast into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:14) This is the death of the soul. The first death is the death of the body. The second death is for the inward man. God told this age they could kill the body, but not the soul. God was telling this age that it would suffer some great persecution. When John wrote this, even the local church in the city of Smyrna was going through great persecution.

This was a bitter age for those saints, but they held out faithfully. We, also, have to suffer today for this message. It is a rejected message, but there is a Spirit filled group of people in this hour that believes all the Word of God.

### The Pergamean Age 312-606

Verse 12: *“And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith He which hath the sharp sword with two edges;”*

This age lasted from 312 A.D. to about 606 A.D. St. Martin was the messenger for this Pergamean Age. **This is where the church and the world were married together, the Christian and the pagan.** This is the age that the first denomination started in. This was where Constantine married the church and state together and made Christianity one of the official religions. This is where the Roman Catholic Whore Church started.

Verse 13: *“I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan’s seat is: and thou holdest fast My name, and hast not denied My faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.”*

Here in verse 13, God is telling the Pergamos church that He knows all about them, and all about their works. He is telling them that He can look into this church of Pergamos and tell them exactly where satan is dwelling.

These seven churches of Asia had started off with a revival, and about 40 years later satan had already come in and took his seat in the church. Therefore *we* need to stay prayed up every hour.

This man, Antipas, was a great saint of that hour; and he was slain. What if some of us were slain? It would be easier to recognize with the natural eye that satan was in the arrangements, but satan in this hour is working a little different than that. He’s trying to deceive us by using part of God’s Word with error, **but thank God for the true ministry that stops the mouths of the deceivers.** (Titus 1:11)

Verse 14: *“But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of*

*Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication."*

Balaam tried to curse the children of Israel, but every time he opened his mouth a blessing came out. So Balaam told Balac to throw a big party and get the young people of the children of Israel and the young people of the Moabites together.

Now, when the Moabites worshipped, they had the sex act in their worship service. That sounds bad, but it is true. When they began to do that, the children of Israel took those Moabite daughters, committed fornication, and God had to judge them. Today that same spirit is here, but it is done in a spiritual way. That same doctrine of Balaam united the Christian and pagan together. That's what happened in 325 A.D. It was typed out perfectly in the Old Testament.

**Constantine got the doctrine of Balaam and united the Christian and pagan together, and God had to reject the whole thing.** That church age ended and another age started. The doctrine of Balaam is still around today. It would like to get *us* to unite with some of these harlot daughters, but we're going to keep the fellowship clean.

This charismatic movement unites the Catholics, Baptists, Methodists, etc., together, but they don't care about the Word of God; it is nothing but the doctrine of Balaam they want. Satan wants to unite them together and get them to commit fornication together so that the wrath of God will be poured out upon them in the tribulation period, but God has called out a Bride for His name sake in this hour.

I believe in fellowship, but I don't believe in fellowshipping demons. Paul said not to do it in II Corinthians 6:17-- *"Be ye separate and I will receive you."* I could deal lengthy with this Balaam doctrine, but you can read it in your Bible in Numbers, chapters 23, 24, and 25. What they did was in the natural; they committed sexual acts. That sounds bad, but did you know that the same thing goes on today in the pews of the churches **spiritually**? That same spirit is in the world today. God is going to have a Bride and she won't be committing fornication. She will believe the Word, and anything contrary to the Word the Bride will leave alone, because she has the true baptism of the Holy Ghost. The Bride has the seed of God, and that seed of God in her will only feed on the Word of God.

Verse 15: *"So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate."*

Notice, in the first church age this was only a deed of the Nicolaitans. A deed, or a little thing, that began to be taught which didn't seem too bad, **but it became a doctrine.** The fruition of the deed becoming a doctrine was when the Roman Catholic Church set up a pope. It started out from a little deed of the Nicolaitans in the first church age. They made a little rule and set the preacher up on a high pedestal after Paul was taken off the scene, when **God meant for His ministry to be a part of the body.** He didn't mean for the ministry to be set up so high that it didn't have connection with the Church. He didn't mean for the minister to be

like some pope, to be set where you would have to wait six months to get an interview with him. God didn't want it to be that way. He said in Galatians 6:6—*"Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth."* The Church and the ministry are one.

God hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans in the first age, and He hates it now. He's an unchangeable God. He wants a many membered body, as Paul said in I Corinthians, chapter 12. **The devil knows that if he can separate the ministry from the people that he has cut the head off of the body spiritually.**

These denominations make state overseers, general overseers, and bishops. This is the same deed of the Nicolaitans, and it comes from the same place. It comes from satan. God said that He knew where satan's seat is; it's a high seat.

Verse 16: *"Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth."*

The *"sword of my mouth"* is the Word of God. God fought against this age and it finally went into total darkness, and then He started another church age. When these ages would get polluted and not obey God, **He would light another candle and blow that one out.** The Truth of God moved through these ages for almost two thousand years; it's the mystery age of Revelation 10:7 and is explained there.

Verse 17: *"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Sprit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."*

The hidden manna was the Word of God. The white stone is a revelation. This is your personal revelation, or fellowship, with God. Peter's revelation was called *a stone* when Jesus told him that flesh and blood had not revealed it unto him. (Matthew 16:17-19) This was the relationship of God in those saints in that hour, and we still have to have the same thing for this hour.

### The Thyatirean Age 606-1520

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;"*

Columba, a man of God, was the messenger for this Thyatirean Age. It has been said by the messenger of the last church age that the word *"Thyatira"* means *dominating female*. This old mother whore dominated the world. This age was the Thyatirean Age or the Dark Age. This age was from 606 A.D. to 1520



A.D. When the papacy was set up and everything was taken off the laity, the Bible was taken away, and the world went into total darkness for a thousand years. This was satan's millennium. Some in the Catholic Church believes the millennium started there. The antichrist and his wife ruled the world for a thousand years. There was great poverty and diseases. Sin was magnified in this age. It was satan and his wife ruling the world for a thousand years. Just in the future, Jesus and His wife will rule for a thousand years. In the age when satan reigned, there was ignorance, poverty, diseases, murders, plagues, and stupidity. It was as though the world went backwards, it seems, for a thousand years, but when Christ and His wife rules there is going to be prosperity, happiness, joy, and even the desert will blossom. (Isaiah 35:1)

Verse 19: *"I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first."*

The saints suffered in that hour, all for Jesus Christ, all for the Word of God and the love of God. **Those saints had a flame burning within their soul, and persecution and being separated from one another couldn't put it out.** They worshipped God in caves, or anywhere they could get a chance.

Today, we have beautiful buildings, wall to wall carpet, central heat, and air conditioning and people don't even want to come and worship God. How will we stand with those saints?

Verse 20: *"Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because 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."*

This was written to the local church in Thyatira. It is said that there was actually a woman named Jezebel in that local church of Thyatira in the days when John wrote this letter. Some of the backslidden ministers of Thyatira were actually committing fornication with her, but it also typifies the condition that would be in the age of Thyatira. They committed fornication with the spirit of the antichrist that got into the church.

By this time in history, the Church of Rome had gotten so much power that she was even teaching God's servants. As the next age came in, Martin Luther was even being taught by her, him being a true servant of God, but then the Spirit of Reformation began to move on him and he gave Rome a deadly wound by the Sword of the Spirit and the Reformation was on!

Verse 21: *"And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not."*

God said He gave her space to repent and she repented not. **God gave the Catholic Church space to repent in the Dark Age.** She didn't repent then, and she'll never repent. She'll rise and kill again, because murder is still in her unrepentant heart. God offered her repentance through the message of Columba and other men of that hour who were anointed of God, to try and call them back to the Word, but they turned it down. God said that her day was over. Then God began to give her daughters a chance to repent after they came along and they, like mother, will never repent and abandon their denomination.

Verse 22: *"Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds."*

This was reaching out, even beyond the age, to the time when God will cast the Roman Catholic Church and all her Protestant daughters into the tribulation; for none of them will repent.

Verse 23: *"And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works."*

This prophecy on the daughters in the tribulation was far-strung. It covers more than just this church age, because it is talking about the daughters. The last daughter to be born to this whore was the Pentecostal daughter. The last major movement was the Pentecostal movement. All these daughters were born of whoredom. Then here comes the independent churches, and they fall right in line with them.

Verse 24: *"But unto you I say, and 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."*

Verse 24 is first to the messenger of the age. *"But unto you"* is to the messenger; *"and unto the rest in Thyatira"* is the True Church of that hour.

Jesus the High Priest is still walking among the candlesticks reassuring the Church that no matter how dark it is, He is still with them to share the burden and to reward them for resisting satan.

Verse 25: *"But that which ye have already hold fast till I come."*

Verse 26: *"And He that overcometh, and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:"*

The promise that God gave to the overcomers of this age couldn't be more appropriate. The whore had reigned and ruled for a thousand years, and Jesus told this age if they overcame He would let them rule for a thousand years with Him.

Verse 27: *"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."*

God made this promise to the overcomers of the Thyatirean Age, because they were the ones who had to live in that age. Yes, these saints had to live in an age where the devil's church ruled with an iron fist. So God tells them they will have authority to rule with Him in the millennium. We have not seen what they saw. We can read the history, but they had to live through it. They had to live right there where satan ruled. Although satan ruled, God had some overcomers in that age.

Verse 28: *"And I will give him the morning star."* (Jesus is the bright and morning star. (Revelation 22:16) And to receive Jesus is to receive Eternal Life.)

Verse 29: *"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."*

Verse 29 shows that it takes a revelation in every age to catch the message of the hour. There was a message for each church age and a people predestinated

to hear it. Thank God for speaking to His Church even in that dark hour. Amen.