

The Message to the Seven Assemblies of Revelation

Know – Prepare – Endure

Upon studying the seven assemblies mentioned in Revelation, I believe He showed me that these are groups of believers all over the world; as if every believer falls into at least one “category” of these assemblies. Not only is this crucial to understand, it is imperative that we all heed the warnings in these chapters (Revelation 1-3).



We must also cling to what we are doing well, continue to seek His face, receive His discipline in areas of weakness, be a witness to the unsaved everywhere we go, and help prepare other members of His body...strengthening them and showing them how to draw near to Him.

Variations of the phrase ‘to him who overcomes’, is used about 17 times in the book of Revelation. When Ya’acob’s (Jacob’s) name was changed to Israel in Genesis 32, it was the beginning of a people who, if they would only follow the ways of Yahuweh, would endure to the end and overcome WITH His help. For the meaning of the name Israel means to ‘overcome with Elohim’.

The father of the 12 tribes of Israel would not let the Messenger go until He blessed him – literally meaning to *make a pronouncement of life*. It is to those who seek the face of Yahuweh with all of their heart, not letting go of Him until He blesses them, enduring to the end that He will say unto them, “enter into the joy of your Master.”

The Loveless Assembly (*Assembly of Ephesus: Revelation 2:1-7*)

“Ephesus is an unloving, orthodox church in the foremost city of proconsular Asia, and according to tradition, the residence of John before and after his imprisonment on Patmos.” ¹

This group of believers abhors those who are evil and the deeds of the Nicolaitans, and exposes/tests those who say they are His to expose liars, deceivers, and false prophets. They are patient, have persevered in their faith, and have labored for His name’s sake without becoming weary. However, they have left their first love. What does this mean?

Look at Revelation 2:5 “Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.”

When we first become “born again,” we want to tell everyone...share with everyone. As time goes by, many of us get stuck in a routine because it is comfortable, and no longer have a passion/zeal for sharing our testimony or witnessing to others about the love of Messiah...the joy of being forgiven, being a new person in Him, and the joy of knowing our eternal salvation. We focus on what is evil (the increasing wickedness in the world), who is lying (false prophets), who has idols, and even “hating” those who compromise or are lukewarm (deeds of Nicolaitans—most say they were a mixture because they believed in Messiah but allowed the eating of meats sacrificed to idols and immorality/fornication/adultery).

Although “hating” the deeds of the Nicolaitans and those doing evil is commended, we also need to return to our first works...put Messiah first. This means seeking His face, reading the Word as often as possible, sharing with others everywhere we go, praying for others, raising up the fallen, etc. If we return to our first love/first works (sharing our passion and belief in Messiah...showing His love to others) and overcome, we are promised to eat from the tree of life, which is in the ‘Garden of Eden’ (in other words, be restored with Him as Adam was before the Fall)!

Remember, it is not enough to hate the deeds of darkness, but to also establish boundaries that undergird the foundation of our belief. These boundaries are what Messiah was referring to when He said to those in Ephesus, "But I hold this against you, that you have left your first love." To return to your first love is to remain protected against the destroyer, inside the boundaries where the Good Shepherd watches over His flock. The boundary that outlines the commandments of our first Love is there to prevent the wolves from coming in and mixing with the sheep. The boundary of the sheep fold exposes those who belong inside and those who belong outside. It defines the differences between the nature of those who belong to the Shepherd and those who do not. To lose our first love, to venture outside His boundaries for us, is to lose the ability to know the difference between the voice of the Shepherd and the voice of the tempter. In Yahushua's case, He remained close to His Father, His first Love, and by this He exposed the destroyers slyness and temptation, overcoming him by the Word of His testimony.

The Persecuted Assembly (*Smyrna Assembly: Revelation 2:8-11*)

"Smyrna was a poor, persecuted church located in a beautiful city of wealth and commercial greatness, with a large Jewish population." ¹

This group of believers is commended for their works, their perseverance/gracefulness in tribulation and slander, and poverty in terms of financial...but rich in their closeness to Him. Messiah has no criticism for this group. He tells them not to fear being put in prison or suffering for their faith/belief in Him, but to be faithful until death and they will receive the crown of life. Upon overcoming, they will also never be separated from Elohim.

The Compromising Assembly (*Pergamum Assembly: Revelation 2:12-17*)

"These groups of believers were located in Pergamum, where the official seat of the Roman government was located as well as a 200-foot high altar of Zeus and was the center of emperor worship." ¹

The doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitans seem to be the same...seducing people of Elohim into idolatry and sexual immorality. This group is commended for their works and keeping the faith of Messiah (holding fast to His Name and did not deny His faith) even in the face of death/martyrs. However, they also were mixing their faith with the doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitans. They need to repent or Messiah will come against them with the sword of His mouth. Those who overcome will receive hidden manna to eat and a white stone with a new name (new character like Messiah's character).

Lets take a deeper look into the doctrines (teachings) of Balaam and the Nicolaitans. In contrast to the assembly of Ephesus, the Pergamum assembly had those who adhered to these doctrines. Messiah said to repent (turn away) from these or else He would have to come and destroy them with the sword of His Mouth. What exactly are these doctrines?

To answer this, we must take a look back into the Garden where the destroyer himself, Satan, seduced mankind into turning away from his Creator (idolatry). We know through studying the Scriptures, that Lucifer's son is Apollyon, meaning in Greek, the destroyer. Interesting, the name of Balaam as well as the Nicolaitans have similar meanings (the conqueror of, devourer of, having victory over) the people. As with the destroyer in the Garden, Balaam and the Nicolaitans did not give into the obvious of cursing the people outright, but devised a plan to destroy the people, causing them to curse themselves, for the sake of greedy gain.

We can easily detect this pattern continuing into the modern day with "shepherds" who innocently cause Yahuweh's unsuspecting people to stumble in the way. The plan of Lucifer from the beginning was to deceive the people of Elohim in order to destroy them. The plan is to "replace to erase". **Replace** the

teachings of the one true Elohim with those teachings that appeal to the flesh. In this manner, the innocent children of Elohim stumble and fall, being deceived by the enemy, and are pulled away into all manners of idolatry thus **erasing** any evidence of the people of Elohim. This is still the plan of the Jesuits today – masquerading as children of light in order to destroy His people from the inside out.

The doctrines of Balaam and the modern day Nicolaitans gain victory over the people, causing them to forsake Yahuweh and His commandments. Did Messiah Yahushua ever address these doctrines before He spoke with Yochanan (John) to write down the Revelation? Yes! Look at Luke 17. This passage has become very real and clear after studying what the doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitans are.

Messiah was basically explaining to His disciples, that to entice another one of His children to fall (to place a stumbling block) in front of them, is to hang a millstone around their own neck. As they have caused others to fall by placing the millstone block in front of them, so shall their reward be by having the same block hung around their necks and drowned in the sea. 2 Peter 2 speaks clearly about this as well.

Balaam had the form existing without the power. A form of "godliness," but the true intention was to destroy the people out of the love of unrighteous wages. (2 Timothy 3)

For his own pleasures of greed, he willingly turned over Yahuweh's people to idolatry, placing a stumbling block (millstone) around their necks, not caring how they would end up but shifting the blame from himself, all for the sake of greedy gain. See Numbers 31, Revelation 2:14, 2 Peter 2.

What was written to the Messenger of the assembly of Pergamum, is a description of the current day church – shepherds that entice their sheep to embrace worldly standards in order to keep their pockets lined and in business. The innocent flock is enticed to partake of the worlds Baal-istic system for the purposes of satisfying greedy shepherd's who, knowing just enough about "God", they use the gifts which have been given to them as tools of persuasion in order to coerce the unsuspecting. In the end, they will reap what they have sown and be killed by the sword of His Mouth (Numbers 31:8).

The Corrupt Assembly (*Thyatira Assembly: Revelation 2:18-29*)

"Thyatira was a morally compromising assembly in a commercial city with numerous trade guilds, each with its patron deity. A city sponsoring frequent idolatrous feasts and orgies, it was famous for woolen goods and a "royal purple" dye (Acts 16:14)." ¹

This group is commended for their works, love, service, faith and patience/perseverance. However, it is noted that their last works are more than in the beginning of their walk, and they have allowed false prophets/teachers to lead them (seduce them) into spiritual and literal fornication (sexual immorality, eating things sacrificed to idols, satisfying their flesh). Those who don't repent will be stricken with disease (Deuteronomy 28...choosing death instead of life) and those who commit adultery against Yahuweh by following/teaching the false doctrines and do not repent, will have great tribulation. Yahuweh Who searches the hearts and minds of every person, will give to each of us according to our works. Those who hold fast to their belief, overcome, and continue to do His works, will have power over the nations and will have the reward of being with Messiah in the end.

The Dead Assembly (*Sardis Assembly: Revelation 3:1-6*)

"Sardis was a dead assembly in the ancient capital of the kingdom of Lydia, and of the King Croesus (560-546 B.C.) who issued the first gold coins; here it represents a decadent city of luxury, apathy, and licentious religiosity." ¹

This group is told they claim to be alive, but are dead in Him. There are a few who have faith and have not wavered, but most have left their faith and are not doing any of His Works. In Revelation 2, verse 3-4, He warns them to repent, hold fast to what they have learned, and “Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before Elohim.” This means to guard what His Spirit has taught us, stay in His Word, teach others what His Word says without changing it or adding to it, and do as He says...plus, be watchful for the signs of His return (not apathetic), and avoid listening to the knowledge of men or thinking that knowledge is better than KNOWING Him.

Those who repent, remain faithful in their walk with Him and overcome, will be clothed in white garments and will not be blotted out of the Book of Life. Yahushua will confess their name before Father and His angels!

The Faithful Assembly (*Philadelphia Assembly: Revelation 3:7-13*)

“Philadelphia was a faithful assembly in a small town that was established to be a center for Greek culture. The town was renowned for its surrounding vineyards but subject to frequent earthquakes.”¹

I believe this group best represents the end-time Bride of Messiah. These are those in the body who have remained faithful, have some strength, have kept His Word, and have not denied His Name! Yahushua commends this group for persevering above all trials and in their faith! He tells them because of their perseverance, He will protect them from “the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test them.” He also tells them to hold fast to their faith so no one takes their crown. Those who overcome will be made a pillar in the house of Elohim (they will never have to leave His Presence/house), He will write His Father’s Name, His Father’s city’s Name (New Jerusalem) and His New Name on them.

Interesting that as Philadelphia experienced frequent earthquakes, that His bridal remnant will also experience many ‘earthquakes’, but will be spared from the last major one that shall come upon the whole world.

The Lukewarm Assembly (*Laodicea Assembly: Revelation 3:14-22*)

“Laodicea was an arrogant, self-sufficient assembly in an affluent city. It was known for being a banking center, for the production of a glossy black wool used in clothing and carpets, and for producing a salve for the curing of eye disorders.”¹

This group of believers is a mixture. They are not on fire for Him but they are not all the way “evil” either. They live on the edge of the fence, walking a fine line between believers and non-believers. I believe they fellowship/pray to Him when it is convenient or they “need” something...but then they socialize with non-believers and “party” when that is convenient. They have one foot in the world, so to speak. They are complacent with their walk. They aren’t growing in Him. They have what they need materially, but are bankrupt spiritually! He says if they stay this way, He will vomit them out of His mouth. If they repent, become zealous again to do His Works, open the door (their heart and ears) to His voice, and overcome, they will sit with Messiah on His throne.

The assembly of Laodicea is the assembly of the Garden - thinking they are rich but are poor and naked. Messiah said, buy from Me (depend on Me,) to cover your nakedness and shame. Anoint your eyes to see the trickery of the evil one. Mankind in the garden became lukewarm through compromise. The shame of their nakedness came from the lack of overcoming.

So, what is His message to His Body?

I believe the seven assemblies are supposed to be representative of the body of Messiah. In summary, we are to: reject/turn away from evil, idols, and sexual immorality, be honest, be patient, persevere in our

faith and through suffering, keep our faith in Messiah, remain fervent in our love for Messiah, zealously do His Works, and increase in our love, service, faith and patience/perseverance through our walk with Him. This is primarily done through seeking His face above all else, staying in His Word daily, praying daily, and sharing His Word/showing His Love every chance we get.

We are to avoid/repent of adultery/fornication literally and spiritually with idols, complacency in Him and in our walk, not being set-apart as He is set-apart, not strengthening His people, and not keeping our faith and/or remaining steadfast in our faith. We are to be the light in this world until His 2nd coming, as He is the Light. If we don't repent, seek His face, persevere through the trials/tribulation, and prepare for His coming by being as blameless as possible (removing all that is not of Him and all He mentions to the assemblies out of our lives), we will be one of the foolish virgins instead of one of the wise virgins (Matthew 25). He cannot use us if we are not prepared BEFORE He needs us.

Frances Roberts says it perfectly in "**Your Body, A Living Sacrifice,**" (*italics are mine*):

"Behold, I say unto thee: Yield Me your body as a living sacrifice, and be not conformed to the things of this world, but be ye transformed by the renewal of your mind. Set your affections on things of the Spirit, and be not in bondage to the desires of the flesh.

For I have purchased you at a great price. Yea, thou art My very special possession and My treasure. I would have thee to set thine affections and desires upon Me even as I have set Mine heart upon thee. It is written that the wife hath no power over her own body except for the husband, nor the husband but for the wife. (1 Corinthians 7:4) So I would that ye should yield your body to Me, otherwise I am limited in My power to work.

For I must have a vessel through which to operate. I would have you to be a vessel not only yielded to Me, but purified, dedicated, sanctified for My use; available to Me at all times, and ready to be used at whatever time I have need of thee. Thou must be prepared. Thou must keep thyself in a state of readiness. Thou canst not live to the flesh and at the same time be available to the Spirit.

Ye must walk in the Spirit, and in so doing keep thyself from becoming entangled in the things of the flesh. Ye must live in obedience to the Spirit, and thus be kept from being in bondage to the desires of the flesh.

I Myself cannot keep you except ye first make this choice. It was concerning this matter that Jude wrote his word of admonition: And ye, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy (*set-apart*) faith by praying in the Holy (*Set-Apart*) Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God (*Elohim*). (Jude 20, 21)

By setting your soul through deliberate choice of your will to pursue the worship of *Elohim* by praying in the Spirit, thou shalt find thy faith strengthened and thy life bathed in the love of *Elohim*. With thy faith laying hold upon *Elohim's* promises and power, and thine actions motivated by the love of *Elohim*, thou wilt find thyself in the path of the activity of *Elohim*: His blessing shall be upon thee, and He will accomplish His works through thee. Thou needest make no plans nor resort to any clever strategy. Keep yourself in the love of *Elohim*. Pray in the Spirit. Rejoice evermore. Set your affection upon *Messiah*.

Elohim will do through you and for His esteem such things as it pleases Him to do, and thou shalt rejoice with Him. For as thine own spirit is aware when His Spirit is grieved within thee, so shalt thou also be aware when His Spirit rejoices within thee. This is His joy. This is the joy He promised.

This is the greatest joy that can come to the human heart, for it is the joy of *Elohim* and the joy of *Elohim* transcends the joy of man. Surely thou shalt not only rejoice but be exceeding glad, with a gladness

surpassing thy power to tell. So, shalt thou give this back to Him, since no other can fully receive it, even as David poured out to him the precious water from the well of Bethlehem. (2 Samuel 23:15,16)

Praise His wonderful Name!"

My note: servant is Strong's #1401 and means a person who willingly offers obedience, devotion and loyalty to another, subordinating his will to him. So to be His vessel, His servant, we have to be completely obedient, loyal, submissive (laying down our free will to do His will), and devoted to Him!

The whole message of the seven assemblies is to prepare yourselves for His return...to know and keep His joy in all circumstances...to give Him all the esteem (glory) for EVERYTHING you have and even for your sufferings as it teaches us to persevere in our faith and to be ready for the end-time battle! We are all to show love to others, as we love ourselves (the 2nd greatest commandment—Matthew 22:39). As Derek said, "if we serve and pamper others the way we like to pamper and treat ourselves, then we are fulfilling the 2nd greatest commandment according to Messiah." This is the message Derek and I have been given to share...to show the love of Elohim to everyone, to prepare the Bride, to strengthen that which remains (Revelation 3:2), and to encourage and lift up His body, in addition to witnessing to unbelievers/bringing those who are in darkness to the Truth/His Light as He leads.

We pray all with heed this message, show the love of Elohim in all you do and say, pray in the Spirit more, fill yourself with His Word to be prepared, and spread this message to all you know. Drink freely of the fountain of the water of life...thirst for Truth and knowing Yahuweh and Yahushua! (Revelation 21:6-8)

Messiah said in Revelation 2:8 that He is the First and the Last. He is the Truth and He can never be deceived. Why? Because He sees the end from the beginning. He knew that Lucifer would fall as well as mankind. He is not deceived because He knows where evil began as well as where it will end. In these final days, it is a matter of eternal life that we must be on guard so as to not be deceived. We do not see the end from the beginning like He does, thus we are always vulnerable to deception. However, those who love truth will never be deceived (2 Thessalonians 2).

" 'And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. I am the Aleph and the Tav, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.' Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may enter through the gates into the city. But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murders and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie. 'I, Yahushua, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the assemblies. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.' And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22:12-17

HalleluYAH!! Come Yahushua Come!

Shalom and joy,
Derek and Rivkah
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¹ The Spirit Filled Life Study Bible (1991 - NKJV) commentary on the book of Revelation