

Revelation 2:24:29

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Jesus now turns from His chastisement of those who have followed the false teacher He calls “Jezebel” into sexual immorality and addresses those who have resisted her false teaching: *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.*

The teaching of the false prophetess Jezebel is apparently called locally *the deep things of Satan*. Somehow the false prophetess convinced a group of believers in Jesus, believers who had “love and faith and service and perseverance” (Revelation 2:19) that practices called *the deep things of Satan* were consistent with walking in their faith in Jesus. We are not told how she pulled off this trick. *The faithful believers in Thyatira are instructed to persevere and are promised favor with God and a position of authority.*

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We do know that various forms of sorcery were common among the Greek pagans. We see multiple instances of this throughout scripture, from the demoniac in the Greek “Decapolis” cities (Mark 5:1-20) to Simon the magician (Acts 8:9). It is common for people to find ways to syncretize their old ways with a new way. That is why Paul exhorts the formerly pagan believers in Rome to be “be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:1b). It is a process to replace erroneous thinking with truth.

Jesus says He will *place no other burden* on the believers who have refused to follow the way of Jezebel, other than to continue to maintain their resistance to her false ways. This would tell us further of her immense persuasion. Jesus simply exhorts them to *hold fast* to following His ways, and avoid falling into the sexual immorality advocated by the false prophetess. However, this is an active command.

The Greek phrase translated *hold fast* in verse 25 where Jesus instructs the believers who did not fall into temptation to *hold fast until I come*, is elsewhere translated in the New Testament as

“seized” (Matthew 26:57) or “arrested” (Mark 6:17). This is not a word that implies that you should just casually keep doing what you are doing. Rather, it implores you to seize the right things and hold on tightly with purpose to God’s instructions so that you will not be swayed by false teachers.

Next, Jesus addresses *he who overcomes*, which is a group of believers mentioned at the end of each of the seven letters. In this case, it would seem that the overcomers would be the believers in Thyatira who *hold fast* and do not give in to the false teachings of Jezebel.

The Old Testament Jezebel wanted worldly power but did not get it. But *he who overcomes* will be rewarded by being given what Jezebel desired, but was denied. Jesus is giving to the overcomers *authority over the nations*. In doing this, Jesus is sharing with these believers the *authority* He was granted for His faithfulness (Matthew 28:18; Philippians 2:8-9). He is sharing His own reward (Revelation 3:21). Jesus will greatly reward the one who resists Jezebel and the temptations of the devil, who instead follows God’s way, just as Jesus overcame the temptations of the devil and the rejection of men (Revelation 3:21).

The one who overcomes is the one who *keeps my deeds until the end*. Jesus started this letter with a commendation for the church at Thyatira. They had grown in maturity. But some of them got blown off course. They were urged to repent and return, implying that they could resume their journey to overcome, and be rewarded for overcoming. But it requires perseverance in avoiding the false teaching of “Jezebel,” and continuing to do good works in obedience to Christ in order to overcome.

The *authority over the nations* that Jesus speaks of will be to share His rule of the earth. This rule is predicted throughout the Bible. God originally created humans to rule the earth, choosing them over the angels, who were superior beings ([see our commentary on Psalm 8](#)). But when humans fell through Adam’s sin, apparently Satan regained the spot of ruling the world from which he had been displaced (John 16:11). It is appointed to humans to silence the would-be tyrant ruler by serving as servant-leaders (Psalm 8:2).

The servant leaders of the new heaven and earth will have authority to rule over the earth. Jesus details how He will reward the overcomers: *to him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces*. This verse is capitalized because it is quoted from the Old Testament.

The quoted phrases are taken from Psalm 2:

“Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance,
And the *very* ends of the earth as Your possession.
You shall break them with a rod of iron,
You shall shatter them like earthenware.”
(Psalm 2:8-9)

This psalm is God the Father speaking to God the Son. What is translated here as “earthenware” is a “potter’s vessel” like in Revelation 2:27. The picture of a *rule* that is with a *rod of iron* is a

picture of absolute sovereignty. In the world that is to come, God's way will prevail. That is why it will be a world in which righteousness dwells (2 Peter 3:13). Jesus's rule of righteousness will create a world in which there is no death, pain, or crying for the believers who dwell there (Revelation 21:4). One of the great rewards for the one who *keeps My deeds until the end* is to "enter into the joy of his master" and share the rule over His kingdom in fellowship with Him (Matthew 25:21,23).

The *rod of iron* that represents the authority of Jesus will "shatter them like earthenware." The "them" refers back to Psalm 2:1:

"Why are the nations in an uproar
And the peoples devising a vain thing?"
(Psalm 2:1)

The authority of rulers of the nations who raise up their power for themselves, against the standard of Jesus, will be broken just as a metal rod breaks a fragile piece of pottery. The world leaders desire to lord over rather than to serve their subjects. They will gather against the Lamb of God, and be destroyed (Revelation 19:11-21). In their place will be Jesus, who will rise up and take the place as King of kings, and Lord of lords. And, apparently, the kings and lords under Him will be those He appoints to rule with Him; those who keep His *deeds until the end*.

It is worth reflection that the *deeds* Jesus considers to constitute overcoming differ from church to church. It appears that Jesus is judging each person's faithfulness with the circumstances they are dealt. This is consistent with Jesus's parable of the talents, where each servant was judged for what they had done with what they were given (Matthew 25:14-30). Jesus indicates that even if the wicked and lazy servant would have gone to a little trouble and put his talent in the bank to draw interest, that he would have been rewarded to some extent (Matthew 25:27).

The final promise given to *he who overcomes* is that *I will give him the morning star*.

The image of the morning star in Isaiah addresses the king of Babylon, who is a type of the angel Lucifer, who became Satan:

"How you have fallen from heaven,
O star of the morning, son of the dawn!
You have been cut down to the earth,
you who have weakened the nations!"
(Isaiah 14:12)

The phrase in Isaiah translated as "star of the morning" is thought to specifically refer to Lucifer, the fallen angel who we know as the devil. It appears from this passage that Lucifer was originally placed as a ruler over the world. It seems that Satan fell from his lofty perch:

The passage continues:

“But you said in your heart,
‘I will ascend to heaven;
I will raise my throne above the stars of God,
And I will sit on the mount of assembly
In the recesses of the north.
‘I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will make myself like the Most High,’
Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol,
To the recesses of the pit.”
(Isaiah 14:13-15)

It seems perhaps that Satan was then displaced by humans, who were appointed to rule the earth, even though they are inferior beings (Psalm 8).

It appears that Jesus giving those who overcome *the morning star* might apply to their position as rulers over the world.

So Lucifer was the first morning star, the shining one, the crown jewel in Heaven, and ruler over all things. But Jesus is the true morning star:

“So we have the prophetic word *made* more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.”
(1 Peter 1:19)

Jesus has now assumed the place of morning star, and all authority has been given to Him (Matthew 28:18). In the future, He will assume physical authority over the world. When He does, He will grant the *morning star* to those who overcome.

To receive the morning star is to be in great favor with God, to be in ascendancy over creation, and to have a position of amazing authority. Jesus has all that, and He wants to share it with overcomers. One interesting thing to note about *he who overcomes* is that resisting bad authority (the false prophetess called Jezebel) qualifies him to be a good authority, ruling in service.

We’ve heard the phrase “pride comes before the fall,” and that applies to Lucifer the most out of anyone. He was a well-respected angel with much responsibility, but he got too prideful and wanted even more power; he wanted to be like God. So, God cast him out of Heaven.

This sounds a bit like what happened to Jezebel too: she was prideful and wanted more power to usurp God’s authority, and then He cast her down when she was literally thrown out of a window.

The letter to the church in Thyatira ends with the invitation for *He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches*.

The challenge for believers is make a choice. Believers can either listen to Jezebel and her false teachings, or they can listen to the Spirit of God. Believers can either listen to what is false, and

pursue satisfying their own lusts, or they can listen to what Jesus says, believe it is true and right, and follow in obedience. This will largely be influenced by the perspective each believer chooses relating to the reward associated with their choices. Jesus here asks believers to look beyond immediate appetites, and to believe that waiting for Jesus's rewards will be well worth it. This takes faith, and reflects this passage from Hebrews:

“And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”
(Hebrews 11:6)

Biblical Text

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.’