

REVELATION – SERMON 13

THAT WOMAN JEZEBEL

Revelation 2:20-24

INTRODUCTION

- In 1631, an edition of the King James Bible was printed with a typographical error in Exodus 20:14 which read, "Thou shalt commit adultery."
- It has become known as the "Wicked Bible".
- Such a Bible today would be embraced and celebrated as being contemporary and relevant to our modern culture.
- In the church at Thyatira, there were some who would have been quite agreeable to the seventh commandment as found in the "Wicked Bible".
- This is a solemn letter of rebuke to a compromised church that is a warning to all churches of the danger of allowing sin to remain and spread throughout the church.

I. CHRIST DENOUNCES THE CRIMES OF JEZEBEL (20)

A. Jezebel – a descriptive name referencing the former queen of Israel

1. Daughter of Ethbaal, king of Sidon (1 Kings 16:31)
2. Wife of Ahab, king of Israel
3. Baal worshipper
4. Guilty of whoredom and witchcraft (2 Kings 9:22)
5. Murderer (1 Kings 18:4,13; 21:1-29)
6. She governed her husband (1 Kings 21:25)
7. She used her outward beauty to manipulate others (2 Kings 9:30)

B. The Thyatiran Jezebel

1. Self-proclaimed prophetess
 - a. There are a number of God-ordained prophetesses in Scripture
 - b. But Jezebel exalted herself as a prophetess (cf. Romans 12:3; 2 Corinthians 10:18)
 - c. There is no gift of prophecy today (1 Corinthians 13:8)

2. She was a teacher in the church
 - a. Women are forbidden to teach men in the church (1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:12)
 - b. Jezebel took and usurped authority that was not hers
3. She was a seductress
 - a. Seduce means “To cause to stray, to lead astray, lead aside from the right way.”
 - b. She deceived and led people astray from the right path
 - c. Note Christ’s designation of “my servants”
4. Fornication and idolatry
 - a. Porneia – any type of sexual sin
 - b. In Scripture, the word is used most frequently in a symbolic sense for idolatry and unfaithfulness to God
 - c. She encouraged some in the church to join the local trade guilds and participate in their immoral and idolatrous feasts in order to maintain employment
 - d. These practices were specifically forbidden in Acts 15:29
5. Her teaching is called “the depths of Satan” (v.24)
 - a. It is important to recognise that the source of all error is the “father of lies”
 - b. “Any doctrine that makes it easy to sin, whether excusing it, minimizing its influence, or denying its existence, is of hell.” (G. Campbell Morgan)
 - c. The Gnostics claimed that only their initiates had a proper understanding of deep spiritual realities (2 Corinthians 11:3; Colossians 2:3-8)
 - d. Those who are enticed by the foolish woman will end in the “depths of hell” (Proverbs 9:18)
 - e. The believer ought to pursue the “deep things of God” (1 Corinthians 2:10)

II. CHRIST DEMANDS CHANGE FROM JEZEBEL (21)

A. The grace of God

1. Before He “casts” (v.22) and before He “kills” (v.23), He “gives”

2. Space = *chronon* – “time”
3. Sinners do not deserve even one second to repent of their sin
4. Yet God is longsuffering, and not willing that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9; cf. Ezekiel 18:30-32)

B. The rebellion of man

1. God does not force men to repent
2. Man must, of his own volition and will, choose to humble himself before God and repent
3. Most will not repent (Luke 13:34)
4. Failure to repent is not a lack of knowledge in the mind, but a lack of humility in the heart (Exodus 7:13,23; 8:15,19,32; 9:34; Romans 2:5)
5. Sinners with the clearest evidence of God’s condemnation and wrath upon them still refuse to repent because they love their sin more than God (Revelation 9:20-21; 16:9-11)
6. This verse summarises the general attitude of sinful man towards a loving God – *God gives...man refuses*

III. CHRIST DECREES CONDEMNATION ON JEZEBEL (22-24)

A. God’s offer of grace is not indefinite

1. His Spirit shall not always strive with man (Genesis 6:3)
2. “He, that being often reprov’d hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.” (Proverbs 29:1)
3. The space/time He extends to sinners will come to an end (Revelation 10:6)
4. It is possible to sin away the day of grace
5. Proverbs 1:20-33 describes this process:
 - a. God calls sinners to repent (20-23)
 - b. Man refuses (24-25)
 - c. God judges (26-33)

B. Cast into a bed

1. This is a bed of sickness and pain
2. The harlot’s bed is changed to a bed of anguish - the place of her sin shall be the place of her punishment

C. Great tribulation

1. This refers to trouble of an exceeding great nature
2. Those in churches who follow Jezebel's way, and are alive at the Rapture will be left behind to suffer the awful wrath of God poured out upon the inhabitants of the world in the Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:21; Revelation 7:14)

D. Kill with death

1. This is a Hebraism for slay with most sure and awful death; so 'dying thou shalt die'
2. Her children are her followers
3. The old Jezebel and her children died awful deaths (2 Kings 9:30-37; 10:6-7)
4. God punishes sinning believers in this life with sickness and death (1 Corinthians 11:29-30; 1 John 5:16)
5. Unbelievers, including hypocritical professors of religion, will suffer the second death (Revelation 20:11-15).
6. Christ's judgment upon sin in the church should serve as a warning to all believers (Acts 5:9-11)

CONCLUSION

1. This church shows the awful consequences of failing to exercise discipline on error and immorality among the members
2. "Some wolves come wearing sheep's clothing; some wolves come wearing dresses."
3. Those who live a life of habitual, unrepentant sin are not saved (1 John 3:9-10)
4. Christian liberty is not a license to sin.
5. We are to practise a careful separation from all evil and those who commit it (2 Corinthians 6:17)
6. We must be on guard against any trace of the satanic spirit of Jezebel in our own lives:
 - ✓ Rebellion against God-ordained authority
 - ✓ Self-exalting, not God-exalting
 - ✓ Making excuses for sin in our own lives and in the lives of others
7. We ought to volunteer our hearts to be searched and cleansed by the all-seeing Christ, lest He search them against our will in judgment (Psalm 139:23-24)