

Pergamum (Pergamos) – a dark place. Home to many pagan temples...filled with demonic powers on an “acropolis.” Acropolis means a “high city” and refers to one of many natural strongholds constructed on rocky, elevated ground. A very oppressive place.

**Revelation 2:12-17 (NIV) "To the angel of the church in Pergamum write: These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword.**

Make note...all these letters to the churches are sent to the Pastor/messenger. The pastor has a grave responsibility. **James 3:1 (NKJV) My brethren, let not many of you become masters, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.**

**Masters** (teachers/instructors, includes pastors) will be judged more strictly. Why? The influence on lives multiplies.

A pastor **cannot overstep** his position of authority, yet also **cannot yield up** their authority to anyone.

Fathers in the home. If you submit to God and follow Jesus, your house is protected. If you allow sin to reign in your life, or if you yield up your God-given authority in your home (to lead your home in righteousness), then you give Satan free reign in your life, your wife and your children...to the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> generation.

Ephesus – words of Him who holds the 7 stars in His right hand...walks among the 7 golden lampstands.

Smyrna – words of Him who is the first and the last...who died and came to life again.

Pergamum (Pergamos) – words of Him who has the sharp, double-edged sword.

**Sharp double edge sword – The Romans used the literal sword to slay people. Jesus uses the sharp double-edge sword to surgically penetrate past the surface and expose our innermost thoughts/desires.**

**Hebrews 4:12 (NLT2) “For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.**

God’s Word, alive, powerful, sharper... it’s used to penetrate through our hard heart/stubborn head, to expose our innermost thoughts and intents (motives). **PETER USED THE SWORD TO CUT OFF SOMEONE’S HEAD, & GOT HIS EAR INSTEAD. JESUS REBUKED HIM FOR THAT. The sword** is not to be used to slay one another, but to surgically remove that which weakens you as a believer, leaving you purer, therefore stronger!

**<sup>13</sup> I know where you live--where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city--where Satan lives.**

**I know... personal knowledge                      Where you live... permanent place where you dwell**

**Where you live is where Satan has his throne. (A seat of power...in authority; in charge.)**

**Satan lives (Gk. to house permanently; reside) So, the devil...demons can dwell/reside in geographic areas!**

**2 Corinthians 4:3-4 (NLT2) If the Good News we preach is hidden behind a veil, it is hidden only from people who are perishing. <sup>4</sup> Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don’t believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. They don’t understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God.**

Believers in Pergamos were called upon to deny Christ. Once a year they could have easily made their public confession that *Caesar is Lord*, but they refused. They knew better; they knew that Christ and Christ alone was Lord. They could have gone quietly about their affairs and never mentioned Christ except when they met for worship. But this they refused to do. Does our life, our actions, our words glorify Christ... or do we keep our faith quiet? Who’s on your throne?

**Mark 8:36-38 (NIV) <sup>36</sup> What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? <sup>37</sup> Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? <sup>38</sup> If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation,**

**the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."**

Does Satan a seat in your heart? Your mind? Your living room? Your house? Your conversation? If so, you'll never have peace. He must be removed from any part of the temple (your body/soul/mind).

**The Word makes it much easier to know how to live for Christ.**

LOVE GOD with ALL YOUR HEART/SOUL/MIND/STRENGTH. LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR (ANYONE/EVERYONE)  
LOVE WHAT JESUS LOVES. HATE WHAT JESUS HATES.

ALWAYS CHOOSE GOD... ABIDING ACCORDING TO GOD'S WORD OVER ANYONE, ANYTHING, AT ANY TIME.

**The Spirit** of God, in accordance with the Word of God is to be the Influencer you listen to... or anyone who is leading you according to the Word of God!

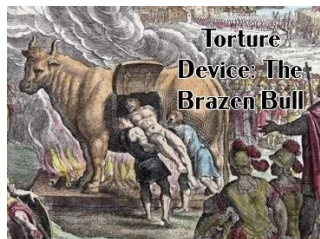
At Ann's funeral, a lady said in my day everyone assumed people were Christians. She said Ann was the first person who emphatically stated: I am a Christian... which made her wonder if she herself was a Christian. She went on to say that Ann was influential in her life to show her what a Christian was.

The Lord commends the people for not renouncing their faith... even in the days of Antipas.

**What were the "days of Antipas?"**

Antipas, a believer, was being used to preach the gospel, cast out demons in people—exercising authority over the demons—in the city where Satan has his throne! The demons were upset. He was brought before the governor who ordered him to stop casting out demons AND to return to his pagan roots. He refused. They martyred him... Gk. Word meaning they butchered him (carnage).

In Pergamum, there was a bronze bull, hollow. It's head & horns were fashioned like instruments. In its side was a "door." The door of this hollow bronze bull could be opened and a person could be placed inside. This is what they did to Antipas. Once inside, they lit a fire below the bull, the metal heated up and fried Antipas inside. Antipas screamed while inside...and the screams were amplified through the musical instruments in the head, probably out the nose! It made it look/sound like the bull was coming to life. When done, they removed the bones, polished them and wore them as jewelry.



The treachery and wickedness of people influenced by demons or possessed by demons is unlimited. <https://www.thescarechamber.com/torture-device-the-brazen-bull/>

Even so, Antipas remained faithful, as did the believers of Pergamum.

**14 Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality. Common theme—I have a few things against you.**

**WHAT WAS THE DOCTRINE OF BALAAM?**

Balaam was known as a wicked prophet in the Bible. Realistically, he was a "diviner." A diviner is someone who claims to have some special knowledge or information...supposedly from God, and uses that information to seek to influence others. A diviner is led by demonic spirits vs. the Spirit of God.

Pergamon was a pagan city. The theater, which sat 10,000 was a great gathering place. The Greeks loved theater, yet as time went by, the theater became more corrupt. So much so, Christians gave up going there. With the crude language, mocking political leaders, sexual immorality, "theater life" was not compatible with the higher standard that Christians were/or are, called to. **They refused** to be entertained by that which the Lord died to set us free of! Today as well, much or most of what is being put out as entertainment is incompatible with our walk with the Lord.

God, today, is calling us to a greater separation! He is doing some pretty amazing things among us right now. Recently we baptized 27 people! With the beginning of TL and AHG, a potential Hispanic Church, and all the other ministries we have outside the building during the week, He has opened the door for us to influence our

community for Christ. As a result, we have stirred up the demonic realm. Even businesses have moved into Delphi with occultic foundations. Also, I believe that God is turning up the fire in many lives, to burn away impurities, compromises, etc. to purify us in preparation for the next thing He wants to do. Our impurities stink to God. **POND WE DROVE PAST WHEN GOLFING...GREEN MOSS-LIKE STUFF ON TOP – IT STUNK!**



<https://www.flickr.com/photos/davebailey/7427826138> And our impurities provide an open door for the devil in our lives. WE must shut, and keep that door shut.

He wants to reveal that for us to repent of, letting Him skim that off of our lives. Let's pray for one another and encourage one another to purer lives!

Balak enlisted Balaam to curse God's people—3 times. Every time he went to curse God's people, He blessed them instead. **GOD'S PROTECTIVE POWER SAYS, SATAN CANNOT CURSE WHAT GOD HAS BLESSED!** Numbers 23:23 (NLT2) "No curse can touch Jacob; no magic has any power against Israel. For now it will be said of Jacob, 'What wonders God has done for Israel!'

**LISTEN CAREFULLY!** Satan can't successfully curse what God has blessed! As a child of God you are blessed of God and protected by His Blood and His Spirit. But, Satan will try to seduce you into compromise & sin, which opens the door for Satan's activity in your life. Ephesians 6:10-11 (NIV) Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

So, Balaam took king Balak as an apprentice. The DOCTRINE of Balaam was described as when he not only told King Balak how to destroy the Israelites, he then showed him the method. This is someone disguised as a follower of God, who for whatever reason has decided that they want to help destroy the people of God.

James 3:13-18 (NLT2) <sup>13</sup> If you are wise and understand God's ways, prove it by living an honorable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from wisdom. <sup>14</sup> But if you are bitterly jealous and there is selfish ambition in your heart, don't cover up the truth with boasting and lying. <sup>15</sup> For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic. <sup>16</sup> For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind. <sup>17</sup> But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. <sup>18</sup> And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness.

Balaam did hear from God, and God did give him some true prophecies to speak. However, Balaam's heart was not right with God, and eventually he showed his true colors by betraying Israel and leading them astray. Satan wants to destroy you...us! And he will use any willing vessel for his purposes. #1 Keep yourself pure; #2 Don't ever be used to lead someone away from God. **TOO MANY ARE TOO CONCERNED ABOUT HURTING SOMEONE'S FEELINGS RATHER THAN HURTING GOD!** If there's gossip—SHUT IT DOWN! If there's foolish talk/coarse joking—DON'T ENTER IN...WALK AWAY! **WHATEVER INAPPROPRIATE COMES BEFORE YOU, DON'T STAY IN THAT!**

<sup>15</sup> Likewise you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

**The teaching that compromised living is ok with God – it is not! Therefore, God says...v16**

<sup>16</sup> Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

Acts 17:30 (NLT2) "God overlooked people's ignorance about these things in earlier times, but now he commands everyone everywhere to repent of their sins and turn to him.

**You've been saved and that is great...God is and has given you time to "clean it up."**

**He'd done waiting. You know better! God's looking for a greater cleanliness from His people.**

<sup>17</sup> He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.

**HIDDEN MANNA -- JESUS SAID IN John 6:51 (NLT2) I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever; and this bread, which I will offer so the world may live, is my flesh."**

**WHITE STONE:** During the time that John wrote the book of Revelation a **white stone** was equivalent with innocence. If you were to be tried for a crime; a white stone signifying acquittal, and a black stone signifying guilt would be placed in a jar anonymously. To receive a white stone meant that you were judged as innocent and you are free from condemnation. You had been tried and had been found not guilty and worthy of freedom.