

Revelation Backgrounds 8

Pergamum Part II



Revelation 2:12-17

1

Revelation 2	References
<p>(14) Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: you have some people who hold to the teaching of Bil`am, who taught Balak to set a trap for the people of Isra'el, so that they would eat food that had been sacrificed to idols and commit sexual sin. (15) Likewise, you too have people who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.</p>	<p>Num 22-25, 31 Josh 13:22 Balaam also, the son of Beor, the one who practiced divination, was killed with the sword by the people of Israel 2 Pe 2:15 Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray. They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing</p>

2

And the border of the children of Reuben was the Jordan



Northern end of the Dead Sea (aerial view from the west)

Joshua 13:23

3

And Beth-peor, and the slopes of Pisgah, and Beth-jeshimoth, and all the cities of the plain



Jordan River and the Plains of Moab (aerial view from the west)

Joshua 13:20-21

4

Balaam the son of Beor, the soothsayer, the children of Israel killed with the sword



"Balaam son of Beor" inscription from Tell Deir 'Alla, 9th century BC

Joshua 13:22 

5

2nd Peter 2

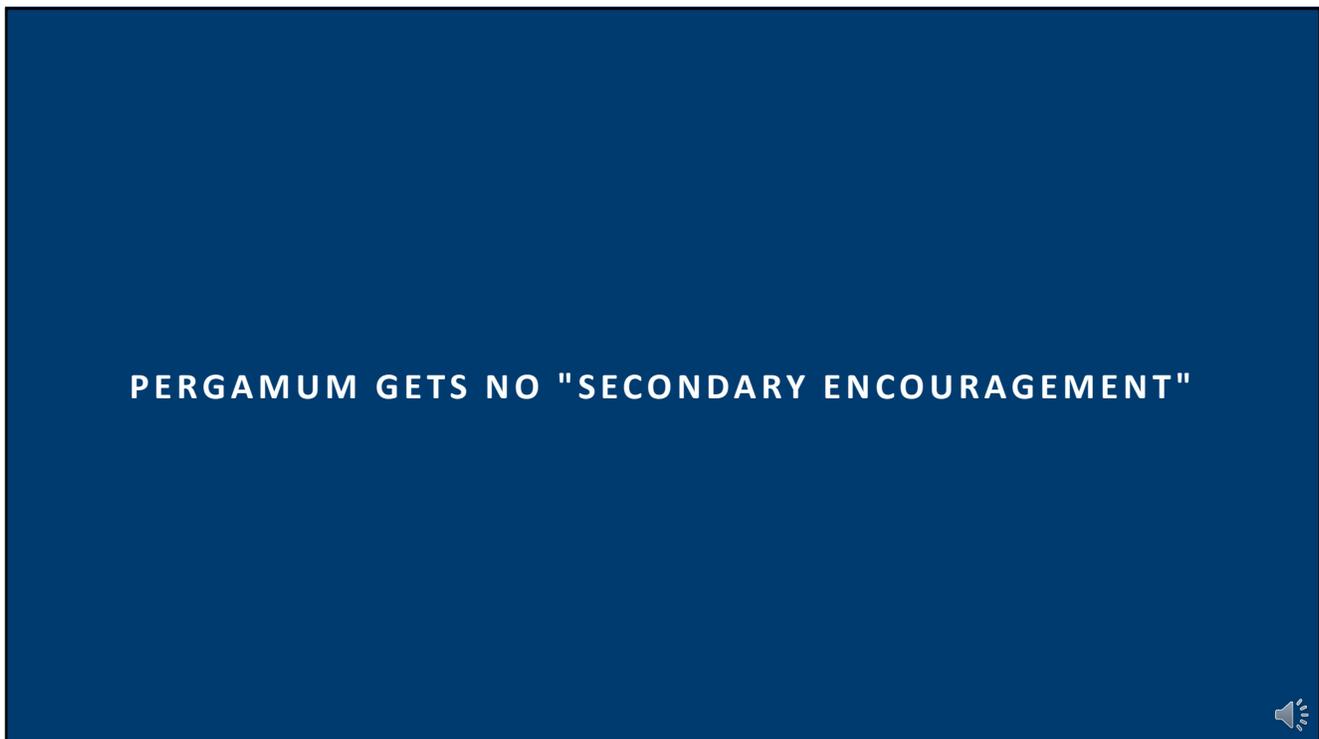
- 2 Pe 2:12-15 But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction, (13) suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you. (14) They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children! (15) Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray. **They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing**
- 2 Pe 2:1-3 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be **false teachers among you**, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. (2) **And many will follow their sensuality, and the way of truth will be blasphemed because of them.** (3) **And in their greed, they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.**
- 2 Pet 2:20 For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and **overcome**, the last state has become worse for them than the first.



6

Revelation 2	References
<p>(16) Therefore, turn from these sins. Otherwise, I will come to you very soon and make war against them with the sword of my mouth.</p>	<p>Josh 13:22 Balaam also, the son of Beor, the one who practiced divination, was killed with the sword</p> <p>Rev 19:15 And out of his mouth comes to a sharp sword with which to strike down nations—"He will rule them with a staff of iron." It is he who treads the winepress from which flows the wine of the furious rage of Adonai, God of heaven's armies.</p> <p>Rev 19:21 The rest were killed with the sword that goes out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.</p>

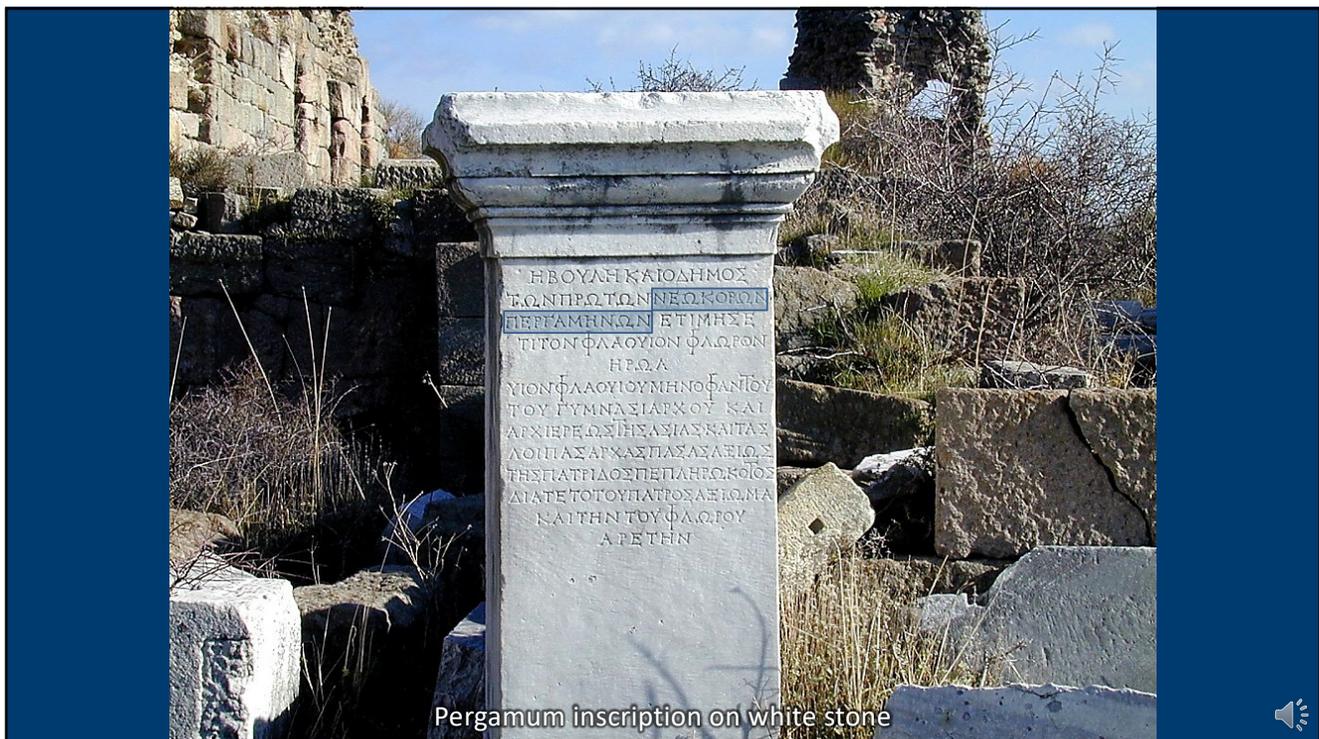
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8

Revelation 2	References
<p>(17) Those who have ears, let them hear what the Spirit is saying to the Messianic communities. To him winning the victory, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone, on which is written a new name that nobody knows except the one receiving it."</p>	<p>Exo 16:31-35 Now the house of Israel called its name manna. It was like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. (32) Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Let an omer of it be kept throughout your generations, so that they may see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.'" (33) And Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar, and put an omer of manna in it, and place it before the LORD to be kept throughout your generations." (34) As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before the testimony to be kept. (35) The people of Israel ate the manna forty years, till they came to a habitable land. They ate the manna till they came to the border of the land of Canaan.</p> <p>Joh 6:31 Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"</p>

9



Pergamum inscription on white stone

10

שם

(SHEM) NAME, CHARACTER, REPUTATION



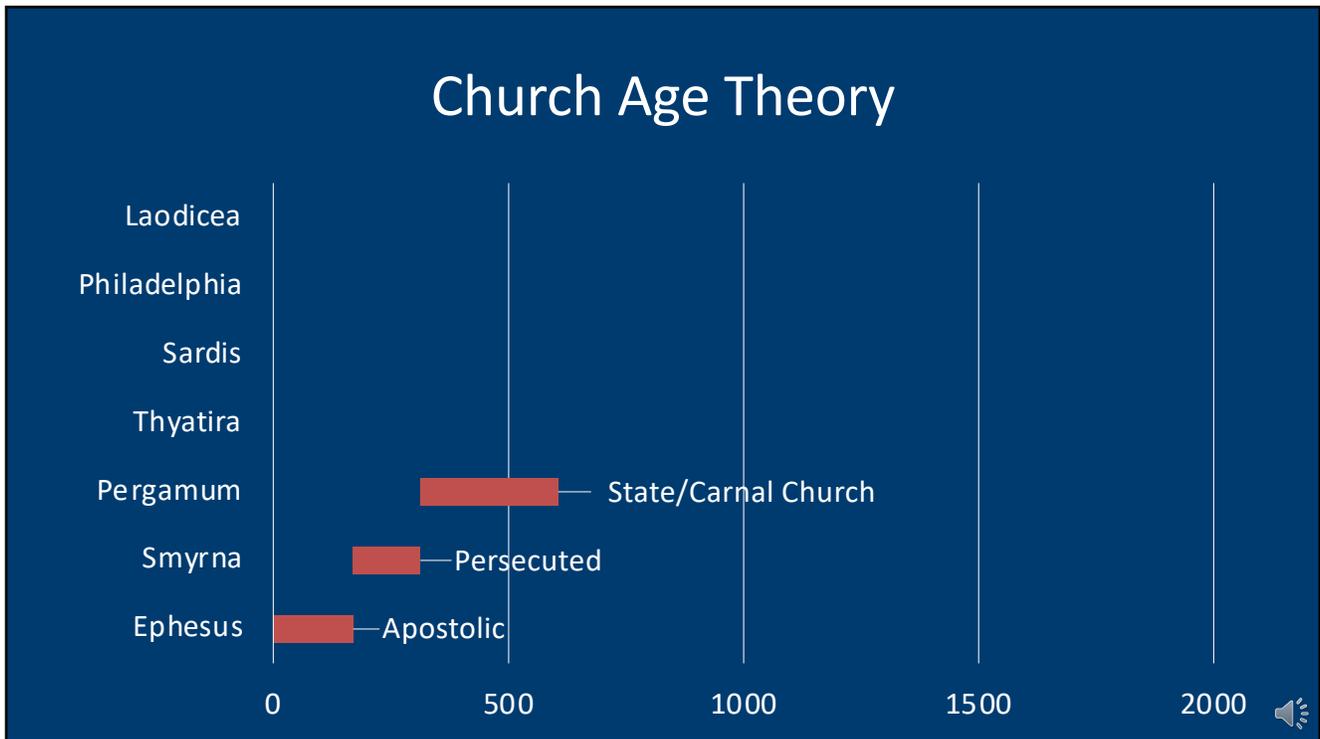
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Conclusion

- Didn't directly deny Jesus, but they didn't directly deny false gods either - "no one can serve two masters"
- Do an "audit" for any idols in our lives
 - A thing does not have to be sinful to become an idol
 - "Today there is a false god for anything and everything, and they offer immediate satisfaction. But they are not the truth." Wayne Stiles
- Believers must be willing to exchange a comfortable life now for tremendous rewards later
- "He who has an ear, let him hear"



12



13

Possible Parable Connection: Pergamom = Mustard Seed

Matthew 13	Explanation
<p>Mat 13:31-32 He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. (32) It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."</p> <p>Birds of the air = Evil one</p> <p>Mat 13:4 And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them.</p> <p>Mat 13:19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path.</p>	<p>While they can grow large, a usual mustard plant is usually no more than 4' or 5'.</p> <p>The "birds of the air" from the first parable are ministers of Satan; it would be most unusual if Jesus changed the symbolism.</p> <p>The suggestion is that what started small and was supposed to be a plant has become a monstrosity. It has become something it was never intended to be. It is so large that ministers can not just land but make nests, i.e., make a home, in its branches.</p> <p>Jesus said to carry a weapon for defense only, and even this was unusual. When He was arrested, He told the disciples to put their swords down. For all intents and purposes, Jesus' earthly ministry was a model of pacifism.</p> <p>Now with the advent of Constantine, we see the church as a conqueror, both politically and militarily.</p>

14

Possible Paul Connection: Corinthians Carnal Church

- 1Co 2:12 Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.
- 1Co 3:1-3 **But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ.** (2) I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, (3) for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?
- 1Co 3:4 For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not being merely human?
 - Greek culture divinized heroes into gods.
- 1Co 3:16-17 **Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? (17) If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.**
 - This pertains to the dietary and fleshly fornication happening at Pergamum.
- 1Co 4:2 **Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.**
- 1Co 4:5 Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.



15

Possible Paul Connection: Corinthians Carnal Church

- 1Co 5:1 **It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife.**
 - Chapter 5 is all about sexual immorality
- 1Co 5:11 **But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one.**
 - Who one ate with was a big deal in the early apostolic movement
 - I thought Paul taught "freedom in Christ" Are we sure the historical Paul is the same Paul we have been taught?
- 1Co 6:12-13 **"All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be dominated by anything. "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food"—and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.**
 - The ESV does an excellent job of setting off the quotes.
 - Despite people who like to attribute these quotes to Paul, he is not saying these directly.
 - He is quoting the arguments of his opponents.



16

	Ephesus	Smyrna	Pergamum	Thyatira	Sardis	Philadelphia	Laodicea
To	Darling; desired	Myrrh; death	Height, or abnormal marriage				
From	Holds 7 stars/ walks among lampstands	First/last dead/alive	Two edge sword				
+	Don't tolerate evil; Persevered; Acts 17:11	Suffering (pressing, tribulation) and insults	Living with Satan yet holding His name				
-	Lost love they had at first	N/A	Balaam / Nicolaitans				
+	Hates deeds of people who do things their own way instead of God's	Do not fear suffering; remain faithful	N/A				
Ear	Before promise	Before	Before				
Promise	Eat from Tree/Life	Not taste 2nd death	Hidden Manna, white stone, new name				
Age	Apostolic (70-170)	Persecuted (170-312)	Carnal-political (312-606)				
Parable	Four Soils	Wheat/tares	Mustard Seed				
Paul	Ephesians	Philippians	Corinthians				

17

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18

