

The Seven Churches of Asia

Thyatira

8

Lesson

Thyatira

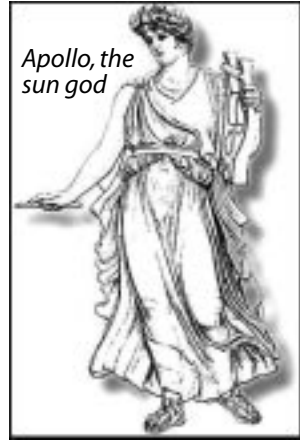
Thyatira was a wealthy city that sat on the River Lycus and served as an important commercial route between Pergamum to the northwest and Sardis to the south. More trade guilds were known to exist in Thyatira than in any other Asian city. Trades included wool and linen workers, makers of garments, dyers, leather workers, tanners, potters, bakers, slave traders and bronze smiths. Lydia, the seller of purple taught by Paul in Philippi, was from Thyatira (Acts 16:14). According to James Tolle, every tradesman was part of a guild and the guilds were closely tied to idol worship.

The church in Thyatira likely came into existence as a result of Paul's efforts in Ephesus (See Acts 19:10, 26.)



More About Thyatira

- The heathen guardian of the city was the god, Tyrimnos, who has been identified with the Greek sun god Apollo. Tyrimnos was connected with the guilds. If you were a craftsmen, you were expected to join a guild and to honor Tyrimnos as well as the other pagan gods.
- The dilemma facing craftsmen who converted to Christianity was that obedience to Christ very likely meant the loss of their livelihood and financial resources.
- There is debate about the meaning of the city name. Some suggest the name comes from the Greek *thauteria* meaning "castle of Thya." Other's believe the name of the city is associated with Jezebel and originates from the Greek *thea*, "a female deity, goddess," and *tyrannos*, "a tyrant or ruler." Others believe Thyatira is a variation on the name of the city of Tyre. Both cities worshipped the sun god and were known for their purple dyes and guilds.



Apollo, the sun god



Read Revelation 2:18-29

1. Who does John say is communicating these words to the church in Thyatira (vs. 18)?



Praise for the Church

2. List below the *specific* things for which John praises the church in Thyatira:

3. What admirable trait evident in Thyatira was missing in the church in Ephesus?

4. How did the works (deeds) of the church in Thyatira change over time? Relate your answer to the need for growth as indicated by Paul in Ephesians 4:14-16.



Problems in the Church

5. What specific problems does John say existed in the church at Thyatira? List them below:



**Read 1 Kings 16:31-33; 18:13, 19;
21:25-26; 2 Kings 9:30-37**

6. Based on the verses above, describe Jezebel's a) character, b) influence, and c) her demise.

a) *Her Character:*

b) *Her Influence over King Ahab:*

c) *Her Demise:*

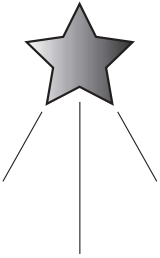
7. How is the Lord's patience demonstrated even in the case of one as bad as this Jezebel of Thyatira?



Prescription for the Church

8. What is Lord's prescription for the evil influences of Jezebel which have infiltrated the church in Thyatira?

What warning is given to those who fail to repent?



9. What is the "morning star" promised to the faithful (Rev. 22:16)?

Question for Discussion

Is the Jezebel mentioned and described an actual woman or a characterization of a faction that encouraged immorality in Thyatira?

