

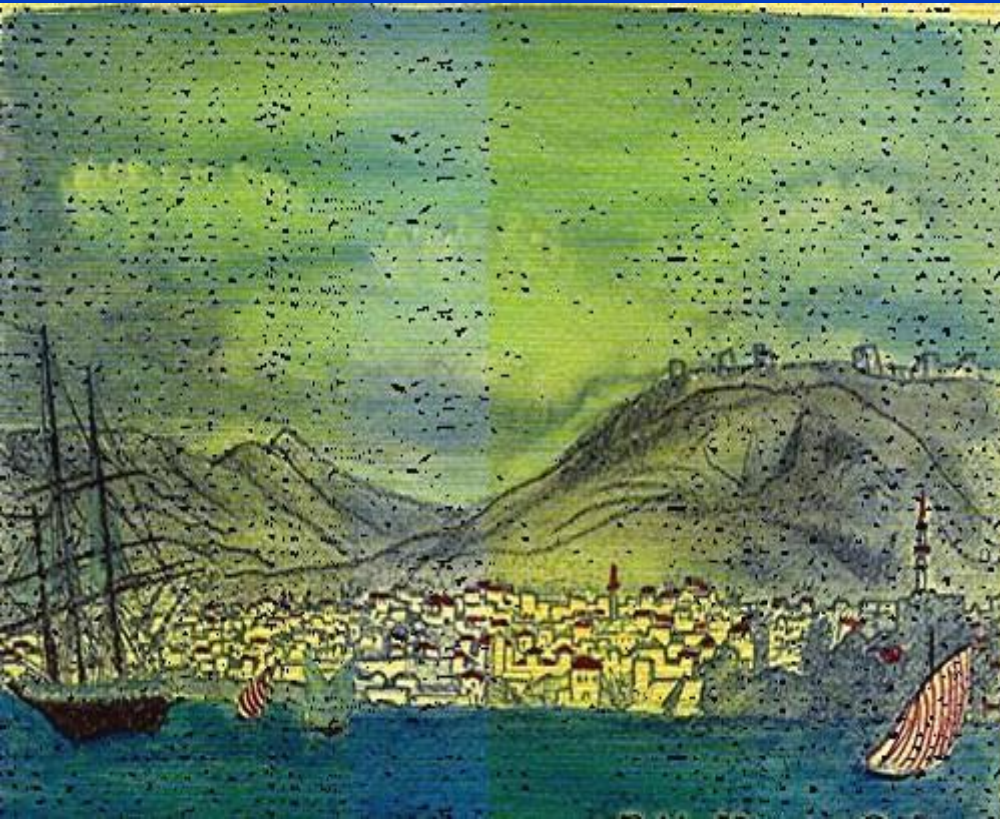


SAVED FOR A PURPOSE

- Lack of love was the issue for the Ephesian Believers
- Outbound ministry turned into serving themselves
- Christ emphasized that we were saved for more than personal happiness and going to Heaven!
- John 15:16 ***“.....go and bear fruit, fruit that will last”***
- Eph. 2:10 ***“...we are.....for a life of good actions..”***
- Love combined with action is our mission

THE GOD PARADOX

- Victory is correcting lack of love, and then being allowed to eat from The Tree of Life (eternal life)
- Smyrna receives top marks from God, but also a warning of coming persecution
- Vs. 8 ***“The One who is the first and last, who died and came alive again”***
- John 1:1 ***“..the Word was with God, and..was God..”***
- By faith we accept this paradoxical truth that cannot exist in our 4 dimensional Universe

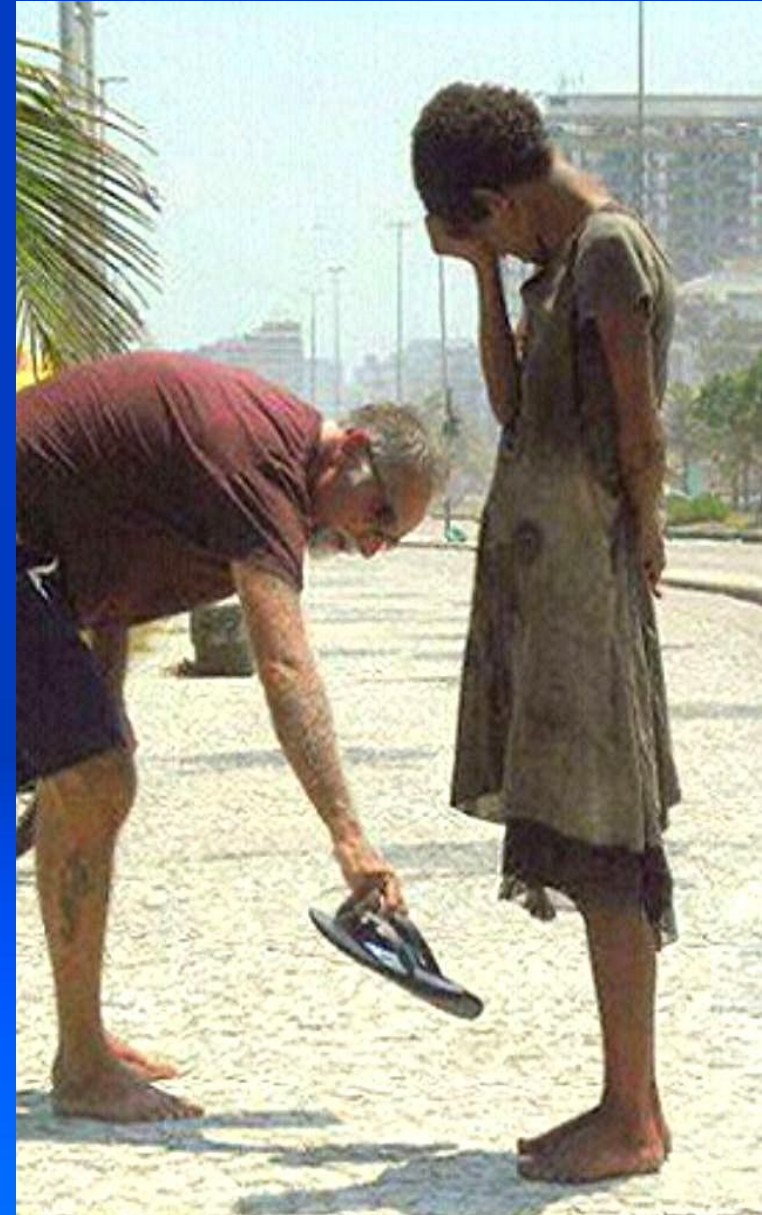


SMYRNA

- Defining and re-defining God has led to a shattering of our faith into many denominations
- We must accept, as-is, how God describes Himself
- Smyrna a wealthy cult center like Ephesus
- Believers of Smyrna were a tiny minority

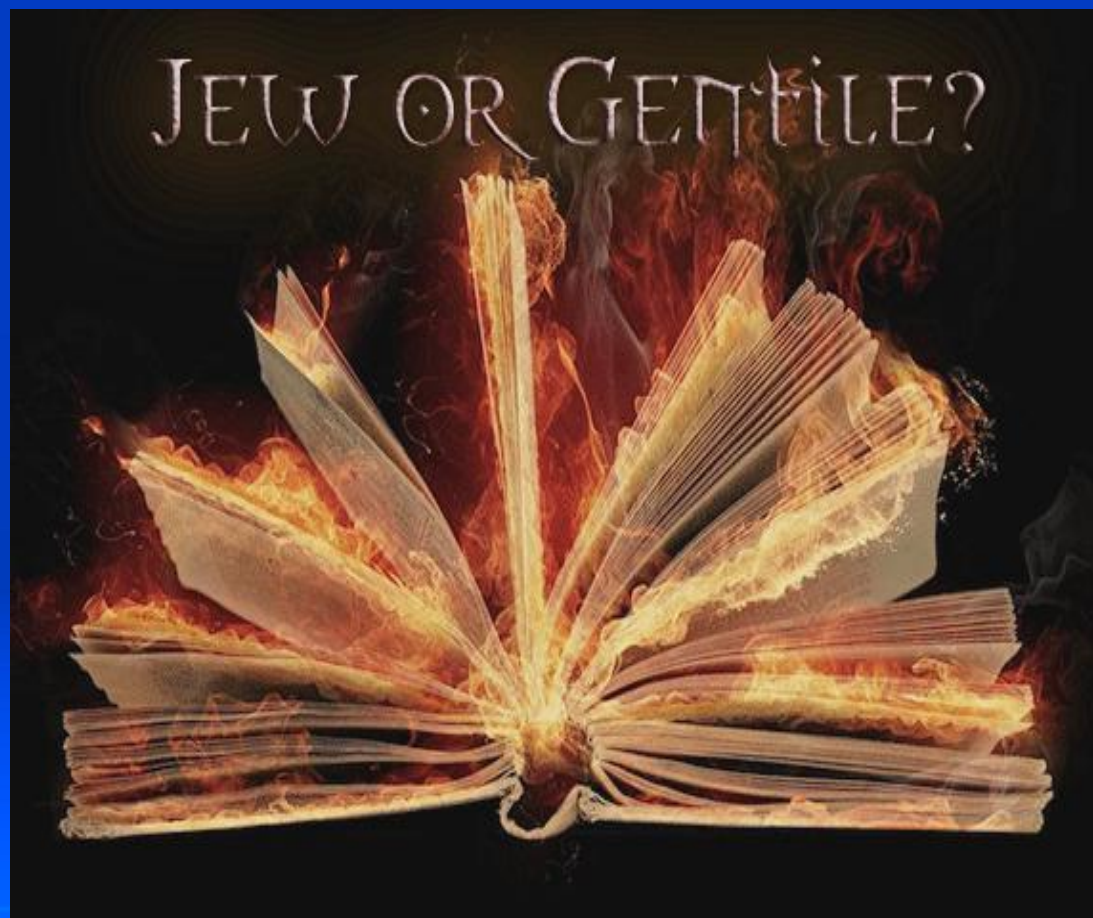
VS. 9: WORKS AND TRIBULATION

- Compare CJB, KJV, and NET
- *Ergon* = works
- *Thlipsis* = pressure
- Works = acts, deeds
- Smyrna is under *thlipsis* because of their faith
- *Thlipsis* can mean tribulation
- Rev. 7:14 THE Tribulation and THE Great Tribulation are made to sound like named events, but they are misnomers
- There is no “The” in the passage, so these are actions but not names of events



POVERTY AND INSULTS

- Materially poor, but spiritually rich!!
- “*..those who call themselves Jews but aren't...*”
- Standard Bible hermeneutics say to take a verse in the plain sense, if it makes sense as-is
- Christianity says these are Judaizing Jews
- The plain sense tells us these are gentiles who pose as Jews



WHAT IS THE SYNAGOGUE OF SATAN?

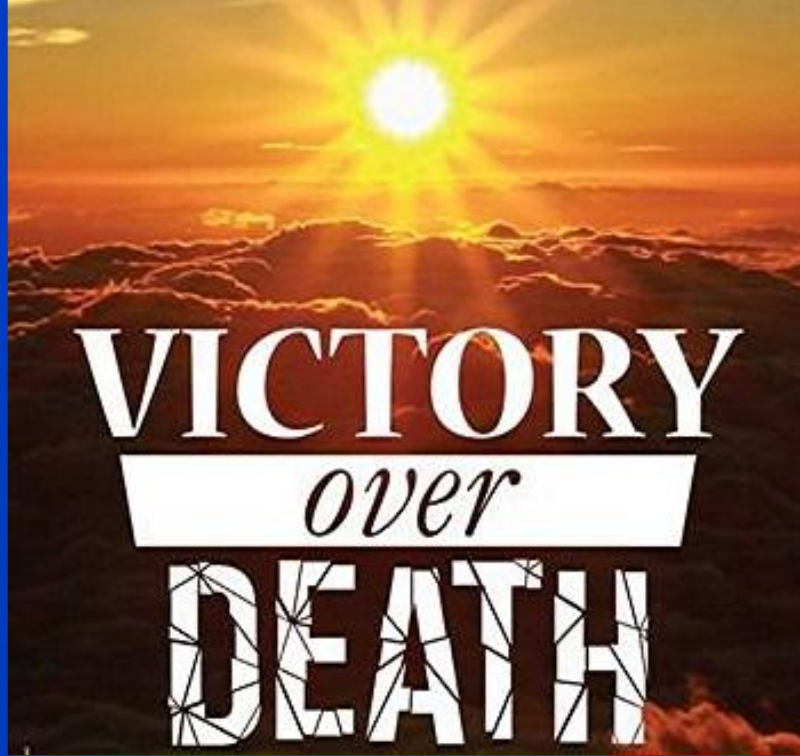
**False
Assumptions**

- In 1st century, Judaism was an attractive religion to gentiles
- These gentiles claiming to be Jews are called the Synagogue of Satan by God
- ***Sunagoge*** = synagogue
- A play on words
- Because the Jewish Believers of Smyrna meet at a Synagogue (of God), then the fake Jews are called a “synagogue” of Satan

SUFFERING & PERSECUTION



- Smyrna Believers had only commendation from God, but they were still going to suffer persecution
- Romans prisons were not for serving prison terms; they held you for trial or pending execution
- Oppression for 10 days The meaning is obscure, but since 10 is the number of wholeness, then it means until the allotted time has been completed



- Charles Feinberg: “ In the OT, saints were delivered from death...in the NT they triumphed over death”
- The only death Believers can avoid is the 2nd death
- IF Believers of Smyrna are faithful until death, they will not experience the 2nd death
- Kingdom of Heaven movie: “Convert now, repent later”
- The price for this mindset is our eternal life



PERGAMUM

- Message-giver still does not give us His name
- He is: the One with the sharp double-edged sword
- The Temple of Aesculapius
- The symbol used for the world of medicine found there
- Early medicine a combo of superstition and science



IS THIS SATAN'S THRONE?

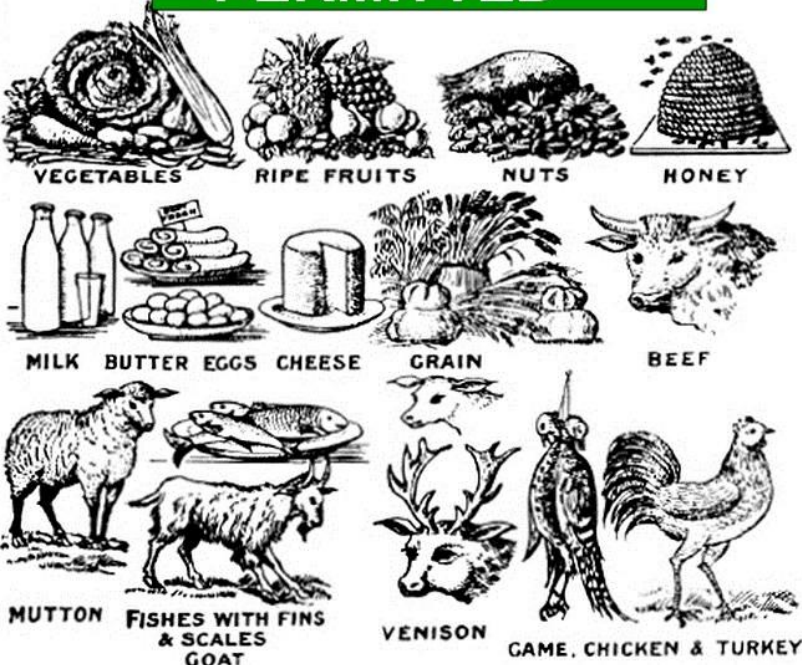


- God says He knows the Believers live at Satan's Throne
- Temple of Zeus, in Berlin Museum
- No hard evidence as to what Satan's Throne was
- "Holding on to God's name"
- Doesn't mean calling oneself "Christian", as the term did not exist at that time
- **Shem** = name In Hebrew it meant reputation

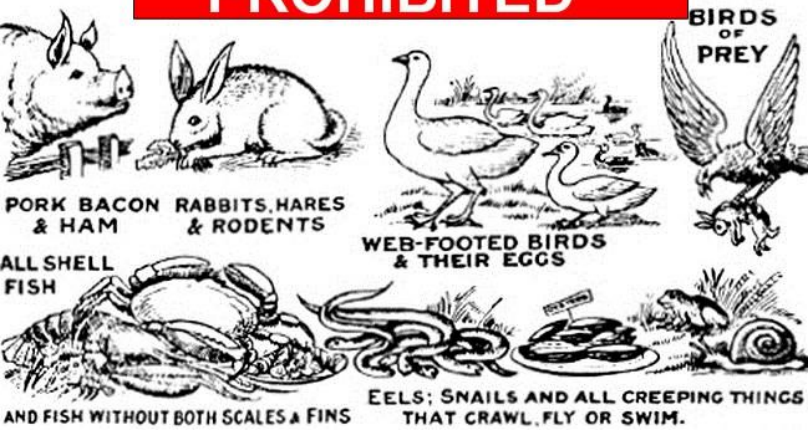
UNDERSTANDING

“Food sacrificed to idols”

PERMITTED



PROHIBITED



- Some Believers were holding on to the teaching of Balaam regarding food and sexual sin
- Biblically, food does NOT mean “any edible thing”
- Torah provides two sets of food laws: 1) what is permitted is one set, and 2) how food must be handled is another set
- Only permitted food is food
- Permitted food can be rendered ritually impure and thus unclean
- Sacrificing permitted foods to idols makes it ritually impure