

“The Revelations #4”

Revelations 2: 8 – 11 (The Persecuted Church)

Review: Ephesus...

- Strengths: Hard work, Patient endurance, Rejection of evil and Perseverance.
- Fault or Rebuke: Left or lost their first love... Admonished to repent and do the first works.
- If you adhere to the doctrine of the timeline of the Christian church throughout its lifespan and history. (Ephesus covers the time from approximately AD31 – AD100)

Text: V8 Read...

“These things says the first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life.”

Isaiah 44: 6, 8b *“Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, and his redeemer, the Lord of host: I am the first and the last; besides Me there is no God... You are my witnesses, Is there a God beside Me? Indeed, there is no other Rock; I know not one.*

Romans 14: 8 – 9 *“If we live, we live to the Lord and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living.*

1 Corinthians 15: 20 *“Now Christ is risen from the dead and has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.”*

V 9 Read...

- This is what Smyrna was going thru at the time of this writing...
- Also true in the church's historical application. **(Which covers approximately AD100 – AD 325)**
- This is the time period that the church suffered a great deal of persecution. Until the edict of Milan in AD 313...

"I know your works, your tribulation, and poverty (But you are rich)"

Matthew 5: 3 *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

James 2: 5 *"Listen my brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He has promised to those who love Him."*

Matthew 5: 10 – 12 *"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven."*

- We need to be reminded of this constantly...

V9b... "I know the blasphemy... of those that say they are Jews..."

Romans 2: 28 – 29 *"For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, and in the Spirit, not by the letter, whose praise is not from man but from God."*

V10 Read...

“In the third and fourth century AD, scores of Christians were jailed, some were tortured to disfigurement: some lost their property and others their lives. In 250AD Roman Emperor Decius enacted a law in which all people were required to make sacrifices to pagan Roman deities... In 303AD the reigning emperors under the instigation of Emperor Diocletian, put into place a calculated strategy aimed at completely eradicating the growing Christian population... One of the longest and most ruthless to face Christians thus far, this persecution lasted without reprieve for ten years, or as this verse prophesied, ten prophetic days.”

- Ten years from 303AD to 313AD
- Biblical days to years... Numbers 14: 34 / Ezekiel 4: 6

Matthew 24: 9 – 14, James 1: 12

V11 Read...

“He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.”

John 16: 33 *“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, **I have overcome the world.**”*

- **2 Timothy 4: 7 – 8...**