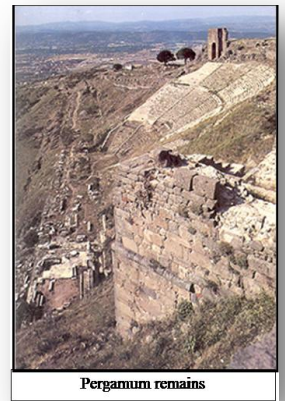


The Church at Pergamos

A Bit of History



ergamos, or Pergamos, was a major city of Mysia, in Asia Minor, in what is today Turkey. Located about 15 miles inland from the Aegean Sea, it was the capital for the Pergamenian kings until about 133 B.C. when it came under Roman control. The Romans made it the central city of their new province of "Asia."

In this town was first discovered the art of making parchment, which was called ¹pergamena. Parchment, an ancient writing material made from the processed skins of animals, most often that of calves, sheep and goats, was invented in Pergamos to free the great library there from dependence upon imported papyrus which mainly came from Egypt. Pergamos had a vast library of 200,000 volumes, which was moved to Egypt by Antony and presented to Cleopatra.

The city was greatly addicted to idolatry, being filled with statues and altars. In 29 B.C. a temple for the worship of Caesar Augustus was erected in Pergamos (Caesar Augustus was the Roman emperor who called the census that resulted in Jesus Christ being born in Bethlehem Luke 2:1). However, worship of Caesar and subsequent emperors was long rivaled there by the cult of the pagan god Zeus, the symbol of which was a *serpent*. Pergamos's throne-like altar of Zeus, that some have speculated was the symbolic "Satan's throne" reference in Revelation 2:13, and is now in the Berlin Museum.²

¹ <http://pergamena.net/history.htm>

² <http://www1.cbn.com/700club/seat-satan-nazi-germany>

The Third Message to The Church at Pergamos

(Revelation 2:12-17)

The licentious, compromising church under Rome – 313 A.D. to 538 A. D. The church that had become worldly.

The church that fell under the influence of the pagan culture in which it lived.

The Commendation: “I know your works, and where you dwell, even where Satan’s seat is: and you hold fast to My name, and have not denied My faith, even in the days where Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwells.”

The Complaint: “But I have a few things against you, because you have there with you some that hold the “Doctrine of Balaam”, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication. So you also have them that hold to the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.”

The Warning: “Repent! Or else I will come unto you quickly, and will fight against you with the Sword of my Mouth.”

The Promise: “He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the Churches; to him that overcomes will I give to eat of the Hidden Manna, and will give him a White Stone, and on the stone a New Name written, which no man knows except he that received it.”

A Closer Look at Pergamos

In this message Pergamos is spoken of as “Satan’s Seat.” When Attalus III (170-133 BC), the Priest-King of the Chaldeans, fled before the conquering Persians to Pergamos and settled there, Satan shifted his capital from Babylon to Pergamos. Attalus III was also known as the last King of Pergamum.

³The Roman Emperor Domitian in A.D. 83 persecuted the followers of Christ, and Antipas was one of the martyrs (Rev.2:13). Antipas was consecrated “Bishop of Pergamos” by John during the reign of Emperor Domitian. His name means "against all" which could mean that he was standing alone for the faith against the forces of evil.

Soon Satan changed his tactics and began to exalt the Church, and through Constantine united the Church and State, and offered all kinds of inducements for Pagans to come into the Church. Constantine’s motive was more political than religious. He wished to weld his Christian and Pagan subjects into one people, and so consolidate his Empire.

The result of this union was that two false and pernicious doctrines crept into the Church. The first was the “**Doctrine of Balaam,**” and the second the “**Doctrine of the Nicolaitans.**” The latter we have already considered under the Message to the Church at Ephesus. The foothold it had secured in the Church was seen in the First Great Council of the Church held at Nicaea, in A.D. 325. The Council was composed of about 1500 delegates, the laymen outnumbering the Bishops 5 to 1. It was a stormy council, full of intrigue and political methods, and from the supremacy of the “Clergy” over the “Laity” it was evident that the “Doctrine of the Nicolaitans” had secured a strong and permanent foothold.

³ <http://latter-rain.com/escha/antipas.htm>