

**Jesus Evaluates His Churches, Part 4**  
**SMYRNA – The Key that Unlocks the Mystery**  
**Revelation Chapter 2:8-11 -- 02/28/2014**  
**NEW LIFE FELLOWSHIP**  
<http://NLFJL.org/Teachings>

**Today's TEXTs: Revelation 2:8-11**

**SMYRNA** - "sweet smelling" ("sweet smelling sacrifice" or "sacrifice of myrrh [incense]")  
(modern day – Turkish City of **Izmir** – place of many massive persecutions, even up to the 1920s)

<sup>8</sup>"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write,

'These things says **the FIRST and the LAST**, who was dead, and **CAME TO LIFE**: <sup>9</sup>"**I KNOW** your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. <sup>10</sup>**DO NOT FEAR** any of those things which you are about to **SUFFER**. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have **TRIBULATION TEN DAYS**. Be **FAITHFUL UNTIL DEATH**, and I will give you the crown of life.

<sup>11</sup>"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall **NOT** be hurt by the **SECOND DEATH**."

1. There are **ONLY TWO** churches that Christ **does NOT** have any condemnation toward, two churches that He **does NOT** call to Repentance, but **fully** commends them and encourages them. What are those **two** churches? Sm\_\_\_\_\_ & Ph\_\_\_\_\_
2. In each introduction to each of the 7 churches, Jesus Christ is introduced in Symbolic Language that draws from the Symbolic Imagery that we saw of Jesus Christ in Chapter 1.  
**These things says the FIRST and the LAST, who was dead, and CAME TO LIFE**  
Since, Jesus Christ, Himself, **faced Death victoriously**, so would they.  
This **hints at** what that church, specifically, would face, but also hints at the period in Church History, the period of **10 Massive waves of Persecution and Martyrdom**
3. Jesus **knows** everything about His local churches  
<sup>9</sup>"**I KNOW** your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.  
He knows Our Faithful Service in His Name, for His Name's Sake **is always noticed** ...  
He does not and Will **NOT** Forget ... → Jesus is Encouraging this Local Church  
He says that they are **RICH, how?** They are in poverty because of the Massive Persecution.
4. **Syngogue of Satan** → **Satan = Adversary**, Enemy, Opposition/Opposer ...  
This hints at those who say that they are following God, but in fact are in Opposition to True Biblical Christianity. Roman Empire "undercover agents", Jewish folks faking it and then betraying – turning them into the "State" ... similar to what was seen in the USSR, Hitler, Stalin, Mao (China), etc... So, this **doesn't** necessarily mean Jewish Satan Worshipers
5. **KEY** that unlocks Revelation chapters 2 & 3 – **10 Days in Prison . . . it never happened.**  
**WHAT???** → **Revelation 2:10**  
This unlocks the **MYSTERY** of the **SEVEN CHURCHES**. What do they **REPRESENT?**

**(CONTINUED on the back side)**

**Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for TEN DAYS you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.**

It turns out those folks of the church in Smyrna were NEVER thrown into prison for 10 days. That never happened. (church history has much documentation for this period of time, BTW)

**So, what does this “10 DAYS” refer to?**

- It Refers to **The DEVIL** being behind this (his demonic spiritual forces are behind this)
- It is for a period of **10 time periods** (i.e. “days”)
- It relates to suffering, persecution, prison and death (martyrdom)

Online Ref: <http://www.bibleprobe.com/10persecutions.htm>

**Between about 67 AD or so until about 312 AD or so ...** there were **10** Specific and Horrific Periods of Persecution against Christians, that the church had never experienced up to that point by the Roman Empire. With each subsequent persecution, they were each worse, exponentially.

Thus, the Church of Smyrna, doesn't just represent a specific local church family in History, but it Prophetically Represents a Period of Time in Church History (remarkably accurate prophetically).

This Helps us see that each of the SEVEN CHURCHes of Revelation 2 & 3 Represents different Periods (or overlapping Periods) of Time (or Ages) within the overall Church Age.

**Ephesus (Rev. 2:1-7)** → represents the Apostolic Age of Christianity – the first 30 years of so... from 33 AD (day of Pentecost [Acts 2]) until about 67 A.D. or so

**Smyrna (Rev. 2:8-11)** → represents the Early Church Fathers Period of Church History – from 67 AD or so until about 312 A.D. or so

→ **SMYRNA** is the **KEY** that **UNLOCKS** the Prophetic Mystery of the SEVEN Churches

## 6. What can we learn (applications)?

- a. Jesus knows everything we are going through. (this is personal and per each local church) He knows, remembers and applauds our **FAITHFULNESS** to Him
- b. He encourages us to be **Faithful** and Victorious, but most of the time He does **not** stop the source of the suffering, tribulation, and/or persecution (sometimes He does, but not always) – **Faithful in what?**
- c. There will always be **OPPOSITION** until Jesus comes back – but He will provide the Victory ... and that could mean being Faithful Unto Death in some cases (in Smyrna's case, for sure) – **if we are silent – how can anyone Oppose us?**
- d. **Our Reward for being FAITHFUL is Jesus Christ** – being with Him forever, ruling and reigning with Him forever → Not Hurt by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Death → Receive the Crown of LIFE  
You see that, being with Jesus Christ, personally, intimately is our Reward.  
“I will give you the crown of life ...” Jesus will personally give ... that's closeness.  
**Does, Jesus Christ, right now, consider you Faithful to Him, unto Death?**  
(ponder on that)

**CHURCH HISTORY - PERIOD OF TIME:** approx. LATE 60's AD to around 312 AD, or so.

Exponential Expansion of the Church, along with **10 MASSIVE WAVES** of **PERSECUTION**

**POINTS TO CONSIDER:** “Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. ... The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.”

Those “weak” Christians, in the world's eyes, were  
“**more than conquerors**” in their Savior's eyes.