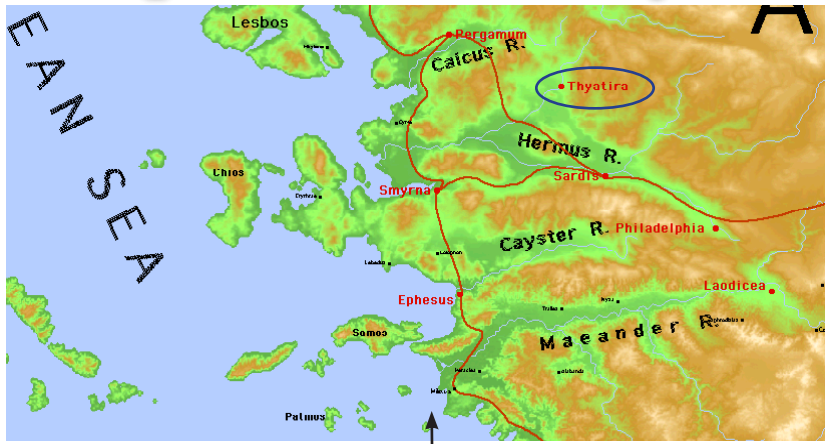


# Maps & Pictures Of Thyatira



Map of the seven churches of Revelation (Revelation 2:1-3:22). The book of revelation was written by John from the island of Patmos (southern island on the map to which John was exiled) to seven churches which may have been under his previous leadership. Thyatira is circled on the map.



Archaeological park at Thyatira. Archaeological remains from ancient Thyatira are scant, found primarily in this small archaeological park in the center of the Turkish city of Akhisar. Here we see arches, columns, and bases of a portico.



Basilica at Thyatira. The exterior walls of a public basilica (from the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century) would have stood to a height of 16 feet.



Greek inscription at Thyatira

# Purity

Long Beach Alliance Church • January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006 • Happy New Year! • Pastor Chris Lankford

**BUT I HAVE THIS AGAINST YOU, THAT YOU TOLERATE THE WOMAN JEZEBEL, WHO CALLS HERSELF A PROPHETESS, AND SHE TEACHES AND LEADS MY BOND-SERVANTS ASTRAY SO THAT THEY COMMIT ACTS OF IMMORALITY AND EAT THINGS SACRIFICED TO IDOLS. I GAVE HER TIME TO REPENT, AND SHE DOES NOT WANT TO REPENT OF HER IMMORALITY.**

**~REVELATION 2:20-21 (NASB)**

## 1) The City Of Thyatira

- A) Thyatira was one of the less prominent cities in Asia Minor. Like the other churches in the region, it was a location of both the Imperial cult (emperor worship) and regular cult worship (esp. Apollo and Artemis).
  
- B) Located on commercial and manufacturing trade routes, Thyatira was a particularly prosperous city. The city was a garrison outpost for the Roman army, whose soldiers would get actively involved in the local businesses as secondary jobs to their military responsibilities.

- C) Because of the strong military presence in Thyatira, there were an abundance of trade guilds\* to which craftsmen belonged. These guilds were a central feature of the financial, social and religious life of Thyatira.
- D) Since participation in the guilds was expected (sometimes even required), this would have put enormous social and financial pressure on Christians. To refuse participating in the guild feasts meant both the loss of goodwill and business.

## 2) Characteristics Of Jesus Christ For His Church

- A) In writing to Thyatira, Jesus Christ is described with two key characteristics which have particular impact for the church at Thyatira (Revelation 2:18, cf. 1:14-15).
  - i. First, Christ ("The Son of God") is described with "eyes like a flame of fire" (2:18). In an environment where participating in the sinful aspects of the culture could go unnoticed, Jesus sees everything.
  - ii. Second, Christ is described as having feet of "burnished bronze" (2:18). This was military-grade bronze, used locally for weaponry. Feet of burnished bronze would have communicated 'characteristic power' beyond any 'possessed power' or influence others might have.

---

\* The military presence was organized, leading perhaps to the large number of organized trade guilds which were in Thyatira. The guilds included each craftsperson (especially shoemakers, sellers/buyers of dyed wool, and bronze smiths) who each belonged to their respective guilds. Though the guilds were not absolutely required, few workers failed to belong since the guilds were the center of social life as well as commerce. In fact, towns (like Thyatira) were laid out in squares, each guild controlled its portion of "squares." Lydia, "a seller of purple fabrics" (Acts 16:14) was from Thyatira, which was well known for its rich dyes. Religious life was especially influenced by the guilds. Each guild had its own patron god or goddess, and the frequent feasts of the guilds were religious in their character. The pressure on Christians to participate in the idolatrous lifestyle of the people was probably linked to the existence of the guilds in Thyatira (*Revelation*, Grant R. Osborne, pgs. 151-152).

## 3) Compliments For Growing Strengths

- A) Jesus Christ compliments the church in Thyatira in several areas of success (2:19):
  - i. Jesus compliments the church for their "love AND faith AND service AND perseverance" (2:19).
  - ii. In all of these areas (and unlike the church in Ephesus, 2:1-7), Thyatira is growing stronger (2:19)!

## 4) Criticisms For Tolerating False Teaching & Impurity

- A) The Thyatiran church was tolerating a false teacher (possibly a woman?) who was, like Jezebel (cf. 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 16:31-24; 21:25-26; 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 9:22), leading the people into accommodating the sinful culture (2:20).
- B) There is a particular emphasis on the immorality (*πορνεύσαι*, *porneusai*, sexual sin/adultery) of the false teacher (2:20-22). The immorality appeared spiritual, but was Satanic (2:24).
- C) The subsequent judgment (against the stubborn refusal to repent, 2:21) is to serve as a warning against sexual immorality and strikes at the "fruit" of sexual union (2:22-23).

## 5) Purity Is Non-Negotiable Christian Characteristic

- A) Christ calls His church to purity, to "hold fast" to their separation from teaching which leads to impurity (2:24-25).
- B) The reward for the "overcomer" (the Christian) would be the opportunity to assist Christ in His rulership (2:26-27), with emphasis on crushing the opponents of Jesus. Finally, Christ Himself, the morning star (2:28-29), will be the reward for all who "hear" and respond to Christian purity in their lives.