

³ Blessed *is* he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time *is* near. —
Revelation 1:3 (NKJV)



THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)

¹¹ saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."
(Revelation 1:11)

PERGAMOS

SMYRNA

THYATIRA

SARDIS

PHILADELPHIA

LAODECIA

EPHESUS

PATMOS

Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO
Image Landsat / Copernicus

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THE BOOK OF REVELATION

TO THE 7 CHURCHES WHICH ARE IN ASIA (CHAPTERS 2 & 3)



Jesus is said to be “in the midst” of the seven golden lamp-stands, which are the seven churches (1:13,20).

The Lord is intimately aware of what transpires within every congregation. — He “knows” their situation, works, faithfulness & sins (2:2,9,13,19; 3:1,8,15; Heb 4:13).

The Lord sees us as we really are (2 Corinthians 5:10).

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

TO THE 7 CHURCHES WHICH ARE IN ASIA (CHAPTERS 2 & 3)



■ These churches needed hope, courage, comfort & most needed an instructive rebuke

◆ Social disgrace; financial & material loss; physical persecution; loss of physical life - (Acts 14:22; 2 Tim 3:12)

◆ Was / is being a Christian "worth it?" - Mat 10:28; 16:24-27; Rev 14:12,13

■ Instruction needed for all Christians of all ages

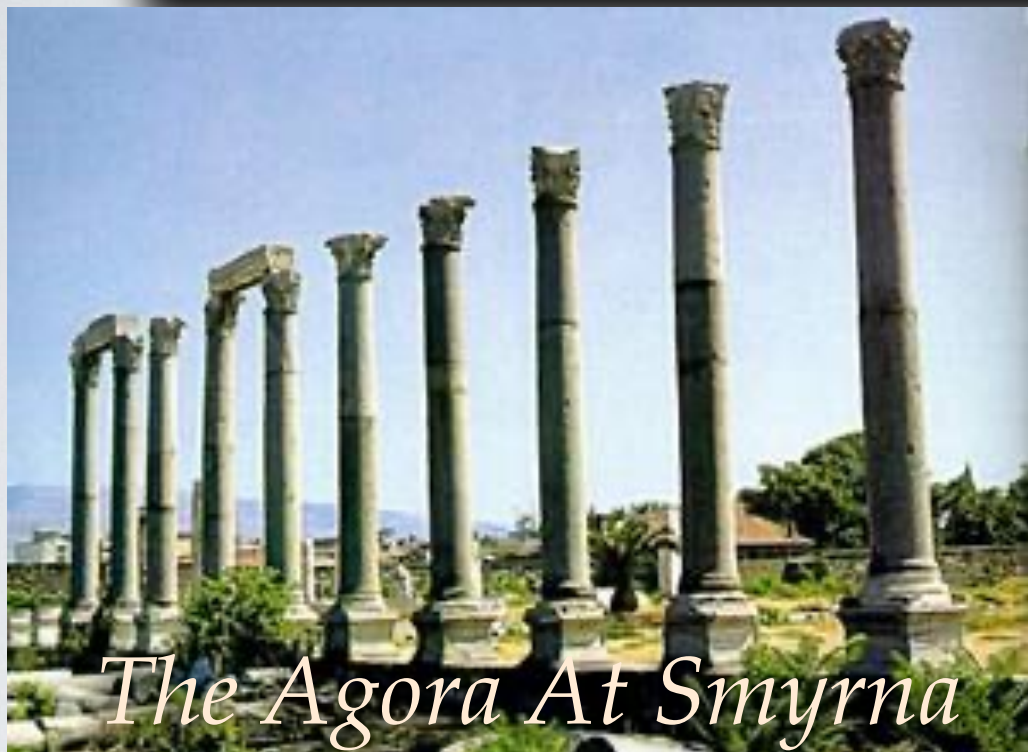
THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)

⁸ “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: ⁹ “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. ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ “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.” ’

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



■ Background Information

- ◆ A large, prosperous city with a pleasant climate 35 - 40 miles north of Ephesus.
- ◆ Second only to Ephesus in trade.
- ◆ Noted for beauty, being surrounded by rolling hills and groves and containing well-paved streets and beautiful buildings.
- ◆ Its acropolis (citadel) on Mt. Pagas looked like a crown and became the symbol of the city.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



■ Background Information

- ◆ Smyrna gained prominence in the 9th century b.c. and thrived before Lydians from Sardis destroyed the town in 600 b.c.
- ◆ In 334 b.c. Alexander the Great conquered Smyrna and refounded it atop Mt. Pagus,
- ◆ As early as 195 b.c. Smyrna foresaw the rising power of Rome and built a temple, (shrine) to “Roma,” goddess of Rome.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)

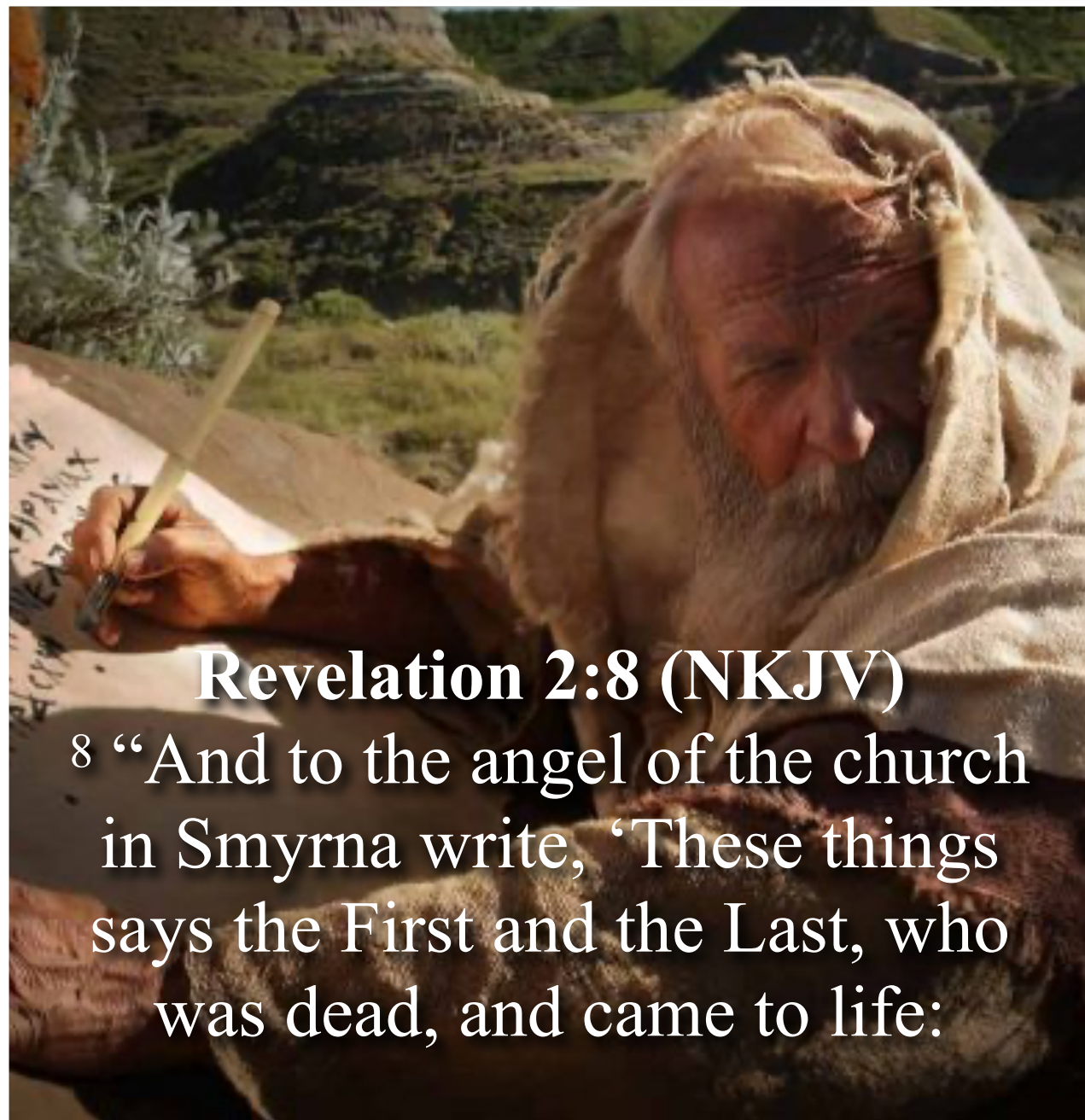


■ Background Information

- ❖ In 23 b.c. Smyrna was given the honor of building a temple to the Emperor Tiberius because of its years of faithfulness to Rome.
- ❖ The city became a center for the cult of emperor worship which brought severe persecution for the early church under some of the emperors of Rome.
- ❖ Polycarp was martyred in the stadium at Smyrna in 155 a.d.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)

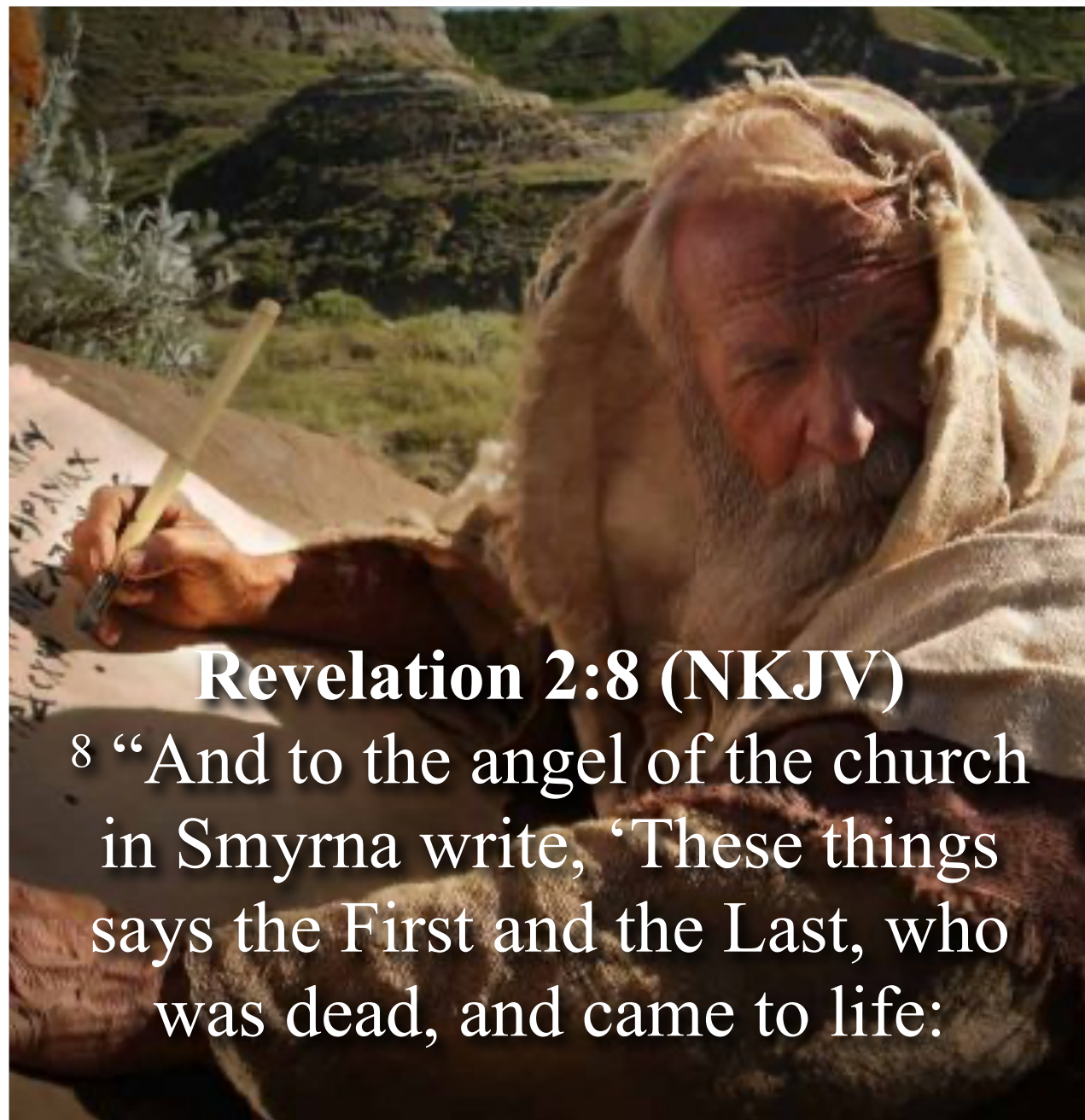


CHRIST’S SELF DESIGNATION

- ❖ “**I am the First and I am the Last**” a declaration of His uniqueness as deity in contrast with the idol gods of pagans. (Isa. 44:6; cf. 41:4; 48:12).
- ❖ Several times in Revelation Jesus identifies His own deity and oneness with the Father - (1:17; 2:8; 22:13; John 1:1-3; 8:58; Phil. 2:6,7).

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



Revelation 2:8 (NKJV)

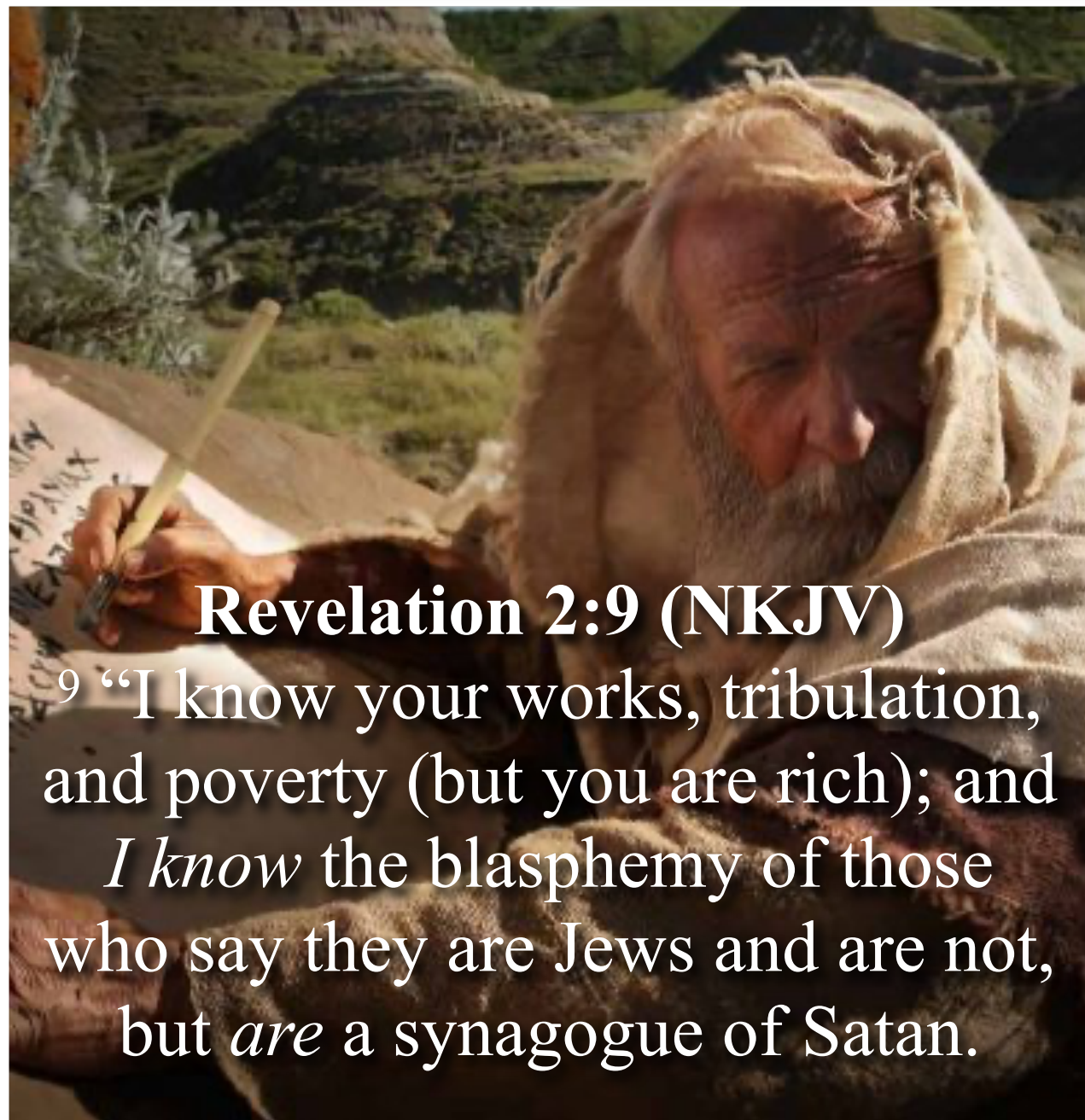
⁸ “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, ‘These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life:

CHRIST’S SELF DESIGNATION

- ❖ **“Who was dead, and came to life”** Jesus came into the world for the purpose of suffering death so He could defeat death and provide us with hope (Heb. 2:9-15; 1 Cor. 15)
- ❖ His resurrection is the ultimate proof He is the Son of God - (“*Alive forever more*” - 1:18; Romans 1:4), and provides our eternal hope.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



Revelation 2:9 (NKJV)

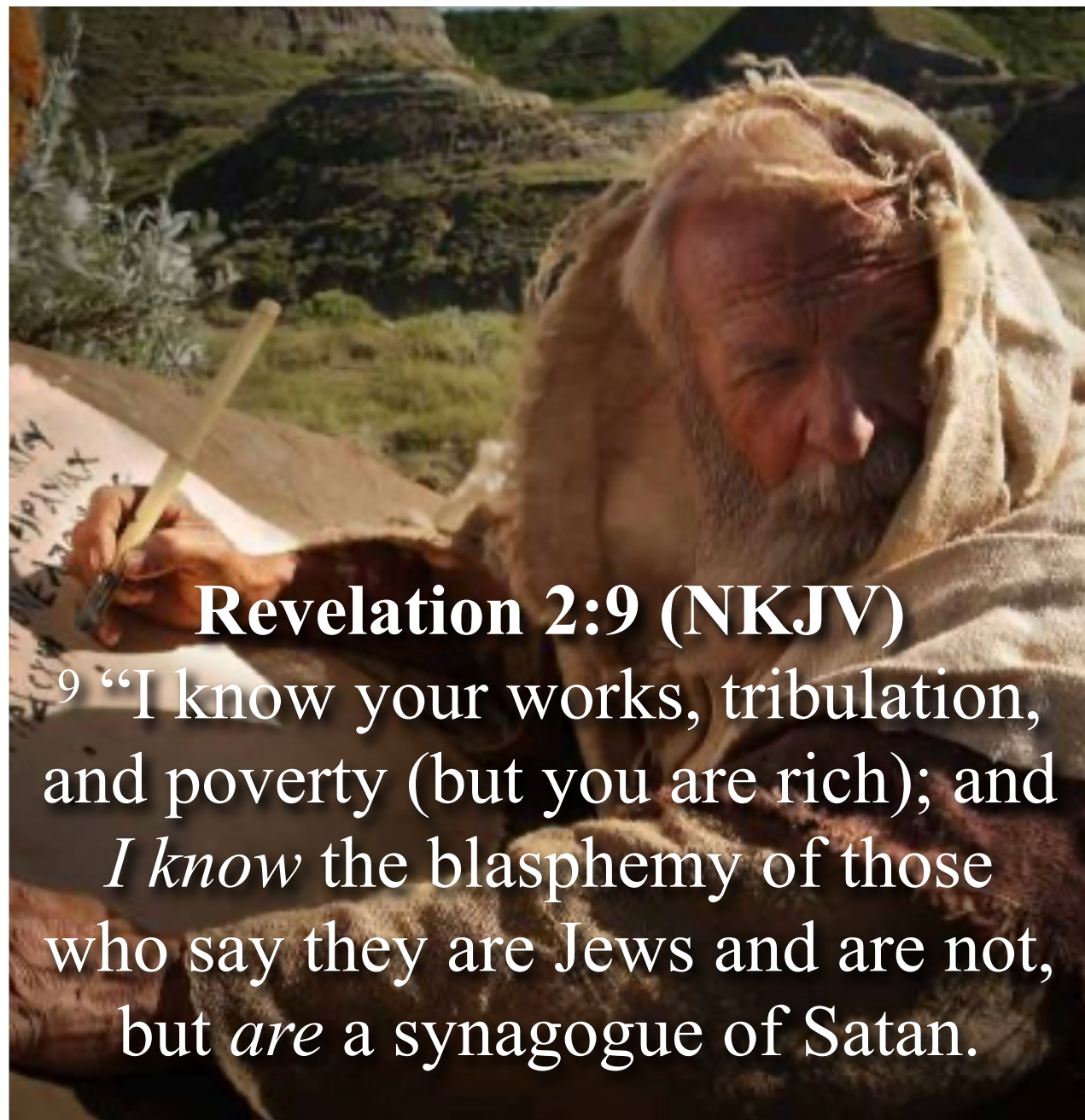
⁹ “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and *I know* the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan.

CHRIST’S COMMENDATION

- Jesus was aware of their “**works**” - All our works are known by the omniscient Son of God (1 Thes 1:3; Heb 6:10)
- “**I know your tribulation**” - literally means “*pressure, compression*” but is used metaphorically of “*distressing circumstances, trial, affliction*” (Mounce, 1170).

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



Revelation 2:9 (NKJV)

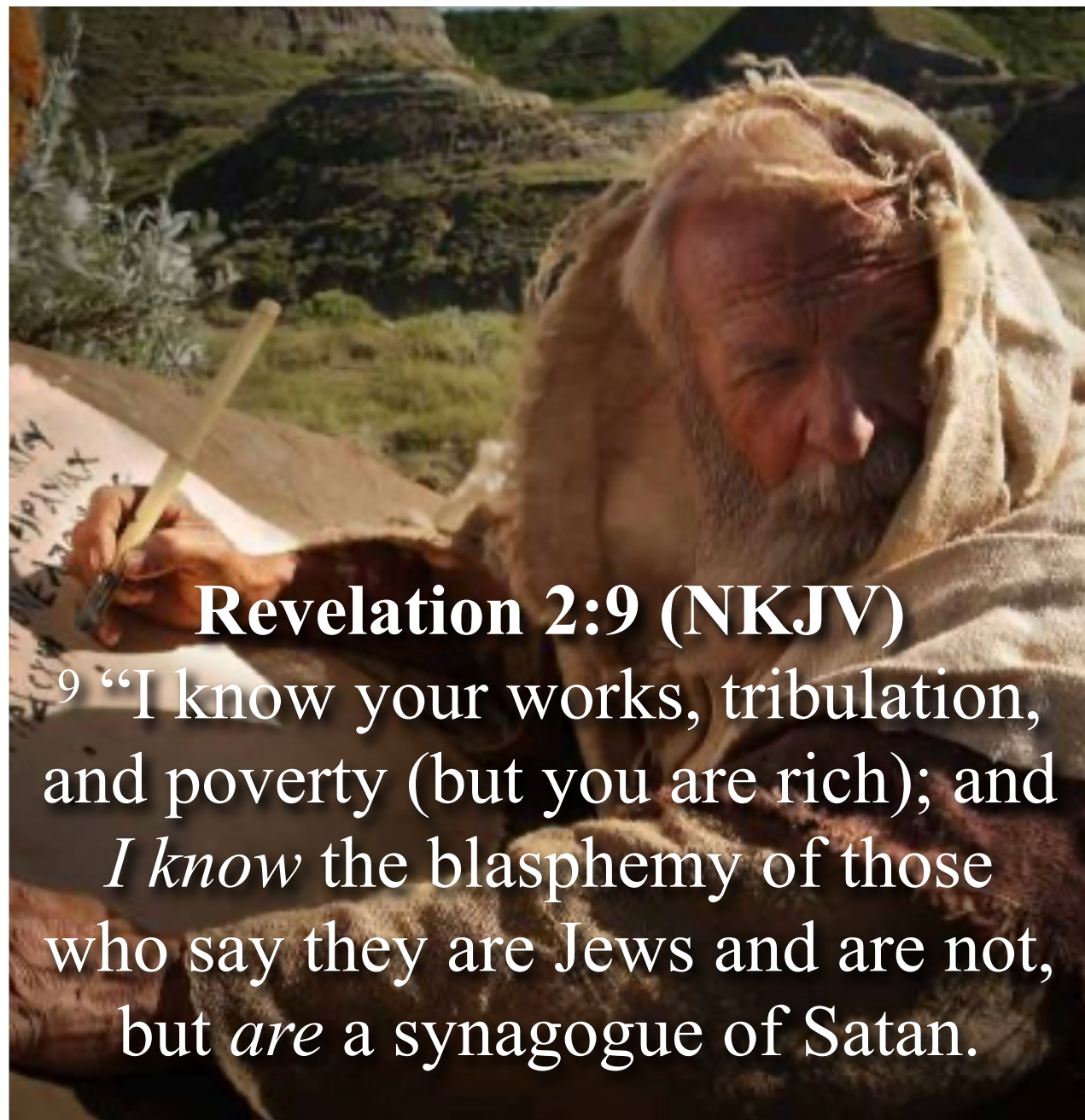
⁹ “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and *I know* the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan.

CHRIST’S COMMENDATION

- ❖ For faithful Christians to be “under extreme pressure” because of their faith was, (is), common and to be expected. (Mat 10:21-28; John 16:33; Acts 14:22; 2 Tim 3:12)
- ❖ Persecution was an instrument used to pressure Christians to surrender their faith & loyalty to Christ (Mat. 13:21; 2 Tim 2:3-15; 3:10-12)

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Revelation 2:9 (NKJV)

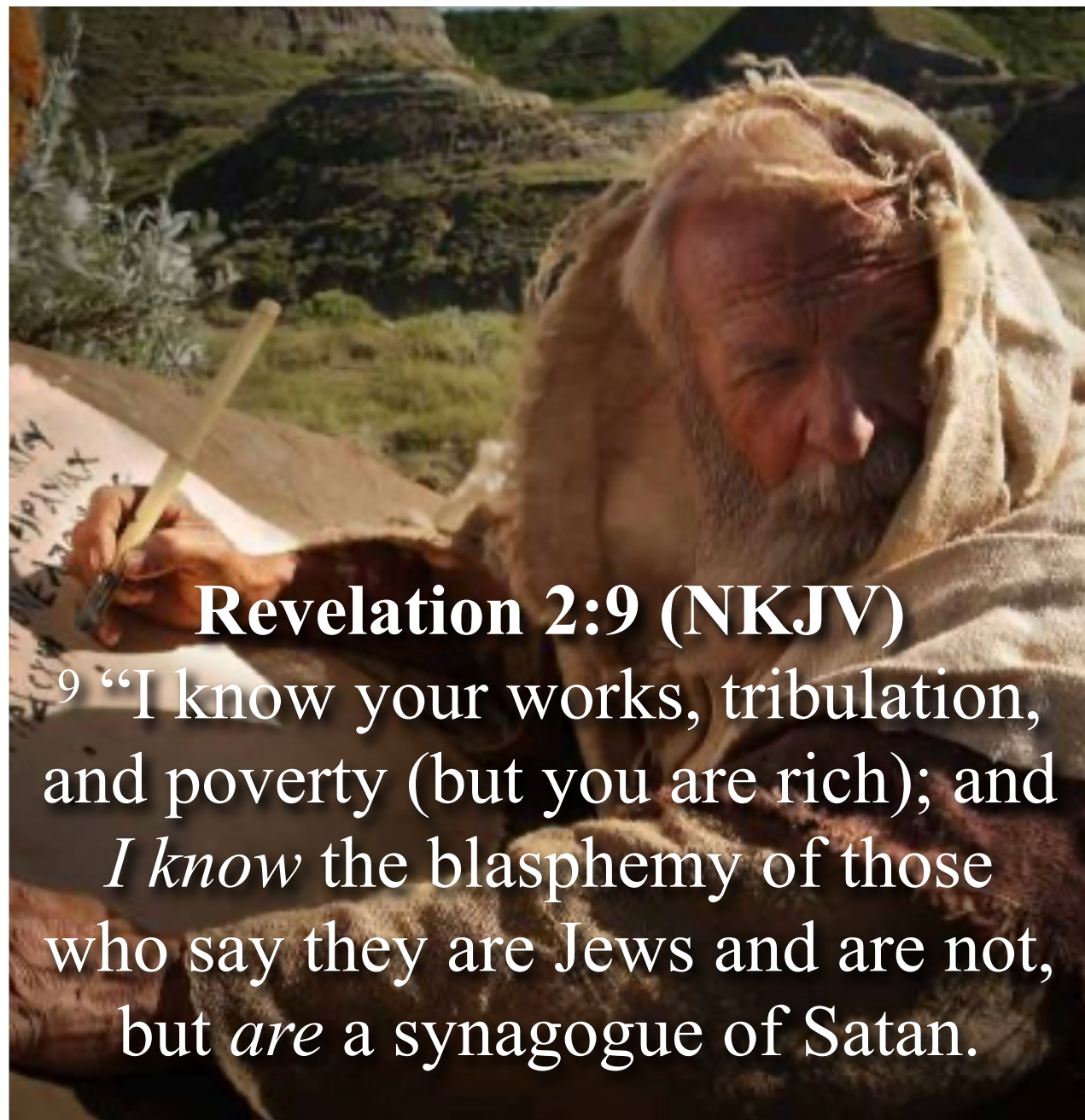
⁹ “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and *I know* the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan.

CHRIST’S COMMENDATION

- ❖ Christ has not promised to remove us from all trouble but provides all we need to endure (Phili 4:13; 1 Cor. 10:13; James 1:5,6; Rom 8:18-39)
- ❖ Tribulation CAN destroy us, (Mat 13:20,21), but CAN also help us grow spiritually - (*depends on our perspective & response*) (Rom 5:1-5; James 1:2-12; 2 Cor 4:8-5:4)

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

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Revelation 2:9 (NKJV)

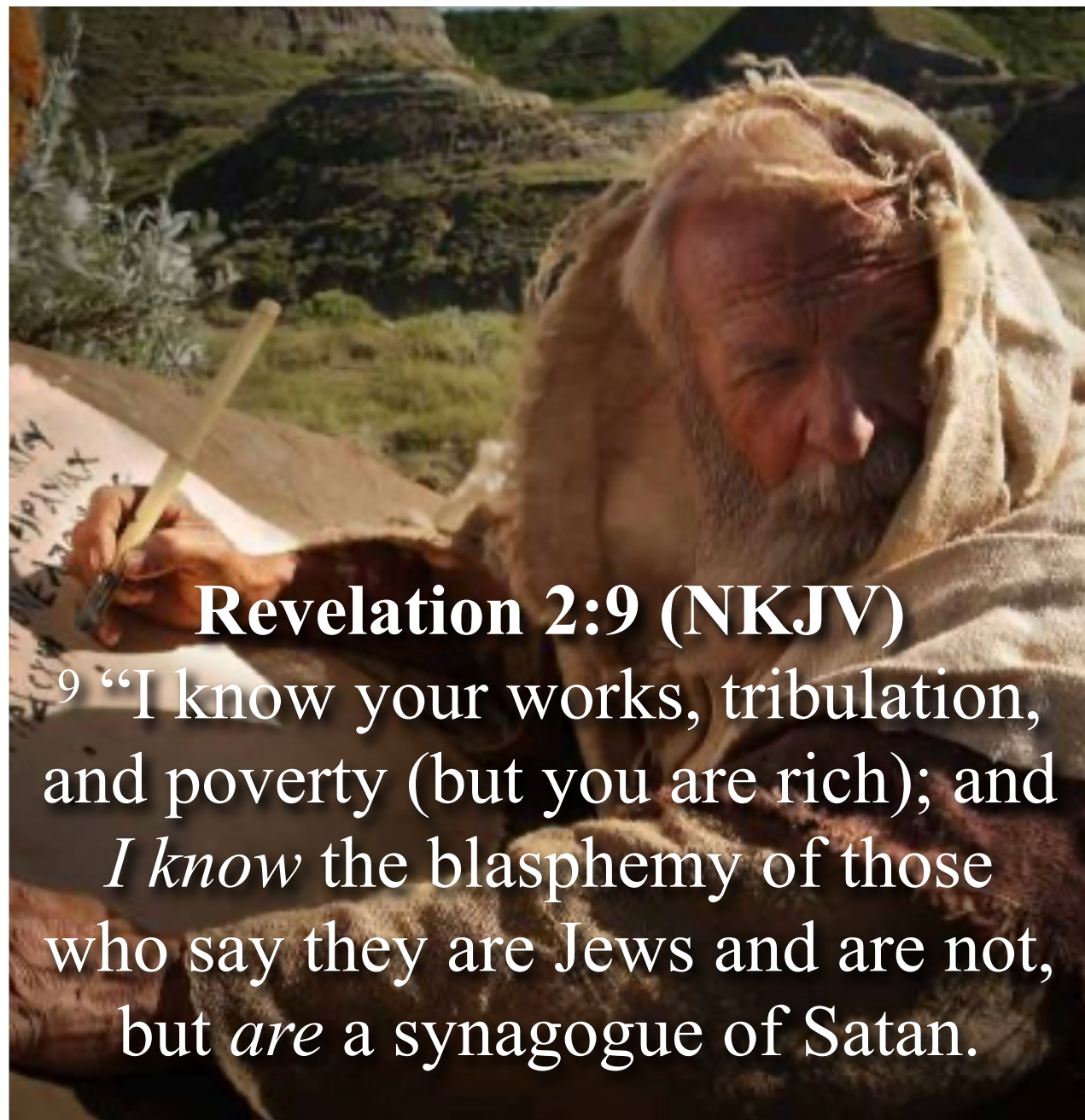
⁹ “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and *I know* the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan.

CHRIST’S COMMENDATION

- ❖ “I know your . . . poverty (*ptochēia*)” - Two common Greek words for poverty: “*penia*” and “*ptochēia*.” “A far deeper depth of destitution is implied in” “*ptochēia*” than in “*penia*” (Trench. 129)
- ❖ The “*penia*” person has nothing to spare, but the one who is “*ptochēia*” has “nothing at all” (ibid)

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



Revelation 2:9 (NKJV)

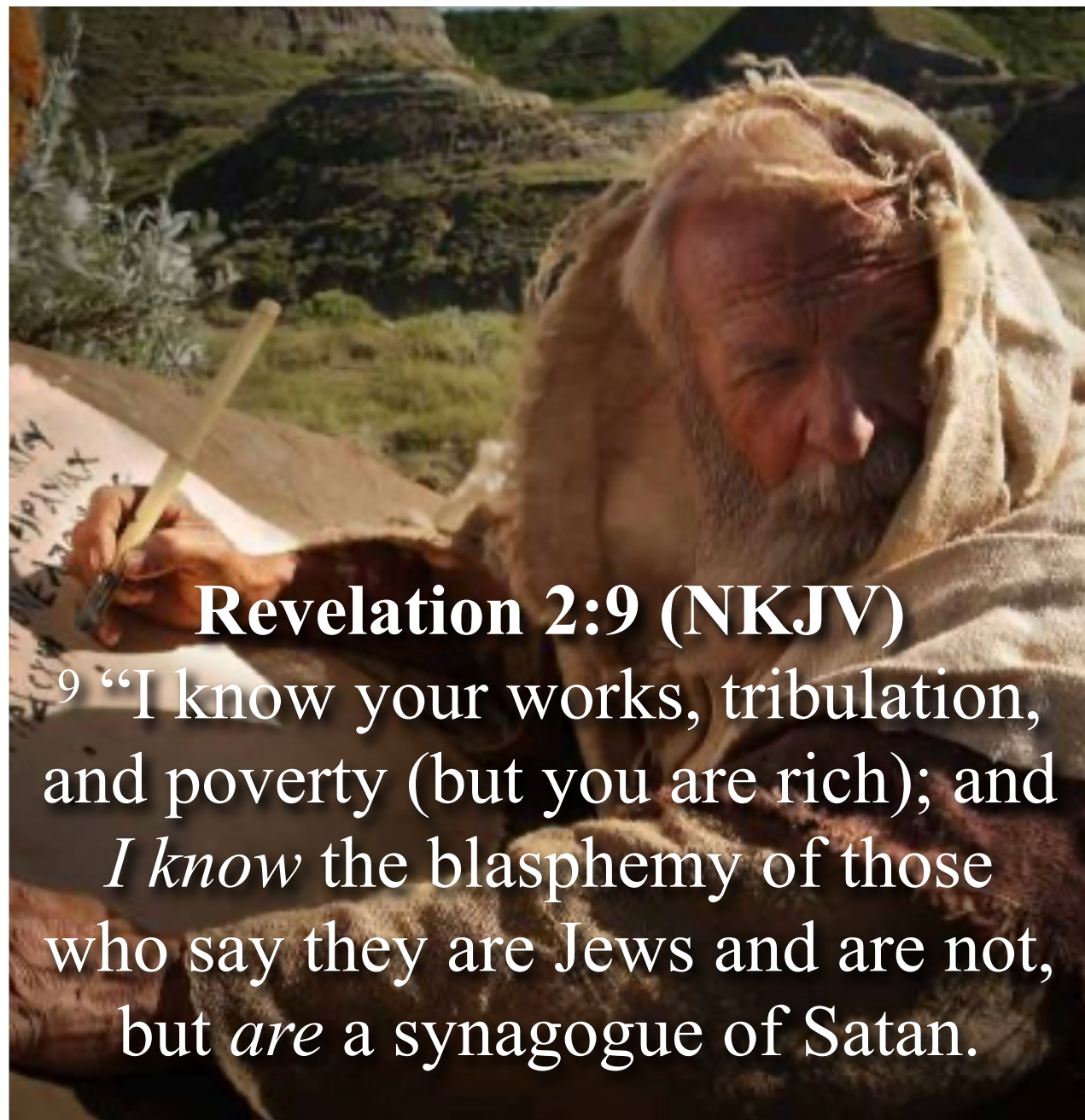
⁹ “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and *I know* the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan.

CHRIST’S COMMENDATION

- ◆ They were in poverty due to their faith for which they were being persecuted (Rom 8:18-28)
- ▶ Rome confiscated property of those they considered disloyal to Caesar.
- ▶ Compromising Jews oppressed Christians (James 5:1-11)
- ▶ Means of income often associated with idolatry (Acts 19:19-27)

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



Revelation 2:9 (NKJV)

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CHRIST’S COMMENDATION

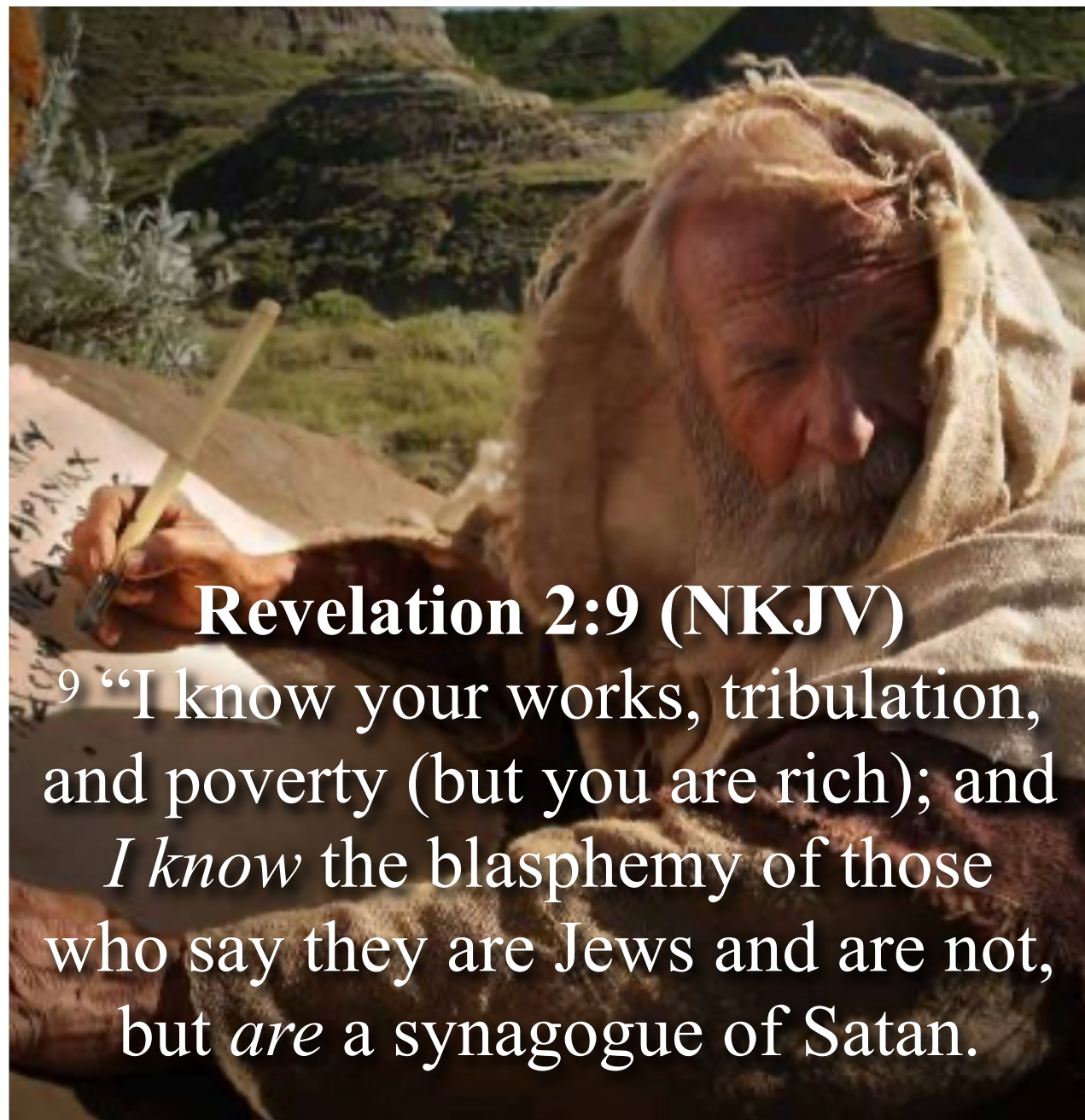
❖ **“(But you are rich)”**

- ▶ In faith (James 2:5),
- ▶ Heavenly Treasure (Mt 6:19-21)
- ▶ In good works (1 Tim 6:18)
- ▶ In spiritual blessings (Eph 1:3).

❖ Compared to heavenly riches in Christ, the wealth of the world is rubbish (Phili 3:8; Mat 16:26;).

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



Revelation 2:9 (NKJV)

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CHRIST’S COMMENDATION

- They endured the blasphemy of unbelieving, compromising Jews who belonged to Satan (2:9; James 5:1-5)
- Blaspheming God’s people is to blaspheme God. (Acts 13:45; 14:2; 17:5-7; 18:5-6; 21:27-28).
- Enduring slander has always been the lot of God’s people in this evil world (Mt 10:24-25; Mat 5:10-12; 1 Pet 4:12-16).

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



Revelation 2:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ 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.

CHRIST'S EXHORTATION

- ❖ Do not be afraid (lit., stop being afraid) of what you are about to suffer - (21:8; Luke 12:4-5; Isa 51:7-13; Acts 20:24; Phil 1:28; 1 Pet 3:14)
- ❖ More severe persecution was coming at the hands of the government - (2:10; 1 Pet 5:8)
- ❖ Prison involved torture, hunger and thirst, cold, darkness and chains - precluded execution.

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CHRIST'S EXHORTATION

- ❖ Ten days is symbolic of a complete, but shortened or brief period of time (1 Pet 1:6; 2 Cor 4:16,17)
- ❖ All Trials Are Temporary -
 - ▶ *Light affliction, but for a moment (2 Cor.4:16ff)*
 - ▶ *Though now for a little while, . . . you have been grieved by various trials (1 Peter 1:6)*
 - ▶ *Life is but a vapor (Jam 4:14)*

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Revelation 2:10 (NKJV)

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CHRIST'S EXHORTATION

- ❖ Be faithful to the point of death (Mat 10:22; Luke 21:16-19; Acts 20:24; 21:13; 2 Cor. 4:7-12; 2 Tim 4:6-8)
- ❖ Not tempted above ability to bear (1 Cor. 10:13; Rev 12:11)
- ❖ **Crown of life** - *a victors*
“*crown*” or “*stephanos*,” a “*wreath, conferred on a victor in the public games*” (Mounce. 1275).

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

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CHRIST'S EXHORTATION

- ❖ The crown of eternal life!
- ❖ This is the “imperishable crown” - (1 Cor 9:24-25),
- ❖ The “crown of righteousness” - (2 Tim 4:7-8),
- ❖ The “crown of life” promised to those who love the Lord (Jam 1:12).
- ❖ The “crown of glory that does not fade away” - (1 Peter 5:4)

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

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Revelation 2:10 (NKJV)

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CHRIST'S EXHORTATION

- ❖ If we will remain faithful, even if it means a martyr's death, we will be victorious with a home in heaven.
- ❖ Question: If the doctrine of “*Once Saved, Always Saved*” is true - why would any Christian ever suffer a martyr's death? Why die & watch others die by refusing to offer a little incense to Caesar? —

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



CHRIST'S INVITATION



““He who has an ear” The call to hear - we choose to believe & obey or reject & perish (Deut. 30:15-20; Josh 24:15; Rom 6:16-18; James 1:21)



Some do not have ears to hear (Mat. 13:13-15; 2 Thes. 2:10-12)



The promise is received on the condition of one “overcoming,” i.e., enduring (1 Cor 15:58; Jam. 1:12; Mat 10:22; Luke 21:16-19)

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



CHRIST'S INVITATION



The first death is the common lot of mankind (Gen. 3:19; Eccl. 3:20; Heb 9:27).



The second death is eternal punishment away from the presence of God in hell (Revelation 20:14; 21:8).



The second death has no power over those who overcome through the blood of the lamb (20:6)

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



Revelation 2:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ “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.” ’

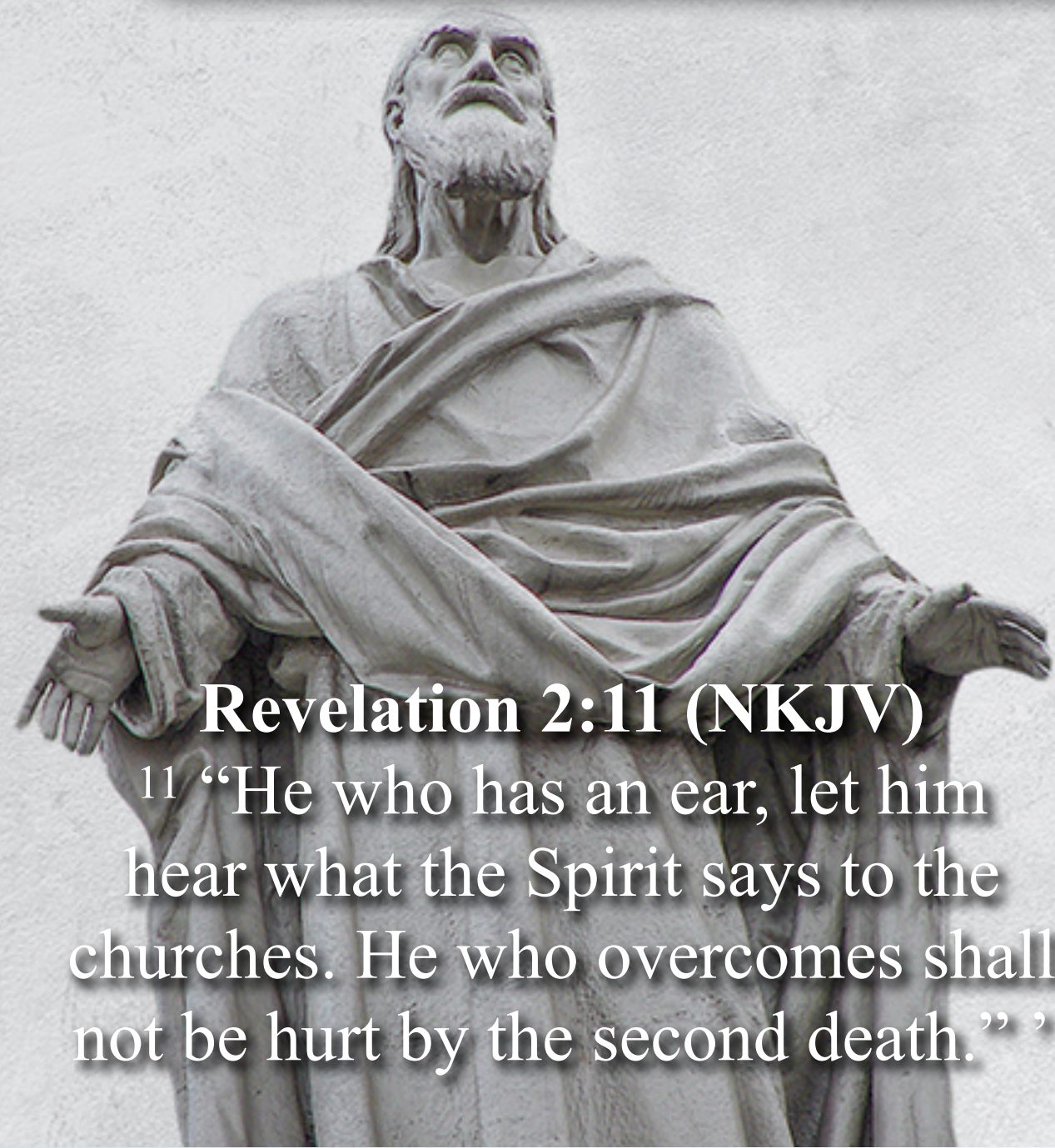
■ CHRIST’S INVITATION

**Revelation 12:11
(NKJV)**

¹¹ And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



Revelation 2:11 (NKJV)

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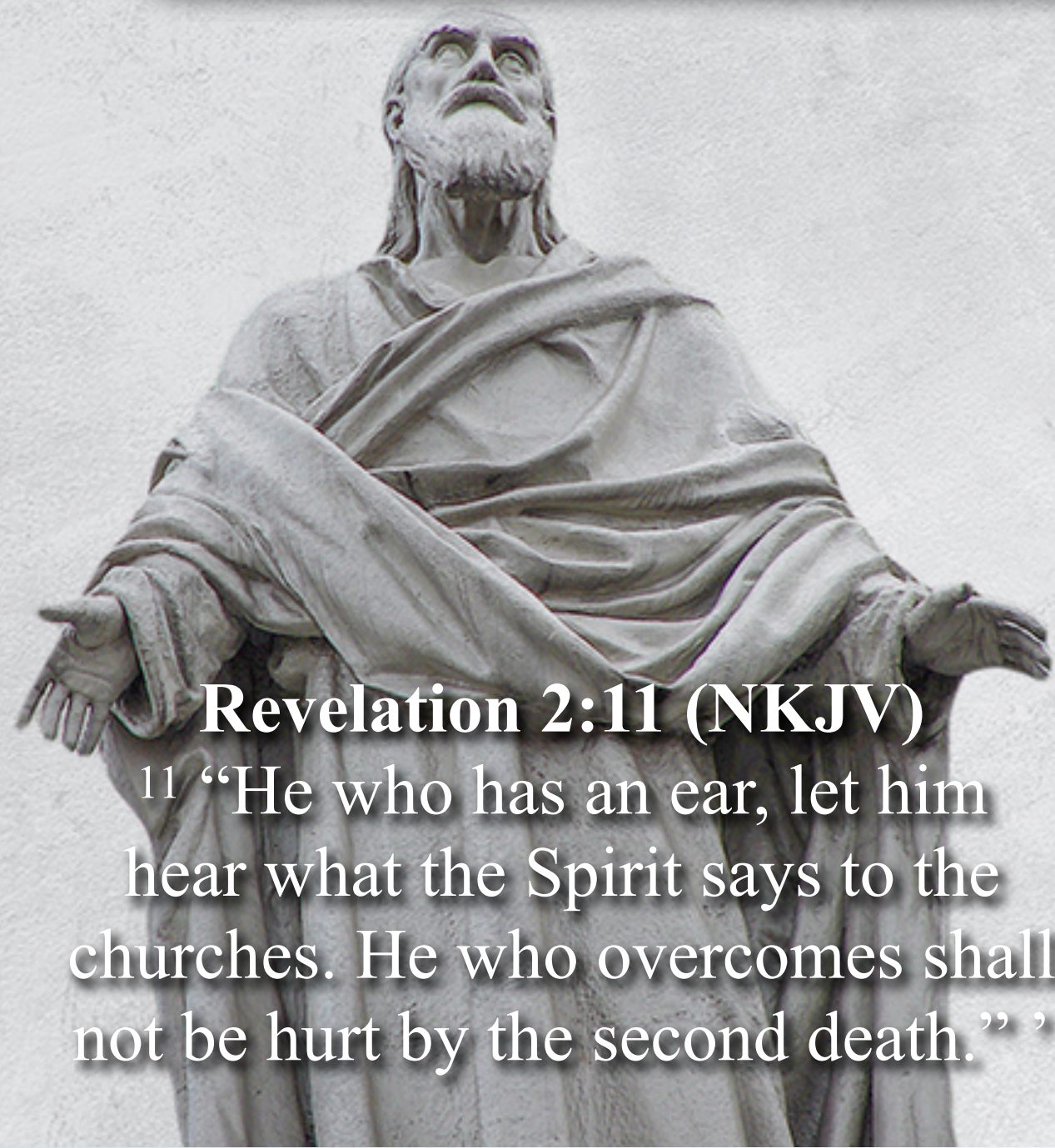


POLYCARP

- ◆ Lived 70 and 155 A.D
- ◆ A direct pupil of the apostle John
- ◆ Probably present when this letter was received
- ◆ Charged to worship Caesar & renounce Christ.
- ◆ Martyred on Sat., Feb. 23, 155 AD

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



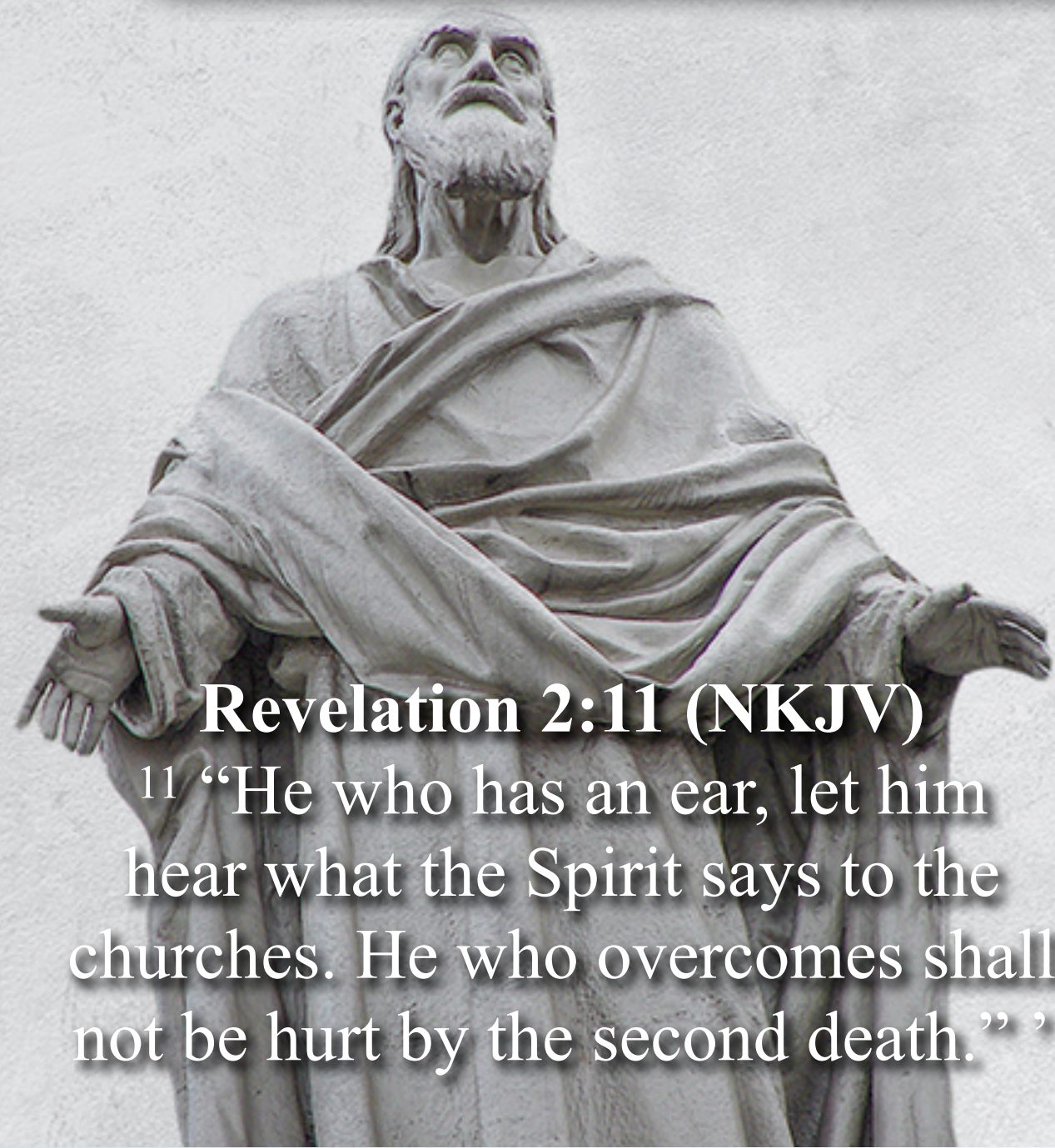
Revelation 2:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ “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.”

"Eighty-six years I have served Christ, and He never did me any wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who saved me? Thou threatenest me with Fire which burns for an hour, and so is extinguished; but knowest not the Fire of the Future Judgment, and of that Eternal Punishment, which is reserved for the Ungodly. But why tarriest thou? Bring forth what thou wilt!"

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



Revelation 2:11 (NKJV)

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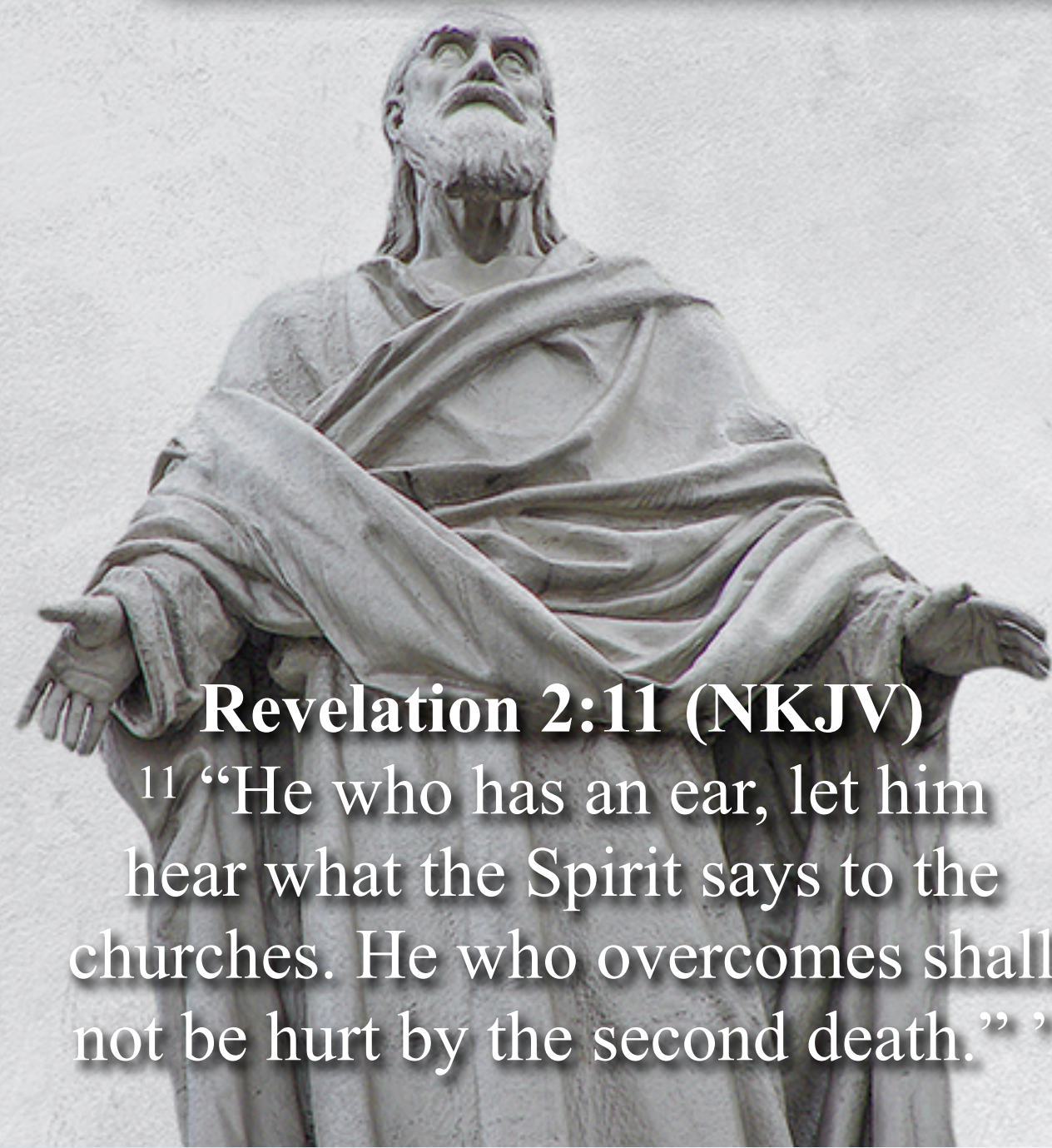
As the flames licked his body
he prayed,

“I thank thee that thou hast graciously thought me worthy of this day and of this hour that I may receive a portion in the number of the martyrs, in the cup of thy Christ.”

So Polycarp died and the Jews assisted in his death.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



Revelation 2:11 (NKJV)

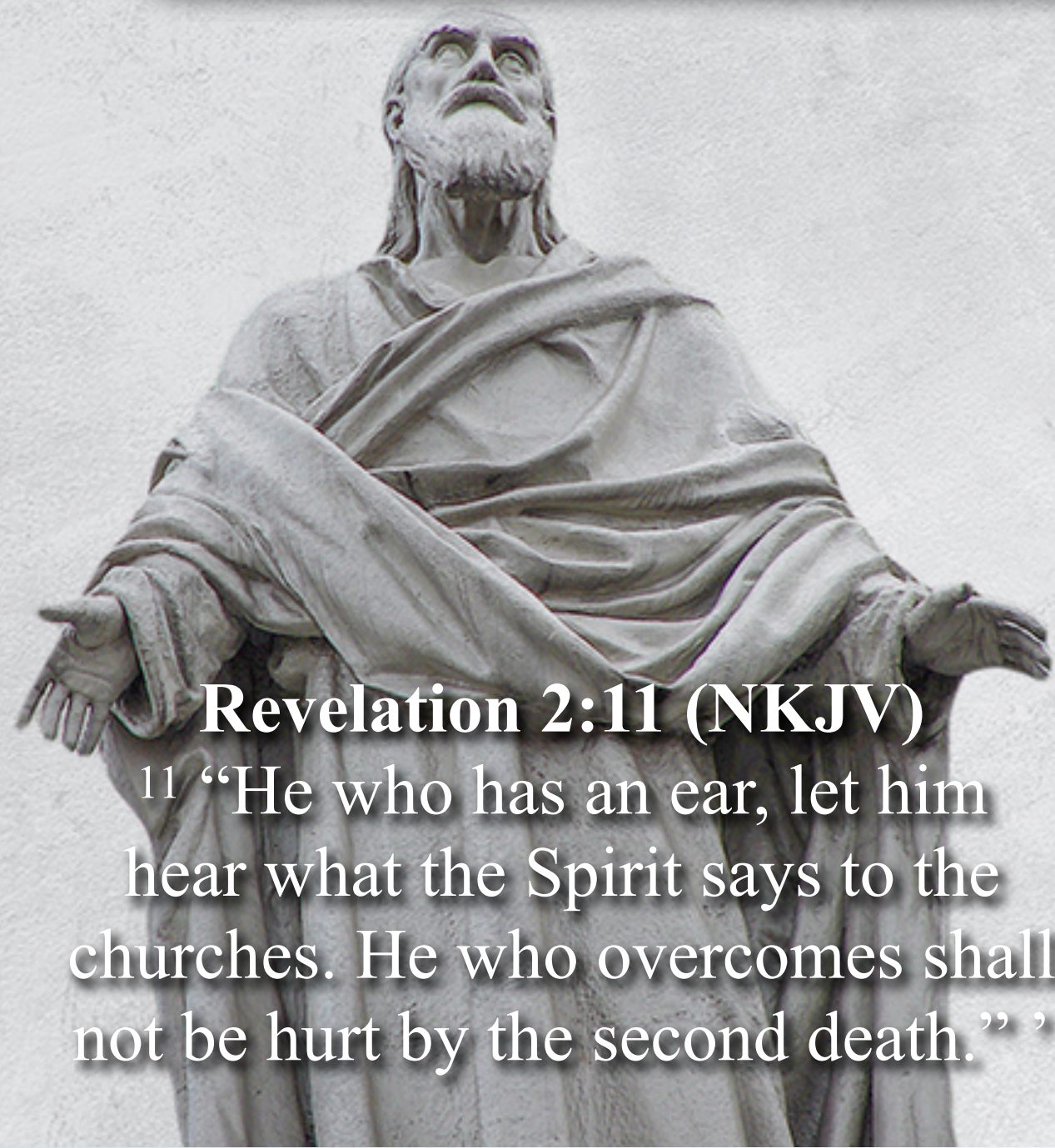
¹¹ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.”

■ HOW DO WE COMPARE?

- ❖ Miss services because of the slightest inconvenience?
- ❖ Make excuses for not serving as we should, or for sin in our life?
- ❖ Don't take our spiritual life & growth seriously.
- ❖ Afraid to talk to others about the gospel or take a stand for the truth.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



Revelation 2:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ “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.” ’

- ❖ The risen Christ experienced the worst that life could do to Him -- (Gal. 3:13),
- ❖ No matter what happened to the Christians of Smyrna, Jesus Christ had already been through it. - (Heb. 4:15).
- ❖ Christ conquered -- He triumphed over pain and death and He offers us the way to victorious living & eternal life - (Heb 12:1-3)

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



Revelation 2:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ “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.” ’

- ❖ Remaining loyal in the midst of hardship can be done through Christ - (Phili 4:13)
- ❖ True riches **ONLY** gained by faithfully serving Jesus - A wonderful reward awaits
- ❖ Is serving Christ & receiving the salvation He offers worth whatever pain & suffering this life may bring for you?

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



- ❖ Will we / you hear?
- ❖ Will we / you overcome?
- ❖ Will we / you live forever with God in heaven?

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH” (2:8-11)



**Hear the gospel
Believe the gospel
Repent & Confess
Be baptized into Christ
for the remission of
your sins**

**Be faithful /
submitting to, serving
& trusting Jesus**

**Revelation 22:14
(NKJV)**

¹⁴ Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.

*"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which
God gave Him to show His servants—
things which must shortly take place."*

Revelation 1:1

Charts by Don McClain

Preached March 13, 2022

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THE BOOK OF **REVELATION**

"SMYRNA - THE POOR, BUT RICH CHURCH" (2:8-11)

Luke 12:15–21 (NKJV)

¹⁵ And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.” ¹⁶ Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. ¹⁷ And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ ¹⁸ So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, *and* be merry.”’ ²⁰ But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’ ²¹ “So *is* he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”