

<sup>3</sup> 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

“PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



<sup>11</sup> 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

Google Earth



# 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

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)

<sup>12</sup> “And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write,  
‘These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword:  
<sup>13</sup> “I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s  
throne *is*. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny  
My faith even in the days in which Antipas *was* My faithful  
martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. <sup>14</sup>  
But I have a few things against you, because you have there  
those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to  
put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat  
things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)

<sup>15</sup> Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. <sup>16</sup> Repent, or else

I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth. <sup>17</sup> “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives *it*.” ’



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



### Background Information

- ❖ Pergamos was located about 30 miles north of Smyrna; some 15 miles in from the sea on a high mountain over the Caicus River.
- ❖ From the times of Lysimachus (355 to 281 B.C.), Pergamum continued as a kingdom until Attalus III, upon whose death (133 B.C.) the kingdom was bequeathed to Rome.
- ❖ The official capital & seat of Asia.



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



Trajan Temple (reigned A.D. 98-11)

### ■ Background Information

- ◆ Called the greatest city of Mysia, noted for its wealth and fashion.
- ◆ It was the headquarters for emperor worship in Mysia.
- ◆ From 29 B.C. on it had a temple to Roma, the goddess of Rome, and to Augustus as a deity.
- ◆ A title which it bore was “Thrice Neokoros,” meaning that in the city 3 temples had been built to the Roman emperors.



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



*Altar of Zeus*



The Great Altar of Pergamon, on display in the [Pergamon Museum](#) in [Berlin](#), Germany

## ■ Background Information

◆ Other temples to pagan deities were also in Pergamos:

- ▶ **Zeus**, (Grecian) 100 feet square and 40 feet tall.
- ▶ **Athena**, (Grecian), daughter of Zeus, goddess of reason, intelligent activity, arts and literature.
- ▶ **Dionysus**, (Asian) god of fertility & wine [Roman name Bacchus]
- ▶ **Asclepius**, (Asian) - the god of medicine & healing -



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)

The Roman theatre



Theatre of Pergamon, one of the steepest theatres in the world, has a capacity of 10,000 people and was constructed in the 3rd century BC.

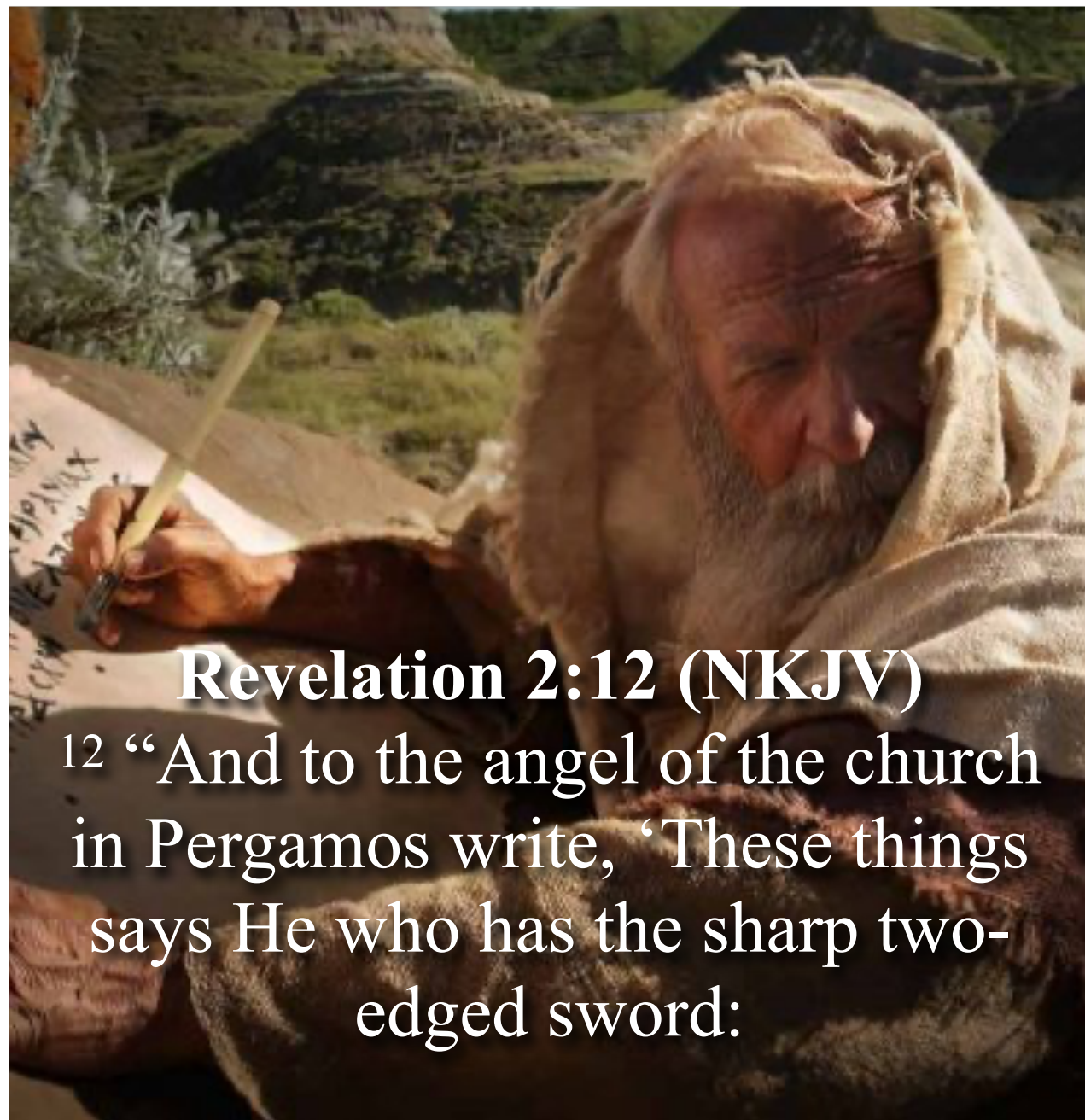
## Background Information

- Art and literature were encouraged, and in the city was a library of 200,000 volumes which later Antony gave to Cleopatra.
- The place where the use of parchment, (on which the ancient manuscripts of the New Testament were written), originated. In fact the word "parchment" is derived from the name "Pergamos." (Greek "pergamena")



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



### Revelation 2:12 (NKJV)

12 “And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, ‘These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword:

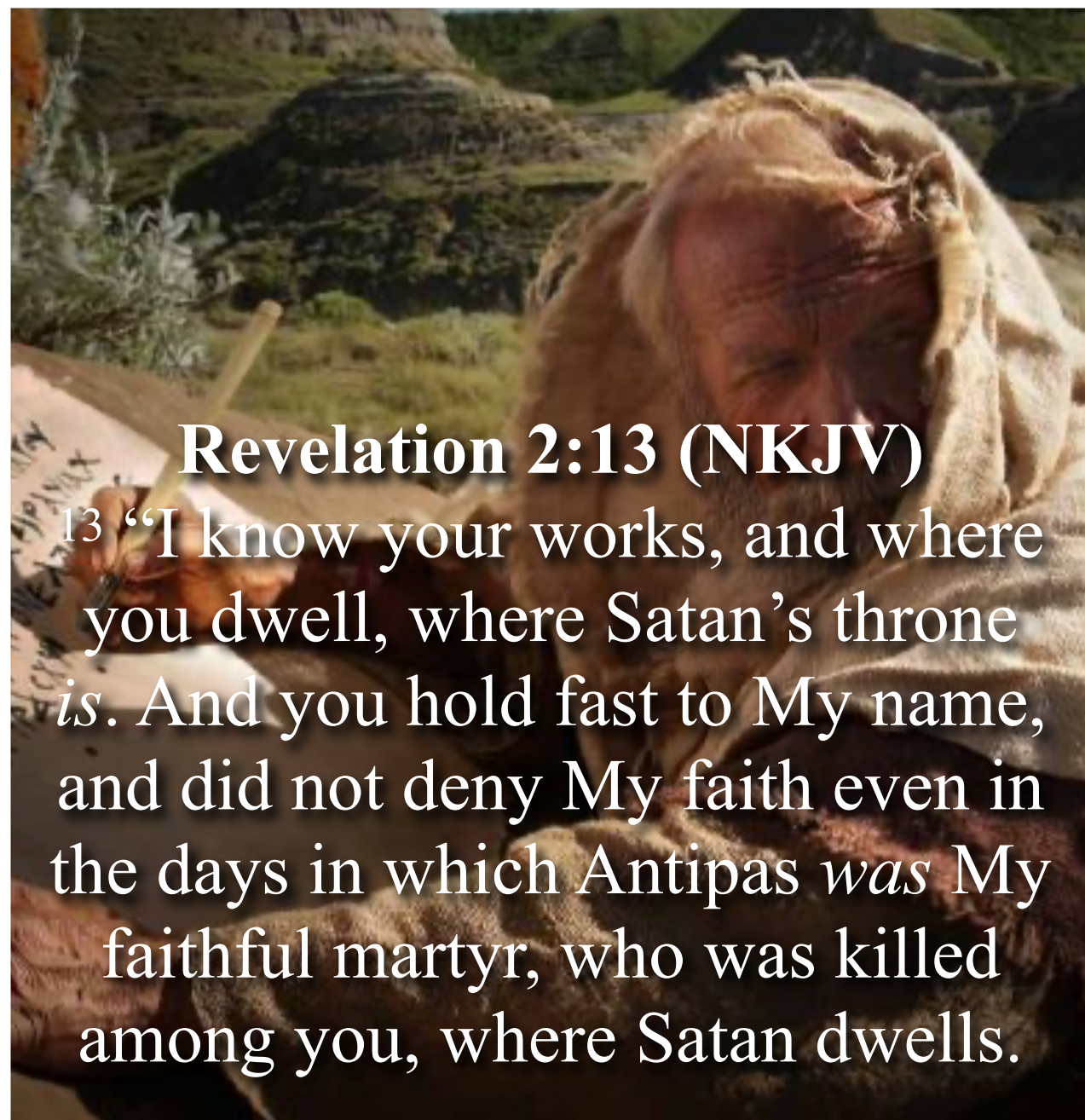
### CHRIST’S SELF DESIGNATION

- ❖ The “**Sharp Two Edged Sword**” – The Thracian long sword - symbol of the Word of Christ which He employs to judge & wage spiritual warfare (1:16; 2:12,16; 19:15,21; cf. Eph 6:17; 2 Cor 10:3-6).
- ❖ **Belongs to Christ** – Jesus has ALL the authority including over life & death - Not Rome! (Mat 28:18-20; John 12:48)



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



### Revelation 2:13 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup> “I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas *was* My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

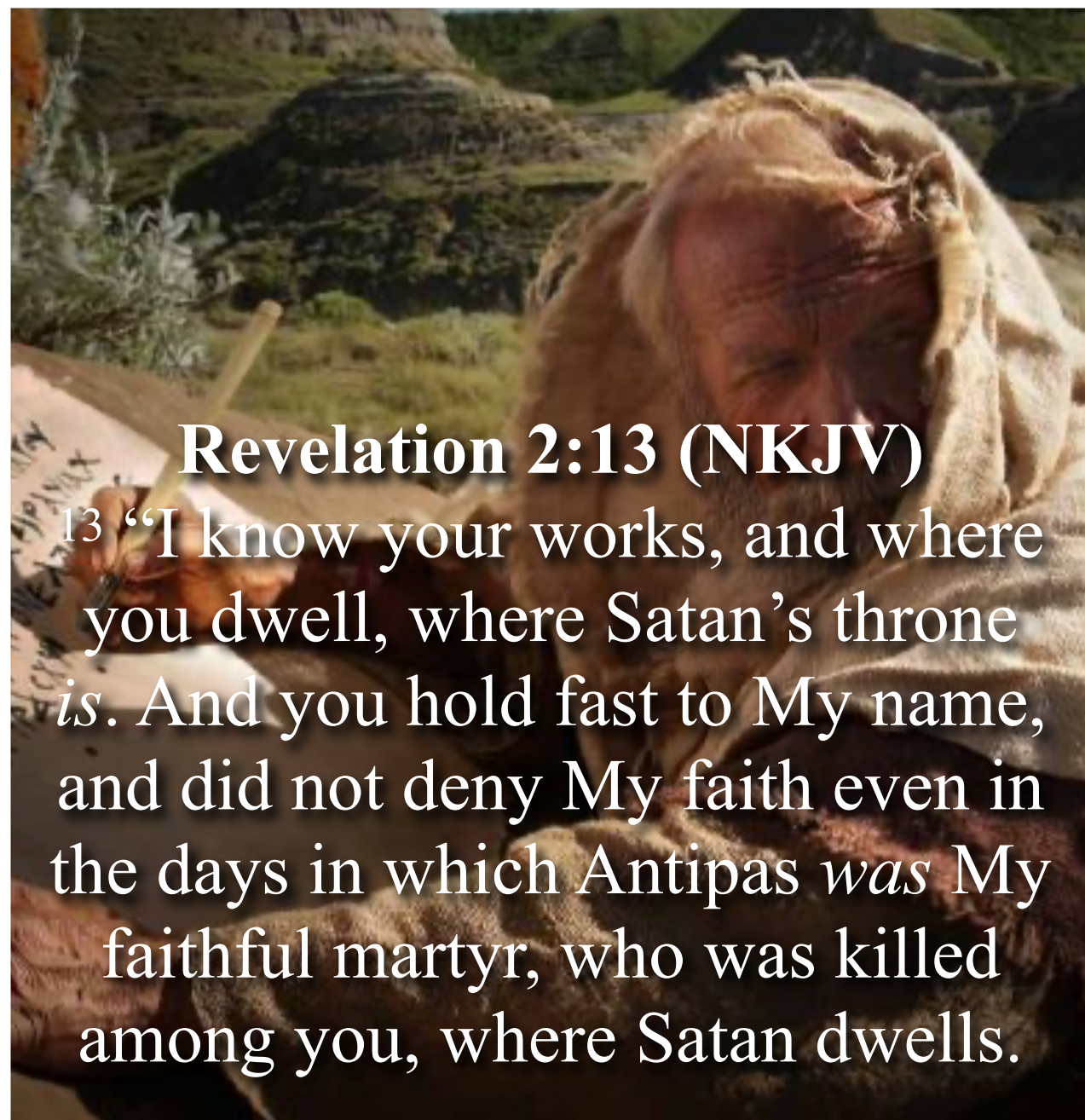
### CHRIST’S COMMENDATION

- ❖ “**I know Your works**” As with the other congregations, the Lord was aware of their “works.” - Jesus knows everything a church is doing or is not doing!
- ❖ “**I know . . . where you dwell**” - Pergamos was "where Satan's throne" was and "where Satan" dwelt -



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



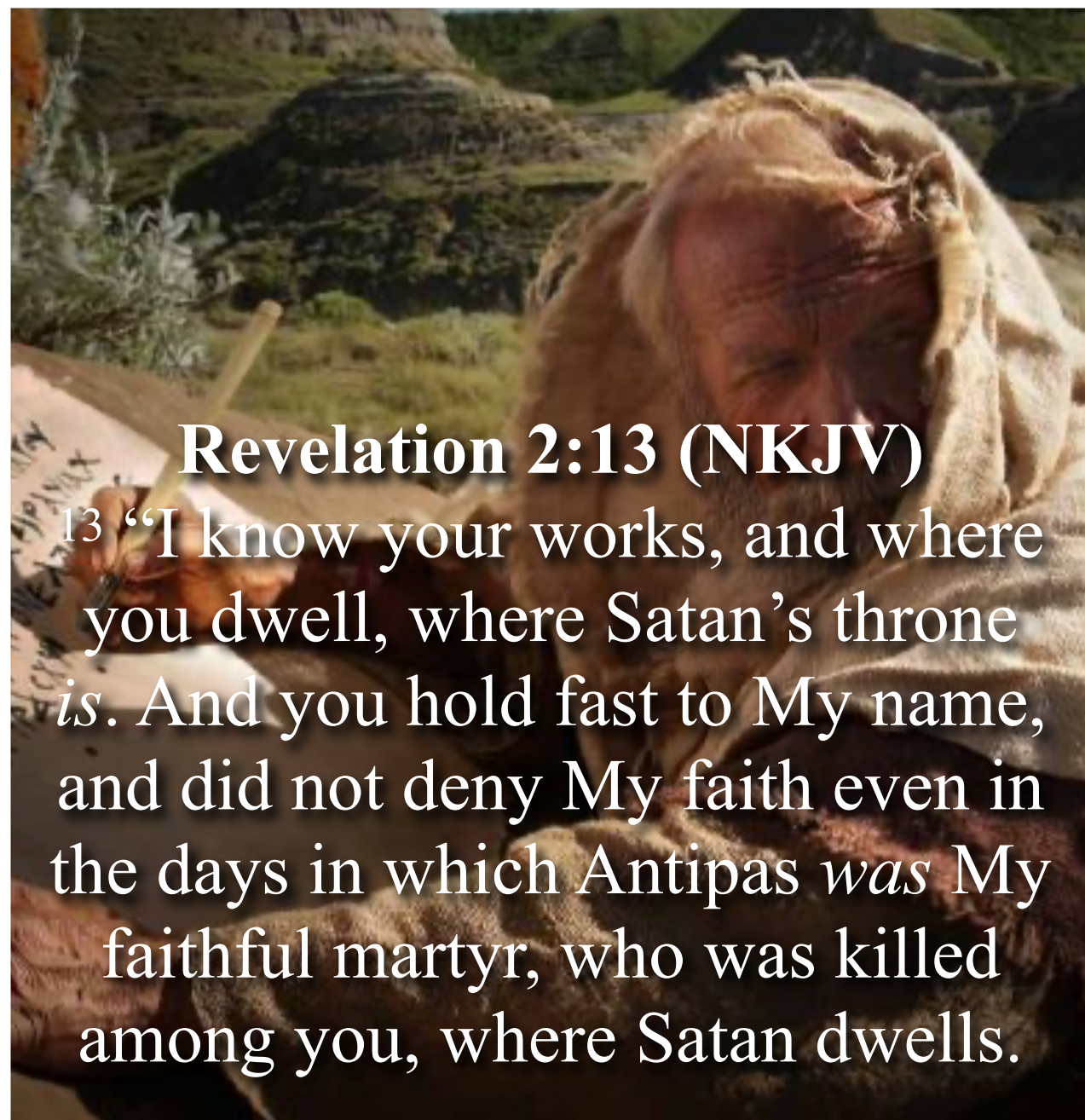
### ■ CHRIST’S COMMENDATION

- ◆ “Where Satan’s throne is . . . where Satan dwells”
- ▶ 3 temples to emperor worship,
- ▶ The worship of Asclepius, (its symbol was the serpent)
- ▶ The great altar to Zeus which resembled a throne
- ▶ The seat of Rome’s authority.
- ▶ A combination of all of these.



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



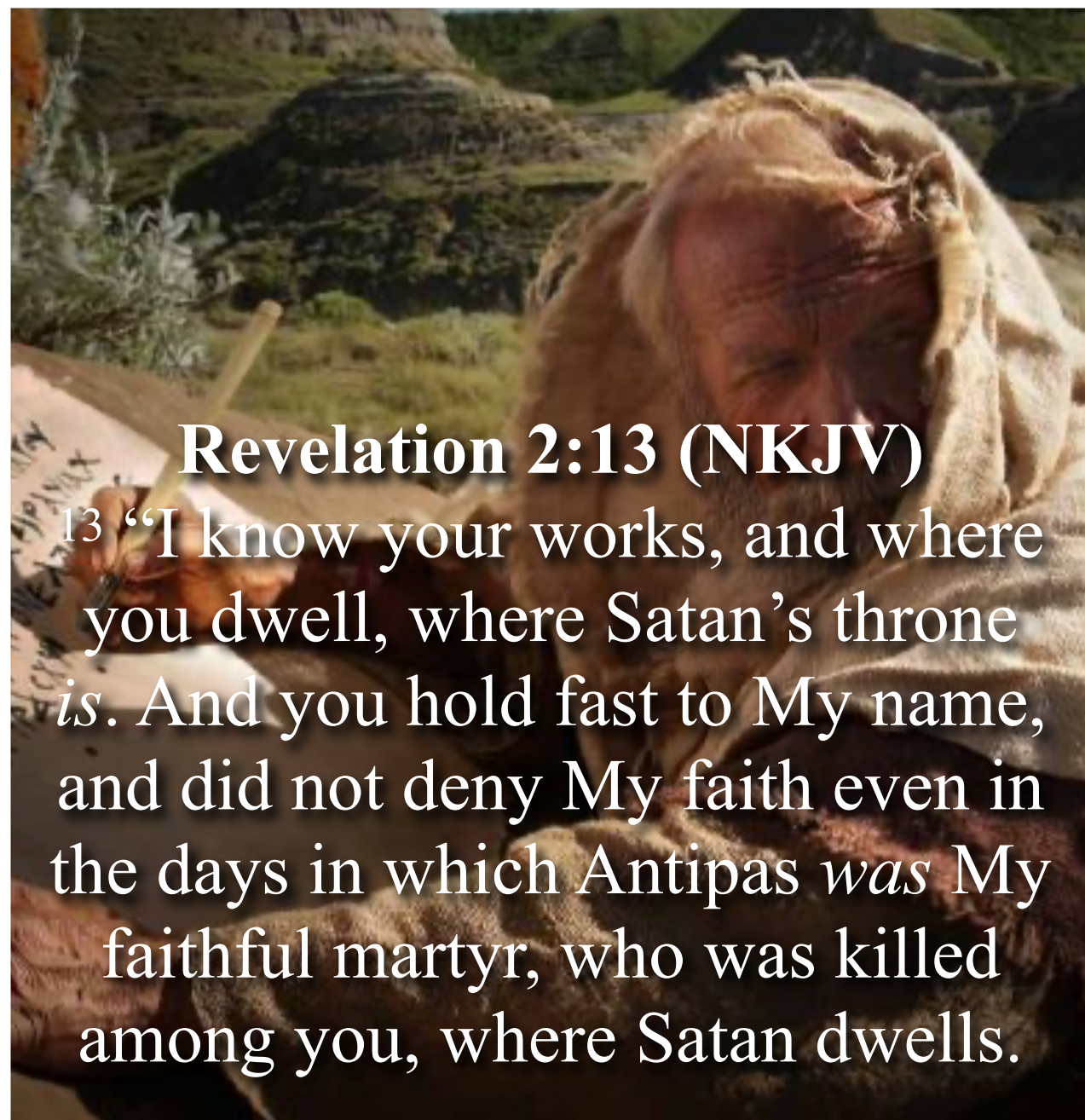
### ■ CHRIST’S COMMENDATION

- ❖ “And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith”
- ❖ Those refusing to honor pagan gods were viewed as the cause of all calamities & troubles.
- ❖ Once a year all citizens were required to bring incense to an altar of the Emperor - to refuse would qualify as treason



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



### Revelation 2:13 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup> “I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas *was* My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

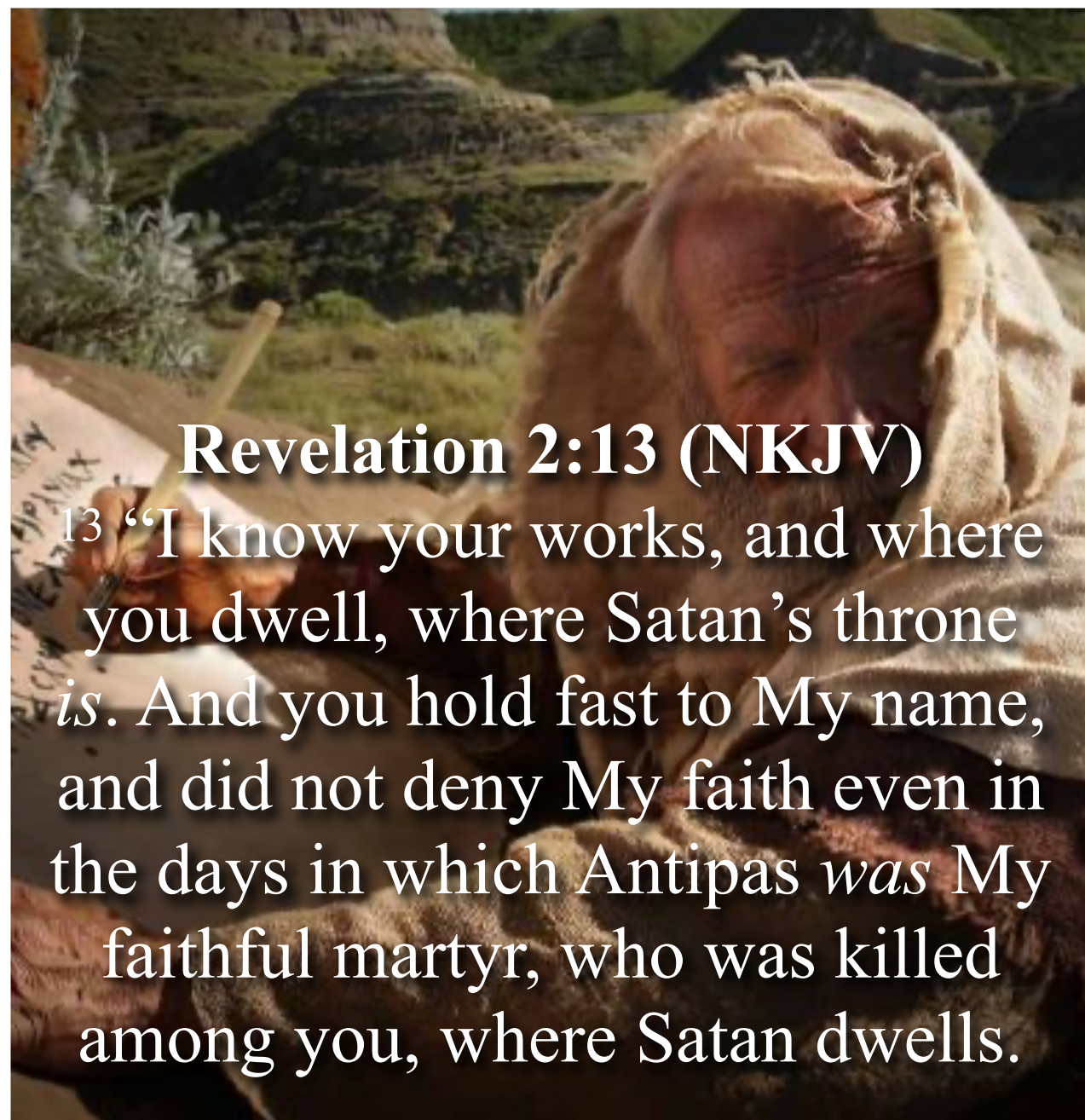
### CHRIST’S COMMENDATION

- ❖ “And you hold fast to My name” - Holding fast to Jesus as their Lord & Christ - (not Caesar, Zeus, or any other pagan god) (Acts 4:12; 5:29)
- ❖ We hold fast to Christ by adhering steadfastly to His word, (Mat 28:18-20), and avoiding all those things He forbids (e.g. Gal 5:19-21), and doing only what He authorizes (Col 3:17; 2 Jn 1:9).



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



### Revelation 2:13 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup> “I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas *was* My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

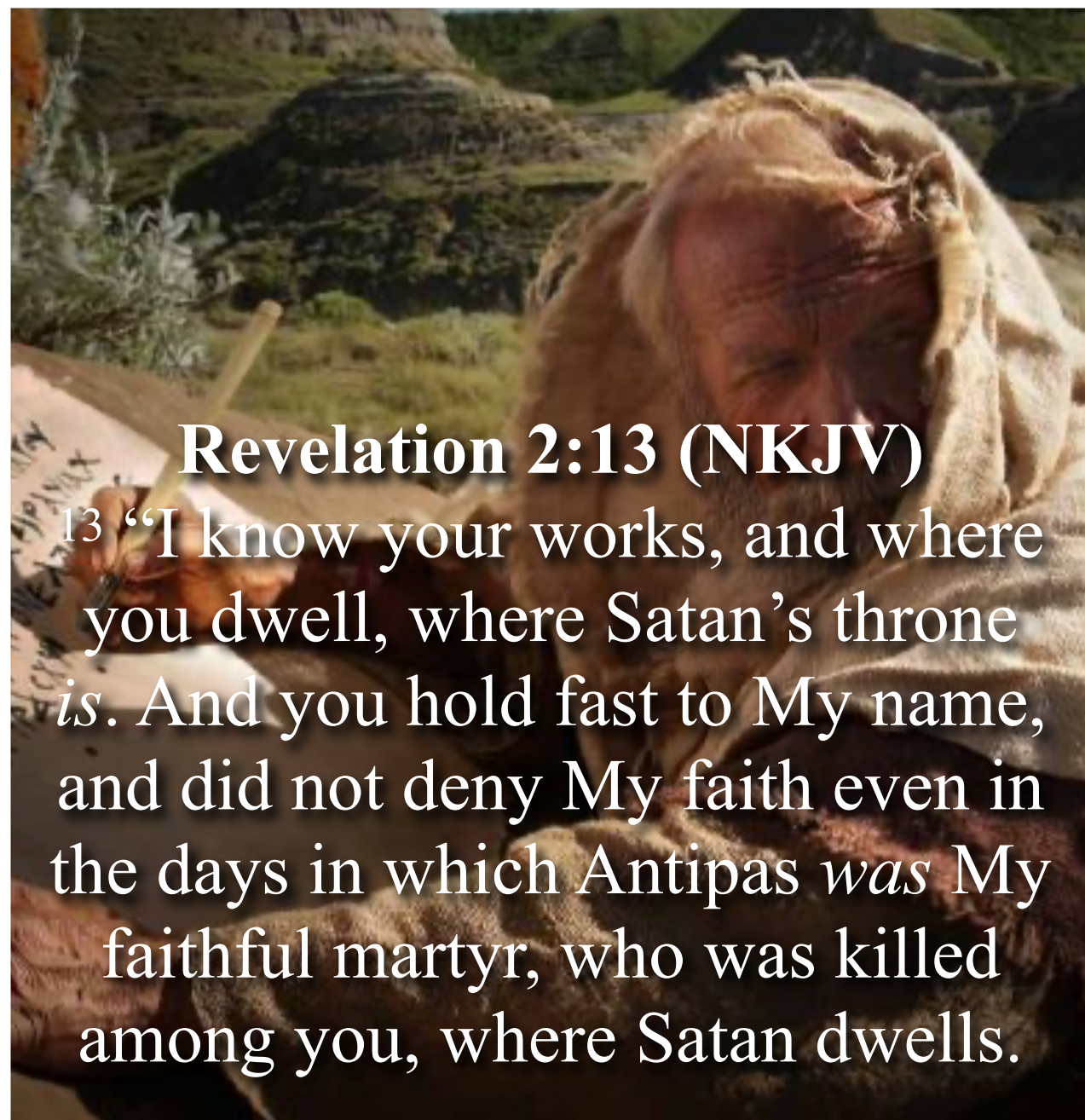
### CHRIST’S COMMENDATION

- ❖ “And did not deny My faith”  
— The “faith” is His word,  
(Rom 10:8,17; Jude 1:3).
- ❖ Refused to deny Christ’s  
identity & authority (Matthew  
26:30–35; Acts 4:5-22)
- ❖ Refused to deny His teachings  
(Mk 8:38; 2 Jn 1:9; Col 1:23)
- ❖ Even under enormous pressure  
to honor paganism & to confess  
the Emperor as “lord & god.”



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



### CHRIST’S COMMENDATION



“And did not deny My faith”  
— The “faith” is His word,  
(Rom 10:8,17; Jude 1:3).



They stood firm even as Antipas the “faithful martyr” of Christ was put to death among them.



**The legend:** An “*elder in Pergamos who refused to pinch incense in the bull-shaped altar of Caesar, was thrown into the altar alive.*”



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)

### Revelation 2:14–15 (NKJV)

<sup>14</sup> But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. <sup>15</sup> Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

### CHRIST'S REBUKE:

- ❖ **“you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam”**
- ❖ Not spoken to those who held the doctrine of Balaam, but to those who held to the truth but yet continued to fellowship those in error.
- ❖ Jesus condemns the doctrine of compromise (Num 23,24; 31:16; 2 Pet 2:15,16)



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)

### Revelation 2:14–15 (NKJV)

<sup>14</sup> But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. <sup>15</sup> Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

### CHRIST'S REBUKE:

- ❖ **“you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam”**
- ❖ Balak, king of Moab, hired Balaam to curse Israel (Num 25:1-8)
- ❖ Balaam's council to Balak led to Israel being seduced with harlots so they might sin & therefore not be blessed. (Num 31:16)
- ❖ Sought after the “wages of unrighteousness” (2 Pet 2:15)



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)

### Revelation 2:14–15 (NKJV)

<sup>14</sup> But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. <sup>15</sup> Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

### CHRIST'S REBUKE:

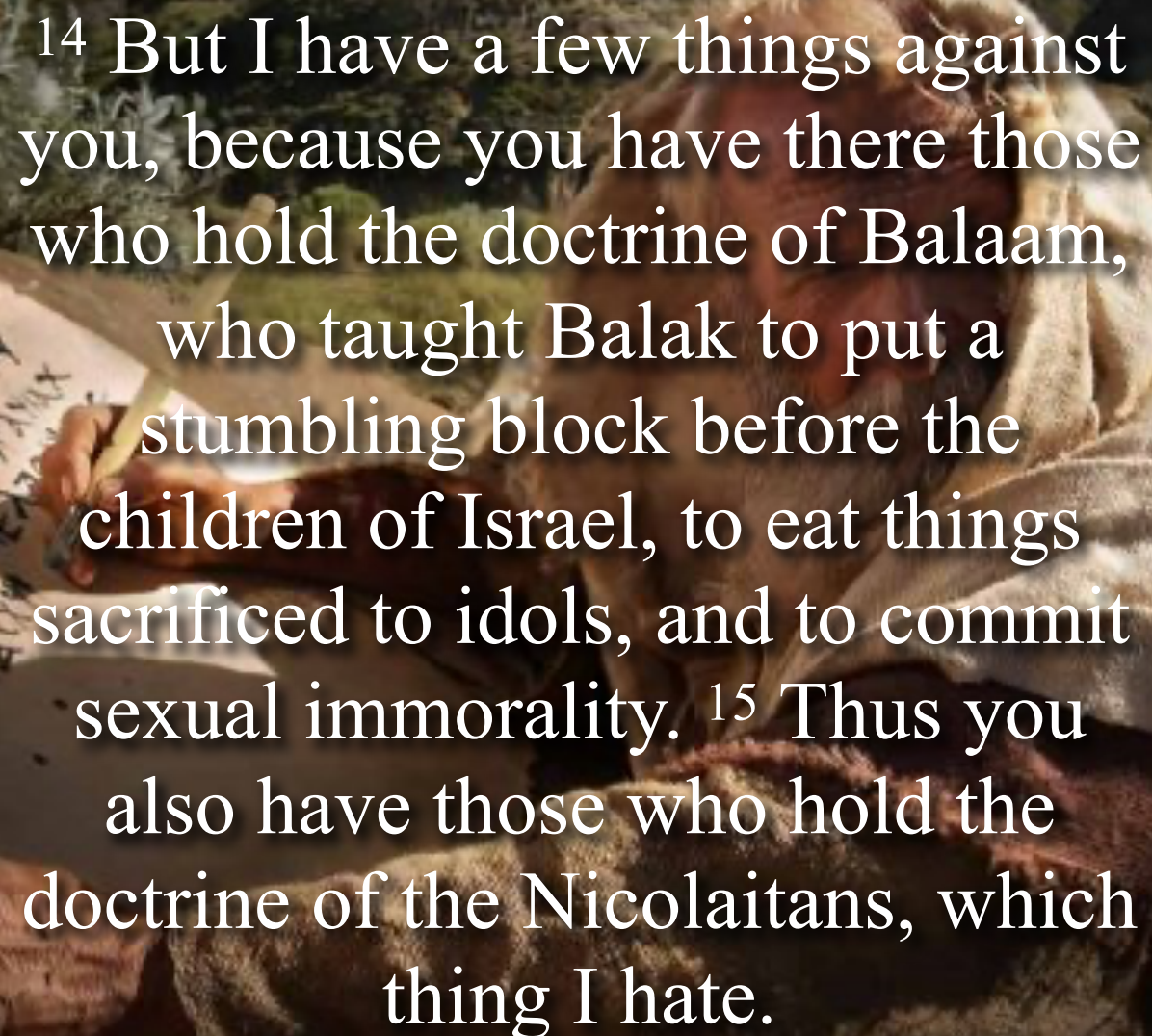
- ❖ **“you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam”**
- ❖ Some professed Christians in Pergamos ate things sacrificed to idols, practiced immorality, and taught others it was OK in order to avoid persecution & hardship (1 Cor. 8:4,8-12; 10:14, 19-22, 27-29; Ac 15:20; 1 Cor. 6:13,18)
- ❖ Compromise made life so much easier in a pagan city! (Jude 1:11)



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)

### Revelation 2:14–15 (NKJV)



<sup>14</sup> But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. <sup>15</sup> Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

### CHRIST'S REBUKE:

- ❖ **“Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans,”**
- ❖ What the Nicolaitans taught is not fully identified in this text, but a strong argument has been made for Gnosticism.
- ❖ This heresy claimed that what the flesh did was immaterial and did not affect the spirit. (1 John; Rom. 12:1,2)



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)

### Revelation 2:14–15 (NKJV)

<sup>14</sup> But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. <sup>15</sup> Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

### CHRIST'S REBUKE:

- ❖ **“Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans,”**
- ❖ Apparently, the doctrine of the Nicolaitans encouraged spiritual compromise in order to further material safety.
- ❖ They reasoned a little compromise from strict adherence to the law of God would not endanger their souls.



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)

William Barclay  
The New Daily Study Bible



Volume Two  
The Revelation of John

“The fault of the Nicolaitans was that they were seeking to adjust Christianity to the level of the world rather than lift the world to the level of Christianity. In other words, they were following a policy of compromise simply and solely to save themselves from trouble they were afraid and unwilling to face.”

*William Barclay, 115*



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



### CHRIST'S EXHORTATION



**“Repent, or else”** — Jesus does not tolerate tolerance of sin within His church –



The command to repent is to the whole church -



Those holding to false doctrine within must repent – change their teaching!

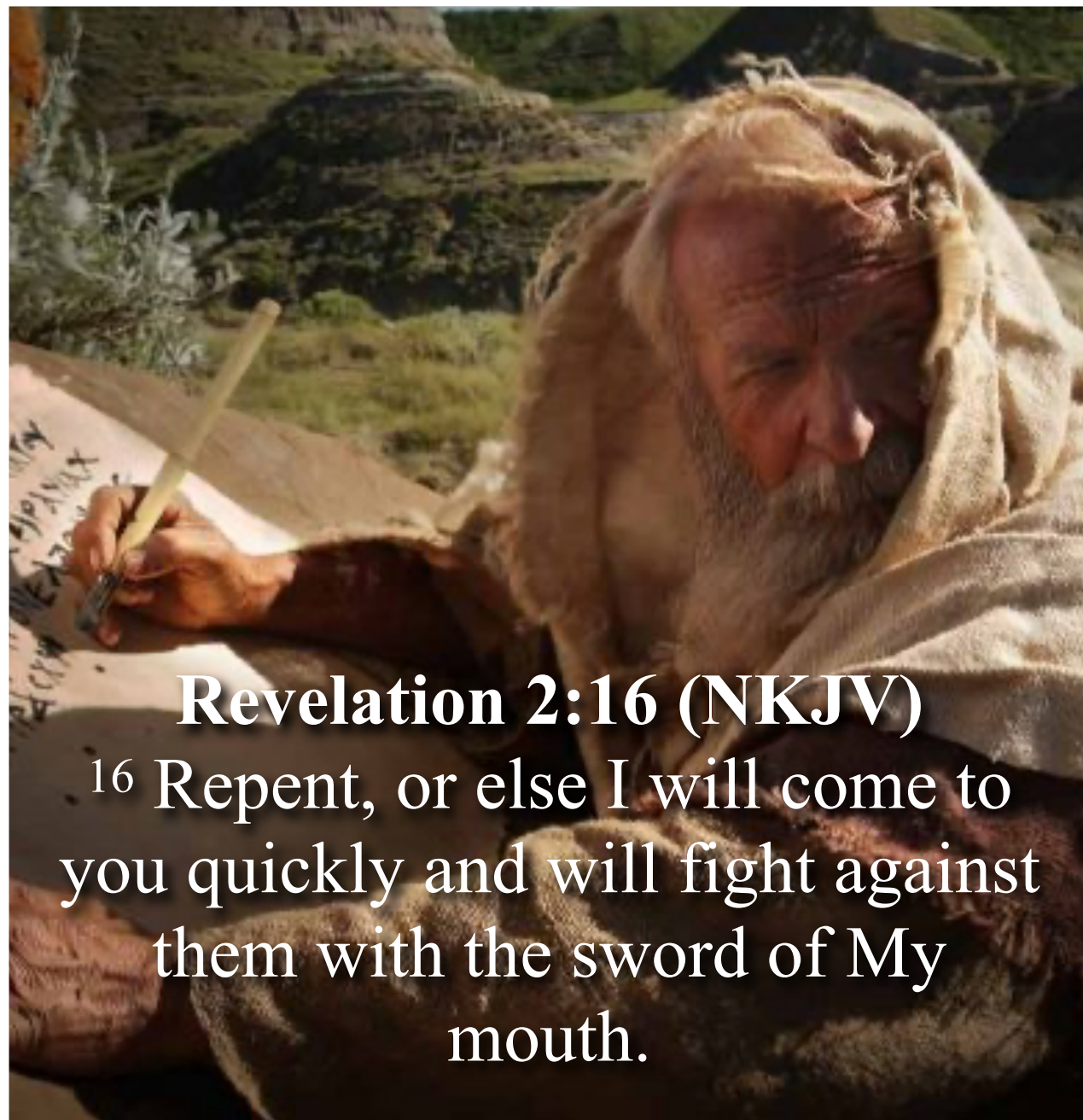


The rest must repent of allowing the false teachers to remain (1 Cor. 5)



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



### CHRIST'S EXHORTATION



**“Repent, or else”** — Jesus does not tolerate tolerance of sin within His church —



To repent, i.e., to make "a radical, moral turn of the whole person from sin and to God" (Mounce. 580; cf. Mat 12:41; Jonah 3:10).



Jesus will judge (condemn / destroy), the sinners and compromiser's (2 Cor. 5:10)

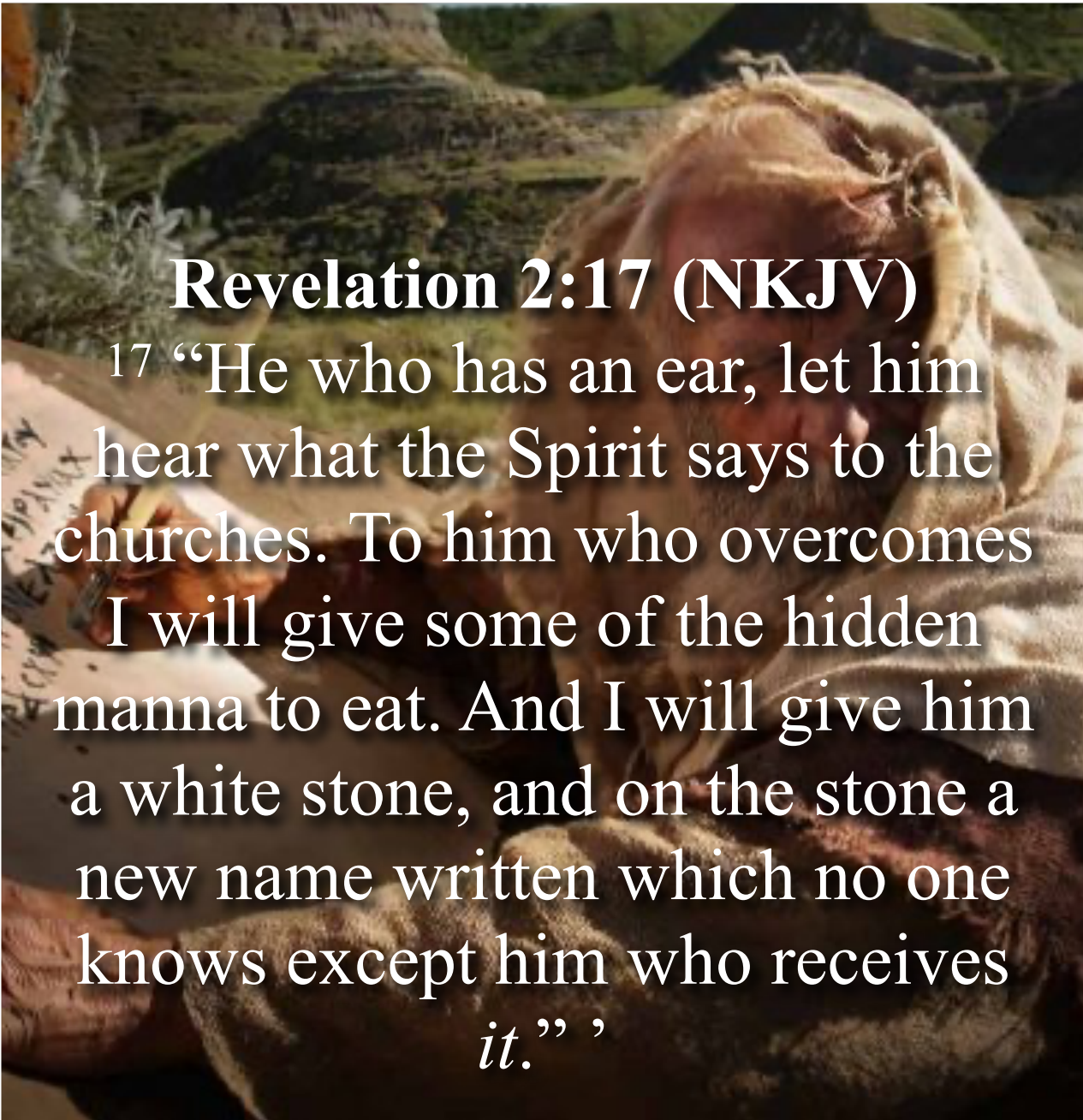


Truth can & will defeat error



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



### Revelation 2:17 (NKJV)

<sup>17</sup> “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives *it.*” ’

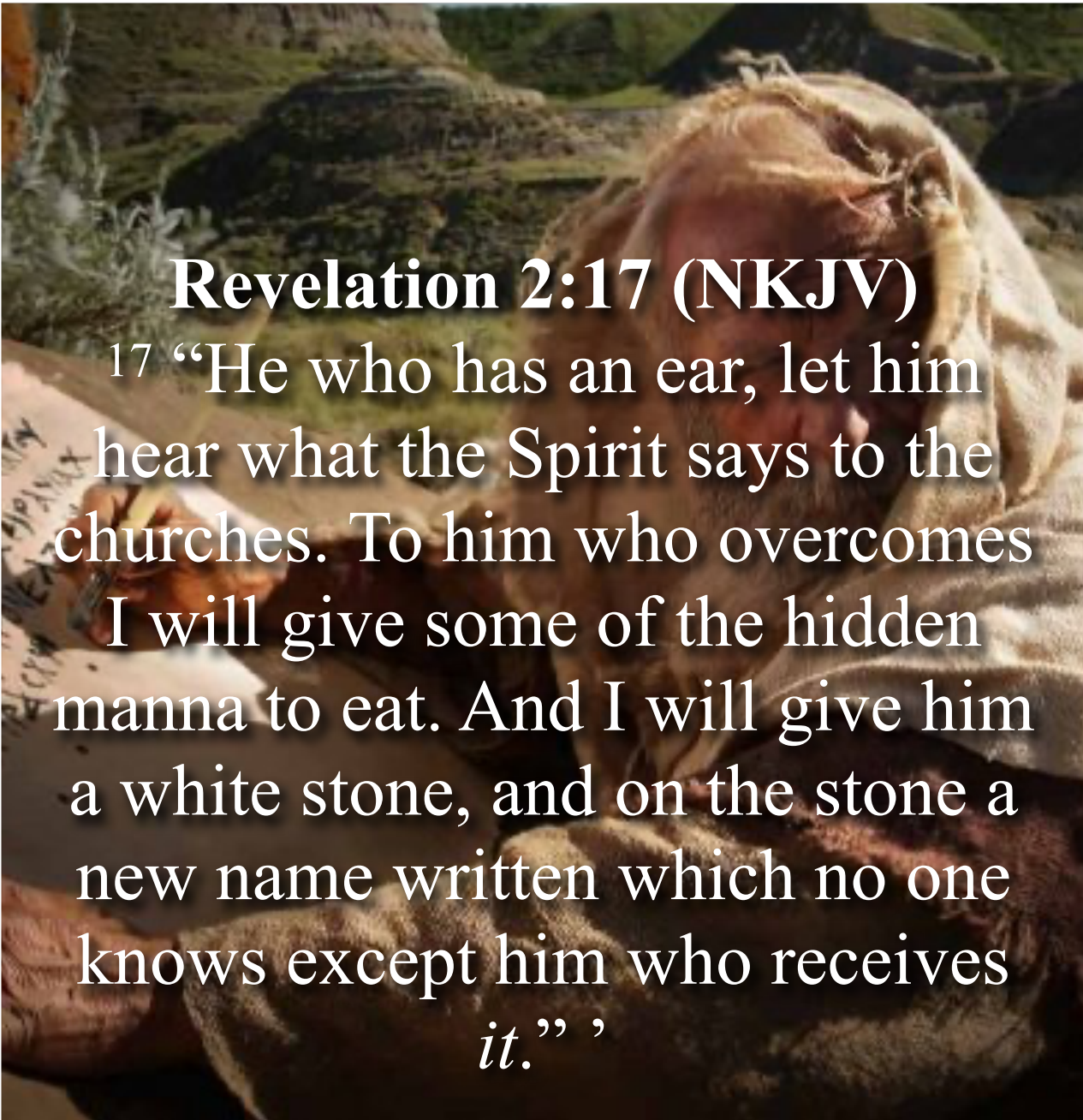
### CHRIST’S INVITATION

- ◆ “He who has an ear, let him hear” (Mat 13:15)
- ◆ “To him who overcomes” (2 Cor. 4:16-18; Rom. 8:18, 31-39)
- ◆ “I will give some of the hidden manna to eat” (John 6:32; 48-51; 57-58, 63)
- ◆ Every spiritual need provided in this life, [wilderness], (Eph 1:3); all the way into the promised land - everlasting life.



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



### Revelation 2:17 (NKJV)

<sup>17</sup> “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives *it.*” ’

### CHRIST’S INVITATION

- ❖ “And I will give him a **white stone**”
- ❖ Given to man justly acquitted symbolizing his innocence.
- ❖ Given to a slave that was freed – symbolizing his citizenship
- ❖ Given to winner of a race & a warrior coming home from battle – symbolizing victory



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)

### Revelation 2:17 (NKJV)

<sup>17</sup> “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives *it.*” ’

### CHRIST’S INVITATION

- ❖ “and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.”
- ❖ A name indicating a new relation, new hopes & triumphs - a child of God - A Christian - the certification of Christ’s help, who is exalted over all pagan rivals. (Is. 56:5; 62:2; 65:15; Rev. 3:12)
- ❖ Only the one who possess it truly understands its import.



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



## APPLICATIONS



Be faithful where you are:



Living where Christianity is popular - it is easy to tell people we are Christians (Acts 11:26),



But how easy is it to tell our denominational friends we are members of the church of Christ (Romans 16:16).



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



## APPLICATIONS



### **Be faithful where you are:**



If we are ashamed to readily confess this fact in our society, what would we do if we were citizens in Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Africa, China, Russia?



Let us NEVER be ashamed of Christ and His word (Mark 8:38; 1 Peter 4:16)



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



## APPLICATIONS



### **The Danger of the Spirit of Compromise:**



Compromise is a prevalent disposition today –



While we must seek to live peaceably with all men - we cannot compromise the truth by compromising with evil - (1 Cor 5:6; Gal 5:9; Mark 8:38; 1 Peter 4:16)



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



## APPLICATIONS



### **The Danger of the Spirit of Compromise:**



The compromise of spiritual principles is how we slowly become conformed to this world (Rom 12:1-3; Eph 5:1-15; 1 Jn 2:15-17)

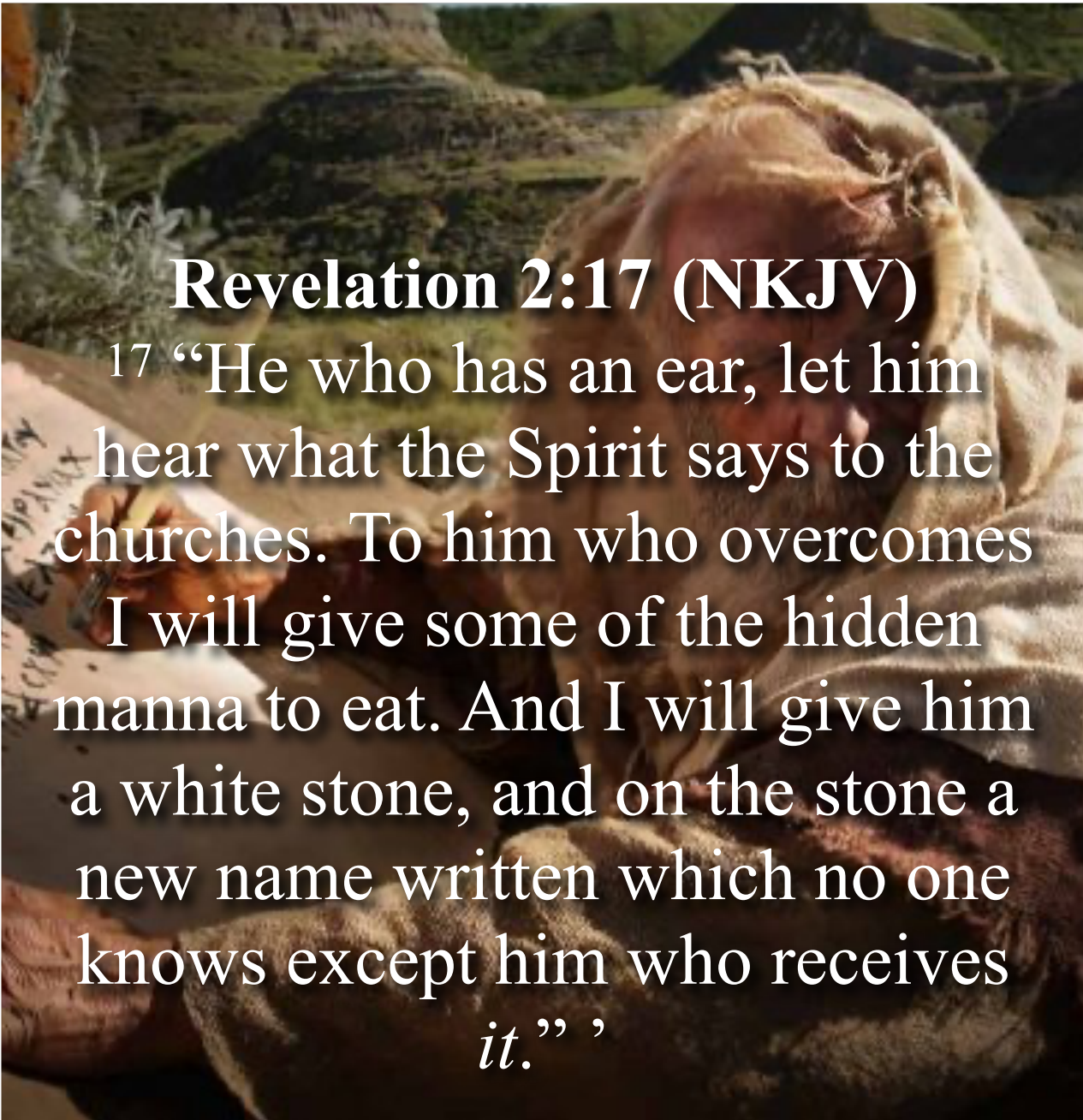


Let us NEVER take the path of compromising matters of faith and conscience.



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## “PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



### Revelation 2:17 (NKJV)

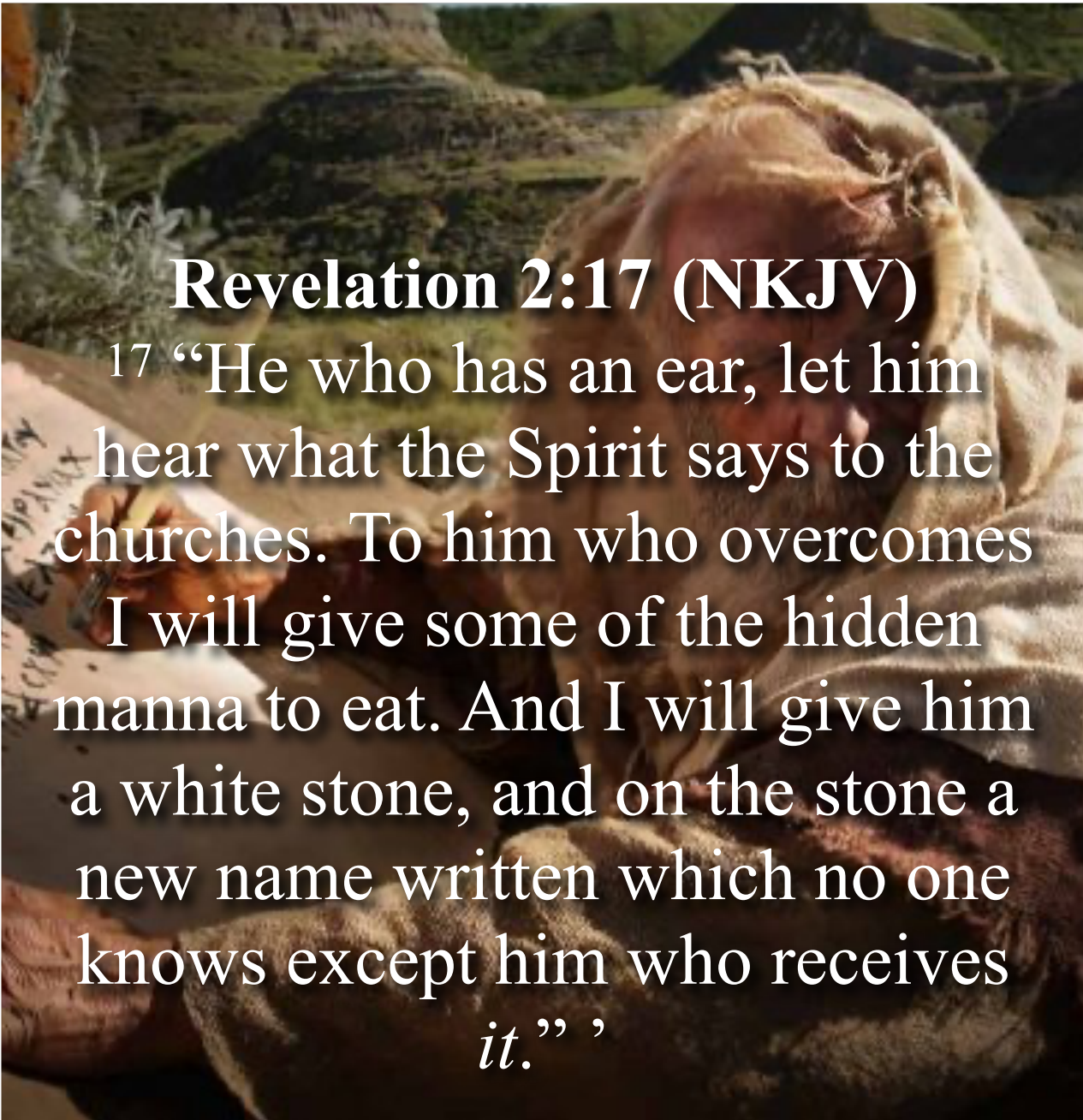
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- ❖ Are we as faithful in the sight of God as we ought to be?
- ❖ Are you faithful to the Lord no matter the cost?
- ❖ If not, are you willing to repent & commit your life to the Lord whatever the cost?



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)



## Revelation 2:17 (NKJV)

<sup>17</sup> “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives *it.*” ’

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



# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“PERGAMOS - THE COMPROMISING CHURCH” (2:12-17)

A photograph of a person, likely a prophet, in a desert setting. The person is wearing a head covering and has a beard. They are holding a scroll or book. The background shows a rocky, arid landscape with some greenery in the distance.

**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

West 65th Street church of Christ – P.O. Box 190062 – Little Rock AR  
72219 – Phone — 501-568-1062 — Email – donmcclain@sbcglobal.net

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# THE BOOK OF **REVELATION**

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



# 1 John 3:24–4:6 (NKJV)

<sup>24</sup> Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us. <sup>1</sup>

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. <sup>2</sup> By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, <sup>3</sup> and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the *spirit* of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.



# 1 John 3:24–4:6 (NKJV)

<sup>4</sup> You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. <sup>5</sup> They are of the world. Therefore they speak *as* of the world, and the world hears them. <sup>6</sup> We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.