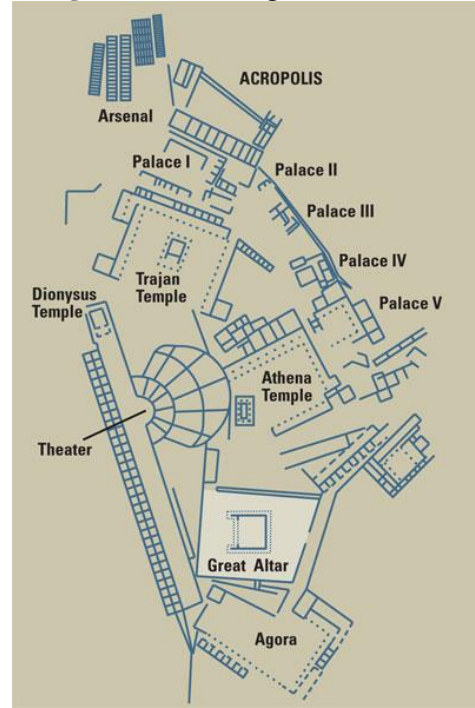


## Lesson 6

### Church at Pergamum

<b>Pergamum Background</b>	
	<p>Pergamon or Pergamum was a rich and powerful ancient Greek city in Aeolis (Aeolis or Aeolia, was an area that comprised the west and northwestern region of Asia Minor, mostly along the coast, and also several offshore islands). Pergamum is located 26 kilometres (16 miles) from the modern coastline of the Aegean Sea on a promontory (a point of high land that juts out into a large body of water ) on the north side of the river Caicus and northwest of the modern city of Bergama.</p> <p>City was a political center where all the rules were made that affected all Asia Minor.</p> <p>It contained the second largest library in the ancient world. The city was known as the keeper of the temples. City also contained three temples to worship the Roman emperor, plus one for Athena, and one for Zeus (Great Altar).</p> <p>The Temple of Trajan was a Roman temple dedicated to the emperor Trajan and his wife Plotina after his deification by the Roman Senate. It was built in the Forum of Trajan (Rome), by Trajan's adoptive son and successor Hadrian, between 125 and 138AD.</p>

### **STUDY OF PERGAMUM**

**Rev 2:13 “I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is.”**

The term Throne was originally used for the best chair in a household reserved for the master of the house. “Satan’s throne” indicates this city was Satan’s territory. He was head of this house. People of city worshiped many Greek and Roman gods. Many authors believe the temple of Zeus was reference to the throne of satan.

The city also had a healing center called the Asklepion, built in honor of Asklepios, the Greek serpent-god. In the first century, this was a cross between a hospital and a health spa, where patients could get everything from a mud bath to a major surgery. Even the emperors came all the way from Rome to be treated here, but this was no ordinary doctor's visit. Terminal patients were not allowed in the facility. Non-poisonous snakes were used to crawl over patients while they slept at night. A snake crawling over you at night meant you had favor with the serpent-god and would receive healing. Dreams were told to the doctor in the morning and a treatment would be prescribed.

Christianity was a threat to the worship of all these gods. Antipas was a bishop in Pergamum ordained by the apostle John. Antipas would not worship the Roman emperor and claim him as god. He was roasted inside a bronze bull on the altar of Zeus. (REF: <http://www1.cbn.com/700club/seat-satan-ancient-pergamum>)

**2:13 And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: ‘The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword (Ref Rev 1:16, Heb 4:12)**

Question 1 – Who is “him” in verse 13?

**2:14 “But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam”**

Balaam, son of Beor, was a seer from Aram, internationally famous for the effectiveness of his blessings and curses. Balak, king of Moab, afraid of the invading Israelites who vastly outnumbered Moab, asked Balaam to come and curse the people of Israel. Balaam was a prophet who worked for money. Thus, his preaching, his teaching, just became a job. Money was the important factor. Numbers 22 gives us the story of Balaam and Balak. In Numbers 31:16, and consequently in later Jewish and Christian tradition, he was blamed for Israel's idolatry and immorality as described in Numbers 25.

Question 2 – What was unusual about Balaam's transportation when he was allowed to go to the Israelites?

**2:15 “So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.”**

(See Lesson 4 – Same as the church at Ephesus)

Question 3 – What were the teachings of the Nicolaitans?

**2:16 “Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth.**

Question 4 – How is the mouth of the Lord like a sword?

**2:17 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.’**

Question 5 – What is the hidden manna?

### **The significance of the white stone**

Many theories but the best theory regarding the meaning of the white stone probably has to do with the ancient Roman custom of awarding white stones to the victors of athletic games. The winner of a contest was awarded a white stone with his name inscribed on it. This served as his “ticket” to a special awards banquet. According to this view, Jesus promises the overcomers entrance to the eternal victory celebration in heaven. The “new name” most likely refers to the Holy Spirit's work of conforming believers to the holiness of Christ (see [Romans 8:29](#); [Colossians 3:10](#)).

Question 6 – What lesson does this passage have for our church?