

# Eschatology II: Revelation

## The Messages to the Seven Churches

### Smyrna: Revelation 2:8-11

#### II. The Church of Smyrna (Rev. 2:8-11)

##### A. Characteristics of Smyrna

1. It was established 1300 years before the Revelation.
2. It was very heavily involved in Emperor worship and even had a temple built to worship Tiberius Caesar.
3. It was a city where Olympic Games were held.
4. It had an acropolis (an area set aside for the "gods") where there were two temples connected by a long street called "The Street of Gold." The one temple was to Zeus, the head of the gods, the other to Cybele, the Mother goddess.
5. The city was nick-named "The Crown of Asia" because of its great splendor, beauty, and wealth.
6. The city was a major trade port for Myrrh, used in embalming the dead.

##### B. The Message to Smyrna

1. The Saviour who's identifies with their suffering (vv8-9)
  - a. Jesus uses the phrase "which was dead, and is alive" to a city that knows very well about death because of its major trade, myrrh.
  - b. Death is the wage owed sinners, but He was sinless. This gave hope to those who faced death because their Savior lives, and so will they.
  - c. Jesus also could stand in empathy with their suffering because of His own suffering (cf. Heb 2:9-11, 14-18, etc).
  - d. He also reminds them of their wealth, though in this city of great wealth they are poor. Our economics are not that of this world (cf Matt 6:19-21).
  - e. His greatest condemnation is for the Jews who persecuted the Christians. They, having all throughout history been persecuted, and the ones through whom Messiah came, ought to have known better.
2. The Adversary who's time and ability is limited (v10)
  - a. Jesus can tell you not to fear because of Satan's limitations (cf Luke 12:4-5 and 9:23-24)
  - b. Though outwardly it was "Jews" who were persecuting the Christians, the real source of them is the Devil (cf Eph 6:12; II Cor 10:3-5).
3. The Reward to those who are true to the Lord (vv10-11)
  - a. The exhortation to remain faithful till death comes to those who may face it. Yet they do not face it alone, nor without the ability to overcome it (Ps 23:1-6, etc) - v10.
  - b. The reward of the crown of life to those who've seen many get crowns for their physical abilities -v10.
  - c. Overcomers will not face the second death, which means eternal hell. Who are the overcomers? See I Jn 5:4-5.
  - d. Note: Smyrna did not receive any rebuke from the Lord.