

Elijah - Father and Shepherd

Rev 2:18-29: Letter to Thyatira Ecclesia
O.T. Background - Elijah and Jezebel: 1 Kings 21

v18 The only time in **Revelation** where Jesus is called **"Son of God"**. Why here? Because the Son inherits his Father's vineyard: **Mk 12:1-7; Heb 1:4-5**. Jezebel took away Naboth's **"inheritance"**, his vineyard: **1 Kings 21:3**. Jezebel was taking away Thyatira's inheritance, their vineyard. Christ has the **power** and **authority** to give it back when he comes, because **he is the heir: Psalms 2:7-12; Song 8:12**. **Fire** means Christ is coming in judgment. His **"feet"** are to tread down 'Jezebel' as Jehu did.

v19-20 Faithful, but they had one problem - they tolerated Jezebel. Just like Israel in days of Ahab.

v24 "The rest in Thyatira" are the faithful, just like the 7000 that had not bowed the knee to Baal.

v25 Exhortation to hold fast to what they have in Thyatira, **care for and protect the ecclesia** from Jezebel. The lesson Elijah had to learn! A similar exhortation is also given in **Rev 3:2,11**.

v26 The saints will **inherit** the power and authority of God's Son in the Kingdom because they are "in Christ", heirs of the vineyard, **Gal 3:29, Rev 21:7**.

v27 Quoting **Psa 2:9**. Significant because **Psa 2** is about the Catholic nations rebelling against Christ at his return. This is when Elijah brings the Jews home to Zion. **Key word: the Saints rule** (Greek = "shepherd") the nations with the rod! **Why?** Because Elijah learnt to be a **shepherd**. Thyatira can be shepherds with Elijah in the Kingdom.

v28 Morning star is Christ, **Rev 22:19**. See also **Mal 4:2; Matt 13:43**, cp. Lucifer in **Isa 14:12**.

Psalm 2 is again quoted in **Rev 19:15** where it is called the **"winepress of the wrath of God"** (winepress - Naboth's vineyard and Christ's!). **Rev 19** describes the Marriage of the Lamb and Christ's final judgments against Rome and Catholic Europe. **Rome's destruction in Rev 18:24; 19:1-3** quotes **2 Kings 9:7** because she is **the latter-day Jezebel**. In **Revelation**, Jezebel is a symbol of ecclesial apostasy (a falling away from the truth: **2 Thess 2:1-11**), which developed into Roman Catholicism. Christ comes to restore the vineyard to Christ's bride who rejoices: **Song 8:12; Rev 14:18-20; 19:7**.

Israel to be shepherded back to Zion: Rev 2:27 promises Thyatira that they will be shepherds in the Kingdom if they are shepherds now. For centuries, Rome's iron rod destroyed God's people: **Rev 11:1-10**. But this will be reversed: **Isa 51:22-23**. When the European nations rage against Christ, Elijah brings the Jews back to Zion. He uses the same rod to bring Israel home. Many times, Israel are described as sheep returning to Zion: **Mic 5:2; 7:14-15; Jer 3:15; Jer 51:19; Ezek 20:36-37**. The Lamb "shall **feed** (shepherd) them and lead them": **Rev 7:17**. **Elijah will bring them to Christ**.

REVELATION 2.

18 And unto the angel of the church in ^kThyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, ^lwho hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet ^{are} like fine brass;

19 I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy

works; and the last *to be more than the first*.

20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman ^oJezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to ^ocommit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto ^oidols.

1 Tim 3v12

24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of ^oSatan, as they speak; I will ^oput upon you none other burden.

25 But ^bthat which ye have *already hold fast till ^oI come*.

26 ^oAnd he that overcometh, and keepeth my works ^ounto the end, to ^hhim will I give power over the nations: **"shepherd"**

27 And ^mhe shall **rule** them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father.

28 And I will give him ^pthe morning star.

Rev 3:1-6: Letter to Sardis Ecclesia
O.T. Background - Moses and Elijah: 1 Kings 19

v2 Yahweh came to strengthen Elijah who was **ready to die, 1 Kings 19:5-8**. By experiencing God's care for him, this helps Elijah appreciate why he should care for others. When Elijah was strengthened, he **"went in the strength of that meat 40 days..."** We (like Elijah) must feed the ecclesia in our time of probation!

v2 'watch' - Matt 24:42-45: Those watching are **faithful** and **wise** servants who feed **"the household... meat in due season"** ("household" in Gk. means "therapists"). The ecclesia should be a place of therapy, where we are healed. If we heal others now, we can heal people in the Kingdom: **Rev 22:2**. The **wise** are those with oil in their lamps (**Matt 25:1-13**). The **faithful** are those who use their talents for good (**Matt 25:20-21**).

v3-5 Now the link with **Moses** at Sinai. Moses in the mountain 40 days is a type of Christ being away now. When Israel made the golden calf, God said to Moses, **"Get thee down quickly"** (**Deut 9:12** cp. **"Behold I come quickly": Rev 22:7,12,20**). Moses came on them like a thief. Israel were made to eat gold in the river (Sardis also had gold in their river system). Israel had been made naked. But the Levites separated themselves and they were given **white raiment**. This is the promise to the faithful in Sardis in **3:4-5**, to be the priesthood of the future, **Rev 5:10; 7:13-14**. **"Book of life"** - cp. **Ex 32:32**

REVELATION 3.

AND unto ^athe angel of the church in ^lSardis write; These things saith he that hath ^athe seven Spirits of God, and ^bthe seven stars; I ^cknow thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and ^dart dead.

2 Be ^wwatchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and ^rrepent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will ^bcome on thee ^las a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

4 Thou hast a few ^mnames even in Sardis which have not ^ddefiled their garments; and they shall walk with me ^oin white: for they are worthy.

5 ^hHe that overcometh, the same ^sshall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not ^lblot out his name out of ^othe book of life, but ⁱI will confess his name before my Father, and ^obefore his angels.

Elijah learns: When he ran from Jezebel, he forgot the 7000. He believed he was the only one left. He was like the man spoken of by Jesus in **John 10:12-13**: **"when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away"** (NIV). This was a real low point in his life. But God worked with Elijah to **develop his character** to be like Christ.

Jesus Christ - father and shepherd: Shepherds in Israel used a rod to mark the sheep with a red dye to number them. Similarly, Jesus knows **all** his sheep **by name, Jn 10:2-4**. He cares for **each** of his sheep **personally**. A shepherd cares for the ecclesia when it is threatened: **Jn 10:10-16**. Jesus is like a **father** to us, just like God: **Isa 9:6; Matt 23:37**. This is what it means to **"know the Father"**: **Jn 10:15**. To "know God" is to **be like Him**.

We can be 'fathers' in the ecclesia: 1 Cor 4:15. No matter what age, male or female, we can all take on this role. There are always younger ones looking up to us. If we love Jesus we will feed his **lambs** and **sheep: Jn 21:15-17**. A father cares, loves, nurtures, protects: **Isa 40:11** (**key verse** linking Elijah with shepherds and fathers, also **Matt 18:3-14**)

Isaiah 49:15 likens Yahweh to a mother feeding a child. **Hosea 11:3** likens Him to a dad teaching his child to walk. When Elijah was taken in a storm, Elisha called him **"my father, my father"**: **2 Kings 2:12**. Elijah developed a **relationship** with Elisha. He showed **God's character** as revealed to Moses: **Ex 34:5-8; Psalm 23; 103:7-13**. Moses cared deeply that Israel would have a shepherd to replace him: **Num 27:16-18**. We must also show care, love and concern for **everyone** in our ecclesia. **Think of others!**

Colour code: Blue (God and Jesus Christ); Red (sin/devil/judgment of wicked); Green (Kingdom); Orange (important words and phrases); Purple (return of Jews to the land); Yellow (practical exhortation). Prepared for Study Week 2008. For a PDF file, go to www.studyweek.net or email acdangerfield@webshield.net.au.