

ENDURING SUFFERING
(Revelation 2:8-11)

- I. The ADDRESS (Rev. 2:8)
 - A. To the *angelos* (“MESSENGER,” or *angel*) of the CONGREGATION at Smyrna
 - 1. City of about 100,000; modern Ismir, Turkey
 - 2. Church led by bishop named POLYCARP
 - a. One of the last DISCIPLED by JOHN
 - b. MARTYRED in AD 155 after over 50 years’ service
 - 3. One of the last Asian cities to fall to ISLAM
 - B. From the One who is ETERNAL in relation to TIME and RESURRECTED in relation to LIFE
 - 1. Reminder of His triumph over MISTRIALS
 - 2. Reminder of His triumph over REJECTION
 - 3. Reminder of His triumph over DEATH
- II. The ENCOURAGEMENT (Rev. 2:9)
 - A. Christ KNEW their SITUATION
 - 1. Enduring PERSECUTION
 - 2. Experiencing POVERTY
 - 3. Possessing GREAT WEALTH (cf. James 2:5; 2 Cor. 6:10)
 - B. Christ KNEW their OPPOSITION

1. Most common interpretation: UNBELIEVING JEWS (cf. Rom. 2:28-29; John 8:33-44)
 - a. PERSECUTING believers
 - b. CORRUPTING worship
 - c. BLASPHEMING Christ
 - 1) Denying His DEITY
 - 2) Denying His RESURRECTION
 - 3) Denying His POWER
2. Possible alternate interpretation: PROFESSING believers adopting JEWISH LAW
 - a. Persecuting the UNCIRCUMCIZED
 - b. Blaspheming by ADDING WORKS to grace

III. The EXHORTATION (Rev. 2:10-11)

- A. STOP being AFRAID
- B. You SHALL SUFFER
 1. Persecution will get WORSE
 - a. Being TESTED by the DEVIL
 - b. Facing PRISON and DEATH
 2. Persecution will be relatively BRIEF (cf. Dan. 1:12)
- C. You will be REWARDED
 1. Remain FAITHFUL to CHRIST
 2. Don't lose HOPE when faced with DEATH
 3. Receive a VICTOR'S crown of LIFE
- D. Those who OVERCOME will not face the SECOND DEATH