***Satan's Throne  
  
RV11-02***

Please open your Bibles to Revelation 2:12-17. This is the second section on this increment of the third letter in the series of seven. This is the letter written to believers to the local churches in the city of Pergamum. This particular letter and this particular church are symbolic of the third period in church history when Christianity ceased being persecuted by the Roman government, and became contaminated by the world. The first period, you'll recall, was a period of intense love for the Lord Jesus Christ, walking very closely in devotion to Him. It was the period of the blossoming out of the Christian church, and of the establishing of the basic doctrinal concepts as they were recorded and revealed in Scripture.

Following that early stage, which terminated with the end of the first century, began a period of intense persecution by the governmental authorities. So a couple of centuries went by when Christians increasingly came under the fires of persecution, and it became harder and harder all the time to be a Christian. It became harder and harder to preserve even your very life as a believer within the context of the Roman Empire. This particular period is portrayed in Scripture by the second letter to the church, which is in the city of Smyrna, which is viewed as the suffering congregation.

But then the year 312 arrived, and a new emperor sat upon the throne of Rome. His name was Constantine. He had the idea that he had had a vision just before a critical battle which was to decide between himself and another contender for the throne of Rome. He believed that he had had a vision from heaven in which he saw a cross and the word written beneath it in this sign: "conquer." So he used that emblem in battle. Sure enough, the result was victory for him. He became the sole ruler of the Roman Empire. His opponent was thoroughly defeated. Consequently, he concluded that the reason he had won this critical battle was because the God of Christianity had favored him.

Therefore, his immediate response was to make Christianity a legal religion of the Roman Empire. That immediately removed it from all further persecution. Up to this time, it had been an illegal religion. Now you could be a Christian and not expect to be fed to the lions for it. Now you could be a Christian and not expect to be soaked in oil and made a torch at somebody's garden party. Everything overnight was changed by Emperor Constantine.

However, on that day there was also set in motion for the next few hundred years (down to about the year 600), a gradual transformation that began taking place within the Christian church and in the Christian community. Constantine, by the year 325 A.D., became aware of the fact that Christians were some of the best people he had around. He found that the Christians were the most reliable and the most trustworthy, and increasingly he found them to be the best administrators that he had. So consequently, he went a step further in 325. He not only wanted Christianity to be legalized, but he wanted it to be the *sole* religion of the empire.

So a fantastic thing took place. He turned everything around so that the pagan religions were now brought under persecution. Christianity, in effect, became the Department of Religion of the Roman Empire. Well, you can readily see what this was going to lead to. Inevitably, if you wanted to go someplace in government circles of the Roman Empire, you had better be a Christian or you weren't going to go anyplace. If you were not a Christian by personal conviction of faith in Jesus Christ, you could take on the language of Christians; you could take on the habits of Christians; and, you could take on the practices of Christians. Consequently, you would be viewed as a Christian. Over this period from 312 to 600, many practices which were common in the city of Pergamum, in the pagan religions, and later throughout the Roman Empire, were incorporated into Christianity.

So this phase of Christian church history is the phase where Christianity is gradually diluted with heathenism, and the product is with us still to this day. It is known as the Roman Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church is not a Christian institution. It is a conglomeration of Babylonian paganism and of Christianity. Over the next couple of sessions, we'll try to show you how, gradually, the things that were commonplace in the pagan system of religion were taken over into the Christian system of religion. Each of these, one-by-one, was given a Christian significance. So it was one of the grandest moves that the devil ever pulled off. The Roman Catholic Church stands as a monument today to the fantastic brilliance of his majesty the devil.

Pergamum itself was a major cultural, political, and religious center. It was extremely loyal to Rome, and it was a devotee of emperor worship. The name Pergamum itself may be significant. This name comes from two Greek words: "Pergos," which means "elevation"; and, "gamos," which means "marriage." Putting these two together to produce the name Pergamum literally gives us the meaning "elevated in marriage." This indeed is a fitting name, we cannot help but observe, for a church which began to enjoy the acceptance of pagan authorities. What actually happened in this third period of Christian church history is that the Christian church became married to the political state, and it is significant that the very word "Pergamum" means "elevated in marriage." So the church went from rags to riches. It went from contempt to prestige overnight because it married the Roman government pagan system. Where it had been a Cinderella before, it now became the queen of the empire.

So we are beginning this session at Revelation 2:13, where we read: "I know your works, and where you dwell, even where Satan's throne is." Let's look, first of all, at the word "know." The word "know" is the word "oida". This is a word which here refers to a knowledge, in this case, by omniscience. This is something that God knows by divine omniscience. This is not something that God learns by His experiences. This word is in the perfect tense, but it has a present meaning. That is a peculiarity of this word. So this refers to something that God constantly knows. His omniscience is always there. It is in the active voice, which means that this is a personal knowledge which the Lord Jesus Christ claims to have. It is in the indicative mood which is a statement of fact.

**I Know Where You Dwell**

"I know." God says, "My omniscience tells me something about you people in the congregation in the city of Pergamum. The next three words, "your works and" are not in the Greek text, so just cross them out in your bible. It simply says, "I know where you dwell." The word "where" is this simple little word "pou.' This is actually what we call an interrogative adverb. It is used here in a construction called an indirect question. It is simply identifying a location. It points to the word "dwell," which is "katoikeo." The word "katoikeo" is actually two words. There is the Greek preposition "kata." It is often added to words in the Greek language, particularly verbs. Here it is added to the word "oikeo" which means "to dwell." But when you put "kata" on a word, then it becomes emphatic. It gives it an intensity of meaning. Therefore, this word means "to settle down in a dwelling" or "to dwell fixedly in a place." What the Lord is referring to here is that these people are not just roaming about from someplace here to someplace there, but that they are living in a certain geographical location on a permanent constant basis, and that that very condition confronts them with a very monumental problem. They are not transients – they are permanent dwellers. We would say, "Their roots have been put down."

**Satan the Adversary**

This is present tense. They constantly and permanently settle here in this place. It is active. This is where they have chosen to live. It's indicative – a statement of fact. It connotes the particular place of residence of this congregation. It's their continual residence. They were personally dwelling in Pergamum. And it's a statement of fact. "I know where you dwell, even where." This is the Greek word "hopou." Before we had "pou," and now we have "hopou." "Hopou" points back to it. This is indicating that, "I know where you dwell, even where" (looking back to where they dwell). And this is a place that is particularly associated with "Satan." This is the Greek word "satanas." "Satanas" is actually an Aramaic word which comes from the Hebrew, and the meaning of this particular word is "adversary." This is the name for the archenemy of God in terms of his adversary role. He is the supreme rebel angel who is leading the angelic warfare against God; against believers; and, against mankind. In this particular case, we want to observe that he is an adversary in terms of faith in God. He is an adversary in terms of true religion. He is an adversary of the truth of God, and he is the promoter of the big lie relative to religious things. Therefore, Satan is the source of religion, which particularly flourished here at this time in Pergamum.

Satan has a basic philosophical outlook for this religion. Today, we call it evolutionary humanism. This same concept, which is with us today, is the basis of all of the thinking today in the unsaved world. It is the basis of our educational system. Evolutionary humanism is ripe throughout the writing of the ancients. They got it from Satan. It was their world view. Satan has created on this philosophy a religious system which incorporates many things about God that are true. But he gives them a twist. That's what was happening here at this particular period in church history that the church in Pergamum symbolizes. There was the gradual action on the part of Satan where he took something that was true, and then he gave it a false meaning.

He had been preparing for this centuries before. Shortly after the flood, he began establishing a religious system that incorporated features that God had revealed were going to be true in His system of faith. For example, there would be, from the seed of the woman, a male child born who would become the agent of God to be the Savior of the world. Satan knew that. Therefore, as we shall see, Satan took this piece of truth, and he incorporated into his system. He just had the whole thing structured for the deliberate purpose that, at a certain point in time, he was going to take his system and superimpose it upon God's system so that the world could not distinguish the difference. The result would be a contaminated system which would lead no one to heaven, and would lead everyone to hell.

The particular thing that the Lord Jesus is pointing out and calling the attention of the Pergamum Christians to, is that they live (their roots are down) in a certain city where Satan has something very important, and that is his "thronos:" "Satan's 'thronos.'" This word refers to a seat of authority. In 96 A.D., when John wrote this particular letter, at the dictation of the Lord Jesus Christ, the headquarters of Satan's false religious system was right here in the city of Pergamum. That's why he calls this city, "The place of Satan's throne." It is the place of Satan's authority.

**Babylon**

Originally, this was not the place of Satan's authority. Originally, as most of you know, the place of Satan's authority religiously was the city of Babylon. The city of Babylon was founded, the Bible tells us, by a man named Nimrod. During the time that the Babylonian Empire ruled the world, Babylon was the seat of Satan's authority. Babylon was the city where Satan's throne was established. Satan's religious system was born in the city of Babylon under the leadership of this Nimrod. All of you are acquainted with the story of the night that the handwriting appeared on the wall in the midst of one of their drunken orgy feasts. It was announced to Belshazzar that his days were numbered, and his time was up. Sure enough, at that very moment, the army of the Medo-Persians had diverted the Euphrates River, which ran under the wall of city of Babylon. So they made themselves a comparatively dry riverbed, and they just marched under the wall into the city and took it completely by surprise. By the next morning, Belshazzar was dead, and Babylon ceased to be the center of world power.

When that happened, of course, the Babylonian priests, the Magi of Babylon, were also expelled. When they were expelled, they very naturally took with them the satanic religion of which they were the priests. Where did they go upon being expelled from Babylon? They went to Pergamum. So Pergamum now became Satan's headquarters of his false religious system. Later, the headquarters was again transferred, this time to the city of Rome itself under the authority of the pope. So at this time in history, Pergamum is the seat of Satan's throne; that is, the seat of Satan's false religious system.

The first thing to look at then is to get some idea of the nature of this religious system. The Babylonian religious system, as we said, was begun by Nimrod and by his wife Semiramis. These two lived sometime after the flood, and they created a rebellion against God. Many of the ancient writers have given us a variety of details in one way or another about the Babylonian religious system, and about Nimrod and Semiramis. It gives it to us under a variety of names, depending on what country the writer lived in. These same two figures keep coming back and forth, cropping up under different names.

There is a book called The Two Babylons written by a man named Alexander Hislop, which is a monumental classic in the field. He has done the great job of researching the ancient writers, and has brought together all of the details from one country after another, and from one ancient writing after another. So when you fit it all together, an amazing picture evolves. That picture gives us the details that the Scriptures pass over in silence. The Scriptures indicate to us that a condition developed. Then, from ancient writers, we see how these matured; how they progressed; and, what the results were of things that the Scriptures simply allude to as a beginning situation.

So Nimrod and his wife Semiramis began the Babylonian religion, which was, of course, an idolatrous system that was devoted, in fact, to the worship of Satan. Nimrod was violently killed by those who opposed him because they recognized the evil system that he and his wife were introducing mankind to after the flood. He was actually cut in pieces. As was the custom in those days, pieces of the body were sent to various places in order to make it clear to people that a vengeance and a judgment had been exercised upon what this person was doing. Every now and then, you actually find that same custom reflected, even in Scripture in about two places. This was an ancient practice – just to cut up the victim and send a piece of him to everybody that should know about the event.

Now Semiramis was in a very uncomfortable situation. Her husband was gone – he who had carried great influence, and had been held in high esteem, and I'll show you in a minute why that was. But Semiramis was a girl who knew her way around, and who knew how to make the best of what she had. So she came up with a marvelous idea under Satan's direction, of course. That is, she bore a son. She was the kind of a playgirl that was very loose morally, and would not have any problem about establishing a pregnancy by one of her lovers. But she claimed that this was a miraculous birth, and that, in fact, she was bearing (she was reincarnating) her dead husband.

**Madonna and Child Worship**

So sometimes you read the ancient writers, and you get a little confusion that Nimrod was Semiramis's husband, and Nimrod was Semiramis's son. Well, he was both. The reason for it was that she was claiming that when he was killed, she reincarnated him by a miraculous birth, and she established a system of worship which now centered upon a mother and her infant child. The title given to this was Madonna and Child. Of course, I need not tell you that this system is at the heart of the Roman Catholic system today. This is where it came from. Such a thing does not come from the Bible. Such a thing came during the period represented by the Pergamum church when the world was flooding into the church; trying to get on the winning team; and, bringing all of its Babylonian satanic religious concepts along with it.

The religious practices of the Babylonian system, as represented by the mother and child cult, were grossly deprave and extremely licentious. It is almost too humiliating to describe some of the things that were done under the worship of this system. It was as grossly debased, and it was as vile as the human mind has ever invented. Nimrod, we know from Scripture, was a great hunter of animals. This was one of the reasons, the ancient writers indicate to us, that he became a highly esteemed man among them, because of his ability to hunt animals, which became very important following the floods. For the animals indeed multiplied very rapidly. But the food supply in the reviving earth was very marginal. Consequently, animals were fighting for survival against men for the food supply that existed. Mankind itself could hardly farm and protect its produce against the roaming animals. Well, Nimrod comes along, and he devises ways, because of his cleverness with weapons, to be able to keep the animals at bay. This was viewed as practically a divine ability and a divine product. So it was easy for people to look up to him as somewhat of a god.

Nimrod also did something else for mankind that men greatly welcomed. We find again from ancient writers that Nimrod took away their fear of God in terms of judgment for their evil. You remember that these people living so close to the flood had the story clear. They knew what had happened to the earth. They had the stories handed down from Noah's family very, very precisely. They heard all of these descriptions of how suddenly the bottoms of the oceans just heaved up, and the waters of the oceans spewed out across the land. They had the stories of how the canopy of water, which once covered the earth, making it a greenhouse all over (including at the poles) – a tropical paradise. It took over six weeks perhaps for this whole canopy of water to collapse, where God had originally separated waters beneath and waters above. And the whole thing came crashing down on their heads. It was terror from the word go.

These people were scared of God. Evil had begun to be tolerated more and more, but the memory of the flood was so clear in their minds that they were fearful of what God might again do to them. But we know, from the information of ancient writers, that Nimrod was credited with having brought freedom from this fear to mankind. In other words, he gave vent to the old sin nature of mankind once more.

Nimrod's religious system, of course, was from Satan. What he taught men that put them at ease was that they did not need something from God to be regenerated. He didn't tell men that they didn't have to do anything about their sins. He did tell them that you have to do something about your sin – that you do have to worship God. But what he taught them was that they didn't need an internal change in order to meet the demands of God upon them. What he taught them was that they could achieve regeneration by external means. That was at the heart of the system of Nimrod – salvation by external means – salvation by what a human being himself could do.

Of course, when this system was absorbed into what is the Roman Catholic Church today, this core concept came right along with it. This is at the heart of the Roman Catholic system. Salvation is the result of what an individual can do for himself, and he makes it with God on the basis of his personal good works.

The means that Nimrod and his mother/wife presented to mankind for achieving this regeneration was indulgence in these extremely sensual sins – sins of an unrestrained moral depravity. Well, the ancient records from several countries record for us that Nimrod met a violent death at the hands of those who were loyal to the true God. As a matter of fact, Mr. Hislop has very ably demonstrated that in all likelihood, the leader of this execution of justice upon Nimrod and his religious system was Noah's son Shem, who was still alive at the time. In all likelihood, it was Shem who was the leader executing this justice. In any case, Nimrod was executed; his body was cut in pieces; and, the parts were sent out as warning to mankind in various places. Well, when the word had gone out that Nimrod was dead, his followers bewailed his demise tremendously. They wept – great outpourings of weeping.

Nimrod's name among the Phoenicians was Tammuz. Tammuz and Nimrod were the same person. But the outpouring of weeping for Nimrod upon his death (which we take as indeed a true historical event) gave rise to the custom once a year for the practice of weeping for Tammuz – a practice which was part of this Babylonian pagan system of religion. The interesting thing is that this was such a common practice that, of course, the people of Israel could not help but observe it. And one of the examples that we have in the Bible of the affinity that the Jews had for the Babylonians false religious system is to be found in Ezekiel 8:14. One of the things that God is telling the prophet that he is going to bring judgment upon the Jewish people for is that they have the audacity to practice the evil customs of the pagans around them, from this Nimrod/Semiramis religious system in the very temple of God Himself.

**The Sign of the Cross**

Ezekiel 8:14: "Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's house, which was toward the north. And, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz." Nimrod had various names in different countries. But here the Scripture uses the Phoenician name: "Weeping for Tammuz." This is a pagan custom which was begun as the result of the death of Nimrod (or Tammuz). As a matter of fact, just looking ahead, this first letter of his name, the "tau," was in the form of the cross. When they took this system into Roman Catholicism, they immediately recognized that system, and it was the custom of the pagans to go around carrying a pole with a crossbar on it like that in the worship of Tammuz. So they converted that into the cross of Jesus Christ. They also incorporated the custom of the pagans, which was to make a sign of a cross in the air. So to this day, there is the Roman Catholic Church making its sign of the cross. They're saying, "Oh, this is honoring of Jesus Christ." They are pathetic fools. They're honoring Tammuz. They're honoring Nimrod. It has nothing to do with Jesus Christ at all. They just swallowed part of Satan's system. And the Jews swallowed the part of weeping annually for the death of Tammuz.

When Shem and his group exercised this righteous judgment, it, of course, drove the whole system underground. It could no longer be practiced openly. It was vile to the core, and it could no longer be practiced openly. Remember that what we are saying took place back in Babylon is the same thing that was taking place in Pergamum where this Christian community resided. That's why the Lord is making such an emphasis on this word – that here's where your roots have been sunk as family groups, and this very place where your roots are down is the headquarters of Satan's religious system. That religious system is what we're describing to you now.

So the system of evil had to go underground. When it did that, it assumed the title of "mysteries." That's why you sometimes find the ancient religious systems referred to as the mysteries – the ancient pagan mysteries. When Edgar Cayce, the psychic, was questioned under his self-hypnosis concerning theological matters, the answers given were, of course, the spirit speaking through him. He claimed to be a Christian, and a Sunday school teacher, and he viewed himself as a fine, outstanding Christian worker. He claimed that what he was doing was of God, and his gift was of God, but it was actually mouthing all of the basic religious tenets of the mystery cults. It is one of the most amazing things, as you read through what the spirit world said through the mouth of Edgar Cayce, to discovery that it's right down the line of this ancient Babylonian system. So that immediately clues us in as to where Edgar Cayce's powers came from, which powers were indeed very spectacular. For there were many people, and perhaps some even living to this day (I'm sure there are), who had serious illnesses, which Cayce, under the direction of the spirit world, prescribed the precise remedy that they needed to remove their illness. But it was these mystery religions that he was speaking of.

**The Confessional**

It became a mystery cult because it had to be secret. That's all the word "mystery" means here. It was a secret system now. The information of these secret mysteries were given only to the initiates – to those who became part of the system. You became part of the system in a variety of ways. One of the things you had to do to enter the mystery religious system was to have a confessional with one of the priests of the system. You had to confess all of your innermost thinking; all of your innermost attitudes; and, all of your wrongdoings, and you just had to expose yourself. Well, of course, you see how that also was absorbed into the Roman Catholic system in the confessional.

Well, this system, because it was a system of evil, had to go underground. It didn't change its practices after Nimrod was removed. It just went into a secret system. Therefore, it was called the "mysteries." It is these mysteries which were now removed from Babylon (upon the fall of that empire) to Pergamum. And only those who were going into the system were given its doctrines and were told its practices.

Basically, the problem was that this was a system that worshiped Satan. This was Satan worship. Later, of course, the whole idolatry system was openly practiced again. The whole practice of immorality was openly practiced in the pagan temples. The sacred prostitutes were there in order to perform the very practices of worshiping the god of the Babylonian mysteries, which was Satan, and worshiping him in sexual immorality. It was later openly practiced.

**The Seed of the Woman**

The Babylonian mysteries in Pergamum thought that the sun was the one true actual God. The sun actually represented Satan. You probably know enough about ancient history and ancient peoples to know that the sun was often viewed as a god. It was often worshiped as a god. But this sun-god had an incarnation. Satan had a human incarnation. Guess who the human incarnation was? The Babylonian mystery cults taught that it was Nimrod (or Tammuz), and that he was the seed of the woman, and that's exactly what they call him. He was the seed of the woman.

**The Holy Virgin**

This incarnation of the sun-god was viewed as the savior of the world, but he was viewed in his incarnation as the product of a serpent and Semiramis – the wife/mother of Nimrod. Consequently, the mother who gave birth to this reincarnated Nimrod (her husband who had been killed) gave birth (the claim was made) as the result of her having been impregnated by the serpent. She was called the Holy Virgin among the pagans, which again is a common Roman Catholic practice toward Mary.

The consequence of this in Pergamum was that the sun divinity Satan was worshiped in the form of a snake. The snake god had the name "Aesculapius." Aesculapius, the name of this snake-god, means the man-instructing serpent. He was worshiped as the one who had opened man's eyes to the first knowledge of good and evil. For this reason, he was called Aesculapius Soter, which is the Greek word for savior: Aesculapius Savior. So Satan was actually worshiped in Pergamum as the great benefactor of the world under the form of this serpent Aesculapius. Of course, you know how precisely that fits in the Scripture.

This was, again, a clever move on the part of Satan. You would think that we might say, "Well, Satan was very unwise in using the serpent as a symbol, because everybody looks askance at the serpents." But that's the very reason he did it, because the followers of Satan today still claim that the devil received a raw deal at the hands of God; that God mistreated Satan in the judgment that He passed upon him; and, that Satan actually did a good thing for mankind. Yet God, in His lack of justice (His unfairness) has brought judgment upon mankind for what Satan did in Eden.

The snake Aesculapius was also viewed as the strength restorer, and thus the healing god. The serpent actually was the symbol of Rome. The symbol of the United States is the American bald eagle. The serpent was the symbol of the Roman Empire. It was carried about on the emblems of Rome, and on a pole with the serpent wound about it. This, of course, makes sense after the mystery cults were removed from Pergamum to the headquarters in Rome itself. Consequently, snakes were viewed as sacred objects by the Romans. They would have home altars to the god of Aesculapius, and they would have little live snakes crawling on their altars. These snakes were actually treated, and they acted, like pets. They would come by and want you to pet them. They would come out waiting for you to give them little pieces of food. When you invited guests over for a banquet, you had certain of these harmless little snakes crawling around on the table, because they were sacred objects, and they gave dignity to your banquet. As a matter of fact, they had some larger ones which the ladies would take on hot days, and wrap around their necks, because snakes are cool. Snakes have a cooling effect. They were very sacred objects. It was a very inspirational moment when they could have a snake crawling on them.

Of course, because they were sacred, they could not be killed. These things multiplied like crazy. The city of Rome was run over with snakes like cities in India are run over with rats. Cities in India have temples to the rats – sacred animals there. So they had temples, of course, to the god Aesculapius in the form of the snake. The only thing that kept it under control was the fact that Rome had so many fires and such a poor fire department that the snakes were kept thinned out.

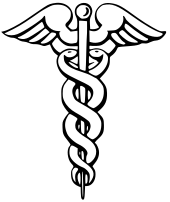
The Roman emperor himself took over the main title of the high priest of the Babylonian system when it was transferred from Pergamum to Rome. That was the title of Pontifex Maximus, literally "chief bridge builder," or really more pointedly, "the chief high priest." He was the chief contact point between man and God – the Pontifex Maximus. Again, I need not tell you who bears the title of Pontifex Maximus today, but the Pope himself. This title had previously been carried by the King of Pergamum as the head of the religious system. When it was transferred to Rome, Julius Caesar was the first one who took upon himself the title of Pontifex Maximus, because he became both head of state religion, which was now this Babylonian mystery cult, and he was head of the political entity.

Pergamum had a great temple to Aesculapius the snake – a temple which was worshiping the snake in terms of his healing qualities. This is one of the prime reasons that the Scriptures, here in this letter, call Pergamum the headquarters of Satan – the place where Satan's throne is. It was, of course, called that because they were so great on emperor worship. But it was also called that because of this fantastic worship of the snake who actually represented Satan. So Satan really was the God of Rome.

**A Halo**

Actually, the people of the ancient world came from all over Asia to Pergamum to be healed at the temple of Aesculapius. This was a place which indeed did study medicine. You could really say that modern medicine began here at the temple of Aesculapius. They actually did study human ailments, and they actually did come up with diagnoses; prescriptions; and, processes by which certain things could be healed. However, the basic principle was worship of the god Aesculapius which represented Satan. This god Aesculapius represented the sun God. Incidentally, when the serpent was often portrayed, he had a disk around him. This disk represented the sun. That's where the practice came of putting what we call a halo, or this round disk, around the heads of saints, and around the head of Jesus Christ. Anytime you see a great piece of art that has this halo thing around the head of Jesus Christ, recoil in horror. That's a thing they took right from the snake worship. It's a thing they took right from the Aesculapius temple. It's a thing they took right from the heathen practice of dignifying the sun as a god. They attach it to Jesus Christ.

**Caduceus**

All of you are acquainted, I'm sure, with the caduceus. The caduceus is a symbol which represents the medical profession in our day. It's a pole, and it has wings. Then it has two snakes wrapped around it. What does it mean? Well, it's the old pagan mystery religion symbol for healing that Satan himself came up with. Those snakes that you see on there are the representatives of Satan himself.  
  


The temple of Aesculapius, of course, was visited by people from all over Asia for the purpose of being healed. The way they went about this was that the temple was covered with harmless snakes that slithered all over the place. And a person who had an ailment would come and spend the night lying on the floor. If one of the snake slithered over him, it caused great joy within the sufferer, because the god of healing had touched him, and he viewed this as a good omen relative to his own healing. So those of you who have been in the habit of letting snakes slither over you, you may have received an additional benefit that you didn't anticipate.

Well, this will give you a little bit of an idea of why Pergamum was the headquarters of Satan and of his whole religious system. It gives you a little idea of what went on in this city, and why the Lord Jesus addresses these people and tells them, "First of all, I want you to realize that from my omniscience, I understand exactly what kind of a city you are living in. You are living in the place of Satan's headquarters; the headquarters of Satan's religious system; and, the headquarters of this evil, depraved, gross system of immorality that Satan invented through Nimrod and Semiramis, and which has been passed down through the ages as the finest approach that man has to God. However, in truth it is a worship of Satan himself."

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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