

God Is Government

Isaiah 33:22

**“For the LORD is our judge, the
LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is
our KING; he will save us.”**

**TEACHINGS OF YESHUA HAMASHIACH
BIBLICAL AND WORLD HISTORY MASTERCLASS**

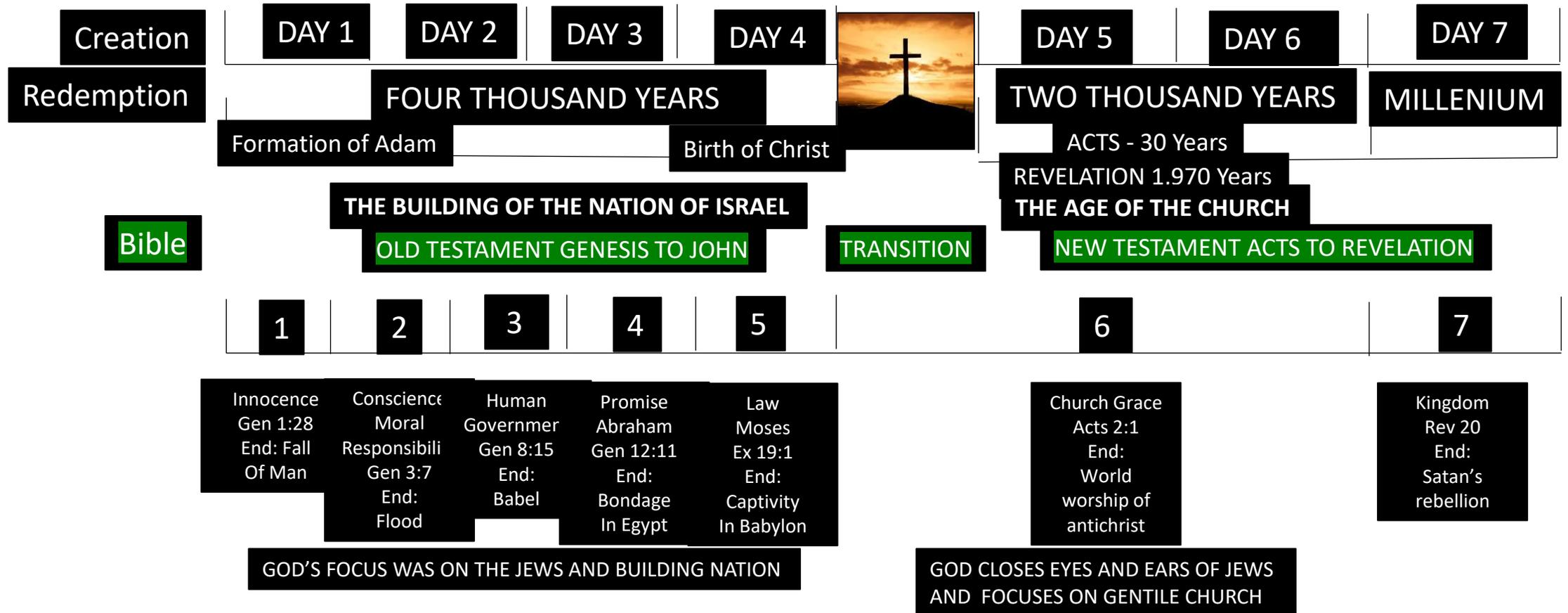
A Study of Revelation

Letter to the Church at Sardis

Chapter 3

April 11, 2024

CREATION (GENESIS) – REDEMPTION (REVELATION) TIMEFRAME



Innocence Gen 1:28 End: Fall Of Man	Conscience Moral Responsibili Gen 3:7 End: Flood	Human Governmer Gen 8:15 End: Babel	Promise Abraham Gen 12:11 End: Bondage In Egypt	Law Moses Ex 19:1 End: Captivity In Babylon
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Church Grace
Acts 2:1
End:
World
worship of
antichrist

Kingdom
Rev 20
End:
Satan's
rebellion

The Seven Churches

- The seven churches are
 - ❖ Ephesus
 - ❖ Smyrna
 - ❖ Pergamos
 - ❖ Thyatira
 - ❖ Sardis
 - ❖ Philadelphia
 - ❖ Laodicea
- These seven, somehow are completely representative of the Church in total – the age of the church history.
- The degree, the way they are ordered, are anticipatory of history (prophetic) is astonishing!

Revelation 1:10-11 – VISION OF THE SON OF MAN

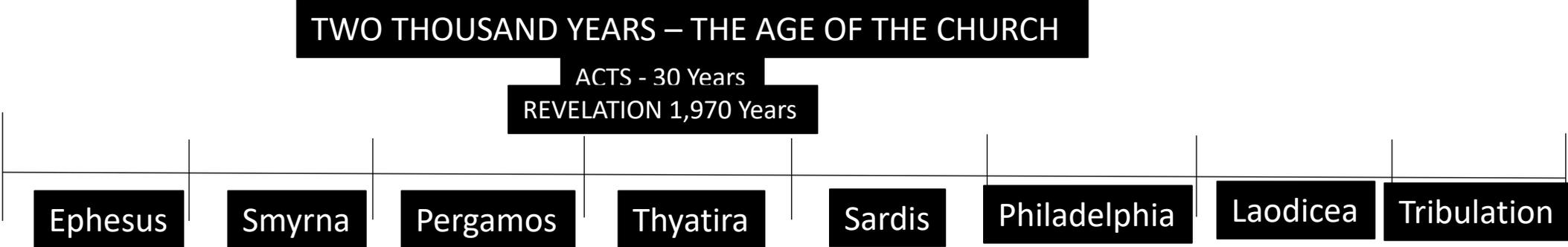
“I WAS IN THE SPIRIT.....” John says four times

- On the “day of the Lord” (At Patmos) Revelation 1:10
- To the Throne in Heaven Revelation 4:2
- Carried away in the wilderness Revelation 17:3
- Carried to a mountain Revelation 21:10

John was “in the spirit” but the key phrase here is “On the day of the LORD” (Revelation 1:10). John, through the spirit was brought forward through time and was given the ability to “SEE” what was going to happen. He was able to “SEE” “the day of the LORD,” even though he is on the island of Patmos. In chapter 4, he is in the spirit and at the throne room in heaven.

There is another phrase to pay attention to. “Thunders, voices, lightening's, and an earthquake.” The first time we see the phrase it is in regard to the Throne (Rev 4:5) and another referring to the opening of the seven seals (Rev 8:5), Trumpets (Rev 11:9) and Bowls (Rev 16:18).

REDEMPTION (REVELATION) TIMEFRAME



Revelation 1:10-11 – VISION OF THE SON OF MAN

The Seven Churches: “The Things That Are”

- There is Divine outline of the book of Revelation. The entire book is like a cover letter that is then sent to the seven churches. Each letter to the seven churches contains the same closing phrase “He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” There are four levels of interpretation or application of these seven letters:
 - ❖ **LOCAL:** There were actual churches (researched extensively by Sir William Ramsey and found these churches existed and they had problems that the letters were relevant to.)
 - ❖ **ADMONITORY:** It says “churches” meaning all of them. Each message applies to each, to some extent.
 - ❖ **HOMILETIC:** the phrase “He that hath an ear” is a personal letter that applies to us.
 - ❖ **PROPHETIC:** In their particular order they profile and lay out the history of the church. (They fill the gap implied in Daniel 9:26 and between Revelation 12:5 and 6).

Revelation 1:10-11 – VISION OF THE SON OF MAN

Seven Design Elements In Each of the Letters

- Name of the Church: Each church name proves to be significant to its particular unique message.
- Title of Christ Chosen: Jesus will select a title, from those listed in Chapter One, to represent Himself to each church, a title characteristic for the unique letter.
- Commendation: Some good news.
- Concern: the bad news.
- Exhortation: what to correct.
- Promise to the Overcomer: this will prove to be an interesting structural element.
- “He that hath an ear what the Spirit says to the churches”: the close.

Every detail will prove important: even the placement of the closing phrase will prove illuminating.

The Church at SARDIS

Historical Background – Sardis

Seven hundred years before this letter was written, Sardis was one of the greatest cities in the world. It is reputed to be one of the oldest cities of Asia Minor. Aeschylus, Thucydides, and other Greek writers mention it as a city of renown. It probably dates back to before 2000 BC. Sardis was the ancient Capital of Lydian empire (1200 BC) and residence of the royal dynasty of the Mermnades.

A strategic travel location between Pergamum, Smyrna, Ephesus, Philadelphia, and Phrygia. Sardis favored commerce and it became a very wealthy city. Gold and Silver “Lydian Staters” were the first coins in the world – in about the sixth century BC.

At its zenith, Croesus, its king, (and also its river, Pactolus) became proverbial for riches. Its patron deity was the goddess Cybele, (known as Diana in Ephesus) whose son, Midas, was the wealthy but effeminate king of Phrygia.

Historical Background – Sardis

Midas Mythology

In Greek mythology, Midas was king of Phrygia in Asia Minor. For his hospitality to the satyr, Silenus, Dionysus, god of wine, offered to grant Midas anything he wished. The king requested that everything he touched be turned to gold, but he soon regretted his choice because even his food and water were changed to gold. To free himself from the enchantment, Midas was instructed by Dionysus to bathe in the Pactolus River. It was said that afterward the sands of the river contained gold.

Historical Background – Sardis

Ostensibly Impregnable

Sardis was situated on a hill one thousand feet above the broad valley of the Hermus at the foot of Mt. Tmolus. It appeared to be impregnable. However, the sheer precipitous cliff was clay, which suffered continual erosion and the untrustworthy mud left occasional cracks which could be exploited.

This false confidence was reflected in the character of the inhabitants: false confidence, appearance without reality, promise without performance, outward appearance of strength betrayed by want of watchfulness and diligence. An example: When besieged by Persians in 549 BC, Croesus, then king of Lydia, left unguarded the precipitous cliffs on three sides of the city. After a fourteen-day siege, Cyrus offered a reward to any man who could find a way of scaling the apparently unscalable cliffs. One of his soldiers, Hyeroeades, noticed a Lydian soldier accidentally dropped his helmet over the battlements and noted his path to retrieve it, thus revealing an unguarded oversight.

In the darkness of the following night, Hyeroeades and a Persian party climbed the cliff and clambered over the unguarded battlements to take the city. But the Sardians did not learn their lesson. In 214 BC, the formidable cliffs again proved susceptible to a hazardous climb when Lagoras repeated the exploit of Hyeroeades and the city was similarly taken by Antiochus. Hegel said, "History teaches that man learns nothing from history." The Sardians were not watchful.

Historical Background – Sardis Ostensibly Impregnable

Sardis' Dismal History

- 549 BC Fell to the Persians
- 501 BC Burned by the Ionians
- 334 BC Surrender to Alexander the Great
- 322 BC Taken by Antigonus
- 214 BC Fell to the Seleucids

A City of Failure

The name of Sardis became synonymous with: Pretensions unjustified; promise without performance; appearance without reality; and false confidence that heralded ruin. They betrayed themselves by a lack of watchfulness and diligence (W.M. Ramsay, Letter to Seven Churches).

By the New Testament time, most of Sardis' earlier dignity and splendor had disappeared. A severe earthquake in AD 17 caused major damage. The town was destroyed by the Turkic conqueror Tamerlane in 1402. Archaeological excavations were begun at the site in 1910, but the city itself was not uncovered until 1958. Today the little town of Sart has only fragments of its proud history.

The Church of Sardis

Revelation 3:1A – The Stone

And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write;

There is much uncertainty around the “Sardis” stone. It means “Red stone,” or “the red ones” and the plural of uncertain derivation (Odem, the red stone with a yellow shade; Exodus 28:17; 39:10; Ezekiel 28:13). It was used by the ancients for seals, as being tough yet easily worked, beautiful, and susceptible of high polish and the best stone for engraving. Josephus (the best authority, being a priest, therefore having often seen the high priest’s breastplate) calls it the sardonix, the first stone in the high priest’s breastplate. According to the Septuagint, sardion was the first stone, in the first row, of the breastplate of the high priest. Both sardine and sandonyx are varieties of agate.

It was named from Sardis in Lydia, where it was first found. The Hebrews for their high priest’s sardones in Arabia, and from Egypt (Exodus 12:35). The Sarda of Pliny’s time was much used by the seal engravers. There were three Indian varieties, all of them transparent, one of them red in color; there was then no precious stone in more common use; those of honey-color were less valued. It probably included both the sard and the carnelian of the present day (cryptocrystalline silica).

The Church of Sardis

Revelation 3:1A – The Stone

And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write;

It, at one time, was deemed a precious stone but then becomes quite common. The labels for precious stones in the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek translations of the New Testament were not consistent, so there are many speculations regarding this stone. Sardion (Greek sardion) found in Revelation 4:3 and 21:20 refers to the foundation of the New Jerusalem. The Vulgate (Jerome's Latin Bible, AD 390-405) translates "sardius" and the King James Version translates "sardine" (stone) and "sardius" (Revelation 21:20); the Revised Version (British and American) translates "sardius."

In Revelation 4:3, it says, "And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." As the Jasper (or else diamond) represents the divine brightness or holiness, so the red sardine (our Cornelian) represents His fiery wrath. This is also the same union as in Ezekiel 1:4 and 8:2 and Daniel 7:9.

It is interesting that this stone is not identifiable although it has a name, but no significance. This is exactly what the letter to Sardis is all about!

The Church of Sardis

Revelation 3:1B – Title of Christ & Concern

These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

The “Seven Spirits of God” was the Old Testament idiom for the Holy Spirit. Why does Jesus use this title with this particular church? Most denominations today are very uncomfortable with the Holy Spirit – It is one major cause of division within the church.

Concern

The word “name” in the Greek is onoma and also means “Label” or “Being covered by a name.” This word appears three times in six verses in this letter. Sardis has a name and yet art dead!

What is missing? There is no “Commendation” in this letter!

The Church of Sardis

The Reformation A Review

As early as the thirteenth century, (before Martin Luther) the reformation was beginning. The papacy had become vulnerable to attack because of the greed, immorality, and ignorance of many of its officials in all ranks of the hierarchy. They had vast tax-free church possessions, some constituting as much as one-fifth to one-third of the lands of Europe. This incited the envy and resentment of the land-poor peasantry.

14th Century

English reformer John Wycliffe boldly attacked the papacy striking at the sale of indulgences, the excessive veneration of saints and the moral and intellectual standards of ordained priests. To reach the common people, he translated the Bible into English rather than Latin.

15th Century

Wycliffe's teachings spread to Bohemia, where they found a powerful advocate in Jan Hus (John Huss). His execution in 1415 led directly to the Hussite Wars, a violent expression of Bohemian nationalism, suppressed with difficulty by the combined forces of the Holy Roman emperor and the pope. The wars were a precursor of religious civil war in Germany in Luther's time.

The Church of Sardis

The Reformation A Review

French Papacy

The captivity of popes at Avignon in the fourteenth century, and the ensuing Western schism, gravely impaired the authority of the Papacy and divided its adherents into partisans of one or another pope.

Council of Constance (1414-1418): A four-year period where all kinds of ambitious programs for the reorganization of the entire hierarchy were debated but no program gained a majority.

Concordat (1516) between the king and the pope which placed the French church substantially under royal authority. Earlier concordats with other national monarchies also prepared the way for the rise of autonomous national churches.

The Church of Sardis

The Reformation A Review

The Gutenberg Press

The invention of the Gutenberg Press and the idea of printing with movable metal type generated a revolution in printing. The Gutenberg Bible is the first book so printed, by Johannes Gutenberg in Mainz, Germany, 1455. The increased efficiency of printing, and a more literate population, enhanced the spread of ideas, fueling the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation in Germany. Scholarly studies laid the basis on which Luther, Calvin, and other reformers proclaimed the Bible, rather than the church, as the sole authority. This greatly increased the circulation of books and the spread of new ideas throughout Europe.

The Church of Sardis

The Reformation A Review

Martin Luther

In the year 1483, in Eisleben, Saxony, a baby was born to a poor coal miner. As he grew up and observed the poverty of his father, this boy, named Martin, chose to pursue a different vocation. He decided to become a lawyer and in 1501, entered the University of Erfurt, where he excelled in his studies.

As he came to the end of his schooling in 1504, an event took place which changed his life. While he was walking the campus grounds, a storm broke so forcefully that Martin fell on his face in fear. The thunder was deafening and lightening struck all around him, including a tree next to him. Instinctively, he cried out to the patron saint of coal miners, whose name he had heard invoked during his childhood. "Saint Anne! Save me from the lightening. If you save me, I will become a monk." Shortly thereafter the storm stopped.

The Church of Sardis

The Reformation A Review

Martin Luther

Being a man of his word. Martin withdrew from Law school and entered an Augustinian monastery where he applied himself so diligently that he obtained a Doctorate of Theology with a few years. But the more he studied, the more troubled his heart became; for although he was becoming an expert in theology, he lacked peace personally. The question he repeatedly wrote in his diary was: "How can a man find favor with God."

Disillusioned by a visit to Rome, Habakkuk 2:4 (the just shall live by faith...) became his life text. On October 31, 1517, Luther nails his ninety-five-page thesis to the door at Wittenberg College. His hope was to get the church to reform and shed these pagan practices. On December 10, 1520, Pope Leo X issued a papal bull, or decree, which excommunicated Luther and commanded him to "retract within sixty days or suffer death." Luther burned it publicly, and the Reformation was born.

The Church of Sardis

The Reformation A Review

Martin Luther

At the Diet of Worms in 1521, Charles V the Emperor of ‘ the Holy Roman Empire’ (Germany, Spain, Netherlands and Austria) summoned (God does not summon) Luther to appear. Luther said to him, “Here I stand I can do naught else; so, help me God.”

The Centuries of War began:

The war on the German Protestants (1566-1609)

War on Protestants of Netherlands (1566-1609)

Huguenot Wars in France (1572-1598)

Philip’s attempt against England (1588)

Thirty Years War (1618-1648)

The Church of Sardis

The Reformation A Review

The Jesuits

Rome's answer to the Lutheran succession, the Inquisition was an order founded by Ignatius Loyola, a Spaniard, under the leadership of the Jesuits. On the principle of absolute and unconditional obedience to the Pope, its sole objective was the recovery of territory lost to Protestants and Muslims and the conquest of the entire heathen world for the Roman Catholic Church. Their supreme aim was the destruction of heresy – that is, thinking anything different from what the Pope said or thought. For this accomplishment anything was justifiable, deception, immorality, vice, even murder.

In France, they were responsible for St. Bartholomew's Massacre; persecution of the Huguenots, revocation of the Toleration Edict, and the French Revolution. In Spain, Netherlands, south Germany, Bohemia, Austria, Poland and other countries led in the massacre of untold multitudes, and thus saved the Papacy from ruin.

The Church of Sardis

The Reformation A Review

Church Development

11th – 15th Centuries

1054	Eastern Orthodoxy	Peter Waldo
1173	Waldensians	John Wycliffe
1415	Hussites	Jan Hus

The Church of Sardis

The Reformation A Review

Church Development

16th Century

1517	Lutheranism	Martin Luther
1521	Anabaptists	Scandinavian Lutherans
1523	Swinglianism	Huldreich Zwingli
1534	Anglicanism	Henry VIII
1536	Mennonites	Menno Simons
1536	Calvinism	John Calvin
1540s	German Reformed Church	
1550s	Hungarian Reformed Church	
1560s	French Calvinists (Huguenots)	

The Church of Sardis

The Reformation A Review

Church Development

16th Century

1560s

Scottish Presbyterians

John Knox

1560s

Congregationalism

Puritans

1570s

Dutch Reformed Church

17th Century

1606

English Baptists

John Smyth

1647

Quakers

George Fox

1690

Amish

Jacom Ammon

The Church of Sardis

The Reformation A Review

Church Development

18th - 19th Centuries

1739	Methodism	John Wesley
1785	Protestant Episcopal Church	
1800	United Brethren in Christ	
1819	Unitarianism	William Channing
1831	Disciples of Christ	Thomas Campbell
1863	Seventh-Day Adventists	William Miller
1865	Salvation Army	William Booth
1879	Christian Science	Mary Baker Eddy
1914	Assemblies of God	

The Church of Sardis

The Reformation A Review

The Denominational Church Today

Characteristics of the major modern denominations include:

- “Soft” hermeneutical traditions
- Denial of the Millennial Reign
- Denial of Israel’s prophetic destiny
- Absence of Biblical devotional life
- De-emphasis of the Gospel of Christ
- Ordination of homosexuals

The Reformation was a heroic period in church history, “Salvation by faith, not works.” But its failure persist unto this day. The allegorizing of Scripture (especially those concerning Christ’s rule in the Millennium) is at the top of the list. The Reformation did not go far enough. The Millennium and the Rapture of the Church are not accepted literally in most mainline denominational churches today.

The Church of Sardis

The Reformation A Review

Evangelicals and Catholics Together

The most significant event in five hundred years of church history was on March 29, 1994. On that date, a joint declaration titled “Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium” was issued. The compromise of the Gospel lies at the heart of the agreement – but the Gospel hasn’t changed. This could be the most significant event in 500 years of church history.

The Church of Sardis

Revelation 3:2-3 – Exhortation Begins

Rev 3:2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

Rev 3:3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

This is a call to be “WATCHFUL,” to “PAY ATTENTION” and do your homework and research!!! To strengthen the things that remain is a warning and an implication of the things that you have are eroding away. It is a rebuttal to those ignoring the times. “... As a thief in the night” was the proverbial downfall of Sardis! The message in the letter to Sardis is hold fast and repent. Apparently, He will now come “as a thief” for those who are diligent.

The Church of Sardis

Revelation 3:2-3 – Exhortation Begins

“BE WATCHFUL”

By vigilant

Watchfulness

Be Watchful of the wiles of the devil

Be Watchful of Temptation

Be Watchful of His Coming

False Teachers

Ten virgins of Matthew 25

Romans 13:11; 1 Corinthians 16:13

1 Peter 5:8

Matthew 26:41

Matthew 24:42-42; Mark 13:37; 1 Thessalonians 5:6

Acts 20:29-31 (Ephesus was watchful but no devotion)

“STRENGTHEN THINGS WHICH REMAIN”

Great truths are being lost today: the justification by faith alone; the inerrant Word of God; the depravity of man; and redemption by His blood.

“... WORKS NOT COMPLETE”

Our love is not complete, our fear (our devotional life) is not complete, our loyalty (our Ambassadorship) is not complete, and our service is not complete. Without HIM, we can't. Without US – HE won't.

The Church of Sardis

Revelation 3:2-3 – EXHORTATION BEGINS

I NEVER KNEW YOU

Mat 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Mat 7:22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

Mat 7:23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

The Church of Sardis

Revelation 3:4 – EXHORTATION ENDS

Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.

Only a few names? The phrase, “even in Sardis” is the call to be faithful remnant!

The Church of Sardis

Revelation 3:5-6 – Promise to the Overcomer

Rev 3:5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

Rev 3:6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Perspectives

Admonitory Level (to all churches)

- Ephesus Devotion, not just doctrine
- Smyrna Endure persecution
- Pergamum Purify ambassadorship
- Thyatira Pagan practices
- Sardis Watchfulness, diligence
- Philadelphia
- Laodicea

STAND FAST AGAINST THE WORLD!

Perspective

Personal Level (Homiletics – to each of us today)

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| ➤ Ephesus | Neglected priorities |
| ➤ Smyrna | satanic opposition |
| ➤ Pergamum | Spiritual compromise |
| ➤ Thyatira | Pagan practices |
| ➤ Sardis | Watchfulness, diligence |
| ➤ Philadelphia | |
| ➤ Laodicea | |

STRENGTHEN, PURIFY YOUR AMBASSADORSHIP. AND ACCURATELY REPRESENT YOUR KING!!!!!!

Perspective

Promises to the Overcomer

- Ephesus Eat of the Tree of Life
- Smyrna Not hurt of the Second Death – satan’s grave of the fiery pit
- Pergamum Manna, Stone (DNA change) New Name (Name in Lamb’s Book of Life – your ticket to heaven)

- Thyatira Power over nations
- Sardis Walk with Him in white; name
- Philadelphia
- Laodicea

Who is the “Overcomer”?

1Jn 5:4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

1Jn 5:5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

The Church of Sardis

Prophetic Profile

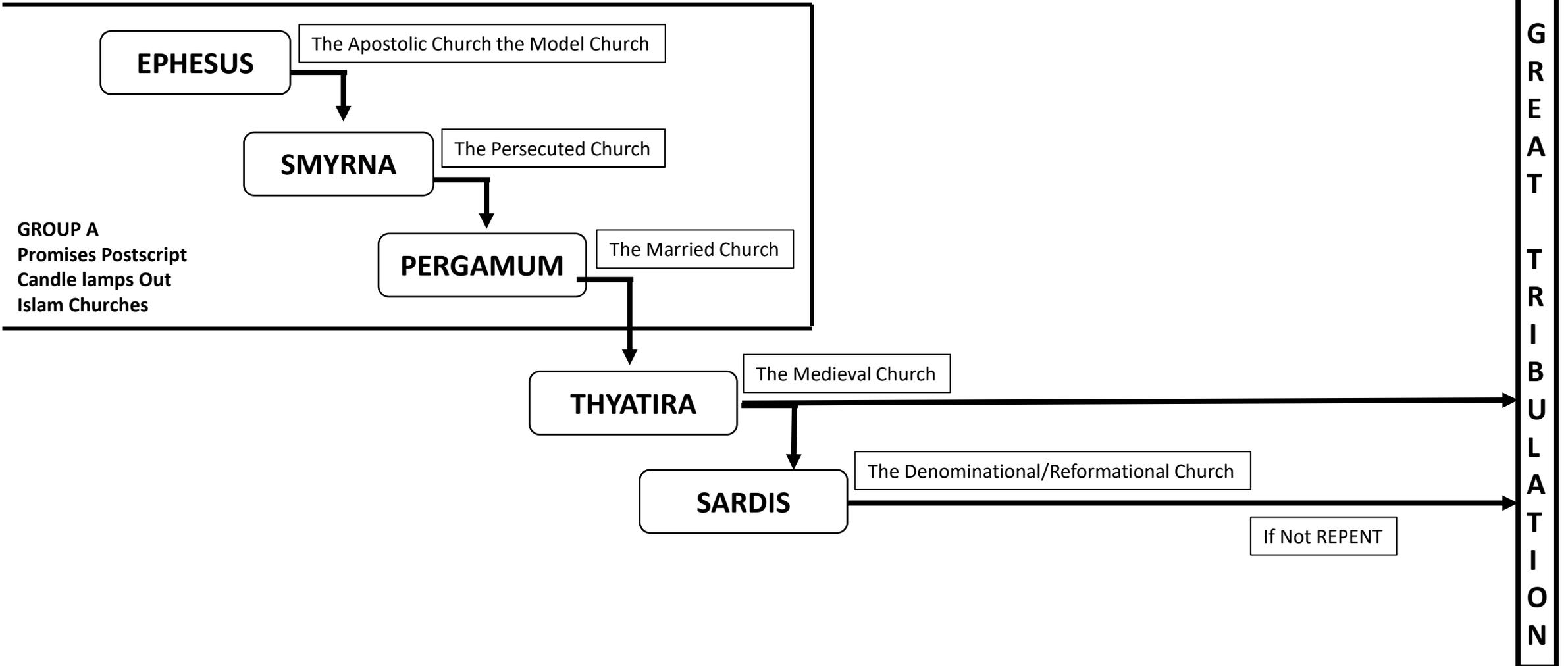
Sardis is the Denominational Church – Reformation Church

	Ephesus	Smyrna	Pergamos	Thyatira	Sardis	Philadelphia	Laodicea
Name of the Church	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Title of Christ Chosen	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Commendation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗		
Concern	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓		
Exhortation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Promise to the Overcomer	PS	PS	PS	BODY	BODY		
“He that hath an ear what the Spirit says to the churches”	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

PS – Means that the Promise to the Overcomer was made after the body of the letter.

BODY – Means that the Promise to the Overcomer was made part of the letter to the churches.

Prophetic Profile of the Seven Churches



Study Assignment

- Always pray first before asking to open your minds to God's reveal for you
- Have a relationship with the Author of everything – Jesus Christ
- Set aside your personal presuppositions
- Take good notes
- Start and Continue to update your personal private journal
- Read the book of Revelation each week
- Read the chapters 2 and 3.
- Download the Word Doc handout and outline the Church of Philadephia.
- From the Handout Outline the Church of Ephesus.