

**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**

**Overview of the Seven Churches**

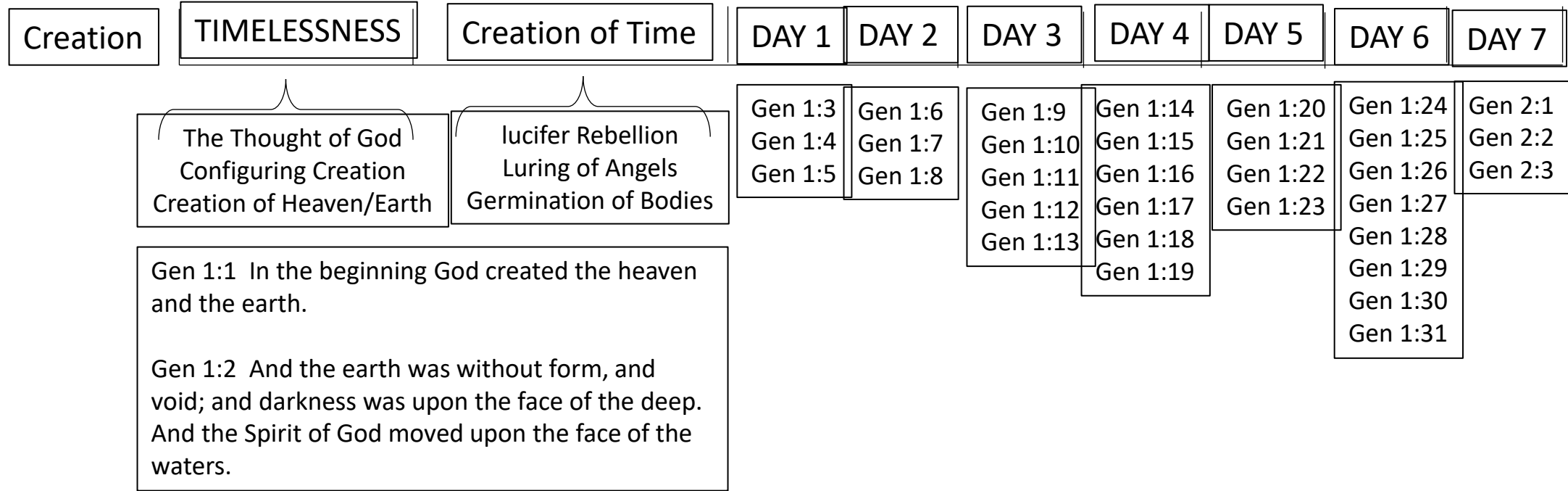
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**Letter to the Church at Ephesus**

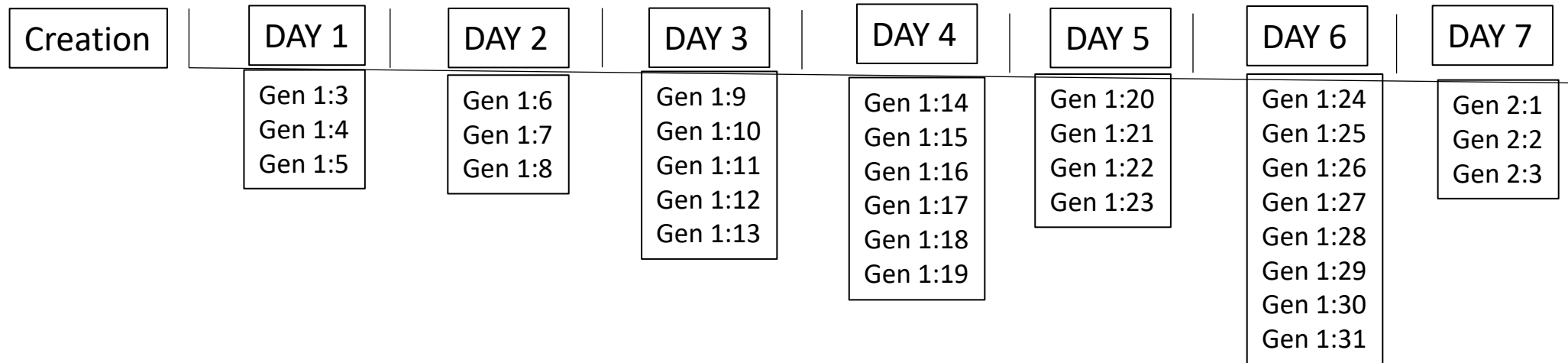
**Chapter 2**

**March 14, 2024**

# CREATION (GENESIS) – REDEMPTION (REVELATION) TIMEFRAME

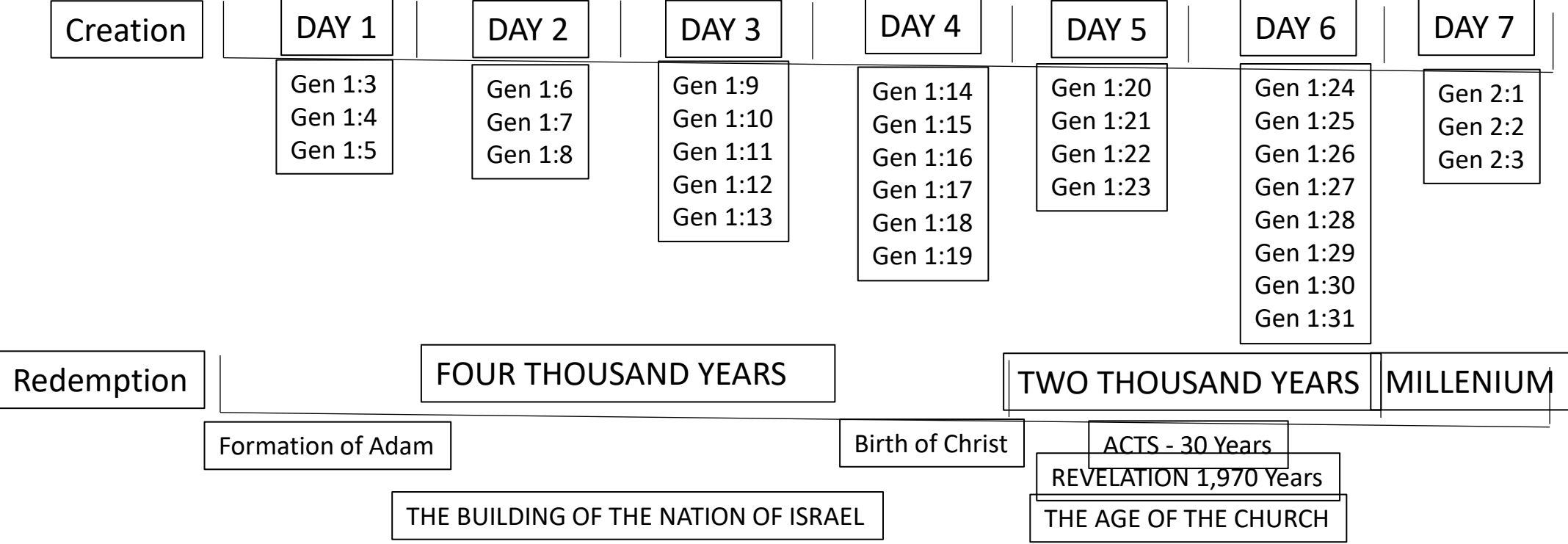


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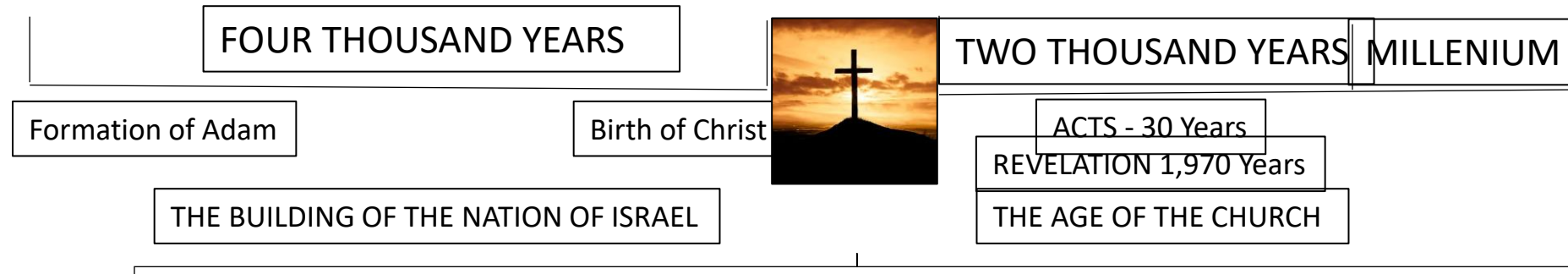


2 Peter 3:8 “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that **one day is with the Lord as a thousand years**, and a thousand years as one day.”

# CREATION (GENESIS) – REDEMPTION (REVELATION) TIMEFRAME

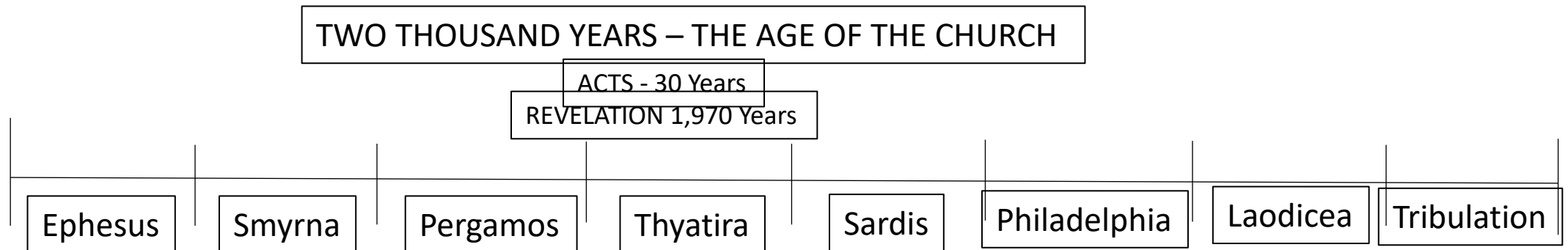


# REDEMPTION (REVELATION) TIMEFRAME



The period of Christ birth to death was 33 1/2 years. Under Jewish law a priest could not start his ministry until he reached the age of 30. Therefore, Christ ministry is **3 ½ years, 1,260 days, 42 months, Times time and half time. – Daniel 9**

# REDEMPTION (REVELATION) TIMEFRAME



- The period of Christ birth to death was 33 1/2 years. Under Jewish law a priest could not start his ministry until he reached the age of 30. Therefore, Christ ministry is 3 ½ years, 1,260 days, 42 months, Times time and half time. – Daniel 9
- If the church was not started until Pentecost, then the day of Pentecost would day 1 of the 2,000-year church history. Pentecost was May 22, 33. Two Thousand years from that date would be May 22, 2033. However, we know not the exact date. (Matthew 24:36) But we do have the begin date. (Hosea 6:2)

**Ephesus   Smyrna   Pergamos   Thyatira   Sardis   Philadelphia   Laodicea**

Name of the Church

Title of Christ Chosen

Commendation

Concern

Exhortation

Promise to the Overcomer

“He that hath an ear what the Spirit says to the churches”

## The Seven Churches

- Why did Christ pick these seven churches to write letters to?
- The seven churches are
  - ❖ Ephesus
  - ❖ Smyrna
  - ❖ Pergamos
  - ❖ Thyatira
  - ❖ Sardis
  - ❖ Philadelphia
  - ❖ Laodicea
- There are several dozen others He might have picked. Where's the church in Jerusalem, Rome, Antioch?
- In the Bible the number seven implies completeness.
- 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!



# The AGE OF THE CHURCH

- The Old Testament is an account of a NATION (ISRAEL)
  - ❖ Romans 11:1-8 "I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, 3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. 4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. 7 What then? **Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded 8 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. [THE DAY OF THE LORD]"**
- The New Testament is an account of a MAN (GENTILE)
  - ❖ Colossians 1:26-29 "The **mystery [THE AGE OF THE CHURCH]** which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

# THE CHURCH AGE PERIOD

- For all believers in Christ both Jews and Gentiles
- The Church Age Period started in Acts with Ephesus.
- The Church Age Period is for two thousand years

Hosea 6:2 “After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up (gathering of his people – the rapture), and we shall live in his sight (the second coming of Christ the end of tribulation and the start of the Millenium).”

Now we can take from this and with our hermeneutics (our interpretation) can apply this verse to several points in time.

1. The birth of Christ
2. The death of Christ
3. The resurrection of Christ
4. The ascension of Christ
5. The birth of the Apostolic Assembly – Acts 2:38

## Revelation 1:4-5 – GREETINGS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

“4 John (Rev 1:1) to the (Rev 1:11, Rev 1:20, Rev 2:1, Rev 2:8, Rev 2:12, Rev 2:18, Rev 3:1, Rev 3:7, Rev 3:14; Act 19:10; 1Pe 1:1) seven churches which are in Asia: Grace (Rom 1:7; 1Cor 1:3; 2Cor 1:2; 1Pe 1:2) be unto you, and peace, from him (Rev 1:8; Exo 3:14; Psa 90:2, Psa 102:25-27; Isa 41:4, Isa 57:15; Mic 5:2; Joh 1:1; Heb 1:10-13, Heb 13:8; Jas 1:17) which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the (Rev 3:1, Rev 4:5, Rev 5:6; Zec 3:9, Zec 4:10, Zec 6:5; 1Cor 12:4-13) seven Spirits which are before his throne; 5 And from Jesus Christ, who is (Rev 3:14; Psa 89:36-37; Isa 55:4; Joh 3:11, Joh 3:32, Joh 8:14-16, Joh 18:37; 1Ti 6:13; 1Jn 5:7-10) the faithful witness, and the first (Act 26:23; 1Co 15:20-23; Col 1:18) begotten of the dead, and the prince (Rev 11:15, Rev 17:14, Rev 19:16; Psa 72:11, Psa 89:27; Pro 8:15-16; Dan 2:2, Dan 7:14; Mat 28:18; Eph 1:20-22; 1Ti 6:15) of the kings of the earth. Unto him (Deu 7:8, Deu 23:5; Joh 13:1, Joh 13:34, Joh 15:9; Rom 8:37; Gal 2:20; Eph 2:4, Eph 5:2, Eph 5:25-27; 1Jn 4:10) that loved us, and washed (Rev 7:14; Zec 13:1; Joh 13:8-10; Act 20:28; 1Cor 6:11; Heb 9:14; 1Pe 1:19; 1Jn 1:7) us from our sins in his own blood,”

- John is referred to with no additional title, so it seem he is well known to these churches.
- The word “grace” or “Charis” is a common Greek greeting and here contains a deep theological term.
- The word “Peace” or “Shalom” is referring to the Peace of God. (profound problem resolved)
- Some view these “Seven Spirits” as referring to angels as the seven special ones. The term “Angels” appears 74 times (104 in New Testament) and 9 times as the seven special ones. However, in Isaiah we are given the seven spirits.

Isaiah 11:2 “And the spirit of **the LORD shall rest upon him**, the spirit of **wisdom** and **understanding**, the spirit of **counsel** and **might**, the spirit of **knowledge** and of the **fear of the LORD;**” (Zech 4:1-10, Hebrews 10:29, Galatians 5:22)

## Revelation 1:6 – GREETINGS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

“And hath made (Rev 5:10, Rev 20:6; Exo 9:6; Isa 61:6; Rom 12:1; 1Pe 2:5-9) us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him (Rev 4:11, Rev 5:12-14; Psa 72:18-19; Dan 4:34; Mat 6:13; Joh 5:23; Php 2:11; 1Ti 6:16; Heb 13:21; 1Pe 4:11, 1Pe 5:11; 2Pe 3:18; Jud 1:25) be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

- In Israel, kings were from the tribe of Judah and the priests were from the tribe of Levi.
- They were mandated to stay separate.
- The phrase “and hath made us kings and priests” (more details when we get to chapters 4 & 5) is because there are only three places in scripture that detail being a king and a priest at the same time. (1 Peter 2:9-10)
  - ❖ Genesis 14 – Melchizedek being a king and a priest
  - ❖ Psalms & Hebrews – Jesus Christ
  - ❖ Revelation – You and I, as believers, are stated as kings and priests
- The work of Christ on behalf of believers caused John to burst forth in an inspired doxology of praise to Him. In the present, Christ loves believers with an unbreakable love (Romans 8:35-39)
- Christ love also caused Him to make us to be a kingdom not the millennial kingdom, but the sphere of God’s rule which believers enter in salvation. (Col 1:13)

## Revelation 1:7-9 – GREETINGS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES/VISION OF THE SON OF MAN

“7 Behold, he cometh (Rev 14:14-16; Psa 97:2; Isa 19:1; Dan 7:13; Nah 1:3; Mat 24:30, Mat 26:64; Mar 13:26, Mar 14:62; Luk 21:27; Act 1:9-11; 1Th 4:17) with clouds; and every (Rev 22:4; Num 24:17; Job 19:26-27, Job 33:26; 1Th 1:10; 1Jn 3:2; Jud 1:14) eye shall see him, and they (Psa 22:16; Zec 12:10; Joh 19:34, Joh 19:37; Heb 6:6, Heb 10:29) also which pierced him: and all (Rev 6:15-17, Rev 18:15-19; Mat 24:30; Luk 23:28-30) kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so (Rev 18:20, --Rev 19:1-3, Rev 22:20; Jdg 5:31; Psa 68:1), Amen.

8 I am Alpha (Rev 1:11, Rev 1:17, Rev 2:8, Rev 21:6, Rev 22:13; Isa 41:4, Isa 43:10, Isa 44:6, Isa 48:12) and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is (Rev 1:4), and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty (Rev 4:8, Rev 11:17, Rev 16:14, Rev 19:15, Rev 21:22; Gen 17:1, Gen 28:3, Gen 35:11, Gen 43:14, Gen 48:3; Gen 49:25; Exo 6:3; Num 24:4; Isa 9:6; 2Cor 6:18).

9 I John (Rev 1:4), who also am your brother, and companion (Rev 2:9-10, Rev 7:14; Joh 16:33; Act 14:22; Rom 8:17; 1Cor 4:9-13; Php 1:7, Php 4:14; 2Ti 1:8, 2Ti 2:3-12) in tribulation, and in the (Rev 3:10, Rev 13:10, Rev 14:12; Rom 2:7-8, Rom 5:3-4, Rom 8:25; 2Th 1:4-5, 2Th 3:5; Heb 10:36; Jas 5:7-8) kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word (Rev 1:2, Rev 6:9, Rev 11:7, Rev 12:11, Rev 12:17, Rev 19:10) of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. ”

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## **Revelation 1:7-9 – GREETINGS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES/VISION OF THE SON OF MAN**

- The phrase “every eye shall see him” is a physical and personal observation (Daniel 7:13, Matthew 24:30, 26:62)
- Seeing with their own eyes “Which pierces him” is also mentioned in Zechariah 12:10.

### **I AM ALPHA AND OMEGA.... THE FIRST AND THE LAST**

- The LORD refers to himself as the First and the Last Seven Times
  - ❖ Isaiah 41:4
  - ❖ Isaiah 44:6
  - ❖ Isaiah 48:12
  - ❖ Revelation 1:11
  - ❖ Revelation 1:17-18 (“was dead and am alive”)
  - ❖ Revelation 2:8 (“was dead and am alive”)
  - ❖ Revelation 22:13
- “I John” is specifically references five time (Rev 1:1, 4, 9, 21:2, 22:8)

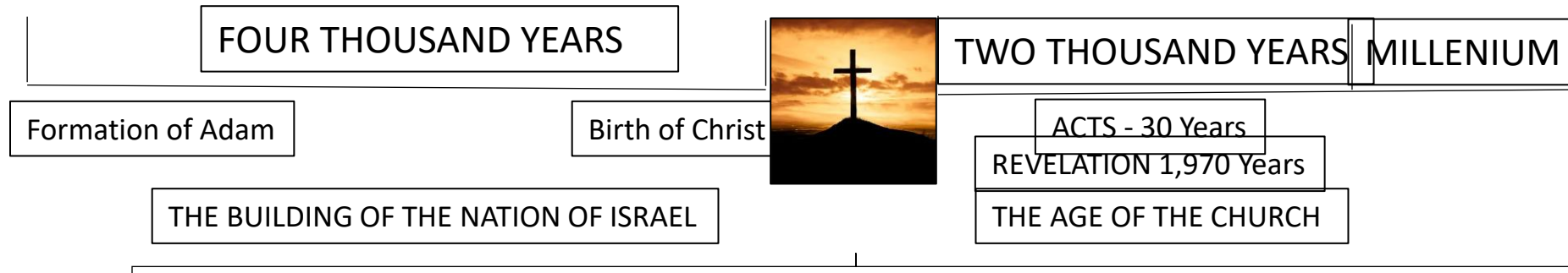
## Revelation 1:7-9 – GREETINGS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES/VISION OF THE SON OF MAN

### Why Christ Must Return

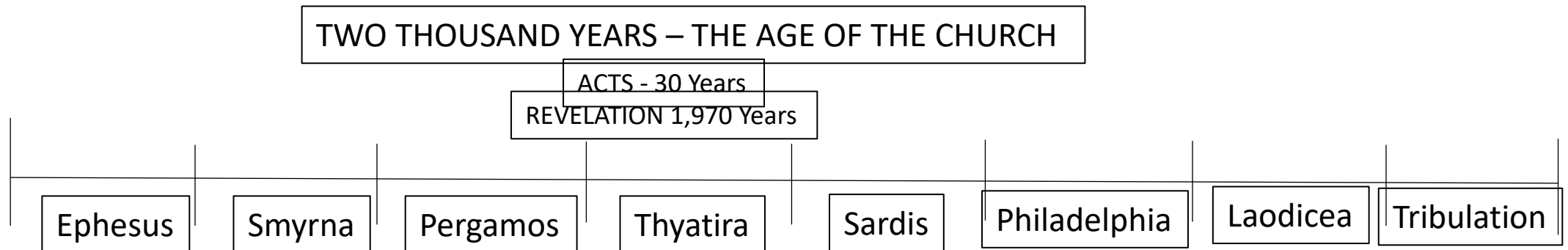
- People deny His Second Coming (2 Peter 3:3-4)
- The truth of His second coming appears in more than 500 verses throughout Bible.
- One out of every twenty-five verses in the NT refers to the Second Coming.
- Christ repeatedly spoke of His return (Matthew 16:27, 24-25, 26:64, Mark 13:35, 14:62, Luke 12:40, 21:34-36)
- The promises of God require Christ return (Genesis 3:15)
- Messiah's earthly reign (Daniel 7:13-14, 18, Zech 14:4-9, Mal 4:1-4, Numbers 23:19)
- The promise from Jesus requires His return (Rev 2:16, 3:11, 22:7, 12:20, John 14:2-3, Luke 19:11-27)
- Guarantee by the Holy Spirit of His return (John 15:26, 16:13, 1 Cor 1:4-8, Phil 3:20-21 Col 3:4, 1 Thes 2:19, James 5:8, 1 Peter 1:13, John 3:2)
- God's program for the church (Rev 3:10) following the Rapture (Romans 14:10, 1 Cor 3:12-15, 4:5, 2 Cor 5:10, Phil 1:6, 10:2, 2 Tim 1:12, 18, 4:8, Rev 11:18)
- End of Tribulation (Rev 19:7-9, 2 Cor 11:2, Eph 5:22-30, 2 Tim 2:19)
- Christ program for unbelievers (Psalms 2, Joel 3:1-2, 9:17, Isa 11:1-5, Mic 4:1-8, Zech 3:8, Matt 25:31-34)
- Covenant with Israel (Romans 11:13, 1 Tim 2:7, Romans 11:1-2, Deut 4:30-31, Isa 9:6-7, 11:11-12, 60:10-14, Jer 23:5-8, 30:1-33, 46:28, Ezek 36-37, 40-48, Dan 9:20-27, 12:1-3, Hos 2:14-23, 14:4-7, Joel 3:18-21, Amos 9:8-15, Obad 17, 21, Mic 4:8, 7:14-20 Zech 3:14-20, 13-14, Matt 19:28, Acts 1:6-7)







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

### The Seven Churches: “The Things That Are”

- Why these seven churches?
- Why not Jerusalem? Antioch? Rome? Lystra? Iconium?
- 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 of Ephesus

The word Ephesus means “my darling,” or “the desired one.”

*Rev 2:1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;*

*Rev 2:2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:*

*Rev 2:3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.*

In Acts 20, when Paul was on his way back to Jerusalem, he didn't go through Ephesus itself because the crowd would be too big. He went to Milerus on the other side of the peninsula and let the elders come to meet him. There he gave them his farewell address. But he warned them to be on the alert for false doctrine and false teaching. Apparently, they heeded that admonition because Jesus here compliments them on their diligence; they did well in that regard. But then there is this horrible word, nevertheless.

## The Church of Ephesus

*Rev 2:4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.*

They got so busy doing the work of the Kingdom that they didn't have time for the King! The weak link here was their devotional life. (Is that also true of us?) So, Jesus gives them an exhortation.

*Rev 2:5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.*

*Rev 2:6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.*

Who were the Nicolaitans? It's an untranslated word: but nicao means "to rule over" and laitans are laity, the common people. It means "ruling over the common people." The idea of the clergy over the laity was introduced in the organizational church. However, Jesus taught us about His organizational concepts when He washed the disciples' feet. "He who will be the greatest ought to be the servant." Then we encounter this little closing code phrase:

*Rev 2:7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches;*

## The Church of Ephesus

And then we come to the promise to the overcomer:

*Rev 2:7 To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*

In this letter, the promise to the overcomer is a postscript, a tag after the closing phrase that closes the letter proper. This is true of the first three letters, but we will notice that there is a strange design in the last four letters; in fact, several aspects of the last four letters are distinctively different from the first three.



## The Church of Smyrna

The word Smyrna means “myrrh” as aromatic embalming ointment; the name myrrh thus suggests death. When the Magi gave the three different gifts to the baby Jesus in accordance with the secret prophecy that Daniel had conveyed some five centuries earlier, they gave gold as an emblem for His deity, frankincense for His priesthood, and myrrh for His death.

The very name of Smyrna, myrrh, tells us, up front, this will be to the persecuted church.

*Rev 2:8 And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;*

*Rev 2:9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.*

## The Church of Smyrna

This letter to a suffering church. That is why Jesus chose an identity of Himself that would be precious to them.

*“These things saith the first and the last, which was dead and is alive.”*

That is an encouragement to those facing death.

*“I know thy works of tribulation and poverty.”*

Yes, they are going through all kinds of tribulation and persecution.

## The Church of Smyrna

*“I know the blasphemy of them that say that they are Jews, but they are not.”*

Same people say the promises which God made to Israel. However, the promises in question were unconditional! Israel could not forfeit them if she tried. So, beware of the blasphemy of those non-Jews [Ashkenazi Jews – Rothschilds – Central Banks – State of Israel] who would deny God’s expressed commitments to His chosen people. The idea that the Church has replaced Israel would make God a liar! (This is a widespread controversy; study it diligently for yourself, discerning the distinctiveness of both Israel and the Church in God’s program.)

His exhortation:

*Rev 2:10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

*Rev 2:11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.*

## The Church of Smyrna

Death and life is all through this letter. Again, the promise to the overcomer is an add-on, after the catchphrase. "He hath an ear ... He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." Jesus in encouraging them in their trials. (He that is born once, dies twice; he that is born twice, dies once.)

## The “Ten Days”

It has been suggested that the persecution of the early church happened in ten distinct periods:

1. Nero A.D. 34-68; beheaded Paul, crucified Peter upside down.
2. Domitian A.D. 93-96; who exiled John to Patmos, where he wrote this letter.
3. Trajan A.D. 104-117; Ignacius was burned at the stake.
4. Marcus Aurelius A.D. 161-180; Polycarp was martyred on the Sabbath and burned at the stake.
5. Septimus Severus A.D. 200-211.
6. Maximus A.D. 235-237.
7. Dectus A.D. 249-251.
8. Velarian A.D. 257-260.
9. Aurelian A.D. 270-275.
10. Diocletian A.D. 303-313; the worst of the entire bunch.

## The Church of Pergamos

The first clue to the significance of this letter is the name Pergamoa; it means “mixed marriage.” Pergamos was a perverted marriage.

*Rev 2:12 And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;*

*Rev 2:13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.*

*Rev 2:14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.*

*Rev 2:15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.*

*Rev 2:16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.*

## The Church of Pergamos

Jesus is alluding to the Old Testament story of Balaam, a prophet for hire. Balac, the enemy king, was trying to figure out a way to conquer Israel, so he hired Balaam to advise him. Balaam told him that God would support Israel as long as they were faithful; so, to conquer them, he had to lead them to unfaithfulness and God would then turn His hand against them. In other words, he advised Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel.

Balaam's strategy in the Old Testament was characteristic of what was going on in Pergamos: the church was beginning to marry the world.

Also, the "deeds" of the Nicolaitans had become "doctrine." The remedy for all these concerns was to return to the Word of God.

## The Church of Pergamos

*Rev 2:17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.*

Again, the promise to the overcomer, glorious though it is, is an appendage after the closing catchphrase.



## The Church of Thyatira

At one time this town was named Semiramis, who was the consort of Nimrod (his mother), the first world dictator.

*Rev 2:18 And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;*

*Rev 2:19 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.*

They have done some good things, but they also have some problems:

*Rev 2:20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.*

## The Church of Thyatira

Again, as idiom from the Old Testament: Queen Jezebel was bad news. She introduced idol worship into Israel. (False worship is always termed a form of spiritual fornication.) After the great standoff between Elijah and the priests of Jezebel on Mt. Carmel, when the Lord demonstrated who was really God, Elijah slaughtered the priests of Jezebel.

*Rev 2:21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.*

*Rev 2:22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.*

*Rev 2:23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.*

In 1 Kings 21, King Ahab wanted a vineyard that belonged to a Naboth, but Naboth did not want to sell. Ahab was upset, so, Queen Jezebel arranged an inquisition and bribed everyone to lie so that Naboth was condemned and executed. Then she took the property for the king. Does that procedure sound familiar? Like the practices the Medieval Church indulged in during the Inquisition?

## The Church of Thyatira

*Rev 2:24 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 Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.*

*Rev 2:25 But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.*

*Rev 2:26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:*

*Rev 2:27 And he 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.*

*Rev 2:28 And I will give him the morning star.*

One of this representative church's problems was a desire for temporal power. Does that summarize the history of the medieval church in European history?

## The Church of Thyatira

*Rev 2:29 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

Two things distinguish this letter (in fact, the last four letters) from the previous three. First, it has an explicit reference to His Second Coming: “till I come.” But also, the promise to the overcomer is brought into the body of the letter.

Bear in mind, we believe there is no detail, no number, no place name, no subtlety to the original text, that isn't there by the deliberate design of the Holy Spirit.

## The Church of Sardis

The name Sardis means “remnant.”

*Rev 3:1 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; 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 word name will appear all through this letter. This church seems to be the denominational church created out of the reformation.

*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.*

## The Church of Sardis

Apparently, if they repent, they won't be caught by surprise. They still won't know the day or the hour, but they won't be surprises. If you are caught by surprise, you are not doing the will of God. He desires for you to expect Him at any moment (The Doctrine of Imminence.)

*Rev 3:4 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.*

*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.*

Again, the promise to the overcomer is in the body of the letter, included before the closing catchphrase.

## The Church of Philadelphia

Every church believes they are the Philadelphians. The word means “brotherly love.”

*Rev 3:7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;*

*Rev 3:8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.*

*Rev 3:9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.*

*Rev 3:10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.*

## The Church of Philadelphia

Verse 10 is a key verse for all of us. There are two groups of people in the Book of Revelation. Those who get caught up to heaven, and those who are “earth dwellers.” The earth dwellers do not just live on the earth, their focus and orientation is earthly. Go back to Genesis 1:26-27. These are lost. There will come an hour of trial upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth. This is the Great Tribulation, the last half of the Seventieth Week of Daniel. The promise to this particular church is that they will be kept, not from the tribulation, but the hour of tribulation. In other words, they aren’t protected through the trials; they won’t even be around.

“Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown” (3:11). You can’t lose your salvation, but you can lose your rewards. Be diligent.



## The Church of Philadelphia

*Rev 3:11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*

*Rev 3:12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.*

*Rev 3:13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

Here again, “promise to the overcomer” is within the body of the letter.

## The Church of Laodicea

Laodicea means “the rule of the people.” That is an interesting phrase. Many churches across the country are doing market research, trying to make their pulpits “user-friendly,” and the message of the Church more palpable to the easily offended. But we are called to preach the Gospel. How Christ died for our sins according to Scripture, that He was buried, that He rose again, according to the Scriptures.

Jesus Christ is to rule the Church; here we have the people running things instead of God.

*Rev 3:14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;*

*Rev 3:15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.*

*Rev 3:16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*

*Rev 3:17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:*

*Rev 3:18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.*

*Rev 3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.*

## The Church of Laodicea

Even though they have fancy cathedrals and much worldly goods, they are poor, blind, and naked.

The next verse is one of the most quoted verses, but we have all heard it out of control.

*Rev 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

That is a wonderful verse, but read it in its context and it is a disturbing indictment: Where is Jesus with respect to this church? “Behold I stand at the door.” He is out there. He is outside, trying to get in. And the promise isn’t to the church, it is to the individual inside this church. “If any of you hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him and sup with him and be with Me (individually).”

## The Church of Laodicea

*Rev 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*

*Rev 3:22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

## **Characteristics of the Church Letters**

Although we have only skimmed the surface of these carefully crafted letters, we notice some provocative patterns. For instance, only five of the seven were commended; two had nothing good said about them. Five of the seven were admonished; two had nothing bad said about them. It is extremely provocative that every one of them were surprised: those that thought they were doing well were not. Those that thought they were not doing well, were doing better than they thought. All of them were exhorted to improve.

## Characteristics of the Church Letters

And, in particular order they profile the history of the church through the ages.

- Ephesus described the apostolic Church (the model church); diligent but neglected their devotional life.
- Smyrna fits the Church when persecutions began. Nothing negative was said about it; just “hang in there.”
- Pergamos fits the Church that was married to the world under Constantine. His successors would make it the official state religion, which was disastrous spiritually.
- Thyatira introduced idolatry in the medieval Church, which became codified in the Roman Catholic Church. It carries an express threat of being cast into the Great Tribulation.
- Sardis seem to fit the Reformation and the start of denominationalism. But notice that Sardis is one of the seven that had nothing good said about it.
- Philadelphia is the glorious Church, the missionary Church declaring the blood of Christ. It has an express promise of being removed prior to the time of the Tribulation.
- Laodicea is the apostate Church.

## Characteristics of the Church Letters

In the first three letters, the promise to overcome is an addendum. The same promise is within the body of the last four. The last four letters are also distinctive in that they have an explicit reference to the Second Coming of Christ. So, one of the possibilities is that the last four letters relate to churches alive, when the Lord returns, and the first three, while historical, will have passed from the scene. In fact, today the first three are no where to be found. God took their lampstands.

The Great Tribulation ends the life of the last four churches. The medieval church, Thyatira, is warned that if she doesn't repent, she will be thrown into the Great Tribulation. Well, that is exactly where the Roman Catholic Church is headed. Philadelphia is promised that she will be kept from the time of the tribulation. No comment is made about the denominational church, Sardis, or the apostate church, Laodicea. One would imply that, in the absence of repenting, they too will endure the Great Tribulation, which will be characterized by a great ecumenical (but apostate) movement.

## **The Church at Ephesus**



## Historical Background - Ephesus

- Tactus records that the city of Ephesus was founded in 1400BC, with an early temple to the Mother Goddess and ancient Hittite fertility deity who subsequently became identified with Diana. Ionian colonists from Athens there about 1100BC.
- In the middle of the sixth century BC, the Lydians captured the city. Croesus, their king, was routed by the Persians in 541BC and Ephesus was joined to the other cities in the Ionian confederation. It was about the time the tutelary deity became identified with Diana (or Artemis).
- Ephesus was involved in its own disadvantage in the Peloponnesian and Persian wars (431 – 404BC) and served as a key naval base. In 334BC, it fell to the Macedonians under Alexander. After his death, four of his key generals took over his empire and Lysimachus became master of the city and added great improvements.
- Ephesus unwisely sided with Antiochus of Syria against the Romans. It eventually became the Roman capital of the province of Asia (Asia Minor or Turkey today). But as a free city, Ephesus had its own municipal government and senate (mentioned both by Strabo and Josephus).

## Historical Background – Ephesus

### Geographic Position

- Ephesus was called the “Queen of Asia” as it was one of the most beautiful cities in the region and was located near the mouth of the river Cayster (now Lower Meander). It was the proud capital of Ionia and chief harbor of proconsular Asia. It was an extremely wealthy and beautiful city. and was the principal line of communication between Rome and the eastern provinces.
- One Major road ran eastward through a pass to Sardis and then to Galatia and beyond. Another led to Magnesia and up the valley of the river Meander to Iconium; a third ran through Collasae and Laodicea to the Euphrates. Trade with Greece and Italy ran through the port regularly.

## Historical Background – Ephesus Architecture

- Architecturally superb, its theater was 495 feet in diameter and held 25,000 people (Acts 19). The Marble Way, lined with statues and fountains, ran from the temple of Artemis through the city to the Megnesia Gate. The Arcadian Way, another main road from the theater to the harbor, was 1,735 feet long and 70 feet wide, lined with columns and shops and illuminated at night. The most outstanding architectural feature was the temple of Diana (daughter of Zeus, sister of Apollo).
- The temple of Diana, one of the “seven wonders” of the ancient world, was four times as large as the Parthenon at Athens and stood on a platform 425 feet by 220 feet. The building itself was 340 by 165 feet, had 120 Ionic columns, each 60 feet high. Ecstatic, sexual rites took place at the temple, involving both male and female prostitutes. Its income was threatened by Paul’s preaching - this led to his departure. The temple was also an asylum for the criminals.
- The first bank (in the world?) functioned at the temple under the chief priests.

## Historical Background – Ephesus

### New Testament Period

- In the New Testament period Ephesus was the largest city of its day. As the harbor gradually became unusable, traffic diverted to Smyrna. Ephesus was the center for the study of arts and magic; renowned over the world for talismans (Bush family original name), incantations, books, charms, etc. (Occult items burned in Acts 19:19)
- Paul's visit was brief and was directed toward the Jewish community; he later made a second visits – he was driven from the synagogue and settled in the school of Tyrannus for two years until the uproar in AD 58 (Acts 19:24-41; 20:1). Ephesus later became the center for missionary operations throughout Asia. Imitators followed, but without power (Seven sons of Sceva: Acts 19:12-17). After Paul left Ephesus and journeyed through Macedonia, he returned (to Miletus) for his famed farewell to the Ephesian elders.

## **Historical Background – Ephesus**

### **New Testament Period**

Timothy is alleged to have become its first bishop (1 Timothy 1:3). It is here that we find Aquila, Priscilla, and Apollos. 1 Corinthians was penned during his second visit. (Paul's Epistle to Ephesus was written from Rome.) John is said to have spent time in Ephesus with Mary, the Mother of Christ. According to Eusebius and others, John returned there in AD 95 after Patmos, and spent his closing years there. His Gospel was apparently written from there and Timothy, John and Mary's tombs are there. The reputed home of Mary is now a shrine.

## Historical Background – Ephesus

### Later History

The bishop of Ephesus was accorded rank and authority of a patriarch over the churches in the province of Asia. In AD321, Emperor Theodosius II called a general church council at Ephesus to consider the hotly argued question of the time whether the Virgin Mary should be described as the mother of God, and two hundred bishops at this Third Ecumenical Council decided in the affirmative.

Its chief city was Miletus, but alluvial deposits gradually silted up the harbor of Miletus; Ephesus (for a while) eclipsed its rival in importance. (The Roman stripped the land of its wooded mountain ranges; soil eroded and the resulting silt transformed the harbor to a swamp; today twenty miles of land has cut off the city from the sea. (Even in the first century, Paul landed at Miletus – after one of the many dredged – In Acts 20.)

The present unpretentious village of Seljuk, built by the Byzantines, is but a sad remainder of the former glory. After its destruction by the Goths in AD 262, it never regained its former glory,. Jesus' letter in Revelation was about thirty-five years after Paul's departure. (For more background read Acts 18-20. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians and John's Epistles.)

## Historical Background – Ephesus

### Paul's Farewell to the Elders

*Act 20:16 For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.*

*Act 20:17 And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.*

*Act 20:18 And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons,*

*Act 20:19 Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews:*

*Act 20:20 And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house,*

## Historical Background – Ephesus

### Home Fellowship

- Original form of fellowship “house-to-house” (all incidents in Books of Acts were in homes)
- Formal churches established in the third century with Constantine
- Home fellowships ostracized by
  - ❖ Medieval Church
  - ❖ Reformation Church
  - ❖ Many churches today
- Viable form for underground churches



## Historical Background – Ephesus Home Fellowship

*Act 20:21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*Act 20:22 And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there:*

*Act 20:23 Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.*

*Act 20:24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*

*Act 20:25 And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.*

*Act 20:26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.*

## Historical Background – Ephesus Home Fellowship

*Act 20:27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.*

*Act 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*

*Act 20:29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.*

“Grievous wolves enter in among you ...” the very thing that they apparently anticipated in Jesus’ letter.

## Historical Background – Ephesus

### Home Fellowship

- Act 20:30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.*
- Act 20:31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.*
- Act 20:32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.*
- Act 20:33 I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.*
- Act 20:34 Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me.*
- Act 20:35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.*
- Act 20:36 And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all.*
- Act 20:37 And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him,*
- Act 20:38 Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.*

## Historical Background – Ephesus

### John's Epistles

- 1 John            Epistle to Ephesus
- 2 John            Personal to Mary
- 3 John            Personal to Gaius

John – understandably – emphasizes love to his Ephesian flock! 1 John 4:1-3 also includes warnings about false teachers. (Even his personal letter to Mary includes warnings about false teachers; 2 John 1:9-11)

## Historical Background – Ephesus

### John's Epistles

*1Jn 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.*

*1Jn 4:2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:*

*1Jn 4:3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*

*1Jn 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.*

*1Jn 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*

*1Jn 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.*

*1Jn 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

*1Jn 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.*

## Historical Background – Ephesus

### Revelation 2:4 - Concern

*Rev 2:4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.*

The primary theme of the letter is “thy first love.” The word first is protos, meaning first in rank, influence, honor, the chief, principal. The superlative love. The phrase “because thou hast left thy first love” is referring to they were too busy on the business of the King to have time for the King. God would prefer to have “devotion” rather than “doctrine.”

## Historical Background – Ephesus

### Revelation 2:4 - Concern

#### Love of Espousal

- Joy of their salvation (Isaiah 51:12, Jeremiah 2:2, 2 Corinthians 11:2, 1 John 4:19)
- First-named fruit of the Spirit is love (Galatians 5:22)
- God uses the marriage to communicate His most intimate truth? (The Most Intimate Truth: The Harpazo!)
- Twenty references on this grace are found in Paul's epistle to the Ephesians (Ephesians 5)

*Luk 10:38 Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.*

*Luk 10:39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.*

*Luk 10:40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.*

*Luk 10:41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:*

*Luk 10:42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.*

## Historical Background – Ephesus

### Revelation 2:5-6 - Exhortation

*Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.*

The aorist is used both “Remember” and ‘repent” so he envisaged no delay. Repent is repeated for emphasis. Where is the lampstand of Ephesus visible today? It is gone, Notice He hates the deeds, not the Nicolaitans. These deeds will become doctrine in the third letter to Pergamos.



## Historical Background – Ephesus

### Revelation 2:5-6 - Exhortation

Nicolaitans

- Some scholars suggest the possibility the Nicolaitans were a first century sect claiming apostolic authority for their opinions.
- There are others that believe it was an untranslated word and comes from the Greek word Nicao which means laity or people. Using their clerical stature or position to rule over the laity.

In John 13, Jese gives us an example or organizational chart of how He was the church.

*Joh 13:14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.*

*Joh 13:15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.*

*Joh 13:16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.*

Jesus washed His disciples' feet. If He was this humble, then this is the pattern in which we should follow. The whole idea of the clergy (minister which we all are) somehow ruling over the laity apparently is something that offends Jesus Christ by these letters.

## Historical Background – Ephesus

### Revelation 2:5-6 - Exhortation

#### Admonitions

- Doctrinal purity: He acknowledges they had doctrinal purity, but He has an abhorrence of heresy.
- Devotion to our King: this is where they were lacking. “They left their first love” and were too busy on the business of the King rather than for the King Himself.
- He wants devotion, not just doctrine.
- First commandment: Sh'ma (Deuteronomy 6:5)
- No thought of self: “If I speak with the tongues of men ...” (1 Corinthians 13)
- First love is the abandonment of all for a love that has abandoned all.

	<b>Ephesus</b>	<b>Smyrna</b>	<b>Pergamos</b>	<b>Thyatira</b>	<b>Sardis</b>	<b>Philadelphia</b>	<b>Laodicea</b>
Name of the Church	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						
Title of Christ Chosen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						
Commendation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						
Concern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						
Exhortation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						
Promise to the Overcomer	<b>PS</b>						
“He that hath an ear what the Spirit says to the churches”	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						

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

# Prophetic Profile of the Seven Churches

**EPHESUS**

The Apostolic Church the Model Church

# 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 Smyrna.
- From the Handout Outline the Church of Ephesus.