

To Those Who Overcome

Preparing For Christ's Return
Volume 2



Maurice Barratt

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Preface

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready.

Revelation 19:7

In the previous volume, I looked at the aspirations of Paul to be in the first resurrection and the process he knew he would have to go through to attain it. He plainly said that he was not assured of this reward for he says, ‘Lest by any means...’. He was assured of his salvation and eternal destiny but he was striving for the mastery and was running the race to receive the prize of his high calling: the first resurrection.

If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I

had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:11-14

We too, must not presume that because we are saved by faith our entrance into the coming kingdom is a foregone conclusion. Jesus, and the Apostles in their letters to us, make the conditions for entering the Kingdom very plain and we ignore them at our peril.

Christians who think that because they are saved by faith, and not works, and have eternal life, will automatically reign with Christ over the nations of this world are deluded in the extreme. Works cannot obtain Salvation just as sure as faith cannot obtain the Kingdom that is coming. If Believers have not been faithful in this life why would Jesus allow them to reign with him and judge angels? It is neither scriptural nor common sense. The Parables of the Kingdom speak of rewards and punishment

for those facing Christ at his judgement seat. Paul says we will have to give account for deeds done in our body – how we have lived since we believed.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad.

2 Corinthians 5:10

Our eternal destiny is sealed by faith but there will be 1,000 years on this earth when Jesus will reign and only those who qualify will be in the Kingdom.

Footnote 1

In this 2nd volume, I will be looking at the qualifications for a Believer to be the Bride of Christ, based on John's letters to the seven Churches in the book of Revelation. We will see that those who overcome will inherit the promises and those who did not will not obtain the promises. Jesus tells each church their faults and, in some cases, the remedy. It is obvious that these faults are the things the churches have to overcome to inherit the wonderful promises.

The question I have been asked many times is; "Are the letters to the Churches chronological and a timeline of Church history, or are they just applicable to every age?"

A good, intelligent question

I believe both could be true and I see no reason to believe one and reject the other for, on the one hand, I can see that they could be a timeline of Church history (although I have never studied this possibility). I certainly believe and will show, that the last church in Laodicea fits the modern church perfectly. On the other hand, of course, the principles and faults of all seven churches will apply in any age so we need to take heed of all the warnings and apply the remedies if they apply to us in this present age. This is what I intend to do in this volume.

If we are in the last of the last days then it is imperative that the potential Bride of Christ rids herself of the spots and wrinkles that mar her, so that Jesus can come for a glorious Bride.

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Ephesians 5:25-27

Jesus will not prepare the bride, the scripture is very clear that the Bride must prepare herself.

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and **his wife has made herself ready.**

Revelation 19:7

The modern-day church is not preparing the Bride and has missed the purpose of 'winning souls' The church does not know what to do with the new converts. They remain babies and need to mature into the image of Christ. In other words to be like Jesus, perfect (mature) without spot or wrinkle. Paul makes it plain that the, so-called, '5 fold' ministry is for this very purpose. Why, oh why, are the church not making this their primary purpose once a person has accepted Christ, been baptised in water and filled with the Holy Ghost?

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; **for the perfecting of the saints**, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge

of the Son of God, **unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:** that we henceforth are no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

Ephesians 4:11-15

The only purpose I can find in scripture for those who are saved is to 'be conformed to the image of Christ'. That is the purpose of the book sent to the Churches; to get rid of the spots and wrinkles.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate **to be conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Romans 8:29

Footnotes

1. I have written concerning this subject and the qualification for the Kingdom in my 'Radical Christianity' and 'Parables series –

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Introduction

The Lion of the Tribe of Judah

He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion: who shall stir him up? Blessed [is] he that blesses thee, and cursed [is] he that curses thee.

Numbers 24:9

We know that Jesus came the first time to this earth as a prophet and he died as a prophet. He was led like all the

prophets as 'a lamb to the slaughter'. He was meek and lowly, and came to die for the world, for those who were called. For those who accepted the call, he became their Saviour.

This is that Moses, who said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall you hear. ...Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom you have been now the betrayers and murderers:

Acts 7:37 and 52

Because we know all about Jesus' first coming, so many believers have this false image of Jesus. They presume he displayed his whole character, but they are wrong for there is another side to Jesus that we have not seen yet and John paints a very different picture.

A Wrong View of God

I know this to be true for the modern Church, in general, has the same one-sided picture of God.

A God who wants to bless us and loves us all unconditionally. He wants to fulfil our dreams and destiny, bless and prosper us. They do not want to see God as a father really is, one who chastises those he loves and demands that we obey his son's instructions to the letter. We serve a fearful God. Paul says, 'It is a fearful thing to fall to the hands of God', for he will destroy those he hates. This is not the God of the Old Testament because the character of God does not change. He did not have a heart transplant after the book of Malachi before he started the New Testament. Moses says in Deuteronomy exactly what Paul says in the New Testament.

For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.

Deuteronomy 4:24

For our God is a consuming fire.

Hebrews 12:29

Jesus will return, not as a lamb but as a lion to tear and devour. He is coming as a fearful judge with vengeance and no one will escape his judgement. Israel, the Church, and the nations of the world will all have to answer to Christ when he returns to this earth.

Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, **in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:**”
2 Thessalonians 1:6-8

The world is already under judgement. They are already condemned, that is why Jesus came the first time to save the world, but the second time he will come to judge the world.

And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

John 12:47

Worthy to Open the Book

Jesus is the only one qualified to perform this judgement. The obedience of Jesus not only saved the world but gave him the right, when God sends him back to earth, to judge it. No one, not even

Abraham, Moses, Elijah, or David the man after God's own heart, was found worthy to open the seals of this book of judgement.

The judgement has already been written by God and sealed in a book with seven seals and it is waiting to be opened in these last days. Read below what John saw in his vision.

And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders said unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

Revelation 5:1-5

One of the elders who says Jesus was the 'lion of the tribe of Judah' also says he is the 'root of

David'. A whole chapter could be written about the wonderful relationship between David and Jesus, but here are a few scriptures and observations of mine for those who want to pursue this intriguing relationship for themselves.

I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the **root and the offspring of David**, and the bright and morning star.

Revelation 22:16

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, **upon the throne of David**, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 9:7

And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth **in the tabernacle of David**, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.

Isaiah 16:5

And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.

Isaiah 22:22

Behold, the days come, says the LORD, that **I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper**, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

Jeremiah 23:5

It records that there were 14 generations from Abraham to David, fourteen generations from David to the carrying away to Babylon, and 14 Generations from Babylon to Jesus. Why is David one of the points between Abraham and Jesus?

The DNA of David

Paul says that it was necessary that Jesus had the seed (DNA) of David. It doesn't say he was born of Judah after the flesh, meaning the tribe, but to a certain King, David personally. Why? Is this the key to the incarnation – that the Holy Ghost impregnated the womb of Mary with the seed (DNA) of David. There is no Biblical evidence to

believe Mary was of the tribe of Judah. We know Joseph did not sleep with Mary before Jesus was conceived, so how could Jesus be of the seed of David in his flesh any other way? Please email me if you have any other explanation!

Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
which was made of the **seed of David**
according to the flesh;
Romans 1:3

Has not the scripture said, That Christ
comes of **the seed of David**, and out of
the town of Bethlehem, where David was?
John 7:42

Remember that Jesus Christ of **the seed of**
David was raised from the dead according
to my gospel:
2 Timothy 2:8

I will finish this introduction with the new song
that the 24 Elders will sing around the throne when
Jesus takes the book out of the hand of God to open
the seals and start the judgement.

And Jesus came and took the book out
of the right hand of him that sat upon the

throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sang a new song, saying, You are worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for you were slain, and have redeemed us to God by your blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and have made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, (100 million) and thousands of thousands; (millions) saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

Revelation 5:7-13

Have all the seals been opened at this time in history? Have some of them already been opened? Will they all be opened sometime in the future? This

is the material for another book, but personally, I believe none of the seals have been opened at this present time. However, I am convinced that very soon Jesus will start the end of the world judgement and the first seal will be opened. Woe to the earth when this judgement starts.

Chapter 1

A Very Different Jesus

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

Revelation 1:1

Before I look at the seven churches in Revelation, it is important to understand the first chapter for it will influence how we look at these churches.

The first point I want to make is that it was God who gave the revelation to Jesus about the last days, for the purpose of letting his Bride know what would come to pass. Therefore, we can conclude that up to this point Jesus did not know what would happen in the last days until he had accomplished his destiny – to die and rise again. It seems to me that there were many things that Jesus did not know when he was on this earth. Jesus did not know everything about God's plan.

Even Jesus Did Not Know

Jesus told Peter that he did not know who would be on his right or left hand in the kingdom, only his father knew who would qualify for this position.

Jesus said unto them, You shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

Matthew 20:23

Jesus did not know the hour when he would return to Earth..

But of that day and that hour no man knows, no, not the angels which are in heaven, **neither the Son**, but the Father.

Mark 13:32

In the book of Revelation, we have God revealing more of his plan to Jesus via John. From the wording of the first verse of the book of Revelation, it seems to me that God revealed it to his son only after he qualified to reign on this earth and claim his bride.

A Message From an Angel

Jesus sent the revelation via an angel to John so when it says throughout the book that 'Jesus said', it was actually the angel who was talking on behalf of Jesus in the same way an ambassador of a King would speak as the king, and not on his own behalf. He would only convey that which he had been told to say. John in turn passed the revelation on to us so it is actually 4th hand when we read it. Well, actually, it is 5th hand because the translators took John's writing and translated it into English. This does not make it any less accurate. Unlike Chinese whispers where the message gets corrupted after many people have passed it on, Jesus and the angel are perfect. I believe the Holy Ghost wrote the Bible, not men – they only held the pen. I could never believe it

was the word of God if men had flavoured it with their own personalities and doctrinal prejudices. The Bible would only **contain** the word of God not **be** the word of God which is very different to me.

Footnote 1

Of course, we need the Holy Ghost to interpret what is written or we will put men's interpretation of what we read. Indeed, many Church doctrines are assumed and only vindicated by proof texts taken out of context. The only way to understand God's word is to know God himself and not the written word alone. Satan will quote the word of God to deceive us so we are confused if we do not have an intimate relationship with God, the author.

Reading and Obeying

The second thing to note is verse 3 of this opening chapter for it says we are blessed when we read or hear what is written, but more importantly that we hold on to the things it tells us to keep, and this is the challenge. To read and even understand and not to do is to build our house on sand, and we know what will happen to the building when the test comes. 'Great will be the fall of it'.

Blessed is he that reads, and those that
hear the words of this prophecy, and keep

those things which are written in it: for the time is at hand.

Revelation 1:3

So many Believers either will not read Revelation because it is confusing to them (I know many ministers, to their shame, who will not speak on Revelation for the same reason), or major on the future prophecies yet do not obey the instruction to the churches. I believe one of the keys to understanding the Book of Revelation is simply to do what is demanded in the letters to the churches.

Why would God reveal the future if we are not living how we should in the present

Where is Babylon

John was told to write to seven churches in Asia which are now situated in modern Turkey. Why this location? Why not include the church in Jerusalem, or Antioch, for after reading the book of Acts and the letters to the churches they were far from perfect. My thinking is that Babylon, as a physical city, will always be fixed geographically but spiritually it can be in any situation. I believe it was, at this time, in Asia Minor for the simple reason all the faults of the seven churches show the spirit of Babylon at work

as I will confirm this when I come to the specific letters. I believe spiritual Babylon later moved from Turkey to Alexandria where the influence of Egypt (the world) entered the Church, and finally to Rome when Imperial Rome morphed into religious Rome, where the doctrines of Babylon were assimilated into the Church. So, at this time, Rome is the modern spiritual Babylon. However, we must never forget that this is only the capital of Babylon for the city rules the world. God told Nebuchadnezzar that his kingdom would cover not only his empire but the whole world and we can see that this has become a fact in the 21 century. ^{Footnote 2}

You, O king, are a king of kings: for the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven has he given into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all. You are this head of gold.

Daniel 2:37-38

I believe Spiritual Babylon will eventually move to Jerusalem before Jesus returns. Later in Revelation, it calls Jerusalem, 'Sodom and Egypt' showing how God thought of the Holy City spiritually just before the return of his son.

And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

Revelation 11:8

We know John was the disciple that Jesus loved. John is the only gospel writer that gives us this information, and he makes four different references to it in his Gospel.

When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, **whom he loved**, he said to his mother, Woman, behold your son!

John 19:26

Then she runs, and comes to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, **whom Jesus loved**, and said unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

John 20:2

Therefore that disciple **whom Jesus loved** said unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the

Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him,
(for he was naked,) and did cast himself
into the sea.

John 21:7

Then Peter, turning about, **sees the
disciple whom Jesus** loved following;
which also leaned on his breast at supper,
and said, Lord, which is he that betrays
you?

John 21:20

John seemed to have had a special relationship with Jesus. He is the one who conveyed all the conversations about the Bride in the upper room. (John 13-18 which I will look at in the next volume is all about love and marriage to just 11 men, the foundation of Christ's Church and his Bride).

John Was Shocked!

John knew Jesus as the lover of his soul and a friend. Exiled on the Greek Island of Patmos, John was in the spirit and heard a loud voice like a trumpet telling him to write what he saw and send it to the seven churches. John turned to see who was speaking and he was shocked beyond comprehension at the Jesus he saw and he fell as dead. He saw Jesus as he

had never seen or imagined before. This was a Jesus who would judge with fierceness. His eyes were like flames of fire. One look would burn up all the 'wood, hay, and stubble' of a Believer. Out of his mouth went a sword that would cut to ribbons any defence one might have, piercing to the innermost parts of the heart to reveal all the unknown truth of men's deceitful hearts. His countenance was like the noon-day sun which man could not look at directly.

And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shines in his strength.

Revelation 1:13-1

We must only read and interpret the letters to the churches in the light of this fearsome judge and

not how we see Jesus now as a gentle, loving, Saviour. If we do not we will fail to see the seriousness of this judgement and a lack of fear will prevent us from making the necessary and painful remedies that are required of us.

Footnote 1

After the Bible was translated we had no new versions for 400 years, Now we have 900 versions in English alone. I personally believe the KJV is the most accurate and many of the versions are actually perversions but contain the word of God. (With all these caveats in mind, the number of printed English translations and paraphrases of the Bible, whether complete or not, is about 900.) American Bible Society, Dec. 2009.)

Footnote 2

I have shown this to be true in my Babylon series of books. The 5 volumes in the series, '6,000 years of Babylon', can be obtained from **www.barrattministries.org.uk** or **Amazon** as paperbacks or Kindle downloads

Chapter 2

To the Angel of the Churches

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, what you see, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

Revelation 1:10-11

God told John what the symbolism of the vision of Jesus meant, so we do not need to speculate. This is what John saw:

And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man ...And he had in his right hand seven stars:

From Revelation 1:12 and 16

This is what the stars and the candlesticks represent.

The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which you saw are the seven churches.

Revelation 1:20

We now have the full picture. Jesus, as a fearsome judge, was standing in the middle of the churches in Spiritual Babylon and in his right hand were the angels of the seven churches he is going to judge when he returns to earth. I want to make the point here that the church in Ephesus, and the other six churches, had nothing to do with denominations or individual groups of Believers. Remember, there were no Church buildings for 400 years after Jesus died and rose again.

No Places of Worship

Why didn't they put buildings up to meet with God and fellow Believers, for there were 1,000s of Believers in the larger cities? Simply because they knew that God did not dwell in a building since the Temple was destroyed in AD70. When Jesus died the veil of the temple was rent in two, not to let us in because we now have access to the temple in heaven, the throne of grace as Hebrews puts it.

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 4:16

The veil was rent because God was leaving the temple never to return again for he now dwells in people. The people that God dwells in are the temple of God. The last thing the early church would do is put a building up and call it a temple, or tabernacle, as modern-day Believers do. To name a church with these titles is to mislead people and is counterproductive to the life of Christ in a person.

Do you not know that **you are the temple of God**, and that the Spirit of

God dwells in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, **you are that temple.**

1 Corinthians 3:16:17

Bought With a Price

We are redeemed out of the world but it is not our doing. We are purchased with the blood of Christ and we are no longer our own. It was not our choice, it was God's, but we accepted his choice by our own free will. We are called out of religion and we make our own decision about this. It's the reason that so few come out of religion because the price is high and the majority are not willing to pay that price.

Church is translated from the Greek word 'ecclesia' which means – those called out. Here are a couple of definitions of the word translated 'church' in our bibles.

Ecclesia, Greek 'gathering of those summoned'
In ancient Greece, assembly of citizens in a city-state. Its roots lay in the Homeric agora, the meeting of the people.

The word translated as 'church' in the English Bible is ekklesia. This word is the Greek word

kaleo (to call), with the prefix ek (out). Thus, the word means 'the called-out ones.'

Where is the Church called out from? Babylon of course! God's people were placed in Babylon physically and spiritually in the time of Daniel and God gave the King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, the kingdom, the power, and the glory over the whole earth and he is a type of antichrist. That is why John says there are many antichrists. They are always present in any age. God has been calling his people out of Babylon since that time.

You, O king, are a king of kings: for the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven has he given into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all. You are this head of gold.

Daniel 2:37-38

Little children, it is the last time: and as you have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

1 John 2:18

In the time of Ezra and Nehemiah and the return from Babylon to build again Jerusalem, God's people were asked that those who had a willing heart and would pay the price to leave the land and go to back to Judah should respond. Many of them were born in Babylon and had family, friends, and security, so it was a big ask to risk the perilous journey and emigrate to do hard manual labour building the temple under hostile conditions.

Who is responsible for the Churches?

When John addressed each Church he was addressing the angel of the church. A question many readers of Revelation have asked is, 'Why not address the Pastor, or more scripturally, the elder of the Church? Surely the Elder is responsible for his church?' They believe the angel is actually the Elder. This is the belief of many bible students, but I have to dismiss this for the word used is 'angel' and I see no reason to believe it was not as stated.

It is quite scriptural for angels to be responsible for, or guardians over, a country. In the book of Daniel Gabriel is speaking to Daniel.

Then he said to me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that you set your heart

to understand, and to chasten yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I am come for your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia ...Then he said, Do you know why I come to you? And now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Greece shall come.

Daniel 10:12-13 and 20

Michael was the angel to protect Israel.

But I will show you that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holds with me in these things, but

Michael your prince.

Daniel 10:21

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which stands for the children of your people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time your people

shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

Daniel 12:1

God Sent His Angel to Lead Them

God sent his angel to have authority over Israel in Moses' time and was able to pardon or punish their transgressions.

Behold, I send an Angel before you, to keep you in the way, and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, don't provoke him, for **he will not pardon your transgressions:** for my name is in him. But if you shall indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto your enemies, and an adversary unto your adversaries. For my Angel shall go before you, and bring you in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off.

Exodus 34:20-23

Angels can be personal guardians.

To the Angel of the Churches

Take heed that you despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

Matthew 18:10

Bearing in mind the above scripture it is a reasonable assumption to accept what John wrote; that God is addressing the angel that was over the Believers in those seven cities. If this is true then it shows how God respects authorities because Jesus' angel was addressing the angel of the church to convey the message to them. God, via Jesus, via his angel, to the angel of the church is addressing the seven churches in Asia.

Babylon - the Counterfeit

I think all Bible students accept that the number seven denotes completion, or fullness, throughout the Bible. Therefore, the book that is sent out to the seven Churches represents the whole of Spiritual Babylon which I have shown in my writing to be the counterfeit Bride (the Whore), and religion over a relationship with God. Christianity, as a religion, is part of Babylon and God hates religion; which is man's substitute for a relationship with God. Footnote 1

If this is true then this book which John sent to the seven churches is to God's people worldwide. Only a remnant in each generation comes out of Babylon, as history has proven, but now in these last days God is calling his people out of Babylon and at the end of this book he says these very words, showing us that God expects his people to be in Babylon in the last days, just as they were around John's time on earth and throughout the 2000 years since.

And I heard another voice from heaven,
saying, **Come out of her, my people,**
that you are not partakers of her sins, and
that you receive not of her plagues.

Revelation 18:4

For some reason, I always believed that John sent the individual messages to each individual church but looking at the scripture more thoroughly I can see that the whole of the book of Revelation was sent to every church not just the part applicable to them. In fact, it never mentions 'letters' in Revelation. God told John to write the vision **in a book** which is obviously the whole of Revelation...

Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first
and the last: and, What you see, **write**

in a book, and send it unto the seven churches.

Revelation 1:11

Then he said to me, See you do it not: for I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God. And he said unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy **of this book**: for the time is at hand.

Revelation 22:9-10

Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keeps the sayings of the prophecy of **this book**.

Revelation 22:7

For I testify unto every man that hears the words of the prophecy **of this book**, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Revelation 22:18-19

John was told to write three things in this book:

1. The things he saw – the vision of Jesus as a fearful judge.

2. The things that are – what was happening in each church at that time.

3. The things which shall be thereafter – the future revealed in his vision (around AD70). ^{Footnote 2}

Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, (Letters to the churches in Asia), and the things which shall be hereafter (the rest of the book of Revelation).

Revelation 1:19

At the end of each individual message the angel says these words; 'He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches'. Notice, it says 'churches' not church so the message had to be heeded by all the seven churches, and that applies to us in this generation if we have ears to hear. Jesus always used this phrase when he spoke in parables or mysteries of the Kingdom, and it is the same in Revelation – the messages to the churches are keys to the kingdom.

Peter was given the Keys of the Kingdom:

And I say also unto you, That you are Peter, and upon this rock, I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Matthew 16:18-19

I will look at each of the seven churches in a systematic way so that it will be easier to compare them and to understand the principles and instructions. When heeded and obeyed they will result in rewards to those who overcome.

All seven Churches had recommendations for the works they had done so I will look at them. Five of the churches had criticism and were advised how to overcome these faults, and all the churches had rewards for overcoming these faults; and consequences if they did not.

First an overview of the Churches. The first thing to note about each church is that Jesus comes with a different attribute shown by the description the angel gave to John.

Ephesus

The one who holds the seven stars and walks in the middle of the golden candlesticks.

Smyrna

The first and the last, 'The Alpha and Omega', the beginning and the ending.

Pergamos

The one who has the sharp sword with two edges.

Thyatira

The one who has eyes like flames of fire.

Sardis

The one who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.

Philadelphia

The one who has the key of David. That opens and none shall shut; and shuts, and none shall open.

Laodicea

The faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.

In the following chapters, I will look at the seven churches that were in spiritual Babylon.

Footnotes

1. See my series entitled 6,000 Years of Babylon
The 5 volumes in the series can be obtained from
www.barrattministries.org.uk
or from **Amazon** as paperbacks or Kindle
downloads

2. There is much speculation as to when John
had his vision. The great debate is whether it was
before the destruction of Jerusalem in AD70 or
after it. I have looked at the evidence for both
arguments and do not find them conclusive and,
for me, it is not of fundamental importance to the
vision.

Chapter 3

Leaving Your First Love - EPHESUS

And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.
2 John 1:5

Attribute of Jesus:

These things says he that holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks in the middle of the seven golden candlesticks.

Revelation 2:1

We know from the interpretation of the vision that Jesus holds the seven angels in his right hand. In other words, he is in control, has power over them, and they answer to him. He walks in the middle of the seven churches.

This is what he said to the angel of Ephesus.

I know your works, and your labour, and your patience, and how you cannot bear them which are evil: and you have tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and have found them liars: and have borne, and have patience, and for my name's sake has laboured, and have not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against you, because you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you are fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto you quickly, and will remove your candlestick out of his place, except you repent. But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit said unto the churches; To him that overcomes I will give to eat of the tree

of life, which is in the middle of the paradise of God.

Revelation 2:2-7

I must mention that this was not a church as we know it. 'Church' is refers to those who had accepted Christ as the saviour and were meeting from house to house. There were no denominations or Church buildings. The letter is addressed to all those in that city who were called by God.

A Good Church

This church in Ephesus was a good church. It was pioneered and grounded in the word by Paul. It was here that he spent the longest time with any group of Believers and stayed for three years teaching and maturing them. It seems he also had disciples in the city who received the Holy Ghost when he prayed for them after they had been baptised in water into Jesus.

Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the

Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spoke with tongues, and prophesied. **And all the men were about twelve.**

Acts 19:4-7

The incident with the sons of Sceva was in this city of Ephesus, and when they had been exposed it brought the fear of God and many of those who heard of it repented. This was true repentance for they brought their idol and occult paraphernalia and burned them in public.

And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. (£3-4,000,000 at today's value) So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

Acts 19:-2017

Ephesus was the leading church out of the seven so it is not surprising that it is the first in the list in Revelation. Paul invested more of his time in perfecting these Believers than in any other city he visited on his missionary journeys.

Paul was a good shepherd and warned them before he left that false teachers would try to lead them astray. He told them, as Jesus did, that there would be grievous wolves in sheep's clothing to test them.

Wherefore I take you to record this day,
that I am pure from the blood of all men.
For I have not shunned to declare unto you
all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore
unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over
the which the Holy Ghost has made you
overseers, to feed the church of God, which
he has purchased with his own blood. For
I know this, that after my departing shall
grievous wolves enter in among you, not
sparing the flock. Also of your own selves
shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to
draw away disciples after them. Therefore
watch, and remember, that by the space of
three years I ceased not to warn every one
night and day with tears.

Acts 20:26-30

Before he went to his death in Rome he gave his farewell to this Church.

And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: saving that the Holy Ghost witnesses in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. 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.

.... (Verse 36) And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.

Acts 20:22-24 and 36-38

Even when Paul was in Rome ready to be brought before Nero the second time he sent Tychicus to Ephesus to build them up and encourage them.

And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.

2 Timothy 4:12

His whole epistle to this church is full of encouragement and instruction with the aim of maturing them to become the Bride of Christ. This is not a study on his epistle but here is just one passage where he encourages their maturity in Christ.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we hereafter are no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which

every joint supplies, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Ephesians 4:11-16

What good things did Jesus commend the Believers in Ephesus for?

1. Their works.

Ephesus were a group of Believers who did good works. This must have included feeding the poor and supporting other Believers in different cities who were also under persecution from the Jews and the Roman occupation.

2. Their patience.

Patience is a wonderful quality and so necessary in a man of God. Paul ordained Timothy as the first Bishop of Ephesus and wrote two letters specifically to him from prison to encourage him.

But You, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, **patience**, meekness.

1 Timothy 6:11

Timothy remained Bishop of Ephesus for 15 years, and at the age of 80, was beaten, dragged through the streets, and then stoned by pagans. He was martyred for his faith in Jesus.

3. Their abhorrence of evildoers.

These believers were not tolerant of those who did evil and did not compromise with the licentiousness and decadence of this idolatrous city.

4. Their discernment in exposing false Apostles.

The Ephesian Believers had discernment and could recognise false Apostles in their midst. How lacking is this 'Gift of the Spirit' in our modern Christianity? It seems as if any wind of doctrine that blows into the church is accepted without scrutiny or testing with the word of God. Alas, so many ministers do not know the word of God, they only know their denominational commandments of men – the traditions of the elders that Jesus had to deal with in his day. Nothing has changed with God's people. Prophets of old had the same problem with Israel all throughout their history.

But in vain they do worship
me, teaching for doctrines the
commandments of men.

Matthew 15:9

For the Pharisees, and all the Jews,
except they wash their hands oft, eat
not, holding the tradition of the elders.

Mark 7:3

5. Their hatred of the Nicolaitians.

Who were the Nicolaitians? They were a sect who practised what Balaam taught Israel; to commit fornication and eat things sacrificed to idols. They brought paganism into the body of Christ.

Ephesus was a great seaport and was the centre of worship to the God Diana, which is the same goddess as Isis, Britannia, Queen of Heaven, etc. The temple to Artemis was magnificent, and one of the seven wonders of the world at that time,

The city of Ephesus was engaged in sexual perversion and idolatry. The pagan temples had prostitutes, both male and female, and there is an incident in Acts where the city was in an uproar because the idols were being destroyed after people accepted Paul's teaching.

For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen; whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, you know that by this craft we have our wealth. Moreover you see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they are no gods, which are made with hands: so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worships.

Acts 19:24-27

In the Church today

We still have the spirit of the Nicolaitians in abundance in today's churches, bringing in New Age practices like yoga and visualization, and making idols of mega church leaders and evangelists. There is homosexuality and adultery among Charismatic leaders, and fornication is rife in evangelical churches. The Roman Catholic church brought

the doctrines and idols of Babylon into the early church when they made it a state religion and the church has never recovered. The reformation only came halfway out of Babylon and continued with many of the Babylonian doctrines, clerical robes, and practices. Some of the wrong doctrines were changed but became just as erroneous as before. For example the Communion meal. Protestants, because they believe transubstantiation to be an error have relegated it to just being a symbol which is equally an error. Paul clearly says that you can eat and drink damnation to yourself when taking it and a symbol could never do this. ^{Footnote 1}

What were the faults they had to remedy?

Despite all his commendation, Jesus had something against these Believers and he wanted them to correct this fault because it was a blemish on their perfection. **They had left their first love.** They had not lost it but they had left it. This is a fundamental flaw and so easy to drift into because the outward works carry on as normal. Without the motive of love, all our works, patience and faithfulness are in vain and will profit us nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to
feed the poor, and though I give my body

to be burned, and have not charity, it profits me nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:3

Love embodies all the fruit of the spirit and the beatitudes. Jesus, in his sermon on discipleship, shows that to use the power of God and do wonderful works without the fruit of the Spirit is actually an evil work. The power of God without the character of God is to misrepresent God which is very serious (Moses didn't go into the promised land because of this) and that is why Jesus was exposing it in the Believers living in Ephesus.

Lack of Love

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? And in your name have cast out devils? And in your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity.

Matthew 7:22

What was the advice to remedy this blemish?

Jesus was not giving them an option when he told them to repent. It was a command.

Remember therefore from where you have fallen, **and repent**, and do the first works;

Revelation 2:5

These Believers were already doing good works and were recommended for it so I can only come to the conclusion that they had forgotten the motive they had when they first accepted Christ – love, and that was what they had left out of their works. Motive is king with God and to do the right thing with the wrong motive is not acceptable to him. They were told to remember and repent.

So many Believers do not see the need to repent because they have forgotten how they started off doing their works and Christian duty out of love when they were first reconciled to God. They still do their duty but the love has long ago demised.

The Consequence of Disobedience.

Jesus then tells them what will happen if they do not obey his command to repent and do the first works

I will come unto you quickly, and will remove your candlestick out of his place, except you repent.

Revelation 2:6

This is so serious because we know that the candlestick is the church and carries the light. If Jesus takes the candlestick out then it is no longer his Church, becoming the counterfeit, and will shine with the counterfeit light of Babylon. Sadly, so many churches and denominations, in our day, have had the candlestick removed and they don't realise they are promoting the light of Babylon and not the true light. The light in them has become darkness.

But if your eye be evil, your whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

Matthew 6:23

Let them alone: they are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

Matthew 15:14

Jesus then gives the same message he gave to the end of each church he addresses (all the churches had these letters read out to them), and of course, this applies to us in this present age.

He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches;

By saying this Jesus is confirming that most will hear but not understand and I fear it is no different today. Selfishness, empire-building, competition, covetousness, and envy are all signs that true love is missing from today's churches.

What are the consequences, or rewards, for repenting and getting back to the first works?

To those who overcome this fault and get back to their first love there is a wonderful promise

To him that overcomes I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the middle of the paradise of God.

Revelation 2:7

Where is Paradise?

This is not a difficult promise to understand if we know our Bible. Jesus is referring to the New Heaven and Earth after he has destroyed his first creation. The tree of life, the same one that was in the Garden of Eden, will be in the New Creation and will give eternal life to the nations that are saved.

The following passage is taken from Revelation after God has created a New Earth and the Bride is New Jerusalem – the light of the world.

And **the nations of them which are saved** shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defiles, neither whatsoever works abominations, or makes a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of the street of it, and on either side of the river, there was there **the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.**

Revelation 21:24-22:2

Paradise is where God is and Paul, who went to the third heaven, said that it was Paradise.

I knew a man in Christ above fourteen

years ago (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knows) such a one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knows) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

2 Corinthians 12:2-4

God will dwell with his people on the New Earth so it will be Paradise.

What a wonderful promise to this church if they overcome, and what a wonderful promise to us if we don't leave our first love. If we repent and get it back. I pray that I, and those reading this chapter, will take it seriously and examine our hearts to see where we stand in this regard.

Footnote 1

I have written a book on the Breaking of Bread. For a full explanation of this wonderful spiritual meal and is available from

www.barrattministries.org.uk

or from **Amazon** as a paperback or Kindle download

Chapter 4

Church of the Martyrs – Smyrna

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding joy.

1 Peter 4:12-13

Attribute of Jesus

...the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive (the resurrected Christ).

This is the second church John was told to address and send the book of Revelation for it to be read out. This is what Jesus said to the Believers in Smyrna:

I know your works, and tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich), and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which you shall suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that you may be tried; and you shall have tribulation ten days: be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches. He that overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death.

Revelation 2:8-12

Smyrna was one of two churches that had no recrimination from Jesus. Why was it that this church had no need for correction?

The city was 35 miles north of Ephesus and in the Apostles' time had grown with a population of about 100,000 as a Roman commercial centre with a port on the Aegean Sea. In the 1930s archaeologists

excavated a massive altar to Zeus. Zeus was a Greek god, whom the Romans called Jupiter. He was the god that disguised himself as a bull and seduced the woman Europa after whom Europe was named by Charlemagne.

Emperor Worship

Smyrna was a city devoted to Rome and the worship of the emperor. The Believers may have submitted to the civil laws of Rome, but they refused to worship or offer sacrifices to the emperor. This refusal to worship the emperor brought intense pressure and persecution on the Believers.

What good things did Jesus commend them for?

1. Their works.

Like Ephesus, they were a church that did good works. This is so important for us today if we want the commendation of Jesus. Works do not have any bearing on our Salvation because it is by faith alone but they have a great bearing on our relationship with Christ and our future either as the Bride of Christ, or being, 'saved as by fire' because our works have been wood hay and stubble.

So many Christians are afraid of good works and hide behind grace saying that we are coming under the law when we do works. Here are a few scriptures to show that all through the New Testament we are encouraged, after we are saved from dead works, to do good works.

How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from **dead works** to serve the living God?

Hebrews 9:14

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see **your good works**, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Matthew 5:16

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **unto good works**, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:10

That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all **good works**.

2 Timothy 3:17

That they do good, that they be rich in **good works**, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

1 Timothy 6:18

This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that you affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain **good works**. These things are good and profitable unto men.

Titus 3:8

And let ours also learn to maintain **good works** for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

Titus 3:14

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to **good works**:

Hebrews 10:24

Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your **good works**, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

1 Peter 2:12

2. Their tribulation.

This church faced strong Jewish opposition in Smyrna. There was a considerable number of Jews in the city from pre-New Testament times throughout the Ottoman period. Even today, various synagogues are located throughout the modern city. Under the persecution of the emperor, these Christians had their homes and property confiscated. They lost their jobs when they were thrown out of the local trade guilds.

3. Their poverty.

Smyrna Christians endured poverty. So many Believers today around the world are in this position just because they will not accept other gods. They become second-class citizens and suffer untold hardship and poverty. We, in the Western nations know nothing of this cost of being a Believer. Believers who spend large amounts of money on indulgent holidays abroad have never even considered giving one of them up to travel to the third world to see how their brothers and sisters in Christ live. They would rather put a little money in the missionary offering to ease their conscience. We will have to give an account of how we have lived and behaved as Believers when we face the

judgement seat of Christ and our works will be under scrutiny.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad.

2 Corinthians 5:10

4. They perceived the counterfeit Jews.

I have written much about this and how the Zionists are the counterfeit Jews of our modern society and want to build the temple in Jerusalem again to welcome their Messiah – The Man of Sin, who claims to be God. In Jesus' day, it was the Pharisees who were the Synagogue of Satan for Jesus said their father was the Devil.

You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

John 8:44

It follows, that if your father is the Devil you will go to his temple – the Synagogue of Satan. They were teaching the Babylonian Talmud which is the 'traditions of the elders' instead of the Torah the commandments of God.

But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Matthew 15:9

This was one of two churches that were not asked to repent. Why? Because suffering perfects us.

Forasmuch then as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin;

1 Peter 4:1

Even Jesus was perfected (matured) by the things he suffered.

For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Hebrews 2:10

Tribulation days

Jesus foretold of the persecution they would suffer for 10 days.

Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that you may be tried; and you shall have tribulation ten days:

Revelation 2:10

What does 'ten days' signify? It is the time of testing and proving. I could bring many examples to show this but I think one will surface. Daniel asked for ten days to see if eating pulses instead of King Nebuchadnezzar's rich food, and wine would produce health in himself and his three companions.

Prove your servants, I beseech you, **ten days**; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days.

Daniel 1:12-14

However, the Believers in Smyrna were given an instruction not to fear the persecution knowing it would bring the wonderful reward that was promised them if they were faithful unto death – a crown of life.

Fear none of those things which you shall suffer: ... be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life. He that overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death.

Revelation 2:10

This shows that those who are willing to die will be in the first resurrection. They will attain unto the Bride of Christ and will reign with Christ for 1,000 years as kings and priests.

Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection: on such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Revelation 20:6

Peter also encourages the Believers in his letters and tells them to expect trials and to rejoice in them with knowledge of the glory that will be revealed at Christ's coming. If only today's Believers would take heed to this message.

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened

unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding joy.

1 Peter 4:12-13

Consequences for overcoming.

Although they had no faults they still had to endure to the end to claim the promise. They were told to be fearless and willing to die for Christ's sake.

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Revelation 12:11

Surely we are in the time of the churches of Revelation and the last of the last days. Jesus warned the disciples when he was on earth what would happen in AD70 which is a shadow of what will happen soon for it is also a prophecy of these last of the last days.

But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and you

shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what you shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what you shall speak. For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaks in you. And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And you shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: **but he that endures to the end shall be saved.** But when they persecute you in this city, flee into another: for verily I say unto you, You shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

Matthew 10:17-23

This spirit of persecution and genocide has never left Turkey. It is not by chance that persecution of Christians continued up to our present time and in 1922 the Turkish leaders began ethnic cleansing with the results that Christians were murdered and expelled from the country and the city of Smyrna was burned with fire. The city was renamed with the

Turkish variation of Smyrna in 1930 to Izmir and remains with this name today.

Turkey also massacred 1.5 million Armenian Christians in 1915-16.

Jesus says to this church also that not many will hear and understand this message for he uses the same phrase.

He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches;

Revelation 12:11

Chapter 5

Satan's Seat – Pergamos

A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that has it: wherever it turns, it prospers.

Proverbs 17:8

Attribute of Jesus

These things says he which has the sharp sword with two edges;

The two-edged sword is to separate and expose things we cannot differentiate between. It is the word of God that

judges us. Paul tells the Hebrews about this sword.

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12

This is what Jesus said to the Believers in Smyrna:

I know your works, and where you dwell even where Satan's seat is: and you hold fast my name, and have not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwells. But I have a few things against you, because you have them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. You also have them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto you quickly, and will fight against them with

Satan's Seat – Pergamos

the sword of my mouth. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches. To him that overcomes I will 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 knows saving he that receives it.

Revelation 2:13-18

Pergamos was a rich and powerful ancient Greek city in Mysia. The site is now occupied by the modern town of Bergama, a province of İzmir, Turkey. In Roman times its population was an estimated 200,000. Excavations that began in 1878 under the auspices of the Berlin Museum, besides unearthing many artistic treasures, have enabled archaeologists to reconstruct the plan of the most important areas of the Hellenistic city. Its monuments included a theatre and the temple to Athena Nicephorus.

Satan's Seat

Today, the most famous structure from Pergamos is the monumental altar which apparently was devoted to the Greek deities Zeus (Roman: Jupiter). It is now on display in Berlin's Pergamon museum. Some have suggested that this altar is the Seat of Satan

According to Plato this altar at Pergamos was used for human sacrifice and cannibalism. Pliny the Elder (23-79 CE), in his Natural History, recounts a previous author's testimony of a sacrifice which occurred during Plato's lifetime. This was dismissed as historians believed that the Greeks didn't practice these abominations. However, the discovery of the remains of a male teenager at Mount Lykaion, the spot where some Greeks made animal sacrifices to Zeus, confirms to me that this all happened at Satan's seat.

Satan always demanded blood sacrifices, and cannibalism and human sacrifice are his greatest desires – these things are still practised behind closed doors today by those who participate in Satanism.

What good things did Jesus commend this church in Pergamos for?

1. Their works.

This church must have done the works of Christ even though they were at the very seat of Satan.

I know your works, and where you dwell, even where Satan's seat is:

Revelation 2:13

2. They would not deny Christ or their faith.

They lived in fearful times but held on to their faith even though one of them was martyred.

You hold fast my name, and have not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwells.

Revelation 2:12

What were the faults they had to remedy?

1. They held to the doctrine of Balaam.

But I have a few things against you, because you have there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

Revelation 2:14

Balaam was offered money and great status to curse Israel for King Balak, but God forbade him. However, he found a way to receive the money and status by instructing the king to seduce the men of

Israel with their young women and these women caused the men of Israel, who had married them, to participate in their idol worship to their false gods. In doing so they came under God's curse and were punished by God. (Story in Numbers chapter 22.)

Covetousness Again

Balaam pleased his ungodly master because he was covetous and loved the money he earned because of his supernatural gift of prophecy. Peter and Jude both mention Balaam when warning the Believers of false prophets in the church.

Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, **following the way of Balaam** the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

2 Peter 2:15

Woe unto them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, and **ran greedily after the error of Balaam** for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

Jude 1:11

This sin is also rife in churches today and many evangelical denominations run their churches as a

business. I realise that a ministry needs some legal identity, but how far have we come from the Acts of the Apostles? Where is the real faith and miraculous power of God? Faith preachers openly boast of their covetousness and still, the mad crowd donate millions of dollars each month to their ministry so they can live the lifestyle of royalty as millionaires.

2. They held the doctrine of the Nicolaitans.

Not only has the world been brought into the church of Christ with its entertainment, politics, culture, and business, but it has also brought in pagan doctrines and practices – the doctrine of the Nicolaitans.

You also have them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

Revelation 2:15

What was the advice to remedy this blemish?

It was simple, the angel only used one word, 'Repent'. They had to change their direction, and attitude, and renew their mind to the teaching of the Apostles. It is astonishing that only 40 years after Jesus died and rose as the first of a new creation, Believers in the time of the Apostles

had backslidden to these pagan practices and an ungodly mindset.

God's People Love Babylon

These letters are a great warning to us today as they show how quickly we can turn away from the truth and practice lies and hypocrisy believing we are still on the strait and narrow way. It is surely time for the Bride to make herself ready and be free from these indictments Jesus brought to his church. It is no wonder that Jesus said we were to come out of Babylon before she is judged. He knew his people would be there in the last days and for those who have eyes to see it is staring us in the face.

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, **my people**, that you are not partakers of her sins, and that you do not receive her plagues.

Revelation 18:4

What are the consequences if this church does not repent?

There will be swift judgement. Jesus will fight them with the word of his mouth.

I will come unto you quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

Revelation 2:16

This phrase seems to be saying that he will judge them like the world if they do not repent and get the world out of the church. He says the same phrase when describing how he will judge the nations.

And **out of his mouth goes a sharp sword**, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treads the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

Revelation 19:15

What are the rewards for repenting?

1. He will give them the hidden manna.

I give to eat of the hidden manna,

Revelation 2:17

The manna that God gave Israel is interesting. It was a mysterious bread. Whether it caused them to live for 40 years in the wilderness without their clothing or shoes wearing out I do not know, but

David called Manna the corn of heaven and angels food.

...And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven. Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.

Psalm 78:24-25

Is The Manna A Type of Jesus?

I have heard preachers say that the manna was a type of Jesus, but they are in error because Jesus himself said that he was not the manna; although he did claim to be the bread that came down from heaven. Jesus said that the children of Israel ate the manna and died but he was the true bread from heaven and if they ate him they would never die. Jesus is the resurrection bread that we take at communion. The breaking of Bread that Jesus commanded us to take is the meal of the Bride and if we can discern it we will be raised up on the last day. Read slowly what Jesus said.

They said therefore unto him, What sign will you show us that we may see, and believe you? What do you work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as

it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Moses did not give that bread from heaven;** but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which comes down from heaven, and gives life unto the world.

Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that comes to me shall never hunger; and he that believes on me shall never thirst.

...I am that bread of life. **Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.** This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

From John 6:3-51

I believe the hidden manna is Christ himself – the bread that came down from heaven – the

resurrection bread that he will give to those who overcome.

2. He will give them a white stone with a new name written on it.

I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knows saving he that receives it.

Revelation 2:17

Jesus says a similar thing to the church in Philadelphia.

He that overcomes 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 comes down out of heaven from my God: and **I will write upon him my new name.**

Revelation 3:12

I cannot find any reference in the Bible that will shed revelation on what this white stone represents but I did come across a piece of interesting information. In the ancient courts of justice, the

accused were condemned by black pebbles and the acquitted by white, so this stone may be the sign we are saved from judgement and the new name of Christ will be written on it.

At the end of the address to this Church Jesus says the same words showing that most who heard it read out would not understand even though they heard it.

He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches;

Revelation 2:17

Will we, in the twenty-first century, also be so blind as God's people have been through the ages since Jesus rose again? I pray that you and I will have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to perceive what the spirit is saying to the Church today.

Chapter 6

Jezebel's Church – Thyatira

And you shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endures to the end shall be saved.

Matthew 10:22

Attribute of Jesus

These things says the Son of God, who has his eyes like unto a flame of fire.

Revelation 2:18

This church is faced with the fierce, fiery eyes of judgement from Jesus.

This is what Jesus said to the Church in Thyatira:

And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things says the Son of God, who has his eyes like unto a flame of fire, I know your works, and charity, and service, and faith, and your patience, and your works; and the last to be more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against you, because you suffer that woman Jezebel, which calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she didn't repent. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searches the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according

to your works. 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. But that which you have already hold fast till I come. And he that overcomes, and keeps my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: 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. And I will give him the morning star. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches.

Revelation 2:18-29

Thyatira was an ancient Greek city in Asia Minor, now the modern Turkish city of Akhisar. In John's day, it was a wealthy town in the northern part of Lydia of the Roman province of Asia, on the river Lycus.

Lydia, a Gentile Believer, came from this city but lived in Philippi. She was apparently a very wealthy woman, a dealer in purple cloth, who supported Paul and gave him and his entourage lodgings. When Paul was released from prison, after the Jailer

and his house had been baptised, they went to the house of Lydia.

And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

Acts 16:40

What good things did Jesus commend this church in Pergamos for?

This was a good church because Jesus had much to say about their activities and attitude.

1. Their Works.

The Believers in Thyatira also did good works and were recommended for them.

2. Their Charity.

The word charity has lost its original meaning in our present climate. A good substitute would be compassion which I define as 'love in action' as opposed to the feelings of love which is often only sentiment, or at the most pity, but does nothing about the situation.

3. Their Service.

I see this as a consequence of having compassion for without demonstration, love, and faith it cannot be substantiated or proved.

4. Their Faith.

Jesus told his disciples that when he comes again he will be looking for faith. I do not believe he will be looking for the Gift of Faith that comes from the Holy Ghost to do signs and wonders and miracles. I believe he will be looking for the Fruit of Faith which is the character of God, not the power of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy,
peace, long-suffering, gentleness,
goodness, faith,

Galatians 5:22

... Nevertheless, when the Son of man
comes, shall he find faith on the earth?

Luke 18:8

5. Their patience.

What a wonderful quality patience is and this Church in Thyatira, with all its faults, had this

attribute. In a world where people want instant, or near instant, response to their requests I have found that so many Christians have the same mentality and want their prayers answered in a time scale acceptable to them and do not want any suffering or delay. Yet delay and suffering are what having patience is all about.

Here is a definition of the word:

The capacity to accept or tolerate delay, problems, or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious.

James exhorted believers to 'count it all joy' at these so-called setbacks so that patience can work in their lives.

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith works patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

James 1:2-3

Patience is not something we feel it is something we exercise in adversity. If there are no problems

we cannot exercise patience so we need to be knowledgeable when we pray for this quality or we may not understand when God delays his answers or puts difficulties in our way so that we can exercise what we prayed for.

6 Their last to be more than the first.

This church had not lost its first love but was as fervent as when they were first evangelised by Paul. What a great accolade for Jesus to attribute to these Believers. It is so easy to 'grow weary in well doing' and to become complacent in our marriage, work, or more importantly our love and dedication for Christ. Most Believers seem to settle for the status quo after a few years of fervency, or becoming religious and just end up doing their 'Christian duty'. How sad is that? And what a challenge to maintain our first love of all that we embark upon both naturally and spiritually.

What were the faults they had to remedy?

Like the other churches, the good points far outweighed their faults, but Jesus is coming for a spotless Bride and these faults were blemishes in their wedding garments which needed to be addressed if they were to be overcomers.

They suffered from that woman Jezebel.

Jezebel called herself a prophetess but she was not one of God's prophetesses, yet she was in Israel and the King's wife. She was like so many women today who prophesy out of their own heads and hearts and tell people what they want to hear. The original Jezebel told Ahab, 'Don't worry, I'll give you what you desire in your heart'.

And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Do you now govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise, and eat bread, and let your heart be merry: I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

1 Kings 21:7

She was a ruthless woman for she supported and provided food and shelter for 850 false prophets.

Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.

1 Kings 18:19

She not only supported the false prophets but cut off the true prophets of Israel.

For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took a hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.

1 Kings 18:4

These women false prophets are in the body of Christ today – even in good churches like this one at Thyatira. They do the same work as the original Jezebel and their terrible fate will be the same when Jesus judges them for he gives them a chance to repent.

And I gave her space to repent of her fornication.

Revelation 2:21

It says that she teaches Believers to commit fornication, and although it was physical in the Old Testament, it is now spiritual adultery and fornication. Many so-called prophetesses have introduced yoga and new-age practices into God's people. This is spiritual fornication. Spiritual adultery is friendship with the world according to James. The world with its business, culture, entertainment and politics has flooded into the church in my lifetime so that now there is hardly

a difference in lifestyle between Believers and unbelievers in these areas.

You adulterers and adulteresses, don't you know that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? **Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.**

James 4:4

Jesus then addresses those who have not accepted this lifestyle and doctrine of Jezebel without any condemnation.

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. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.

Revelation 2:24

What was the advice to remedy this blemish?

It was a simple remedy; repent, turn around, and stop practising this evil doctrine of devils. It is sad that Jesus had already announced the judgement because Jezebel had not repented, showing us that

in our present age, this spirit of Jezebel will never repent for it is an implacable and unrepentant spirit, and those who are inhabited by this spirit will face judgement in this age and when Jesus returns.

The Consequence for Disobedience.

Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searches the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

Revelation 2:22-23

What are the rewards for Overcoming?

1. They will reign with Christ as his Bride.

And he that overcomes, and keeps my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: 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.

Revelation 3:26-28

2. They will be given the Morning Star.

And I will give him the morning star.

Revelation 2:28

We do not have to speculate what or who is the Morning Star because later in Revelation Jesus tells us that he is the morning star so this church is to be given Jesus. They have obviously accepted Jesus as their saviour but now they will be given to Jesus as his Bride. What an incentive to overcome if you are in a denomination or Church with this spirit of Jezebel. Here is the scripture that confirms Jesus as the Morning Star.

I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and **the bright and morning star.**

Revelation 22:16

It is interesting that the planet Venus is also called the morning star as it appears in the east at sunrise. Lucifer is referred to as the son of the morning in Isaiah which seems to be the morning star also. Lucifer is not Satan because he is a man. According to the context in Isaiah 14, Lucifer is a name for the King of Babylon who is a type of

antichrist, so Venus, King of Babylon. Lucifer is the counterfeit morning star ^{Footnote 1}

Deception

Let me encourage you to be diligent in these last days when the doctrines of devils have entered the church and the great falling away, as told by Paul, is in full swing. Deception is one of the signs of the end of the age and so many times the letters to the Churches warn us to 'not be deceived'.

Jesus says the same thing to each Church so let me remind you that most will not understand the message of the book of Revelation even though they read it.

He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Revelation 3:13

Footnotes

For a full explanation of the deception that Lucifer is Satan, I have written a whole chapter in my book 'Israel, the Church and the Kingdom of God, Volume 6, Chapter 7 'THE LUCIFER MYTH'.

The book is available from
www.barrattministries.org.uk
or from **Amazon** as a paperback or Kindle
download

Chapter 7

Almost Dead – Sardis

If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we are lying, and do not the truth. But, if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin.

1 John 1:6-7

Attribute of Jesus

These things says he that has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars;

Revelation 3:1

We know that the seven stars are the seven angels who are responsible for the seven churches to whom the letters are addressed. By these words, Jesus is surely saying that this church is being held by him and he is in control of his whole seven churches, not just this one. But what, or who, are the seven spirits that Jesus mentions?

The Bible Interprets Itself

The problem is that John, at this point in the vision, had not been told about the seven spirits that Jesus has, so we need to decide what these spirits are. The Bible will always interpret itself and the answer is right here in the book of Revelation. In the opening verses of chapter one, it says that the seven spirits belong to God and they are before his throne in heaven.

John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

Revelation 1:4

Chapter five of Revelation gives us the answer to the seven spirits of God. They are the seven eyes that traverse the earth and report to God.

And I beheld, and, lo, in the middle of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the middle of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, **which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.**

Revelation 5:6

Whenever the Bible says ‘the eyes of the Lord’ it must be referring to these seven spirits that watch over God’s creation. There are many scriptures that talk about the eyes of the Lord but here are a few.

The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.

Psalms 34:15

The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

Proverbs 15:3

Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, says the LORD.

Amos 9:8

For who has despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.

Zechariah 4:10

For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

1 Peter 3:12

This is what Jesus said to this church in Sardis:

And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things says he that has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know your works, that you have a name that you live, and are dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found your works perfect before God. Remember, therefore, how you have received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore you shall not watch, I will come on you as a thief, and you shall not

know what hour I will come upon you. You have a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcomes, 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. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Revelation 3:1-6

Sardis, when John saw his vision on the Isle of Patmos was in Asia Minor, and capital of the ancient kingdom of Lydia. It was a wealthy and important commercial trading centre. As a pagan city, Sardis was home to the well-known temple of Artemis, which still exists today in ruins. The church at Sardis was surrounded by paganism and idolatry. Today, the site is located by the present-day village of Sart, near Salihli in the Manisa province of Turkey.

What good things did Jesus commend this church in Sardis for?

I think this is the saddest of the seven churches for Jesus had nothing to commend them for, only

faults to rectify – they were almost dead in Jesus’ eyes and yet they had a reputation of being alive and a vibrant church.

I know your works, that you have a name that you live, and are dead.

Revelation 3:1

They had a reputation but it was a false one because they were dead in the eyes of God. These seven spirits, the eyes of God who run to and fro on the earth to see who is perfect towards God and who is not, found them wanting.

For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.

2 Chronicles 16:9

What were the faults they had to remedy?

They were the blind leading the blind because they thought they had life but were dead and this is so true today. Quite often a large Church full of energy and lively worship are dead spiritually because they have brought the world into the church and that certainly brings spiritual deadness. The tree

may be big, but Jesus will be looking for fruit when he comes and the size of the tree in immaterial.

Worship to God can be Carnal

Worship can be spiritual but not necessarily with God's spirit because people are spirits and when 1,000 people gather together in unity there is always a spiritual atmosphere. A football match has a spiritual unity that can be felt but it has nothing to do with God's spirit. My father called it a soulish or carnal spirit, as opposed to a Satanic spirit. As an audio engineer, I know that loud music can give those in the audience the same adrenaline rush as amphetamine pills. Often in a Christian concert young people are getting high on adrenaline, but think it is the Holy Ghost they are experiencing.

Jude, talking about the last days, put things in perspective in his tirade against the false prophets in the body of Christ.

These are spots in your feasts of charity,
when they feast with you, feeding
themselves without fear: clouds they are
without water, carried about of winds;
trees whose fruit withers, without fruit,
twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

Jude 1:12

What was the advice to remedy this blemish?

Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found your works perfect before God. Remember therefore how you have received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore you shall not watch, I will come on you as a thief, and you shall not know what hour I will come upon you.

Revelation 3:2-3

1. Be watchful.

Jesus is warning them to be diligent about the time they are living in for he says he will come as a thief in the night and 'catch them out' if they are not ready. We are also warned in the Epistles to be watchful and at the ready so we are not caught out when Jesus returns.

Therefore let us not sleep, as do others;
but let us watch and be sober.

1 Thessalonians 5:6

But the end of all things is at hand:
therefore be sober, and watch unto prayer.

1 Peter 4:7

2. Strengthen themselves.

This church was dying and so were encouraged to gird up and strengthen what little life of Christ they had.

Their prayer life must have been lacking for real prayer prevents backsliding and hypocrisy. Pride must have blinded them to the fact that they were dead spiritually and they were resting on their laurels as they had a good reputation as a live church.

3. Remember.

It is so easy to forget where you have fallen for the simple reason that it does not happen overnight. Backsliding is a slow process and long before there is any physical evidence backsliding festers in the heart. For a long while before we even realise it the heart grows cold towards God and often it is too late when it manifests in some sin or carnality because we become blinded by the deceit of our own heart.

It's for Believers

The scripture below is usually applied by Christians to those who do not know God, but it must be applicable to believers because the verse says 'that they knew God'.

Because that, **when they knew God**, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Romans 1:21

The Consequence for Disobedience.

If therefore you will not watch, I will come on you as a thief, and you shall not know what hour I will come upon you.

Revelation 3:3

If this Church does not heed the warnings and instructions that are given to them they will be caught out and miss the first resurrection. Jesus used the term ‘like a thief’ many times and the phrase is used to warn of not being alert, or ready, and to be caught out when Jesus returns in judgement.

For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

1 Thessalonians 5:2

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the

heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

2 Peter 3:10

What are the rewards, for those who repent and overcome?

It seems that only a remnant overcomes in any age. God had to destroy the whole world and only eight people were saved in the time of Noah. All the Jews in Babylon bowed to the stature of Nebuchadnezzar's statue except for three of them. God redeemed 2-3 million people from slavery in Egypt yet only two of the original men entered the promised land of Canaan. So it is with this church in Sardis, only a few were worthy to obtain the white raiments.

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

He that overcomes, 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.

Revelation 3:4-5

Redemption of Our Bodies

What a fantastic promise for this almost-dead assembly of Believers. I believe the white raiments are the garments they would receive at the first resurrection. They are the spiritual bodies that they would be clothed with. This is my reasoning from scripture. We are told that the Bride is given white linen garments and these garments are the righteousness of the saints.

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in **fine linen, clean and white**: for the fine linen is **the righteousness of saints**.

Revelation 19:8

These saints already have the righteousness of Christ so why would they be given righteousness as a reward. I can only believe they were given righteous, resurrection bodies. Now they would not only have a righteous spirit but they would also have a righteous body.

Paul said he was waiting for the redemption of his body. His spirit was already redeemed, but he longed to be clothed with the spiritual body like the risen Jesus.

And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, that is, the redemption of our body

Romans 8:23

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

2 Corinthians 5:1-4

Surely the armies of Heaven, which Jude talks about in his epistle, are the ones who come with

Jesus in their resurrection bodies. Revelation tells us that these armies had the same white, linen garments – the righteousness of the saints.

And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his saints,

Jude 14

And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed **in fine linen, white and clean**

Revelation 19:14

Jesus ends this message to the Believers in Sardis with the familiar words; ‘He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches’. We need to remember that the letters to the churches are a misleading term because they were told to read the whole vision John saw in the book of Revelation not just the part that we think is applicable to each of the seven they were addressed to.

Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What you see, **write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches** which are in Asia; unto Ephesus,

and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos,
and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and
unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

Revelation 1:11

Chapter 8

The Church That Stands – Philadelphia

For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 3:8

Attribute of Jesus

He that is holy, he that is true, he that has the key of David, he that opens, and no man shuts.

Revelation 3:7

This is interesting because these words are not in the description of Jesus in Revelation chapter one so we will have to look elsewhere in the Bible for the symbolism of the ‘key of David’. Obviously, keys are to open and shut doors. Jesus told Peter he would give him the keys to the Kingdom.

And I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Matthew 16:19

Keys Open Doors

Keys also open mysteries for without the keys to the parables of Jesus no one can understand them. We will put our own interpretation to them which will always be incorrect. If they were plain and obvious we would not need the keys. Indeed, this is what Jesus told his disciples in Matthew 13.

The disciples came, and said unto him,
Why do you speak to them in parables?
He answered and said to them, Because
it is given unto you to know the

mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. ...Therefore I speak to them in parables:

From Matthew 13:10-11

A few verses later Jesus gives them the keys to the parables of the kingdom Here is one of the keys. The seed in the first parable is not the gospel as is supposed for Jesus had not died and shed his blood, but is a word about the kingdom. It is for Believers to understand the kingdom within and the kingdom that is coming which Jesus sets up on his return to earth for his 1,000-year reign. ^{Footnote 1-2}

When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then comes the wicked one, and catches away that which was sown in his heart.

Matthew 13:19

The word ‘key’ is also used figuratively for power or authority of office, as with Peter as already stated. I believe this is a key of authority that Jesus has.

The key that Jesus is alluding to is the key of David and Jesus and is quoting from Isaiah 22, where the prophet is Prophesying about Jesus;

And I will clothe him with your robe,
and strengthen him with your girdle,
and I will commit your government into
his hand: and he shall be a father to the
inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house
of Judah. And the **key of the house of
David** will I lay upon his shoulder; so he
shall open, and none shall shut; and he
shall shut, and none shall open.
Isaiah 22:21-22

Isaiah, prophesying about Jesus and his millennial reign, says Jesus will sit in the Tabernacle of David. Amos, talking about the restoration of Israel, also mentions it. Peter in Acts refers to the Tabernacle of David so maybe the key of David that Jesus holds is for the authority to rule from the Tabernacle of David in his millennial reign. I cannot go any deeper into this for it would be going outside the boundaries I have set for this book, but it is something for the reader to look into if they are interested.

And in mercy shall the throne be
established: and he shall sit upon it in
truth in the tabernacle of David, judging,
and seeking judgment, and hastening
righteousness.

Isaiah 16:5

In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old:

Amos 9:11

After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins, and I will set it up:

Acts 15:16

This is what Jesus said to the Believers in Philadelphia:

I know your works: behold, I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it: for you have not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Because you have kept the word of my patience, I also will keep you from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try

them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which you have, that no man take your crown. Him that overcomes 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 comes down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Revelation 3:8-13

Philadelphia was about 25 miles south-east of Sardis and was historically located in Lydia near the northeast foot of Mount Tmolus (modern-day Bozdağ) in the rich valley of the Cogamis River, which was a southern tributary of the Hermus River (modern-day Gediz). It was located in southern Catacecaumene, on the road connecting Sardis and Laodicea.

It sometimes bore the title of ‘Little Athens’ because of the magnificence of the temples and other public buildings which adorned it. Philadelphia quickly became an important and wealthy trade centre, for as the coastal cities declined, it grew in power and retained its importance even until late Byzantine times.

Today it is called Alaşehir, a town located in Manisa Province in the Aegean region of Turkey.

What good things did Jesus commend this church in Philadelphia for?

1. They had kept Jesus' words.

You have kept the word of my patience,

Revelation 3:10

This was so important to them being one of the two churches that had no recrimination from Jesus. When he was alive Jesus told his disciples 'If you love me, keep my commandments'. It is not enough to believe in Christ and accept his free salvation, because we are told to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow his example of implicit obedience to his father. Only those who obey him does he call friends and these will inherit the kingdom ^{Footnote 1} as well as eternal life. Obedience to the word of God is imperative if we want the commendation that this Church in Philadelphia received.

You are my friends, if you do whatsoever

I command you.

John 15:14

If you love me, keep my commandments.

John 14:15

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

John 14:23

2. They Had not denied Jesus' name.

...for you have a little strength, and have kept my word, and have not denied my name.

Revelation 3:8

Martyrs are Rare

I have called this chapter, 'the Church that stands' because they had not denied Christ under extreme pressure. We are certainly in the last of the last days according to my assessment, and Believers will have to stand or compromise. The majority will always compromise under pressure and it is a rare thing for Believers to risk persecution, and death for the sake of Christ.

Paul told the Believers in all the Churches

he had founded that the kingdom is obtained by suffering. Below are a couple of scripture to show this and we ignore it at our peril. This world is being trapped ready for the Man of Sin to be revealed and the whole population of this world will be required to worship him or be killed.

And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that **we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.**

Acts 14:21-22

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

2 Timothy 2:12

Now, is the time to prepare yourself to stand. I must warn you if you are not preparing yourself at this time you will compromise as so many did in the 2020 lockdown where churches would not stand and so they closed their doors under orders of the World Health Authority.

3. They knew about the Synagogue of Satan.

Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but are lying.

Revelation 3:9

This church, along with Smyrna, were the only two out of the seven Churches that understood that there were counterfeit Jews who actually belonged to the synagogue of Satan in their midst, even though they had a righteous exterior.

The Pharisees were named by Jesus in this category. Herod also belonged to this category. He was King of the Jews but his lineage was from Esau, not Jacob and his lineage included Amelak, and Haman, those who tried to annihilate the true Jews. The modern synagogue of Satan is the Zionists who are political, not religious at all, and cannot trace their lineage to Abraham. They are antisemitic at their roots, although many Christians do not realise this and support them in a mistaken love for Israel.

Footnote 3

What were the faults they had to remedy?

Unlike the Church in Sardis who had nothing to commend them Philadelphia has nothing to

condemn them and is one of the two churches that have no faults.

What are the rewards?

1. The keys to the Kingdom.

I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it:

Revelation 3:8

In the light of Jesus' opening statement; that he has the keys of David, I believe the open door he sets before them is into his kingdom that is coming to this earth shortly. He is confirming that nothing can stop this, they have qualified and no one can shut this door

2. Those who serve Satan will worship at your feet.

...behold, I will make them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.

Revelation 3:9

I believe this will happen in the Kingdom, not in this present dispensation. It is a promise for the future. ^{Footnote 1}

3. He will keep them from the hour of temptation.

Because you have kept the word of my patience, I also will keep you from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

Revelation 3:10

This is what Jesus told us to pray in the Lord's Prayer – lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. God does want to test, or tempt us, so to ask him not to is to misunderstand what he is saying in this passage.

James says, count it all joy when you are tempted and the Bible records that God tempted Abraham, Joseph, and so many others because the test shows where we are – surely that is the reason for a test, to evaluate a person.

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith works patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

James 1:2-4

Jesus, when talking about the last days, and his return to earth, told the disciples that they should aim to be worthy to escape this hour of temptation.

And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and pray always, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Luke 21:34-36

The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

2 Peter 2:9

4. They will be part of the Heavenly City.

Him that overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out.

Revelation 3:12

This statement shows they will be the Bride of Christ that comes down from heaven to the New Earth.

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Revelation 21:2

This is New Jerusalem, the spiritual city, made up from the lively stones that Peter tells us about in his epistle.

You also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:5

5. Jesus will write a new name on us

I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

Revelation 3:12

Jesus will not only write a new name upon us but will also write the name of the city of God, ‘New Jerusalem’, on everyone who overcomes and is the Bride of Christ. All those who overcome will know they are the Bride of Christ and part of the heavenly city – what a wonderful promise and what a goal to aspire to. They will receive a crown, and a crown is for reigning not for an adornment – they will live and reign with Christ for 1,000 years.

And has made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

Revelation 5:10

There was no instruction to remedy any faults so Jesus gave them positive advice.

Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which you have, that no man take thy crown.

Revelation 3:11

Hold fast, what a wonderful encouragement for us to stand in the evil days that are coming on this earth. No wonder Paul told the church to put on the armour of God so they would be able to stand. I know of no better way to end this chapter about this wonderful Church in Philadelphia that stands than

to quote the words of Paul. Take them to heart, not as some light instructions but with the knowledge that you could lose your crown. Let me exhort you to hold fast and stand your ground for what is coming on the earth shortly.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying always with all prayer and

supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Ephesians 6:10-18

Of course, Jesus says the same words to each Church knowing that only a remnant will have revelation on this, the last book of the Bible.

He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches;

Revelation 12:11

Footnotes

I have written a book on the 8 parables in Matthew 13, entitled ‘Parables of the Kingdom’.

Available from

www.barrattministries.org.uk

or from **Amazon** as a paperback or Kindle download.

2. When I refer to the Kingdom I do not mean the Church but the kingdom that is coming at Jesus’ return – the millennial kingdom of 1,000 years where Jesus will reign with his Bride; those in the first resurrection.

3. The writings of Theodore Herzl, the so-called founder of the Zionists will show this to be true.

The Church That Stands – Philadelphia

The state of Israel in 1948 was in God's plan because the carnal counterfeit always comes first, before the true and spiritual.

For example: Saul the king of the flesh before David the spiritual man after God's own heart, Ishmael before Isaac, the first Adam before the second Adam – Jesus, and so on. It is a principle throughout the Bible. Many Believers will accept antichrist as the real Messiah because they do not know this principle. Antichrist must come first before Christ Jesus comes to depose him and reign over the whole earth.

The Zionists took the land of Palestine politically without repentance. At present It is a secular nation and the aggressor in the Middle East not the victim. Only when Israel repents as a nation will God restore the land to true Israel. I believe this will happen in my lifetime if God spares me.

Chapter 9

The Lukewarm Church – Laodicea

But he that lacks these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and has forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

2 Peter 1:9

Attribute of Jesus

These things says the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

Revelation 3:14

What a strange statement from Jesus, ‘The beginning of the creation of God’, but I believe I understand what it means. In his greeting to the 7 churches, John says his message is from Jesus who is the first begotten of the dead.

And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.

Revelation 1:5

A Brand New Creation

Jesus is saying he is the beginning of a brand new creation of spiritual sons of God. Jesus was the first of God’s creation to be born of flesh and blood, die, and be resurrected with a new spiritual body. Paul said Jesus is the first fruits and we will be like him at his coming when our mortal bodies will put on immortality.

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. ...But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.

From 1 Corinthians 15:20-23

God had this New Creation, and plan, in his mind before he created the heavens and earth. I do not know whether Adam would have attained this spiritual body if he had not sinned; I can only speculate for the Bible does not say anything about it. My thoughts are that the first Adam failed to attain what God had planned for him but Jesus, the second Adam, fulfilled God's plan to have a creation with spiritual bodies.

This is what Jesus said to the Church in Laodicea. Remember, he was addressing the angel responsible for the Church.

I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot: I would you were cold or hot. So then because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth. Because you say, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and do not know that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich; and white raiment, that you may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness do not appear; and anoint your eyes with eye-salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and

chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. 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. To him that overcomes 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. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Revelation 3:14-22

Laodicea was an ancient city and the chief city of Phrygia, Asia Minor (now Turkey), on the river Lycus. It was located in the Hellenistic regions of Caria and Lydia. Laodicea was a wealthy city during the Roman period. Not only was Laodicea located on major trade routes that connected it to important cities like Ephesus, Smyrna and Sardis, but it was also a centre for textile production and banking.

What good things did Jesus commend this church in Laodicea for?

Sadly, Jesus had nothing to commend in this Church, but Paul who had founded it loved it and when writing to the church in Collose shared his burden for them.

For I would that you knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;

Colossians 2:1

For I bear him record, that he has a great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.

Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house. And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.

Colossians 4:13 & 15-16

What were the faults of this Church?

This Church had many faults and Jesus lists them. This is how Jesus saw the Laodicean Believers, this was their true spiritual situation.

....you do not know that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

Revelation 3:17

Let me go through these faults.

1. They were wretched and miserable.

What a pathetic group of Believers this was in Laodicea. The synonyms of wretched are a sorry list and did not make comfortable reading if you belonged to this Church. This is a definition of the wretched:

In a very unhappy or unfortunate state.

These are some synonyms of wretched;

Of poor quality; very bad, pitiful, damned, blighted, powerless, helpless.

Synonyms of miserable are not much better:

Inadequate, insufficient, beggarly, stingy, pathetic, restricted, limited, insubstantial.

Jesus saw this church as a powerless, pitiful, helpless, beggarly, pathetic, body of Believers, in contrast to how the Church saw themselves; prosperous, in need of nothing. They should have seen their true state but their prosperity and self-sufficiency had blinded them.

I would rather see myself as Paul did, he saw himself as a wretched man, but he also knew the remedy and was not condemned.

O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

Romans 7:24

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Romans 7:25-8:1

Notice there is only ‘no condemnation’ if we walk after the spirit. Christians quote this verse without the condition and think that because they are saved they can claim there is no condemnation. If we walk after the flesh as a Believer there is condemnation. All the promises in the Bible are conditional.

Oh that we would see ourselves as God sees us, full of carnality and coldness of heart in the flesh and the sins that so easily beset us. If we saw our true state we would remedy this and would receive the commendation of Jesus instead of his rebuke when

we face him at his judgement seat when he returns to judge his Church.

2. They were poor.

They were rich in material wealth for Laodicea was a centre for textile production and banking, but Jesus saw them in their true state, impoverished of true riches. Prosperous churches are usually carnal churches and spiritually dead although they have an outward appearance of spirituality and life. Paul told Timothy to tell the rich to look after the poor.

Charge them that are rich in this world,
that they be not high-minded, nor trust
in uncertain riches, but in the living God,
who gives us richly all things to enjoy;
that they do good, that they be rich in
good works, ready to distribute, willing
to communicate;

1 Timothy 6:17-18

Enough to Feed the World!

The richest Church in the world is the Catholic Church and they do not feed the poor they take from them – they have enough wealth to feed all the world's hungry but they still accumulate riches

to themselves, and all daughters of Babylon do the same in some measure.

3. They were blind.

The Bible has much to say about spiritual blindness in God's people. Peter says Believers who lack the following list are blind and have forgotten they were sinners saved by grace. The Laodiceans had obviously lost these qualities: virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and compassion.

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **But he that lacks these things is blind**, and cannot see afar off, and has forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

2 Peter 1:5-9

4. They were naked.

They were not naked physically, and I am sure Jesus never saw them unclothed in the flesh, but spiritually he knew they were naked. This makes me think of the man at the wedding feast who had no wedding garment and was cast out.

All these faults were because their minds had not been renewed and they thought like the world with its false ethos and standards

A Timeline?

If ever there was a case for the seven churches to be a chronological timeline of Church history, the last Church would fit perfectly into this scenario. Never in the history of the Church could it boast of the present-day Church being wealthy.

The Catholic Church with its 1.34 billion members, which continued to be about 17.7% of the world's population, has unknown and inestimable wealth. The Church of England are the 13th biggest landowners in the country. Christianity is the largest religious group in the world, with an estimated 2.6 billion adherents in 2020. Almost a third of the world's population.

All these faults were because they were blind and had a wrong view of themselves.

Because you say, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;

Revelation 3:17

What was the advice to remedy this blemish?

1. Buy gold tested in the fire so that you may be rich.

The fires of persecution, and pruning, produce the character of Christ. Even Jesus was perfected (matured) by the things he suffered. The cup of suffering that he drank on the cross was his baptism of fire that perfected him. If only Believers would follow Christ's example today as the early church did.

But Jesus said unto them, You don't know what you ask: can you drink of the cup that I drink of? And be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

Mark 10:38

And he said unto them, You go and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day **I shall be perfected.**

Luke 13:32

A Christian who will not allow God to purge them with trials and suffering will never be perfected. This is because the heat of the trial brings the dross in our lives to the surface so that we are exposed and God can wipe it away. God cannot change the faults in my life until I accept that I have them. The biggest hindrance to our growth is the covering up of our faults so that in the end we think we have none. This was exactly the situation with the Laodiceans – their conscience was hardened to their blindness and coldness of heart. They actually thought they were a good Church, which is amazing when we consider how Jesus saw them.

2. Acquire white raiment.

They had nothing to cover their carnality and worldliness with. Peter tells the Believers in his first epistle to clothe themselves with humility. Surely this was to cover their pride. The white garments of the character of Christ will cover our carnal nature and our nakedness. It is impossible to be like Christ without his life in us, and that will never happen if we walk after the flesh and not the spirit.

Likewise, you younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yes, all of you be subject one to another, and **be clothed with**

humility: for God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble.

1 Peter 5:5

3. Address the blindness.

If a person knows they are blind then they can ask for help and spiritual blindness can be cured easily if a person is open and honest. But, if a blind person believes he can see, as those is this church did, then it is impossible to heal them. The Pharisees were in a similar position in that they thought they could see and were not blind. When Jesus exposed them they could not, or would not, accept it.

And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If you were blind, you should have no sin: but now you say, We see; therefore your sin remains.

John 9:40-41

It is interesting that Jesus told the Laodiceans to use eye salve for the city was famous for “Phrygian powder”, an ingredient used in a healing eye ointment. They would know how to heal physical blindness so Jesus used the illustration to show them

they needed healing spiritually of their blindness.

I think we all need to admit that we are blind in part and need revelation and healing in one area or another. If you, the reader, think you have perfect knowledge and revelation of the scriptures and your doctrines are all correct, you are confessing to me you are blind. Paul says we see through a dark glass so no one has perfect revelation or spiritual sight. Let us be honest and admit we are not perfect in our revelation and in doing so there is a chance that God will reveal our blind spots and heal them.

And if any man think that he knows any thing, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know.

1 Corinthians 8:2

For now we see through a glass, darkly;
but then face to face: now I know in part;
but then shall I know even as also I am
known.

1 Corinthians 13:12

4. Repent.

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten:
be zealous therefore, and repent.

Revelation 3:19

To repent is to change direction and attitude. If this church only realised that the rebuke was because of love it would make it so much easier. So much fallacy has come into the Church and we now have a situation when many Believers think that God only wants to bless them and fulfil their desires; that God would not rebuke them but always be gentle with them. This is a distorted view of a good father and Paul reminded us that those God loves he chastens.

And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks unto you as unto children, My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are rebuked of him: **for whom the Lord loves he chastens**, and scourges every son whom he receives.

Hebrews 12:5-6

Repentance comes at the cost of our pride. We have to confess our faults.

6 Let me in my Church.

Jesus gives a final entreaty to this lukewarm church.

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.

Revelation 3:20

Outside HIs Church

Christ had been shut out of this Church but it carried on as if he was the centre of it. They talked as though he was in their midst but in reality, he was outside. This must be true of many Churches today. They praise God and worship him but he is outside the building.

Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:

Isaiah 29:13

However, he does not write this church off and he will not write off present churches that are lukewarm. Jesus will keep on knocking because there is always a chance of change in God's people. Jesus is very patient and long-suffering, and I believe he will keep on knocking until he returns again for his Bride.

The Consequence for Disobedience.

So then because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth.

Revelation 3:16

A Strong Word

What a phrase! He is saying ‘You make me sick, I can’t stomach you’. It lets us see how God hates lukewarmness and would rather us be hot or cold, serve the devil or God, serve God or mammon, but never the mixture. When the Bible uses the word ‘abomination’, the strongest word in my estimation, it is usually talking about mixture. Anything less than perfect purity is a mixture. Here are a couple of examples.

The woman shall not wear that which pertains unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so **are abomination** unto the LORD your God.

Deuteronomy 22:5

You shall not sacrifice unto the LORD your God any bullock, or sheep, wherein

is blemish, or any evil-favouredness: for that is **an abomination** unto the LORD your God.

Deuteronomy 17:1

What are the rewards for those who overcome?

They will reign with Christ for 1,000 years.

To him that overcomes 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.

Revelation 3:20

Wonderful Promise

It is hard to believe that this decadent church, with all its faults, and lukewarmness, would receive a promise like this if they would overcome their faults. But this is the character of God, in judgement he is impartial and will reward those who repent and overcome.

It makes me think of the phrase Jesus used for the woman who was a sinner but washed Jesus' feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.

Wherefore I say unto you, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved

much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.

Luke 7:47

The last thing he says to this Church is the same as to the other six who were in spiritual Babylon.

He who has ears to hear, let his hear what the spirit says to the churches.

Chapter 10

Comparing Noah with Lot

The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

2 Peter 2:9

All the seven churches in Asia, even the ones with many faults who were recriminated because they were in spiritual Babylon, were capable of overcoming and being rewarded with wonderful promises.

I have been challenged while studying these seven churches. I have been critical of today's

churches because the attitudes and doctrines of Babylon are so prevalent. Yet, I have been surprised that despite the faults, of some of the seven churches and some are very serious, they were not discarded by God. Jesus sent messages to them to correct their faults and overcome them. If they changed they would receive rewards in the Kingdom that is soon coming to earth.

None Were Written Off

Every one of the seven churches was told how they could overcome. Not one of them was written off by Jesus. I have realised that there are Believers in every denomination and, even those outside of any faith, who believe in Jesus and are saved because God looks at the heart and not the doctrines. If having the perfect set of doctrines were a condition of salvation then no one would be saved.

When Elijah thought he was the only one to stand against the spirit of Jezebel, God told him there were 7,000 who had not bowed the knee which is a massive number when you consider Elijah thought he was the only one

It is no different today. I have had to change my thinking about the modern churches I was so critical of because of the doctrines and practices of Babylon.

A weak Believer can become a strong Believer, and a Church full of the doctrines and practices of Babylon can change and become a good Church. Change is always possible while we still have breath in our bodies.

God is patient and long-suffering and so should we be of Believers who are weak or have different doctrines from us. Jesus didn't write them off because they had faults and neither should you or I because they can change. There are always those people hidden from mainstream denominations who will not bow their knee to Babylon when the pressure comes. It will happen when antichrist asks the whole world to bow to the statue erected to the Man of Sin. There will be a remnant that is hidden who will not bow and this gives me great hope.

I was Bigoted

Writing this book has made me realise how bigoted I have been over the years, and still am to some extent, so I will have to work on this.

To conclude this book I would like to compare Noah and Lot who both escaped the judgement of God. One by water and the other by fire.

God warned Noah about the coming judgement by flood, and prepared for it by being a preacher of righteousness for 100 years whilst building the ark

And God spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

2 Peter 2:5

When the time came for judgement, the ark was ready and so was Noah. God told him to go into the ark for the rain would come in seven days. As soon as Noah and the animals were in the ark God shut him in. He was now safe – there was no way he could change his mind and be drowned in God's judgement. This shutting in also meant that those outside the ark could not repent and be saved even during those seven days

For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth ...And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him ...And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth ...And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: **and the LORD shut him in.**

From Genesis 7:4-16

With Lot, it was a very different story. He did not prepare at all because God did not warn him till the last moment – the day before he sent fire and brimstone on the cities of the plain. Therefore, Lot did not preach about the coming judgement for he was unaware of it until the last moment.

And the men said unto Lot, Have you here any besides son in law, and your sons, and your daughters, and whatsoever you have in the city, bring them out of this place: for we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD has sent us to destroy it. And Lot went out, and spoke unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law. And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take your wife, and your two daughters, which are here; lest you be consumed in the iniquity of the city.

Genesis 19:12-15

This seems to me to be much more like our present circumstances for although the evangelical

churches believe Jesus could come any time they are not preaching about God's judgement. In fact, they are saying the church will miss the judgement and be taken up out of it before it comes to this earth. This is despite what Jesus and the Apostles taught; that the judgement will come and catch God's people out because they have not been warned and do not expect it. Noah was warned and could prepare the ark, but Lot had no time to prepare.

But of that day and hour knows no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

Mark 26:36

And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. **For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.** Watch therefore, and pray always, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Luke 21:34-35

Jesus described his second coming as a snare and it is a perfect example of being unaware until

the snare snaps shut without warning and there is no escape.

Lot was delivered because he was a righteous man. Many will be delivered from the coming judgement of God because they have the righteousness of Christ even though they are not living the right life. They will be saved as Paul says 'as by fire'. All their works will be burned up. What a warning to Believers in this generation (which could be the last one before Christ returns).

If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

1 Corinthians 3:15

Lot and his family had to be forcibly snatched out of the city the same day it was destroyed after he had protested to the angels who were sent to destroy the city. The angels could not destroy the cities of the plain until Lot and his family had been removed.

...And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take your wife, and your two daughters, which are here; lest you are consumed in the iniquity of the city. And while he

lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city. ... Hasten, escape out of the city; **for I cannot do anything until you come out of it.** ...Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;

From Genesis 19:12-24

Even, after leaving they were not safe because they were warned not to look back to the city. Lot's wife did look back and was turned into a pillar of salt. I can understand that maybe she had family in the city but when God instructs us we disobey at our peril.

And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

Genesis 19:25-26

The following scripture, in context, is about the coming of Jesus to earth to judge and not the

‘Rapture’ as many believe, and Jesus says; Remember Lot’s wife.

In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. **Remember Lot’s wife.** Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

Luke 17 31-36

All the seven churches in Asia were given the same last words: He that has ears to hear let him hear what the spirit says to the Churches. I pray that you will heed these instructions and examine yourself and your Church to see if you have the same faults as described in the words of each church. And, that you will remedy the faults so that you can be an overcomer to stand without shame at the judgement seat of Christ.

For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.

Luke 9:26

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