



VII
LETTERS
TO THE CHURCH

I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the seven lampstands one like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes like a flame of fire; his feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and his voice

as the sound of many waters, he had in his right hand seven stars, out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. I am he who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

Write the things which you have seen, and the thing which are, and the things which will take place after this. The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands:

The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches."

FORWARD

The Revelation of Jesus Christ is the final book of the Holy Bible. As to its authorship, Chapter I, verses 1 & 2 state: The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants - things which must shortly take place. And he sent and signified it by his angel to his servant John, who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.

John, the last living Apostle now about 90 years old, wrote the book according to Christ's instruction in AD 94 - 96 while in exile on the island of Patmos. His instructions from Jesus were stated as, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea." And to "Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. "

John describes in Chapter I what he has seen; Christ's evaluation of the churches located in seven districts of Asia Minor (modern Turkey) become the things that are. And once John is called up to heaven he sees and records the things that will take place after this.

These are seven actual churches that existed at the time. However, it has been suggested that the descriptions given of them by Christ may also represent churches throughout the whole 'church age' - which would make his words of warning and comfort equally relevant and applicable now as then.

In this sense, the seven letters may therefore be viewed as having been directed by the Lord Jesus Christ to his whole church - then, now, and in its entirety.

John is told to address each to 'the angel of the church'. The Greek word translated 'angel' means messenger. In the context it most likely refers to the chosen elders or pastors of the seven churches. Christ tells John the following: "The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lamp-stands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lamp-stands which you saw are the seven churches." John sees the Lord walking amongst his churches.

As we shall see, Christ's evaluation identifies these churches as: loveless, persecuted, compromised, corrupted, dead, faithful and lukewarm. He has no word of condemnation for the persecuted and faithful churches. The others he warns!

*"To the angel
of the church of
Ephesus write,*

[The Lord identifies Ephesus as
having become an orthodox church no
longer functioning out of love for him.]

These things says he who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lamp-stands: "I know your works, your labour, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; and you have persevered and have patience, and have laboured for my name's sake and have not become weary.

Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.

Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lamp-stand from its place—unless you repent. But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God." "

THE
FAITHFUL WITNESS



THE
FIRSTBORN
FROM THE DEAD



*"And to the angel
of the church in
Smyrna write,*

[The Lord recognizes that the
Smyrna church is undergoing intense
persecution and has only words of
comfort for it.]

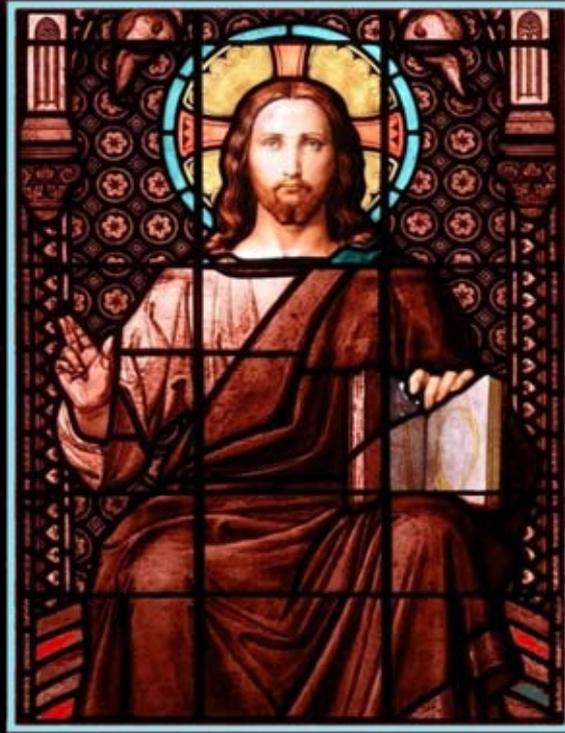
These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days.

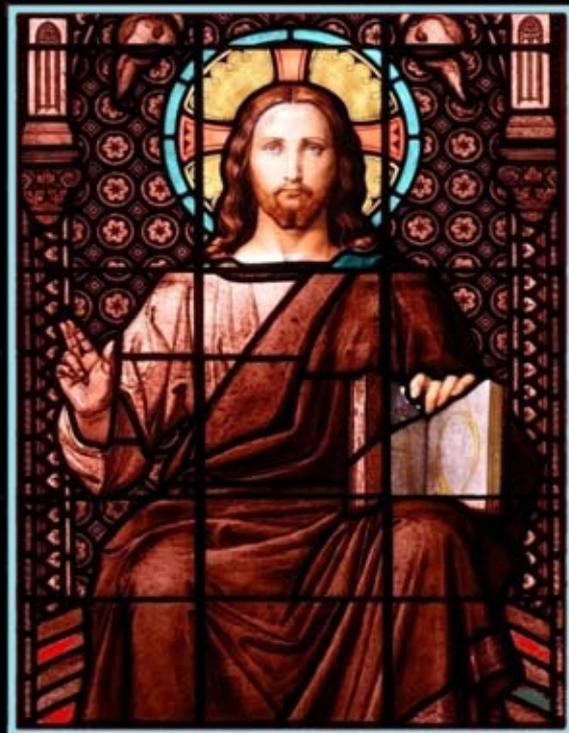
Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death." "

THE ALPHA
AND
THE OMEGA



THE FIRST
AND
THE LAST



*"And to the angel
of the church in
Pergamos write,*

[The Pergamos church had suffered persecution and been faithful, but it had also compromised with the world and allowed heresy to exist.]

These things says he who has the sharp two-edged sword: "I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to my name, and did not deny my faith even in the days in which Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it." 41

THE
BEGINNING
AND END



THE ALMIGHTY



*"And to the angel
of the church in
Thyatira write,*

[Although this church had great
virtues, sexual immorality and
idolatry had corrupted it.]

These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet like fine brass: "I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first.

Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.

I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am he who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden.

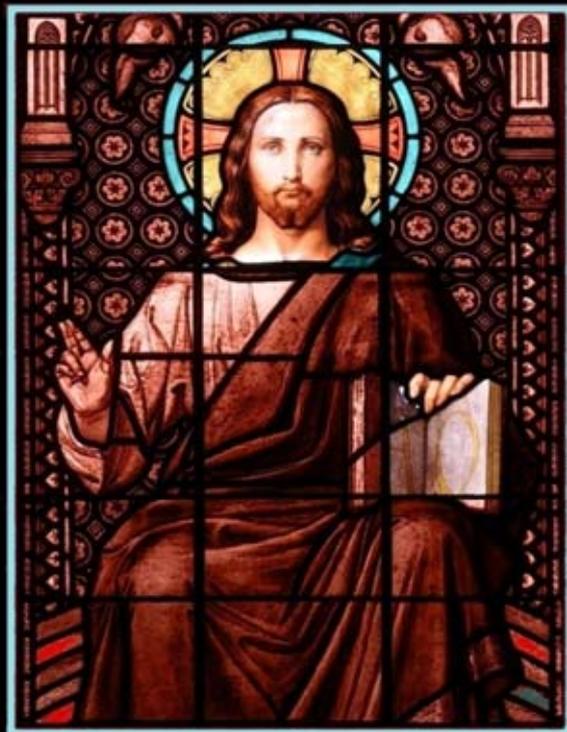
But hold fast what you have till I come. And he who overcomes, and keeps my works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations – he shall rule them with a rod of iron; they shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels' – as I also have received from my Father; and I will give him the morning star.

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

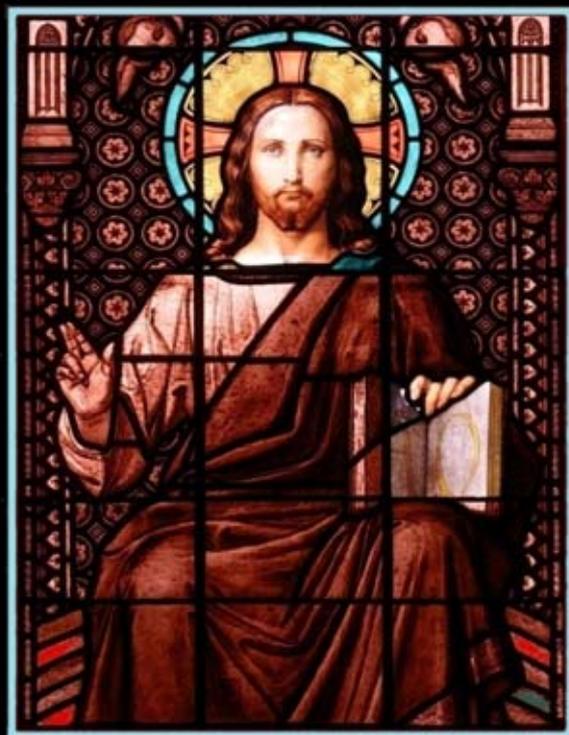
THE LORD
WHO IS
AND
WHO WAS
AND
WHO IS TO COME,



I AM HE WHO LIVES,
AND
WAS DEAD,



BEHOLD, I AM ALIVE
FOREVERMORE.
AMEN



*"And to the angel
of the church in
Sardis write,*

[The Lord who walks amongst the
lampstands declares Sardis to be a
dead church, apart from a few
members whom he knows.]

These things says he who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you 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; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.

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

He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the **Book of Life**; but I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." "

THE
SON OF GOD



EYES LIKE A
FLAME OF FIRE



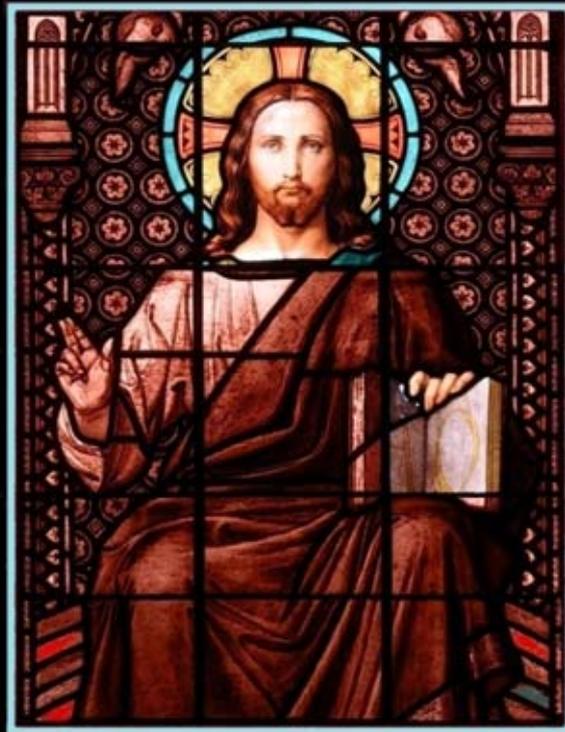
*"And to the angel
of the church in
Philadelphia write,*

[The Lord has only a message
of hope and promise for this
faithful, suffering church.]

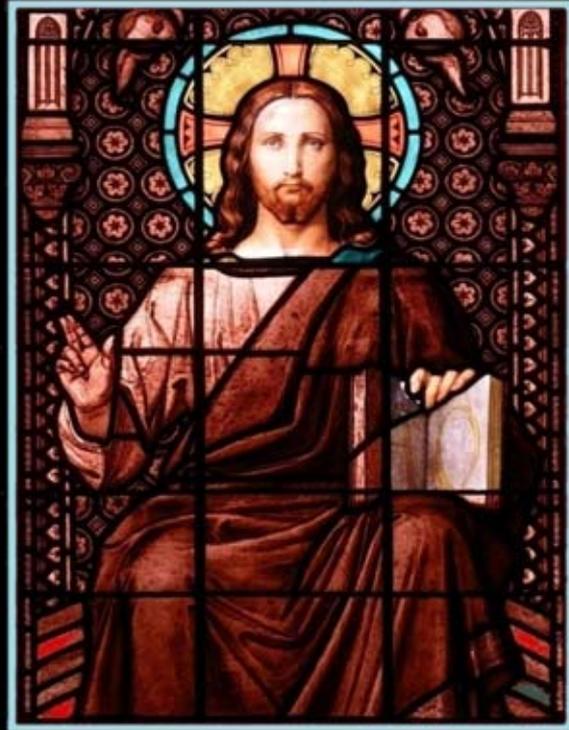
These things says he who is holy, he who is true, he who has the key of David, he who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens: "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept my word, and have not denied my name. Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Because you have kept my command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God. And I will write on him my new name. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." " "

THE RING
OF
RINGS



THE LORD
OF
LORDS



*"And to the angel
of the church of the
Laodiceans write,*

[This church had grown complacent
and lost its zeal for the Lord - and he
made it clear they shamed him.]

These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth. Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' -and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked - I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with me on my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." "

Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, "See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."

And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of this book, for the time is at hand. He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still."

"And behold, I am coming quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to everyone according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."

Blessed are those who do his commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.

But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.

"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."

And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the prophecy of this book God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

He who testifies to these things says, "Surely, I am coming quickly." Amen.



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