

CHURCHES OF REV. 1 OF 2

Discussing Bible Churches of Revelation.

Part 1 of 2 parts

When we study these churches we want to keep in mind that it begins with letters sent from God, (the First and the Last), through John, to Gentile churches, not Israelite churches. None of these churches are directed to a Jerusalem or American, or any Israelite church. Another thing to remember is these specific churches are not necessarily directed to the people located in these confined locations but are among the time periods they live in. It would not make sense to group all these locations together and address them as separate "called out ones". When we get to the last group of "called out ones" we find that it is the Laodicea congregation, who is neither hot nor cold. They will exist during the time of God's wrath at the very end of this age. These members of God's Gentile church will be "tried as by fire" to purify them. The word "church" according to Strong's Conc. simply means God's "called out ones" (from the world and false religions).

The number seven is very important because God uses it to label periods of the history of Gentile churches right up to the time of God's wrath, before the return of Christ. God's seven bowls of wrath is the only time it effects "the whole world". The last bunch of believers will be tested "as by fire" by having to go through God's wrath. The previous group called "Philadelphia" was promised, because of their faithfulness, to escape this horrendous time.

We have no way of knowing how long each church period lasts or how many come and go, just as we see many religious people today floundering about from one doctrine to another. Some claim to be "The" Church, giving the impression theirs is the only one that God recognizes, or accepts. We don't even know, if or when, these Gentile congregations "in Asia" will exist. It may be possible that they are already existing. What we do know is that they are Gentile people in Asia whom Christ recognizes as his "called out ones." We also know that Paul said Israel has been blinded. We do not see anything in Revelation referring to any Israelite churches.

Rev 1:4 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;

5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first born of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

First #1 Church of Ephesus seal # 1 Rev. 6:1-2)

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

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

God approves their "trying" those who are false teachers. This is something we all should do before we attach ourselves to any one religious belief without first using the Bible to "test" their truthfulness.

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

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

Many believers think if they do a work, don't break any Laws, that they are pleasing God. We can become distant, or bored, and lose our love for God by allowing work, and many other things to interfere with

our relationship with God. God warns us about that because he knows it is spiritually dangerous, leading to a Laodicean attitude.

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

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

There have been studies that shows the Nicolaitans were types of organized religions that were willingly ruled over by a man made government. If that is true then God "hates" it.

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

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

Second #2 Smyrna (seal # 2) (seal # 2 Rev. 6:3-4)

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

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

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

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

Notice Christ refers to himself as "the Spirit". He also is instructing John to write to "the angel" (messenger) of this church period. Smyrna is an almost perfect group during their period of time.. Evidently they cleaned up their act and learned from the previous period. Even so, they are going to go through a time (10 yrs?) of persecution to try them. If they pass the test they are promised eternal life. The greatest reward to work toward.

Third # 3 Pergamos (seal # 3 Rev. 6:5-6)

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

13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in

those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

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

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

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

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

This church period has a lot of problems, but it is still considered being God's called out ones, with a few still being faithful. They have become involved with false religions, but are holding on to their belief in the true God, to a certain extent. But notice he seems to be warning them by having

a two edged sword. There is no mention of them being rewarded with eternal life.

#4 Thyatira church (seal #4 Rev. 6:7-8)

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

19 I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.

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

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

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

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

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