

A scenic landscape featuring a herd of sheep in the foreground, a city in the middle ground, and mountains in the background under a clear sky. The text is overlaid on this image.

**THE LETTER TO PHILADELPHIA**  
**Revelation 3:7 – 13**

**THE LETTER:**  
**“Church of the Open Door”**

**THE CITY:**  
**Not especially notable  
at time of writing.**



**1. Built c. 168 B.C. as platform for Grecian culture.**

**2. Natural disasters brought ruin.**

**3. The city soon became dependent on government for its existence.**

**4. Today: Ala-shehir.**

**5. Previously:**

- a. Decapolis**
- b. Neo-kaisaria**
- c. Flavia**
- d. "Little Athens"**

# THE CONGREGATIONAL SALUTATION:

*“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: ‘He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this:’”* – Revelation 3:7.

1. Only description for which the language does not come from the vision of the Son of man among the seven candlesticks.
2. Language borrows from Isaiah 22:22 re: Eliakim.
3. **QUESTION: Why this designation?**
4. **ANSWER: Revelation 3:8 provides solution.**
5. **QUESTION: What does the language reveal regarding Christ?**

6. **ANSWER:** Only Christ opens and shuts irrevocably.

7. **SIGNIFICANT:** No criticism is spoken regarding this church.

**THE COMMENDATION:** *“I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept my word, and have not denied my name”*

– Revelation 3:8.

**PHILADELPHIA**  
(Alaşehir, Turkey)

1. **“deeds”** = working church.
2. **“have a little power”** = potential.
3. **“kept my word”** = faithful church.
4. **“not denied my name”** = non-compromising church.
5. ***“Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie – I will [make them] come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you”*** = persecuted church.

# THE CHALLENGE:

***“He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will not go out from it anymore; 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 my new name”*** – Revelation 3:12.

**1. “...make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will not go out from it anymore” = eternal life.**

**a. Earthquakes devastated numerous temples.**

**b. Icons of deities destroyed in earthquakes.**

**c. Items intended for permanency had been destroyed.**

2. ***“...will write on him the name of my God”*** = relationship.
3. ***“...will write...the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God”*** = honor.
4. ***“...will write...and (even) my new name”*** = identity.
  - a. **Cf. Isaiah 62:2**
  - b. **Cf. Revelation 2:17**


## **THE EXHORTATION:**


***“I am coming soon; hold fast to what you have, so that no one may seize your crown. If you conquer, I will make you a pillar in the temple of my God; you will never go out of it....Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches”*** – Revelation 3:11 – 12(a), 13.

# ESSENTIAL TRUTHS:


1. ***"I am coming soon"*** = reference to judgmental activity in time.


a. 

(1) Revelation 1:1(b) ***"what must soon take place"*** ().

(2) Revelation 1:3(c) ***"the time is near"*** ().

(3) Revelation 16:15 ***"like a thief"***

(4) Revelation 22:12 ***"I am coming soon"*** ().

(5) Revelation 22:20 ***"I am coming soon"*** ().

b. Reflects preterist focus

2. ***“hold fast to what you have, so that no one may seize your crown”*** = discipleship, even for the most ardent of the faithful, requires repeated effort.

a. ***“hold fast...so that”***

b. ***“may seize your crown”***

(1) “seize” = may take.

(2) “crown” = victor’s crown.

c. **FOR THOUGHT:** What is to be concluded from this language to a faithful church?

3. ***“If you conquer, I will make you a pillar in the temple of my God”***

a. Literally, “the conquering.”

b. **QUESTION:** What needed ‘overcoming’ in Philadelphia?

c. **CONSIDER:**

(1) Revelation 3:8(b) ***“open door.”***

(2) Revelation 3:8(c) ***“but little power.”***

(3) Revelation 3:9 ***“synagogue of Satan.”***

(4) Revelation 3:10(b) ***“hour of trial.”***

4. ***“I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. I am coming soon”*** = The Lord ‘trying,’ ‘testing’ mankind.

a. 

 ***hour of trial***

b.  ***test***

c. This term is to be literally translated variously as: “test;” “try;” “tempt.”

**d. This “testing/tempting” is activity here attributed to the Lord.**

**e. FOR THOUGHT: How then shall we understand James 2:12 – 16?**

**f. PROPOSED SOLUTION:**

**(1) God has always ‘tempted’ man.**

**(a) Genesis 1:29 – 31.**

**(b) Genesis 2:8 – 9**

**(c) Genesis 2:16 – 17**

**(2) Satan has always ‘tempted’ man –  
Genesis 3.**

# g. Old Testament references to the 'tempting' activity and intent of God

in doing so: Hebrew      (nissa)

- (1) GENESIS 22:1-2
- (2) EXODUS 16:4
- (3) DEUTERONOMY 8:2-3
- (4) DEUTERONOMY 8:16
- (5) DEUTERONOMY 13:3
- (6) JUDGES 3:1,4
- (7) 2 CHRONICLES 32:31
- (8) PSALM 11:4-5
- (9) PROVERBS 17:3 [et al]

## **g. James 1:12 – 13 (misconceived)**

**(1) Context is essential to any proper understanding of Scripture.**

**(2) James 1:2 – 4**

**(3) James 1:12**

## **h. THE RESOLUTION:**

**(1) James speaks of the ‘testing’ from Satan.**

**(2) God never ‘tests’ anyone with unrighteous intent.**

**(3) Satan ‘tests’ mankind for sovereignty.**

**(4) God ‘tests’ mankind for sovereignty.**