

REVELATION SERIES - LESSON 7

REVELATION 3:1-6

SARDIS

Rev. 3:1-6

Sardis is not mentioned anywhere else in the Bible.

Located 65 miles east of Smyrna, 30 miles southeast Thyatira.

Background of Sardis:

Wealthy city on major trade route.

Polytheistic like rest of Roman Empire.

Chief Goddess of Sardis was “Artemis”

She was the goddess of the hunt and fertility.

Some of first coins ever minted were minted in Sardis.

Center of carpet and wool industry in the 1st century.

Had large “Necropolis”

“Necros” - Death

“Polis” = City

Literally it means “city of death”.

There has actually been the physical remains of a church discovered here, near the remains of temple to “Artermis”.

This pagan city was not without the witness of a church.

In AD17 a major earthquake happened and the city was never really rebuilt.

It's the modern town “Sart” in Turkey with population of about 5300 people.

“7 Spirits” =

7 is often a number in the Bible that speaks of perfection or completion.

One idea is that since we know only 1 Holy Spirit, that this is a reference to the perfect/complete work of the Holy Spirit.

It could also be translated as the 7 Fold Spirit, or the complete work and attributes of the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 11:2

In that verse you and I see 7 aspects of the 1 Holy Spirit.

1) SPIRIT OF LORD

2) SPIRIT OFF WISDOM

3) SPIRIT OF UNDERSTAND

4) SPIRIT OF COUNSEL

5) SPIRIT OF MIGHT

6) SPIRIT OF KNOWLEDGE

7) SPIRIT OF FEAR OF LORD

Commendation - Remnant of Holy

God has always done great things with a small amount of dedicated holy people.

In Biblical History God uses small remnants to do great and Mighty things.

1. Noah

2. Gideon

3. 3 brave jewish teenagers

4. 1 courageous jewish boy named David

5. 12 Apostles

Complaint = Alive on outside but dead on inside.

“Activity” does not equal “vitality”.

He condemns them for being and looking alive on outside and dead on the inside.

Reward = To the Remnant He says:

1. Clothed in white garments

2. Name not blotted out.

White = Righteousness - clothed in righteousness. I take this literal and figurative.

“Name not be blotted out of Book of Life”.

In the NKJV, the Book of Life is mentioned 7 times in Revelation.

What is Book of Life? Record of all the names of people who are going to heaven.

Why significant? Could it be that originally everyone was there cause God's desire is all be saved?

Psalms 69:28

I get questions what about kids die before they make a profession of faith, 1 or 2 years old, or mentally disabled and can't understand?

When David's son died, David was asked why are you not mourning? He said "he won't return to me, but I will go to him."

He understood that his child was with the Lord.

In Exodus we see gracious provision given to an entire generation of adults who was not allowed to enter Promise Land except Joshua and Caleb. God made provision for their children. God extended grace.

Please don't misunderstand, only way to heaven is through faith in Christ. It seems the language indicates it's there and removed upon rejection.

Let's talk for a minute about this era in church history.

Martin Luther, Catholic monk, Oct 31 in 1517, had 95 rejections to Roman Catholicism.

He as a Catholic, and objected to specifically the Indulgencies”.

“Indulgencies” - the Roman Catholic Church would require an individual to pay them money in order to be absolved from sin.

They were quickly snapped up and translated from latin to german and distributed and a copy sent to Rome.

They tried to get Luther to change his mind and he refused so in 1521, Pope Leo X, formally excommunicated Luther from the church.

Same year Luther again refused to recant before Roman Emperor Charles 5th of Germany and he issued an Edict of Wormes.

It declared Luther an outlaw and heretic and gave permission for anyone to kill Martin Luther without consequence.

1517 until early 1700's, another shift came in the "Great Awakening".

The Great Revival stimulated growth in several educational institutions. Colleges were planted as a result.

Princeton

Brown

Rutgers

Dartmouth

This leads us into the next letter to the church at Philadelphia.

So we move 28 miles southeast to Philadelphia.

City was built by and named after a King of Pergamos.

Attalus Philadelphus (138 BC died) King of Pergamon.

Philadelphia - City of brotherly love.

It's also like Sardis was rocked and almost completely destroyed in 17 AD.

Grapes were one of the principal commodities and one of the reasons the pagans worshipped "Dionysus" = God of wine.

Modern day, the city of "Alishir", "City of God".

It's currently an Islamic City.

Philadelphia Evangelistic Church

"Holy" & "True"

"True" = 2 different greek words for the word true!

1. True and not false

2. True and not fake

It means Jesus is genuine and not fake.

He is the real deal.

“Key of David; what he opens, no one can shut”.

It's actually a quote from Isaiah 22:22.

Commendations - “Little Strength” - It's not a reference to size of strength but they realized strength comes from God.

“Kept God’s Word” - they obeyed even when faced with persecution.

This is why the evangelical church and its revival is that they will be kept from the hour of trials that’s coming upon the whole world.

This time is what’s taught in Jeremiah 30:7, Jacob’s trouble.

Daniel 9:27 - 70th week

Matthew 24:21 - Great Distress

It is a reference to Great Tribulation

This is a proof text as to why it is that the true church will be taken from the earth just prior to the Great Tribulation.

Reward for the true church is this escape from going through the Great Tribulation.

Matt. 24:22 - For sake of the elect, we won't have to endure the great tribulation.

But in I Thessalonians 5, he discusses seasons and times of his coming.

I Thessalonians 5:1-3

He clearly says church is not "appointed to wrath".

Let's talk about according to church history, why this is such a significant event here.

From 1750 on going

No perfect church, but I do see us as living currently in the age of the Philadelphian church.

It's the evangelistic church that will be raptured and spared the wrath coming upon the earth.

2 diverging streams in church age.

One stream is Evangelistic Church.

Other stream is Laodicea Apostate (Liberal)

2 streams right now.

There are some churches that are evangelistic and believe in the fullness of scripture and inerrancy and Jesus is the only way.

But also a liberal apostate church that's alive and well that sadly denies scriptures, virgin birth.

Those 2 kinds of churches exist today.

Let me say what happened to Evangelistic Church:

They have been basically 4 Great Awakenings in church history.

1. 1730 or 1740 (First Great Awakening), Jonathon Edwards, John & Charles Wesly, George Whitfield
2. 1790 - 1840 - J Edwin Orr wrote about Second Great Awakening - Rebirth of America.

3. 1855 - 1930 - Big part of this was 1904 - 1905 in Wales
Great Welch Revival - John Shiver "in the glory of His
presence".

4. 1960 - 1980 - Billy Graham, Jesus movement, Calvary
Chapel, Chuck Smith.

Philadelphia was evangelistic and millions been saved and may
we do our part.

