

# REVELATION 3

Letter to the churches – Philadelphia

By Richard Osei



# REVELATION “THE UNVEILING”

- The consummation of all things
- The only book promising a special blessing to the reader
- 404 verses containing over 800 allusions from the Old Testament
- It present the climax of God’s Plan for you and me



# THE SEVEN CHURCHES

- Why these seven?
- One phrase that echo's through out the letters (He that heath an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches)
- Levels of Application
  1. Local – Sir William Ramsay conducted an intensive archeological investigation (Had local problems that the letter address)
  2. Admonitory to all churches ( all the seven letters were sent to all the seven churches, with one specifically to that church)
  3. Homiletic (Personal)
  4. Prophetic



# SEVEN DESIGN ELEMENTS

- In each of the Letters to Seven Churches
  1. Name of the Church
  2. Title of Christ Chosen
  3. Commendation (2 letter - nothing good to say about them)
  4. Concerns (2 letter - nothing bad to say about them)
  5. Exhortation
  6. Promise to the Overcomer
  7. Close: "He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the Churches."



# EPHESUS

- Nevertheless I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love.
- They are too busy on the business of the King, to have any time for the King (Example: Luke 10:38-40)

1. Name of the Church → Ephesus
2. Title of Christ Chosen → Rev. 2:1
3. Commendation → Rev. 2:2-3
4. Concerns → Rev. 2:4
5. Exhortation → Rev. 2:5-6
6. Close: “He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the Churches.”  
→ Rev. 2:7
7. Promise to the Overcomer → Rev. 2:7



# SMYRNA

<sup>10</sup> 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.

1. Name of the Church - Smyrna
2. Title of Christ Chosen – Rev. 2:8
3. Commendation - Rev. 2:9
4. Concerns – no concerns
5. Exhortation - Rev. 2:10
6. Close: “He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the Churches.” - Rev. 2:11
7. Promise to the Overcomer - Rev. 2:11



# PERGAMOS

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. <sup>15</sup> Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

1. Name of the Church - Pergamos
2. Title of Christ Chosen – Rev. 2:12
3. Commendation - Rev. 2:13
4. Concerns – Rev. 2:14
5. Exhortation - Rev. 2:15
6. Close: “He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the Churches.” - Rev. 2:17
7. Promise to the Overcomer - Rev. 2:17



# THYATIRA

Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow<sup>[c]</sup> that woman<sup>[d]</sup> Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce<sup>[e]</sup> My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. <sup>21</sup> And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. <sup>[f]</sup> <sup>22</sup> Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their<sup>[g]</sup> deeds.

1. Name of the Church – Thyatira
2. Title of Christ Chosen – Rev. 2:18
3. Commendation - Rev. 2:19
4. Concerns – Rev. 2:20-23
5. Exhortation - Rev. 2:24-25
6. Promise to the Overcomer - Rev. 2:26-28
7. Close: “He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the Churches.” - Rev. 2:29





# SARDIS

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. <sup>2</sup> Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. <sup>[a]</sup> <sup>3</sup> 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.

1. Name of the Church – Sardis
2. Title of Christ Chosen – Rev. 3:1
3. Commendation -
4. Concerns – Rev. 3:2-4
5. Exhortation - Rev. 3:5
6. Promise to the Overcomer - Rev. 2:26-28
7. Close: “He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the Churches.” - Rev. 3:6



# PHILADELPHIA



# PHILADELPHIA

- Philadelphia – means brotherly love → acceptable
- Philadelphia – City of Brotherly Love
- Phila – friendly toward | friendly fellowship



# PHILADELPHIA

- The youngest of the cities was build in the area acquired by Pergamos in 189 BC
  - King Eunenes II, King of the Pergamos, had a younger brother, Attalus II: who was his successor, and won the cognomen Philadelphus for his loyalty and affection for Eumenes



# GEOGRAPHIC ADVANTAGE

- The area was well favored for wine production
  - Dionysius, the god of wine, was the principal deity
- Well situated on the imperial post road from Rome and Troas to Pergamos, Sardis and to the interior of Phrygia
  - It was a virtual gateway to the high central plateau of Asia Minor
- Name Changes
  - Katakekaumene (“the Burned Land”): a highly volcanic region, suffered repeatedly from earthquakes
  - Almost completely destroyed in the disaster of 17 AD, which devastate Sardis and ten other cities (Tacitus, Annals 2 47)
  - Tremors were reported for years afterwards



# NAME CHANGES

- Generous financial relief from Tiberius caused the citizens to rename the city Neo-Caesarea (“New City of Caesar”)
  - Later, in the time of Vespasian, it was changed to Flavia, his family name
  - The name changes were short-lived and the old name Philadelphia soon revived
- Today: Allah-Shehu, “City of God”



# PHILADELPHIA - CHRIST TITLE

- <sup>7</sup> “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write,
- “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”:[c] <sup>8</sup> “I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it;[d] for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

**Title of Christ:** 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”



# “HOLY”

- Holy” – Rev. 6:10, Lev. 11:44, 2:8, Isa. 57:15
  - Song of the Seraphim Isaiah 6:3
- At His birth Luke 1:35
  - <sup>35</sup> And the angel answered and said to her, “*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.*”
- At His death Acts 2:27
  - For You will not leave my soul in Hades,  
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.
- In His present priestly office Hebrews 7:25
  - <sup>25</sup> Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.





# “TRUE”

- Alethinos, real, genuine; John 17:3, 1John 5:20
  - Alethes, truth in contrast to falsehood
- Prophecy of Zecarias                      Luke 1:75
- His kingship rests upon the bedrock of His character                      Psalm 2, 24, etc...



# “KEY OF DAVID” – ISAIAH 22

- <sup>20</sup> ‘Then it shall be in that day,  
That I will call My servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah;  
<sup>21</sup> I will clothe him with your robe  
And strengthen him with your belt;  
I will commit your responsibility into his hand.  
He shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem  
And to the house of Judah.  
<sup>22</sup> The key of the house of David  
I will lay on his shoulder;  
So he shall open, and no one shall shut;  
And he shall shut, and no one shall open.  
<sup>23</sup> I will fasten him as a peg in a secure place,  
And he will become a glorious throne to his father’s house.
- <sup>24</sup> ‘They will hang on him all the glory of his father’s house, the offspring and the posterity, all vessels of small quantity, from the cups to all the pitchers. <sup>25</sup> In that day,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘the peg that is fastened in the secure place will be removed and be cut down and fall, and the burden that was on it will be cut off; for the LORD has spoken.’”



# “KEY OF DAVID”

- Elakim (when Shebna, Hezekiah’s treasurer was deposed and superseded) Isa. 22:19-24
- Full administrative authority: Eliakim carried a heavy key on a loop slung over his shoulder, indicating his power to grant or deny others an audience with the king. He alone provided access to the presence of the king
- Messianic term: Isa. 9:6-7, Luke 1:32-33, Mt. 28:18, Rev. 1:18



# NOT “JUST TO PETER”

- “Keys to the kingdom”?
  - To Peter (Matt. 16:19) - <sup>19</sup> And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed<sup>[a]</sup> in heaven.”
  - To all Apostles (Matt. 18:18) - <sup>18</sup> “Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.
  - Door opened to Gentiles (Acts 10)
- Clarified in his 1<sup>st</sup> Epistle (1 Peter 2:4-9)



# “KEYS OF KINGDOM” — MATT. 16:13-20

- <sup>13</sup> When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?”
- <sup>14</sup> So they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”
- <sup>15</sup> He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”
- <sup>16</sup> Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”
- <sup>17</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven. <sup>18</sup> And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. <sup>19</sup> And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed<sup>[d]</sup> in heaven.”
  
- Build his church on “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”
- Peter explain it in – 1 Peter 2



# PHILADELPHIA - COMMENDATION

- <sup>8</sup> “I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; <sup>[d]</sup> for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. <sup>9</sup> 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.
- 1. I know your works. See
- 2. I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it
- 3. for you have a little strength
- 4. have kept My word
- 5. and have not denied My name
- 6. 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.
- 7. 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.



# COMMENDATION

- I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it
- “open doors”: 1 Cor. 16:9, 2 Cor 2:12, Col. 4:3
- Door(s) of deliverance:
  - “I Am the Door.” John 10:7, 9
  - Noah’s Ark: Closed by God (7 days before the flood)  
Gen 7:16
  - The door at the wedding Mt. 25:1-10



# OPEN DOORS?

- <sup>8</sup> But I will tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost. <sup>9</sup> For a great and effective door has opened to me, and *there are many adversaries.*
- 1 Corinthians 16:8-9





# COMMENDATION

- 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.
- Complete denial of Jesus sacrifice – putting us under the law
- False Jews
- Legalists? Cf. Rev. 2:9
  - False Jews = Reconstructionist (Replacement Theology)
  - The idea that, since the Jews rejected Christ, the promises now falls on the church
- Will be compelled to worship (Philippians 2:10-11)
- Day of Vengeance: (Isaiah 61:2 vs. (Luke 4:18-20) 2 Thess. 1:7-8)



# COMMENDATION

- <sup>10</sup> 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.
- <sup>10</sup> Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, ( Because you have kept My command to persevere)
  
- King David
- The anointed King of Israel, for a time exiled from his kingdom and took refuge in a cave in Adullam (1 Sam. 22:1, 2 Sma 23:13, 1 Chr 11:15)
- Fefused by his people, gathered three classes of people around him:
  - Men in debt, danger, and discontented
  - He transformed them into the mighty men
- Ultimately left Adullam for his crowning



# COMMENDATION

- 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.
  
- Tes horas: the hour, time, season
- Ton peirasaon: the trial, temptation, testing, adversity, tribulation, etc
  
- The purpose of this trial – to try them (Gentile believers are killed)
- Who – dwellers of the earth.
- “Dwell” = not oikeo,
  - Katoideo = identified with (Phil 3:20, Heb. 11:13)Epi teo oikoumenes holes;  
In the Greek it is very clear: upon all mankind; geographically comprehensive



# PHILADELPHIA – CONCERN:

- No Concern



# EXHORTATION:

- <sup>11</sup> Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.
- Two Crown – Smyrna and Philadelphia
- Already have the crown
- Hold on to what you got



# LET NO MAN ROB YOU

- Esau lost his place to Jacob (Gen. 25:34, 27:36)
- Reuben lost his place to Judah (Gen. 49:4,8)
- For his actions at Meriabath, Moses was superseded by Joshua (Num 20:12; Deut 3:26-28)
- Saul lost his place to David (1 Sam. 16:1,13)
- Shebna lost his place to Eliakim (Isaiah 22:15-25)
- Joab and Abiathar lost their places to Benaiah and Zadok (1Kings 2:25)



# HOLDING FAST

- During the 14<sup>th</sup> century The city of Philadelphia stood alone against the entire Turkish empire as a free, self-governing Christian city in the midst of a Turkish land
  - Twice besieged by great Turkish armies, its people reduced to the verge of starvation, they had learned to defend themselves, and resisted to the end
- 1379-1390, it finally succumbed to a combined Turkish and Byzantine army
  - Until then, Philadelphia had held fast



# PROMISE TO THE OVERCOMER:

- <sup>12</sup> Him that overcometh 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 cometh down out of heaven from **my God**: and I will write upon him my new **name**.
  
- Pillar – solid
- Name of my God
- Name of the city
- I will write upon him my new name of my God
  
- New Name: Rev. 14:1, Rev. 19:12-13, Rev. 6, Rev. 22:4





# CLOSING

- <sup>6</sup> “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”
- To the church of Philadelphia
- To the Your church
- To you individual as a body of the church



# ADMONITORY (TO ALL CHURCHES)

- Application to All Churches
  - Ephesus → Devotion, not just doctrine
  - Smyrna → Endure Persecution
  - Pergamos → Stand fast against world (Purify Ambassadorship)
  - Thyatra → Pagan Practice (Sunday, Easter, ...)
  - Sardis → Watchfulness, Diligence
  - Philadelphia → Missionary outreach
  - Laodicea



# PERSONAL (HOMILETICS)

- Personal Application
  - Ephesus → Neglected Priorities
  - Smyrna → Satanic Opposition
  - Pergamos → Spiritual Compromise
  - Thyatra → Pagan Practice (Sunday, Easter, ...)
  - Sardis → Watchfulness, Diligence
  - Philadelphia → Loyal Ambassadorship
  - Laodicea



# PROMISES TO THE OVERCOMER

- Application to All Churches/Person
  - Ephesus → Eat of Tree of Life
  - Smyrna → Not hurt of 2<sup>nd</sup> death
  - Pergamos → Manna, Stone, Name
  - Thyatra → Power over nations
  - Sardis → Walk with Him in white, Name not blotted out
  - Philadelphia → Pillar in temple, name of God, name of His city, new name
  - Laodicea



# WHO IS THE “OVERCOMER”

- <sup>4</sup> For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our<sup>[a]</sup> faith. <sup>5</sup> Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? (1 John 5:4-5)
- Overcomer promises are to the people of faith



# PROPHETIC PROFILE?

- Ephesus - Apostolic Church? (**The Loveless Church**)
  - Knew the word, and on a mission but left their first love
  - Being too busy on the business of the King rather than for the King Himself
- Smyrna - Persecuted Church? (**The Persecuted Church**)
  - that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation
  - They ambassadorship was tested

Pergamos – The Marriage Church (**The Compromising Church**)  
you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith  
Compromising with the world

Thyatira – The Medieval Church? (**The Corrupt Church**)

- I know your works, love, service, faith, <sup>[b]</sup> and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first
- Allowing what is evil (immorality) in the church



# PROPHETIC PROFILE?

- Sardis – Has a name but of no significance (**The Dead Church**)
  - “I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.
  - Be Watchful, Strengthen
- Philadelphia – Missionary Church (**The Faithful Church**)
  - I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; <sup>[a]</sup> for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.
  - Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.



# NEXT READ CHAPTER 2 & 3

- Outline the Letter to Laodicea
  1. Name of the Church
  2. Title of Christ Chosen
  3. Commendation
  4. Concerns
  5. Exhortation
  6. Promise to the Overcomer
  7. Close: “He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the Churches.”





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