The Seven Churches Timeline - Part 2





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Enter The Ark of Hope

The Great Controversy between God and Satan is primarily over

"WORSHIP"

Who will you Choose?



Get into the Ark Sanctuary





And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.

Exodus 25:8

Psalms 77:13



Health Snippet – Trust: Faith in the Creator God

"If religious faith could be packaged in a pill, the stock price of drug companies would soar."

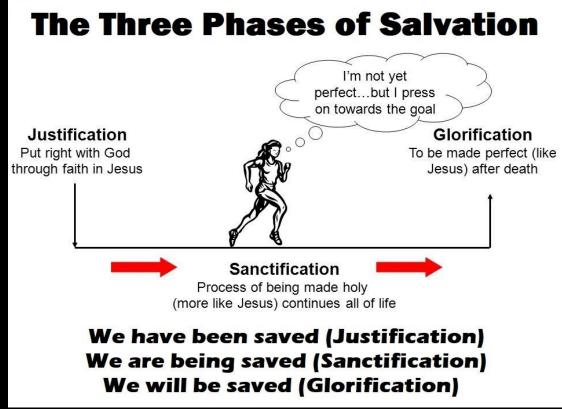
Religion and spirituality is a profound predictor of health. Spiritual practices reduce blood pressure, strengthen the immune system, and help stave off some effects of mental illness as well as many drugs on the market. *In a study, the lack of religiosity is about as unhealthy as 40 years of smoking a pack of cigarettes a day.*

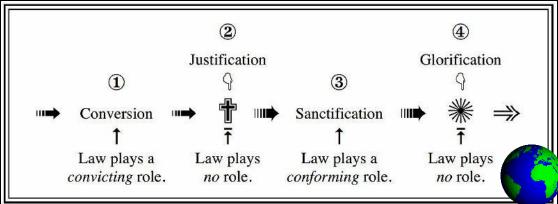
5 ways your faith improves your health:

- 1. FAITH ENCOURAGES HEALTHY BEHAVIOR.
- 2. FAITH REDUCES STRESSES OF LIFE.
- 3. FAITH COMMUNITY IMPROVES EMOTIONAL HEALTH.
- 5. FAITH IMPROVES LIFE'S SATISFACTION.
- 5. FAITH IS SPACE FOR THE MIRACULOUS.

The anxieties & stresses of modern life encourage the body's fight or flight response. Prayer, worship and other spiritual activities can balance out this stress response by enhancing the body's <u>relaxation response</u>. In a survey, 3/4 of <u>doctors said</u> that they believe in miraculous healings.

"So if you care about your health, you might want to start going to church and praying regularly!"



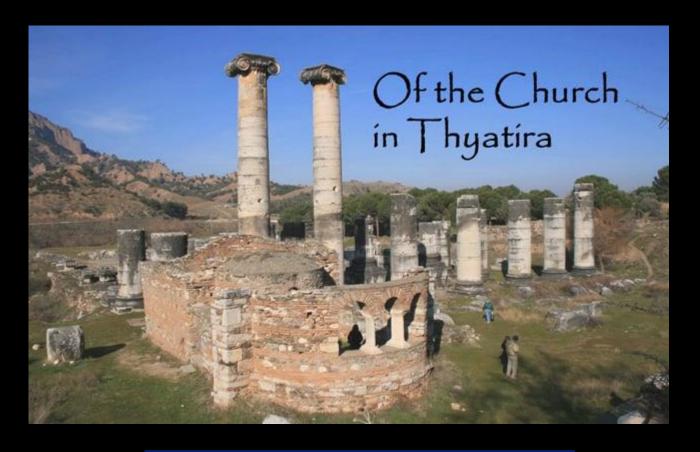


Can We Trust Bible Prophecy?





Yes we Can!



Revelation 2:18-29



The Seven Churches Timeline

God's Messages for today's church



A brief study of God's grace to His church, then and now, from the Book of Revelation Chapters 2 & 3



The geographic location of the 7 churches



All the letters will be broken down into seven sections:

REVELATION



(Revelation 2 & 3)

- A pattern is followed in each of the messages to the seven churches.
 - 1. Salutation
 - 2. Christ's self designation
 - 3. Commendation of good
 - 4. Condemnation of evil
 - 5. Counsel (warning & exhortation)
 - 6. Promise of reward to those who overcome
 - 7. Invitation to Hear



What are the three basic messages to these churches?

- 1. God knows about me. He says: "I know thy works." Note: God cares about my conduct and this fact is repeated to all the churches.
 - Rev. 2:2,9,13,19 and 3:1,8,15.
- 2. Overcoming is imperative. To him that overcometh." Note: This takes place only through Jesus, and its importance is strongly emphasized to each church.
 - Rev. 2:7,11,17, 26 and 3:5,12,21



What are the three basic messages to these churches?

- 3. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Jesus counsels, "Hear what the Spirit saith."
- Note: The Holy Spirit convicts people of sin and leads them to repentance.
 - John 16: 8,13.
- Without the Holy Spirit no one ever feels sorry for sin or finds the new birth experience. No wonder Jesus stressed so forcefully the importance of listening to His Spirit!
 - Rev. 2:7,11,17,29 and 3:6,13,22.

He that has an ear, Let him hear





The Seven Churches Timeline

Church Era Years Smyrna Pergamos Thyatira Sardis **Ephesus Philadelphia** Laodicea 100-313 313-538 538-1517 33-100 1517-1755 1755-1844 1844-2nd Advent Roman Catholic Church Jesuits Of Rome Roman Empire

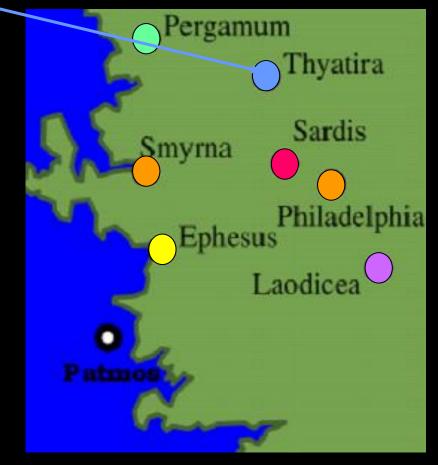
The Journey Continues





Thyatira:







Thyatira:

- Was a smaller city but a thriving manufacturing and commercial center
 many trades and guilds.
 - It was steeped in superstition and pagan rituals.
 - It accepted many cults and 'tradesman' secret societies.
- A woman called Jezebel taught and fooled many Christians to conform to paganism.

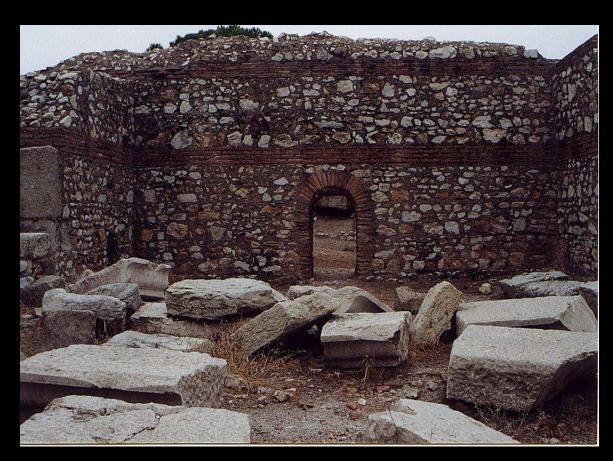


Ruins at present day Thyatira





Ruins at present day Thyatira





Ruins at present day Thyatira









Thyatira:

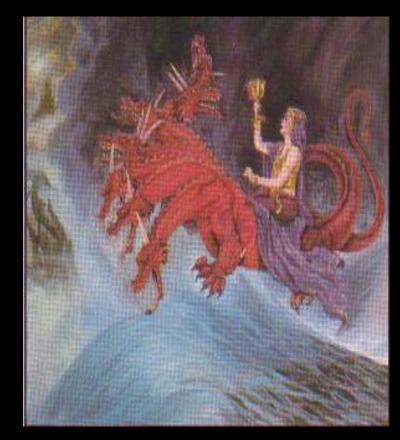
"means - sacrifice of labor - a perfume to comfort in affliction (Acts 16:14-27)



Thyatira - Era of Apostasy

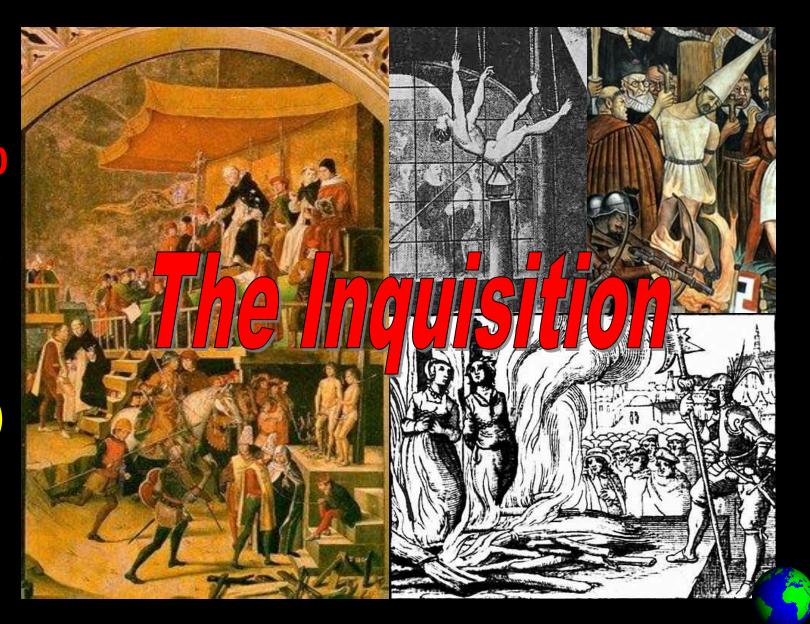


- Who was the woman who corrupted Thyatira?
- Revelation 2:20
- An evil woman named Jezebel.



Note:

Thyatira covers church history for nearly 1,000 years, from the last half of the 6th century to the first half of the 16th century (538 A.D. to 1517 A.D.) This period is sometimes called the Dark Ages.





Revelation 2:18

And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, these things said the Son of God, who has His eyes like to a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine brass.

Matthew 16:27

For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels.

Comments

By drawing a parallel

between these two verses, we get the following description of Jesus, the Son of God: His *«feet like fine brass»* show that He comes in the glory, on a cloud of angels; His «eyes like a flame of fire» show that He is fully invested with the power to judge each one according to his works.



It started with an act of protest...



- On October 31, 1517,
 Martin Luther nailed
 his 95 theses against
 the abuses of the
 Catholic Church on the
 door of the Wittenberg
 University Church
- This "protest" led to the formation of the Protestant Church

Revelation 2:19

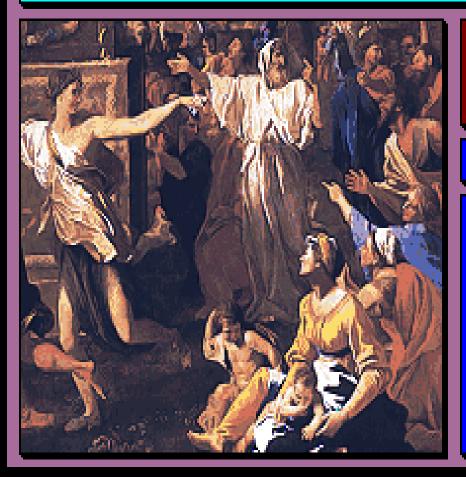
I know your works, and charity, and service, and faith, and your patience, and your works; and the last to be more than the first.

Comments

With His eyes like a flame of fire, Jesus judges the works of Thyatira, symbolizing the Church of the Middle Ages.

First, the good works: from 538 (the year when the Church began to fully dominate Europe on religious and political levels) to 1517 (when Martin Luther started the Reformation movement), the Church indeed accomplished a lot of good works, establishing hospitals, orphanages, schools and missions.

As for the bad works, Thyatira looks amazingly like Pergamos:



Reproach to Thyatira, symbolizing the Church from A.D. 538 to 1517

REVELATION 2:20

I have a few things against you, because you suffer that woman Jezebel, which calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols.

Reproach to Pergamos, symbolizing the Church from A.D. 313 to 538

REVELATION 2:14

I have a few things against you, because you have there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication.



Revelation 2:20

Notwithstanding I have a few things against you, because you suffer that woman Jezebel, which calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols.

Comments

Studying the life of Jezebel, just like we studied Balaam's in our previous lesson, will help us understand what this character symbolizes in Bible prophecy.



1 Kings 16:31

And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that [Ahab] took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him.

1 Kings 21:25

But there was none like to Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.

Comments

Jezebel, the daughter of a pagan king, married Ahab, the king of Israel. As we can see, this union was rather harmful to the people of Israel...



1 Kings 18:4

Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord.

1 Kings 19:18

[The Lord said,] «Yet I have left Me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth which has not kissed him.»

Comments

Among her many wrongdoings, Jezebel attacked the prophets of God who were exposing her misdeeds.

A generalized apostasy became firmly established in Israel, but God could still rely on a group of faithful people, among whom was the prophet Elijah.

Doctrine of Jezebel I Kings 16:31; II Kings 9:22, 30

- She calleth herself a prophetess (false prophet).
- Teach and to seduce to commit fornication.
- Teach to eat things sacrificed unto idols.
- She led people into superstition.
- God Killed her. will kill her children with death





Revelation 2:20

Notwithstanding I have a few things against you, because you suffer that woman Jezebel, which calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols.

Comments

By referring to the character of Jezebel, Jesus thus reveals the real nature of the Church: after Pergamos, the compromising church from 313 to 538, the Church sank into generalized apostasy.

Becoming a political institution, the Church gave itself a power greater than that of the kings, and plunged Christianity into an unprecedented spiritual darkness.



Revelation 2:14

You have there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam. Revelation 2:20

You suffer that woman Jezebel, which calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants.

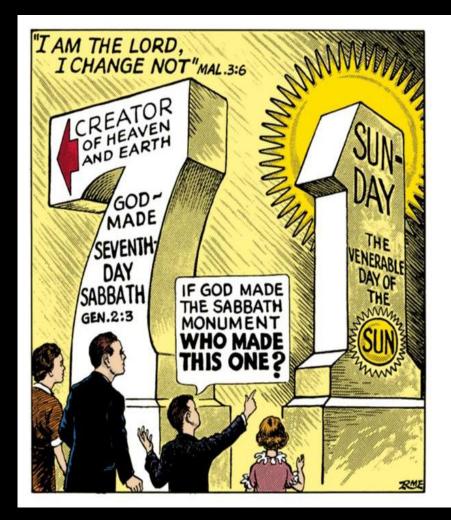
Comments

The progression of apostasy from Pergamos to Thyatira is obvious.

In the church of Pergamos, the apostasy was symbolized by Balaam, a prophet whose bad influence came only from the outside.

But in the church of Thyatira, the apostasy is now symbolized by Jezebel, a queen governing from the inside, leading the people to commit evil.

Papal Rome Changed the day of Worship from 7th day Saturday to 1st day Sunday



Only God can
CREATE and that is
the REASON we are
to obey and worship
HIM. Because He is
our CREATOR. He
owns US and this
WORLD by right of
having CREATED!

The SABBATH is the SEAL of the LAW.

The Catholic Church, admits Seventh-Day Adventist Are keeping the True Sabbath of the Lord.

The Question Box," The Catholic Universe Bulletin (August 14, 1942): 4:

The (Catholic) Church changed the observance of the Sabbath to Sunday by right of the divine, infallible authority given to her by her Founder, Jesus Christ. The Protestant claiming the Bible to be the only guide of faith, has no warrant for observing Sunday. In this matter, the Seventh-day Adventist is the only consistent Protestant.



From 538 to 1517, the presence of «Jezebel» shows up in the Church:



In the year 607:

The Bishop of Rome takes the title of «Pope», meaning Father.

But the Bible says:

«Call no man your father on the earth: for One is your Father, which is in heaven.» (MATTHEW 23:9) In the year 709:

The Church adopts the rite of kissing the feet of the Pope.

But the Bible says:

«[Cornelius] fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, 'Stand up; I myself also am a man.'» [ACTS 10:25,26] In the year 787:

The Church institutes the worship of images and statues.

But the Bible says:

«You shall not make to you any graven image. [...] You shall not bow down to them, nor serve them.» [EXODUS 20:4,5] In the year 993:

The Church adopts the process of canonization of the saints.

But the Bible says:

«You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.» (LEVITICUS 19:2)

The state of «saint» is thus not kept for an elite.



Other pagan doctrines infiltrate into the Church from 538 to 1517:



In the year 1000: 1

The Church begins to impose celibacy on the priests.

But the Bible says:

« And the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone.'» (GENESIS 2:18) In the year 1049:

The Church begins to celebrate masses for the dead.

But the Bible says:

«While the child was yet alive, I fasted. (...) But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again?» (2 SAMUEL 12:22,23) In the year 1090:

The rosary appears in the Church.

But the Bible says:

« [Jesus said,]
'But when you pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do.'»
[MATTHEW 6:7]

In the year 1199:

The Church gives itself the power to forgive sins by creating the system of indulgences.

But the Bible says:

«Thus said the Lord, [...] 'I, even I, am He that blots out your transgressions.'» (ISAIAH 43:14,25)





Still other unbiblical rites and doctrines adopted between 538 and 1517:



In the year 1215:

The Church institutes the hearing of confession, becoming a mediator between God and men for the forgiveness of sins.

In the year 1216:

The Church adopts the dogma of transubstantiation, according to which bread and wine really become the body and the blood of Jesus. In the year 1343:

The Church institutes the additional works, that is, the works that must be added to the sacrifice of Jesus for salvation.



«For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.» (1 TIMOTHY 2:5) But the Bible says:

«Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life. (...) The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.» (JOHN 6:54,63) But the Bible says:

«Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy [God] saved us.» (TITUS 3:5)





Last examples of rites and doctrines adopted between 538 and 1517:



In the year 1434:

The Church institutes the rite of confirmation, making up for the problem of the baptism of babies, who are unaware of their choice.

But the Bible says:

«But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.» (ACTS 8:12)

In the year 1439:

The Church adopts the notion of purgatory, that is, a place where the righteous' souls expiate their sins before going to heaven.

But the Bible says:

« The dead know not any thing. (...) There is no work, (...) nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, where you go.» (ECCLESIASTES 9:5,10)

In the year 1513:

The Church introduces the system of the indulgences sold to the people, so as to shorten the stay of the souls in purgatory.

But the Bible says:

« While the child was yet alive, I fasted. (...) But now he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again?» (2 SAMUEL 12:22,23)





Revelation 2:22

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

Comments

Resolutely steeped in a generalized apostasy, Europe indeed went through a *«great tribulation»* at the end of the period from 538 to 1517.

First, a dreadful famine struck at the beginning of the 14th century, soon followed by an epidemic of bubonic plague which killed 40 percent of Europe's population. Finally, the Hundred Years War (14th and 15th century) added to these murderous scourges.



Revelation 2:23

And I will kill her children with death.

And all the churches shall know that I am He which searches the reins and hearts: and I will give to every one of you according to your works.

2 Kings 10:1,7

Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. (...)

[The people of Samaria] took the king's sons, and slew seventy persons.

Comments

Just as the sons of Jezebel experienced a violent death, Jesus announces the death of the sons of spiritual *«Jezebel»*.

What does that mean?



Revelation 17:1,5

Come here; I will show to you the judgment of the great whore. (...) On her forehead was a name written, «Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.»

Jeremiah 3:6

Have you seen that which backsliding Israel has done? She is gone up on every high mountain and under every green tree, and there has played the harlot.

Comments

First, let's note that God often compares the Church (or Israel, under the Old Covenant) to a woman. When the Church is faithful, then the woman is pure. On the other hand, when the Church is unfaithful, then the woman is impure, defiled.

Like Jezebel, Babylon the great harlot, *«the mother of harlots»*, has children too...





Revelation 2:23

And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches those churches, and their final shall know that I am He which searches the reins and hearts. And I will give to every one of you according to your works.

Comments

Jesus Himself gives the key to the symbolism: the children of Jezebel and of Babylon, «the mother of harlots», are «all the churches» which take their origin in the apostate Church, having adopted some of its pagan rites and doctrines. Jesus foretells the judgment of destruction, symbolized by the death of Jezebel's children.



Revelation 2:23

And all the churches shall know that I am He which searches the reins and hearts: and I will give to every one of you according to your works.

Psalm 7:8,9

The Lord shall judge the people. (...) Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but establish the just: for the righteous God tries the hearts and reins.

Jeremiah 11:20

But, O Lord of hosts, that judge righteously, that try the reins and the heart.

Comments

The picture of God searching the reins and hearts is associated with the Last Judgment.



What warning does God give to followers of Jezebel?

- Rev. 2:22: I will cast ... them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.
- Rev. 2:23: "I will kill her children with death."
- Note: Any unfaithfulness to Jesus or His pure teachings is called adultery or fornication. The punishments (sickness, tribulation & death) are indeed real. Neither the church, the state, nor false teachers will escape God's punishment for spiritual adultery.

The Jezebel Spirit The Godly Woman

- 1. She Rules Her Husband
- 2. She Manupulates & controls
- 3. She's Proud
- 4. She's Selfish
- 5. She's Provocative, Sexy, Flaunts
- 6. She's easily angered
- 7. She doesn't forgive easily
- 8. She's deceptive
- 9. She's ungrateful
- 10. She puts herself first

- 1. She submits to her Husband
- 2. She's obedient to God
- 3. She loves God & Holiness
- 4. She's Humble & Repentative
- 5. She joyfully serves others
- 6. She's Modest
- 7. She loves & forgives easily
- 8. She's Thankful & Grateful
- 9. She's Honest/Peacemaker
- 10. She stands for Righteousness



Revelation 2:24

But to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put on you none other burden.

1 Kings 19:18

Yet I have left Me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth which has not kissed him.

Comments

As in Jezebel's time, Jesus recognizes that a group of faithful believers did not follow the generalized apostasy prevailing from 538 to 1517.



Who were the "rest" who opposed this corruption?



• Revelation 2:24:

 "...and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine and which have not known the depths of Satan..."



Counterfeit in the Church of Satan today





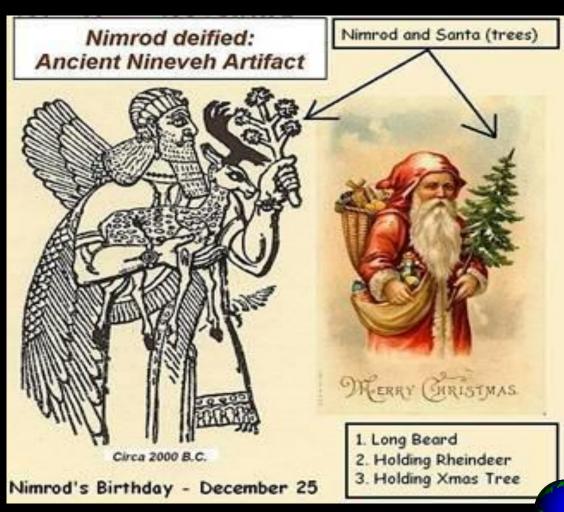
Symbolic Cherubims on either side

The representation of Beasts around



Christmas - Satan's attack on Jesus birth





Easter - Satan's attack on the resurrection of Jesus





Halloween - Satan's Counterfeit Reformation

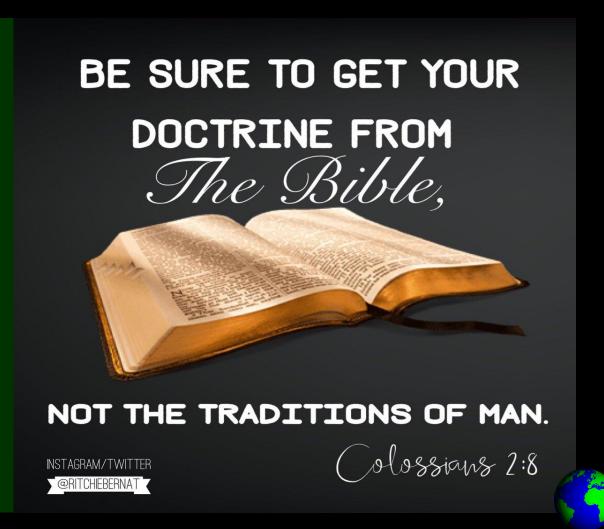
Halloween 2020

Year	Date	Day of the week
Halloween 2015	October 31, 2015	Saturday
Halloween 2016	October 31, 2016	Monday
Halloween 2017	October 31, 2017	Tuesday
Halloween 2018	October 31, 2018	Wednesday
Halloween 2019	October 31, 2019	Thursday
Hellesses 2000	Ootobou 24 0000	0 - 4 1
Halloween 2020	October 31, 2020	Saturday
Halloween 2020 Halloween 2021	October 31, 2020 October 31, 2021	Sunday
	,	•
Halloween 2021	October 31, 2021	Sunday
Halloween 2021 Halloween 2022	October 31, 2021 October 31, 2022	Sunday Monday
Halloween 2021 Halloween 2022 Halloween 2023	October 31, 2021 October 31, 2022 October 31, 2023	Sunday Monday Tuesday



What does Jesus say about traditions?

- **6** He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from me.
- **7** Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.
- **8** For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.
- **9** And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. Mark 7



Era of Apostasy

- The Bible was pushed aside and it was a time of fearful apostasy.
- And superstition and tradition superseded the teachings of the Bible.
- Therefore, Jezebel symbolized the apostasy of this era, which grew to great proportions and plunged the Christian world into the <u>Dark Ages</u>,



But God raised His faithful

- Note: This refers to the powerful ministry of many great spiritual leaders whom God raised up to expose error and apostasy, and to lead His church back to Jesus and Bible truth.
- Their names are well known: eg. Wycliffe, Huss, Jerome, Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Knox, etc... Though many of these men lived in the Sardis era, some had already begun to bring reform into the church during the last part of the Thyatira period of church history.





Revelation 2:24,25

But to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put on you none other burden. But that which you have already hold fast till I come.

Comments

Indeed, between 538 and 1517, many Christians tried in vain to call to order the Church which had allowed itself to be invaded by apostasy.

Among these faithful people who *«have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan»,* the most famous is certainly Martin Luther.



Revelation 2:24,25

I will put on you none other burden.
But that which you have already hold fast till I come.

Comments

Martin Luther was a German catholic monk and university professor.

By studying the Bible, he discovered that, unlike what his Church was teaching, salvation was a free gift of God, and not a reward for good works.

After many attempts to convince the Church of its error, Luther instituted in 1517 the Reformation movement, proclaiming the message of salvation by grace in Jesus Christ, a message which has been carried up to the present day.



Among those Christians we find:

- Peter Waldo (Italy); John Wycliffe (England);
- John Huss (Bohemia); Martin Luther (Germany); And I gave her space to repent
- Jean Calvin (France); John Knox (Scotland).
- Ulrich Zwingli (Switzerland);

Comments

Just as Jesus foretold, the Church of the Middle Ages was called to repentance by many Christians who were torn by its apostasy.

But the Church preferred to turn a deaf ear. Even worse, it persecuted and killed many of them.

Revelation 2:21

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



The French religious leader Peter Waldo (active 1170-1184) believed in voluntary poverty and religious simplicity. His followers were considered heretics by the Church.

The Waldenses, as they had come to be known, felt that their message was too important to be checked by traditional Church discipline, and they rejected the Pope's directive. They were excommunicated at a Church council in Verona by the next pope, Lucius III, in 1184.





1440 edition of hand-written Wycliff Bible.



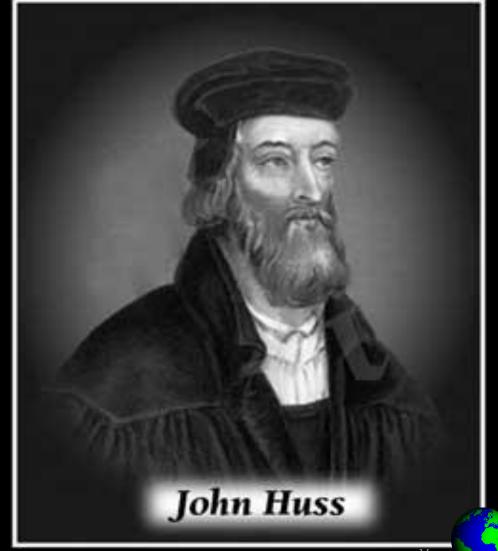
John
Wycliffe's
trial in
London
in 1377
ended in
a riot.

Wycliff published the New Testament in English in 1378 and finished the Old Testament before he died.

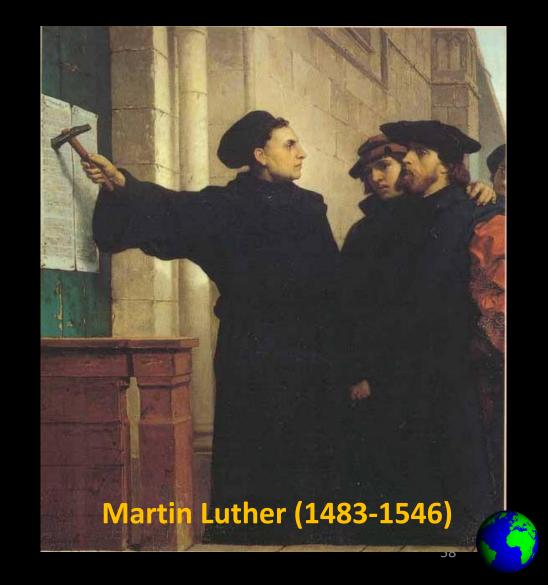
He also wrote some 200 articles mainly defending the ransom. Wycliff spoke out against the doctrine of Transubstantiation, the main teaching of the Catholic Church.



Jan Hus, Hus also spelled Huss (born 1370, Husinec, Bohemia [now in Czech Republic]—died July 6, 1415, Konstanz [Germany]), the most important 15thcentury Czech religious Reformer, whose work was transitional between the medieval and the Reformation periods and anticipated the Lutheran Reformation by a full century. He was embroiled in the bitter controversy of the Western Schism (1378– 1417) for his entire career, and he was convicted of heresy at the Council of **Constance** and burned at the stake.



Martin Luther had a small head-start on Tyndale, as Luther declared his intolerance for the Roman Church's corruption on Halloween in 1517, by nailing his 95 Theses of Contention to the Wittenberg Church door. Luther, who would be exiled in the months following the Diet of Worms Council in 1521 that was designed to martyr him, would translate the New Testament into German for the first time from the 1516 Greek-Latin New Testament of Erasmus, and publish it in September of 1522. Luther also published a German Pentateuch in 1523, and another edition of the German New Testament in 1529. In the 1530's he would go on to publish the entire Bible in German.



Ulrich Zwingli was active in extending the reform to other Swiss cities, such as Basel, Sankt Gallen, and Bern. He was involved in controversy not just with Catholic opponents, but also with the Lutheran reformers because he denied Christ's real presence in any form in the Eucharist. The effort to reconcile the views of Zwingli and Luther at the Colloquy of Marburg (1529) failed. Zwingli also opposed the Anabaptists in Zurich who rejected infant baptism. He was killed on the battlefield of Kappel in 1531 when the Catholic cantons of southern Switzerland attacked Zurich.

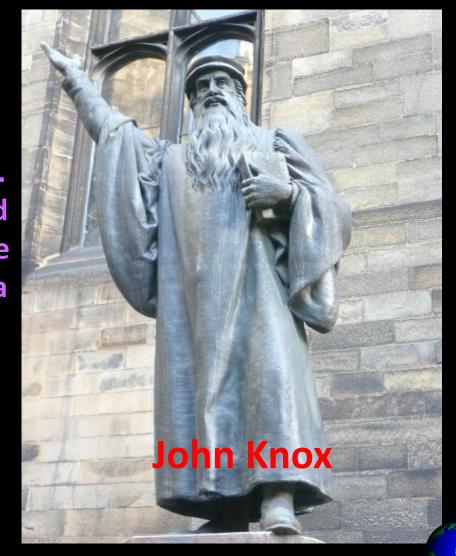




John Calvin, French Jean Calvin, or Cauvin (born July 10, 1509, Noyon, Picardy, France—died May 27, 1564, Geneva, Switzerland), theologian and ecclesiastical statesman. He was the leading French **Protestant Reformer and the most important figure in** the second generation of the **Protestant Reformation**. His interpretation of Christianity, advanced above all in his Institutio Christianae religionis (1536 but elaborated in later editions; *Institutes of the Christian Religion*), and the institutional and social patterns he worked out for Geneva deeply influenced **Protestantism** elsewhere in **Europe and in North America. The Calvinist form of Protestantism** is widely thought to have had a major impact on the formation of the modern world.



John Knox, (born 1514, near Haddington, East Lothian, Scotland—died November 24, 1572, Edinburgh), foremost leader of the Scottish Reformation, who set the austere moral tone of the Church of Scotland and shaped the democratic form of government it adopted. He was influenced by George Wishart, who was burned for heresy in 1546, and the following year Knox became the spokesman for the **Reformation** in Scotland. After a period of intermittent imprisonment and exile in England and on the European continent, in 1559 he returned to Scotland, where he supervised the preparation of the constitution and liturgy of the Reformed Church. His most important literary work was his History of the Reformation in Scotland.





Revelation 2:25,26
But that which you have already hold fast till I come.

And he that overcomes, and keeps My works to the end, to him will I give power over the nations.

Comments

The following promise makes a clear link with the Reformation's message, since it is addressed to whoever keeps the works of Jesus until the end, not one's own works.

The Reformation has indeed proclaimed the work of Jesus, first His sacrifice on the cross giving us salvation, then His work of intercession between God and us, without any other mediator.



Revelation 2:26,27

And he that overcomes, and keeps My works to the end, to him will I give power over the nations.

He shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they also belongs to be broken to shivers: even as I received of My Father.

Jesus.

Revelation 12:5

And she brought forth a Man Child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron.

And her Child was caught up to God, and to His throne.

Comments

The promise also tells that he who overcomes "shall rule the nations with a rod of iron", an authority which also belongs to Jesus.

What does that mean?



Revelation 19:15,16

And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treads the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

And He has on His clothing and on His thigh a name written, «King of kings, and Lord of lords.»

John 5:22

For the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son.

Comments

Like the expression «to search the reins and hearts», the words «rule the nations with a rod of iron» describe Jesus' work of judgment.



1 Corinthians 6:2

Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world? Revelation 20:4

And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God. (...)

And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Comments

So, God's faithful and victorious people «shall rule the nations with a rod of iron», that is, they will assist Jesus in His work of judgment.





Revelation 2:28,29

And I will give him the morning star. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit said to the churches.

2 Peter 1:19

We also have the prophetic word made more sure, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

Comments

The letter to
Thyatira ends by
promising the
morning star to
him who
overcomes.

Peter says that this star will rise at the last day. What is it?





Revelation 22:16

I, Jesus, (...) am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the Bright and Morning Star.

Luke 12:37

Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He comes shall find watching.

Truly I say to you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

Comments

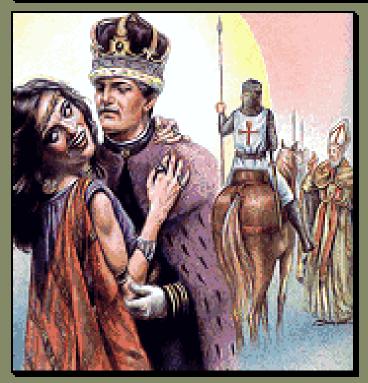
The morning star is Jesus Christ.

Having already sacrificed Himself on the cross for our salvation, He will once again give Himself, at His return, to those who have given themselves to Him during their life on earth.





The five points of the pattern in the letter to the church of Thyatira:



- Portrait of Jesus, according to the spiritual state of the church «The Son of God, who has His eyes like to a flame of fire.» (Rev. 2:18)
- Praise, acknowledgement of the positive points
- «I know your works, charity, service, faith, and patience.» (Rev. 2:19)
- 3 Condemnation, identification of the negative points
- «You suffer Jezebel (...) to teach and seduce My servants.» (Rev. 2:20)
- 4 Correction, counsels to restore the situation
- «I will cast (...) them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.» (Revelation 2:22)
- 5 Promise, encouragement to persevere
- «He that overcomes, and keeps My works to the end, to him will I give power over the nations.» (Revelation 2:26)

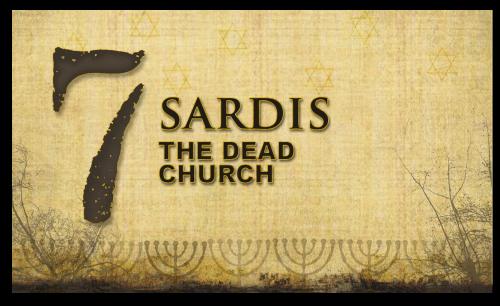
Overcomers of Thyatira

- Revelation 2:26
- And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will give power over the nations







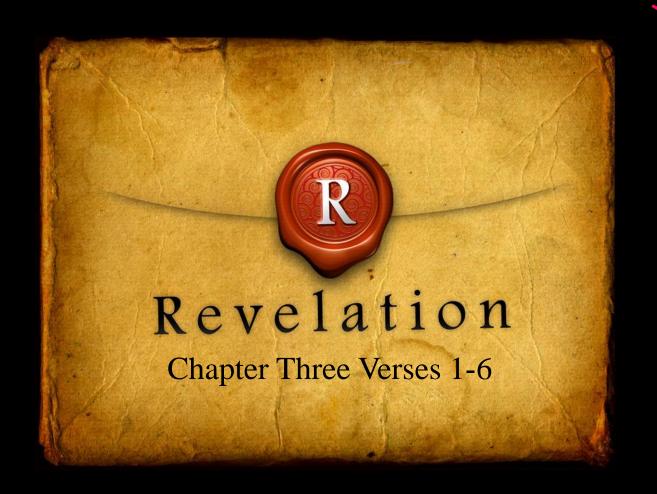


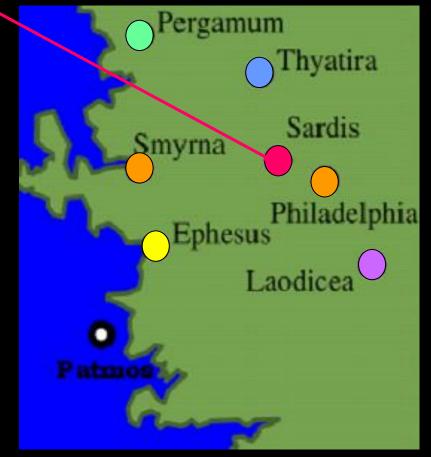
Sardis:

"means red (like metal being refined) – prince of joy – (Matt. 16:3) those who have escaped



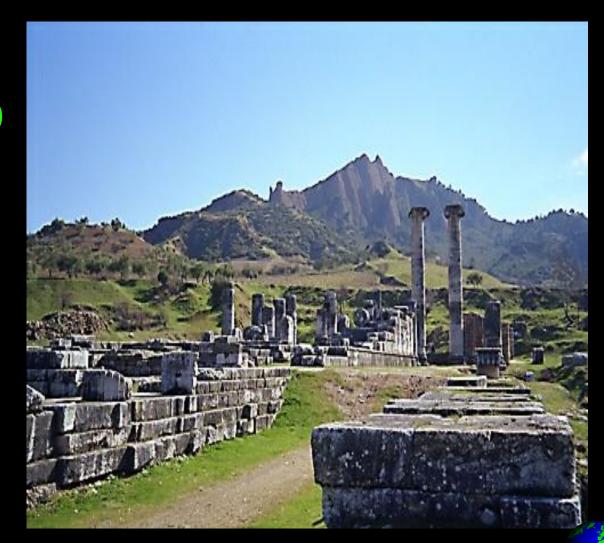
Sardis:





Sardis

- Was the capital city of Lydia about 50 miles from Smyrna.
 - It was well fortified and not easily conquered.
 - It became an important Christian center.
 - But it relied on past glories and became complacent and died.



Ruins at present day Sardis





Ruins at present day Sardis





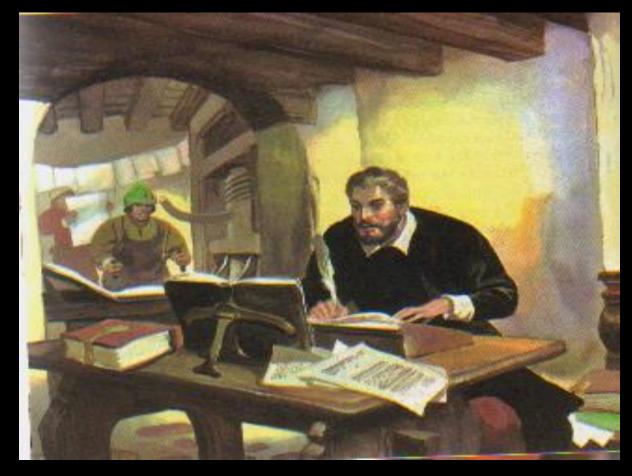
Ruins at present day Sardis





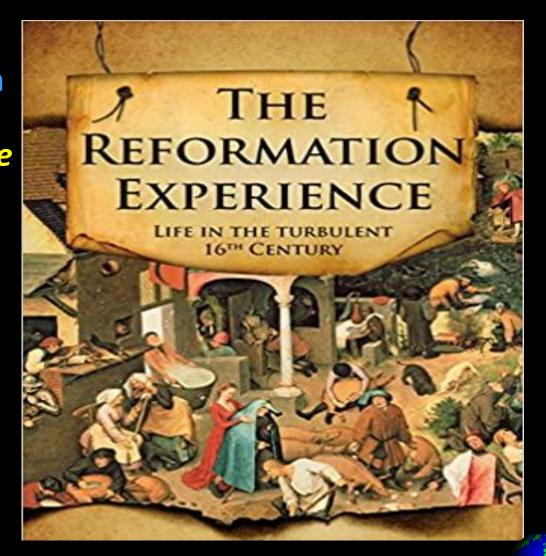
Sardis - Era of Reformation

- What striking words describe Sardis? Rev. 3:1: "Thou livest and art dead."
- Note: Jesus here points out that formal religion is worthless. Paul describes such religion as "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." - 2 Timothy 3:5





 What tragedy was about to happen in Sardis? Rev. 3:2: Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain and are ready to die. Note: Sardis embraces Christianity in the 16th, 17th and part of the 18th centuries. It covers the crucial period of reformation when spirit-filled men of God shook the world with their messages. But, alas, when these men died, their followers, instead of prayerfully seeking more truth, went backward with astounding rapidity. This solemn lesson is for us today. Keep pursuing truth, and follow it as you find it, then all of God's blessing will come into your life.





And to the angel of the church in Sardis write,

«These things said He that has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars.»

Revelation 1:4,16

Grace be to 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. (...) He had in His right hand seven stars.

Revelation 5:6

And I beheld, and, see, in the middle of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the middle of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

78

Comment

First, the seven Spirits of God, which are the *«seven eyes»* of the Lamb, illustrate the omniscience of Jesus: He knows everything, He sees everything, since the seven Spirits are *«sent forth into all the earth»*.





Proverbs 15:3

The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

Jeremiah 16:17

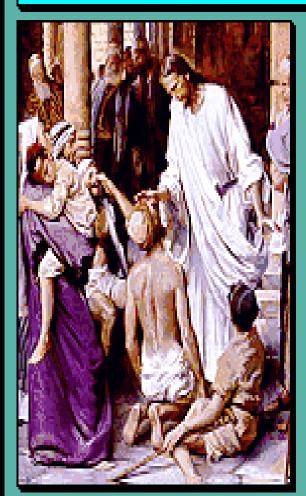
For My eyes are on all their ways: they are not hid from My face, neither is their iniquity hid from My eyes.

Comments

So Jesus introduces
Himself to the church
of Sardis as the One
who sees everything,
beyond what man
can see or perceive.

By deepening our search in the Bible, we can even identify the nature of the seven Spirits of God...

The prophecy of Isaiah 11 speaks of Jesus and the seven Spirits of God:



«There shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest on Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.»

(ISAIAH 11:1,2)



Announcement of Jesus' first coming (see Rom. 15:8,12; Rev. 5:5; 22:16).

First Spirit

«Spirit of the Lord»

Second Spirit

«Spirit of wisdom»

Third Spirit

«Spirit of understanding»

Fourth Spirit

«Spirit of counsel»

Fifth Spirit

«Spirit of might»

Sixth Spirit

«Spirit of knowledge»

Seventh Spirit

«Spirit of the fear of the Lord»



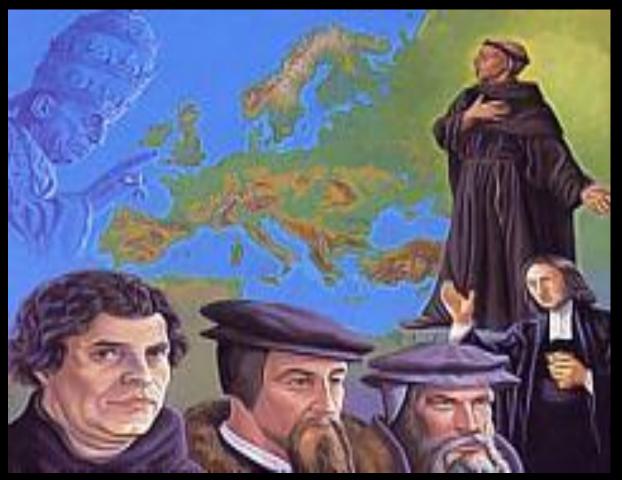
And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, "These things said He that has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars: "I know your works, that you have a name that you live, and are dead."»

Comments

For the first time, Jesus doesn't begin the letter with a positive point.

Reputed to be alive, Sardis is in fact a dead church. It perfectly represents what happened to the Church between the years 1517 and 1755.

It's sad news since, after the period of spiritual darkness and generalized apostasy of 538 to 1517, the Reformation was announcing better days.



I know your works, that you have a name that you live, and are dead.

Comments

The first years of the Reformation, a movement initiated by Martin Luther in 1517, brought about the rediscovery of the Bible and its message of salvation by grace in Jesus Christ.

But this spiritual awakening didn't last. **Protestantism** soon politicized itself and became a national religion, thus making the same errors as the Church it had left.

Theologians became more preoccupied with defining the Gospel than with living it in their hearts. Piety was transformed into a cold formalism, without any meaning or power.

95 Thesis on Indulgences by Martin Luther – 31st October 1517, Wittenberg, Germany

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Lorra veniaga apricara, britat el quelle, fin fil le anathema e malediera.

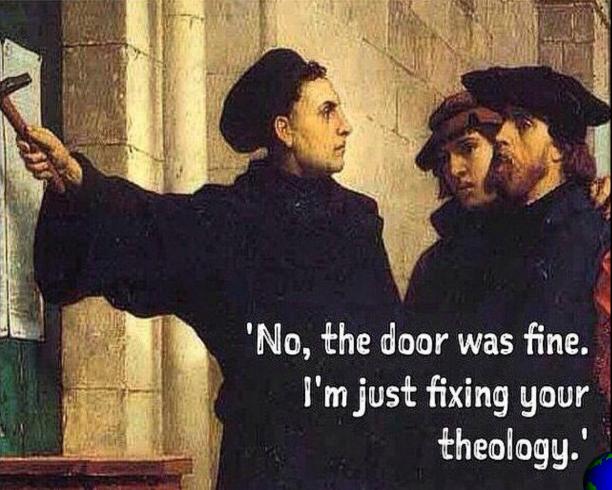
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Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die.

For I have not found your works perfect before God.

James 2:26

Faith without works is dead.

Comments

So Jesus advises Sardis to renew a personal relationship with God, to rediscover genuine faith. This faith goes together with a transforming power, urging the believer into action.

For obedience to God isn't only an outward submission: it is, above all, a service of love.



Remember therefore how you have received and heard, and hold fast, and repent.

Revelation 2:5

Remember therefore from where you are fallen, and repent, and do the first works.

Comments

As with the church of **Ephesus, Jesus calls** Sardis to come back to its first love, to its zeal of the early years of the Reformation, when the Bible had been reinstated as the only basis of the Christian faith, putting aside human traditions marked with paganism.



If therefore you shall not watch, I will come on you as a thief, and you shall not know what hour I will come on you.

Comments

The city of Sardis was really aware of the danger of not being watchful.

Located on a high plateau at a height of about 1000 feet, and protected by very steep slopes, the city was considered to be safe from enemies. Yet, it was invaded by surprise twice:

- In 547 B.C., by the Persian king Cyrus the Great;
- Then in 218 B.C., by the king Antiochus the Great.

However, Jesus' warning is addressed particularly to His Church through the ages, not only to the local church of Sardis.



Comments

Jesus will come as a thief, that is, in a unexpected time.

Revelation 16:15

Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

1 Thessalonians 5:2,4

For yourselves know perfectly that the Day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. (...) But you, brothers, are not in darkness, that that Day should overtake you as a thief.

But he who is watchful won't be surprised by this sudden event.



Matthew 24:42-44

Watch therefore: for you know not what hour your Lord does come.

But know this, that if the manager of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be you also ready: for in such an hour as you think not the Son of man comes.

Comments

The Bible is very clear: nobody knows the day or the hour of Jesus' second coming.

Only the future will tell what God plans to do with the knowledge of the date of Jesus' return.

But God invites us to always be watchful, to be ready when our Savior and Lord appears.



You have a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments.

- Reformed Christians in central Europe:
- Huguenots
- Puritans in England
- Waldenses

Comments

Like He did in the letter to the church of Thyatira, Jesus recognizes here the presence of faithful believers within the dead Church.

Indeed, many Christians showed perseverance between 1517 and 1755. The main groups were known under the following names:

They had to face the attacks of the Church of Rome, as well as the opposition of the protestant world.

The Age Of Reformation And Counter-Reformation

The most traumatic era in the entire history of Roman Catholicism, some have argued, was the period from the middle of the 14th century to the middle of the 16th. This was the time when **Protestantism**, through its definitive break with Roman Catholicism, arose to take its place on the Christian map. It was also the period during which the Roman Catholic Church, as an entity distinct from other "branches" of Christendom, even of Western Christendom, came into being.





The Roman Catholic Reformation The Council of Trent - December 13, 1545

The legislation of the Council of Trent enacted the formal Roman Catholic reply to the doctrinal challenges of the Protestant Reformation and thus represents the official adjudication of many questions about which there had been continuing ambiguity throughout the early **church** and the Middle Ages. The "either/or" doctrines of the Protestant Reformers justification by faith alone, the authority of Scripture alone—were anathematized, in the name of a "both/and" doctrine of justification by both faith and works on the basis of the authority of both Scripture and tradition, and the privileged standing of the Latin **Vulgate** was reaffirmed against Protestant insistence upon the original Hebrew and Greek texts of Scripture.



Reformed Christians in central Europe



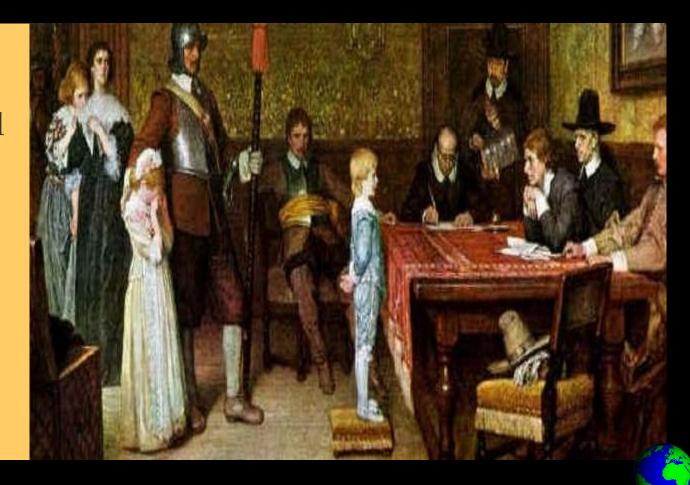
Huguenots in France

Huguenots were French Protestants in the 16th and 17th centuries who followed the teachings of theologian John Calvin. The Huguenots are described by their practice of home worship. Persecuted by the French Catholic government during a violent period, Huguenots fled the country in the 17th century, creating Huguenot settlements all over Europe, in the United States and Africa.



Puritans in England

After the execution of King Charles I, the Puritans under Oliver Cromwell transformed the Kingdom of England into a Commonwealth which was essentially a military dictatorship under the Lord Protector Cromwell, who ruled for life. During this period Puritans continued to migrate to the New World colonies and bring English culture and Puritan educational ideals with them.



The Waldenses

The Waldenses went about from village to village, preaching. In this he and his followers sought to follow directly the command of Christ to the apostles to go forth two by two, taking nothing with them but the bare necessities of life. The name they took for themselves was "the poor of Christ." They sought, by their preaching, to spread the simple precepts of the gospel among the people. As this movement spread it was resisted by the church which forbade them to preach. When the Waldenses sought approval from the church authorities for their way of life and for their translation of the gospels, the church refused its consent and expelled them.





You have a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments.

And they shall walk with Me in white: for they are worthy. **Revelation 7:14**

[They] have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Comments

The white garment which Jesus promises is the robe of righteousness He offers to the sinner, so that he may be able to stand before **God and inherit** eternal life. Let's look at the following verses about this white garment.



Jesus offers a white robe imparting His perfect righteousness to us:

«I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. (...) And white robes were given to every one of them.» (Revelation 6:9,11)

«After this I beheld, and, see, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.» (Revelation 7:9)



«All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.» (Isaiah 64:6) **«Put you on the Lord Jesus Christ.»** (Romans 13:14) «I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation.» (Isaiah 61:10) **«Let your garments be always white.»** (Ecclesiastes 9:8)



He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment.

And I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life.

Revelation 20:15

And whoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Comments

Jesus also promises to him that overcomes that He won't blot out his name from the Book of Life, containing the names of those who accepted Him as their personal Savior, thus allowing them to inherit eternal life.

The Book of Life has the names of those who are saved in Jesus:

«And I entreat you also, true yoke fellow, help those women which labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow laborers, whose names are in the Book of Life.» (Philippians 4:3)

«And all that dwell on the earth shall worship [the beast], whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.» (Revelation 13:8)



«And whoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.» (Revelation 20:15) «And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which stands for the children of your people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time your people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the Book.» (Daniel 12:1)



Exodus 32:31-33

Moses returned to the Lord, and said, «Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if you will forgive of the Book of their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray you, out of Your Book which You have written.»

Psalm 69:28

And the Lord said to Moses, Whoever has sinned against Me, him will I perseverance is so blot out of My Book. Let them be blotted out of the Book of the living, important. and not be written with the righteous.

Comments

Just as indicated in the letter to the church of Sardis, it is really possible to have one's name blotted out Life.

This is why

The Bible is clear: perseverance is essential to our salvation

«But he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved.» (Matthew 24:13)

«In your patience possess you your souls.» (Luke 21:19)

«Brothers, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you have received, and wherein you stand; by which also you are saved, if you keep in memory what I preached to you, unless you have believed in vain.» (1 Corinthians 15:1,2)

«For you have need of patience, that, after you have done the will of God, you might receive the promise.» (Hebrews 10:36)

"He that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him." But we are not of them who draw back to perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.» (Hebrews 10:37-39)

On the contrary, a lack of perseverance is a threat to our salvation:

«But when the righteous turns away from his righteousness, and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All his righteousness that he has done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he has trespassed, and in his sin that he has sinned, in them shall he die.» (Ezekiel 18:24)



«And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written in this book.» (Revelation 22:19) «But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.» (1 Corinthians 9:27)

The best way to persevere is to abide in Jesus:

«And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.» (1 John 2:28) «[Christ] has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and blameless and unreproveable in His sight: if you continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which you have heard.»

(Colossians 1:21-23)



«If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth.» (John 15:6)

«For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end.» (Hebrews 3:14)
«We are [the house of Christ], if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.» (Hebrews 3:6)



He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment.

And I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels.

He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit said to the churches.

Comments

Finally, Jesus promises to him that overcomes that He will confess his name before His Father and before His angels.

When He was on earth, Jesus said that He would confess our name before God and before His angels, but on one condition...



Matthew 10:32,33

Whoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven.

But whoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven.

Luke 12:8

Also I say to you, whoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God.

Comments

Jesus' position is logical: if we profess to be His brothers and sisters, and if we act accordingly, He will do the same before His Father.





Hebrews 2:1

Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

Ephesians 5:14

Why He said, «Awake you that sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.»

Comments

Now, what is the personal application of the letter to Sardis?

We must always make sure that our faith, so ardent at the time of our conversion, does not fade away into a formalism which induces sleep... or death!





I know your works, that you have a name that you live, and are dead.

1 Corinthians 10:12

Why let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

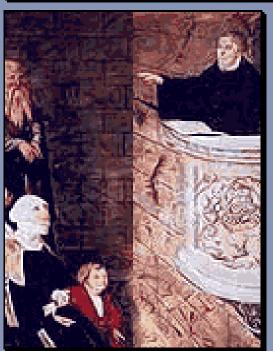
Comments

After having rediscovered and proclaimed the Bible's message of salvation by grace in Jesus Christ, Sardis, the Reformation Church, ceased to be watchful, and slowly slipped towards spiritual death. Let's avoid this grave error.

Let's end this lesson with a summary of the letter to the church of Sardis.



The five points of the pattern in the letter to the church of Sardis:



- Portrait of Jesus, according to the spiritual state of the church

 «He that has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars.» (Revelation 3:1)
- Praise, acknowledgement of the positive points

 Jesus doesn't identify any positive point for this church.
- Condemnation, identification of the negative points «You have a name that you live, and are dead.» (Revelation 3:1)
- 4 Correction, counsels to restore the situation

 «Be watchful, strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die (...). Remember how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent.» (Rev. 3:2,3)
- Fromise, encouragement to persevere

 «He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life.» (Revelation 3:5)

THE TRUTH FOR US IS ...

Many of us are dead spiritually - AIDS (Adventists In Deep Sleep) we are asleep spiritually and need waking up! Jesus knows what has not been completed in our personal lives and in our community and in our churches.

If we do not complete what He has called us to do and to be, then He will come unrepentantly and it will be too late.





Overcomers of Sardis



• Revelation 3:5

 He that overcometh the same shall be clothed with white raiment and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels.



Sardis: The Danger of Spiritual Death & the need of the "seven Spirits of God" – Isa 11:1-2

- 1. The Spirit of the Lord: A lifeless dying church or individual needs to have the Spirit of the God.
- 2. The Spirit of Wisdom: A lifeless dying church or individual needs to seek the wisdom of God.
- 3. The Spirit of Understanding: A lifeless dying church or individual needs a true understanding of their condition so they can correct it.
- 4. The Spirit of Counsel: A lifeless dying church or individual needs to heed the counsel of God.
- 5. The Spirit of Might: A lifeless dying church or individual needs new strength to enter into its lifeless body.
- 6. The Spirit of Knowledge: A lifeless dying church or individual needs to flow in renewed revelation knowledge.
- 7. The Spirit of Fear of the Lord: A lifeless dying church or individual needs to have their fear of the Lord rekindled.



If you feel spiritually dead or your church is dying corporately, then you must follow the five fold plan that the Spirit gave:

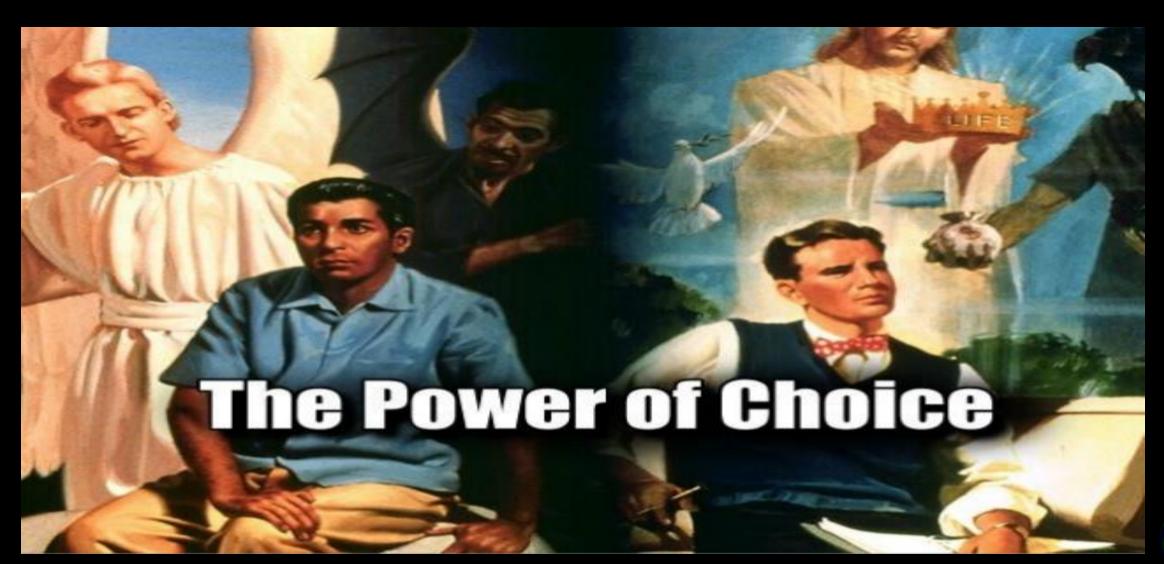
- 1. Be Watchful: It is time for us to wake up, become alert to the signs of the time, and be active for God as never before.
- 2. Strengthen: Take hold of the things that remain and are ready to die in your life and strengthen them through prayer and the Word.
- 3. Remember: Reflect back on the promises of God what you have received and heard in times past.
- 4. Hold Fast: Hold fast to your faith and God's Word.
- Repent: Repent so you will be ready for the return of Christ and not caught unaware.



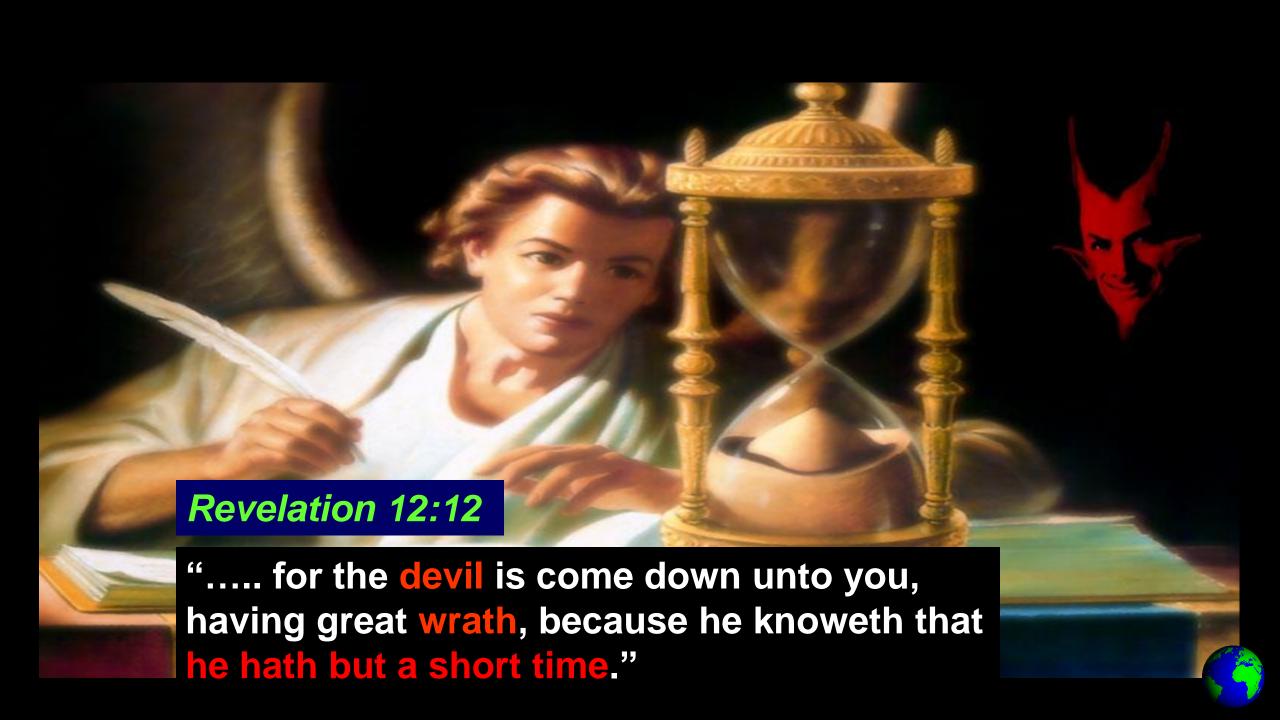
Concluding remarks

The overcomer is the individual who enjoys special benefits in eternity for refusing to give up his faith in Jesus in spite of persecution during life on earth.

God has given all:







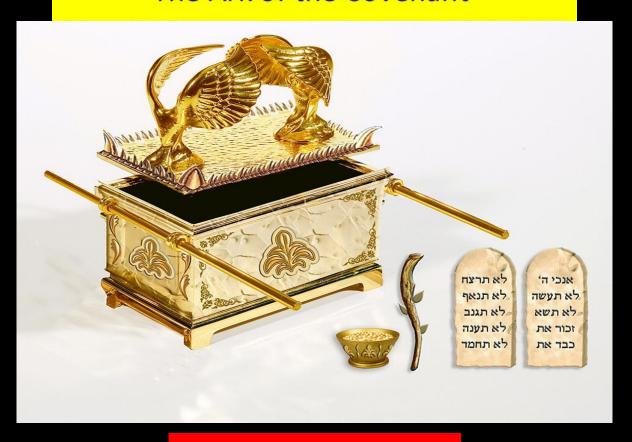
Enter The Ark of Hope

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

- John 10:16



The Ark of the Covenant



Psalms 77:13

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. -Revelation 3:20





