

Revelation chap. 3

The seven churches part 2

1 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. 2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. 3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. 4 Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. 5 He that overcometh, 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. 6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. 7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; 8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. 9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. 10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. 11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. 12 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. 13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. 14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; 15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. 16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. 17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: 18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. 19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous

therefore, and repent. 20 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. 21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. 22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

The last three churches are here addressed by Jesus beginning with Sardis which means 'red ones' or 'that which remains'. Sardis was the capital city of Lydia and occupied part of mount Tmolus and a valley at the bottom. The art of dyeing wool was said to have been invented here. Jesus begins the greeting as he who has the seven Spirits of God or the seven stars. I know thy works and you have a name and live but are dead. It appears the Christians here had some fame or notoriety as being faithful but in reality they were spiritually dead and just had the outward appearance of righteousness. They are counseled to be watchful and strengthen the things that remain and remember how they first heard and received the word of God. Jesus says if they are not watchful he will come as a thief in the night and they will lose out on eternal life. As with most churches there are always a faithful few that prevent the whole group from being cast off who are said to be worthy and will walk with Jesus in white. He that overcomes will be clothed in white raiment and will not have his name blotted out of the book of life. It appears that the book of life can be altered and names can be blotted out if we are lost which is in contrast to other scriptures that say it was written from the foundation of the world.

Philadelphia is the next church in the rotation which means 'brotherly love'. This town was also on the slopes of mount Tmolus and was subject to frequent earthquakes. Philadelphia was known for its wine industry. This church is addressed by he that is holy and true and has the key of David. A key is something that opens and shuts and Jesus is the true king who sits on the throne of David so this is a symbol of his authority and power. Jesus always found fault with the other churches but not so with this one which is fitting because it bears the name of love which is the source of all power and truth. They have kept his word and not denied his name. The synagogue of Satan is mentioned again and will be commanded to come and worship at the feet of these faithful Christians and to know that God has loved them. These verses along with the next are more imminent language that leads us to believe these things will be fulfilled in the last days. Because you have kept the word of my patience, I will keep you from the hour of temptation that will come upon the whole world to try them. Behold I come quickly; hold fast that no man may take your crown. He that overcomes will be made a pillar in the temple of God and I will write on him the name of God and the name of the city of God

which is new Jerusalem and my new name. The pillars in the temple of Solomon actually had names which were Jachin which meant 'he will establish' and Boaz which meant 'fleetness or swiftness'.

We have at last come to the final church which is probably the worst of them all. Laodicea which means 'judged people' is forever synonymous with the lukewarm water that came from its hot mineral springs. This water contained sulphur which made it nauseating to the taste and smell. These things says the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God. I know your works and you are neither cold nor hot and I wish you were one or the other. So then because you are lukewarm I will spit you out of my mouth. Jesus is here showing his intimate knowledge of his people and their land. This was a retirement town presumably with older Christians and they were rich and increased with goods and had need of nothing but they knew not that they were wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. They are counseled to buy gold tried in the fire which is faith and white raiment which is the spotless righteousness of Christ and to anoint their eyes with eyesalve which is the Holy Spirit. Even this church as bad as it was is not left without hope. Jesus is often compelled to present himself as the stern parent who rebukes and chastens those he loves. He stands at the hearts door and knocks waiting for the hearing of faith and the surrender of the soul to his healing touch of life. He that overcomes will sit with him in his throne even as he overcame and sat down with the Father of lights.