

Archaeology and the Bible

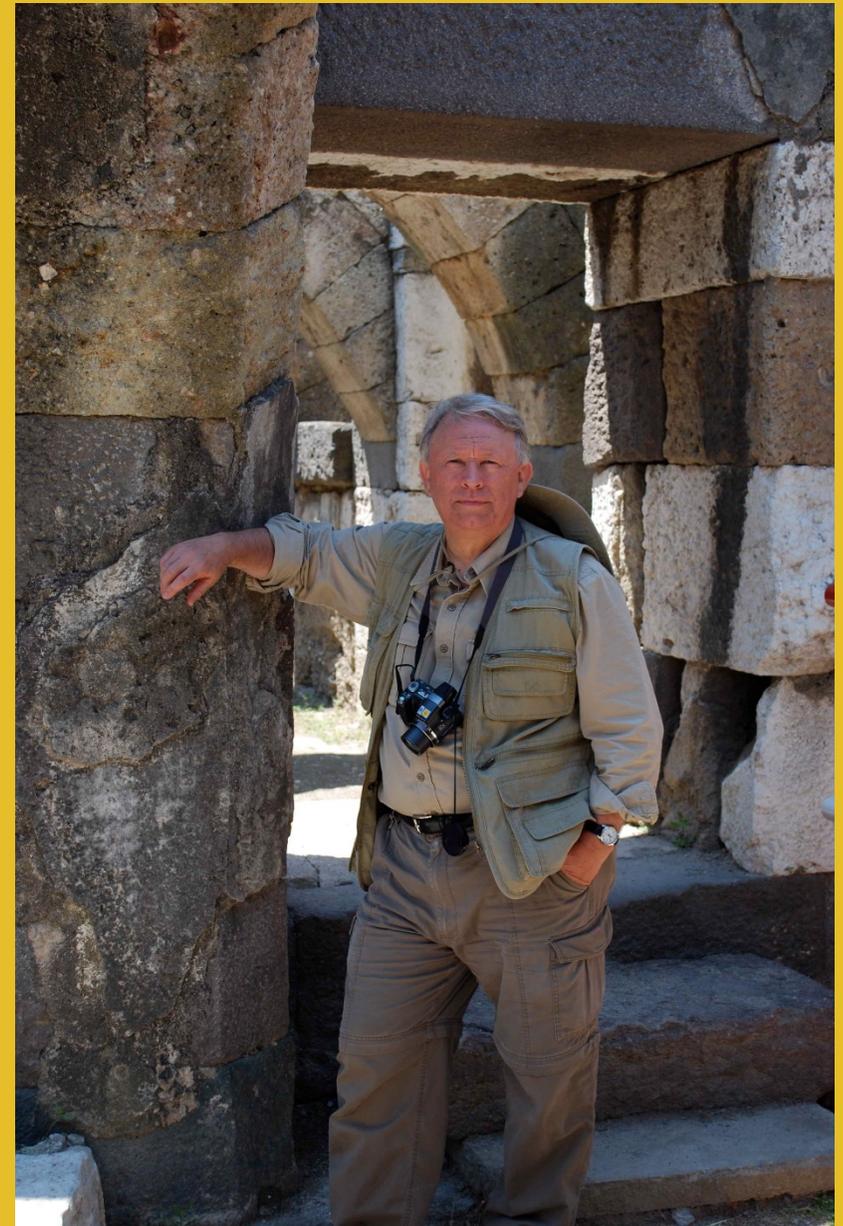
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Archaeology and the Seven Churches of the Revelation

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The Text of the Revelation 1:1—3:22

- “1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated *it* by His angel to His bond-servant John, 2 who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, *even* to all that he saw. 3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.
- 4 John to the **seven churches** that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, 5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood — 6 and He has made us *to be* a kingdom, priests to His God and Father — to Him *be* the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. 7 BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.

The Text of the Revelation 1:1—3:22

- 8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”
- 9 I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance *which are* in Jesus, **was on the island called Patmos** because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 10 I was in the Spirit on the **Lord’s Day**, and I heard behind me a loud voice like *the sound* of a trumpet, 11 saying, “Write in a book what you see, and send *it* to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.”
- 12 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; 13 and in the middle of the lampstands *I saw* one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. 14 His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. 15 His feet *were* like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice *was* like the sound of many waters. 16 In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.

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Seven Churches of Asia Minor



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Archaeology and the Bible Church: St. John on Patmos

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An Overview of the Church Age?

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Introduction to the Seven Churches

17 When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, “Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, 18 and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.

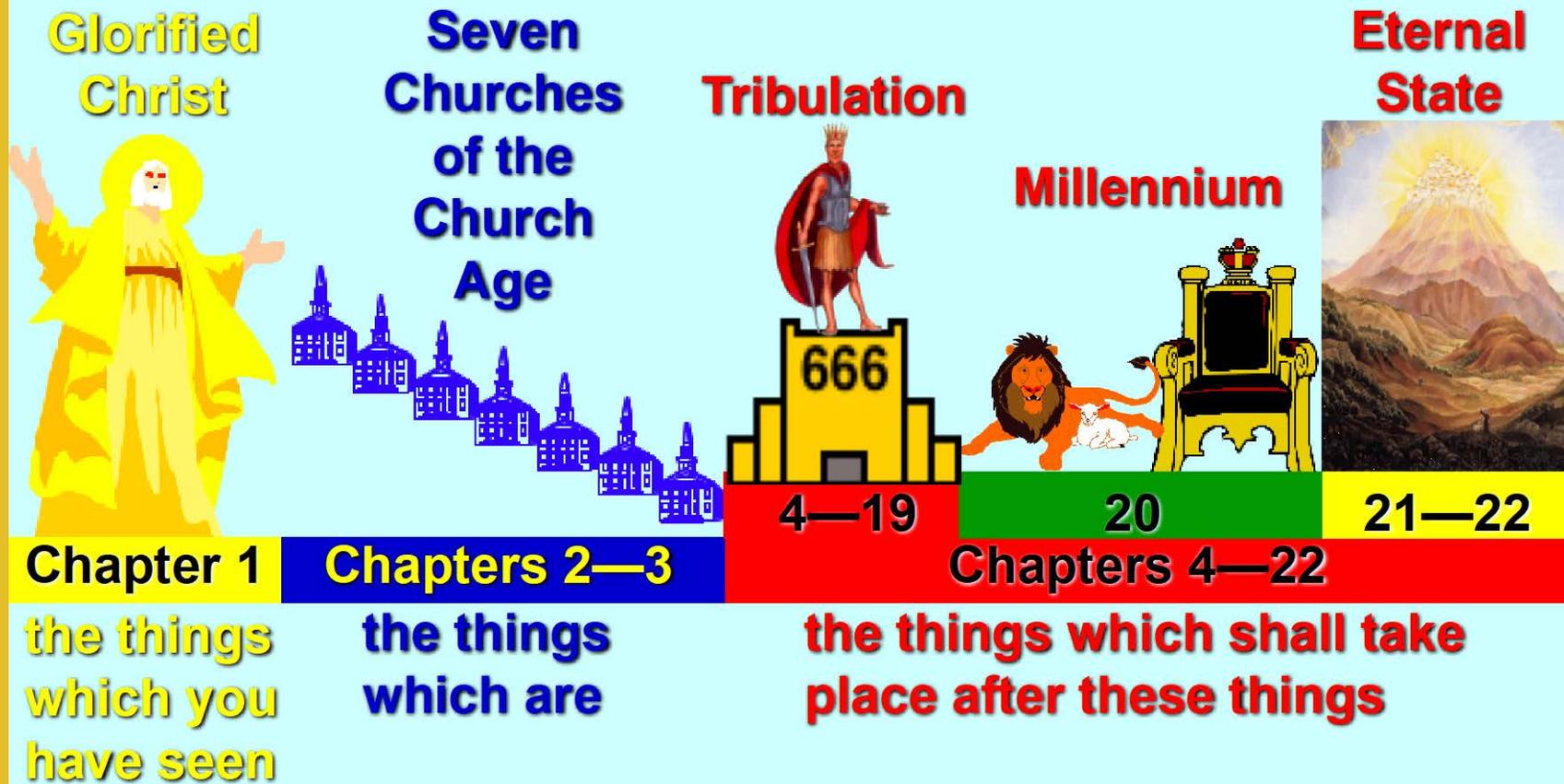
19 “Therefore write the things which you *have seen*, and the things *which are*, and the things which will take place *after these things*.

An Overview of the Church Age?

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OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

**“Write therefore the things which you have seen,
the things which are,
the things which shall take place after these things.”
— Revelation 1:19 —**



Seven Churches of Asia Minor

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The order of the churches in the book of Revelation coincides with order on the map—a circular letter.

Ephesus

Smyrna

Pergamum

Thyatira

Sardis

Philadelphia

Laodicea



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Church: Church at Ephesus

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Rev. 2:1-7 Church in Ephesus (site study) – The Loveless Church

“To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: ‘The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands.

“‘I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false. I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.’

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Church: Church at Ephesus

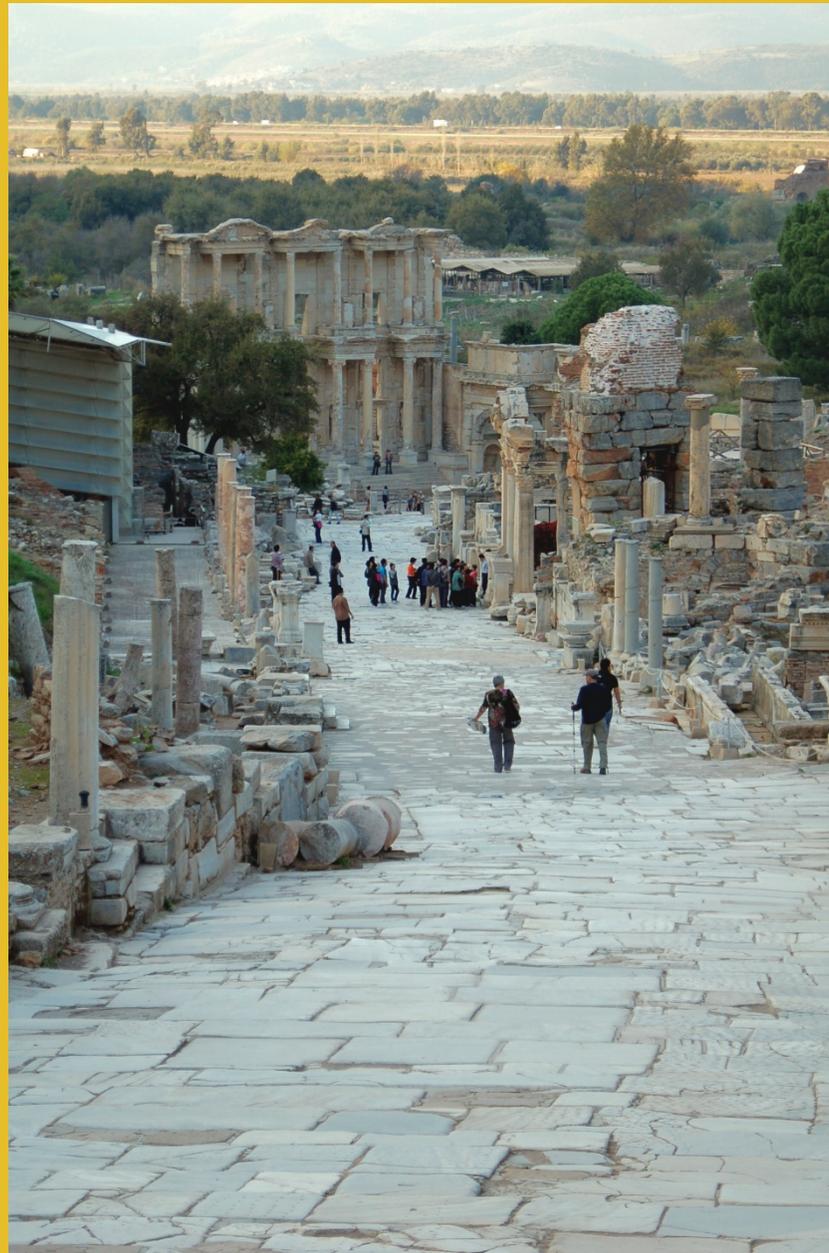
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Church of the Holy Sepulchre

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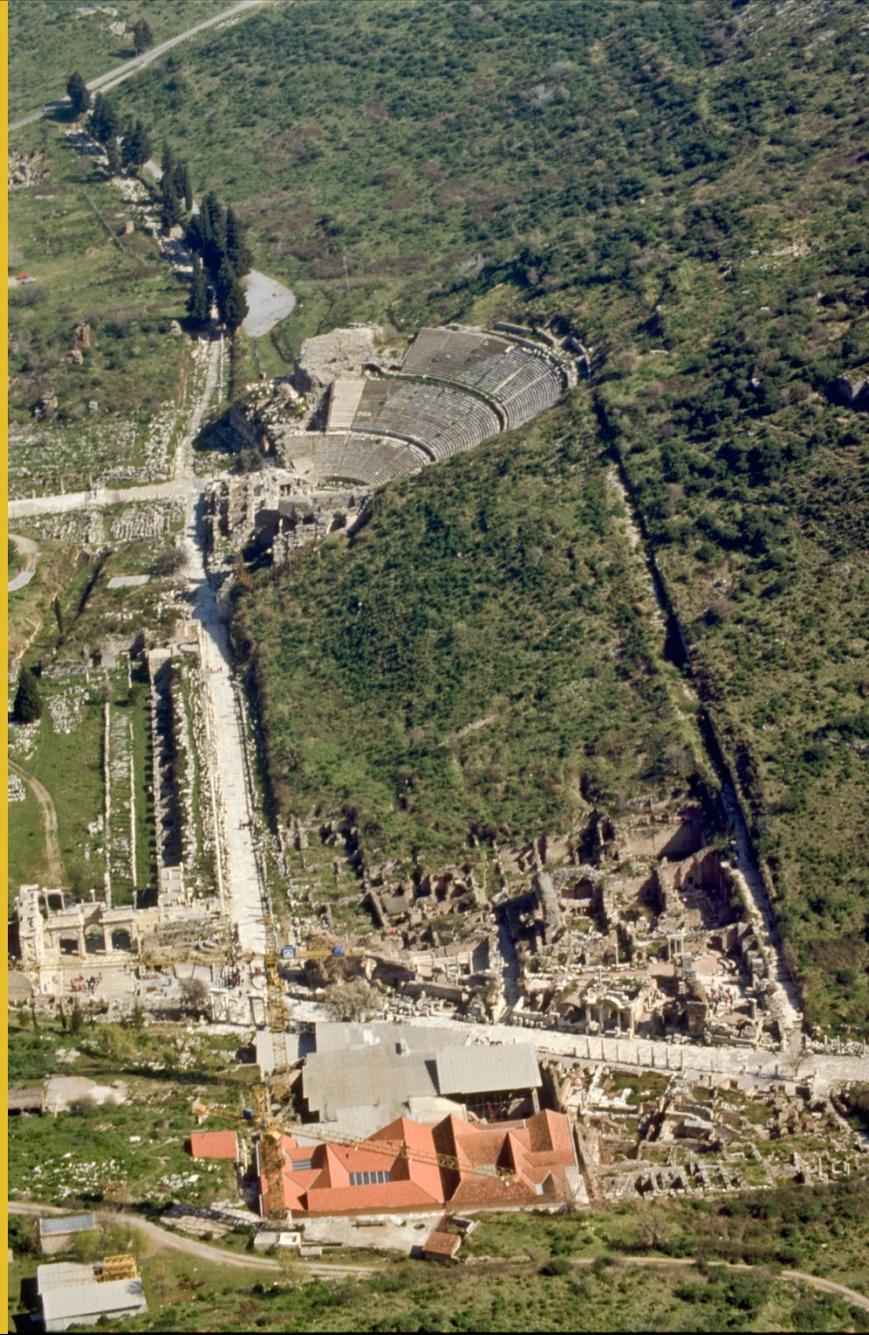
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Church: Church at Smyrna

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Rev. 2:8-11 Smyrna (Site Study) – The Persecuted Church

“And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: ‘The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life.

“‘I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.’

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Church: Church at Pergamum

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Rev. 2:12-17 Pergamon (Site Study) – The Compromising Church

2:12 “And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: ‘The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword.

13 “‘I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. 14 But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality (Num 22-25). 15 So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. 16 Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth. 17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.’

The Nicolaitans had apparently demised by the time of the writing of the Revelation in the last portion of the first century A.D. They were given to sexual immorality and various doctrinal errors, apparently.

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Church: Church at Thyatira

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Rev. 2:18-29 Thyatira (Site Study) – The Corrupt Church

2:18 “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write,

‘These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: 19 “I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first. 20 Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, [1 Kgs 16:31-33] who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. 21 And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. 22 Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. 23 I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

The reference to the woman Jezebel relates to 1 Kings 16:31-33:

“And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him. 32 Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. 33 And Ahab made a wooden image. Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.”

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Rev. 2:18-29 Thyatira (Site Study) – The Corrupt Church cont'd

24 “Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden. 25 But hold fast what you have till I come. 26 And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—

27 “He shall rule them with a rod of iron;

They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels’—as I also have received from My Father;

28 and I will give him the morning star.

29 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’

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Rev. 3:1-6 Sardis (Site Study) – The Dead Church

3:1 “And to the angel of the church in Sardis write,

“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. 2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. 3 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. 4 You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. 5 He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

6 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’

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Archaeology and the Bible

Church: Church at Philadelphia

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Rev. 3:7-13 Philadelphia (Site Study) – The Faithful Church

3:7 “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’: 8 “I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. 9 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. 10 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. 11 Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.

13 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’

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Church: Church at Philadelphia

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Church: Church at Laodicea

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Rev. 3:14-22 Laodicea (Site Study) – The Lukewarm Church

3:14 “And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write,

‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: 15 “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. 16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. 17 Because you say, “I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— 18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. 19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. 20 , I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. 21 To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

22 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’ ’ ”

Archaeology and the Bible

Church: Church at Laodicea

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Rev. 3:14-22 Laodicea (Site Study) – The Lukewarm Church

3:14 “And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write,

‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: 15 “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. 16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. 17 Because you say, “I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— 18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. 19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. 20 , I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. 21 To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

22 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’ ’ ”

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Church: Church at Laodicea

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M.A., Th.D., J.D.
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Archaeology and the Bible ***Church: Church at Laodicea***

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Archaeology and the Bible

Church: Church at Hierapolis

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Hierapolis (Pamukkale)



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Archaeology and the Church: Church at Colossae

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