

The Church at Philadelphia

7 – “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:

He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this:

The Name Itself

Philadelphia from 'Delphi': city, 'phileo': friendly towards Name after Attalus II, *Philadelphos*

Abraham: A friend of God (James 2:23)

Moses: Exodus 33:11 – Thus the LORD used to *speak to Moses face to face*, as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses turned again into the camp, his assistant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.

Jesus: disciples (John 15:15 – *No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father *I have made known to you.**

Number 12:8 – Spoke to Moses Not in riddles

Matthew 13:34-35 – spoke to Israel only in parables (Dark Sayings) (Isaiah 13:14)

Hosea 12:10 – (kjv) *I have also spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes, by the ministry of the prophets.*

Galatians 4:24 – this is an allegory (Sarah & Hagar)

Hebrews 11:6 (ISV) Now without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who diligently search for him.

Trade: main route of Imperial Post from Rome ---- called “the doorway to the East.” (open door)

Religion: Little Athens – god Dionysius (Great wine country)

A missionary city. Phrygia and the barbarous tribes; spread language, culture

Geography: Earthquakes. Geological fault, 17 BC it was destroyed by a severe earthquake that also destroyed Sardis and ten other cities. Called “the burnt land.” Later one in 60 A.D. (not go out from it anymore)

Jesus title NOT out of chapter 1 – **has the flavor of Old Testament Yahweh God.**

The Church at Philadelphia

Revelation 6:9-10 – When the lamb opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slaughtered because of the word of God and the testimony they had given. They cried out in a loud voice, "**Holy and true** Sovereign, how long will it be before you judge and take revenge on those living on the earth who shed our blood?"

Holy: This identifies Him as absolutely sinless, absolutely unstained, unblemished, flawless.

Three-fold expression: the Trinity by the Seraphim

Isaiah 6:3 when it states, "They kept on calling to each other: "**Holy, holy, holy** is the LORD of the Heavenly Armies! The whole earth is full of his glory!"

In Revelation 4:8 the four living creatures declare, "**Holy, holy, holy** is the Lord God, the Almighty." Separate. From what? Sin. The word holy means separate, and He is utterly separate from sin; thus, He is utterly unlike us.

Gabriel to Mary in **Luke 1:35** says this, "The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come over you, and the power of the Most High will surround you. Therefore, the child will be **holy** and will be called the Son of God. (demons, we know you the holy one of God)

"True"

{Gr. **Alethinos**} = genuine, **opposite what is , counterfeit, imaginary, simulated**

1 Thess. 1:9-10 – For they themselves report about us as to the kind of reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to **serve a living** and **true God**, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *that is*, Jesus who rescues us from the wrath to come.

1 Cor. 8:5-6 – For even if there are "gods" in heaven and on earth (as indeed there are many so-called "gods" and "lords"), yet for us there is only one God, the Father, from whom everything came into being and for whom we live. And there is only one Lord, Jesus the Messiah, through whom everything came into being and through whom we live.

The Key of David – this is Messianic

Not only is Jesus holy and true, but He has the authority to open and close doors (He is the door of the sheepfold). The background of this imagery is

Isaiah 22:21-25: [King Hezekiah's time] **Shebna** And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant **Eliakim the son of Hilkiah**: And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah.

Isa 22:22 And the **key of the house of David** will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.

The Church at Philadelphia

Eliakim was a type of Jesus Christ, a dependable administrator of the affairs of God's people.

Isaiah 9:6-7 – For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Jesus Christ also has the keys of hades and of death (Rev. 1:18). In the New Testament, an “open door” speaks of opportunity for ministry (Acts 14:27; 1 Cor. 16:9; 2 Cor. 2:12; Col. 4:3). Christ is the Lord of the harvest and the Head of the church, and it is He who determines where and when His people shall serve (see Acts 16:6–10).

What about the Keys to the Kingdom – Matthew 16:16-19 – And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Mat 16:19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

8 I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have followed My word, and have not denied My name.

Open Door (service, salvation)

1 Cor. 16:9 – for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

John 10:7, 9 – Jesus is the door of the sheep-fold

Noah's Ark – One Door – God closed it – seven days before the flood the door closed

You have a little power – when weak then strong (smallest of the 7)

Remember, God's strength is made perfect in weakness (2 Cor. 12:9)

God gives the increase (1 Cor. 3:7)

Unless the Lord builds the house, those who labor, labor in vain (Psalm 127:1)

have kept my Word – obedience

Joh 14:21 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

Joh 17:6 “I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.

The Church at Philadelphia

1. *Sola scriptura*: “Scripture alone” (versus church traditions)
2. *Sola fide*: “faith alone”
3. *Sola gratia*: “grace alone”
4. *Solo Christo*: “Christ alone”
5. *Soli Deo gloria*: “to the glory of God alone”

Not denied my name – courageous

All cults is the denial of the deity of Jesus Christ. They will not confess Him to be God come in human flesh. The world (Satan), society and even the offenses taken by our family and friends pressure us to water-down or even dent God's Word. This church at Philadelphia would not compromise or corrupt God's Word in a any way.

The Bible as a whole is complete with warnings for us:

- “keep that which is committed to thy trust” (1 Timothy 6:20)
- “hold fast the form of sound words” (2 Timothy 1:13)
- “earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude 3)
- “Continue in the faith grounded and settled” (Colossians 1:23)

9 Behold, I will make *those* of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and *make them* know that I have loved you.

Smyrna faced the same kind of opposition (Rev. 2:9).

Excommunicating Jewish believers from the synagogue.

Another weapon was often false accusations.

Satan is the accuser and he uses even religious people to assist him (Rev. 12:10).

Eph. 6:12 – for we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this World, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

The denominational churches as a whole --- 'Replacement Theology'.

Israel to be Restored

Who performs the work

Zechariah 12:10 – "I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they

The Church at Philadelphia

will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

What will happen

Hosea 5:15 – I will go away *and* return to My place Until they acknowledge their guilt and seek My face; In their distress they will earnestly seek Me.

Why?

Romans 11:25-29 –

10 Because you have kept My word of perseverance, I also will keep you from [ek] the hour of the testing, that *hour* which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who live on the earth [the earth-dwellers].

Thyatira: cast into the Great Tribulation (2:22)

Sardis: caught unawares by His coming (3:3)

Philadelphia: Promised to be kept from the Great Tribulation (3:10)

The churches of Smyrna (the persecuted/suffering church) and Philadelphia run parallel with each other. Jesus told Smyrna, “you will have tribulation 10 days, be thou faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life” (Rev. 2:10). Both churches are warned of suffering but that time of testing is specifically limited by God. One time of testing is initiated by Satan against God's church (Smyrna), the other is sent by God Himself and afflicts the whole world.

Remember, the purpose of the tribulation is NOT to test the church. That will occur at the Bema Seat judgment when our works are tested. The tribulation, however, is a time of testing on the “earth-dwellers”. The preposition 'ek' means out of, or removal from tribulation – not sustaining us through it. “Through” the 7 year tribulation would be “dia” in the Greek. “In the midst of” the tribulation would be “en” in the Greek.

3 Groups of People

- (1) church age saints – who are caught up to heaven,
- (2) Israel, and
- (3) (3) those who dwell upon the Earth. The unsaved people who take the mark of the beast and align themselves with the Satanic evil world system are the Earth-dweller. The original Greek word for dwell is not the usual 'oikeo' which means to abide/live or stay. It is katoideo which means “to be identified with” our citizenship is in heaven – they have aligned themselves with the Satan-controlled world).

The Church at Philadelphia

Philippians 3:20 says that our citizenship as believers is in Heaven. The Earth dwellers in the tribulation are “in” the kingdom of darkness.

This is surely a reference to the time of tribulation that John described in Revelation 6—19, “the time of Jacob’s trouble.” This is not speaking about some local trial, because it involves “them that dwell on the earth” (see Rev. 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 12:12; 13:8, 12, 14; 14:6; 17:2, 8).

11 I am coming quickly; hold firmly to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.

Hold firmly – don't lose your reward (Of all the seven churches it had the longest duration of prosperity as a Christian city. It still exists as a Turkish town under the name of *Allah Shehr, City of God.*)

Esau lost his birthright to Jacob (Gen. 25:34)

Reuben lost his place to Judah (Gen. 49:4, 8)

Moses superseded by Joshua

King Saul replaced by Paul

Again there is a link between Smyrna and Philadelphia – both are promised “crowns” (stephanos)

12 The one who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and 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 My new name.

A sense of permanence in Heaven with God.

Living stones today in God's spiritual temple being erected even now (Eph. 2:19-23; 1 Peter 2:5).

Jachin/Boaz – meaning God establishes/in His strength.

In eternity we will bear the names of God (we belong to Him), the name of the city (our dwelling-place), and that New name written down in glory. The entire New Jerusalem will be the ultimate temple (21:22) and we will discuss the New Jerusalem in detail when we get to chapter 21 of Revelation.

It's interesting to note that there are very few ruins in the modern city today. In fact, it is a living city with houses built over most of the old ruins. The one notable architectural structure are the exposed pillars of the old church at Philadelphia. They were holding fast indeed.

13 The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'