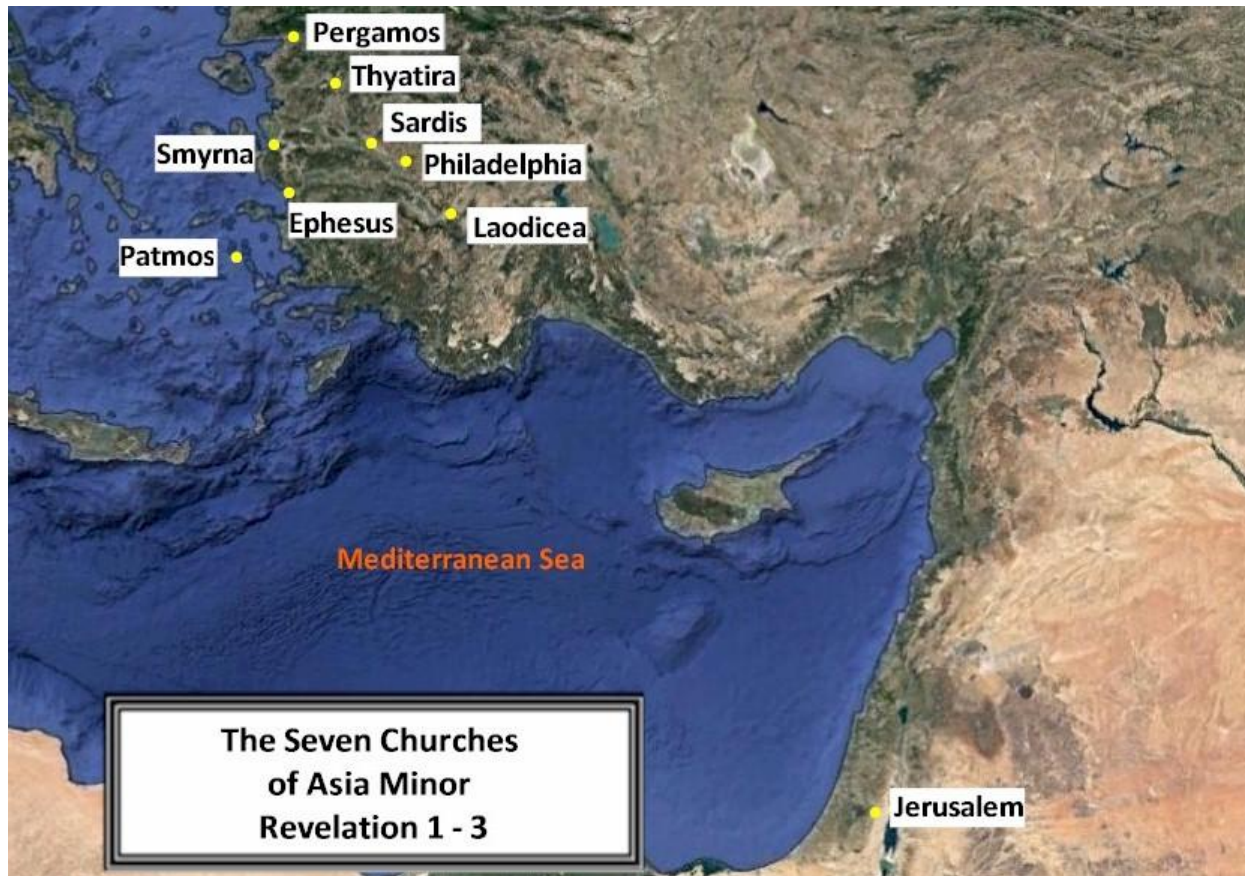


9 -THE LETTER TO THE CHURCH OF PHILADELPHIA (REVELATION 3:7-13)



I. Destination (Revelation 3:7)

A. The Recipient

- Christ addressed the pastor of the church in Philadelphia.

Historical Note: Philadelphia

Philadelphia was an ancient Greek city that was established in 187 B.C. It was in the administrative district of Sardis. In A.D. 17, the city suffered badly in an earthquake, and the Roman emperor Tiberius relieved it of having to pay taxes. In response, the city granted honors to Tiberius. The city experienced an additional twenty years of earthquakes. It was located in an area noted for its agricultural products such as vine growing and wine production. Because of the vine production, Philadelphia became the center of the worship of Dionysus, the god of wine and fertility.

B. The Description of Christ

1. Holy and True

- Christ affirms His deity as Holy and True.

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2. Holds the Key of David

- Christ proclaims His authority as the Son of David.

Biblical Note: The Key of David

The phrase “The key of David” seems to refer to the key of the house of David that was given to Eliakim. It was the highest position in the royal court. The key allowed Eliakim to have access to all the wealth of the king.

See: Isaiah 22:22

3. He Who Opens and Shuts

- Christ describes his actions as firm which no one can interfere.

II. Commendation (Revelation 3:8)

A. Christ’s Knowledge of the Church (Revelation 3:8a)

- Christ has an intimate knowledge of the church.

B. Their Opportunity (Revelation 3:8b)

- Christ has set before them an opportunity for service.

C. Their Condition (Revelation 3:8c)

- Christ notes that they had little power and resources.

D. Their Obedience (Revelation 3:8d)

- Christ commends them for their consistent obedience.

E. Their Endurance (Revelation 3:8e)

- Christ commends them for not giving in to the pressure to deny Christ.

III. Rebuke

- It is notable that Christ did not rebuke them.

IV. Exhortation (Revelation 3:9-11)

A. The Acknowledgement of Their Enemies (Revelation 3:9)

- Their enemies will acknowledge them and Christ’s love for them.

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Scripture Isaiah 49:22-23 (ESV)

²² Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I will lift up my hand to the nations, and raise my signal to the peoples; and they shall bring your sons in their arms, and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders. ²³ Kings shall be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers. With their faces to the ground they shall bow down to you, and lick the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I am the Lord; those who wait for me shall not be put to shame."

B. The Promise of the Rapture (Revelation 3:10)

- Christ promises that they will not have to endure the coming tribulation.

Biblical Note: The Hour of Trial

The "hour of trial" refers to the future time of great tribulation that believers will be spared from.

Biblical Note: Keep You from the Hour of Trial

While believers may face difficulty and suffering at the present time, they will certainly be protected from God's wrath in the Great Tribulation. This is the promise of the rapture of the church.

See: 1 Thessalonians 4:13

C. The Encouragement to Endure (Revelation 3:11)

- Christ encourages them to persevere to the end.

V. Promise (Revelation 3:12-13)

A. A Pillar (Revelation 3:12a)

- They will have a permanent place in Heaven.

B. Names of God and the New Jerusalem (Revelation 3:12b)

- They will belong to God.

C. Christ's New Name (Revelation 3:12c)

- They will belong to Christ.

D. The Exhortation (Revelation 3:13)

- We are called to acknowledge what the Holy Spirit reveals to us.