

# THE SEVEN CHURCHES

Steven Haskell, *Bible Handbook*, 122–127.

## EPHESUS

Time,—first century; meaning,—first, or desirable.

The New Testament gives church history covering the 1st century; therefore, the fulfillment of the prophecy is found in the history given. *Testimonies*, volume 6, 422–423.

Revelation 2:1–7. Work, Acts 20:20; 5:42; 6:2–4; 9:36–40. Labor, 2, Thessalonians 3:8–11; 2 Corinthians 12:10–11; Colossians 1:28–29. Patience, 2 Corinthians 12:12; James 5:10–11. Hated evil, Acts 5:1–13; 8:8–23; Galatians 2:1–8; Acts 8:8–23; 6:16–24. Church trials. 2 Tim. 2:15–19; 1 Tim. 1:19, 20; 2 Tim. 4:14–16; 4:10. Did not faint, Luke 18:1; 2 Corinthians 4:1; Galatians 6:9; Hebrews 12:3. Remember the past and repent, Acts 5:41; 2 Timothy 2:19; Philippians 3:7–15. First works, Acts 8:4; 5:12, 42. Hate evil, Jude 21:23. Listening ear, Isaiah 50:4, 5; Psalm 40:6. Overcomer's reward, Revelation 22:1–2; Isaiah 66:22–23.

## SMYRNA

Time,—100–323 A.D.; meaning,—myrrh, or sweet smelling savor.

Revelation 2:8–11. Works, tribulation, and poverty, John 15:20; James 2:5; Acts 20:29–31; 2 Peter 2:1. Ten days: this doubtless refers to the persecution of ten years under Diocletian, the emperor of Rome, 302–312 A.D. Crown of life, Revelation 1:18. Overcomer's reward, Revelation 20:6.

## PERGAMOS

Time,—about 323 A.D.–538 A.D.; meaning,—height, elevation.

Revelation 2:12–17. Leading sin,—holding doctrine of Balaam; brief study of the doctrine and character of Balaam, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 438–452. True to God in the beginning, Numbers 22:18. Loved wages of unrighteousness, 2 Peter 2:14–15. God gave him a free choice, Numbers 22:20. His way perverse, Numbers 22:32. Balaam reproved, 2 Peter 2:16. United Baal—, or sun—worship, with the worship of the true God. Numbers 23:1–3. Hired to work against God's people, Deuteronomy 23:3–4. United with the king to overthrow the people of God, Revelation 2:14. Honor and position offered him, Numbers 22:17. Balaam died a soothsayer, fighting against the people of God. Joshua 13:22.

Balaam's history is parallel history with the church from about 323 to 538 A.D. The church entered this period a pure church, but united with the state, substituted “the venerable day of the sun” for the true Sabbath, and at the end was persecuting the people of God. Heathen customs were introduced into the church under the garb of Christianity. Remember the course of Balaam, Micah 6:5. A woe pronounced upon all who follow the errors of Balaam, Jude 11.

### THYATIRA

Time,—538 A.D.–1798 A.D.; meaning,—sacrifice of contrition.

Revelation 2:18–29. Teaching of Jezebel, the leading sin, *Prophets and Kings*, 114–115, 215, 204–216. A brief study of the character and sins of Jezebel. Always known as a Baal-worshiper, 1 Kings 16:31. Introduced Baal-worship among the people of God, 1 Kings 16:32. Baal-worship is sunworship, 2 Kings 23:4, 5, margin; 2 Chronicles 14:5, margin; Jeremiah 43:13, margin; 44:15–19. Jezebel introduced heathen customs, 1 Kings 21:25, 26. Jezebel's manner of dressing, 2 Kings 9:30. She destroyed the people of God, 1 Kings 18:4, 13. Given opportunity to repent, 1 Kings 21:27–29; 18:17–46. Repented not, 1 Kings 19:1, 2. Cast into tribulation, 2 Kings 9:31–37. Her children killed, 2 Kings 9:24, 26; 2 Kings 10:1–11. Before the assembled people of God it was shown that Jezebel's Baal-worship was false and God was true, 1 Kings 18:38, 39. Jezebel's carcass left as dung upon the ground, 2 Kings 9:35–37.

Modern Jezebel. A woman the symbol of the church, Jeremiah 6:2. Corrupt Woman represents a corrupt church, Revelation 17:1, 2. Opposes and exalteth itself above God, 2 Thessalonians 2:1–4. Thinks to change the law of God; the day of the sun, or Sunday, was substituted for the Sabbath of the Lord, Daniel 7:25. The woman (church) guides the beast (civil power), Revelation 17:3. The food given by this church abominable and filthy; heathen customs were mingled with the filthy; heathen customs were mingled with the truth during this period, Revelation 17:4. Modern Jezebel's manner of dressing, Revelation 17:4. Destroyed the people of God, Revelation 17:6; Dan. 7:25; Revelation 13:7. Opportunity given to repent, Revelation 2:21; 12:6; 18:4. Repented not, Revelation 12:17; 13:16, 17; Daniel 7:21. Cast into tribulation, Revelation 2:22; 18:6–24. Her daughters destroyed. Revelation 2:23; 17:5; 19:20–21; 2 Thessalonians 2:8. Before the Universe of God, it will be shown that God is true and just. Revelation 2:23; 19:1–3; Philippians 2:9–11. The promise of the coming of the Lord prominent, Revelation 2:25. Noted for their works, Revelation 2:19. The overcomer is the one that keeps God's works unto the end, Revelation 2:26. Our own works must be changed for God's works and ways, Hebrews 4:10. The righteous will help to execute judgments upon the wicked, Revelation 2:26, 27; Psalm 2:7–9; 149:5–9. Wicked left as dung upon the ground, Jeremiah 25:32–33. Christ is the morning-star, Revelation 22:16. Christ is received in exchange for our sins, Galatians 1:3, 4. The message is for all who will hear, Revelation 2:29.

### SARDIS

Time,—1798–1833; meaning,—song of joy, or that which remains.

Revelation 3:1–6. Admonished to be watchful and repent lest the Lord should come and find them unprepared. Some of this church would live during the judgment. The overcomer would have his name retained in the book of life.

### PHILADELPHIA

Time,—1833–1844; meaning,—brotherly love.

Revelation 3:7–14. In preparing to meet their Lord, the church was drawn together. Christ entered the 2nd apartment of the heavenly sanctuary. No combination of earthly circumstances can prevent our entering by faith, for it is beyond the power of man to shut the door. Hypocrites will be exposed, but the faithful ones will be shielded. The overcomers will be pillars in the temple of God.

## LAODICEA

Time,—1844–? Meaning,—judging a just people.

The Saviour introduces Himself under three titles, Revelation 3:14. Lukewarm, Revelation 3:15, 16. Boastful spirit while destitute, Revelation 3:17. Counseled to buy gold, 1 Peter 1:7; James 2:5; Revelation 3:18. White raiment, Isaiah 61:10; Revelation 19:8. Eyesalve, 1 Corinthians 2:9–10; 1 John 2:27; Revelation 3:18. Reproof in love, Hebrews 12:5–11. Invites us to open our hearts, Revelation 3:20. Overcomer shares Christ's throne, Revelation 3:21–22.

## THYATIRA

And I will give him the morning star. Revelation 2:28.

“In the fourteenth century arose in England the ‘morning star of the Reformation.’ John Wycliffe was the herald of reform, not for England alone, but for all Christendom. The great protest against Rome which it was permitted him to utter was never to be silenced. That protest opened the struggle which was to result in the emancipation of individuals, of churches, and of nations.” *The Great Controversy*, 80.

John Wycliffe (1320–1384) was a theologian and early proponent of reform in the Roman Catholic Church during the 14th century. He initiated the first translation of the Bible into the English language and is considered **the main precursor of the Protestant Reformation**. Wycliffe was born at Ipreswell (modern Hipswell), Yorkshire, England, between 1320 and 1330; and he died at Lutterworth (near Leicester) December 31, 1384.

Martin Luther (November 10, 1483—February 18, 1546) was the first and most prominent leader of a reform movement in sixteenth century Christianity, subsequently known as the Protestant Reformation.

**1844 – 360 = 1484**

“The state of the Church represented by the foolish virgins, is also spoken of as the Laodicean state.” *Review and Herald*, August 19, 1890.