

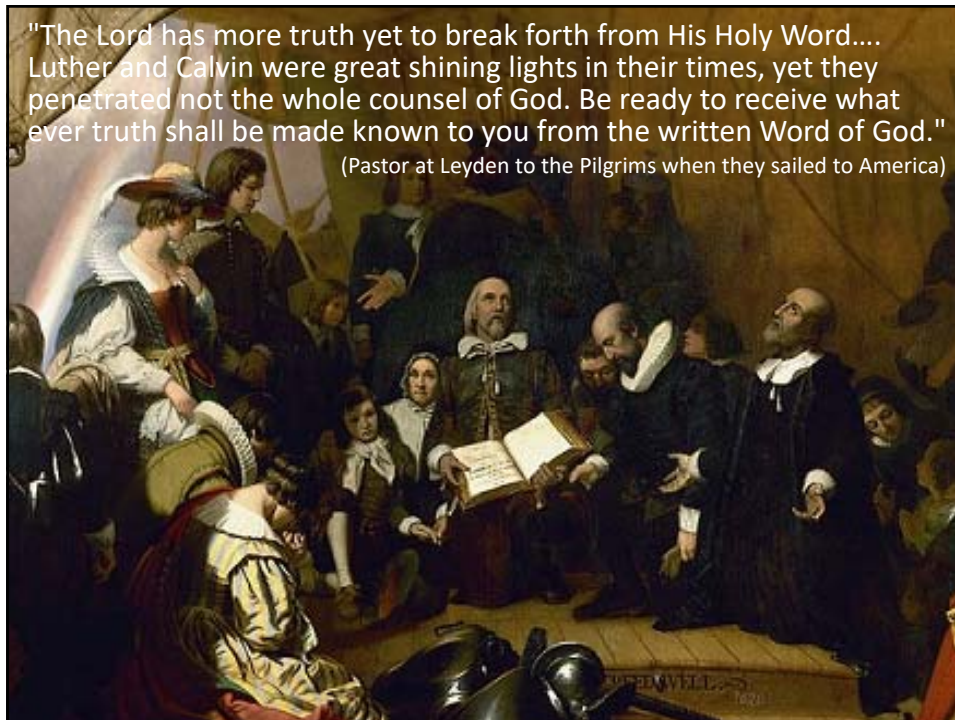
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2

The first word of this book,
Ἀποκάλυψις [*Apokalypsis, unveiling*],
should be kept in mind
throughout the book.
For it is God's intention to *reveal*
rather than *conceal*.

3

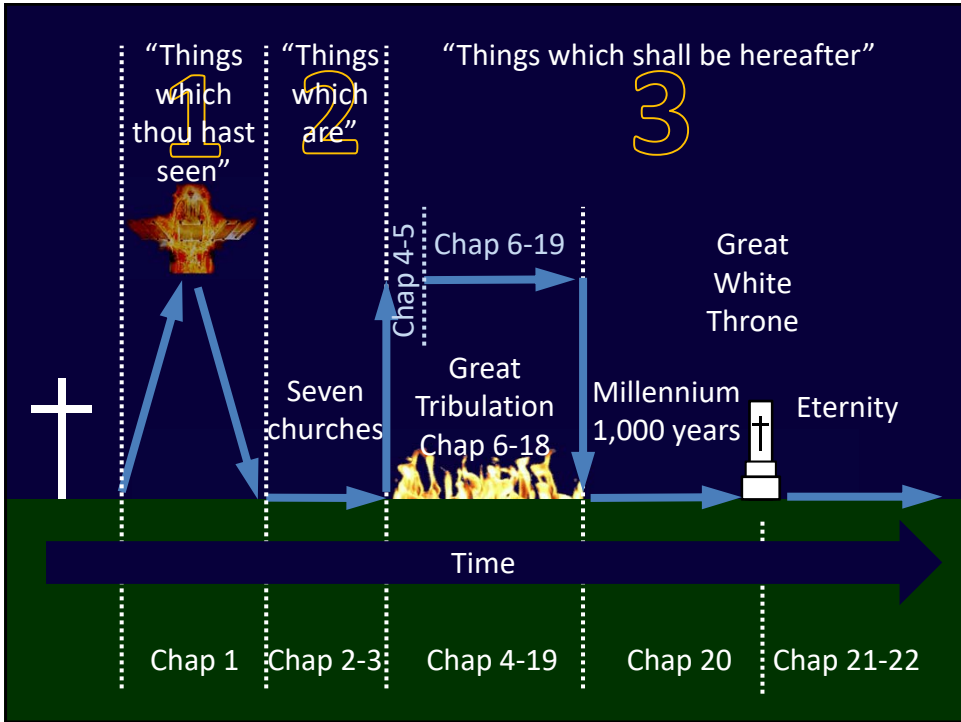


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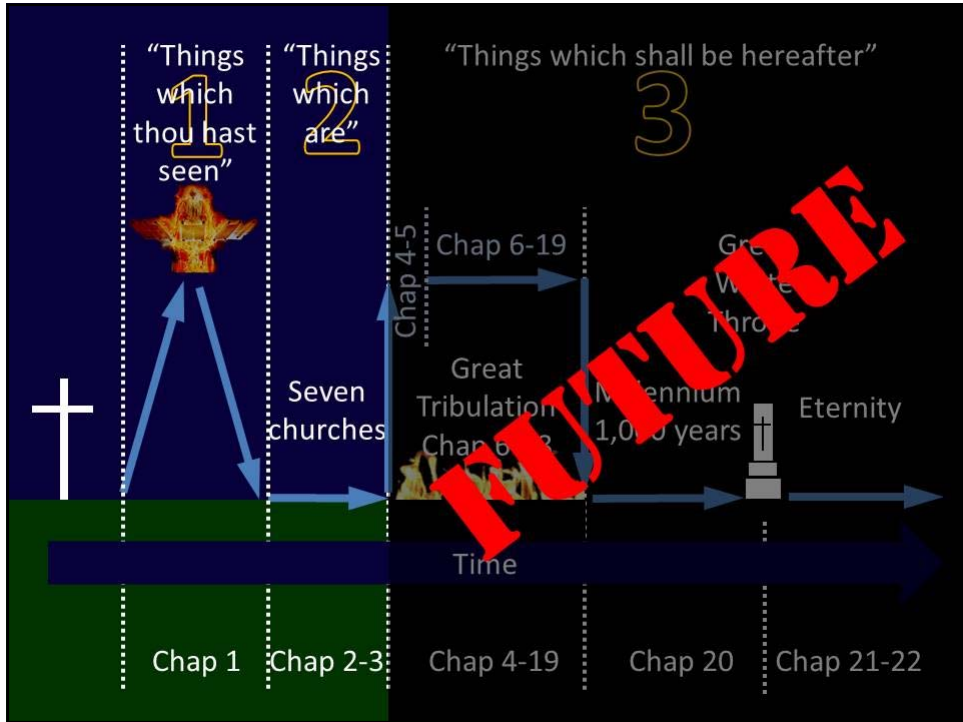
The book of Revelation

THINGS WHICH THOU HAST SEEN (Chapter 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John' vision of the exalted Christ, 1 	
THINGS WHICH ARE (Chapters 2-3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The messages to the seven churches, 2-3 	
THINGS WHICH SHALL BE HEREAFTER (Chapters 4-22)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throne in heaven, 4-5 • Tribulation on earth, 6-19 • The Kingdom of Christ, 20 • The new heavens and earth 	

5



6



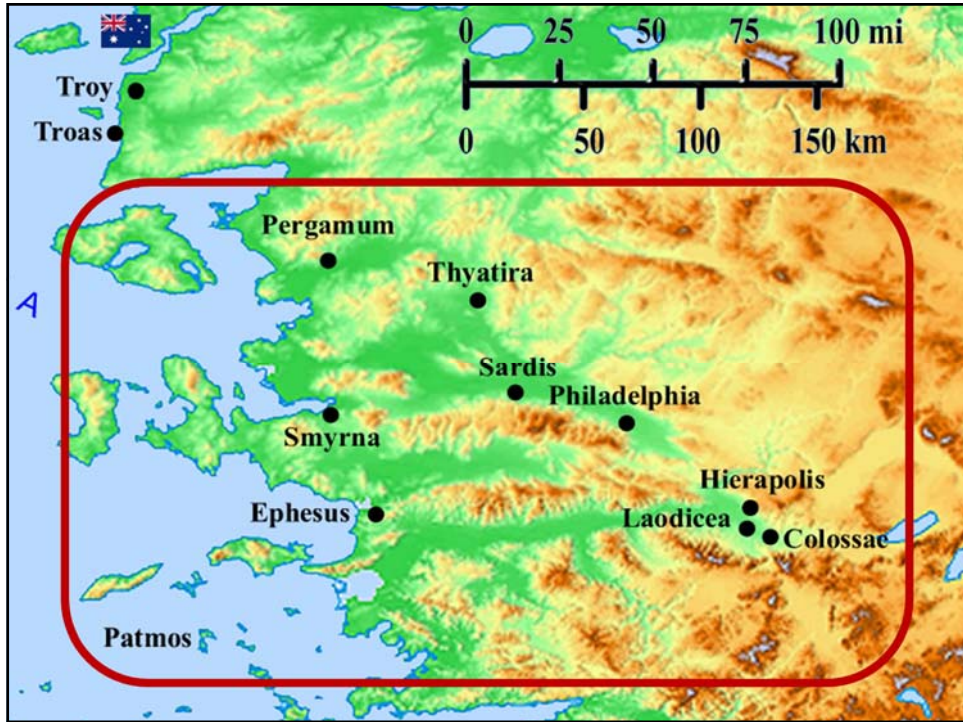
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"I've read the last page of the Bible.
 It's all going to turn out all right."
 Billy Graham

8



9



10

Seven Parts of Each Letter

1. Name of church: "To the Angel in...."

2. Title of Christ: "These are the words of Him who..."

3. Commendation: "I know your deeds..."

4. Concern: "Yet I hold this against you..."

5. Exhortation: "...or I will come"

6. Appeal: "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

7. Promise to the overcomer:
"To him who overcomes I will"



11

A Tale of Three Cities

Ephesus The loveless church Political centre of Asia
Desirable

Smyrna The persecuted church Commercial center of Asia
Death, myrrh

Pergamon The compromising church Religious centre of Asia
Mixed marriage

Throughout biblical times, these three cities vied with each other, through means fair and foul, to be known as "first in Asia."

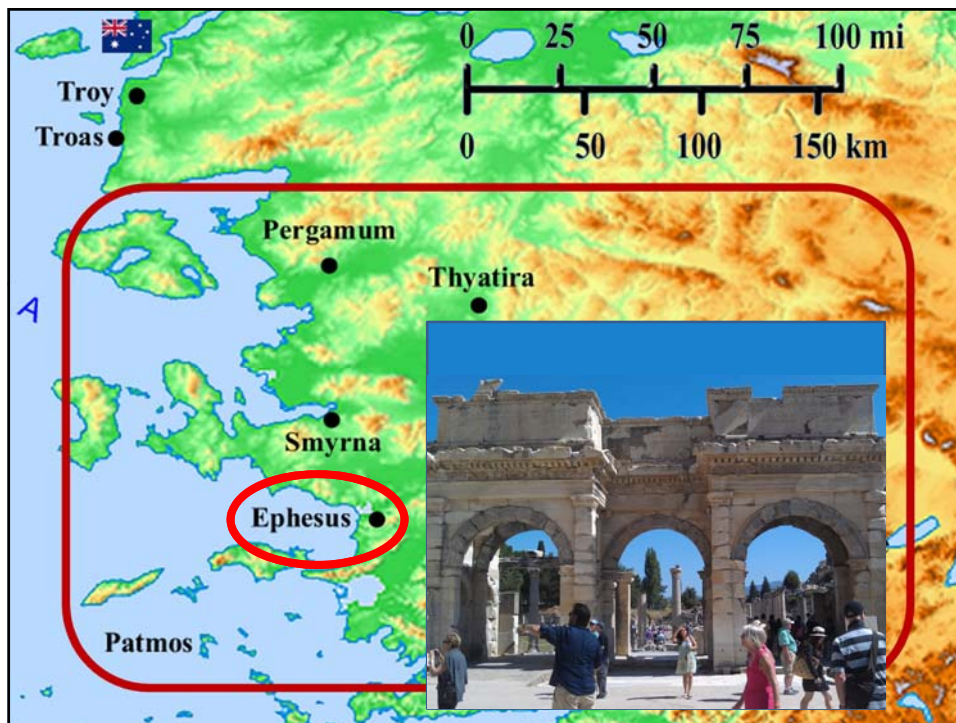
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Καὶ τῷ ἀγγέλῳ τῆς ἐκκλησίας
To the angel of the church in

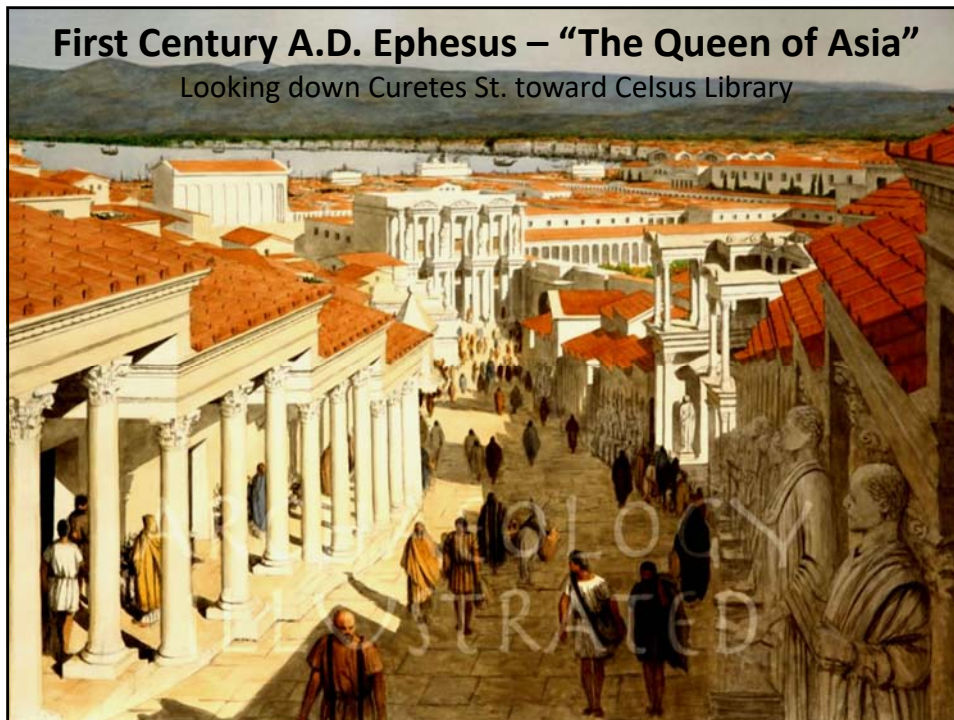
EPHESUS

Revelation 2:1-7

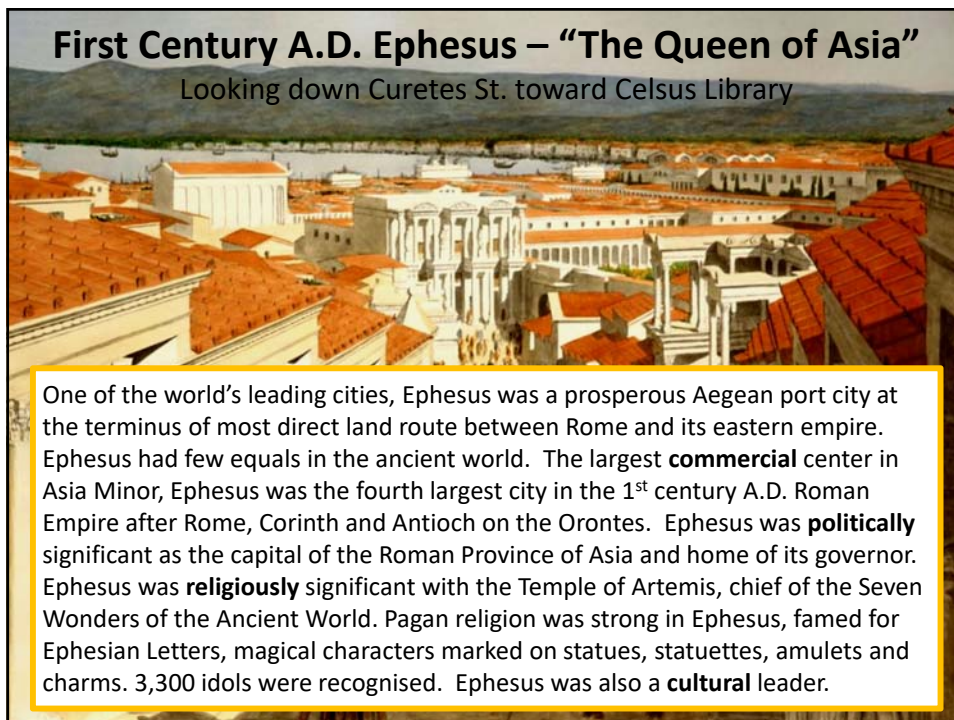
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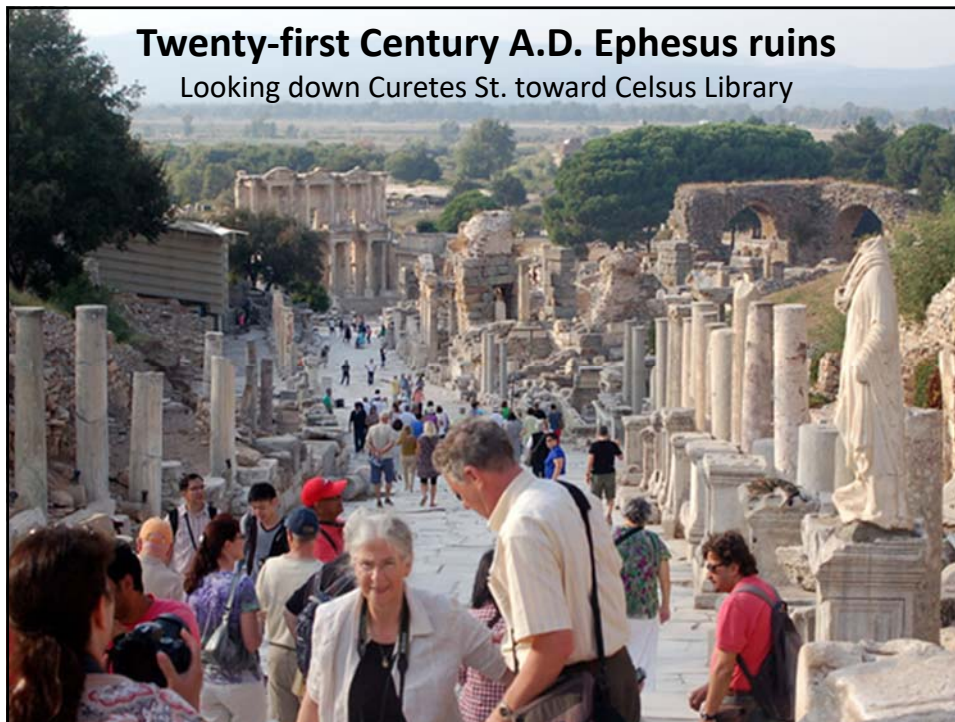
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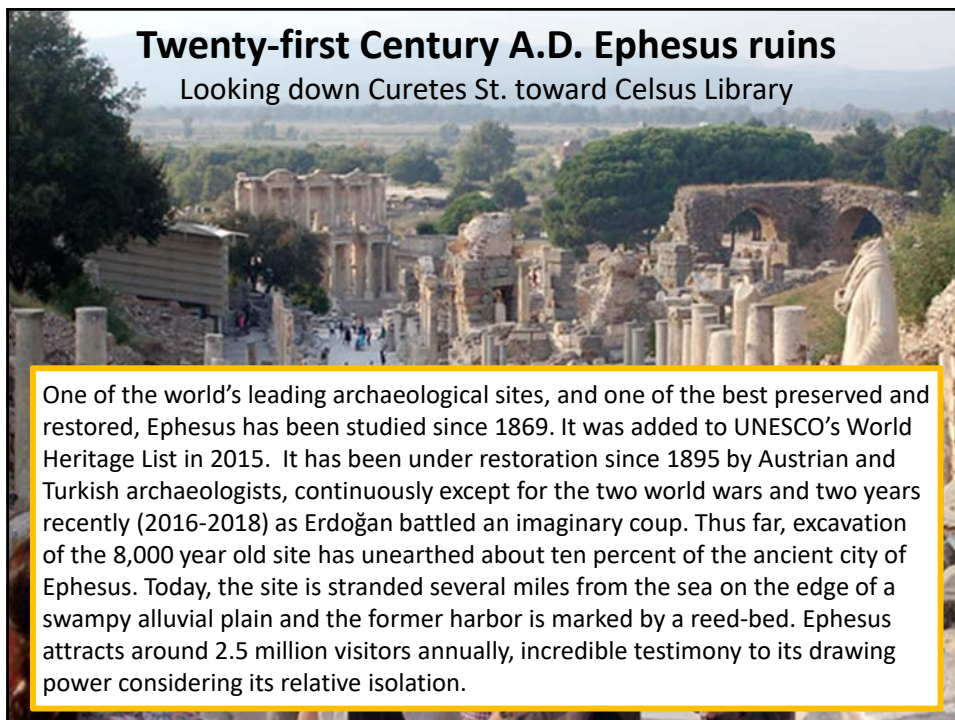
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17



18

Ephesus, the loveless church

- ¹ “To the angel of the church of Ephesus write,
 ‘These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:
² “I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; ³ and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary.
⁴ Nevertheless I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵ Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. ⁶ But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.
⁷ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.” ’

19

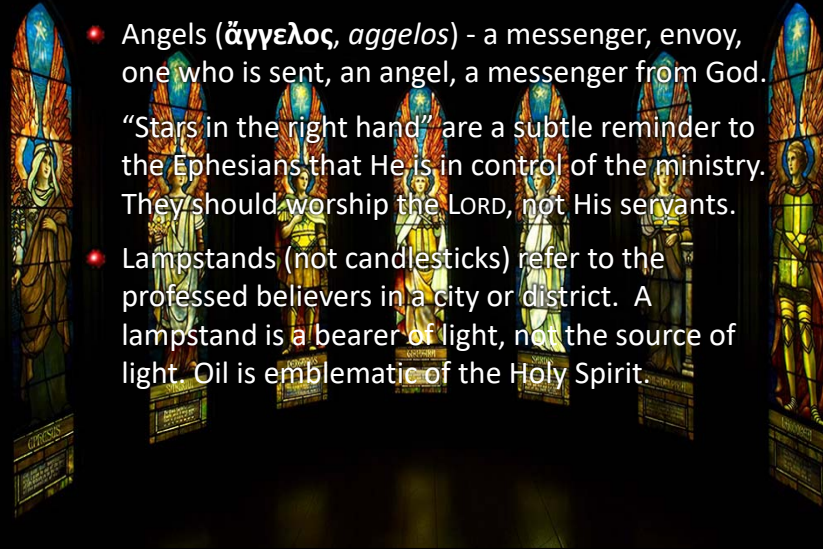
Ephesus, the loveless church

Name	✓	¹ “To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, ‘These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:
Title	✓	² “I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; ³ and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary.
Commendation	✓	⁴ Nevertheless I have <i>this</i> against you, that you have left your first love.
Concern	✓	⁵ Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. ⁶ But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.
Exhortation	✓	⁷ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
Promise	-	To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.” ’
Appeal	✓	
Promise	✓	

20

The Title of Christ

¹ “These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:”



- Angels (**ἄγγελος, *aggelos***) - a messenger, envoy, one who is sent, an angel, a messenger from God.
“Stars in the right hand” are a subtle reminder to the Ephesians that He is in control of the ministry. They should worship the LORD, not His servants.
- Lampstands (not candlesticks) refer to the professed believers in a city or district. A lampstand is a bearer of light, not the source of light. Oil is emblematic of the Holy Spirit.

21

Commendation

² “I know (*have known*) your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; ³and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary.”

- [1] I know your works, **Serving**
 [2] and your labour, **Sacrificing** (toil until exhausted)
 [3] and your patience, **Steadfast** (endure under pressure)
 [4] and how you can not
 bear them which are evil: **Separated**
 [5] and you have tried them
 ... (and) found them liars: **Suffering** (toiled without fainting)

The Ephesians heeded warnings of Paul and John about false teachers. But love was a casualty to heresy-hunting.

22

Concern

⁴ “Nevertheless I have *this* against you, that you have left (*sent away, abandoned*) your first love.”

↙
Protos = first in rank, influence, honor; the chief, principal.

Great works, but they weren't motivated by a love for Christ!

⁴ Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

⁵ And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. ²⁴ And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Galatians 5:22-26

23

Exhortation

⁵ “Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come (*am coming*) to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.

- **Remember** (*keep on remembering*) the love that was lost. The first and greatest commandment in both Old and New Testaments is: “Love the LORD your God with all your...”
- **Repent** (change thinking). Devotion, not just doctrine.
- **Restore** the broken fellowship.

⁶ “But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.”

- Followers of an *unknown* somebody named “Nicholas”,
 ∴ *meaningless* to us today,

OR

- νικάω (Strong's G3528, *nikaó*) = conquer, rule over, subdue.
- + λαός (Strong's G2992, *laos*) = laity; people (of God).

24

Appeal

⁷ “He who has an ear (*that God has opened*), let him hear (*and understand*) what the Spirit* (*the ‘Holy Spirit’*) says to the churches.”

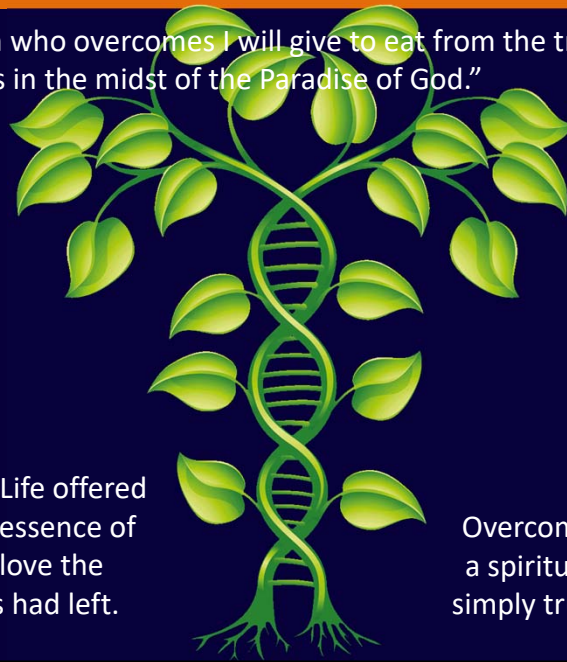
**HE WHO HAS
AN EAR,
LET HIM HEAR**

Before His Ascension, Jesus promised to send another helper (παρακλητον, *paraklēton*), saying “I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.” (John 14:18)

25

Promise

“To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”



The Tree of Life offered is the very essence of the first love the Ephesians had left.

Overcomers are not a spiritual elite, but simply true believers.

26

Overview of Design

	Ephesus	Smyrna	Pergamos	Thyatira	Sardis	Philadelphia	Laodicea
Name	✓						
Title	✓						
Commendation	✓						
Concern	✓						
Exhortation	✓						
Promise	-						
Appeal	"He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the Churches"						
Promise	✓						

27



28



29



30



31



32



33



34

Topographic Map of the Ephesus Area



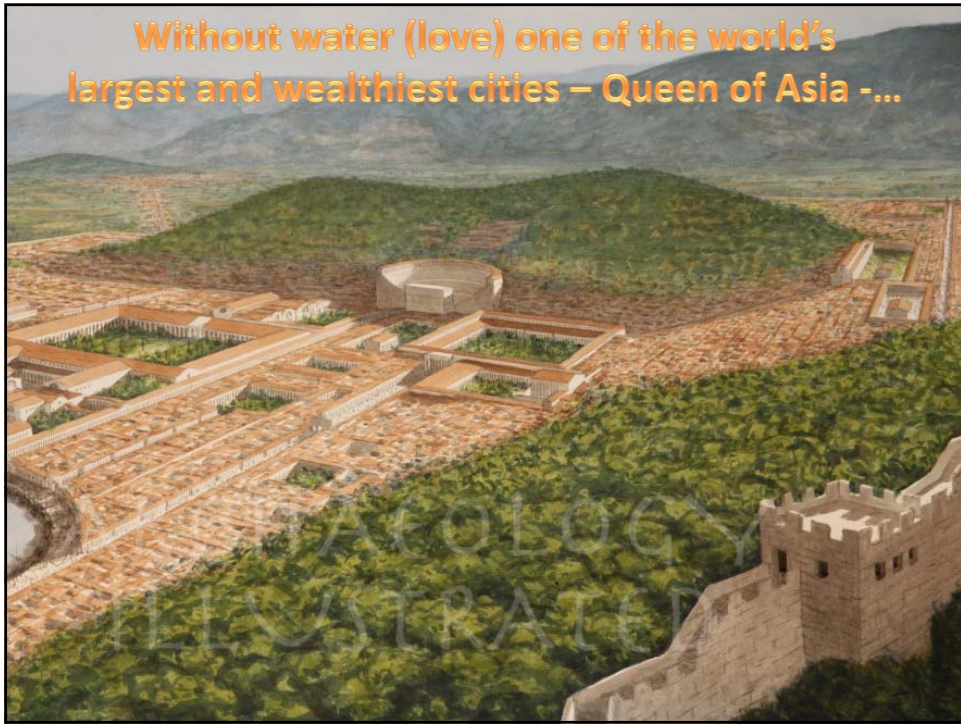
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WATERisLIFE

No water, no life.
No life, no love.

As their water receded gradually,
So too did their love of Christ,
Until their lampstand was removed.

36



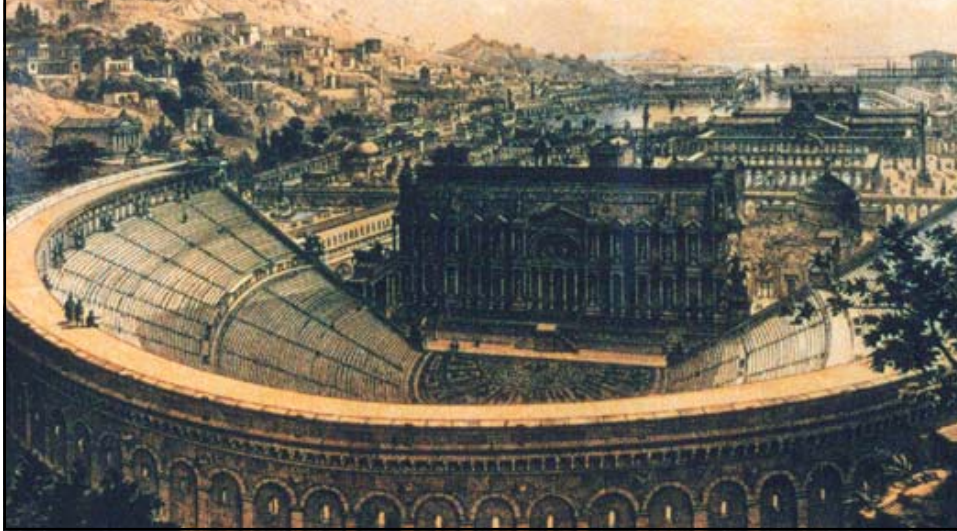
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38

Demetrius' Riot in the Amphitheatre

The important role of Artemis in the city is seen by the silversmith's riot which ensued in reaction to Paul's ministry (Acts 19:24-41). One of the months of the calendar was named after Artemis and a yearly celebration was held in her honor.



39

Sting's Riot in the Amphitheatre

The finest amphitheatre in Asia is now a partially reconstructed ruin. However, it still hold concerts by luminaries like Pavarotti, Sting, Elton John, Ray Charles, Jose Carreras, Joan Baez, Diana Ross, and many more. After riots at Sting's concert in 1993, concerts ceased for five years. Nor have they been active lately.



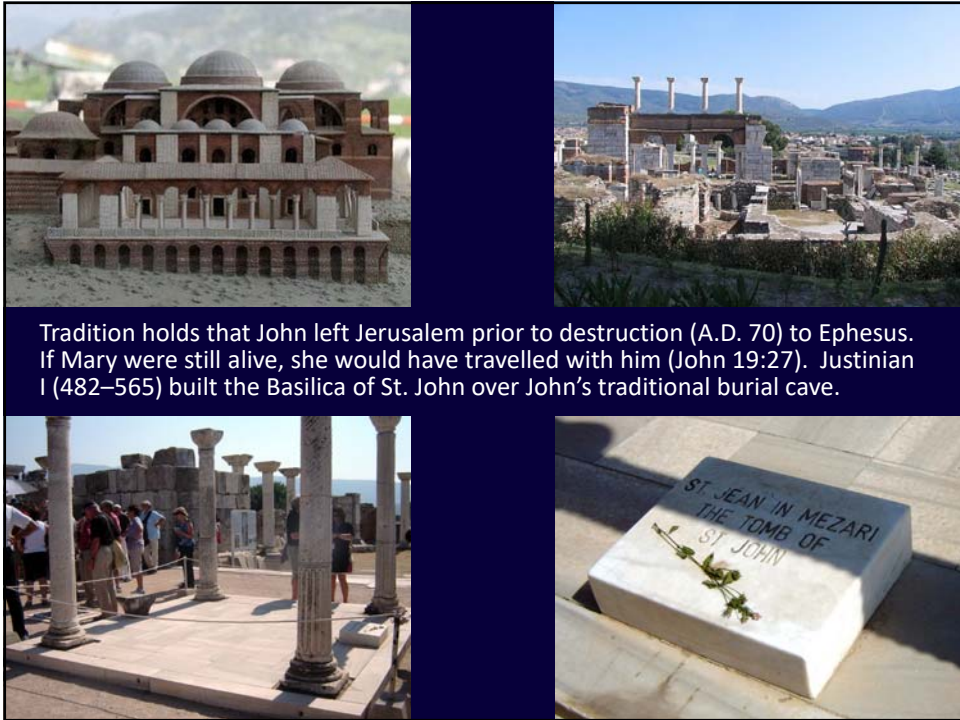
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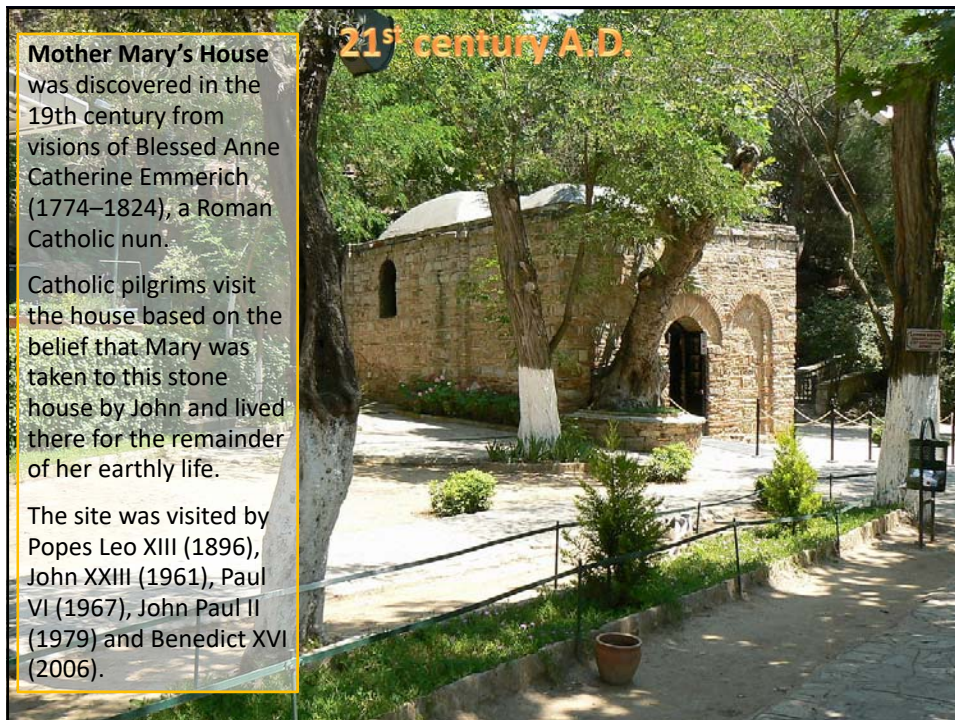


Tradition holds that John left Jerusalem prior to destruction (A.D. 70) to Ephesus. If Mary were still alive, she would have travelled with him (John 19:27). Justinian I (482–565) built the Basilica of St. John over John’s traditional burial cave.

43



44



45



46

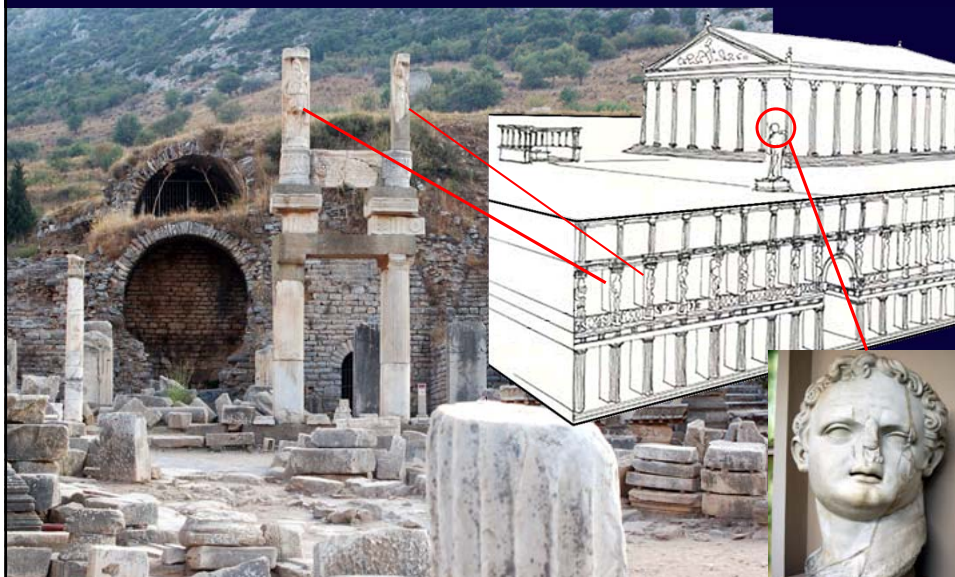
Leaving the first love

Ephesus recognised some 3,300 gods and goddesses. It wasn't just the ONE TRUE God to Whom they were unfaithful. Here are a few examples:

- From the earliest days, they worshipped Cybele the mother goddess. Over time, she mixed her with Diana the huntress and other goddesses and Artemis emerged, replacing Cybele.
- Head of the Ionian Alliance, Ephesus resigned and aligned with the Persians in 537 BC.
- Lysimachus made Ephesus his capital in 301 BC, and forced the new name of Arsenoi after his wife Arsinoe II, daughter of Ptolemy, on unwilling locals. Upon his death in 281 BC, it was renamed Ephesus.
- Goths conquered Ephesus mid 3rd century AD, and the city declined. It started up again as a Christian city and the Wonder of the World became mere building materials for as far away as Byzantium.

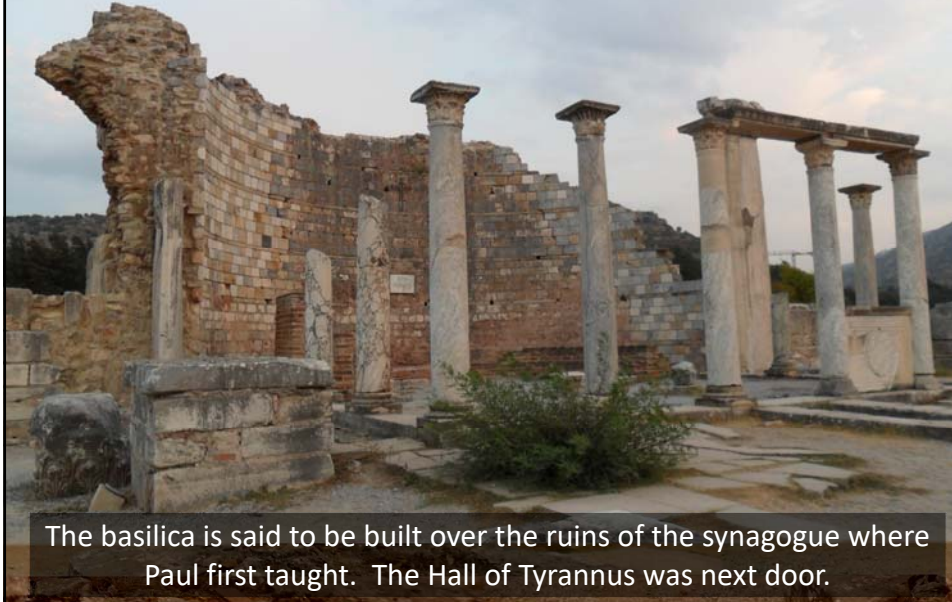
47

A 7.5 metre high statue of Domitian (r. AD 81-96) dominated his emperor cult temple. He was so hated that Ephesians tore it down when he died. The battered head is in the Ephesus Museum.



48

The Council of Ephesus was held in the Basilica of St. Mary in AD 431. One outcome of discussing the Nestorian heresy was a split between the Eastern and Western churches, leading to total rupture in 1054.



The basilica is said to be built over the ruins of the synagogue where Paul first taught. The Hall of Tyrannus was next door.

49

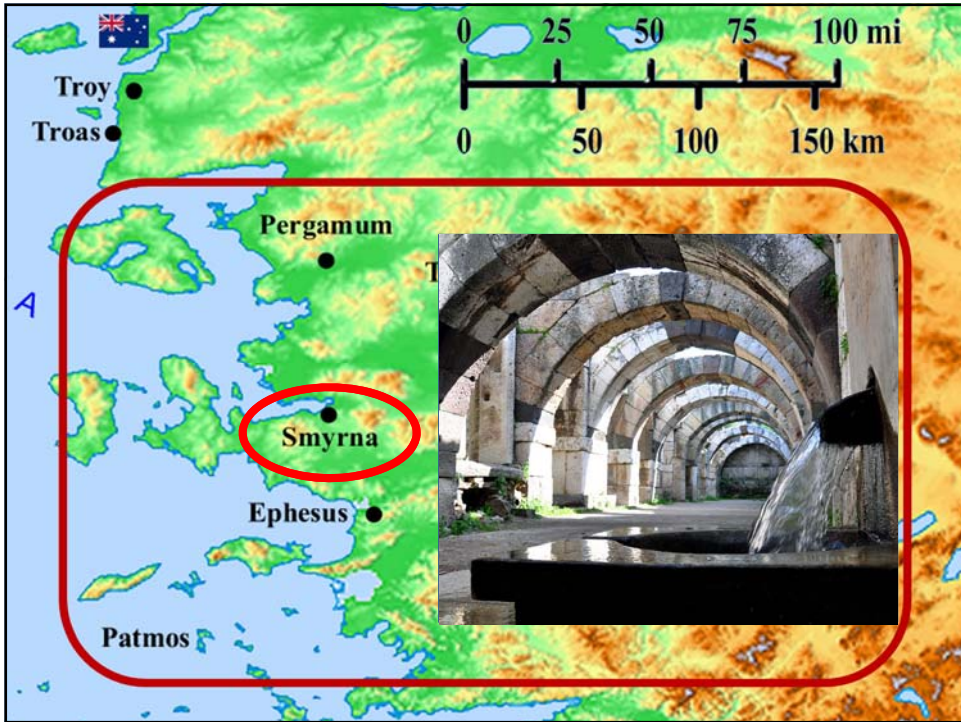
Καὶ τῷ ἀγγέλῳ τῆς ἐκκλησίας

To the angel of the church in

SMYRNA

Revelation 2:8-11

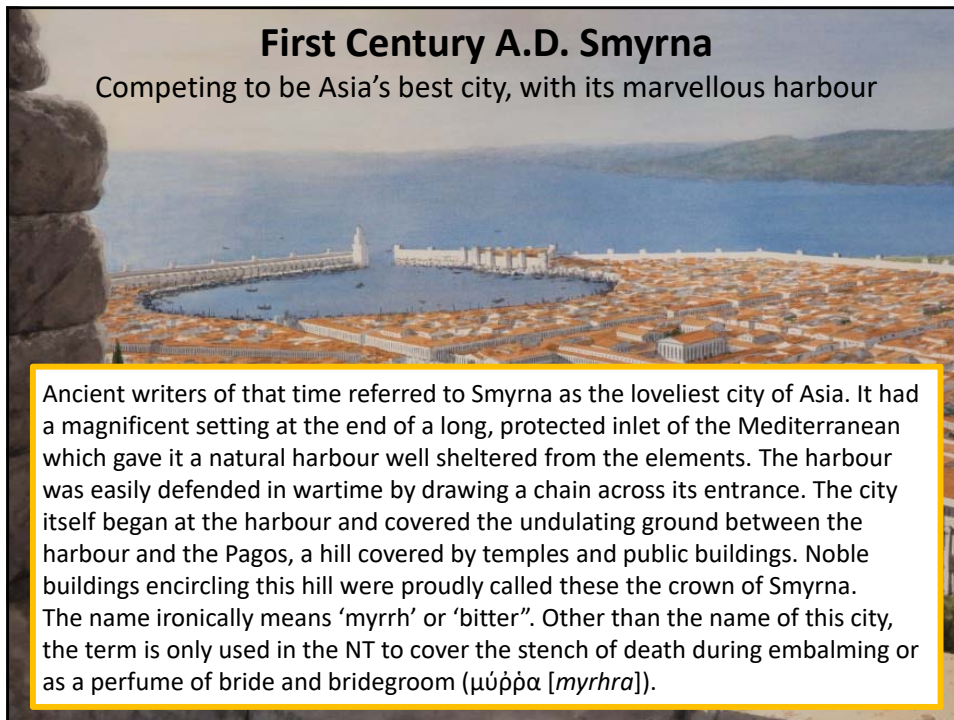
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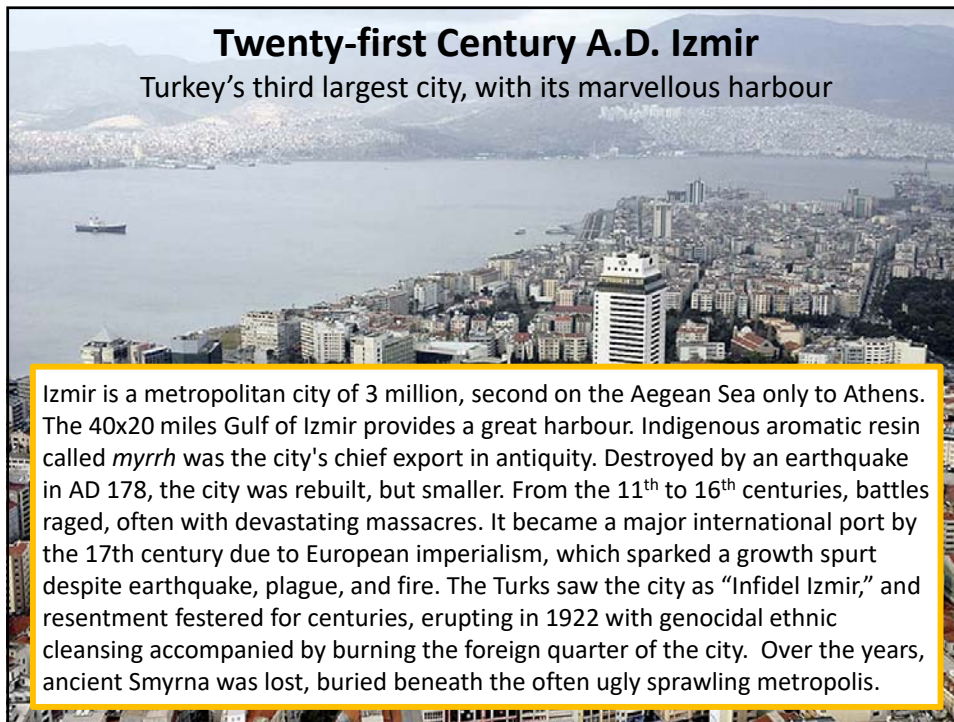
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53



54



55

Smyrna, the persecuted church

- 8 "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write,
'These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life:
- 9 "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and *I know* the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan.
- 10 Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.
- 11 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death."'

56

Smyrna, the persecuted church

Name	✓
Title	✓
Commendation	✓
Concern	✗
Exhortation	✓
Promise	-
Appeal	✓
Promise	✓

⁸ "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write,
'These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life:

⁹ "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and *I know* the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan.

¹⁰ Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

¹¹ "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death."


57

The Title of Christ

¹ "These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life:"

The assembly at Smyrna was under persecution for the faith, which explains why the LORD emphasized His pre-existence, death and resurrection. No matter what experiences God's people may have, their LORD identifies with them.

Smyrna was a centre of Roman imperial cults since 43 BC, when Cicero declared Smyrna "our most faithful allies." Anyone refusing to sacrifice to Caesar was in strife. Rome recognised Judaism so they did not have to patronize the imperial cult, but the Jews ensured that Rome did not accept Christians as Jews.



58

Commendation

⁹ “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and *I know* the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan.”

Abject earthly poverty, but spiritually rich!

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

Ephesians 6:12

²⁸ For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, nor *is* circumcision that which *is* outward in the flesh; ²⁹ but *he is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God.

Romans 2:28-29

59

Concern

No concern was raised for this *ekklesia* of tribulation and martyrdom.



60

Exhortation

¹⁰ “Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil¹ is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days.² Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.^{3,4}”

NOTES:

1

The devil in Greek διάβολος (Strong's G 1228, *diabolos*)
 διάβολος = δια [*dia*] (“against”) + βαλλω [*ballō*] (“to throw”)
 The devil throws his accusations) to throw you into jail.

2

In the Bible, *ten days* indicates a “brief time”, as in Gen. 24:44, “But her brother and her mother said, “Let the young woman stay with us *a few days*, at least ten; after that she may go.”

See Acts 25:6; see also Isa. 26:20; Ps. 30:5; 2Cor. 4:17; 1Pe. 1:6

‘Ten days’ was a normal Greek phrase for ‘a short time’. (Barclay 1957)

61

Exhortation

¹⁰ “Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil¹ is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days.² Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.^{3,4}”

NOTES:

3

1. Smyrna’s athletes participated in the games striving for the winner’s crown.
2. Martyrs would be victors.
3. Priests of cults in Smyrna wore gold crowns as badges of office.



4

English	Strong's	Gk Root	Biblical usage
crowns	G4735	στέφανος <i>stephanos</i>	1) A badge of victory; a laurel wreath of victory. 2) The crown worn at marriages and festal occasions. 3) A laurel crown reward for faithful municipal service.
crowns	G1238	διάδημα <i>diadēma</i>	1) Always a symbol of kingly or imperial dignity; royalty 2) A diadem: kingly ornament for the head, the crown

62

Crowns Available (in General)

The Badge of Victory	Criteria	Reference	Verses (KJV)
Crown of Life	For those who have suffered for His sake	James 1:12; (also Revelation 2:10)	<i>Blessed the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.</i>
Crown of Righteousness	For those who loved His appearing	2 Timothy 4:8	<i>Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.</i>
Crown of Glory	For those who fed the flock	1 Peter 5:4	<i>And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.</i>
Crown Incorruptible	For those who press on steadfastly	1 Corinthians 9:25	<i>And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.</i>
Crown of Rejoicing	For those who win souls	1 Thessalonians 2:19	<i>For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?</i>

63

Reserved Crowns

The Badge of Victory	Criteria	Reference	Verses (KJV)
Crown of Thorns (Jesus Christ)	Blasphemous masquerade of royalty by Roman soldiers made of <i>juncus marinus</i> or <i>lycium spinosum</i>	Mark 15:7 (also Matthew 27:29; John 19:2)	<i>And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head,</i>
A Golden Crown (Jesus Christ) (<i>diadēma</i>)	The Son of Man at the time of God's Wrath; ----- KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS	Revelation 14:14 ----- Revelation 19:12-21	<i>And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.</i>
Crowns of Gold	The 24 Elders	Revelation 4:4	<i>And round about the throne four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.</i>

64

Appeal

¹¹ "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

**SHE WHO HAS
AN EAR,
LET HER HEAR**

65

Promise

"He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death."

"Second death" is a Jewish Rabbinic phrase for "total extinction of the utterly wicked." It is defined later in the book of Revelation as "the lake of fire (and brimstone)" into which the following are cast:

- Rev. 19:20 The beast and the false prophet
- Rev. 20:10 The devil ("And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.")
- Rev. 20:14 Death and Hades ("This is the second death.")
- Rev. 20:15 "And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire."
- Rev. 21:8 "cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars."

66

Famous Christian martyrs in Smyrna

1. Polycarp was martyred together with 11 Philadelphia Christians. Sabina and others "throw themselves on the ground to avoid being dragged to the temple." AD 155
2. Pionius, martyred in AD 255.
3. 10,000 Christians murdered by Turkish sailors in 1097.
4. All Christians in Smyrna massacred by a Turk named Mobassan in 1332.
5. Tamerlane massacred all Smyrnaens in 1402 after the Knights of St. John fled to Malta. He reportedly beheaded 1,000 prisoners to make a monument to his victory of their skulls mixed with stones.
6. Athanasius was beheaded by Muslims in 1653.
7. Nicholas of Karaman and Dioscorus were hanged by Muslims in 1675.
8. Demus was beheaded in 1763.
9. Turks in 1694 were diplomatically persuaded not to massacre Christians in Smyrna; but under Russian provocation, Turks killed 10,000 in Smyrna.
10. Alexander martyred in 1794.
11. In 1797, Turks lit a fire that swept 4,500 Christian homes in Smyrna.
12. Procopius killed in 1810; Agathangelus in 1818; Nektarius was hanged in 1820; and Athanasios martyred in 1819.
13. Chrysostom, Greek Metropolitan of Smyrna, killed in 1922.
14. Turkish ethnic cleansing from 1913 to 1922 (including the Pontian Genocide and the Armenian Genocide), killed 200,000 to 350,000 Greek civilians and up to 1.5 million Armenian civilians, including up to 150,000 in Smyrna, while Western forces looked on.

67

Overview of Design

	Ephesus	Smyrna
Name	✓	✓
Title	✓	✓
Commendation	✓	✓
Concern	✓	✗
Exhortation	✓	✓
Promise	-	-
Appeal	"He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the Churches"	
Promise	✓	✓

68

Smyrna Churches, All Denominations

Churches / Years	1922	2011
Roman Catholic	15	1*
Armenian	1	0
Greek Orthodox	46	1**
Armenian Orthodox (Gregorian)	8	0
Three Anglican	3	2***
Protestant	4	?
Total known	77	4



N.B. * 1 of 9 prop. in use as cathedral. Served US military 1963-2018
 ** Re-opened in 2016?
 *** One pastorate holds services in 2 churches (1xTues & 1xW/E)

St. Polycarpe Roman Catholic Church
 Old Frank Quarter, Alsancak
 Izmir, Turkey
 Built 1775

69

Cathedral Basilica of St. John, Izmir (Smyrna)



The only active churches in the Seven Cities of Revelation today are in Izmir.

70

The Synagogue of Satan

- Unbelieving Jews were a major threat to the early church (Acts 13:50; 14:2, 5, 19; 17:5).
- Just as they are to the Nation of Israel today.



The threat was compounded because Christians initially enjoyed protection from Rome by being considered a sect within Judaism. Since Judaism enjoyed protection as a recognized religion by Rome, so long as Christianity was seen as a sect within Judaism, persecution was minimal. But the fundamental rift between Judaism and Christianity eventually brought persecution, not only by the Jews, but also from Rome.

Persecution by the Synagogue was something that Jesus had promised (Matt. 23:34; Mark 13:9; Luke 21:12; John 16:12) and Paul had experienced (Acts 9:20-23; 13:45-50; 14:2; 17:5-10; 18:6, 28; 19:9; 22:22).

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According to Roman law, religions were illegal outside their country of origin. The only exception to this law was Judaism, the practice of which was allowed throughout the Empire.

Christians were generally considered a sect of Judaism until A.D. 70, when the Jerusalem Temple was destroyed at Passover by Titus Vespasian and the Roman V *Macedonica*, XII *Fulminata*, XV *Apollinaris*) on the west and X *Fretensis* on the Mount of Olives.

This would likely have continued following A.D. 70 except that in a classic case of cognitive dissonance, Judaism made formal attempts to dissociate from Christianity after the Temple fell. The intense Jewish hatred for Christians was illustrated by Polycarp's martyrdom in A.D. 155.



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