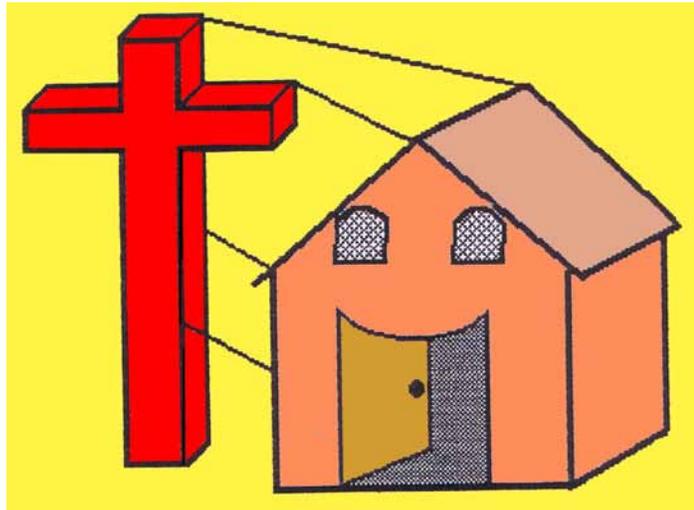


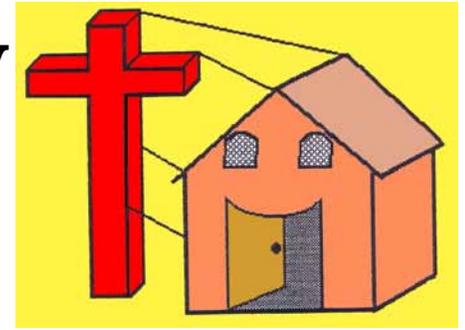
The Seven Churches of Asia

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The REVELATION
PART ONE
The Seven Churches of Asia

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The next church we will study is the Church at Philadelphia.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

ATTENDANCE:

The required minimum attendance for the course overall is 10 weeks.

The required minimum attendance for this lesson is 1 week.

You may take more than 1 week for this lesson should you choose to do so; without any penalty. In fact, some lessons probably will take more than a week to complete for some students. However, though you can take more than the minimum required attendance for each lesson, under no circumstances are you to take less than 1 week for each lesson.

TESTS:

Lesson tests must be taken not less than one week apart.

If you fail a test you may not retake that test on the same day that you failed it.

You must wait at least one day before retaking the test. Use that time to restudy the material and find all of the correct answers to every question missed on the test. The copy of the test automatically sent to you has all of the correct answers on it. Use that copy to make sure you have found all of the correct answers in the study materials.

SCRIPTURES:

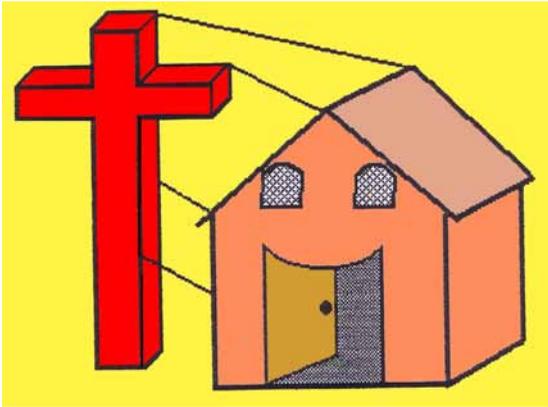
Each scripture referenced in this lesson must be looked up and read in your KJV. Reading the scriptures in the lesson, even if they are fully quoted in the lesson, will not fulfill this requirement. They must be looked up and read in your KJV.

LESSONS:

Each lesson is followed by a test. You will find a link to the course main page at the end of each lesson. When you click that link you will be returned to the course main page where you will find a list of tests. There will be instructions concerning whether a particular test is open book or closed book.

The test for this lesson is open book, so you will not need a password to access it. Click the link for it and it will open and you can then take the test. Your next lesson attendance begins the day after you pass the current lesson test.

You may now proceed to the next page to begin the study of the Church at Philadelphia.



The City: Philadelphia was located in the Cogamis River Valley, 75 miles due East of Smyrna and 45 miles North-West of Laodicea. Along the Hermus (Gediz) river and its tributaries NW of Philadelphia lay such garden spots as Sardis, Thyatira, and Smyrna. Philadelphia itself was

Philadelphia

even called the, "little Athens," of Asia Minor;

this appellation denoted

its place among the Hellenistic cities of cultural importance in that area. Due to its being subjected to frequent earthquakes, however, it always had a comparatively small population.

Note: It is interesting that of the seven churches, only two, the one here at Philadelphia and the one at Smyrna, were given glowing commendations by Christ. One also may note that out of all of the cities named, only the ones housing these two God-commended churches have an extant physical legacy; i.e., they are still there.



History: The period of Philadelphia's greatest prosperity was during the first and second centuries of the Christian era. It did, however, hold a place of somewhat lesser, but still impressive, importance all the way to the seventh century when it became a principal center in the Byzantine Empire. [That empire was originally a portion of the Holy Roman Empire, which, in this eastern segment, was Greek/oriental in culture. Centered politically in Byzantium and religiously in Constantinople, this portion finally split with Rome, the center of the Holy Roman Empire, in 1054.]

The smallness of its population can probably be traced to the fact that it had been built along a major fault line and geological disturbances were common throughout its entire history. Although destroyed by earthquakes a number of times it was always rebuilt.

From the seventh century onward it remained part of the Byzantine Empire until 1390 when it was finally captured by the Turks. At that time it held the distinction of being the very last Christian outpost in Asia Minor.

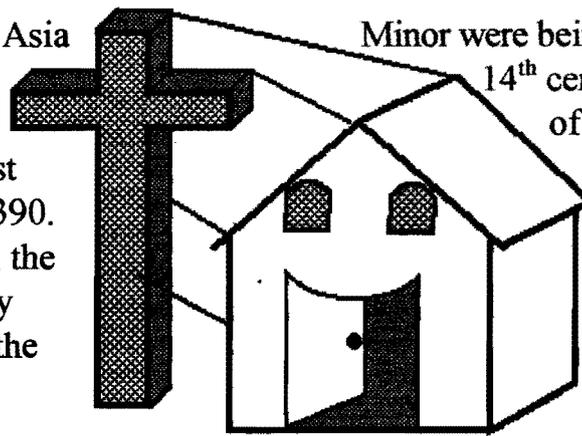
Here, as at Sardis, the church seemed to echo the history of the city. The city was chronically small and, compared to its larger neighbors, (Ephesus, Sardis, etc.) relatively feeble. The church at Philadelphia was remarked by Christ to be similar and He wrote to them, "... for thou hast a little strength..."

Religion: The chief deity of the city was Dionysius the god of wine. This is understandable since the area was known for wine-producing and Philadelphia was the center of that area.



Dionysius, also known as Bacchus, the god of wine.

Christianity: While the other cities of Asia attacks by Turks and Muslims in the Philadelphia itself stood as a bastion. In fact, it was distinguished as the last outpost when it finally fell in A.D. 1390. was outlived only by Constantinople, the of the eastern patriarchs which finally When the Ottoman Turks captured the killed Emperor Constantine XI, they Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire.



Minor were being overrun in 14th century, of Christianity. remaining Philadelphia "Holy city" fell in 1453. capitol and ended the

(Constantinople, the capitol at that time, was renamed Istanbul by the conquering Turks.)

God promised the church at Philadelphia an "open door," that no one could shut. As in the other cities that housed the churches of the Revelation, the city followed suit with the church. Today the Turkish town of Alasehir, ("City of God") population 25,000, occupies the site of ancient Philadelphia. Although most Christians were displaced in a general exchange with surrounding countries after the Greek/Turkish war, (1921-22, see the section on the church at Smyrna) Alasehir, unlike the majority of towns in modern day Turkey, has a respectable sized Christian population even today.

Culture:

These traditional felt cloaks with fancy embroidery have been worn since 1,000 B.C. and must have been a common sight in the areas of the seven churches during NT times. These cloaks serve a dual purpose as both cloak and tent. They were still worn, as late as the first part of the twentieth century, from Alasehir (Philadelphia) to the center and Northern portions of modern day Turkey by the less westernized country folk.



FELT CLOAKS THAT KEEP THE CARRIER DRY AND WARM

Enormous cloaks of embroidered felt like those that we see here-- the one being worn, the other used as a tent-- have been used in Anatolia, says tradition, for something like 3,000 years. The owners of these are carriers on the road from Angora to Eski Shehr, a road that follows closely the old military highway of the long-dead Byzantine Empire.

(pre-WWII. Photograph)

THE LETTER TO PHILADELPHIA

(Rev 3:7-13)

3:7 COMMISSION: The Pastor and the church at Philadelphia.

Who from and who to?

From Jesus Christ to the Pastor and the church at Philadelphia.

3:7 CHARACTER:

A description of Christ, applicable to the Philadelphian church as:

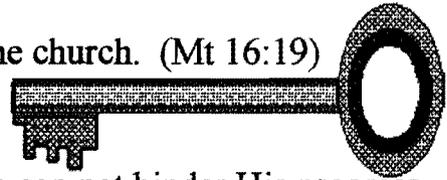
A. Holy. (Acts 3:14; Is 43:3,11)

B. True. (Jn 14:6; I Jn 5:20)

C. Key of David. (Is 22:22; Lk 1:31-32)

1. The key to the door of Heaven was given to the church. (Mt 16:19)

The church was commissioned to preach salvation through Jesus Christ. (Mt 28:18-20)



2. To open or close. Christ is in control and man can not hinder His progress.

3:8-10 COMMENDATION:

:8a A. For their works.

:8b 1. Approval and a guarantee of success.

:8c 2. The reason, faithfulness in the face of adversity.

:9 B. His love and approval will be known to their persecutors.

:10 C. He promised to spare them from suffering.

3:11 CORRECTION:

There is no correction! Merely an exhortation to keep up the good work.

:11a A. I will come without warning. (“... quickly...”)

I Thess 5:2-6 “... as a thief in the night.”

:11b B. “... hold that fast...”

Don't lose your grip on your faithfulness and lose your reward. (“... crown.”)

3:12 CHALLENGE: To the overcomer.

A. He shall be a pillar in God's temple, forever.

(“... he shall go no more out..”)

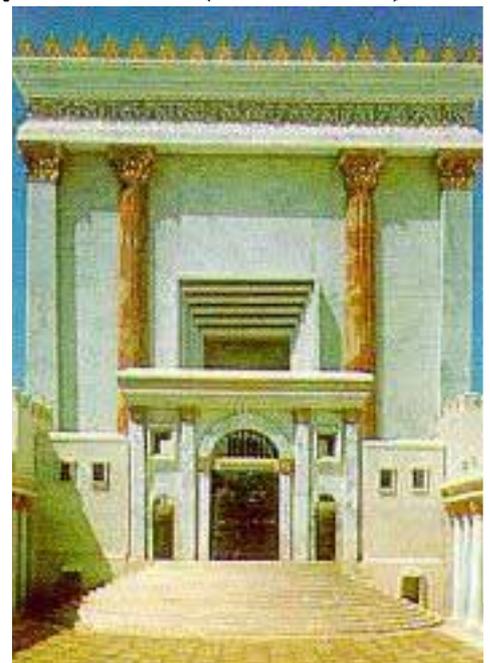
A pillar denotes:

1. Authority or leadership (Gal 2:9)

2. A support. (I Ki 7:21) The two main pillars of Solomon's temple were named:

a. Jachin. (established)

b. Boaz. (strength)



3. The power of God to confuse His people's enemies and, at the same time, light the way for them.

("Pillar of a cloud," and "pillar of fire." Ex 13:21-22; 14:20)

4. A witness of God's call and blessing. (Gen 35:9-15)

5. God's presence. (Deut 31:15; Ex 33:9-10)

6. Communion with God. (Ps 99:7)

7. Strength and impregnability in preaching God's Word. (Jer 1:17-19)

8. Truth. (I Tim 3:15)

9. A designator of God's people. (Ex 24:4)

10. Stability and balance. (Song 5:15a)

11. A sign of God working deliverance; i.e., salvation. (Joel 2:28-32)

B. He will write the name of God on them.

This denotes eternal association with God.

(The 144,000 virgin Jewish missionaries of the Tribulation will also have the name of God written in their foreheads to distinguish them from those with the mark of the Beast. Rev 14:1)

C. Overcomers will have the name of the New Jerusalem written on them.

D. They will have the new name of Christ written on them. This name denotes ownership by Christ and is unfakeable by the devil since neither he, nor anyone else, knows what it is. It will only be made manifest at the moment that Christ comes back in judgment and war. (Rev 19:11-12)

3:13 CALL: To anyone that will listen.

NOTE: Overcomer. (I Jn 5:4-5)