

## The Letter to the Seven Churches of Asia: Philadelphia

- I. Introduction:
  - a. **(Rev 3:7-13)** “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”
  - b. The City of Philadelphia
    - i. Founded in 189
      - 1. “It derived its name from Attalus II, 159–138 B.C., whose truth and loyalty to his brother Eumenes won him the epithet Philadelphus.” (The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia, W. M. Ramsay, pg. 220)
      - 2. After a treaty the city was in the heart of the Pergamenian realm – not a military outpost
    - ii. Founded for the purpose of spreading Graeco-Asiatic
      - 1. “The intention of its founder was to make it a center of the Graeco-Asiatic civilization and a means of spreading the Greek language and manners in the eastern parts of Lydia and in Phrygia. It was a missionary city from the beginning, founded to promote a certain unity of spirit, customs, and loyalty within the realm, the apostle of Hellenism in an Oriental land.” (The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia, W. M. Ramsay, pg. 220)
- II. Christ Description
  - a. **(Rev 3:7)** “These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth”
  - b. Three attributes are said about Jesus Christ
    - i. Holy
      - 1. ἅγιος = “Sacred (physically, pure, morally blameless or religious, ceremonially, consecrated)” (Strongs’s)

2. Thayer's gives four definitions for 'αγιος: - four ways 'αγιος is used in the Scriptures
    - a. Properly reverend, worthy of veneration
    - b. Set apart for God, to be, as it were, exclusively his
    - c. Of sacrifices and offerings; prepared for God with solemn rite, pure, clean
    - d. In a moral sense, pure, sinless, upright
  3. Jesus fits all four of these definitions. He is holy in every meaning of the word.
- ii. True
1. `αληθινος - "That which has not only the name and semblance, but the real nature corresponding to the name real and true, genuine."
  2. Jesus is the real deal – Not only is He the real deal, but He is the real deal that 'Holds the Key of David'
- iii. Holds the Key of David
1. Quotation from Isaiah where Shebna was replaced by Eliakim as the chief-steward
    - a. **(Isa 22:21-23)** "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. 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. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house."
      - i. This was a type of an event that would happen in the future. The antitype was that the Judaism would be replaced by Christ.
      - ii. The key of the house of David was laid on the shoulders of Christ.
        1. The burden of Government
  2. Jesus is ruling His kingdom now and has the authority
    - a. **(Isa 9:6-7)** "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, **upon the throne of David**, and **upon his kingdom**, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."
      - b. Fulfilled in Jesus Christ

- i. **(Luke 1:31-32)** “And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God **shall give** unto him **the throne of his father David**”
  - c. When did God give Jesus this throne?
    - i. **(Acts 13:33-34)** “God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that **he raised him up from the dead**, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, **I will give you the sure mercies of David.**”
      - 1. When Jesus raised from dead
    - ii. **(Acts 2:29-33)** “Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would **raise up Christ to sit on his throne**; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.”
      - iii. Christ is on David’s Throne now!
  - 3. Christ is sitting on the David’s Throne now
    - a. He rules over true Israel
    - b. He and only He has the power to Open and Close the doors

### III. The Open Door

- a. **(Rev 3:8)** “I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it”
- b. Not speaking of missionary opportunities – although this is common Biblical language
  - i. **(1 Cor 16:9)** “For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.

- ii. (2 Cor 2:12) “Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord”
      - iii. (Col 4:3-4) “Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.”
    - c. Speaking of the door to the Kingdom of God
      - i. Christ has the key of David and no one can separate you from Christ and His Kingdom
        - 1. (Rom 8:34-39) “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
          - a. There is no persecution that will shut the door
          - b. No religious leaders that can close the door
      - ii. Jesus was reminding them who was in charge, and encouraging them to endure the Jewish persecution
        - 1. Christ holds the key – He is in authority
        - 2. He is True – Real Deal, all others are imposters
        - 3. He is Holy – In every aspect of the word
- IV. Why they had this open door before them
  - a. (Rev 3:8) “...for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.”
  - b. “Little strength” – not speaking of spiritual strength, because they did keep His word and has not denied His name.
    - i. Speaking of their physical strength
    - ii. They were dependent on God rather than themselves
      - 1. (Matt 5:3) “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”
      - 2. Example of Paul:
        - a. (2 Cor 12:8-10) “For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I

take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.”

3. **(Prov 29:23)** “A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.”

c. Kept His word

i. **(John 14:23)** “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”

ii. Must keep the words of Christ

1. **(John 12:48)** “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”

d. Did not deny His name

i. They remembered that there is no other name in which salvation is found

1. **(Acts 4:12)** “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

V. Promises and Encouragements

a. **(Rev 3:9)** “Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.”

b. Those that say they are Jews and are not, but do lie

i. A true Jew is not one by physical seed but spiritual

1. **(Rom 2:28-29)** “For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.”

c. “Worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee”

i. **(Isa 60:14)** “The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.”

ii. On Judgment day all will bow

1. **(Phil 2:10-11)** “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

d. **(Rev 3:10)** “Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.”

i. “Word of my patience” = His word of endurance

ii. “I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation”

1. Doesn't mean that they will not go through trials, tribulations, and persecutions.
    - a. How else would they keep Christ's word of Endurance?
  2. Christ is promising preservation through the period of trial
  3. It basically is going back to the same idea of the open door that no man can shut – No one can separate you from Christ
  - iii. Christ can keep us safe and secure even in the midst of persecution
    1. **(Matt 10:28)** "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
- VI. Divine warnings and rewards
- a. **(Rev 3:11-12)** "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."
  - b. "I come quickly"
    - i. "Suddenly" – Must watch
  - c. "Hold fast that no man take thy crown"
    - i. Must stay the course, do not give up for any reason
    - ii. Let no one trick you out of your crown
  - d. If you overcome
    - i. Pillar in the temple of my God – Permanent residence in the temple (eternal home in heaven)
    - ii. Shall go out no more – We will be safely shut inside
      1. **(Matt 25:10)** "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut."
    - iii. The Name of God will be written – eternal possession
  - e. If you do not overcome
    - i. **(Luke 13:25)** "When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are."
- VII. **(Rev 3:13)** "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."