



The Church at Philadelphia

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; ⁸ 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. 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. 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. ¹¹ Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. ¹² 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. ¹³ He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. (Rev 3:7-13)

The name, Philadelphia, has a beautifully warm meaning to any church – its meaning: brotherly, or fraternal, love from the Greek, *Philadelphos*. When reading of these churches, we must not forget that these truly are geographic and historical churches to whom our Lord addresses His messages. But, at the same time, no part of Scripture is provincially intended for the benefit of a single assembly. The messages to the churches are abundantly relevant to our churches of today, and of all time. We may

view glimpses of ourselves in every word of Scripture, and in every characteristic of these Seven Churches of Revelations – the Word of God being a mirror to our souls. All of prophecy has yet to be fulfilled; else we would be celebrating beyond the Gates of Splendor with the host of saints from bygone days.

The *angel of the Church* was likely Demetrius whom John ordained. There is evidence of the existence of this Church throughout the councils of the church up to the eighth century; and perhaps the Orthodox remnants who remain there today are descendants and testimony thereof. Various bishops are mentioned in history of this church.

These things saith he that is holy. The same Holy One of Israel (Old Testament Church) is the Holy One of the New Testament Church – the same Church to which Moses, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob belonged (see Acts 7:37-38) and which looked ahead in time to the Coming of the Redeemer in faith. *He that is true* We have only one source of absolute and immutable Truth, and that is the Word of God Incarnate, and presented by Holy Writ. Though He is the only Begotten Son of God, in his legal genealogical descent (so considered), He is also the Son of David. He, not Peter, is the Rock upon which His Church is founded.

He that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth. In Old Testament times, when a man was made a priest, he was given the keys to the Temple library of both books and writing materials. He those was given the keys to know the mysteries of the Bible and to teach them to others. Christ not only possesses the Keys to the Kingdom, but actually is the KEY to the Kingdom. *I am the way, the truth, and the life: NO MAN COMETH UNTO THE FATHER, BUT BY ME.* (John 14:6) – not by Peter, not by John, not by Paul, but by the Lord Jesus Christ! Only Christ can admit, or forbid, a soul from coming into the Kingdom of Heaven.

As with the singular exception of Smyrna, the Lord finds no grave fault with the Church at Philadelphia as compared with the others. Even a little faith gives great power, but a strong and viable faith even more! This Church has a little *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.* The Lord opens a door before those who may have only a little strength, yet remain faithful to Him. But He closes the door to others who are not given to possess the faith and understanding of a Child of God. It is not the role of man to open or close this Door – only Christ can, for He is the DOOR, too. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the DOOR of the sheep.* (John 10:7) Christ is our open DOOR!

To their sure commendation, the Church of Philadelphia had not denied the faith either in word or deed. Have we in our Church? But we should never be satisfied with a little strength, rather strive with all our might.

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. Twice in two consecutive chapters (Rev 2:9) has our Lord made reference to the *Synagogue of Satan*. It is a religious order that has denied the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They have even blasphemed the Lord. They claim to be faithful to the faith of Abraham, but are not. They were the Jewish rulers and priests who crucified our Lord.

Our Lord delivered a stinging rebuke in the Temple to those who masqueraded as believing Jews, and were not, but blasphemed against His name: *38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. 39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. 40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. 41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. 42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. 43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. 44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. 45 And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.* (John 8:38-45) God has no chosen people who deny His beloved Son! Praise God that many of the Jewish people are today coming to the knowledge of the truth.

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. There is a tangible benefit to remaining faithful to the Lord to the end. God will preserve that people from many trying circumstances and persecutions. America has NOT been faithful and, as a result, may endure very hard chastisement in the coming days. 'Endure to the end' is the watchword of the faithful, for Christ did endure to the end without hesitation or reluctance. *Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.* (Rev 3:11) Our Lord does not lose a single soul whom the Father places in His hand. So, must we retain what strength and faith we have – even if a little – and strive to acquire more and stronger faith. There will not be an extended time of grace on the last day to make up for former lapses in faith or testimony. The Wedding Feast of the Lord will be a come as you are affair. His return will be as a thief in the night.

Here is a verse overflowing with profound meaning: *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.* The saint who remains faithful until the end, God will make a monumental pillar in His Temple – not to the glory of the saint, but to the glory of God's effulgent grace. Our feet will no longer wander into the byways of the world, but remain forever with God in His Temple. Those who are so blessed with this distinction shall bear the Seal of God IN (not on) their foreheads. (Rev 7:3). New Jerusalem is not a sordid little city of violence in Judah, but a beautiful and immaculate City that comes down from God as a Bride adorned for her Husband (the Lord Jesus Christ). This represents the fullness of the Church of God from all ages. These will receive the new Name of Christ that the Lord will engrave upon their hearts. We shall have a new Name, as well as that new Name of Christ.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. If you have no spiritual ears to hear clearly, perhaps you should enlist the Hearing Aid of the Holy Ghost to magnify the Word in your ears. Some men have memorized entire books of the Bible to no spiritual avail whatsoever. The power of meaning and understanding must be opened to

us by the power of the Holy Ghost. Then we shall truly know and believe. *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.* (John 14:26)