

## Notes on the Seven Churches of Revelation

“This and the following chapter treat of the seven churches, by which are described all those in the Christian church who have any religion, and out of whom the New Church, which is the New Jerusalem, can be formed; and this is formed of those who approach the Lord alone, and at the same time perform repentance from evil works.” (AR 69)

**Ephesus:** Primarily regard the truths of doctrine and not the goods of life.

***Image of the Lord:*** He that holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands.

- The Lord, from whom through the Word are all truths.
- From whom all those who are of His church have enlightenment.

***What’s good about them:*** They cannot bear that evil should be called goods and the reverse. They scrutinize those things which are called goods and truths in the church, which nevertheless are evils and falsities.

- They study and have patience.
- They teach the things of religion.
- They are not willing to make works meritorious. (v. 6 – Nicolaitans)

***What’s bad about them:*** They do not hold goods of life in the first place.

***Call to repentance:*** “Remember therefore whence thou hast fallen and repent, and do the first works.”

- They should invert the state of their life – put charity first.

***Punishment for not repenting:*** Remove your lampstand out of its place.

- Enlightenment will no longer be given to see truths.

***Prize for overcoming:*** “I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”

- Appropriation of the good of love and charity from the Lord.
- Interiorly in the truths of wisdom and faith.

**Smyrna**: Those who are in goods as to life, but in falsities as to doctrine alone.

***Image of the Lord***: The First and the Last, Who was dead and is alive.

- The Lord who alone is God.
- He is neglected in the church and His Human is not acknowledged to be Divine – Yet as to His Human also He alone is life and from Him alone is eternal life.

***What's good about them***: They are in goods as to life.

***What's bad about them***: They are in falsities as to doctrine.

- “Affliction and poverty” = They are in falsities and thence not in goods.
- Not Jews = Assertion that the goods of love are with them, when yet they are not.
- “Synagogue of Satan” = Falsities as to doctrine – especially regarding the Lord’s Divine Human which they do not approach.

***Call to repentance***: “Be thou faithful unto death”

- Receive and acknowledge truths until falsities are removed.

***Punishment for not repenting***: “Affliction ten days”

- They will remain in temptation as long as they are willing to remain in falsities.

***Prize for overcoming***: “Crown of life”; “Not be hurt of the second death.”

- Eternal life.
- Afterwards they will not succumb to the evils and falsities from hell.

**Pergamos:** Those who place the all of the church in good works and not anything in the truths of doctrine.

***Image of the Lord:*** Sharp two-edged sword.

- The Lord as to truths of doctrine from the Word by which evils and falsities are dispersed.

***What's good about them:*** “Hold fast My name and have not denied My faith.”

- They have religion and worship according to it.
- They acknowledge the Word to be the Divine truth – even when all truth was extinguished by falsities in the church.

***What's bad about them:*** Don't place anything in the truths of doctrine.

- They dwell where Satan's throne is = Their life in thick-darkness – not falsities.
- “Them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat idol-sacrifices, and to commit whoredom” = Some do hypocritical works, by which the worship of God in the church is defiled and adulterated.
- “Them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which I hate” = Some make works meritorious.

***Call to repentance:*** Repent – They should guard themselves against hypocritical and meritorious works.

***Punishment for not repenting:*** “I will fight with them with the sword of my mouth.”

- The Lord will contend with them from the Word and convince them that their works are evil.

***Prize for overcoming:*** “I will give to eat of the hidden manna”; “White stone which no one knows but he that receives it”

- Wisdom and at the same time the appropriation of the good of celestial love in works, and thus conjunction of the Lord with those who work.
- Truths favoring and united to good.
- They will have good of a quality such as they had not before.

**Thyatira:** Those who are in faith from charity and thence in good works; and also those who are in faith separate from charity and thence in evil works.

***Image of the Lord:*** The Son of God who has His eyes like unto a flame of fire and His feet like fine brass.

- The Lord as to the Divine wisdom of His Divine love.
- The Divine good natural.

***What's good about them:*** Some are in faith from charity and thence in good works.

- “Charity and ministry” = Spiritual affection which is called charity, and its operation.
- “Faith and endurance” = Truth and the study to procure and teach it.
- “The last to be more than the first” = Increase from the spiritual affection of truth.

***What's bad about them:*** “You permit the woman Jezebel...”

- Jezebel = some among them separate faith from charity and make faith alone saving.
- Call her a prophetess = make it the very doctrine of the church and found all theology upon it.
- To teach and seduce My servants to commit whoredom = From which the truths of the church are falsified.
- To eat idol-sacrifices = Defilement of worship thence and profanations.

***Call to repentance:*** “That which ye have, hold fast till I come”

- They should retain the few things which they know from charity and faith, thence from the Word, and live according to them, until the New Heaven and the New Church are formed, which are the Lord's coming.
- Live in some sort of charity.

***Punishment for not repenting:*** “Cast into a bed”; “I will kill her sons with death.”

- They will be left in their doctrine with falsifications and will be grievously infested by falsities.
- All the truths of the Word with them will be turned into falsities.

***Prize for overcoming:*** “Power over the nations; He shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken in pieces; I will give him the morning star”

- They will overcome evils in themselves which are from hell by truths from the literal sense of the Word, and at the same time rational things from natural light.
- Things of one's own intelligence will be of no account.
- Then they will have intelligence and wisdom.

**Sardis:** Those who are in dead worship or in worship which is without the goods of charity and without the truths of faith.

***Image of the Lord:*** “He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars.”

- The Lord from whom are all truths and all the knowledges of good and truth.
- Worship lives from truths and a life according to them.

***What’s good about them:*** “You have a few names who have not defiled their garments.”

- There are some who have life in their worship; who are in truths and have not defiled worship by evils of life and falsities thence derived.
- “Will walk with me in white” = They will live with the Lord in His spiritual kingdom.

***What’s bad about them:*** “I have not found thy works full before God.”

- They seem to be spiritually alive but are dead.
- The interiors of their worship are not conjoined with the Lord.

***Call to repentance:*** “Be watchful and strengthen the remaining things which are about to die”

- Be in truths and a life according to them so that the things pertaining to worship may receive life and not be extinguished.
- “Remember how thou hast received and heard” = It should come into the thought that all worship in its beginning is natural, and afterwards by truths out of the Word, and by a life according to them, becomes spiritual.

***Punishment for not repenting:*** “I will come upon you as a thief and you will not know in what hour.”

- The things which are of worship will be taken away from them - they will not know when or how.

***Prize for overcoming:*** “

- “Clothed in white garments” = He who is reformed will become spiritual by means of truths.
- “Will not blot out his name out of the book of life” = He will be saved.
- “Will confess His name before the Father and before His angels” = They will be received who are in Divine good and in Divine truths from the Lord, thus who have the life of heaven in themselves.

**Philadelphia:** Those who are in truths from good from the Lord.

***Image of the Lord:*** “He that is holy, He that is true. He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens.”

- The Lord as to Divine truth.
- Who alone is omnipotent to save; to lead out of hell and into heaven.

***What’s good about them:***

- “Little power” = They know that they can do nothing from themselves.
- “Have kept My Word” = They live according to the Lord’s Commandments.
- “Have not denied My name” = Are in the worship of the Lord.

***What’s bad about them:***

- “Synagogue of Satan” = In falsities as to doctrine.
- “Say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie” = Say the church is with them when yet it is not.
- “Adore at thy feet; know that I have loved you” = Those who are in falsities as to doctrine, provided they are not in falsities from evil, will receive and acknowledge the truths of the New Church. They will see that they who are in truths from good are beloved and received into heaven by the Lord.
- “Kept the word of My endurance” = Have fought against evils and then have rejected falsities.
- “Keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world” = They will be protected and preserved in the day of the Last Judgment.

***Call to repentance:***

- “Hold fast that thou hast” = In the meantime they should remain in their truths and in their good.

***Punishment for not repenting:***

- “That no one take they crown” = Lest wisdom should perish, from which comes eternal happiness.

***Prize for overcoming:*** Those who persist in truths from good from the Lord.

- “Will I make a pillar in the temple of my God” = Truths from good from the Lord with those in whom they abide, sustain the Lord’s church in heaven.
- “Go no more out” = They will remain there to eternity.
- “Write upon him the name of My God” = Divine truth will be written in their hearts.
- “The name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem” = The doctrine of the New Church will be written in their hearts.
- “Which comes down out of heaven from My God.” = Which will be from the Divine truth of the Lord, such as it is in heaven.
- “My new name” = Worship of the Lord alone, with new things which were not in the former church.

**Laodiceans:** Those who alternately believe from themselves, and from the Word, and thus profane things holy.

***Image of the Lord:*** “The Amen, the Faithful and true witness, the beginning of the work of God.”

- The Lord as to the Word which is the Divine truth from Him.

***What’s good about them:*** They sometimes belief from the Word.

***What’s bad about them:***

- “Neither hot nor cold” = Sometimes deny that the Word is Divine and holy, and at other times acknowledge it.
- “Say I am rich and increased in goods” = They think they possess in all abundance the knowledges of truth and good which are of the church and heaven.
- “Have need of nothing” = No need of more knowledge and wisdom, and from any other source.
- “Don’t know that you are wretched” = Don’t know that all they know and think concerning the truths and goods of the church, do not at all cohere, and are uncemented walls.
- “Miserable and poor” = Without truths and goods.
- “Blind and naked” = Without understanding of truth and the will of good.

***Call to repentance:***

- “Buy of Me gold tried in the fire” = Acquire the good of love from the Lord through the Word, that you may become wise.
- “And white garments that you may be clothed” = Acquire genuine truths of wisdom – truths from the good of love from the Lord.
- “That the shame of thy nakedness may not appear” = Lest the good of celestial love should be profaned and adulterated.
- “Anoint your eyes with eye-salve that you may see” = That their understanding may be healed lest the genuine truths of wisdom should be profaned and falsified.

***Punishment for not repenting:***

***Prize for overcoming:***

- “Sit with Me in My throne” = They will have conjunction with the Lord in heaven.
- “As I overcame and sit with the Father in His throne” = As He and the Father are one, and are heaven.