

THE SEVEN ANGELS AND THE CHURCHES OF REVELATION FOR TODAY

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These notes, composed from 2013 on, are based on taped lectures given between 1977 and 1997 by Dr. Ernest L. Martin, Ph.D., formerly the Head of Theology for the Worldwide Church of God; he resigned in January 1974 because of his unresolved doctrinal issues with the administration. Sadly Dr. Martin died in January 2002, a great loss to the world and to those who seek Biblical truth.

Revelation 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him (God the Father) which is, (Present) and which was, (Past) and which is to come (Future); and from the seven Spirits (Spirit beings, the Angels in charge of the seven churches) which are before his throne; 5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. 7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him (the Jews): and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. 8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, (Present) and which was (Past), and which is to come (Future), the Almighty. 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, (The DAY OF THE LORD – THE END TIME) and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, 11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

These seven churches were NOT eras that began and ended at times through history. They existed concurrently at the time [Past] of John's writing this down under inspiration, and they all also exist concurrently NOW [Present] and they will all exist at the time of Christ's coming. [Future]

Revelation 1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks (the seven churches); 13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks (the seven churches) one like unto the Son of man (Jesus Christ, Yahweh), clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. 14 His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; 15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. 16 And he had in his

right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword (the Bible, the Word of God) : and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. 17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: 18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

The Bible interprets the Bible. There is no mystery or enigma here as to what the words “golden candlesticks”, twoedged sword”, or the “seven stars” mean.

Revelation 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

“Golden candlesticks” are the seven churches.

“Twoedged sword” is the Bible the Word of God.

“The Seven Stars” are the Angels who were and are given the responsibility to be in charge of the seven churches. Some of them have not been doing the job they were given properly! So Christ says to them, “I have somewhat against you.”

Notice, new information for most people is that each of these messages to the seven churches is first addressed to the Angel in charge of looking after them, not just to the church members!

In view of the fact that the Seven Churches have existed through the last at least 2000 years, it is important to emphasise that they were not eras, but existed, exist today, and will exist when Christ returns.

Therefore is it significant to note the messages to each Angel and to each church in relation to the PAST, PRESENT and FUTURE implications of the messages.

1. EPHESUS

Revelation 2:2 **Unto the angel** of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand , who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

Present: 2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

Past: 3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

Critique of the Angel and the church: 4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. 5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

Positive value: Present continuous: 6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate.

Reward: 7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. (i.e. Eternal Life!)

2. SMYRNA

Revelation 2:8 And **unto the angel** of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;

Present: 9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

Future: 10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death,

Reward: 10 and I will give thee a crown of life. 11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death. (Eternal life)

3. PERGAMOS

Revelation 2:12 And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;

Present: 13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name,

Past: 13 and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

Critique of the Angel and the church: 14 But I have a few things against thee,

Past: because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

Present: 15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate. 16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

Reward: 17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

4. THYATIRA

Revelation 2:18 And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;

Present: 19 I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.

Past: 20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. 21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. 22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their

deeds. 23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

Present and Future: 24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. 25 But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.

Reward: 26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: 27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. 28 And I will give him the morning star (?). 29 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

5. Sardis

Revelation 3:1 And **unto the angel** of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars;

Present: I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. 2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die

Past: 3:2b for I have not found thy works perfect before God

Present and Future: 3:3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. **Warning:** If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

Reward: 3:4 Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. 5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

Revelation 3:6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

6. Philadelphia

Revelation 3:7 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;

Present, Past & Future: Revelation 3:8 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.

Future: Revelation 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. 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.

Reward: Revelation 3:12 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.

7. Laodicea

Revelation 3:14 And **unto the angel** of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

Present: 3:15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot... 17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

Future: 3:16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. 19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. 20 Behold, I stand at the door,

and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

Reward: Revelation 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Realising that the seven churches have all been in existence throughout the 'ages', and that the messages are directed to the angels that Christ has put in charge of taking care of them puts a different emphasis and light on the scriptures concerning them.