

7 CHURCHES IN REVELATION

Ephesus
 Smyrna
 Pergamum
 Thyatira
 Sardis ✓
 Philadelphia
 Laodicea

Let's Review...

	Ephesus 2:1-7	Smyrna 2:8-11	Pergamum 2:12-17	Thyatira 2:18-29
Commendation (I know your...)	Good works, labor, patience	Works, tribulation, poverty	Hold firmly to My name, did not deny My faith	Good works. Love, service, faith, patience.
Condemnation	You have left your first love	No condemnation	Hold the teaching of Balaam and Nicolaitans	You allow Jezebel to teach idolatry and compromise.
Counsel	Remember from where you are fallen and repent	Fear not. Be faithful.	Repent or I will wage war	Hold fast to what you have until I come.
Challenge	Will give to eat of the tree of life	Will not be hurt by the second death	Will give some hidden manna and a white stone	Will give millennial leadership and the Morning Star.



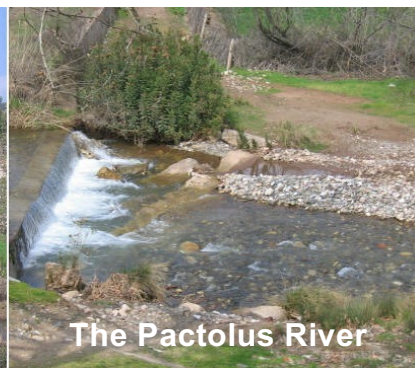
SARDIS (SART)

Sardis (Sart)

- Located approximately thirty miles southeast of Thyatira and fifty miles east of Smyrna.
- Capital of the Lydian kingdom – 7th century B.C.
- Croesus (KREE-sus- richest man in the world) was the last king of Lydia (560–546 B.C.)
- First to mint gold and silver coins- gold from Pactolus River that flowed through the marketplace.
- Defeated by Cyrus of Persia (546 B.C.) (14-day siege) and Antiochus the Great (214 B.C.) of Syria. Secret “stairway” to acropolis (“thief in the night”) (Capturing Sardis = impossible)



The Lydian Stater- Lydia is represented by a lion, and Greece by a bull.



The Pactolus River

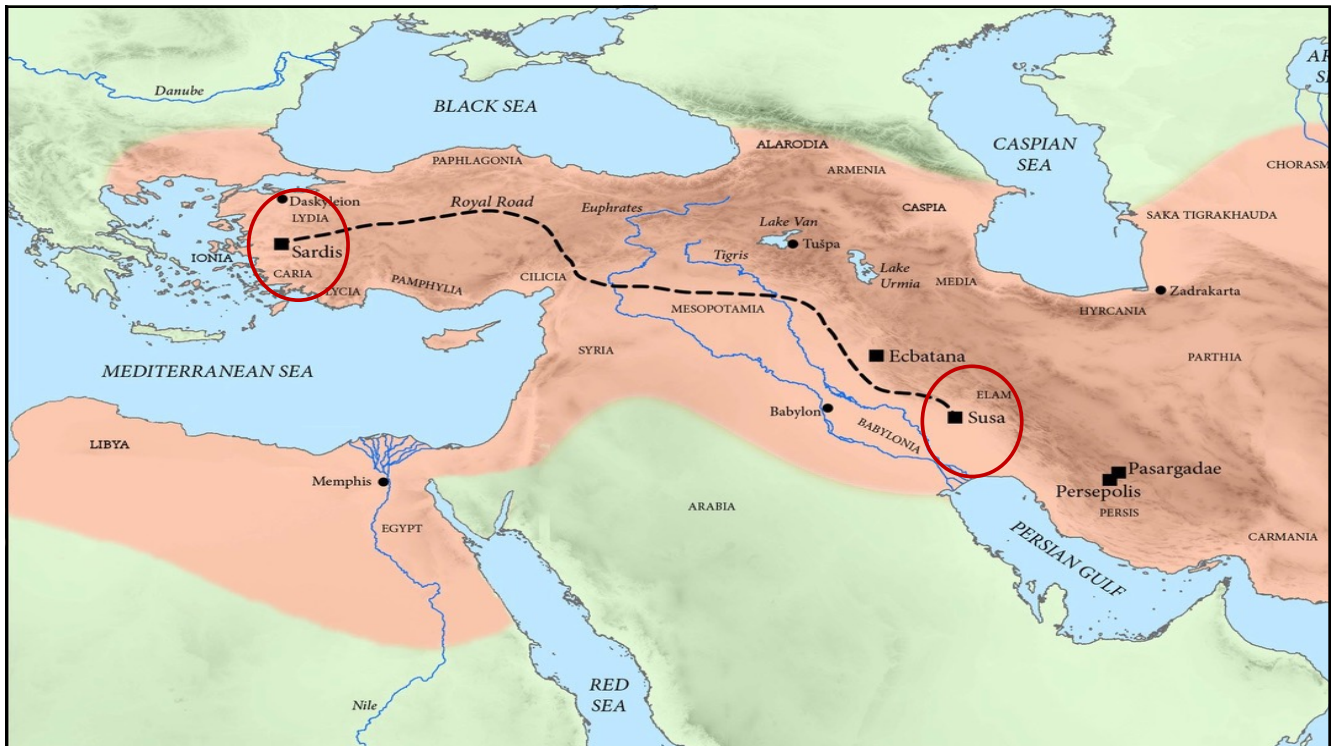
The first coin officially issued by a government in world history and was the model for virtually all subsequent coinage.

Sardis (Sart)

- Conquered by Rome in 186 B.C.
- Just as Ephesus, Sardis built a temple dedicated to Artemis/Diana.
- A wealthy city. Damaged by the Lydia earthquake of 17 A.D. that destroyed at least 15 cities in Asia Minor. The emperor Tiberius forgave city taxes due to Rome for five years and gave the city 10M sesterces (20M dollars) so they could rebuild, but the city was never the same.
- The earthquake took Sardis by surprise. It damaged this city more than any of the other cities (Tacitus- Roman historian).

Sardis (Sart)

- Defeated by Cyrus of Persia (546 B.C.) (14-day siege) and Antiochus the Great (214 B.C.) of Syria. Secret "stairway" to acropolis ("thief in the night.") (Capturing Sardis = impossible)
- Terminus of the "Royal Road" from Susa (capital of Persia/Iran) to Sardis, Lydia.
- 1600-mile road for communication and trade (ancient pony express...Herodotus: "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.")
- Why Sardis was so successful (gold and trade)



Verse 1- *"To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, and yet you are dead."*

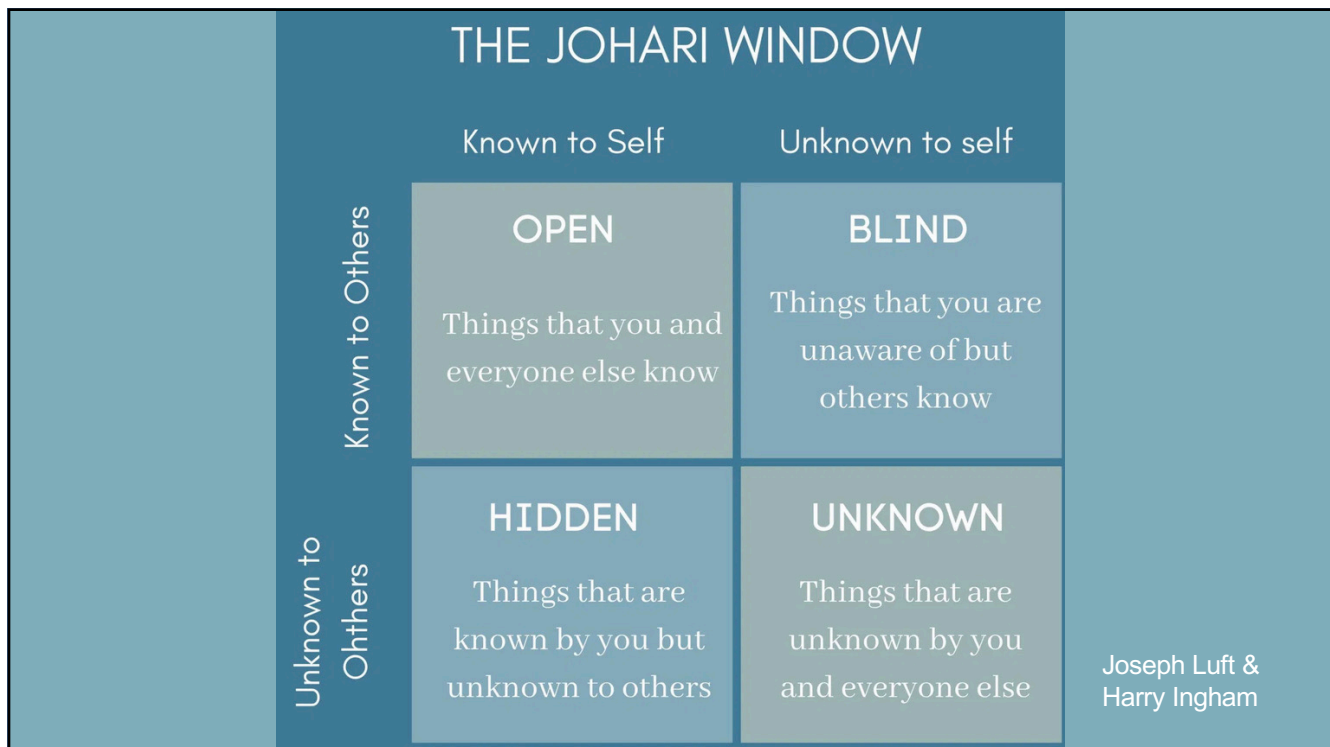
- *angel*- pastor of the church.
- *seven spirits*- the sevenfold ministry of the Holy Spirit (Revelation 1:4, Isaiah 11:2-3).
- *seven stars*- the seven churches of Revelation (1:20).

Verse 1- *“To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: ‘I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, and yet you are dead.’*

- *you are alive, and yet you are dead-* one of two churches with no commendation (also Laodicea). The opposite of Smyrna church- the alive church who was being put to death.
- Their financial position gave them the appearance of being healthy and thriving, but they were spiritually dead.

Verse 1- *“To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: ‘I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, and yet you are dead.’*

- Instead of influencing their city and culture, they were influenced by the culture. There was no opposition from the Jews or the pagans. Synagogue had Roman symbols and donors' names were in Greek, not Hebrew.
- They failed to contribute to the advance of the gospel.



Verse 2- *Be constantly alert, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God.*

- *Be constantly alert-* (“become a watcher”) as with the popular account of the taking of the acropolis. First of five imperatives (commands)
- *strengthen the things that remain-* there is still a little spiritual life in the church. (Second imperative)
- *deeds completed-* did not measure up to God’s standard.

Verse 3- So remember what you have received and heard; and keep *it*, and repent. Then if you are not alert, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.

Remember what you have received and heard- (Third imperative) Just as Ephesus: repentance takes you back to the point of departure.

keep it- (Fourth imperative) Start obeying again what they know to be true.

repent- (Fifth imperative) Turn around and do what is right!

Verse 3- So remember what you have received and heard; and keep *it*, and repent. Then if you are not alert, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.

like a thief- (*kleptes*) Thieves prefer darkness.

1. **Jesus** (Matthew 24:43)- “But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the **thief was coming**, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into.”

2. **Luke** (Luke 12:39) -“But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what hour the **thief was coming**, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into.

Verse 3- So remember what you have received and heard; and keep *it*, and repent. Then if you are not alert, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.

like a thief- (kleptes) Thieves prefer people who are asleep.

2. **Paul** (1 Thessalonians 5:2)- *“For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord is coming just like a **thief in the night**.”*

3. **Peter** (2 Peter 3:10)- *“But the day of the Lord will come **like a thief**, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and [a]its works will be discovered.”*

Verse 3- So remember what you have received and heard; and keep *it*, and repent. Then if you are not alert, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.

like a thief- (kleptes) Thieves prefer the element of surprise.

4. **Jesus** later in the book (Revelation 16:15)- *“Behold, I am coming **like a thief**. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and people will not see his shame.”*

The imminent return of Christ has always been part of the gospel message. We should always be looking and ready for His return.

Verse 4- *But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.*

soiled their garments- avoided the corruption that permeated the culture

walk with Me in white-

- *Marriage supper of the Lamb (19:7-9)*
- *Worn by those victorious in battle.*
- *A symbol of purity and holiness.*

Verse 5- *The one who overcomes will be clothed the same way, in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.*

worthy- not their worthiness but God's

overcomes- those who are saved

erase his name from the book of life- 3 main views

1. Those who are saved and then lost.

Verse 5- *The one who overcomes will be clothed the same way, in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.*

2. Those written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. (Revelation 13:8, 20:11-15, 20:12, 20:15, 21:27)

3. There is more than one book in heaven (Revelation 20:12- "books") This book has the name of everyone living. As unbelievers die their name is taken from the book of life.

Verse 5- *The one who overcomes will be clothed the same way, in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.*

God does not need a book to help Him remember. He is omniscient and knew from the beginning of time who would accept Him by faith.

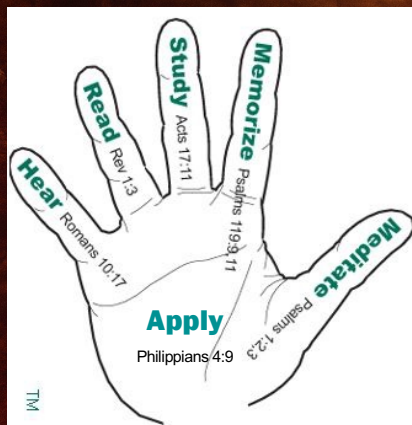
Revelation 13:8- *All who live on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written since the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slaughtered.*

Socinianism- heresy from the Reformation- doubts God's omniscience.

Today it is recast as "open theology/theism."

Verse 6- *The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'*

A church's top priority should be obedience to the Word of God.



You can obey God's Word when you know it.

Get a Grasp on Scripture!

Next week...

Continue Chapter 3 -
The Message to Philadelphia

