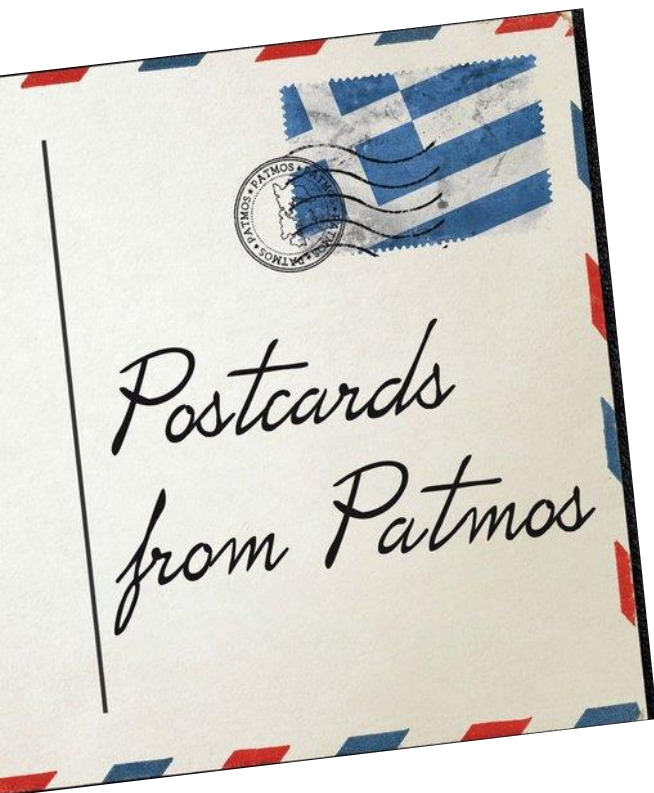


The Revelation

Chapter 2:1-7

Christ Church
Summer 2026

- In Revelation 2-3 we have seven short epistles; or think of them as “post cards”





Asia Minor

• Pergamum

• Thyatira

• Smyrna

• Sardis

• Philadelphia

• Ephesus

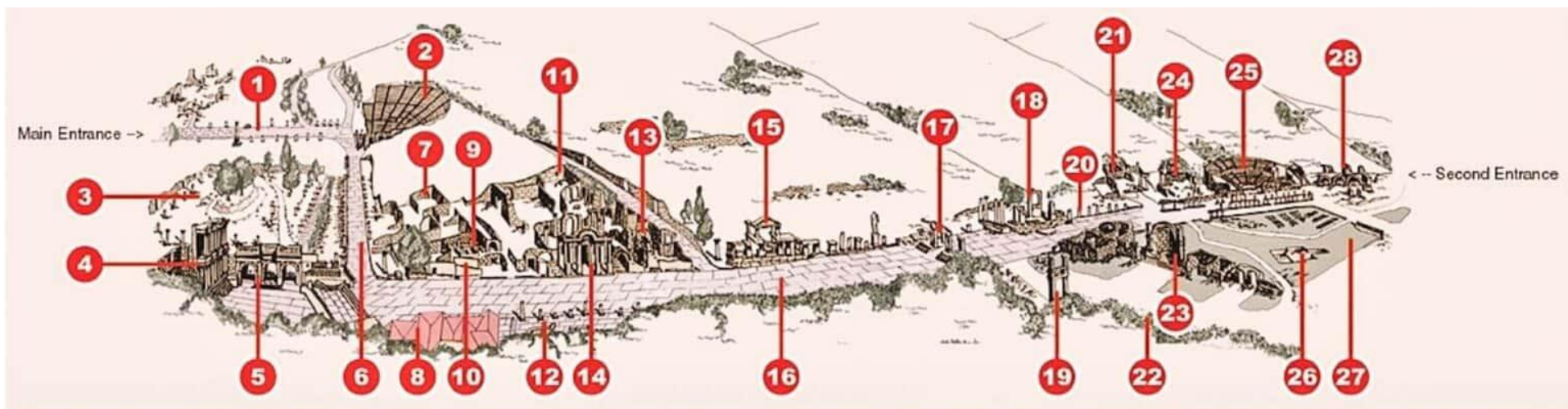
Laodicea •

•
Island of
Patmos

- It was the nearest city to the island of Patmos; about 60 miles
- It was the capital of the province
- It was called “the metropolis of Asia”
- It boasted a large business center, located on the trade route from Rome to the east

Ephesus was...

- A political center - ∴ ***corrupt***
- A business center - ∴ ***rich***
- A religious site - ∴ vile, ***superstitious***,
occultic,



1. Harbor Street.
2. Theater.
3. Commercial Agora.
4. Library of Celsus.
5. Gate of Mazeus and Mithridates.
6. Marble Street.
7. Brothel.

8. Hillside houses.
9. Public toilets.
10. Latrina.
11. Scholastica Baths.
12. The Mosaic - Paved sidewalk.
13. Entrance Scholastica Baths.
14. Hadrian's Temple.

15. Trajan's Fountain.
16. Curetes Street.
17. Hercules Gate.
18. Memmius Monument.
19. Temple of Domitian.
20. An altar.
21. The list of Curetes.

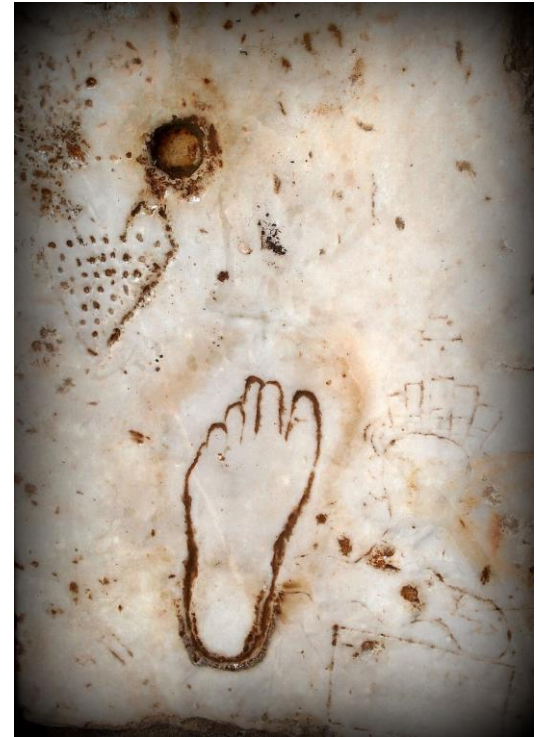
22. Freshwater pipes.
23. The Fountain of Pollio.
24. Prytaneon.
25. Odeon.
26. Isis Temple.
27. Stage Agora.
28. Baths of Varius.

- Ephesus was an important cultural center
 - Art
 - Theater
 - Gladiator sports





- The main street (Arcadian Way) offered
 - Gymnasiums
 - Public baths
 - Public libraries
 - Public brothels



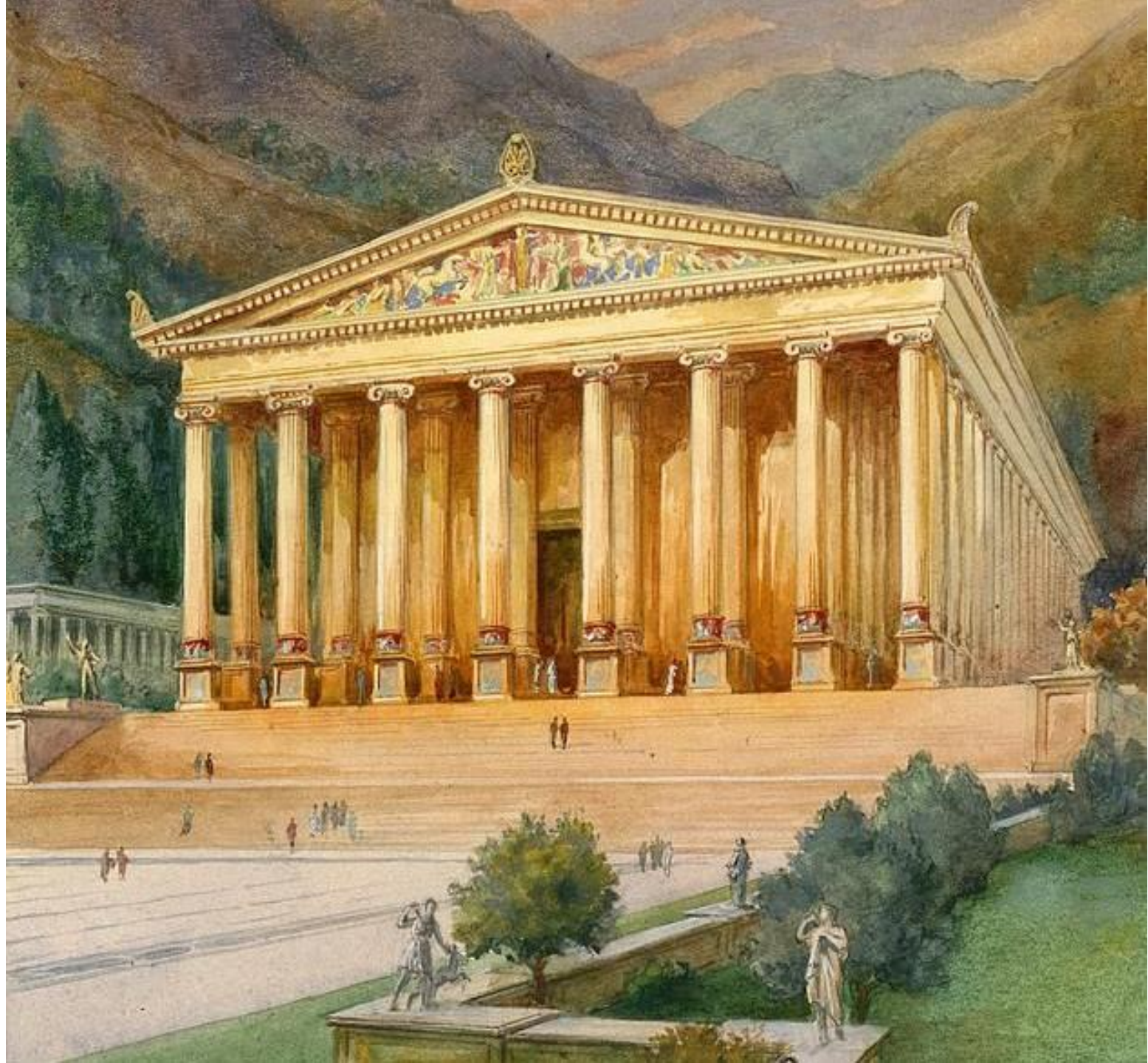




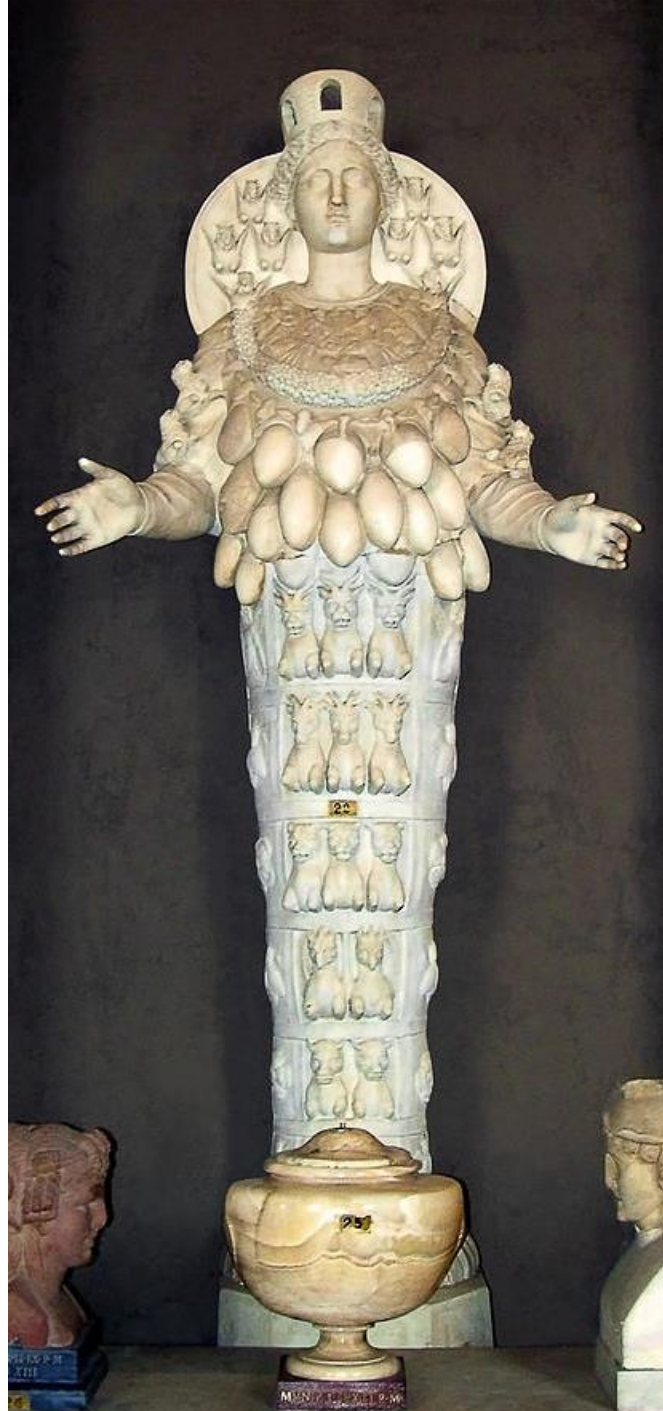
- It was a city with a population of approx. 500,000



- It also had one of The Seven Wonders of the World
 - Temple of Artemis (Diana)



- The temple was measured 425' x 220' x 60'
- The statue it featured was believed to have fallen from the sky (Acts 19:35). Some speculate that it was sculpted from a meteor





- Diana/Artemis suffered from a serious case of ‘polymastia’
- There are several theories about those lumps
 - Breasts
 - Eggs
 - Bull testicles
 - Decorative necklace

- There was a sizable and lucrative souvenir industry (Acts 19:23 ff.)
- It was a city soaked in the occult (Acts 19:17-22)

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 Ζ. Ι. Α. Μ. Ο. Ν. Ι. Α. Κ. Ο. Υ. Ε. Τ. Α. Ζ. Ο. Υ. Τ. Α. Ζ. Ο. Υ.

Shakespeare, Comedy of Errors, Acts 1,
Scene 2, Line 126-131

*“They say this town is full of cozenage,
As nimble jugglers that deceive the eye,
Dark-working sorcerers that change the
mind,
Soul-killing witches that deform the body,
Disguised cheaters, prating mountebanks,
And many such-like liberties of sin:”*

- If you want layers – each of the ‘post cards’ also follow the **Covenant** outline
 - ***Preamble*** – identifying the king; emphasizing his greatness and presence
 - ***Historical prologue*** – surveys the previous relationship
 - ***Ethical stipulations*** – establishes the vassal's obligations
 - ***Sanctions*** – a curse/blessing formulary
 - ***Succession arrangements*** – deals with the future relationship of the covenant

Here is the Covenant outline for the first letter

- 2:1 = Preamble
- 2:2-4 = Historical Prologue
- 2:5a = Ethical Stipulations
- 2:5b = Sanctions
- 2:6-7 = Succession Arrangements

- There is a second structure for these letters
- This is another outline for the “post cards”:
 - Salutation
 - Commendation
 - Accusation
 - Admonition
 - Exhortation
 - Declaration

- **Salutation – v. 1**

- Commendation

- Accusation

- Admonition

- Exhortation

- Declaration

- In 2:1 we see the Salutation
- Revelation 2:1

“To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:

These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands.

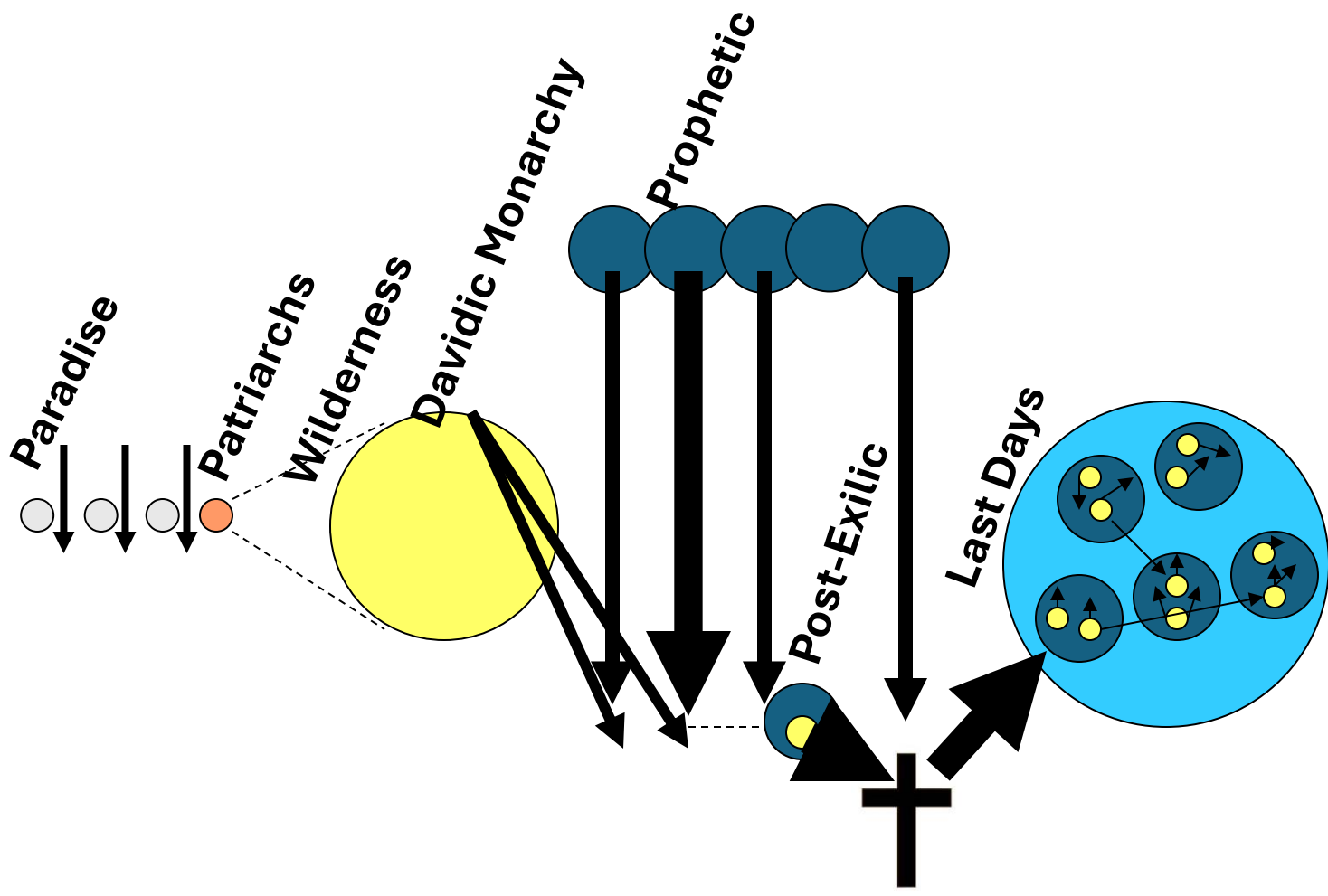
- Despite all the diabolic sin in Ephesus the Lord established His Church there – see Acts 19
- He assures the ‘**angel**’ of Ephesus that He holds the seven stars in His right hand: “He fills them with light and influence. He supports them, or else they would soon be falling stars.”
— Matthew Henry, Commentary on the Whole Bible, p. 1123

- **How does Jesus identify Himself?**
 - ‘holds the seven stars’; and ‘walks among the seven golden lampstands’
- **Do you remember that the lamps were built to resemble trees?**
 - See Exodus 25:31-40; Zechariah 4:1-6



- Get the image in place – **Creator** (7 stars) *walking among ‘trees’*
- **What does that sound like?**
- Look at the other details:
 - ‘hard work’
 - ‘tested’
 - ‘fallen’
 - ‘to be removed’
 - ‘eat from the tree of life’
 - ‘paradise of God’

- One of the great discoveries of The Revelation – the images/symbols used to describe the seven churches is the language related to the seven periods of the OT Church
- The seven Asia Minor churches ***progress chronologically*** from the Garden of Eden to the situation of the first-century



- Ephesus – Paradise
- Smyrna – Patriarchs
- Pergamum – Wilderness
- Thyatira – Davidic Monarchy
- Sardis – Prophetic
- Philadelphia – Post- Exilic
- Laodicea – Last Days (AD 30-70)

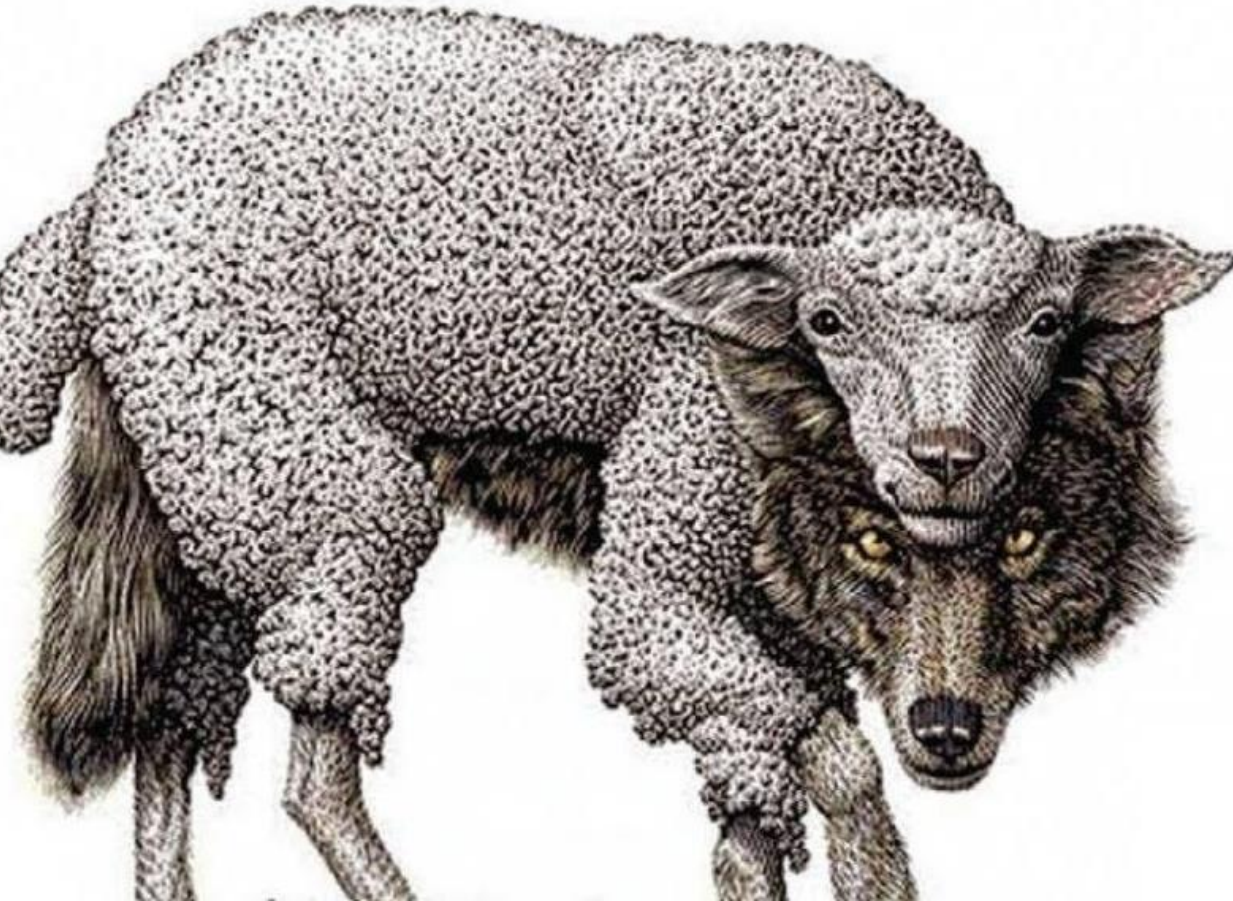
- We know from Acts that cities had multiple assemblies of Christians
 - See Acts 2:46; m 5:42; 20:20
 - Apostles went from ‘house to house’
- John addresses a single **angel/messenger** in these cities.

Apparently, there was an overseer or chief pastor in each of these cities.
Think ‘bishop’
- Ideally, the churches in a city should be organized as one church

- Salutation
- **Commendation** – vv. 2, 3
- Accusation
- Admonition
- Exhortation
- Declaration

- The church was well known for its **‘deeds’, ‘hard work’, ‘perseverance’**
- Ephesus would not compromise, regardless of the cost they maintained solid doctrine
- In Paul’s letter to the Ephesians there is not a single doctrinal issue that needed correction – not so in the other churches

- The leaders tested false “apostles”. They obeyed Paul’s warnings in Acts 20:28-31.



- Salutation
- Commendation
- **Accusation – v. 4**
- Admonition
- Exhortation
- Declaration

- v. 4 “...**forsaken you first love**”
 - They had started into mediocrity
 - They were – in a word – backsliders. This fits with Jesus’s prophecy in the Olivet Discourse – See Matthew 24:12
 - See also Paul’s warnings in II Corinthians 11: 2,3
 - The honeymoon was over for the believers in Ephesus
 - Love is the first mark of a true church

- They toiled with sweat but not with love
- **Do you know any marriages like this? Any churches?**



- Love produces
 - A **deeper worship** – worship is the response of man's whole personality to God's whole revelation
 - A **proper obedience** – obedience is more loyalty than affection. It comes from the will not the emotions – see John 15:21, 23
 - A **sacrificial care** for others – see I John 4:20, 21; 3:17, 18



- Salutation
- Commendation
- Accusation
- **Admonition** – v. 5a
- Exhortation
- Declaration

- In v. 5
 - **Remember** from “**where you have fallen.**” Compare what we were to what we are
 - **Repent** – a change of mind that results in a change of direction. We are not to wallow in the mud but get you at once
 - **Return** – do what you used to do...with new vigor

- Salutation
- Commendation
- Accusation
- Admonition
- **Exhortation – v. 5b**
- Declaration

- If repentance is not forthcoming, then Jesus will remove their lampstand – ‘lights out’. (‘stars fall from the sky’) If Jesus did it to the unbelieving Jews, He’ll do it to the loveless church.
- The church is continually on trial. No church has a permanent place in the world



- **“I will come to you...”** = judgment. As we saw in 1:7, this refers to His comings in history, not to a cataclysm in history. A warning that is repeated three more times in these seven letters – see 2:16; 3:3, 11
- **“quickly”** see 2:5, 16; 3:11; 11:14; 22:7, 12, 20

- In v. 6, concerning “Nicolaitans” – we’ll study them at 2:14



- Salutation
- Commendation
- Accusation
- Admonition
- Exhortation
- **Declaration – v. 7**

- In v. 7 concludes (as in each of the seven letters) by exhorting, urging the Ephesians to “...hear what the Spirit says to the churches...”
- The Spirit issues one command – “Overcome” – see I John 5:4

- To those that overcome; persevere they will get to eat from 'the tree of life'



- The Tree of Life is Jesus Himself
 - There is strong evidence that Jesus was crucified on a living tree – check out Acts 5:30; 10:39; Galatians 3:13; I Peter 2:24



A Review of Revelation 2:1-7 in one slide

**HARDWORKING**

You labor and are not idle.

**PERSEVERING**

You have endurance and patience.

**DISCERNING**

You cannot tolerate evil and test those who claim to be apostles.

**LOYAL**

You have persevered for My name's sake and have not grown weary.

**HATING EVIL**

You hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

THE CHURCH OF EPHESUS

REVELATION 2:1-6

**LEFT YOUR
FIRST LOVE**

"Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love."

REMEMBER.
REPENT.
RETURN.

Do the works
you did at first.

Hold fast to My love.