

The Revelation

Chapter 3:1-6

Christ Church

Fall 2026



Asia Minor

• Pergamum

• Thyatira

• Smyrna

• Sardis

• Philadelphia

• Ephesus

Laodicea •

•
Island of
Patmos



CHURCH OF SARDIS

WE ARE STRONG

THRIVING CHURCH

ACTIVE PROGRAMS
—
GROWING MEMBERSHIP
—
MAKING AN IMPACT

A CHURCH WITH A REPUTATION FOR LIFE, BUT SPIRITUALLY DEAD.

BE WATCHFUL. STRENGTHEN
WHAT REMAINS. REPENT.

YOU HAVE
A NAME THAT
YOU LIVE,
BUT YOU ARE
DEAD.

 TO HIM WHO OVERCOMES:
I WILL CLOTHE HIM IN WHITE GARMENTS,
AND HIS NAME WILL NOT BE BLOTTED OUT
OF THE BOOK OF LIFE.



REVELATION 3:1-6

Allow me to give you a
gentle warning.

Please do not fall into the
common goof of
confusing Sardis with the
famous restaurant in
New York City...



SARDI'S

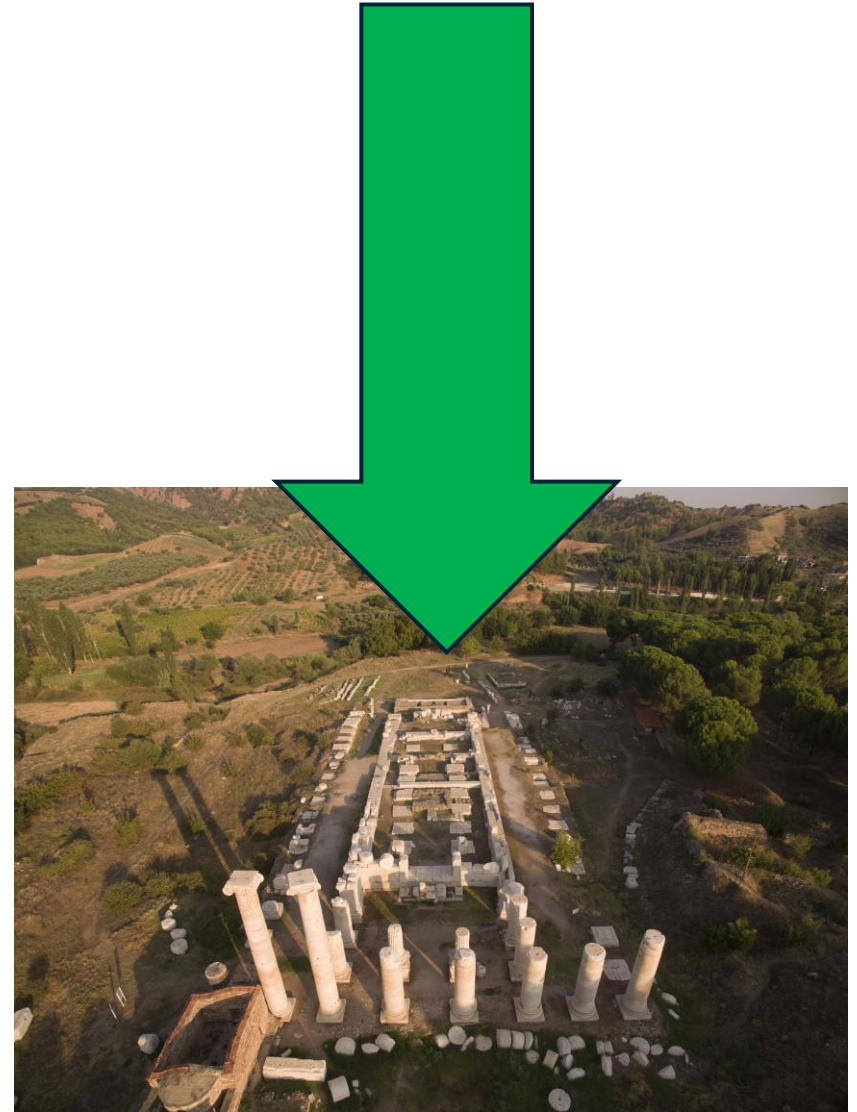
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DISCOVER

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- Sardis was located 50 miles east of Smyrna. It was situated at the foot of Mount Tmolus, in the River Hermus valley
- Nothing is known about the origin of the church in Sardis
- We do know that one of its bishops was **Melito**. He wrote the **first commentary on The Revelation** (circa AD 190)

Bishop Melito of Saris



- Eusebius Ecclesiastical History, Book 4, Chapter 26 writes: “Of **Melito**, the two books *On the Passover*, and one *On the Conduct of Life and the Prophets*, the discourse *On the Church*, and one *On the Lord’s Day*, still further one *On the Faith of Man*, and one *On his Creation*, another also *On the Obedience of Faith*, and one *On the Senses*; besides these the work *On the Soul and Body*, and that *On Baptism*, and the one *On Truth*, and *On the Creation and Generation of Christ*; his discourse also *On Prophecy*, and that *On Hospitality*; still further, *The Key*, and the books *On the Devil* and **the Apocalypse of John**, and the work *On the Corporeality of God*, and finally the book addressed to Antoninus.”

- Sardis was noted for three things;
think of them as ‘natural resources’
 - **The valley was extremely fertile - ∴ it had flocks, herds, and ∴ it had *fabrics***



- Sardis was noted for three things; think of them as ‘natural resources’
 - The valley was extremely fertile -
∴ flocks, herds ∴ *fabrics*
 - **The Hermus River had significant deposits of gold**

Hermus River





- Sardis was noted for three things; think of them as ‘natural resources’
 - The valley was extremely fertile -
∴ flocks, herds ∴ *fabrics*
 - The Hermus River had significant deposits of gold
 - **It was situated near several major trading routes**



- A. Ephesus – no strengths
- B. Smyrna – faithful
- C. Pergamum – unfaithful (w/ some)
- D. Thyatira – worst unfaithfulness
- C'. Sardis – unfaithful (w/ some)
- B'. Philadelphia – faithful
- A'. Laodicea – no strengths

- The letter to the Sardis church is the most severe. Jesus' criticism is almost nonstop
- Note that there is no mention of false teaching (i.e. Judaizers, Nicolaitans, Balaamites, Jezebelites)
- There was probably no shortage of \$, talent, or manpower
- We all know that outward appearances are notoriously deceptive

- The language of this fifth ‘epistle’ to the Asia Minor church of Sardis is from The Prophetic Period
 - **‘reputation of being alive’** – Isaiah 1:5-23; Jeremiah 7:1-7
 - **‘dead’** – Isaiah 26:19; Ezekiel 37:1-14
 - **‘Wake up’** – Isaiah 51:17; 52:1-12; 60:1-6; Jeremiah 35:15
 - **‘repent’** – Ezekiel 18:30; Jeremiah 18:1-8
 - **‘not soiled their clothes’** – Isaiah 1:18-29; Jeremiah 13:1-11; Zechariah 3:1-5

- **‘dressed in white’** – Ezekiel 9:2-11;
Daniel 7:9
- **‘book of life’** – Daniel 12:1; Malachi
3:16



- **Salutation – v. 1**

- Commendation

- Accusation

- Admonition

- Exhortation

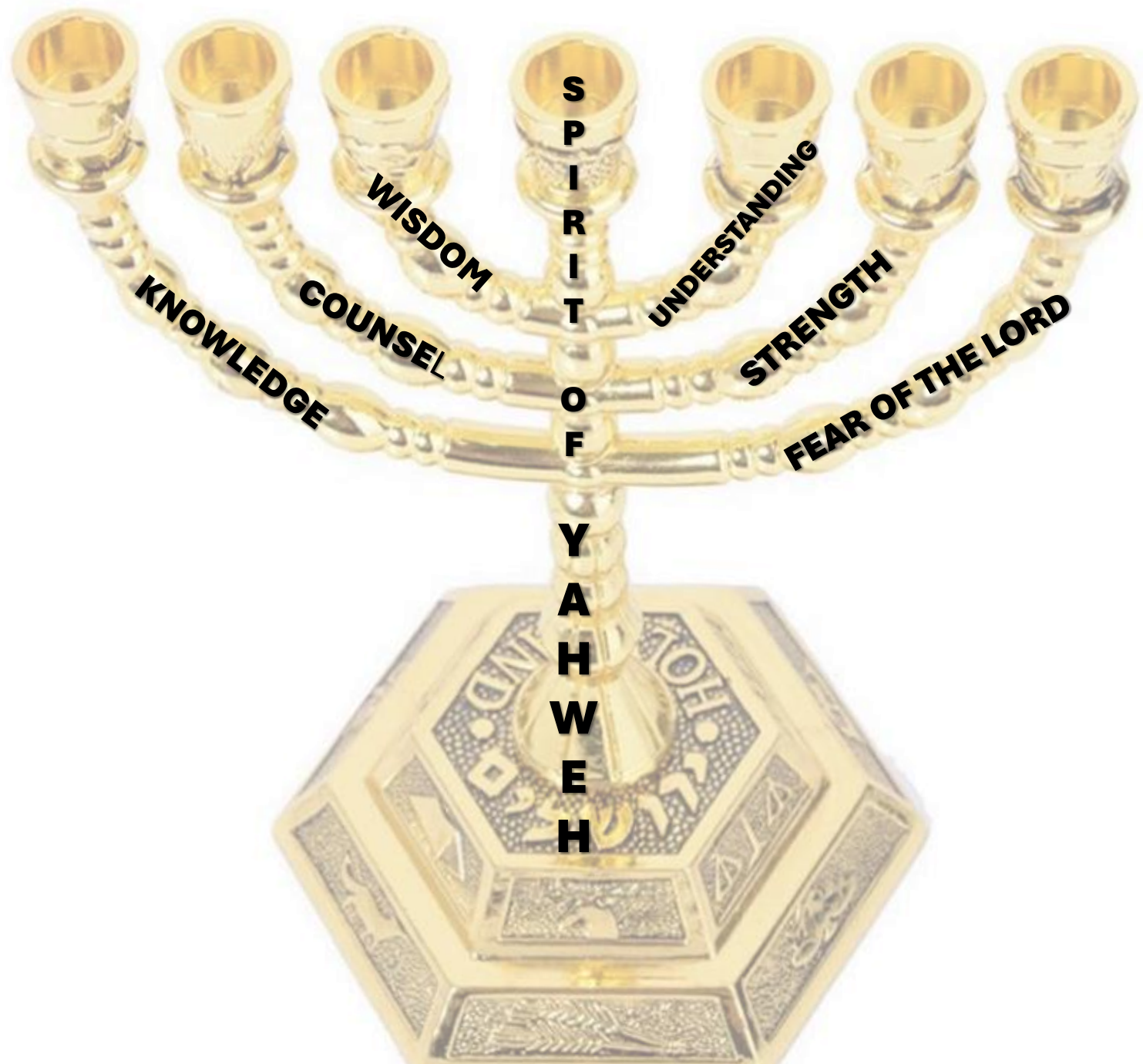
- Declaration

- Jesus describes Himself as the One who **‘holds the seven spirits’** and **‘the seven stars’**
 - The **seven spirits** is a term for the **‘seven-fold Holy Spirit’** (look back to your note on Revelation 1:4)
 - The next 5 slides come from that series of notes

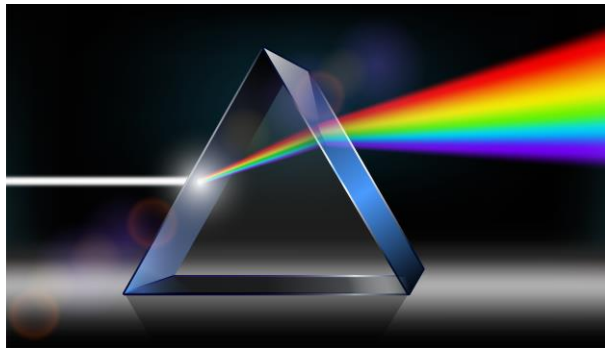
- One-in-seven
 - Revelation 1:4
 - Zechariah 4:1-10
- Isaiah 11:2
 - God, Spirit, Lord
 - Isaiah 6:8
 - Isaiah 48:11-17
 - Isaiah 61:1
 - Isaiah 63:7-19







- **Spirit of Yahweh**
- **Wisdom** – to decide between possibilities and choose the advantageous
- **Understanding** – ability to solve problems
- **Counsel** – ability to devise
- **Power** – connected to strength
- **Knowledge** – knowing God fully
- **Fear** – obeying, pleasing, and glorifying the Lord



- **“you have a name that you are alive”**
 - A reputation of being an active congregation
 - ‘McLite’ services based on ‘needs’, consumer/market driven approach
 - Emphasis on ‘praise music’, programs, age segregation, ‘specialists’, building, brand
 - Lessening role of prayer, theology, priesthood of believers
 - Little or no discipline/correction

- Experience over truth, emotion over doctrine
- Produces unstable, nominal ‘believers’, chase unsound ‘teachers’:
 - Steve Furtick
 - Andy Stanley
 - Joel Olsteen
 - et al.
- The result:
 - Error instead of truth
 - Division instead of unity
 - Confusion instead of clarity
 - Holiness is optional
 - Grace is abused
 - Jesus is neglected

- Swindoll described the Sardis church as:

“a morgue with a steeple on it”



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- There is no evidence that the church in Sardis was under attack
- The truth of the matter points the other way – the Sardis church was almost totally compromised
- It had become secularized. Its outlook was not different from the surrounding godless culture



- A known fact – to avoid persecution, just compromise



- Salutation
- **Commendation - none**
- Accusation
- Admonition
- Exhortation
- Declaration

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

- In v. 2 death and sleep merge
- Jesus summons the dead from their 'sleep' – “**Wake up!**”
- He gives four commands -
 - Watchfulness
 - Strengthening
 - Memory
 - Repentance

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

- In v. 4 we find the existence of a **remnant**
- Recall the number of times that Isaiah dealt with the remnant. See also Jeremiah 6:9; 8:3; 11:23; 23:23
- This means – all is not lost

- **‘white garments’** for the saints are mentioned seven times in Revelation
 - 3:6, 18; 4:4; 6:11; 7:9, 13; 19:14



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

- v. 5 “I will never erase his name from the book of life”
- Does this imply that we can lose our salvation?



- Passages to help you on this matter:
- Psalm 20:6; 37:28; 121:1-8; Isaiah 43:1-3; 46:3,4; 54:10; Jeremiah 32:38-40; Matthew 18:12-14; John 5:24; 6:37-47; 10:27-30; 17:11,12,15,20,21; Romans 5:8-10; 8:1,28-39; 11:29; I Corinthians 1:7-9; 10:13, 27-30; 15:10; II Corinthians 4:14,17; Ephesians 1:5,13,14; 4:30; Colossians 3:3,4; I Thessalonians 5:23,24; II Timothy 4:18; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:11-19; 9:12,15; 10:14; 12:2,28; 13:20-21 I Peter 1:3-5; I John 2:19,25; 3:9; 5:4,5,11-13,20;3:9; Jude 1,24,25

- Salutation
- Commendation
- Accusation
- Admonition
- Exhortation
- **Declaration – v. 6**

- **“...and I will acknowledge (confess) his name before My Father and His angels”**
- **Why angels?**

- “Angels are part of the courtroom setting of heaven. And we will see them in just a few more chapters – we will see the heavenly court sit and the books opened; and these angels are sitting around as jury and as fellow members of the court. And He says, “I will confess his name.” That means that at the Last Judgment, our names will be confessed before the angels. I think that at the Last Judgment the saints will judge, but the angels judge the first world. The world from creation to AD 70 was administered by angels and judged by angels. And that is why the angels are involved here in this book. Now the second creation is administered by the Son of Man, and human beings will be involved in that judgment.” Jordan, Thunder, p. 109