

UNVEILED!

**The Ancient Secrets of Daniel &
The Revelation of Jesus Christ**

JOAN H. RICHARDSON

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The Ancient Secrets of Daniel & The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Written by Joan H. Richardson

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Underscores in the Biblical texts are added for emphasis.
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The Revelation of Jesus Christ

CHAPTER 2

2 “To the angel of the church of Ephesus write,

‘These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: ² “I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; ³ and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary. ⁴ Nevertheless I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵ Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. ⁶ But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

⁷ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”

⁸ “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write,

‘These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: ⁹ “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and *I know* the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰ Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

¹¹ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.”

¹² “And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write,

‘These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: ¹³ “I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne *is*. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among

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you, where Satan dwells.¹⁴ But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.¹⁵ Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.¹⁶ Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

¹⁷ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives *it*.”

¹⁸ “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write,

‘These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass:¹⁹ “I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last *are* more than the first.²⁰ Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.²¹ And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.²² Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.²³ I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

²⁴ “Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden.²⁵ But hold fast what you have till I come.²⁶ And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations.

²⁷ *‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron;
They shall be dashed to pieces like
the potter’s vessels’—*

as I also have received from My Father;²⁸ “and I will give him the morning star.²⁹ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’ (Rev. 2:1-29 NKJV)

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Insights

Jesus commends the **Ephesian** congregation for recognizing the false apostles who would have led them astray from the true doctrines of salvation. Though they called themselves apostles, they were liars. They are among us today, leading congregations and audiences to believe lies that contradict the Bible. When lies are mixed with the truth, even the truth becomes suspect.

False teachers ignore the Word, rationalizing or embellishing it, leading multitudes into lies they purport are true. Deceptions are common, yet few recognize the apostasy that has increased to this day. The church is called to employ the gifts of the Spirit and to change the world by glorious works and holy speech.

Plenty of professing Christians and even scholars believe no one can know the truth, but in Ephesus they spotted heresies and stood against them. They persevered in the Holy Spirit, serving Yeshua by good works. He found no fault in that.

Though they labored without growing weary of doing good, the Lord was displeased because they'd left their first love, and the attitude of the heart was more important than all their godly works. They might have fallen away from their enthusiasm for the Word of God, which would have drawn them nearer to Him.

Has the fire in our hearts turned to ashes by other things that distract us from Him? Jesus was our first love. If we take time in prayer, serve others, and spread the gospel, do we take the time to search the Word of God and sit at Jesus' feet? Do we have *ears to hear* the Spirit who seeks to teach us?

Yeshua warns us to return to our first love, or He will move our lampstand from its place—a strong admonition! What would our nation be like without the church? *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works ... (1:5)*

After our new birth, we received His words and revelations of the Spirit but soon turned to men and saw Jesus second-hand through their eyes. This distanced us from the truth that the Spirit teaches in the Word of God. He wants us to believe and share the true gospel, discipling others as He did; but beyond that, to hear the voice we often shun. Like the Ephesians, we must repent.

He hates elitism in the church. Someone led the Ephesians to blend with the immoral culture. By their status in the church,

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Nicolaitans persuaded some of them to sin. [Gr.: Niko+ *laos*+*ton*, means “power over people.”¹¹⁰] Their attitude remains in churches today, but His Kingdom is unlike that. Jesus served others and lived in holiness as the Son of God, saying, “Follow me.” He said He is the only Way that leads to life. Shunning His example is not an option. We can’t love Him and exclude others.

His blood removes our shame and guilt, and He fills us with His righteousness. He opens our eyes and ears to see and hear. When we consider His words and receive them, they make their indelible mark in our hearts: “*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. (Rev. 2:29)* The one who overcomes by faith in Him is rewarded from the tree of life. (2:7)

Christ urged the believers in **Smyrna** to live and walk in His Spirit, enduring to the end. He knew the blasphemy of people who said they were Jews but were liars. They persecuted Jewish believers, “*speaking evil of them.*” He called them *a synagogue of Satan (in 2:9)*, referring to Jews who sought to destroy them.

At Pentecost, thousands of Jews repented and believed in Yeshua. For some time, the believers were doing mighty works but were opposed by religious leaders while winning many Jews to repentance, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit while teaching them to obey His commands.

The Synagogue of the Freedmen falsely accused Stephen, a godly saint who testified to the Sanhedrin, the tribunal that led him out of the city and stoned him. Before his conversion Paul witnessed it, holding their coats as they killed him. (Acts 6:1-8:3)

Persecution increased in Jerusalem. Of all the believers, only the apostles stayed in the city. On his way to arrest them, Paul was arrested by God, chosen to discover the gospel in the scrolls and write about its new covenant. Thus Paul won the gentiles to Jesus and disciplined the churches but never forgot the Jews.

After Paul’s conversion the Jerusalem church enjoyed a time of peace. (Acts 9:1-30) The gospel multiplied in Galilee, Judea, and Samaria. (Acts 9:31) Paul went to synagogues every Shabbat. The *synagogue of Satan* disdained Jewish believers, yet Paul won converts in synagogues every Sabbath. (Acts 18:4) Like the church, the synagogue is its people, not just a building.

The Greek word for synagogue is *sunagogé*, an assembly or gathering. In the letter by Jacob [James], believers met together

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in the *sunagogé*. (*Jas.* 2:2) The earliest NT congregations were full of Jews who met on the Sabbath in synagogues, beginning with the assemblies in Jerusalem. (Acts 13:42; 18:4)

Persecution against the Jerusalem assemblies sent its saints into Judea and Samaria and then to the nations where multitudes of Jews believed. They confirmed the gospel by miracles and even won gentiles for Christ, unaware that Peter too was winning gentiles though his commission was to the Jews (in Gal. 2:7-8). Smyrna's church expected persecution, faithful to death to gain the crown of life. (Acts 11:19-23; also Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:14; 8:1-3)

³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed, *separated* from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, ⁴ who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the law and the *temple* service and the promises, ⁵ whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. (Rom. 9:3-5 NASB)

Today many Jews hate Yeshua out of ignorance, blindness, and indoctrination as Paul had. Some Jews are raised to hate Jesus; many Arabs are raised to hate Jews; today people hate Christians too; atheists hate God. Men are divided from God and from one another by hatred and lies, but by His Son, God creates one new man as those who trust in Jesus' death and resurrection from all nations, all colors, and all ethnicities.

Some Jews respect Jesus, and many have believed in Him whose families reject them. His holy name is *anathema* to them. It cost Jewish lives for two-thousand years, yet they don't see it as the hand of God. It cost their killers too.

After celebrating Pentecost in the city, Jewish believers left for their homelands. Some began a congregation in Rome, and the gentiles joined them. When the city expelled Jews for dividing her culture, the economy fell, so she quickly took them back.

The Jews rejoined her now gentile church, and Paul taught them their part in the olive tree and corrected their differences.¹¹¹ False brothers had taught them doctrines of devils, telling them to return to Moses' laws, but he disdained the idea. What divides Jews from gentiles does not deliver them from sin; only the Holy Spirit can do that. It was why Jesus made all foods clean. (Acts

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10:15; 15:22-29; Mat. 15:17-20; Mk. 7:14-23) Christ came to die for the sins of the world to make us all clean as one new man.

⁹ And David says,

“LET THEIR TABLE BECOME A SNARE AND A TRAP,
AND A STUMBLING BLOCK AND A RETRIBUTION TO THEM.

¹⁰ “LET THEIR EYES BE DARKENED TO SEE NOT,
AND BEND THEIR BACKS FOREVER.”

¹¹ I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous.

(Rom. 11:9-11 NASB)

Since Yeshua makes the two one, we must not be divided by a kosher table—it’s a trap! We’re not under the law anymore; we’re free to make choices, but let’s walk in the Spirit, not rely on the works of the flesh. *Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.* (Rom. 3:19-20)

God can easily make them Israel who are sons of Israel and can cut off those who cut off Israel. When Abraham heard God, not by the law or by human nature, but in the fear that perfected his faith, he obeyed, and his faith succeeded by his fear of God. Isn’t it in the Word? (See Gen. 22:9-14) Search it out.

²⁰ You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? ²¹ Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? ²² You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. ²³ And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” ²⁴ You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone. (Jas. 2:20-24 NIV; cf. Gen. 15:6)

His faith *was credited to him as righteousness* (in Gen. 15:6). When that was written, it was known that Abraham had feared God and obeyed Him by offering his son, proving his faith.

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When Moses descended the mountain, he found the people in reckless sins and added the handwritten laws to return their hearts to God from Egypt. Those laws were nailed to the cross, but not His moral laws, which He writes, not on stone now, but in our hearts forever. There's a lot to learn about righteousness, governance, prophecy, faith, wisdom, morality, and justice in the Hebrew Bible, but none of us are under the Mosaic covenant.

God didn't tell the Jews what they wanted to hear, but spoke the truth. His words counsel us in all our trials, and His Spirit empowers our faith, but we can't be in Him unless the Spirit is in us. The Holy Spirit distinguishes us from the unbelieving world.

Paul addresses Smyrna's poverty and suffering but says they are spiritually rich. He doesn't lecture them on prosperity or on wealth management but encourages them in all their tribulations, trials, and hard times. If we suffer for the faith, enduring to the end, we receive the crown of life. Christ commands us to overcome the trials that test our faith. His Word goads us to *walk by faith* because faith must be active and living to be effective.

Jewish and gentile believers are in this grace together as one body (in Eph. 2:15-16). Smyrna's church experienced persecution, tribulation, and death, but Jesus promised, *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.* (Rev.2:11)

To the assembly in **Pergamos**, He speaks of His Word as sharper than a two-edged sword. It penetrates our hearts by its truth and with conviction. It's a weapon against sin. We should be careful to properly handle a two-edged sword.

The Word of God is in His Spirit, and His Spirit gives the Word its life: *For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged 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.* (Heb. 4:12)

When His words take root in our hearts, we live by faith in them through the Holy Spirit, not by the law. If we're under the law, we're obligated to it and are condemned because we can't keep it, but are always slaves to guilt. On the other hand, if we walk in the Spirit, we are free and blameless. (Rom. 8; Jn. 15) It could become a habit, walking in His righteousness!

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Long before Christ, the king of Moab hired Balaam to curse the Israelites, but God refused to curse and made him bless them instead. (Jos. 13:22) [Soothsayers are for hire; prophets are not.]

The so-called prophet contrived a way for God to curse the Hebrews. He convinced Balak to lure them with idols and sexual immorality, knowing God would destroy all who did such things. (Rev. 2:14; Num. 31) Seduced by her friends, Israel paid a high price, but not all of them were destroyed. They'd been chosen to serve God, delivered from slavery to the Egyptian culture.

We each are uniquely created, but if we are the focus of our ministries, we are in danger of Balaam's reward. For money the prophet led a king to tempt Israel to sin, hoping God would curse His own people for a reward. Soothing their consciences, we tempt people into lethargy by pleasing them, but God would turn them from sin by alerting those *with ears to hear* His voice.

Pergamon was in the Roman Province, Asia [Turkey], when Greeks called themselves "Babylonian kings."¹¹² Jesus' servant Antipas was baked to death inside an idol by its worshipers in that city. Traditions tell us he sang praises to God, enduring to the end.¹¹³ Jesus says, *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.* (Rev. 2:17) [Saving is archaic for "except."]

To the angel of the assembly in **Thyatira**, He twice names their works, saying the last were greater than the first; however, though they had done good deeds, they'd ignored sexual sins. Does the grace of God ignore sin? Jesus would kill them if they didn't repent. He isn't a pushover.

Men He called "servants" were adulterating by a prophetess and eating foods sacrificed to idols. They were worse than the world. He cursed the woman on her bed and killed her children. No gentle Jesus there! He gave His life as a Lamb but is also a Lion. Can we continue in sin? Not at all. Repent or be lost.

Christ speaks about our thoughts: *I am he which searcheth the minds and hearts* (in 2:23). We must not condemn ourselves, but should judge ourselves. If we sin, He's there at our return. There is great danger in the hardened heart that refuses to repent, continuing to sin until it's reprobate beyond remedy.

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⁹ No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.
(1 Jn. 3:9 ESV)

The prophetess' teachings were accepted in the congregation by men who relished her immoral ideas, but Jesus said, *I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. (Mat. 5:28)*

His Spirit searches us out and judges our thoughts and deeds. We need the Holy Spirit to empower us over our sinful nature, minister to one another's needs, and reveal the works of Christ to the world around us.

He is our Righteousness if we repent and believe that Jesus is alive and hears our prayers. Faith is trusting that if we confess our sins to Him, He cleanses and empowers us to overcome.

Some kept themselves holy, rejecting the prophetess' impure teachings. The Lord commanded them to get rid of her and her ideas and to hold onto good works till His return. Yeshua would kill her, but would they be rid of her words? Churches bring people together with similar beliefs, but only the truth can make us holy, not our agreements. These are matters of the mind.

The Word broaches the topic of sexuality by its required moral standards. Like salvation, it has responsibilities. Have we abused the gift by following our lusts and hiding under grace as we sin? How can we live apart from good works? Will He say, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant. ... Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord? (See Mat. 25:21 or, Depart from me, ye that work iniquity? (from Mat. 7:23)* Don't bet your life on grace without works, and don't trust in works except by the Holy Spirit.

Sexual immorality is not sanctified in heterosexual marriage, including sodomy. If we are possessed by immoral ideas, we'll be lost in our unbelief in the God who sees us but is unseen. But if we consecrate our minds and hearts, we sanctify ourselves.

Do we say, "Who doesn't have lustful thoughts?" If we enjoy those thoughts, does God overlook filthy minds? We must repent. If we don't enjoy them, they oppress us; we're not in sin though sin is in our flesh. Even so, we're in bondage, not yet free of the sin in our flesh. It's the carnal mind of Paul's cry for help in Romans 7, resolved by walking in the Spirit, not the flesh. The

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mind set on the Spirit is life; but the mind set on the flesh is death to us. (Rom. 8:5-17)

We might be teachers, but as long as we're in bondage, we are not free ourselves. Sin is always present in the body, but we don't have to activate it; instead we put it to death. We break its lusts by faith in the cross as those who are bound to be righteous.

Sexuality and love are gifts that unite a man with his wife physically and emotionally. That was the purpose of its creation. Combining sexual desire with love for your mate will enrich your marriage beyond imagination.

The way to purity and peace of mind is like all other spiritual battles: by persevering in faith and in the fear of God, we confess it to Him as long as it takes to be free of it. (Its disturbing details are not necessary; He knows them.) *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 Jn. 1:9)* Our victory may take time, or it may be instantaneous. Either way we persevere in faith for its great rewards, forgetting what's past and pressing on for holiness.

How we receive the gift of salvation reveals our response to the only true God in the Lord Jesus Christ. Will we live by faith in Him, continuing to walk in the Spirit, or neglect our salvation by turning back to the carnal ways we once lived, insulting His grace and gambling away our covenant with God? Now that He set us free, let's walk in the Spirit and live.

Speaking the Word in faith gives us His victory. His words accomplish their purposes and never return void. (Is. 55:11) This means we can depend on God for miracles—even over our flesh. The wise are armed with His words in our hearts, prepared like watchmen on a wall who see the horsemen riding.

²⁶ And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations.

²⁷ *'He shall rule them with a rod of iron;
They shall be dashed to pieces like
the potter's vessels'—*

as I also have received from My Father; ²⁸ “and I will give him the morning star.

²⁹ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”’ (Rev. 2:26-29 NKJV)

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CHAPTER 3

3 “Write to the angel of the church in Sardis:

“The One who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars says: I know your works; you have a reputation for being alive, but you are dead. ²Be alert and strengthen what remains, which is about to die, for I have not found your works complete before My God. ³Remember, therefore what you have received and heard; keep it, and repent. But if you are not alert, I will come like a thief, and you have no idea at what hour I will come against you. ⁴But you have a few people in Sardis who have not defiled their clothes, and they will walk with Me in white, because they are worthy. ⁵In the same way, the victor will be dressed in white clothes, and I will never erase his name from the book of life but will acknowledge his name before My Father and before His angels.

⁶“Anyone who has an ear should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.

⁷“Write to the angel of the church in Philadelphia:

“The Holy One, the True One, the One who has the key of David, who opens and no one will close, and closes and no one opens says: ⁸I know your works. Because you have limited strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name, look, I have placed before you an open door that no one is able to close. ⁹Take note! I will make those from the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews and are not, but are lying—note this—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and they will know that I have loved you. ¹⁰Because you have kept My command to endure, I will also keep you from the hour of testing that is going to come over the whole world to test those who live on the earth. ¹¹I am coming quickly. Hold on to what you have, so that no one takes your crown. ¹²The victor: I will make him a pillar in the sanctuary of My God, and he will never go out again. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God—New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God—and My new name. ¹³“Anyone who has an ear should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.

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¹⁴ “Write to the angel of the church in Laodicea:

“The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Originator of God’s creation says: ¹⁵ I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were cold or hot. ¹⁶ So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of My mouth. ¹⁷ Because you say, ‘I’m rich; I have become wealthy and need nothing,’ and you don’t know that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked, ¹⁸ I advise you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire so that you may be rich, white clothes so that you may be dressed and your shameful nakedness not be exposed, and ointment to spread on your eyes so that you may see. ¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and discipline. So be committed and repent. ²⁰ Listen! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and have dinner with him, and he with Me. ²¹ The victor: I will give him the right to sit with Me on My throne, just as I also won the victory and sat down with My Father on His throne.

²² “Anyone who has an ear should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.” (Revelation 3:1-22 HCSB)

Insights

The Christian community in **Sardis** was comfortable with an appearance of piety but was privately defiled. Outwardly, some of us may look like fine people though we’re not really alive and growing, but are dead and dying. God sees our hearts and minds and knows our secrets yet forgives if we’re willing to repent.

If we refuse to yield to His words, unless we repent, we’ll be lost. If we’re breathing, we must be ready to repent. If we live for ourselves and not for God, we won’t be prepared for the end. Let’s guard our hearts and minds and be holy: living in Christ daily, we are worthy by *works done in faith*, not by empty words.

Some deny Christ by keeping secret, ungodly desires in their hearts and minds; that’s unbelief. We can’t walk with Him in white by hiding from Him. He knows everything and doesn’t need us to tell Him, but having a relationship with God means we turn to Him with confidence for our deliverance. Faithfully, He hears our confession and forgives us, washing us clean.

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If our hearts are open to the truth, our names **are not** blotted out of the Book of Life. Our Brother Jesus is our Advocate to the Father. It's a relationship. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith ...* a personal relationship. Living by faith we're rewarded **on the last day** when many call out, "Lord, Lord!" but lived like hypocrites. (Mat. 24:48-51; 2 Pet. 2:9-22)

Jesus addresses the messenger of the **Philadelphia** church, which has not denied His name, but has kept His command to endure. He opens a door, a way of escape from the hour of trial that tests every living soul on earth. (1 Cor. 10:13)

Some stood against them, claiming to be Jews but were liars. They were of *the synagogue of Satan*. All real Jews entrust our hearts and souls to the Savior. All who walk in the Spirit are His. If we don't live by faith, we don't belong to Him. We are not under the law, but by faith, we act by His Spirit who lives in us.

Jews and gentiles might profess faith in Jesus but hold to the laws of Moses. The new covenant is unlike Abraham's covenant where circumcision was required as was tithing, but Yeshua said the sons are free. (Mat. 17:26) Peter and Paul agreed; these men want to bring us under bondage that neither they nor their fathers could bear. The laws and rules of other covenants were made obsolete by the new and better one. (Acts 15:10-11; Gal. 5:1)

Faith in Yeshua isn't rigid or impersonal. His Spirit writes His commandments in our hearts. By the new covenant, He leads us, *saying, This is the way, walk ye in it (in Is. 30:21)*. If we keep His words and persevere, the rewards are everlasting. Let's be pillars in the true Sanctuary. The victor is in the Father, in the Holy Spirit, in Messiah, and in New Jerusalem forever.

¹³ "Anyone who has an ear should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. (Rev. 3:13 NKJV)

The last message is to the angel of the church in **Laodicea**: Rich in material wealth but spiritually impoverished, its church is lukewarm, not zealous to serve. We give thanks for our wealth but are unconscious of our poverty. If we love the things of this world, God's love is not in us. Unless we repent, He'll remove the church from our nation. He will literally vomit us out. Our lukewarm attitudes make Him sick to His stomach. Do we have *ears but don't hear* the Spirit speaking? (3:15-22)

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By circumventing the truth, we've been lukewarm. We've been idolaters; we've wanted our own way: *They that make a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit; and they are their own witnesses; they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed. ...* ¹⁸ *They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, and they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand. (Is. 44:11, 18)*
This is what God does to idolaters.

When the Scriptures seem dull to us, the truth is, we've been dull to them by our idolatries. His words live in us by our faith in them, so when we receive them, we live by them—not as under the law, but we live by faith in His words as His Spirit leads us.

If He showed wrath to the Jews who hardened their hearts, what happens to us who claim their heritage but are in unbelief? The things that refine the saints also define us. Let's remember the day we vowed our lives to Him and repent. *The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach. (Rom. 10:8; cf. Dt. 30:9-14)*

¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and discipline. So be committed and repent. ... ²¹ The victor: I will give him the right to sit with Me on My throne, just as I also won the victory and sat down with My Father on His throne. (Rev. 3:19, 21 HCSB)

Jesus is speaking to the churches, not just to seven. Less is expected of new believers than of teachers, pastors, prophets, or apostles, and of us who have believed for many years. Looking back, we see His work, cleansing us in time. If we haven't been changed or haven't believed the words of God, then we could be the false teachers, false prophets, false apostles, and yes, false believers who must repent. If we want Jesus Christ in control of our lives, with faith in His power, we *press on toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:14)*

Most like the Laodicean church, the American church sees herself as strong and spiritual but is weak and carnal, easy prey to false teachings that steal our souls. If we've fallen but repent, Jesus will lift us up again. We must love one another and pray for one another; bless our enemies, and don't gossip. Believe the Word. We *live by faith, not by sight*. If we live like materialists, we will die in our sins. (See Hab. 2:4; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38)