

6-24-2026 – HEAVEN – week 4

Rev. 1 - Jesus shows John heaven, the things to come.

Jesus is standing among seven golden lampstands, in R hand, 7 stars.

7 lampstands rep 7 churches; 7 stars are the “angels” of the 7 churches

Rev. 2 – John is to write messages to 7 churches in Asia. (Turkey)

One **purpose** of REV is to **encourage believers to live holy lives.**

The 7 are representative of all churches; words apply to all believers.

Jesus looks different; but He makes clear who He is. Hair is white/ eye-fire.

“I am the First/last. Was dead/nor Alive! Hold the keys of death”

“To the angel of the church. . .”

“Angel” means messenger. Angels don’t need John to give info.

Messengers will take John’s letter back to the churches.

Many consider “messengers” to be pastors. Who helps encourage? Pastor

Corrects false teaching? Explains need to persevere; hold tight to faith? P.

Rev gives guidance in how to teach/preach... but encouragement to us.

1 – Ephesus. Rev. 2:1-7

Ephesus – 1 of most important cities in Roman province of Asia. Turkey.

Famous for its temple to Artemis & the Ephesian theatre (Acts 19); it was a grand city in its glory days, remains an archaeological treasure.

First – praise. Then – a call to change.

²I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. ³You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.

⁴ Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. ⁵ Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. ⁶ But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

⁷ Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

Message to us – don't lose the love we have for God. Keep it growing.

- Love in a relationship / **nurtured**. Same w/our relationship w/Jesus.
- Keep worshipping . . . reading the Bible . . . attending. Growing. Loving.
 - o I once was lost, now I'm found. Then go on your way? No.
 - o Paul wrote Timothy, reminder: "to **fan into flame** the gift of God"
 - o Our faith & love of Jesus requires active **cultivation**. Fire goes out.
- If no change, their **lampstand** be removed. Take away witness.
 - o We're called – "**the light of the world.**" (Mt. 5:15)
 - o God empowers our witness. Strong witness = strong love for God.
- **Victorious?** Tree of life is in eternal Heaven. Paradise. W/God forever!

2 – Smyrna. Rev. 2:8-11 Today, Smyrna is a bustling city called **Izmir**. One of the principal cities of Roman Asia, Smyrna vied w/ Ephesus & Pergamum for the title "First City of Asia. "

Smyrna was a **wealthy** city, known for its production of myrrh ('Smyrna' means 'myrrh'); its **loyalty** to the Roman Empire; and **martyrdom**, including the faithful bishop Polycarp, who was a disciple of the apostle John.

These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again. ⁹I know your afflictions and your poverty—yet you are rich! I know about the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor’s crown.

¹¹Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death.

Message to us – Jesus commends their enduring faith in persecution.

- Historically, Smyrna was a wealthy city, yet the Christians there were often **marginalized and economically disadvantaged due to their faith.**
 - Despite material poverty, they’re described as "rich"
 - **James 2:5** – “...dear brothers and sisters. Hasn’t God chosen the poor in this world to be rich in faith? Aren’t they the ones who will inherit the Kingdom he promised to those who love him?”
 - **Matthew 5:3** - “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”
 - **Matthew 6:20** – “store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.”
 - Live w/ the **mindset** – to be rich in heaven is what **matters.**
- Jesus knows our "affliction" . . . persecution for faith; trials we endure.
 - Reward is coming. Victor’s Crown!
- “Second death” mentioned multiple times in the book of Revelation.
 - It is synonymous with the **lake of fire.**
 - It’s “death” b/c it is a separation from God, the Giver of life.

- It's the "second" one b/c it follows physical death.
- [Rev. 20:14–15](#): "Then death & Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire."
- Second death is for those who have rejected Christ. It is not a place believers in Christ should fear. Names in book of life!