**The Book of Revelation:**

**Sardis: The Dead Church**

April 22, 2017

Revelation 3:1-6 (NKJV)

1 “And to the angel of the **church** in Sardis write,

‘These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: “I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. 2Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. 3Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. 4You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. 5He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

6“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the church**es**.”’

**The city of Sardis.**

1. **The city of Sardis had a reputation.**
2. **The Jews in Sardis had a similar reputation.**

Obadiah 20 (NKJV)

And the captives of this host of the children of Israel

*Shall possess the land* of the Canaanites

As far as Zarephath.

The captives of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad

Shall possess the cities of the South.

*Sepharad* is an Aramaic designation for *Sardis*.

David E. Aune, Word Biblical Commentary, Revelation 1-5, (Dallas, Word Publisher, 1997), 219.

**Name of the Church**. – "red ones."

**Description of Jesus.**

1. **He is the One Who has the seven spirits of God.** (3:1)

Isaiah 11:2 (NKJV) –

The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him,

The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,

The Spirit of counsel and might,

The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

John’s 7-fold ministry of the Spirit:

1. The Comforter, the Counselor, or the other helper in Jn 14:16.
2. The Spirit of Truth in Jn 14:17.
3. The personal presence of Christ in Jn 14:18-20.
4. The manifestation of Christ within the believer in Jn 14:21-22.
5. The abiding presence of the Trinity in Jn 14:23-24.
6. The Teacher in Jn 14:25-26.
7. The peace of Christ in Jn 14:27.
8. **He is also the One Who has the seven stars.** (3:1)

2 Timothy 3:5 (NKJV) – having a form of godliness but denying its power.

**Commendation to the church of Sardis**.

1. **For the individual who walks with Christ**.
2. **There is also praise in verse 4 for the individual who stays pure.**

**Rebuke to the church**.

**Thief in the night:** (Mt 24: 42-44; 1 Thes 5:1-3; 2 Pet 3:10; Rev 3:11).

**Jesus –** Matthew 24:42-44 (NKJV) – 42Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. 43But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the **thief** would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 44Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

**Paul –** 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 (NKJV) – 1 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 3For when they say, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

**Peter -** 2 Peter 3:10 (NKJV) – But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

**Sardis’ unique understanding of the phrase, “thief in the night.”**

1 John 3:2-3 (NKJV) – 2 We know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 3 Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

**Five-fold Instructions to the Church.**

**1. Wake up.** (Rev. 3:2). NKJV: Be watchful… NIV: Wake up!

Romans 13:11 (NKJV) – And *do* this, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation *is* nearer than when we *first* believed.

**2. Strengthen** the things which remain. (Rev. 3:2).

**3. Remember** therefore how you have received and heard. (Rev. 3:3).

A. Purity (Rev. 3:4).

B. Zeal.

**4. Obey.** (Rev. 3:3).

Revelation 3:3 (NIV) – Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent.

**5. Repent.** (Rev. 3:3).

**Promise to the church** (Rev. 3:4-5).

1. Clothed in white as they walk with the Lord (Rev. 3:4-5).
2. Name shall not be blotted out from the Book of Life. (Rev. 3:5).
3. If your name is written in heaven, Jesus will confess it before the Father (Rev. 3:5).

**Some names are blotted out from the Book of Life?**

John 3:3 (NKJV) –Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”

Exodus 32:32 (NKJV) – 32Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written.”

**~ Judgment Day is Described in 3 Kinds of Jewish Books ~**

Revelation 20:11-15 (NKJV) – 11Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book* of Life. And the dead were **judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books**. 13The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14Then Death and Hades were cast **into the lake of fire. This is the second death**. 15And **anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire**.

1. **The Book of Life.** (Lk. 10:20; Phil. 4:3; Rev. 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 21:27 AND many extra-Biblical sources including 1 Enoch 108:3; Jubilees 30:22; et al.).

1 Enoch 108:3 – And wait ye indeed till sin has passed away, for their names shall be blotted out of the book of life and out of the holy books,

Jubilees 30:22-23 – 22 … they will be destroyed out of the book of life, and they will be recorded in the book of 23 those who will be destroyed and with those who will be rooted out of the earth.

1. **Books of Deeds.** (Mal 3:16; Isa 65:6-7).

Book of Good Deeds – Malachi 3:16 (NKJV) – Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, And the Lord listened and heard *them;* So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the Lord And who meditate on His name.

Book of Bad Deeds – Isaiah 65:6-7 (NKJV) – 6 “Behold, *it is* written before Me: I will not keep silence, but will repay—Even repay into their bosom—7 Your iniquities and the iniquities of your fathers together,” Says the Lord, “Who have burned incense on the mountains And blasphemed Me on the hills; Therefore I will measure their former work into their bosom.”

1. **Book of Destiny** (Psa 56:8; 139:16; 1 Enoch 106:16-107:2 Jubilees 5:12-19; 23:32).

Psalm 139:16 (NKJV) – Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When *as yet there were* none of them.

1 Enoch 106:16-107:2 – 16 I have read (them) in the heavenly tablets. 107:1 And I saw written on them that generation upon generation shall transgress, till a generation of righteousness arises, and transgression is destroyed and sin passes away from the earth, and all 2 manner of good comes upon it.

Jubilees 5:12-17

1. And he made for all his works a new and righteous nature, so that they should not sin in their whole nature for ever, but should be all righteous each in his kind alway.
2. And the judgment of all is ordained and written on the heavenly tablets in righteousness -even (the judgment of) all who depart from the path which is ordained for them to walk in; and if they walk not therein, judgment is written down for every creature and for every kind.
3. And there is nothing in heaven or on earth, or in light or in darkness, or in Sheol or in the depth, or in the place of darkness (which is not judged); and all their judgments are ordained and written and engraved.
4. In regard to all He will judge, the great according to his greatness, and the small according to his smallness, and each according to his way.
5. And He is not one who will regard the person (of any), nor is He one who will receive gifts, if He says that He will execute judgment on each: if one gave everything that is on the earth, He will not regard the gifts or the person (of any), nor accept anything at his hands, for He is a righteous judge.
6. [And of the children of Israel it has been written and ordained…

**The blotting out of names is some type of judgment.** (Ps 69:27-28; Ex 32:32; Isa 4:2-3).

Psalm 69:27-28 (NKJV)

27 Add iniquity to their iniquity,

And let them not come into Your righteousness.

28 Let them be blotted out of the book of the living,

And not be written with the righteous.

Exodus 32:32 (NKJV) – Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written.”

**The phrase may refer to natural (rather than spiritual) death?**

Isaiah 4:2-3 (NKJV)

2 In that day the Branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious;

And the fruit of the earth *shall be* excellent and appealing

For those of Israel who have escaped.

3And it shall come to pass that *he who is* left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy—everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem.

**Heavenly citizens have their names recorded** (Heb 12:22-23).

Hebrews 12:22-23 (NKJV) – 22But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect.

**If your name is written in heaven, Jesus will confess it before the Father (Rev. 3:5).**

Matthew 10:32-33 (NKJV) – 32“Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. 33But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

**Prophetic Message?**

* Martin Luther (1520) – John Wesley (1703-1791), OR
* Martin Luther (1520) – into the Tribulation…