

The REVELATION of JESUS CHRIST

ALPHA / OMEGA



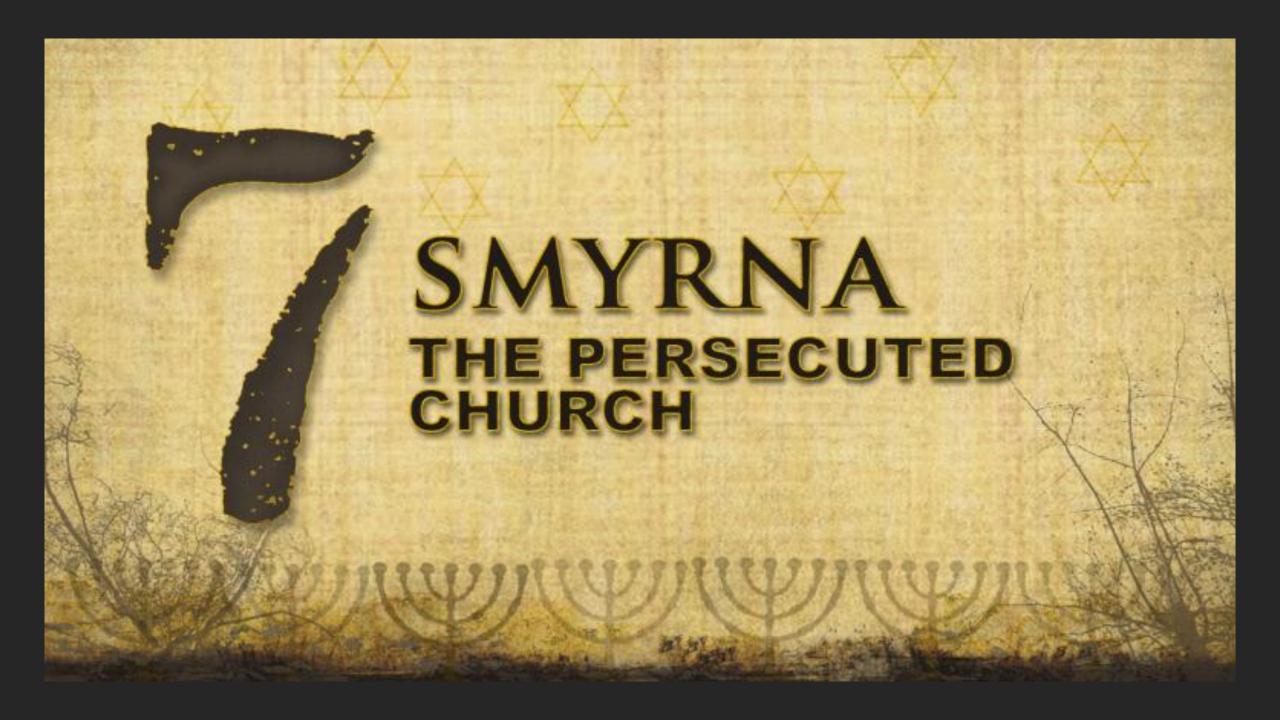
Seven Churches of Revelation

Chapters 2-3

- Ephesus
- Smyrna
- Pergamos
- 4 Thyatira
- Sardis
- O Philadelphia
- Laodicea

Island of Patmos: where John received the vision



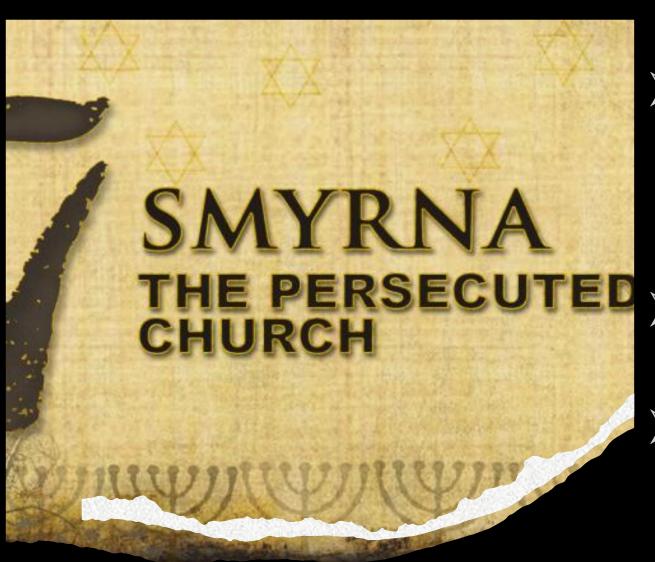


Historical Background









- ➤ Name comes from the root word myrrh a costly perfume/ointment
- Ancient City was destroyed and rebuilt numerous times due to earthquakes and war
- Celebrated Greek and Roman gods with temples
- Today it is called Izmir 3rd largest city in Turkey

Seven Design Elements In Each of the Letters

- 1. Name of the Church
- 2. Title of Christ Chosen
- 3. Commendation
- 4.Concern
- 5. Exhortation [Repent]
- **6.Promise to the Overcomer**
- 7. "He that has an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: 'The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life.'"

[Revelation 2:8]

Jesus – the One who Died



God the Son had to take on flesh as a man to suffer and die as an atoning sacrifice for our sin. [Isaiah 53]

"Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery." [Hebrews 2:14-15]

"For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. 17Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted." [Hebrews 2:16-18]

"Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, Zbut emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." [Philippians 2:5-9]

"I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan."

[Revelation 2:9]

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. [Matthew 5:3-5, 10]

"Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him?" [James 2:5]



"I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan." [Revelation 2:9]



WHO ARE THE JEWS?



Twelve Tribes of Israel

Manasseh Asher Naphtali Issachar **Ephraim** Benjamin Simeon

Zebulun Gad Dan Reuben Judah

"Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies;

your father's sons shall bow down before you.

The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,

until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples."

[Genesis 49:8, 10]



Divided Kingdom



"Where is he who has been **born king of the Jews**?" [Matthew 2:2]

And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

[Matthew 27:37]

"You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for **salvation is from the Jews**."

[John 4:22]

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, **to the Jew first** and also to the Greek."

[Romans 1:16]

But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, 26 for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. 27For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

[Galatians 3:25-29]

Possibility #1 – Those who were ethnic/religious Jews but who rejected Christ and persecuted the early church.

They answered him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did ... You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

[John 8:39,44]

"I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me.

[John 16:1-3]

Possibility #2 – Those who were ethnic Jews but who were persuading Christians to partake in pagan idolatry.

Possibility #3 - Those who were not ethnic Jews but who pretended to be Jews in name only to serve Satan and further destroy God's reputation.

Jew hatred is the <u>essence</u> of the spirit of <u>antichrist</u>.

God will keep His **promises** to save a **remnant** of the Jews and restore the fortunes of Israel when Jesus returns. [Ezekiel 37:15-281

Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all around, and bring them to their own land. 22And I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. And one king shall be king over them all, and they shall be no longer two nations, and no longer divided into two kingdoms. 23They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols and their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions. But I will save them from all the backslidingsfin which they have sinned, and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God."

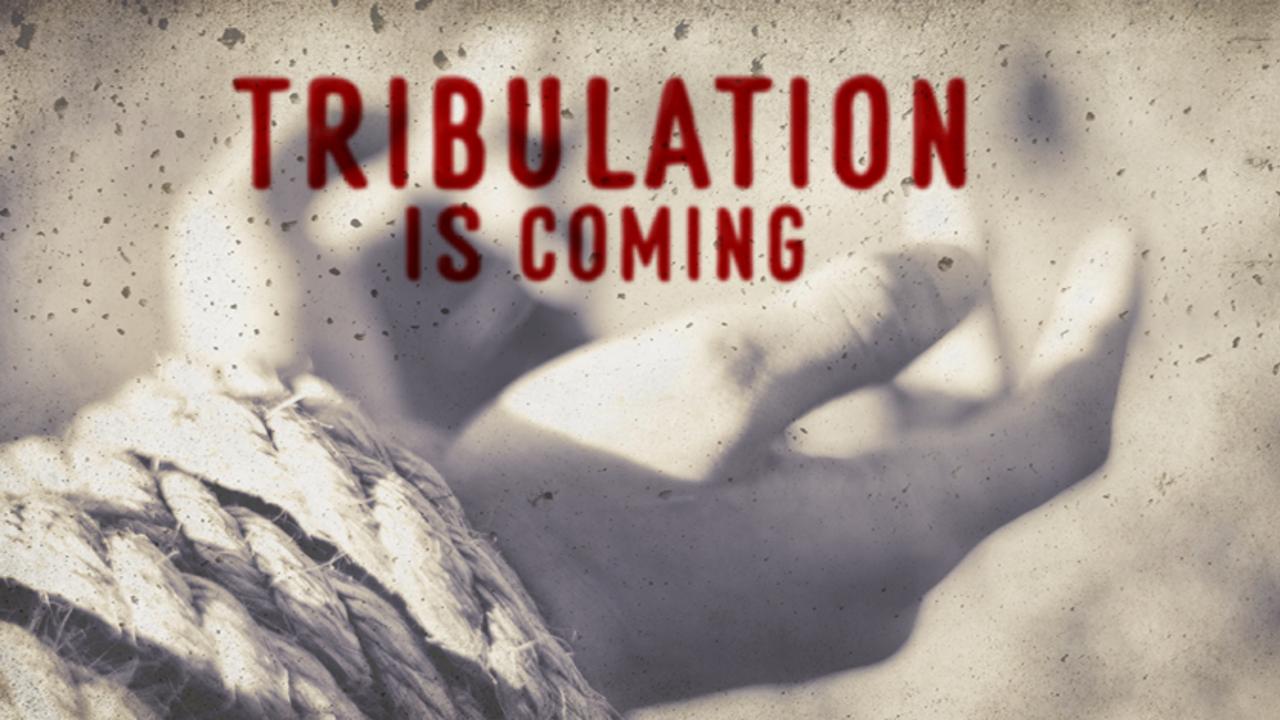
[Ezekiel 37:21-23]

"My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes. 25They shall dwell in the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children shall dwell there forever, and David my servant shall be their prince forever."

[Ezekiel 37:24-25]

"I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore. 27My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 28 Then the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore."

[Ezekiel 37:26-28]



God promises that Christians will suffer tribulation in this world and encourages us to remain faithful, even unto death.

"Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life."

[Revelation 2:10]

As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. [Matthew 13:20-21]

All these are but the beginning of the birth pains. 9"Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. 10 And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. [Matthew 24:8-10]

"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

[John 16:33]

"When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."

[Acts 14:21-22]

"We ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, 5 which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer;

[2 Thessalonians 1:4-5 NKJV]

"since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, 7 and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

[2 Thessalonians 1:6-8 NKJV]

And they have overcome him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, **for they loved not their lives even unto death**.

[Revelation 12:11]



What are these 10 Days in "prison?"

Roman Persecution

- 1. 54-68 -- Nero (Paul beheaded; Peter crucified upside-down)
- 2. 95-96 -- Domitian (John exiled)
- 3. 104-117 -- Trajan (Ignatius burned at the stake)
- 4. 161-180 -- Marcus Aurelius (Polycarp martyred)
- 200-211 -- Septimus Severus (killed Irenaeus)
 Maximinus (killed Ursula and Hippolytus)
- 6. 235-237 -- Decius
- 7. 249-251 -- Valerian
- 8. 257-260 -- Aurelian
- 9. 270-275
- 10.303-313 -- Diocletian (Worst of all)



God will <u>reward</u> faithful <u>stewards</u> with imperishable <u>crowns</u> in the kingdom.

"Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life."

[Revelation 2:10]

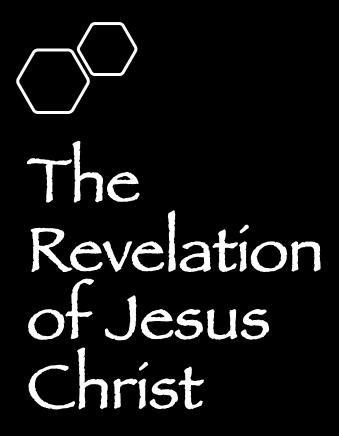
"Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him." [James 1:12]

"The twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever.

They cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

"Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."

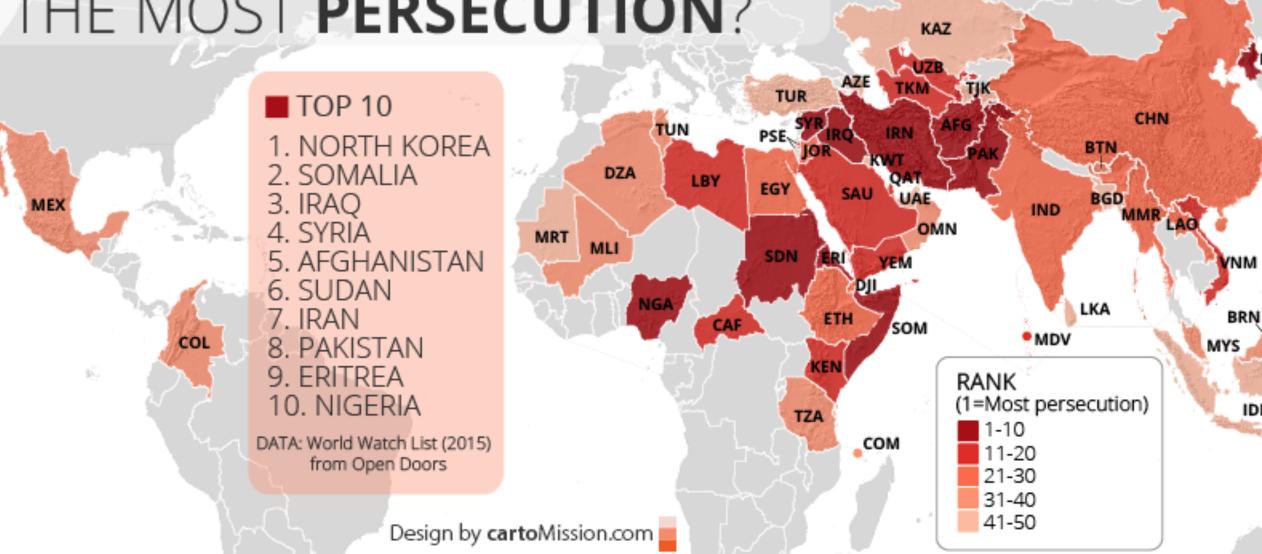
[Revelation 4:10-11]



- 1) **Local:** literal churches. Researched archaeologically by Sir William Ramsey...
- 2) **Admonitory:** "...<u>churches</u>": all of them. Each message applies to each, to some extent. Meant to be shared and read
- 3) **Universal:** "He that hath an ear..." Applies to all churches in all places of every generation.
- 4) Profile of Church History: In their particular order, they lay out the history of the church???
- 5) Prophetic for the Last Generation: describe the various complexions and conditions of the end-times church

PERSECUTED GHURC

WHERE DO CHRISTIANS FACE THE MOST PERSECUTION?





"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death."

[Revelation 2:11]



"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

[Romans 8:37-39]

"For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.5Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"

[1 John 5:4-5]



Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me. though he die, yet shall he live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" [John 11:25-26]

And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. 13And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done.

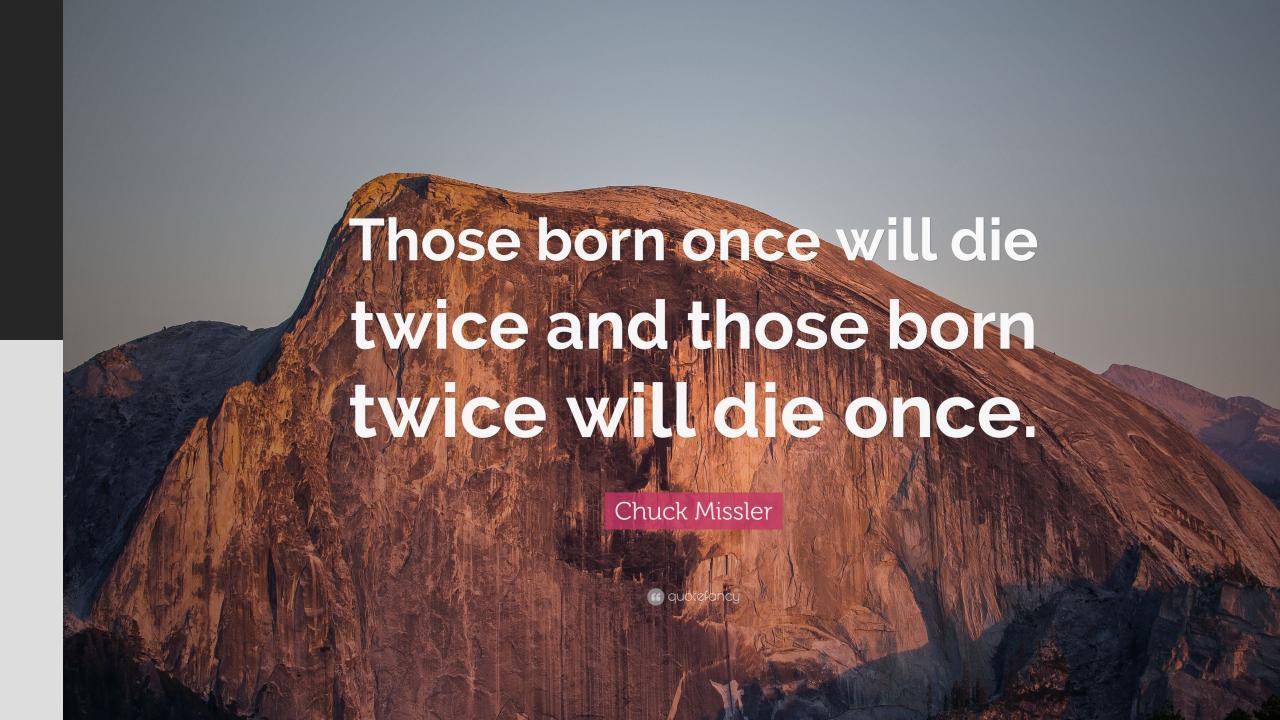
[Revelation 20:12-13]

"Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

[Revelation 20:14-15]

The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. **8**But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."

[Revelation 21:7-8]



APPLICATION



- ✓ Have you been born again? Are you in Christ?
- ✓ Keep Praying for ears to hear and understand
- ✓ Prepare for increased persecution and coming tribulation in this hostile culture
- ✓ Pray for the persecuted church
- ✓ Read Revelation Chapter 2 out loud multiple times - take notes
- ✓ Outline the Letter to the church at Pergamum