

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST SERIES

RLJ-802

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PART 6: UNTO THE ANGEL OF THE CHURCH OF SARDIS

CHAPTER THREE: THE CITY OF SARDIS

In order to understand a region or a city, we must look at what kind of demonic ruler has been and is ruling the people living there. The country that is today is known as Turkey, was once known as "Anatolia," or as it is named in the Bible "Asia Minor." It was in the eastern part of Anatolia that Noah's Ark landed on Mountains of Ararat. The region was settled after the flood, some 1,500 years after the creation of Adam and Eve.

The most well-known empire to rise from this region was the Hittite Empire (1900-1200 B.C.). This empire had conquered Egypt at the time Joseph was taken there as a slave. After ruling Anatolia for 700 years, the empire crumbled as Phrygians and Lydians invaded Anatolia from the West and the eastern part was held by Armenians.

The Kingdom of Lydia rose to power in the 7th century B.C., when King Gyges established his rule and the city of Sardis became his capital. Its last king was Croesus, who was known for his enormous personal wealth, acquired through business dealings. It was in this kingdom that permanent retail shops were established along with the minting of silver and gold coins.

Lydia and its capitol Sardis were taken through war with in Persia 546 B.C. The Persians lost Anatolia to the Greeks, and in 133 B.C., it became a Roman province. Sardis became the metropolitan capital of the province of Lydia and the center of Roman judicial administration. The city was destroyed by an earthquake in 17 A.D. when Jesus was a teenager on the earth. It was rebuilt and was a strong commercial and judicial center at the time John received the Book of Revelation. People living in Sardis at this time were wealthy and involved in business and administration.

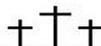
We can see that the demonic rulers over Sardis were Greed, Power, Control and Complacency.

The Roman cult of worship was present in Sardis, and the goddess Cybele was also worshiped in Sardis.

In the midst of this prosperous pagan city, Jesus had been preached, people were saved and a church had been established. Now, let's look and see what Jesus had to say to this church:

VERSE 1

Most of the events, infrastructure and laws governing the spiritual world that God lives in are not made known to man. Instead of speculating, we are better off to



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just accept by faith what God tells us. We know that our God consists of GOD THE FATHER, GOD THE SON AND GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT. The Bible does not tell us why we are told in this verse about the seven spirits of God, which is also repeated in **Revelation 4:4-5. Genesis 1:1-2, 26-27; John 16:5-16**

The people who made up the church in Sardis were not poor, and the church was financially well-off with no need to pray and seek God. Thus, instead of trusting in God for all things, they trusted in themselves. They must have bragged about how strong they were, when spiritually they were dead. Jesus had addressed this problem once before when he walked on this earth. **Matthew 6:24-34**

God wants us to understand that He is the source for our wealth. **Deuteronomy 8:11-20**

God is still in the manna business. **Exodus 16:1-12**

The last thing that a man will surrender is his heart (his finances). When God began to deal with me in this area, I was very dense at first. I was deceived by a religious spirit that convinced me that I had to save the ministry which God had given me. Here is how God taught me: Some four years ago, our finances started to dry up and a choice had to be made, should we pay rent on our church building or should my salary be paid? As a pastor, I made the decision to keep the building open, and since God was not giving us enough funds, I would be pious and borrow money to pay my own salary. This went against the Word of God (**1 Corinthians 9:1-9; Deuteronomy 25:4**). God in His mercy then cut me loose, and for the next few years, I maxed out my credit cards to around \$35,000. Then the day came when I had no more credit, and in agony I cried out to the Lord, HELP!

He told me to trust Him, I needed to let the finances of the ministry be handled by Him, and the heavy burden would be taken away from me. Some six months ago, I surrendered and told our treasurer, pay my salary first!

Here is what happened: Finances increased, and God paid both my salary and our rent and all the other bills. For the last six months, I have not borrowed any money, rather I have been able to pay my own bills and at the same time reduce my personal credit debt to around \$30,000.00. **1 Kings 17:1-9; Hebrews 11:6**

For the last 27 years our music ministry has been handled by Mrs. Rita Jackson.

Let me give you another example how God works. Scores of talented people have come and gone over the years, some wanting to oust Rita and establish their own glory. God removed them one by one, and the only musician we currently have in our church, is Sister Rita, who is 90 years old. If she became sick, there is no one to replace her. Instead of being nervous about this, I am trusting God to make sure that we have music in our worship service. Sister Rita has been in most Sunday morning worship services for the last 27 years, but some younger persons in our church miss many Sundays, using all kind of excuses. God gave me a name for them, "Bonus Christians!" We must learn to

trust God in all things, and know that people will come and people will go,
BLESSED BE THE NAME OF THE LORD! **Job 1:20-22**

VERSE 2

Jesus wants us to examine our works now, so that we can make corrections while we still are alive on this earth. **1 Corinthians 3:11-18**

VERSE 3

Jesus demands repentance and faithfulness. **Matthew 24:42-51**

VERSE 4

Some of the Christians in Sardis had renounced all idolatry and fornication and surrendered everything to Jesus. **Luke 19:12-26**

VERSE 5

Since Jesus paid for the sins of all human beings, every name is written in the Book of Life. But if a person dies without receiving Jesus as the Messiah and is born again, his name is blotted out at the time of his death. **Exodus 32:30-35, Mark 8:34-38, Luke 12:8-9**

Do you have an ear to hear with?