

*Cultural, Historic, and Geographic Context*



## Revelation Backgrounds 10

Sardis

Revelation 3:1-6



1

**Acts 17:11 (KJV)**

**These (Bereans) were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.**

Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are from the Complete Jewish Bible by David H. Stern. (Clarksville, MD: Messianic Jewish Publishers, 1998).

Unless otherwise noted, images courtesy of the Satellite Bible Atlas and the Pictorial Library of Bible Lands (BiblePlaces.org)



2

## Topics

- Sardis
  - Background - Asleep
- Sevenfold structure of each letter:
  - Name of the city
  - Specific attributes of Messiah
  - ~~Praise~~
  - Judgment - "I know"
  - Encouragement
  - Promise to the Overcomer
  - "He who has an ear..."
- Does it fit? Protestant age / Treasure in a Field / Romans



3

### *Revelation 3:1-6 (CJB)*

- (1) "To the angel of the Messianic Community in Sardis, write: 'Here is the message from the one who has the sevenfold Spirit of God and the seven stars: "I know what you are doing—you have a reputation for being alive, but in fact you are dead!"
- (2) Wake up, and strengthen what remains, before it dies too! For I have found what you are doing incomplete in the sight of my God.
- (3) So remember what you received and heard, and obey it, and turn from your sin! For if you don't wake up, I will come like a thief; and you don't know at what moment I will come upon you.
- (4) Nevertheless, you do have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes; and they will walk with me, clothed in white, because they are worthy.
- (5) He who wins the victory will, like them, be dressed in white clothing; and I will not blot his name out of the Book of Life; in fact, I will acknowledge him individually before my Father and before his angels.
- (6) Those who have ears, let them hear what the Spirit is saying to the Messianic communities." '



4



Sardis Temple of Artemis



5



Sardis Temple of Artemis column circumference



6





Sardis acropolis from below



7



Sardis burial ground of biblical Gog



8





Sardis paint shop



9



Sardis synagogue with mosaic floor, 4th century AD



10



Sardis Byzantine chapel inside Temple of Artemis



11

Revelation 3	References
(1) "To the angel of the Messianic Community in <a href="#">Sardis</a> , write: 'Here is the message from the one who has the sevenfold Spirit of God and the seven stars:	<p><b>Joh 15:26-27</b> "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. (27) And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.</p> <p><b>1Pe 1:10-12</b> Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, (11) inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. (12) It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.</p> <p><b>Zechariah 4:6</b> Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.</p>



12



And the angel who talked with me said, "Awakened out of his sleep, and behold, a lampstand on it, with seven lips on it, two olive trees by it, one said to the angel who talked with me and said, 'No, my lord.'" (6) Zerubbabel: "Not by might." Who are you, O great I shall bring forward the word of the LORD came foundation of this house the LORD of hosts has small things shall rejoice "These seven are the eyes of the LORD which look on the oil."



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**the whole earth."**



13

## No "Praise" section for Sardis



14



Revelation 3	References
(1) "I know what you are doing—you have a <b>reputation</b> for being alive, but in fact you are dead!	<p>1 Sa 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."</p> <p>Pro 21:2 Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the heart.</p> <p>Deu 12:8 "You shall not do according to all that we are doing here today, everyone doing whatever is right in his own eyes,</p> <p>Jdg 17:6 In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.</p>

15

*Man looks on the outward appearance; the LORD looks on the heart.*



Shepherds' fields east of Bethlehem

1 Samuel 16:7

16

Every man did what was right in his own eyes



*Samson and Delilah*, by José Echenagusia Errazquin, 1887

Judges 17:6

17

### Revelation 3

(2) Wake up, and strengthen what remains, before it dies too!

### References

Joh 11:11 After saying these things, he said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him

Mar 14:38 Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."



*You Could Not Watch One Hour With Me*, by James Tissot, circa 1890



18

Revelation 3	References
(2) Wake up, and strengthen what remains, before it dies too! <b>For I have found what you are doing incomplete in the sight of my God.</b>	Jas 1:22-24 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. (23) For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. (24) For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.

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Revelation 3	References
(3) So remember what you received and heard, and obey it, and turn from your sin!	Deu 6:3 Hear therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them, that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply greatly, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.

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Revelation 3	References
(3)! For if you don't wake up, <b>I will come like a thief</b> ; and you don't know at what moment I will come upon you.	<p>Exo 22:2-3 If a thief is found breaking in and is struck so that he dies, there shall be no bloodguilt for him, (3) but if the <b>sun has risen</b> on him, there shall be bloodguilt for him. He shall surely pay. If he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.</p> <p>Mat 24:42-43 So stay alert, because you don't know on what day your Lord will come. (43) But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the <b>night the thief was coming</b>, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into.</p> <p>1Th 5:2 because you yourselves well know that the Day of the Lord will <b>come like a thief in the night</b>.</p> <p>Rev 16:14-16 For they are demonic spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty. (15) ("Behold, <b>I am coming like a thief!</b> Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!") (16) And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.</p>

21

*Watch therefore: for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming*

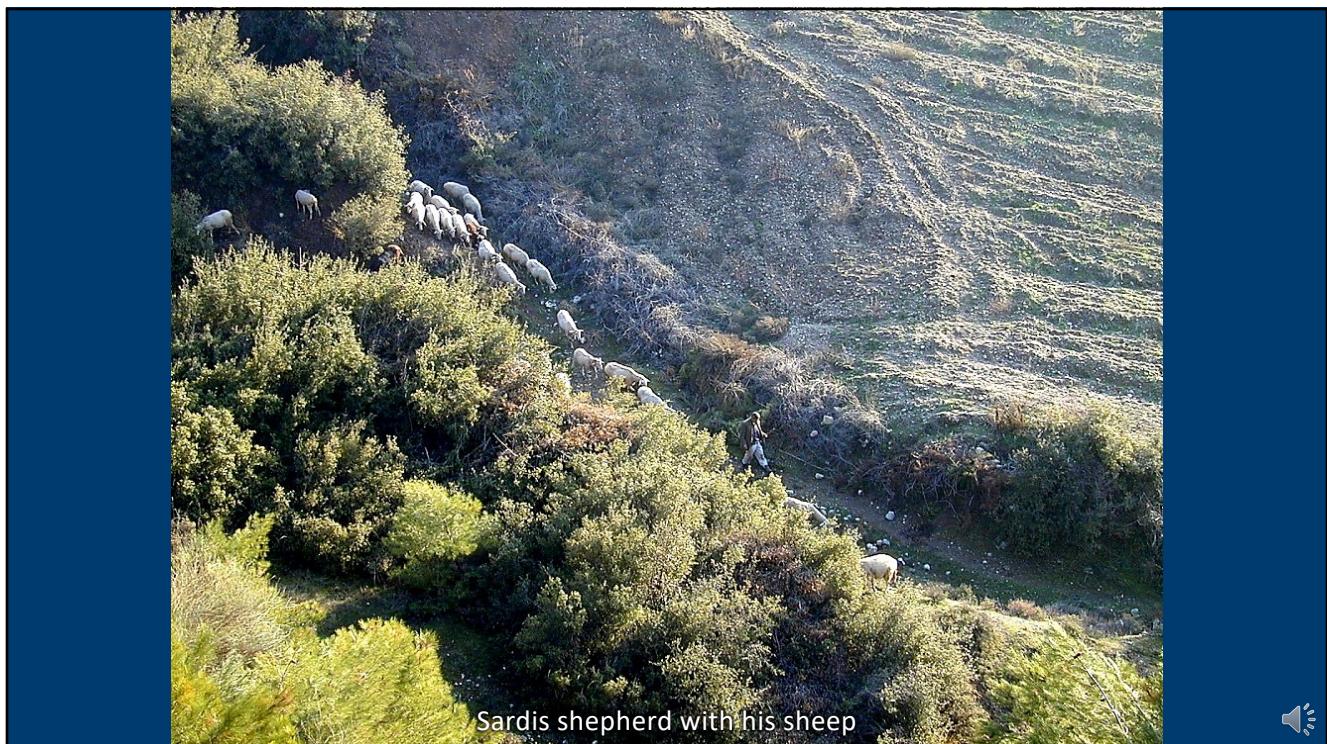


Shepherd on watchtower at Nazareth Village

22

Revelation 3	References
(4) Nevertheless, you do have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes; and they will walk with me, clothed in white, because they are worthy.	<p>Isa 61:10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.</p> <p>Rev 19:8 it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure” — for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.</p> <p>Ecc 9:8 Let your garments be always white. Let not oil be lacking on your head.</p> <p>Mat_23:27 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness.</p>

23



Sardis shepherd with his sheep

24



*You are like whitewashed tombs, which from the outside appear beautiful . . .*



Ossuary with Aramaic inscription from Jerusalem, 1st century AD

23:27

25

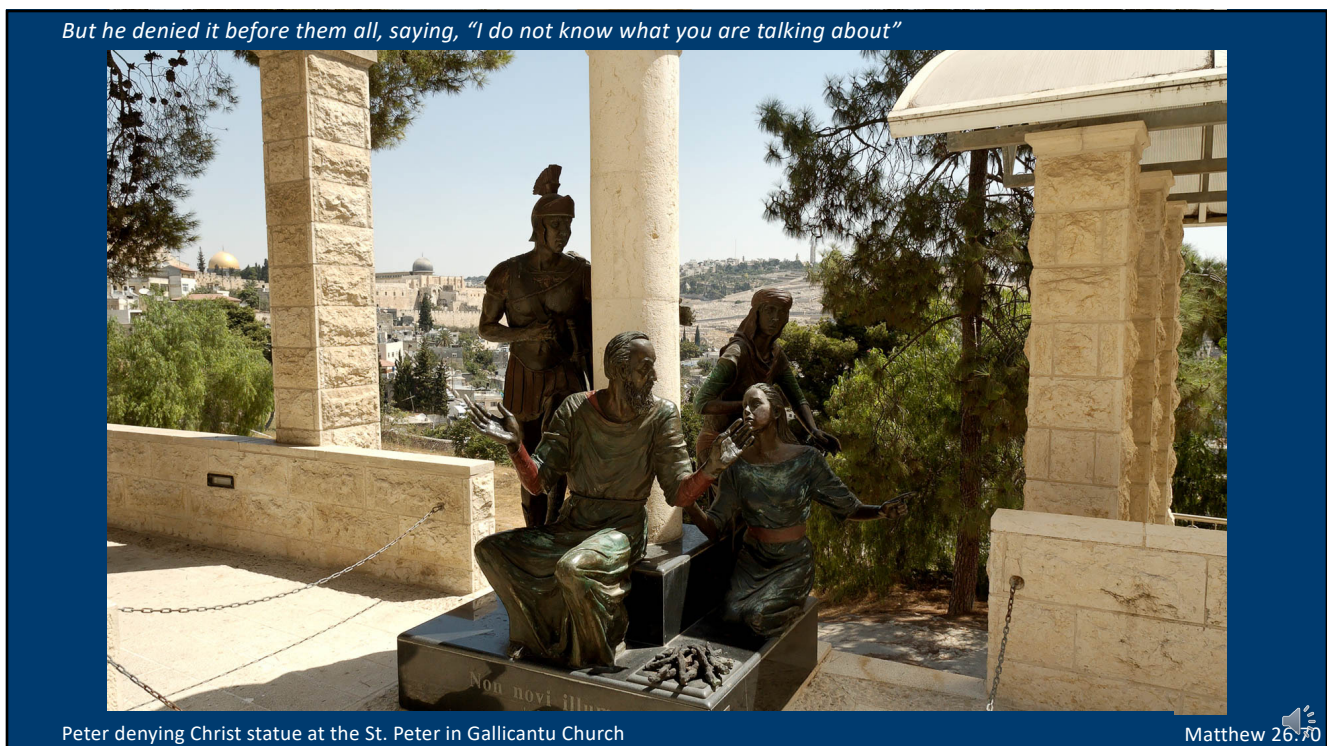
Revelation 3	References
(5) He who wins the victory will, like them, be dressed in white clothing; and I will not blot his name out of the Book of Life;	<p>Exodus 32:32-33 But now, if you will forgive their sin—but if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written.” But the LORD said to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against me, I will blot out of my book.</p> <p>Dan 12:1. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book.</p> <p>Mal 3:16 Then those who feared the LORD spoke with one another. The LORD paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the LORD and esteemed his name.</p> <p>Rev 20:12 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.</p> <p>Rev 20:15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.</p>

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Revelation 3	References
<p>(5) He who wins the victory will, like them, be dressed in white clothing; and I will not blot his name out of the Book of Life; <b>in fact, I will acknowledge him individually before my Father and before his angels.</b></p> <p>(6) Those who have ears, let them hear what the Spirit is saying to the Messianic communities."</p>	<p>Luke 12:8-9 "And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God, (9) but the one who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God.</p> <p>Mat 26:75 And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.</p>

27



28

*Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus*



Traditional location where Jesus stood on the "sacred rock" at Heptapegon



29

## Conclusion

- No outward signs of trouble
- Believers were self-deceived
  - Which led to misrepresenting what it means to be a believer
- Let us not be self-deceived!
- How is your Jesus audit going?



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END OF PART I

