

Assembly at Sardis

Chanakya Sehgal

Location



Leading idea for each Assembly

- Ephesus – A cooling heart
- Smyrna – A crushed heart
- Pergamum - A compromising heart
- Thyatira – A Careless heart
- Sardis – A cold heart
- Philadelphia – A committed heart
- Laodicea – A complacent heart

Meaning of the names

Name of the Assembly	Meaning	Prophetic timelines
EPHESUS	Desirable	70-170 AD
SMYRNA	S-myr-rh-NA - The sweet-bitterness of myrrh	170-312
PERGAMOS	Marriage. Mixture	312-606
THYATIRA	Continual Burning	606 – Rapture
SARDIS	A Remnant escaping	1517 – Rapture
PHILADELPHIA	Brotherly Love	1750 – Rapture
LAODICEA	The Rights of the People	1900 - Rapture

Discourse for each Assembly

Destination

Presentation

Commendation

Condemnation

Exhortation

Reading from Rev 3:1-6

1 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

4 Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.

5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Destination

1. **Sardis** was the capital of the ancient kingdom of [Lydia](#), one of the important cities of the [Persian Empire](#)
2. The seat of a [proconsul](#) under the [Roman Empire](#), and the metropolis of the province Lydia in later Roman times.
3. Its situation on an important highway leading from the interior to the [Aegean](#) coast.
4. It had a wide and fertile plain of the [Hermus](#).
5. Once a famous city, built on a plateau, on a narrow ridge of mountain, its position made it almost unassailable. It was an imposing sight; walls and towers, temples and houses and palaces filling the elevated plateau 1500 feet above the plain below.
6. But in 549 B.C. it was captured by Cyrus of Persia. One of Cyrus' soldiers discovered a secret path of steps cut into the cliff face. Silently, at night, the Persian troops ascended one by one. There was no guard or sentinel at the top, as this was deemed unnecessary, and when the citizens awoke next morning their proud citadel had been captured.



Presentation – Rev 3:1

And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; **These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars;** I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.



- 1) To the church with the background of the busy markets of Sardis, Christ shows himself to be the divine trader in whom are the resources to meet every market exigency.
- 2) Since Christ holds the seven stars in his right hand (1:20) it is a fair inference that the seven spirits of God are held in his other hand.
- 3) This picture presents Christ weighing resources against conditions. Whatever deficiencies exist in the actual spiritual condition of the church can be matched by that which Christ can supply out of the divine fullness in the Spirit.

Isa 11:2 And 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;

Commendation – (for individuals)

There **were no words** of collective commendation for this assembly, however there are some words of individual praise in this letter –

Rev 3:4 - Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.

1. **This is not a matter of count but a fact displaying God’s knowledge of his own and their life**
2. **A typical Roman procession would have the pagan priests walking in white robes. No true Christian would be a part of this procession.**
3. **The Lord promises that “they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.”**



Seven Assemblies of Asia Minor

Condemnation

Re 3:1 ¶ And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

1. The “name” here is not taken in the Hebrew sense of revelation of the person, but rather in the Greek sense of the **Reputation** on the person
2. The reputation that this assembly had was of life and vitality – “thou livest” (Zao), speaks of more than just physical life.
3. They would have been deeply insulted had anyone questioned the reality of their life. In one brief word the Lord shatters this reputation – “art dead” (in the present tense).
4. There was profession without possession.
5. The parallel of the city is inescapable; fortress-like with a proud history, if the defeats due to lack of watchfulness.

Condemnation

Reformation Period

1. By the Reformation we mean that period in the history of the Christian Church when Martin Luther and a number of other reformers protested against the **false teaching, tyranny and claims of the Papal Church** .
2. This Period began about A. D. 1500. The condition of affairs in the realm dominated by the Papal Church became intolerable, and came to a crisis when **Martin Luther, on October 31, 1517 A. D., nailed his 95 Theses on the church door at Wittenberg, Germany**. From that date the Reformation set in. But it was more a struggle for political liberty than a purely Christian or religious movement.
3. It had the advantage of encouraging and aiding the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, that had hitherto been a sealed book, the revival of the Doctrine of "Justification by Faith," and a reversion to more simple modes of worship,
4. The multiplication of sects only led to bitter controversial contentions, that, while they threw much light on the Word of God, interfered greatly with the spiritual state of the Church, until it could truthfully be said, "That she had a name to live and was **dead**."

Exhortation Rev 3:3-6

Re 3:2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

Re 3:3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

- 1) Be watchful and strengthen – become awake and on the watch, the picture is of the sentry running to a weak point in the defense Neh 4:19, 20
- 2) Things that remain – is in the neuter indicating the principles from the holy writ, it also includes those who hold on to the divine statutes.
- 3) God's assessment – "I have not found thy works perfect before God" – this indicates that the work had begun but had not completed. Incomplete fortifications are not of any real value and fortification without a watchful sentry is an incomplete defense.

Exhortation Rev 3:3-6

Re 3:3 Remember therefore how thou hast **received** and **heard**, and **hold fast**, and **repent**. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

- 1) The ingredients of “starting an assembly”, a life of “LIFE” – Received, heard and held fast.
- 2) “Come as a thief” – **kleptes** – he will come with silence and stealth, every time this phrase has been used it is with regard to unbelievers

1Th 5:1 ¶ But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

1Th 5:2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

1Th 5:3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

1Th 5:4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

Exhortation Rev 3:3-6

Re 3:5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

- 1) A civic Inauguration – **shall be clothed in white raiment** - clad in robes expressive of holiness and joy.
- 2) A civic Recognition – **I will not** (ου μη **ou me oo may** a double negative strengthening the denial; not at all) **blot your name out of the book of life** – every city in those days maintained a register of all those born. If any one was found guilty of treachery or disloyalty then his name would be struck out of the register. Those who bought honour their names would be inscribed in gold. This is a double negative to indicate that the register in earth can have names expunged but the book of life will never never blot out a name.
- 3) Civic Presentation - **but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels** – Confessing the name of Christ cost their lives in Sardis. But in the August court in heaven the Lord will declare the names of the faithful

THANK YOU