

# Pentwater Bible Church

*Revelation Message 10*

*October 29, 2023*



Christ Leaving The Praetorium by Gustave Dore, Cir. 1876-1883

Daniel E. Woodhead – Pastor Teacher

# Pentwater Bible Church

## Revelation Message Ten

### THE CHURCH AT PHILADELPHIA PART II

October 22, 2023  
Daniel E. Woodhead

PHILADELPHIA: THE CHURCH OF THE GREAT MISSIONARY MOVEMENT (A.D. 1648-1900)

Revelation 3:7–13

*<sup>7</sup> And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; <sup>8</sup> I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. <sup>9</sup> Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. <sup>10</sup> Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. <sup>11</sup> Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. <sup>12</sup> Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. <sup>13</sup> He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches (KJV).*

LOCATION & JESUS DECLARATION

Revelation 3:7

*<sup>7</sup> And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth (KJV).*

Philadelphia was 28 miles southeast of Sardis. It was principally noted for its agricultural products but suffered earthquakes that destroyed the city several times, the latest recorded to the writing of this letter was about A.D. 37. The city was named for a king of Pergamum, Attalus Philadelphus, who had built it. Philadelphus is similar to the Greek word *philadelphia*, meaning “brotherly love,” which occurs many times in the Bible (Romans 12:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:9; Hebrews 13:1; I Peter 1:22; II Peter 1:7; Revelation 3:7). Only here is it used of the city itself. Christian testimony continues in the city in this present century.

Christ described Himself as the One who is holy and true, who holds the key of David, and who is able to open or shut a door which no one else could open or shut. The holiness of Christ is a frequent truth in Scripture (I Peter 1:15), and being holy He is worthy to judge the spiritual life of the Philadelphia church. He *that hath the key of David*; mention is made of David, because he is a

type of Christ; and because from him Christ came according to the flesh, and whose throne He will to sit upon, in the Messianic kingdom.

Seventeen verses in the New Testament describe Jesus as the “son of David.” Christ (the Messiah) was the fulfillment of the prophecy of the seed of David (II Samuel 7:12–16). Jesus is the promised Messiah, which means He had to be of the lineage of David. Matthew 1 gives the genealogical evidence that Jesus, in His humanity, was a direct descendant of Abraham and David through Joseph, Jesus’ legal father. The genealogy in Luke 3 traces Jesus’ lineage through His mother, Mary. Jesus is a descendant of David by adoption through Joseph and by blood through Mary. “*As to his earthly life [Christ Jesus] was a descendant of David*” (Romans 1:3). Son of David is a Messianic title which means He is the long-awaited Deliverer, the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. Jesus was addressed as “*Lord, thou son of David*” several times by people who, by faith, were seeking mercy or healing. The woman whose daughter was being tormented by a demon (Matthew 15:22) and the two blind men by the wayside (Matthew 20:30) all cried out to the Son of David for help. The titles of honor they gave Him declared their faith in Him. Calling Him “Lord” expressed their sense of His deity, dominion, and power, and calling Him “Son of David,” expressed their faith that He was the Messiah. In order to fully embrace how Jesus is describing Himself it is important to look to the question He posed in Mark 12:35.

#### JESUS THE HEART KNOWER

Revelation

3:8

*<sup>8</sup> I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name (KJV).*

Philadelphia lacked the *energy* of Ephesus of the early church days, but it had three precious things first, a little *power*; second, obedience to Christ’s *word*, third, not denying His *name*.

As with the messages to Ephesus, Thyatira and Sardis, Jesus *knows* their *deeds*. The idea of an *open door that no-one can shut* shows Jesus provided them a large open door for opportunity. In doing this for them He further says that because I am all powerful, *no man can shut it*.

Jesus wants to reassure the Philadelphians that the door to God’s presence stands open because, like the fragility of the city in which they live, they know that they are *weak* and cannot in their own strength stand to oppose the world that they are about to face. Obedience to Jesus’ command and allegiance to Jesus’ person belong together; they have both *kept [his] word* and not *denied* their association with Him. They know to rely on the promises He gave them.

This church was unimportant in the world’s eyes, probably few in number, poor in property, and low in the social scale. The Lord has a commendation for them. They loved Christ. Jesus answered and said, “*If a man love me, he will keep my word*” (John 14:23). This assembly of the church at Philadelphia, had a *living response to the known word* of the blessed Lord. The destination (v.7a) is the church in the city of Philadelphia, which means “brotherly love.”

The description of Jesus in verse 7b is taken from Revelation 1:18, picturing Him as the One with authority to open and close doors and in possession of the Key of David. This open door for them is realized in the Philadelphian period of the historical-prophetic view of these churches. During this period there was great success in evangelism.

This is the second church for which there is no condemnation. Like Smyrna, Jesus finds nothing against this church and is satisfied with it.

Jesus closed Matthew's Gospel with words that sent disciples out evangelizing.

Matthew 28:18–20

*<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. <sup>19</sup> Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: <sup>20</sup> Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen (KJV).*

In the historical-prophetic interpretation, it is a fitting symbol of the church during the great missionary movement from 1700 through 1900. It was the period of great missionary names like Hudson Taylor, Adoraim Judson, William Cary, Stanley Livingstone, Amy Carmichael and many others.

Beginning with the first major and sometimes fanatic convert, Saul who became the apostle Paul, Christian missionaries spread the good news about Jesus into all the world. Within three centuries they had succeeded so well that the Roman Empire became officially Christian. But none had the success as the era of the Great missionary movement of the Philadelphian era of the 1700's through the early 1900's. The commendation to this church is found in verse eight. They are commended for making use of the open door. It is Jesus Himself, who opened the door, and the Philadelphians were faithful in making use of the open door of acceptance in all countries. During the period of 1700-1900 there was virtually no place where a missionary could not go. Every place was open to them. Today, increasingly more countries are closing their doors to missionaries. But, during those two centuries there was virtually no limitations, and this church took advantage of it. They had little power; it was a minority supporting those missionaries. Yet, the little power was used to accomplish great things. They are commended for it.

The promise found in verses 9-10 and 12-13 is fourfold. First, in verse nine, they are promised fruit from those who claim to be Jews or the people of God and are not. It is still the period described by Hosea (1:8-9; 2:23) when Israel is on the sideline of God's program and considered to be not my people. But in the future, they will again become my people (Hosea 1:10-2:1; 3:5). It is interesting to note that it is during this time that Jewish missions were strongly developed. Near the end of this time the Jews (Zionists) were coming back to the Land Israel (Eretz Yisrael). It was also at this time that the Lord Jesus declared the beginning of the end times was starting (Nation rising against nation). By 1900 some 250,000 Jews became believers. Jewish missions first began in Germany, took root in England, and finally came to fruition in the United States. It was a time

when the natural branches were regrafted into their own Olive Tree. However, it is more likely that this verse deals more literally with those who claim to be Jews, but they are not. This is also the period that saw the rise of the cults, such as Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christian Science, and Seventh Day Adventists.

*And hast not denied my name.* When Christians were brought before civil magistrates in times of persecution, they were required to renounce the name of Christ, and to disown him in a public manner. It is possible that, amidst the persecutions that raged in the early times, the members of the church at Philadelphia had been summoned also to similar trials, and they had stood the trial firmly. The early Christians expected suffering. Christ had died on the cross, so there was no higher honor than to imitate that death through accepting martyrdom. The Jewish legacy portrayed, in writings such as the Fourth Book of the Maccabees, the glorious nature of death rather than renunciation of Israel; even without this, Christianity would inevitably have held the martyr's death in high esteem. As the apostle Peter expressed it, *Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf* (I Peter 4:16).

In modern times persecution has taken the form of lawsuits and other social shunning activities deigned to prevent the open observation of Christianity. These are the times when we should lean on Him ever more. Because it strikes more terror into the hearts of those who are against Him than anything else. When the genuine believer's heart is true to the Lord, it shows the genuineness of the facts of Christianity and the truth of Jesus to others. It is this which produces proper feelings toward Him and toward one another. The very name of this church, Philadelphia is significant of the relationship which He had established; but it is also important to remember that it is a holy relationship we hold to one another.

#### THE WHOLE WORLD WILL BOW BEFORE JESUS

##### Revelation 3:9

*<sup>9</sup> Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee (KJV).*

*Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan*, which is a reference of the followers of the men that profess faith in Jesus but follow after the methods of their true father the devil, and do his works, and will do them: *Which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie*; they are Jews by name and nation; they are Jews outwardly, but not inwardly and spiritually, (Romans 2:28, 29). They are carnal wicked men, under the influence of Satan. Whether they be Jewish, or gentile members of the visible church or even unsaved Jews they really pretend to be religious men, and worshippers of God: *behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet*; The true followers of the Lord Jesus will be treated as Him,

##### Philippians 2:10-11

*<sup>10</sup> That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth <sup>11</sup> And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (KJV).*

Those who love Jesus and realize who he is adore, worship, and bow down to His majesty. Our text in this verse says that the three realms of existence all do and will bow down to Him.

1. Heavenly beings
2. Earthly beings
3. Demonic beings

The heavenly or celestial beings knew who Jesus was before He appeared on the earth.

Revelation 5:13-14

*<sup>13</sup> And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. <sup>14</sup> And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever (KJV).*

This chapter of Revelation closes with the three realms bowing down to Him. The creatures in Heaven, on the earth and under the earth all acknowledge Him by bowing down and confessing His name. While He was on this earth the demons also knew who He was (Matthew 8:28-34).

All in Heaven, on earth and under the earth will bow down to Him and confess His name. Only those on the earth have the choice to do it now while it is still today. The other realms are already bowing down to Him. Those who do not accept His Lordship today will when they meet Him face-to-face.

PROMISE TO PROTECT THIS CHURCH FROM GOD'S WRATH

Revelation 3:10-11

*<sup>10</sup> Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. <sup>11</sup> Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown (KJV).*

This verse is one of the strong affirmations of Jesus removing His Church before the Tribulation. In this passage, the Church is promised to be kept from the period of trial that is about to fall upon the whole earth. In the context of the entire book of Revelation, it is the Tribulation found in chapters 6-19 that is this period of trial that is to fall upon the whole earth. It is from this period of trial that the Church is to be kept. The Church will not just be protected, but it will be kept *from the very hour* of the trial, that is, from the very *time* of it. So therefore, the Church must be removed entirely before the Tribulation ever occurs. This will be examined more thoroughly after the



completion of chapter three. Here in verse eleven Jesus ends this section of Scripture with an affirmation for them to continue doing their well doing.

*Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.'*

This announcement of the soon coming of the Lord, is sometimes used as a word of fear for those who are abusing the Master's absence, wasting his goods and ill-treating their fellow-servants; careless and secure as men who don't realize the day of judgment is in coming (Matthew 24:48–51; II Thessalonians 1:7–9; I Peter 4:5; cf. James 5:9). It can also provide comfort for those who are in difficult and painful circumstances who hold their ground and persevere. Such a word of comfort is in this announcement here: 'Yet a little while, and thy patience shall have its full reward; only in the interval, and till I come, *hold that fast which thou hast.*' That which Philadelphia '*had*' is zeal, patience, with little means but accomplishing great work.

This taking, or seeking to take, the crowns from others refers to the wicked who would see others discrowned and disinherited like themselves. It is important to regard them as exactly equivalent to those of Paul: 'Let no man *beguile you of your reward*' (Colossians 2:18); and as giving no slightest hint that what this Angel of Philadelphia lost, another would gain; the crown which he forfeited, another would wear; and that other one who had despoiled him of it. This crown is not the one we have already earned but the crown which thou may have in the future (II Timothy 4:8). 'Let no man,' Christ would say, deprive thee of the glorious reward laid up for thee in heaven, of which many, my adversaries and thine, would want to rob you of; but which only one, namely you yourself, can ever cause you to forfeit it.

#### REWARDS FOR PERSEVERANCE

##### Revelation 3:12–13

*<sup>12</sup> Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. <sup>13</sup> He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches (KJV).*

This set of passages has a strong reference to two Old Testament prophetic passages, Isaiah 62:2 and Ezekiel 48:35 both referencing the Messianic kingdom and the establishment of the eternal order after that. A new name is given to the people in both passages.

##### Isaiah 62:2–3

*<sup>2</sup> And the nations shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory, and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of Jehovah shall name. <sup>3</sup> Thou shalt also be a crown of beauty in the hand of Jehovah, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God (ASV, 1901).*

As the population of the earth begins to reign in righteousness in the Messianic kingdom, all the nations of the world will see the glory God has bestowed upon them as described in verses 2-3. At

that time, the Israelites will receive a new name, *Jehovah Shammah*, meaning “Jehovah is there” (Ezekiel 48:35). Jerusalem will be further characterized by beauty, never again to be called *Azuvah*, which is transliterated in verse 4 as *Hephzi-bah*, which means “forsaken” or “desolated by God”, for the city itself will be God’s joy and delight. He will once again affirm His remarriage vows to Zion

Ezekiel 48:35

*<sup>35</sup>It shall be eighteen thousand reeds round about: and the name of the city from that day shall be, Jehovah is there. (ASV, 1901)*

In verse 35b, Ezekiel, describing the messianic wall around Jerusalem tells us that the name of the city will be renamed “Jehovah Shammah” or “God is there.” Since the Messiah, the God-man, will be reigning in as the Prince of Peace, God also is going to be there. Jeremiah also calls messianic Jerusalem by a different but related name, which is Jehovah our Righteousness:

The city gates will all be named after the twelve sons of Jacob. On the north side of the city of Jerusalem will be Ruben, Judah, and Levi’s gate. These three sons of Leah, the unloved wife of Jacob, will have a prominent place in the messianic city of Jerusalem in terms of being the names of the top of most gates, which is a way of honoring Leah. Leah never turned from God, and He honors her loyalty here by naming the top three gates after her sons. They were also first in Moses’ blessing.

God is promising to the church of Philadelphia when the Messianic kingdom is here they will have a prominent position in the kingdom too because they persevered.

NEXT WEEK: REVELATION MSG. XI

**Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments**

[pentwaterbiblechurch@scofieldinstitute.org](mailto:pentwaterbiblechurch@scofieldinstitute.org) Toll Free 877-706-2479