

The End Times

4. The Church of the Last Days

Historical sketch of the church

EPHESUS
SMYRNA
PERGAMUM
THYATIRA
SARDIS
PHILADELPHIA
LAODECIA

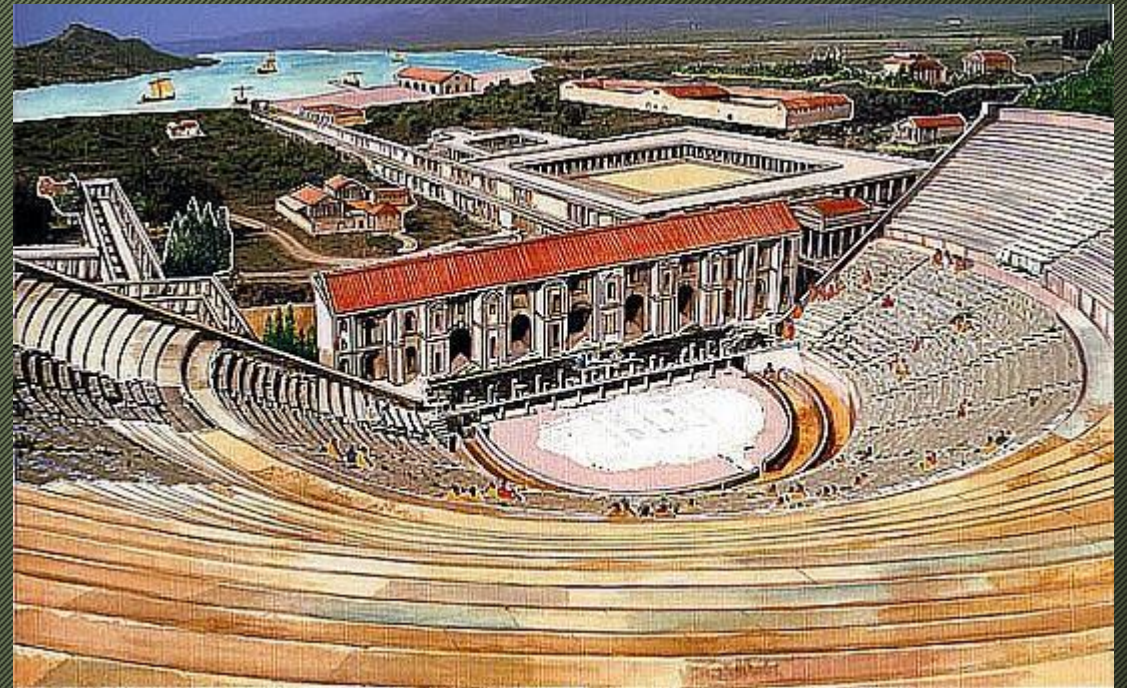


Historical sketch of the church

- Revelation 2:1-7

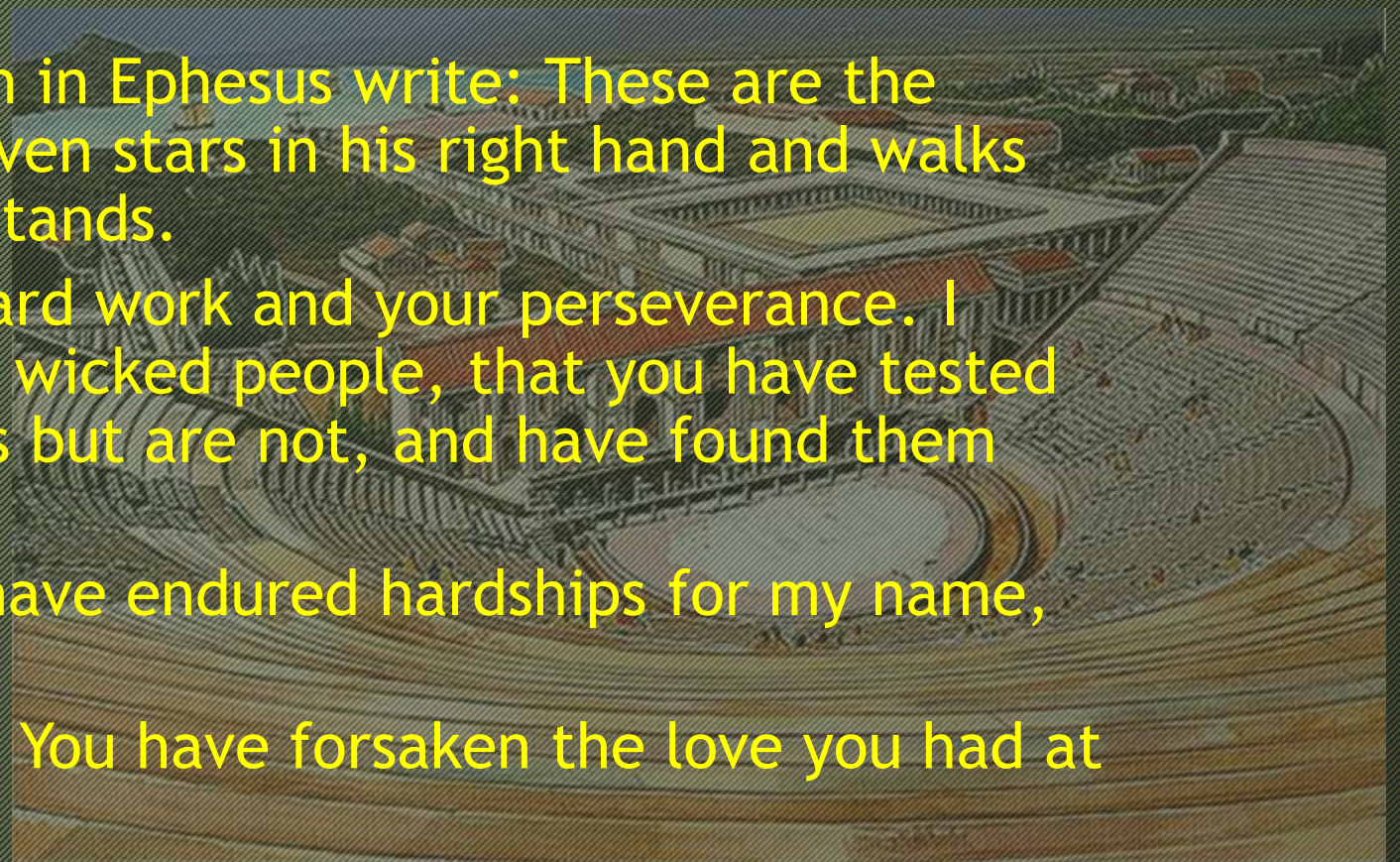
- **Ephesus:**

- Apostolic church of the first century (AD 33-100).
- It had the fire of the Spirit, endured much hardship, but had lost its first love.
- Jesus calls for the church to repent.



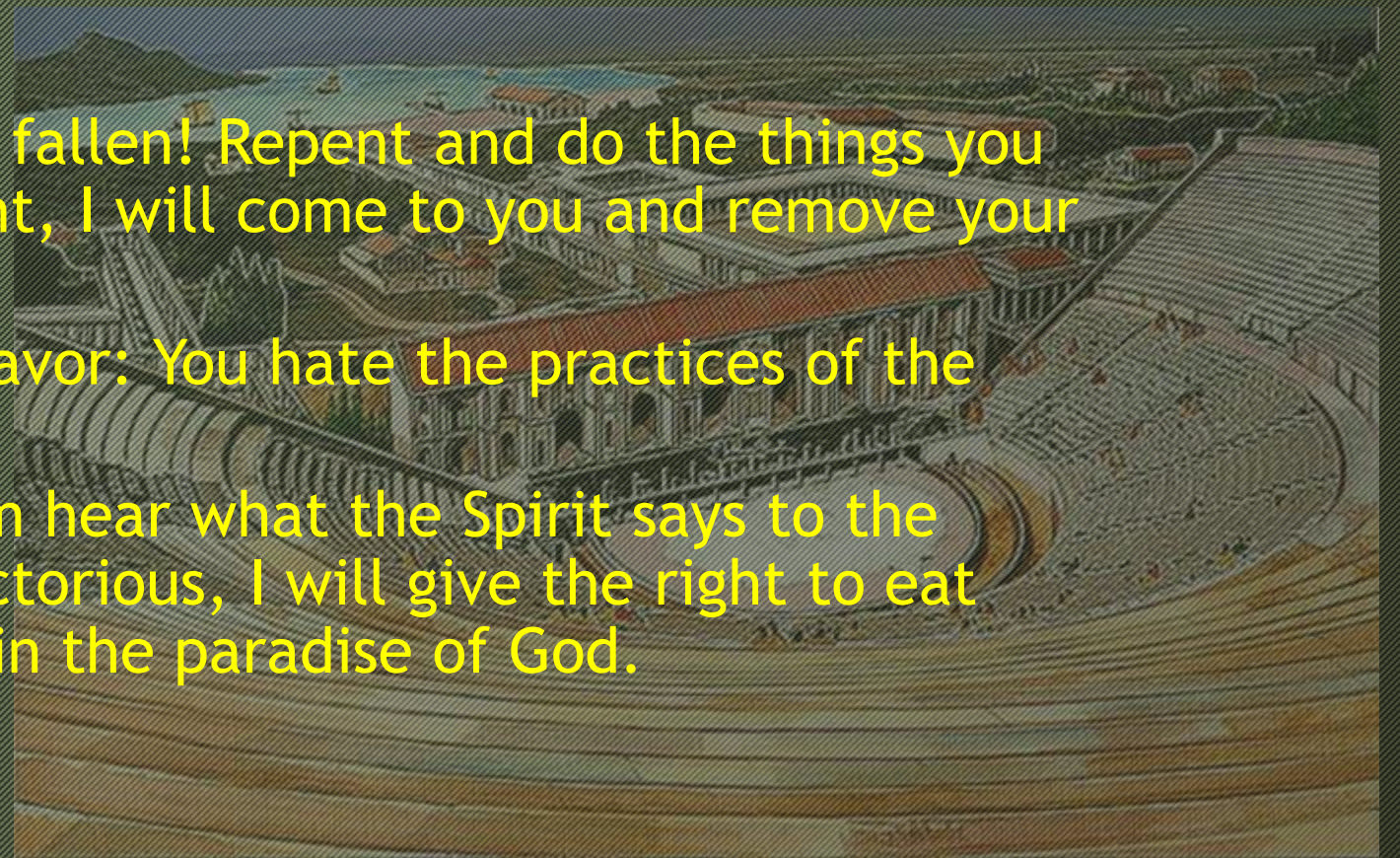
Revelation 2:1-7 Ephesus

- (1) "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands.
- (2) I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false.
- (3) You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.
- (4) Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first.



Revelation 2:1-7 Ephesus

- (5) Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.
- (6) But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.
- (7) Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.



Historical sketch of the church

- Revelation 2:6:11

- **Smyrna:**

- Persecuted church (AD 100-312).
- God permitted suffering to purify the church under ten Roman emperors.
- It seemed outwardly poor but was inwardly rich.
- Jesus encourages the church of this period.



Revelation 2:8-11 Smyrna

- (8) "To the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again.
- (9) I know your afflictions and your poverty—yet you are rich! I know about the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.
- (10) Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor's crown.
- (11) Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death.

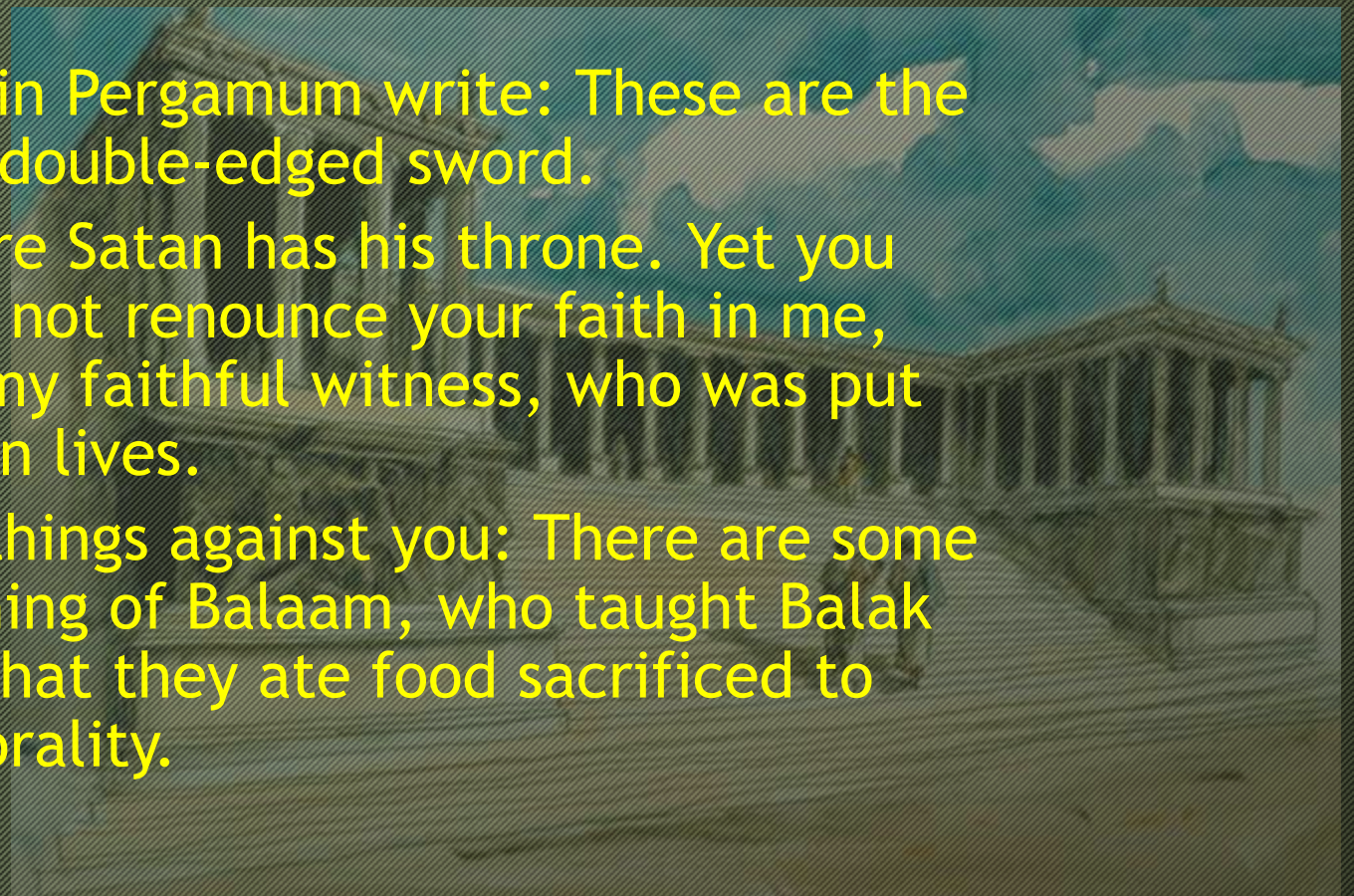
Historical sketch of the church

- Revelation 2:12-17
- **Pergamum:**
 - The State church (AD 312-590).
 - Pergamos means "marriage." The church married to the state compromises with the world.
 - Jesus calls for repentance.



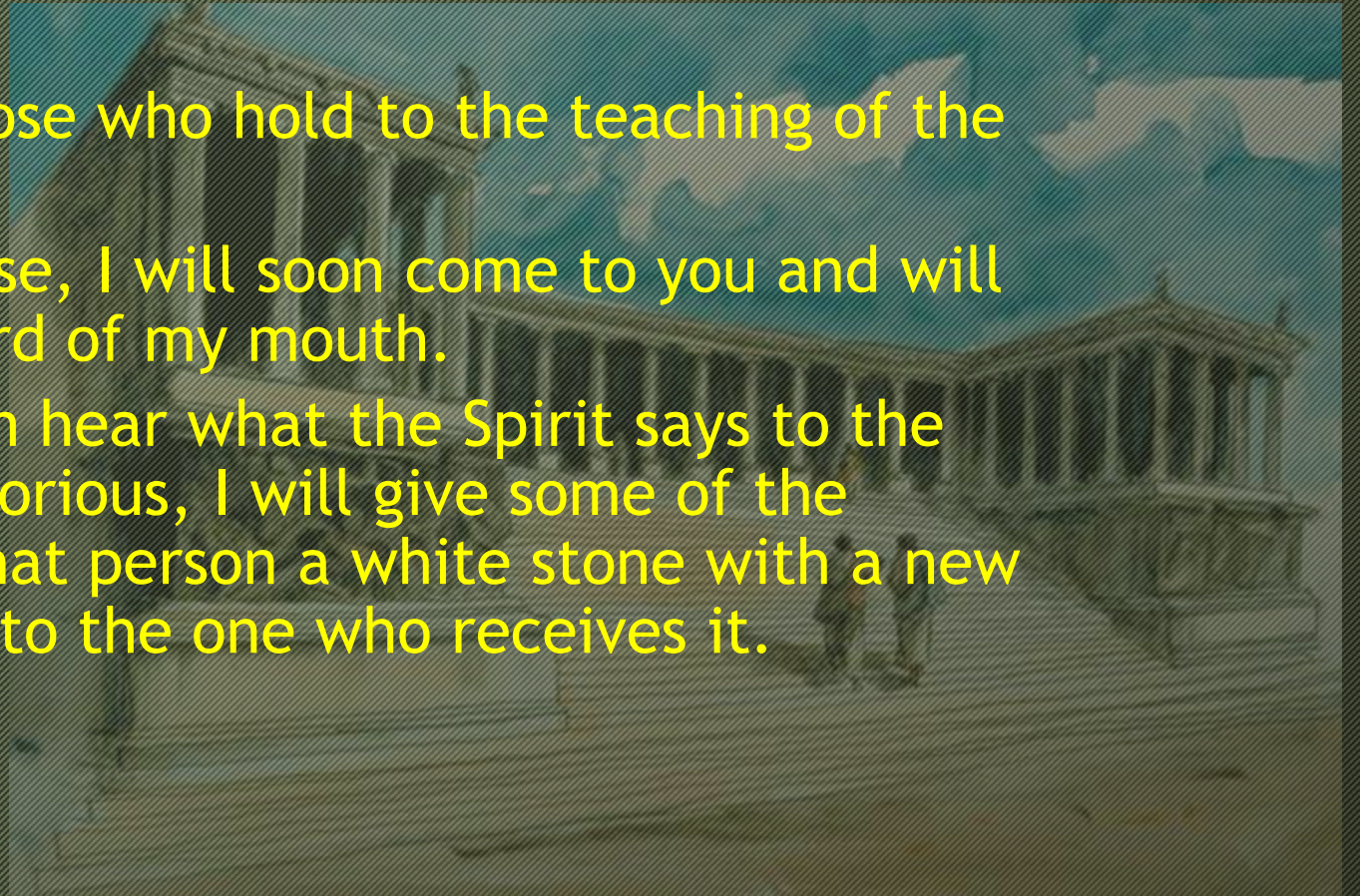
Revelation 2:12-17 Pergamum

- (12) "To the angel of the church in Pergamum write: These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword.
- (13) I know where you live—where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, not even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city—where Satan lives.
- (14) Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: There are some among you who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin so that they ate food sacrificed to idols and committed sexual immorality.



Revelation 2:12-17 Pergamum

- (15) Likewise, you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.
- (16) Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.
- (17) Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.



Historical sketch of the church

- Revelation 2:18-29

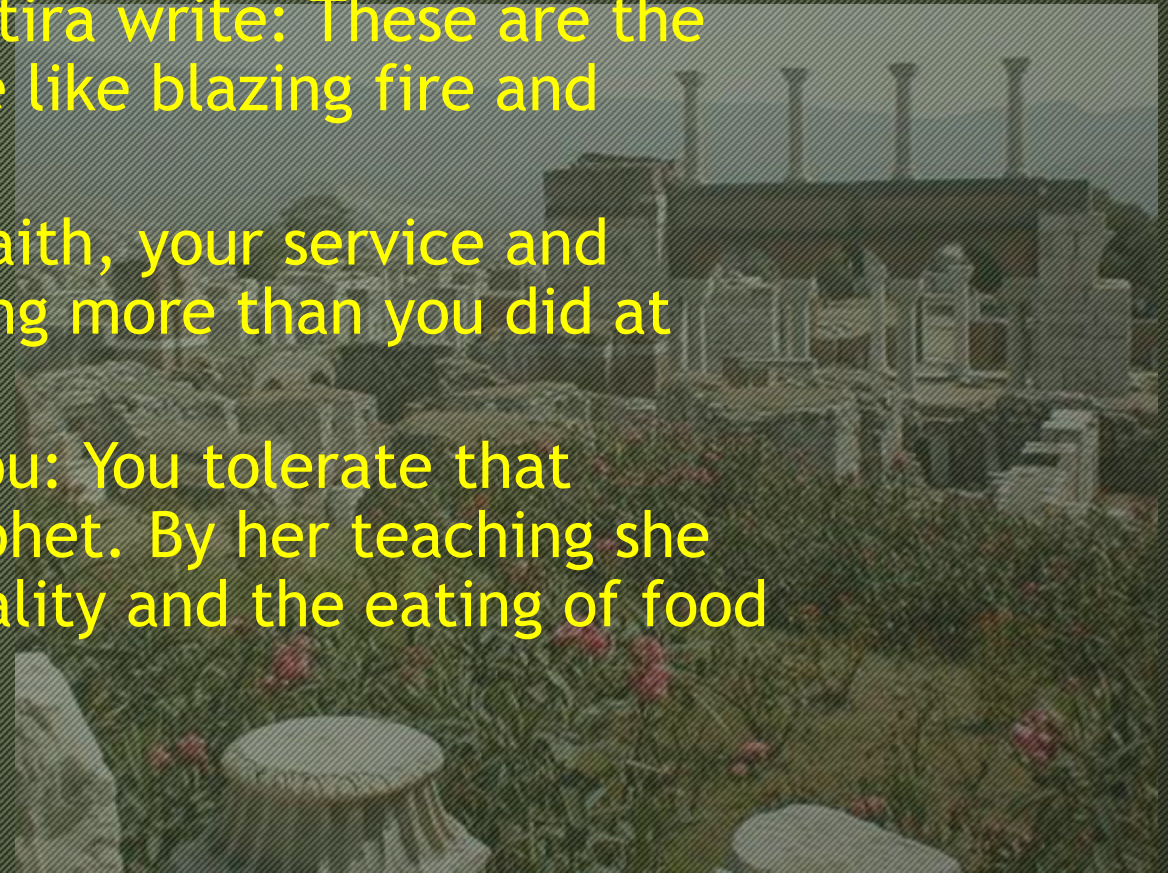
- **Thyatira:**

- Church of the dark ages (AD 590-1517).
- Thyatira means "continued sacrifice."
- Ritualistic church, which focussed on clergy, and substituted ritual for prayer, worship and the Word.
- Compared to Jezebel who corrupted Israel with idolatry (1 Kings 16:29-33).



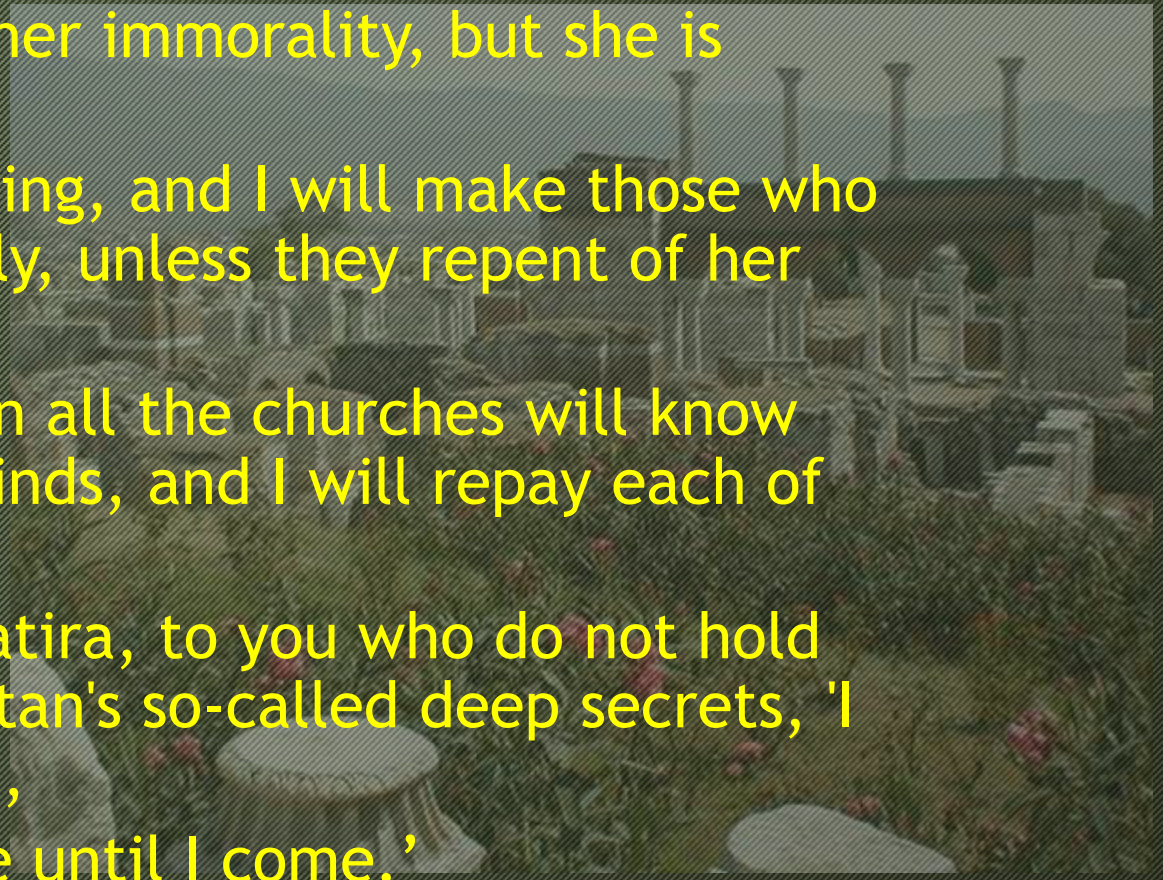
Revelation 2:18-29 Thyatira

- (18) "To the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These are the words of the Son of God, whose eyes are like blazing fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze.
- (19) I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first.
- (20) Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols.



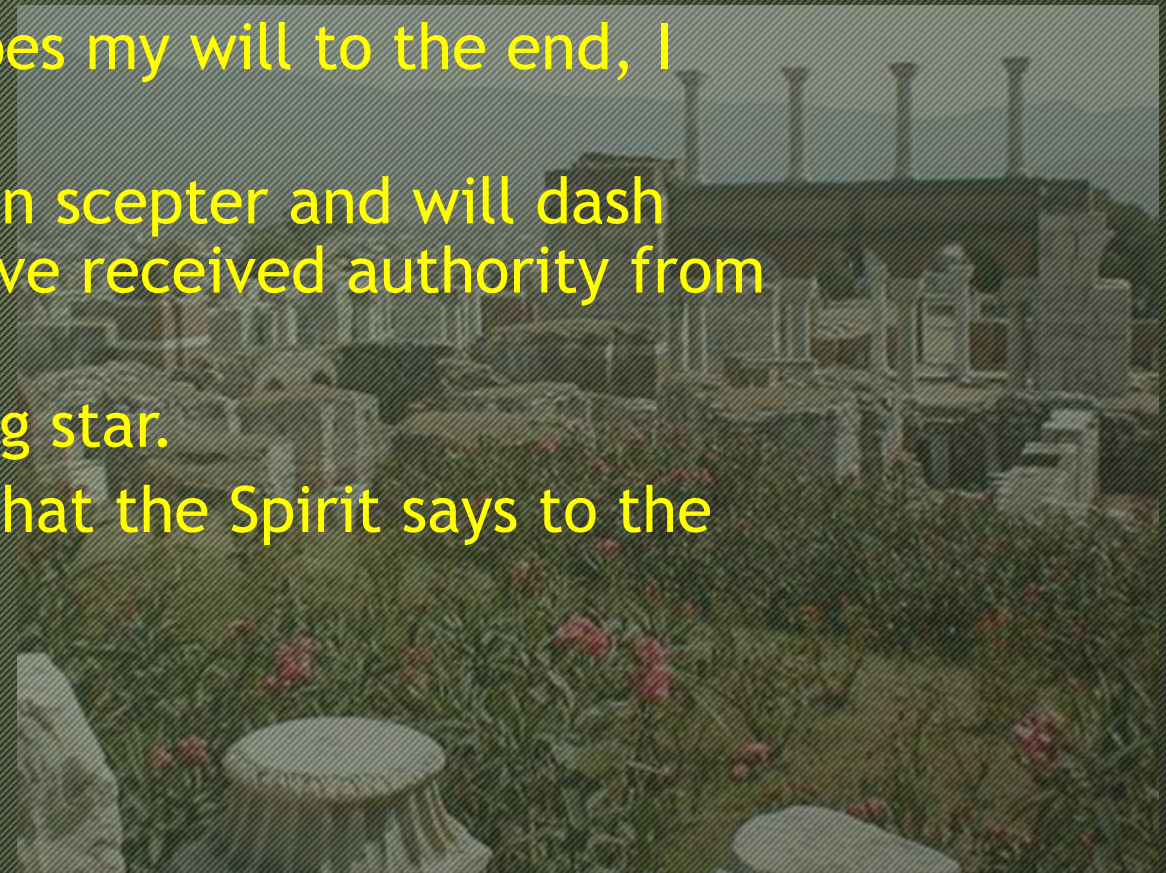
Revelation 2:18-29 Thyatira

- (21) I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling.
- (22) So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways.
- (23) I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds.
- (24) Now I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan's so-called deep secrets, 'I will not impose any other burden on you,
- (25) except to hold on to what you have until I come.'



Revelation 2:18-29 Thyatira

- (26) To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations—
- (27) that one 'will rule them with an iron scepter and will dash them to pieces like pottery'—just as I have received authority from my Father.
- (28) I will also give that one the morning star.
- (29) Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.



Historical sketch of the church

- Revelation 3:1-6

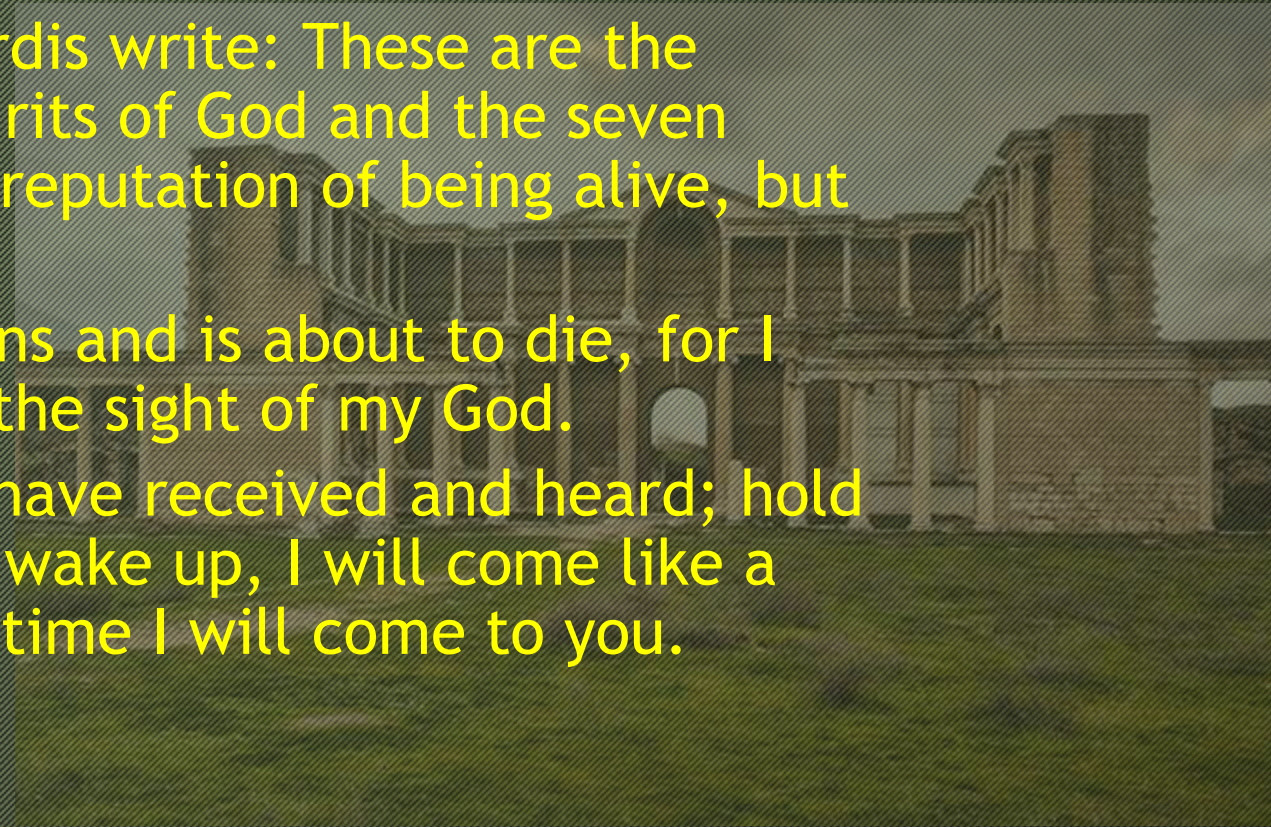
- **Sardis:**

- The church of the Protestant Reformation (AD 1517-1750).
- Sardis means "those escaping."
- The intensity of the Reformation cooled.
- Jesus calls for the church to wake up.



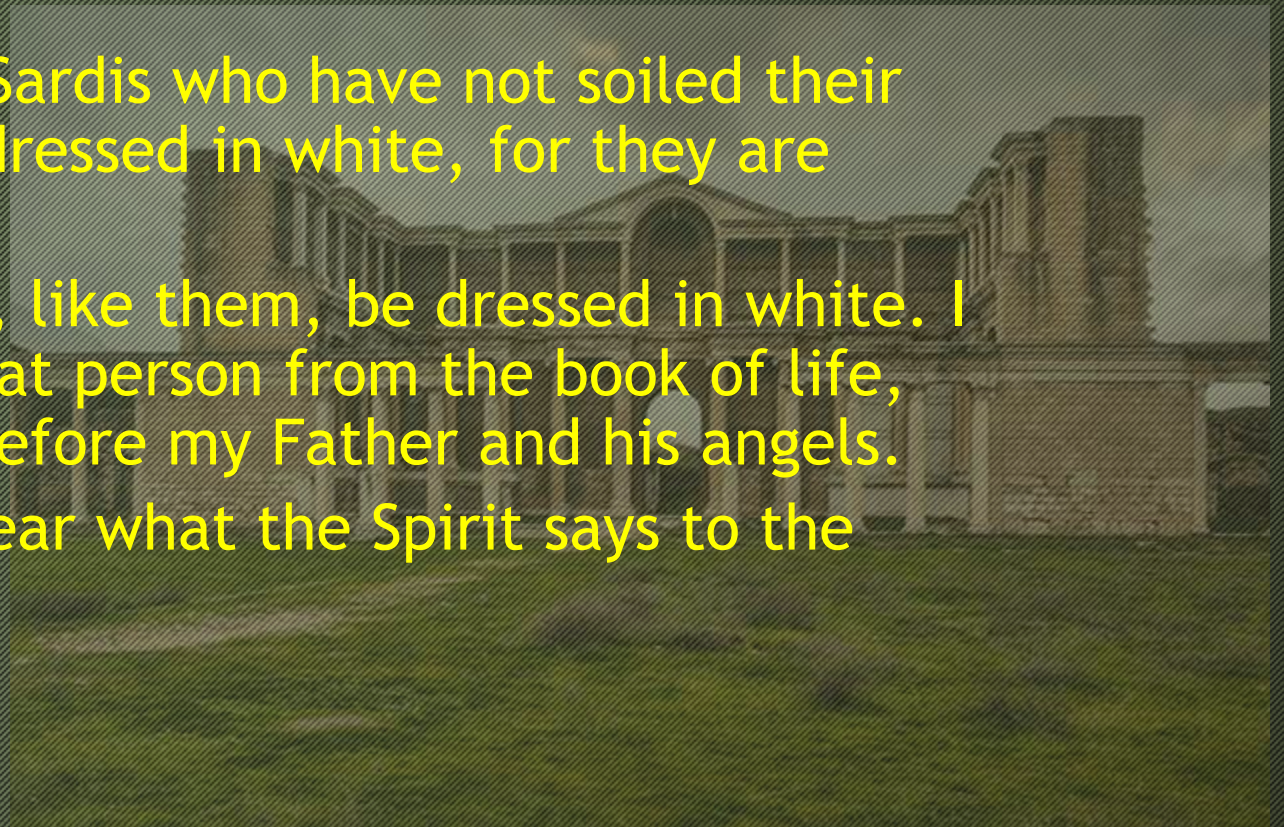
Revelation 3:1-6 Sardis

- (1) "To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.
- (2) Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God.
- (3) Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.



Revelation 3:1-6 Sardis

- (4) Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy.
- (5) The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels.
- (6) Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.



Historical sketch of the church

- Revelation 3:7-13

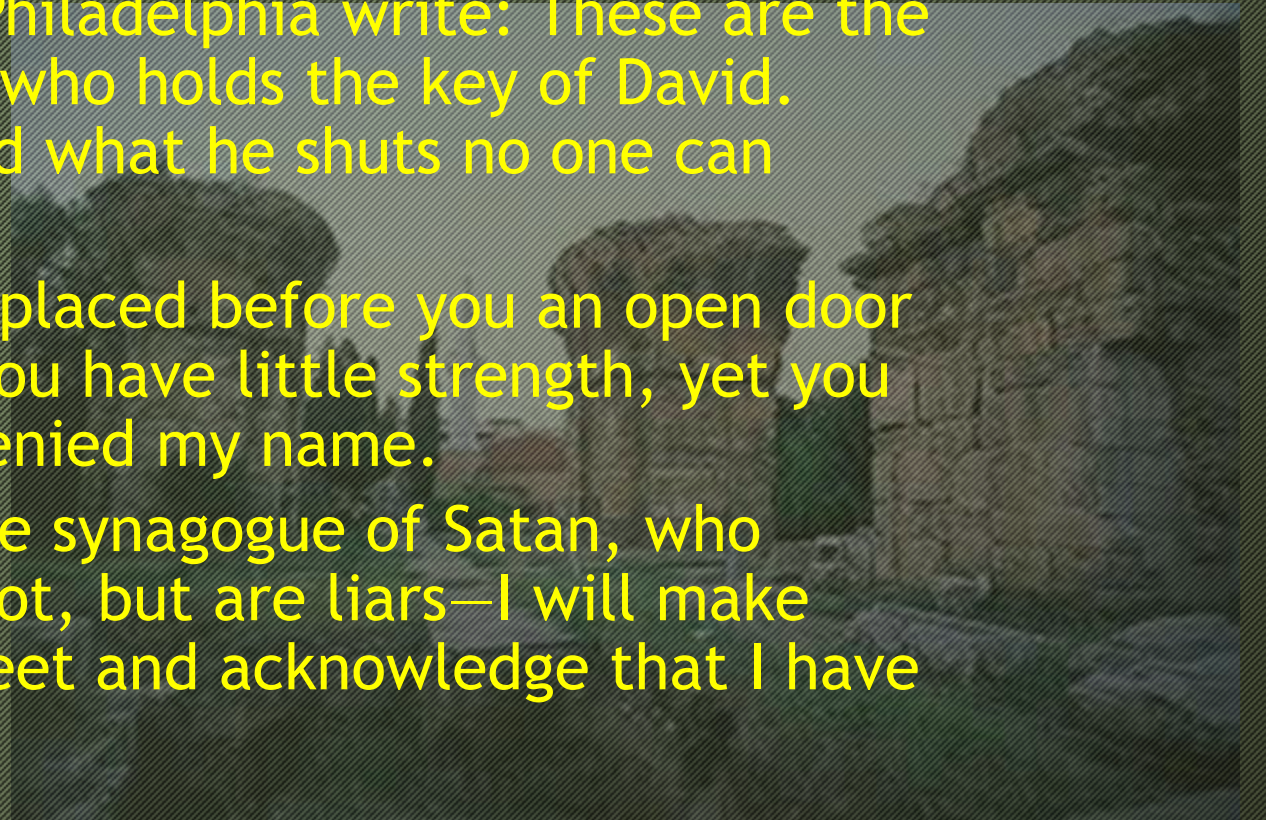
- **Philadelphia:**

- The evangelising church (AD 1750 - 1905).
- Philadelphia means "brotherly love."
- This was the period of many revivals.
- Jesus commends the church for behaving sincerely and causing no shame to His name.



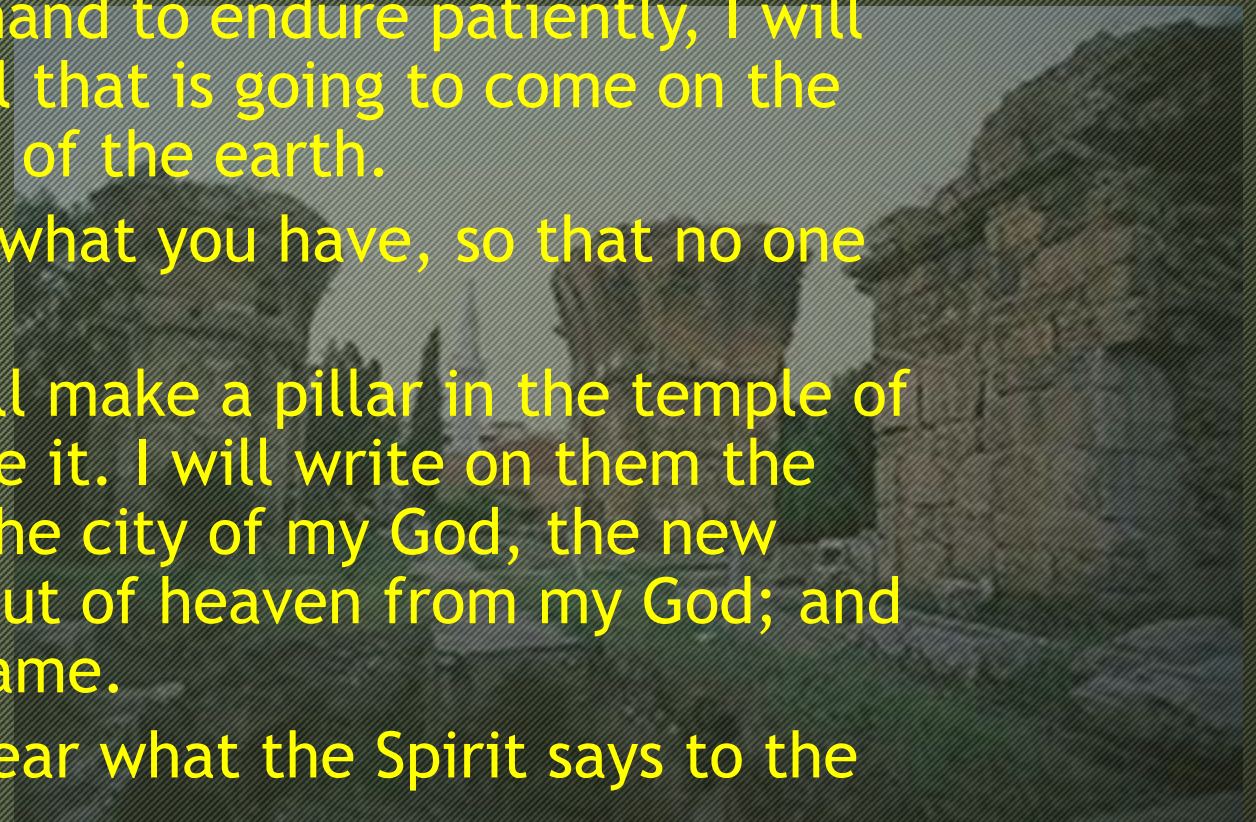
Revelation 3:7-13 Philadelphia

- (7) "To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.
- (8) I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.
- (9) I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars—I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you.



Revelation 3:7-13 Philadelphia

- (10) Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth.
- (11) I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.
- (12) The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name.
- (13) Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

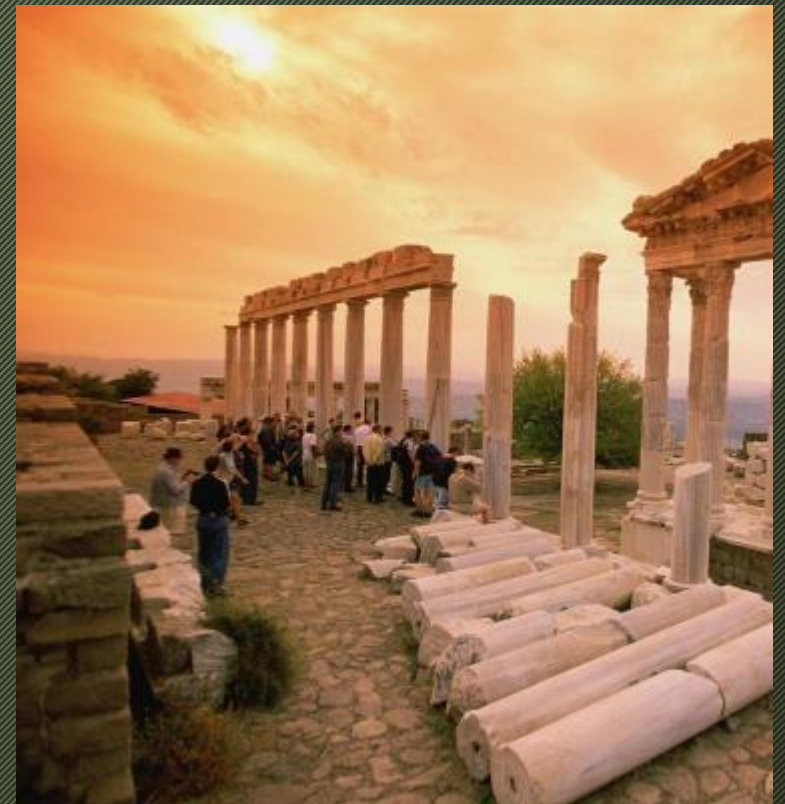


Historical sketch of the church

- Revelation 3:14-22

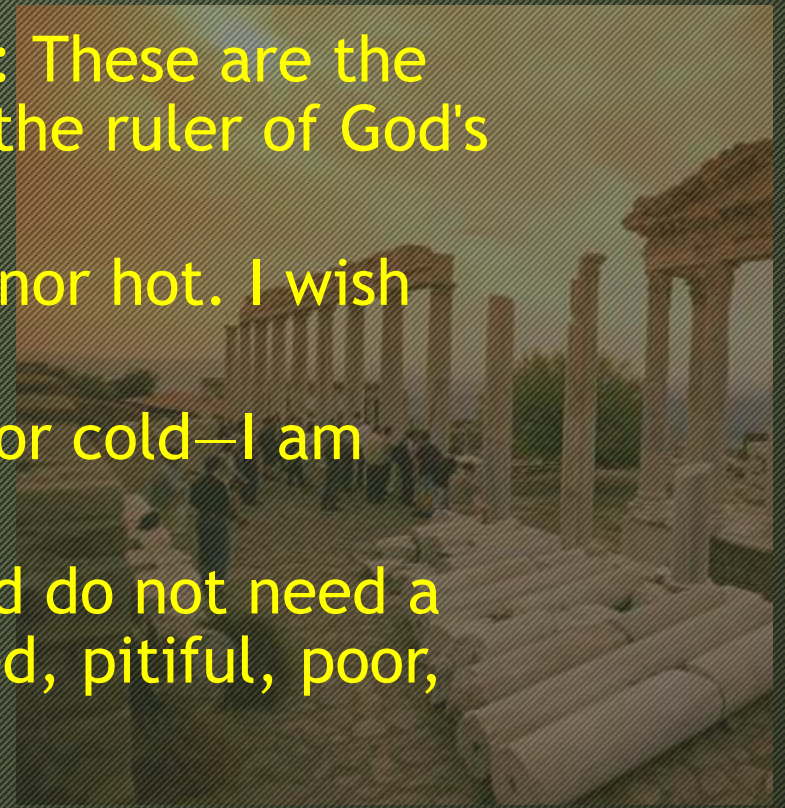
- **Laodecia:**

- The End Time church (AD 1905 to the Tribulation).
- Laodecia means "right of laity." It indicates a focus on the people of the church.
- Lukewarmness creeps in. Liberal thinking has invaded theology, the inspiration of the Bible is being questioned, materialism has replaced spirituality and morality is at its lowest.
- Jesus calls for repentance.



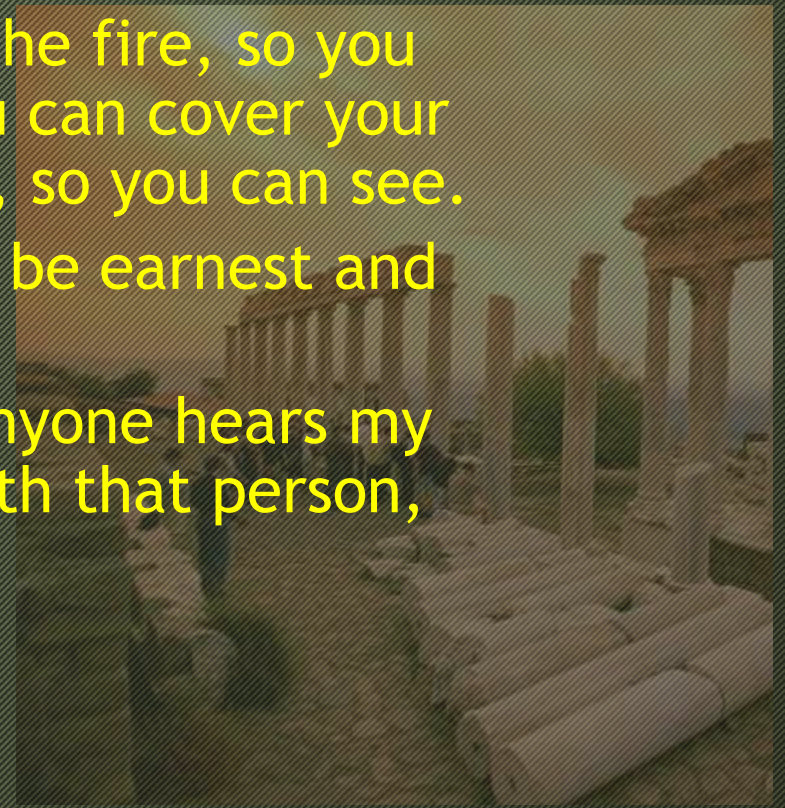
Revelation 3:14-22 Laodicea

- (14) "To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation.
- (15) I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other!
- (16) So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.
- (17) You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.



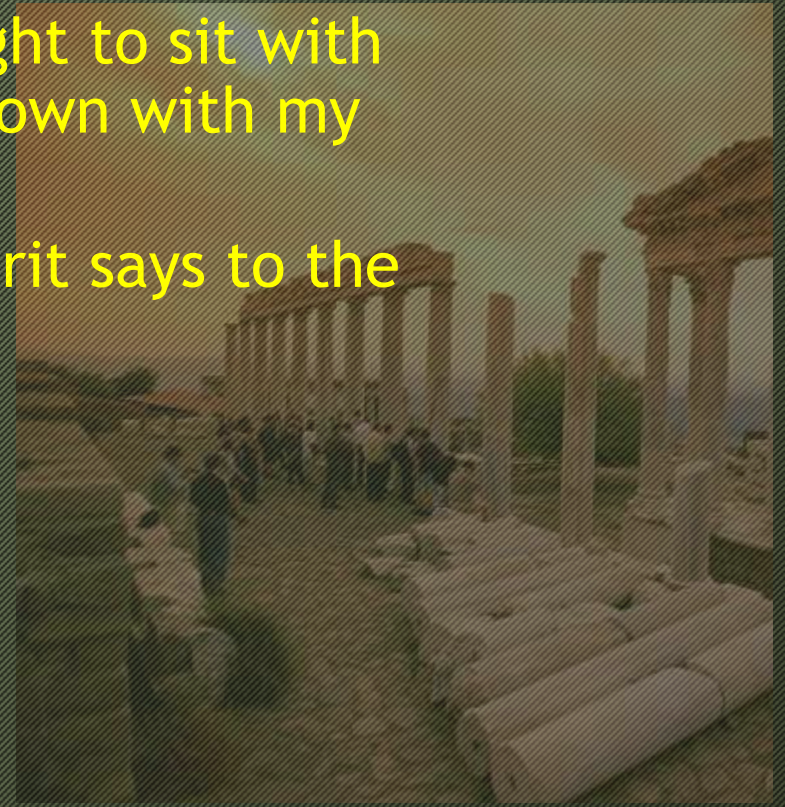
Revelation 3:14-22 Laodecia

- (18) I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.
- (19) Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent.
- (20) Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.



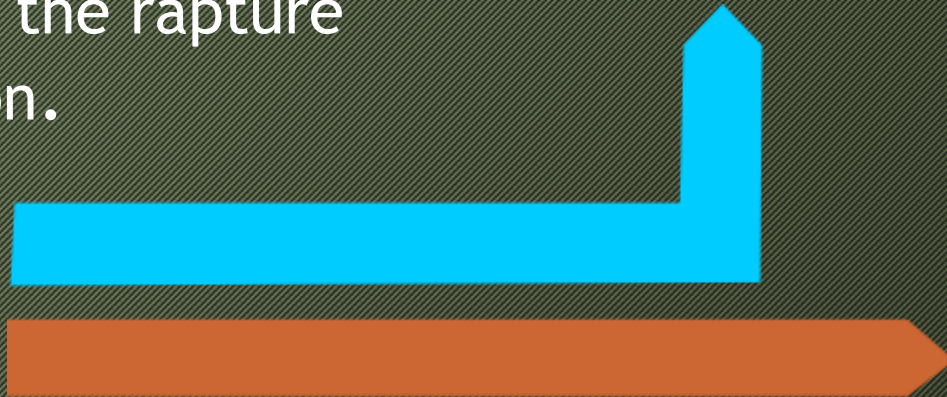
Revelation 3:14-22 Laodecia

- (21) To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne.
- (22) Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches."



Historical sketch of the church

- There is another view that Philadelphia (representing those with a genuine experience of salvation) and Laodecia (representing the nominal church) are concurrent at the end.
 - Philadelphia is snatched away in the rapture
 - Laodecia goes into the tribulation.



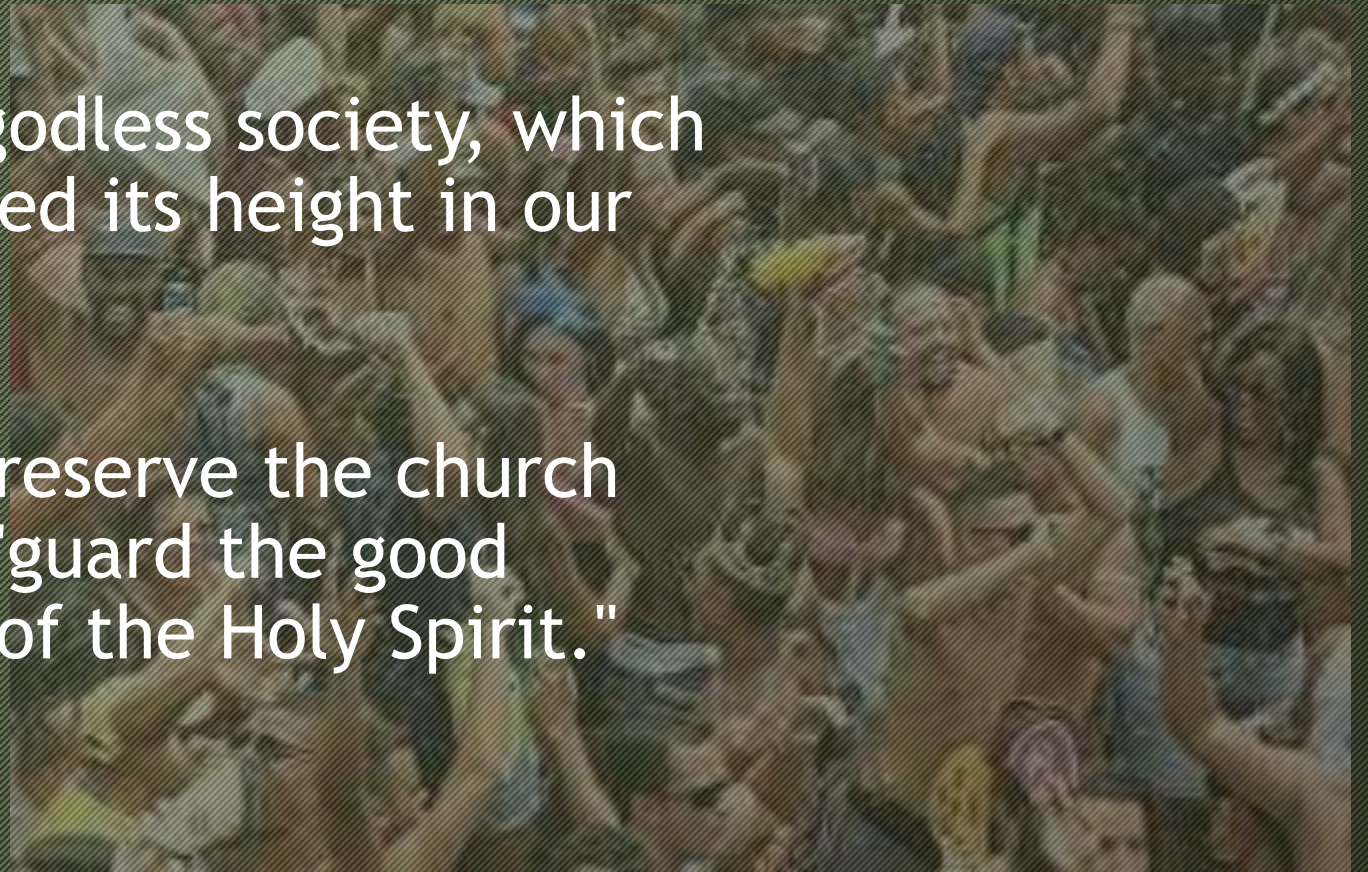
Conditions in which the church ministers

•2 Timothy 3:1-5

- The pleasure loving and godless society, which Paul describes, has reached its height in our day.

•2 Timothy 1:12-14

- He knows that God will preserve the church but stresses the need to "guard the good deposit ... with the help of the Holy Spirit."



Conditions in which the church ministers

• **2 Peter 1:5-11**

- Peter encourages the church to make its 'calling and election sure', with a view to receiving a rich welcome into the 'kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.'

• **2 Peter 3:3-4**

- Peter anticipates the scepticism of the present age. He, with Jude, very strongly asserts the certainty of God keeping his promises.
- He reveals that it is the mercy of God that delays certain judgement

Tribulation Views

- These views are in relation to the seventieth week, generally referred to as the Tribulation, of which the latter 3 ½ years is called the Great Tribulation.



Great Tribulation

Views of the Rapture

- **Various views**

- Partial rapture view
- Pre-tribulational rapture view
- Mid-tribulational rapture view
- Post-tribulational rapture view

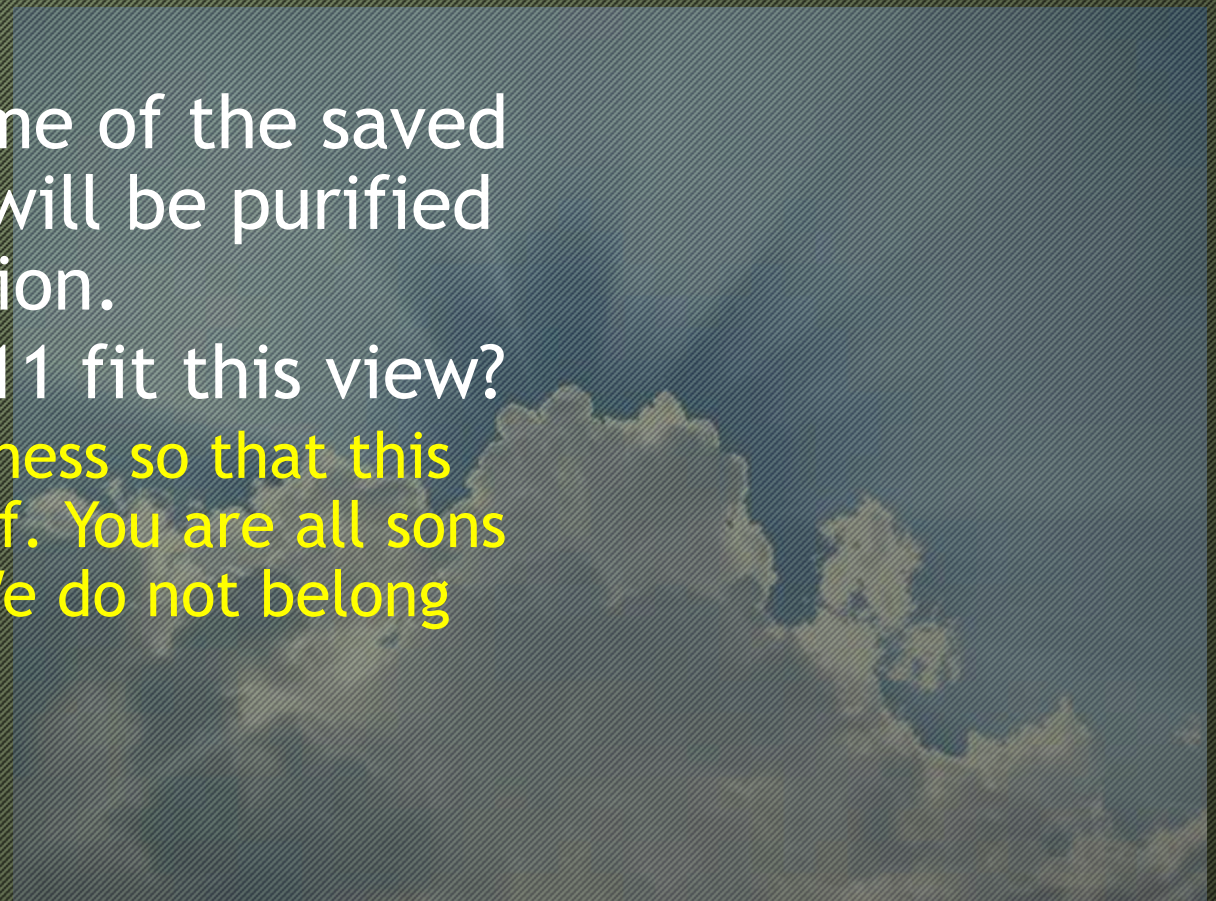


Tribulation

Views of the Rapture

• Partial Rapture view

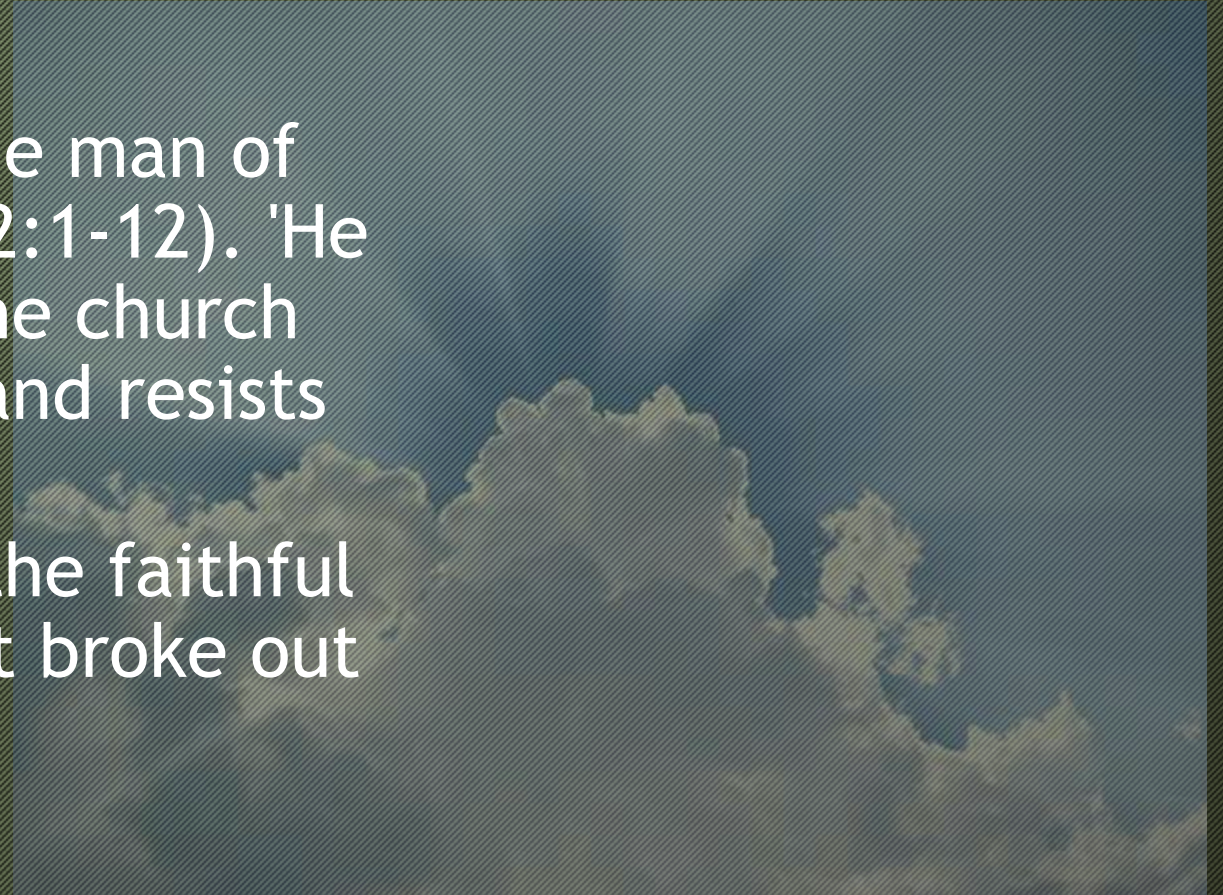
- This view teaches that only some of the saved will be raptured, and the rest will be purified and resurrected in the Tribulation.
- How does 1 Thessalonians 5:4-11 fit this view?
 - But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness



Views of the Rapture

•Pre-tribulational view

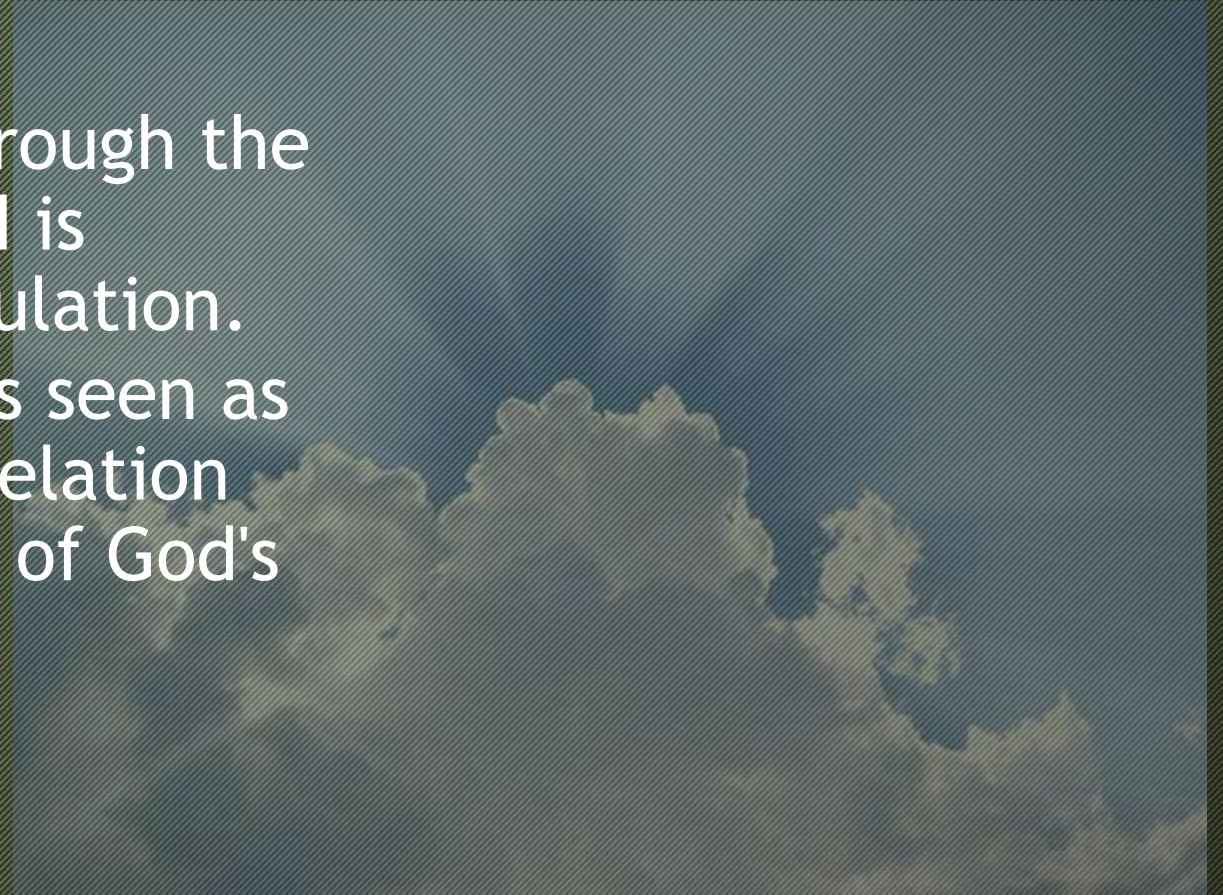
- The church is raptured before the man of sin is revealed (1 Thessalonians 2:1-12). 'He who holds back' (or hinders) is the church in which the Holy Spirit resides and resists the work of Satan.
- As in the case of Noah and Lot, the faithful were removed before judgement broke out on evil.



Views of the Rapture

•Mid-tribulational view

- In this view the church goes through the first part of the Tribulation and is raptured before the Great Tribulation.
- The last trump of 1 Cor 15:52 is seen as the 7th Angelic Trumpet of Revelation 11:15 which precedes the vials of God's wrath.



Views of the Rapture

•Mid-tribulational view

- The resurrection of the two witnesses of Revelation 11:12 is seen as analogous with the Rapture of the church.
- It stresses that the first 3 ½ years are the 'beginning of sorrows.'



Views of the Rapture

- **Mid-Tribulational view**

- *Pre-Wrath view*

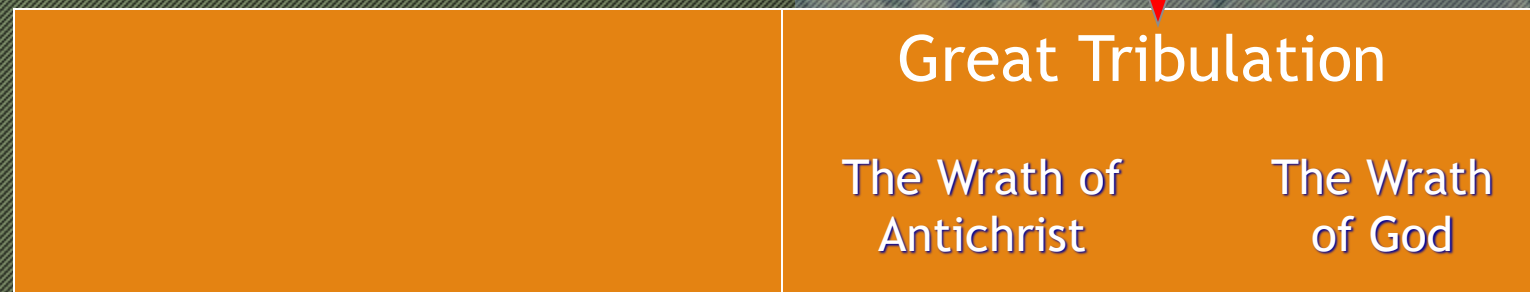
- This is one of the newer views propounded by Robert Van Kampen, who seeks to reconcile scriptures used by both the Pre-trib and Mid-trib positions
- References from Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 are used as evidence that this tribulation will be cut short by the coming of Christ to deliver the righteous by means of the rapture.

Views of the Rapture

- **Mid-Tribulation view**

- *Pre-Wrath view*

- The Great Tribulation is divided into two periods
 - The Wrath of Antichrist
 - The Wrath of God



Views of the Rapture

- **Mid-Tribulational view**

- **Pre-Wrath view**

- The Rapture of the Church occurs after the Wrath of Antichrist and before the Wrath of God
 - The duration of the Wrath of Antichrist is unknown, but he persecutes Christians and causes martyrdom; some become apostate
 - The Rapture is preceded by signs in the sun, moon and stars



Great Tribulation

The Wrath of Antichrist

The Wrath of God

Views of the Rapture

•Post-tribulation view

- This view sees the church as going through the entire tribulation period.
- It claims that the existence of tribulation saints in Revelation indicates that the church is present.
- It sees the Rapture in the resurrection of Revelation 20:4.

Great Tribulation

Views of the Rapture

- **The Assemblies of God** holds the pre-tribulational view.
- Some scholars of prophecy say that if the tribulation is regarded as only the latter 3½ years of the seventieth week, the mid-tribulational view can be harmonised with the pre-tribulational view.

