

Precept study on Revelation Part 1, Lesson 7: Sardis

Tim Davis

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1 Summary of last lesson: Thyatira

2 Thyatira

commercially successful city. not politically important numerous trade guilds: bakers, bronze workers, clothing, cobblers, weavers, tanners, dyers, potters

Ephesus hated the practices of the Nicolaitans, Pergamum simply had some among them. Thyatira *tolerated* them.

"I KNOW" is more pertinent for Thyatira, since the Jezebelians were doing their deeds in secret (the 'deep things of Satan'; Jesus 'searches minds and hearts'; Jesus 'eyes like flames of fire').

3 Sardis

Notes from Stott.

- At the foot of Mt Tmolus, fertile river valley. Former capital of Lydia. Destroyed by an earthquake in 17 AD, rebuilt into a great city (but not at its former glory).
- Sardis was an almost impregnable city that had twice fallen to surprise attacks (Persian Cyrus, and the 2nd to Antiochus the Great). "Through the failure to watch ... the acropolis had been successfully scaled in 549 BC by a Median soldier, and in 218 BC by a Cretan.'
- no false doctrine. OK by external appearances, but inwardly dead. High reputation, reality weak. (1 Sam 16:7 - man looks at outward appearance, the LORD looks at the heart).
- sin had seeped into the church (soiled clothes). Pious exterior, inwardly wicked. Secret immorality, perhaps? Nominal faith (nominal: in name only). Hypocrisy – playing a role that is not real.
- Herodotus: Sardis had a reputation for lax moral standards and open immorality.
- let the dead bury their own dead, Jesus said (Matt 8:22). The people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me (Isaiah 29:13). Woe to Pharisees – white-washed tombs.
- pleroo: completed / filled. Also used in Eph 5:18: be filled with the Holy Spirit.