

and deed the character of God, fulfill the Lord's purpose for them, and Christ takes pleasure in them." (7BC 956.3).

The Holy Spirit has delineated seven different states of the Christian church, which would appear in succession, extending to the coming of our Lord and the consummation of all things. The first church named is EPHESUS, cover the first, or apostolic age of the church. The definition of the word Ephesus is DESIRABLE—a good descriptive term of the character and condition of the church in its first state. (DAR 379.2).

## THE ANGEL OF THE CHURCH

The angel of a church must denote a messenger, or minister, of that church; and as these churches each cover a period of time, the angel of each church must denote the ministry during the period covered by that church. "I have somewhat against thee," says Christ, "because thou hast left thy first love." (Rev. 2:4). "I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." (Rev. 2:5).

The coming here mentioned signify a visitation of judgment, the removing of the candlestick would denote the taking away from them of the light and privileges of the gospel, and committing them to other hands, unless they should better fulfil the responsibilities of the trust committed to them.

It would be the rejection of them on the part of Christ as his representatives, to bear the light of his truth and gospel before the world. Christ mentions that they hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes...a class of persons whose deeds and doctrines were alike abominable in the sight of Heaven.

They held to a community of wives, regarding adultery and fornication as things indifferent, and permitted the eating of things offered to idols. (DAR 376.2). "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." The same language is used to each

of the seven churches. Christ, when upon earth, made use of the same form of speech in calling the attention of the people to the most important of his teachings. He used it in reference to the mission of John (Matt.11:15), the parable of the sower (Matt.13:9), and the parable of the tares, setting forth the end of the world. Verse 43.

It is also used in relation to an important prophetic fulfilment in Rev.13:9. To the overcomer it is promised that he shall eat of the tree of life that grows in the midst of the paradise, or garden, of God. Where is this paradise? Answer: In the third heaven. (2 Cor.12:2). To the overcomer, is promised a restoration to more than Adam lost. Reader strive to be an overcomer; for he who gains access to the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God, shall die no more.

## References

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# The church of Ephesus

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**T**he word EPHESUS, means the first or desirable and covers the New Testament church history of the 1st century (6T, p. 423). Also read Acts of the Apostles pages 578.2.

## THE CHURCH OF EPHESUS

“Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write: These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted.

“Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” (Rev. 2:1-7).

“Ephesus signifies, "desirable, chief." This was true of the first age of the church, in the apostles' days. They had received the doctrine of Christ pure from the mouth of the great Teacher, and the Holy Spirit was poured out, and rested upon them.

“The gifts of the Spirit were with the church. It was noted for "works," "labor," and patience, and could "not bear them which were evil." God could dwell with such a church, and manifest his power in their midst. Yet there were some things against this desirable church, in consequence of which they were called upon to repent.” (RH, vol 8, October 16, 1856, p 188). Also read AA 578.2.

“To the Church in her first stage -- the Church of Ephesus -- He says: "I have somewhat against thee because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works."

“This points definitely to the falling away that is mentioned by Paul to the elders of the Church at Ephesus (Acts 20 : 30), and that is again mentioned and dwelt upon by him in 2 Thessalonians 2, which falling away, when continued, developed "that man of sin," "the son of perdition," "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped" -- the ecclesiastical State now under consideration. The time of this phase of the Church is by the letter itself, shown to be the days of the apostles,<sup>9</sup> and therefore ended about A. D. 100.” (Alonso T. Jones, *Ecclesiastical Empires*, p 5).

## THE CHARACTERS OF BELIEVERS

“At the first the experience of the church of Ephesus was marked with childlike simplicity and fervor. A lively, earnest, heartfelt love for Christ was expressed. The believers rejoiced in the love of God because Christ was in their hearts as an abiding presence. The praise of God was on their lips, and their attitude of thanksgiving was in accord with the thanksgiving of the heavenly family.” (6T 421.2).

“The world took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. Sinful men, repentant, pardoned, cleansed, and sanctified, were brought into partnership with God through His Son. The believers sought earnestly to receive and obey every word of God. Filled with love for their Redeemer, they sought as their highest aim to win souls to Him.” (6T 421.3).

And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Acts 20:20, 23).

“And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.” (Acts 5:42).

## CHRIST CARES FOR HIS CHURCH

“In the message to the church at Ephesus, Christ is represented as holding the seven stars in His hand, and walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. He is represented as "walking" among them, thus illustrating His constant diligence in behalf of His church.

“These figures are to be carefully studied by the undershepherds, and faithfully applied to their own experience, that they may not lose sight of their great privilege of securing light from the Source of all light, and giving it in turn to those for whom they labor.” (7BC 956.1).

Christ is in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, walking from church to church, from congregation to congregation, from heart to heart. He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. If the candlesticks were left to the care of human beings, how often the light would flicker and go out!

“But God has not given His church into the hands of men. Christ, the One who gave His life for the world, that all who believe in Him may not perish but have everlasting life, is the watchman of the house. He is the warder, faithful and true, of the temple courts of the Lord.” (7BC 956.2).

“Christ walks in the midst of His churches through the length and breadth of the earth. He looks with intense interest to see whether His people are in such a condition spiritually that they can advance His kingdom. He is present in every assembly of the church. He knows those whose hearts He can fill with the holy oil, that they may impart it to others. Those who faithfully carry forward the work of Christ, representing in word