

# 04aa12-Letter to Philadelphia

by "Sister Anne" | Jun 1, 2017 | 04aa Mary Unveils the Apocalypse | 0 comments



[Video](#) | [Audio](#) | Transcript ([PDF](#), [DOCX](#))

Good evening everyone!

Greetings to our audio and YouTube listeners!

We devoted six conferences to six of the seven letters to the seven churches. I held back the letter to Philadelphia because it's so deeply intertwined with the heart of the Apocalypse. The letter to the Church of Brotherly Love [*philadelphos*] isn't addressed to a region of the world as are the other Churches. It's addressed to, shall we say, "special operations" Christians who are living within those regions. They each have their orders from on high. They might not know one another. If they stand out from other Christians, it's because they are fervent, or they have become somehow marginalized by Christians who are compromising with the Faith.

Significantly, Philadelphia receives the sixth letter. Its number is "six." We already had a conference on the mark of the beast and the number 666. The Philadelphians are the Christians who engage most directly with the triple-six. But what's difficult for me to present in a brief synopsis is that all the traits of the Philadelphians are bound up with the entire sixth vertical row in the table of Seven Sevens, namely the Judgments upon Babylon, and the sixth horizontal row, namely, the "Sixth Events" (e.g., the sixth seal, the sixth trumpet, et cetera).

In our first conference we examined a general overview of the whole Book of Revelation and saw that it is highly structured, a super-structure. This evening I would like to present a more particular overview of this amazing book, to help you see the pattern that repeats itself very consistently and emphasizes the sixth events.

## ***The Prologue [Rev 1:1-9]***

It corresponds very closely in style and content to the Epilogue [Rev 22:6-21].

## ***First Group of Seven: The Seven Letters [Rev 1:10-3:22]***

A Double Preparatory Vision

*First Vision: John is overwhelmed by the majesty of Jesus who walks among lampstands*

*Second Vision: Jesus raises John and orders him to write to the Churches*

Six Letters

Within the 6th Letter—a double vision

*First Vision: "Behold" an open door*

*Second Vision: "Behold" a synagogue of Jews*

The 7th Letter

## ***Second Group of Seven: The Seven Seals [Rev 4:1-7:17]***

A Double Preparatory Vision

*First Vision: John sees a heavenly liturgy*

*Second Vision: John sees a sealed scroll and weeps*

Six Seals

After the 6th Seal—a double vision

*First Vision: John sees 144,000 who follow the lamb*

*Second Vision: John sees an uncountable number washed and saved in the blood of the lamb*

The 7th Seal

### ***Third Group of Seven: The Seven Trumpets [Rev 8:6–11:18]***

A Double Preparatory Vision

*First Vision: John sees an angel offering the incense of the prayers of God's people*

*Second Vision: John sees the same angel hurling the coals of the censer to the earth*

Six Trumpets

After the 6th Trumpet –a double vision

*First Vision: John sees a mighty angel standing on land and sea*

*Second Vision: John sees two witnesses*

The 7th Seal

### ***Fourth Group of Seven: The Seven Signs (or “Mysteries”) [Rev 11:16–15:4]***

A Double Preparatory Vision

*First Vision: John sees 24 Elders*

*Second Vision: John sees God's Temple in heaven and the Ark*

Five Signs

Before the 6th and 7th Signs—a double vision

(Note: the exception serves to emphasize that the just and unjust will be judged simultaneously.)

*First Vision: John sees three angels uttering warnings*

*Second Vision: John hears a voice from heaven uttering a blessing*

The 6th and 7th Signs

### ***Fifth Group of Seven: The Seven Plagues (or Bowls)***

A Double Preparatory Vision

*First Vision: John sees the Sea of Glass*

*Second Vision: John sees the Tent of Meeting opening and angels emerging*

Six Plagues

After the 6th Plague—a double vision

*First Vision: John sees three unclean spirits like frogs*

*Second Vision: John sees kings assembling at Armageddon*

The 7th Plague

### ***Sixth Group of Seven: The Seven Judgments on the Sinful City***

A Double Preparatory Vision

*First Vision:* John sees *the harlot sitting by the sea*

*Second Vision:* John sees *kings, merchants and seafarers lamenting Babylon*

Six Judgments

After the 6th Judgment—a double vision

*First Vision:* John sees *the first resurrection*

*Second Vision:* John sees *Gog and Magog*

The 7th Judgment

### ***Seventh Group of Seven: The Seven Adornments of the Holy City***

A Double Preparatory Vision

*First Vision:* John sees *the New Heavens and a New Earth*

*Second Vision:* John sees *the New Jerusalem*

Six Adornments

After the 6th Adornment—a double vision

*First Vision:* John sees *streets of glass*

*Second Vision:* John sees *nations walking by the light of God*

The 7th Adornment

### ***The Epilogue [Rev 22:6-21]***

As we noted, the text will be very similar to the Prologue

That's basically the vertical structure of the book which emphasizes each group of seven with an introductory double vision, then emphasizes the sixth event in each group with another double vision.

If we look at the horizontal structure, the book becomes something like a multi-tiered three-dimensional chess board. All the first events (that is, the seven first events) correspond to the First Day of the week of creation, and they also correspond to the themes of the First Letter, namely to the Church of Ephesus. Then the second events correspond to the Second Day of the week of creation, and to themes of the Second Letter, namely to the Church of Smyrna, and so on, except that the Sixth Day is very special. That's the Day of Adam's creation and the creation of all the beasts, wild and tame. It's a Friday, and the traditional day of Eve's fall. Good Friday is the day of the saving death of the Redeemer. The Sixth Day is a day rich in many events. In the Apocalypse we have new and strange animals (wild and tame), and we have the fall of the scarlet woman, and we have some rescue or salvation activity. So, the Sixth Day is a very busy day. Then the seven "seventh events" correspond to either a state of rest, or a new creation, or both.

Our human minds can only focus on a small portion of reality at any given time, so it's difficult for us to keep all of these cross-related factors (pardon the pun) in focus. But we must keep at least this much in mind, namely that the Apocalypse is all about the Crucifixion and Resurrection of the Bride of Christ. She will imitate her Spouse and Redeemer by laying down her life for her brothers in union with Jesus, the last Adam man on the white horse, and the Woman in the Sky, thus bringing about the salvation of many souls in this generation. Just as Jesus was crucified by all the tribes of Israel and the religious leaders, except for a remnant which was partly faithful and partly cowardly, so the Bride Church (represented by Philadelphia) will be apparently killed by all the regions of the Church, except for Smyrna which will be faithful, but not always heroic. So let's begin by reading the letter.

### ***Letter to Philadelphia***

And to the angel of the Church of Philadelphia write: Thus, says the Holy One, the true one, he who has the key of David, he who opens and no one shall shut, and shuts and no one opens. I know your works.

Behold, I have set before you a door opened, which no one is able to shut—that you have but scanty strength, and yet have kept my word and have not denied my name.

Behold I am giving you some of the synagogue of Satan, that say that they are Jews and are not, but do lie.

Behold, I will make them to come and to prostrate themselves before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.

Because you have kept fast the lesson of my patience, I also will keep you from the hour of trial, which is about to come upon the whole world, to try those that dwell upon the earth. I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one seize your crown. He that conquers, I will make him a pillar in the sanctuary of my God, and never more shall he go out of it; and I will write upon him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God—the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God—and my new name. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches!

*Rev 7-13*

### ***To the angel of the Church of Philadelphia write:***

Philadelphia was thirty miles south-eastward from Sardis on the circuit route when Bishop John visited the seven main churches in his episcopal territory. Philadelphia had been founded from one of the other seven cities, Pergamum, through a treaty in 189 B.C. This is significant because we are proposing that the sixth city is not a region of its own, but represents a portion of the members from other city-churches.

The city was named, *phila delphos*, “he who loves his brother” for two famous brothers. King Eumenes named the city for his beloved brother King Attalus I. I won’t pretend to be a Greek historian but the story goes that Rome had offered Attalus a tempting proposal, but Attalus refused to supplant his brother in any way. Three times at the Last Supper Jesus said: “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you” [Jn 15:12]. This is the shining virtue of this group of Christians.

Philadelphia was located on the main line of imperial communication, that is, the road that connected the Hermus Valley 500 ft below sea level (at the harbor of Smyrna) to the Phrygian plateau 3,000 feet above sea-level: a beautiful spiritual symbol that the citizens of Philadelphia spiritually rise to the heights. Located in the heart of the Pergamum realm, the city could not have been founded as a military colony to guard any border. The intention of its founder was to make the city a center of the Graeco-Asiatic civilization and a means of spreading the Greek language and manners in the eastern parts of Lydia and Phrygia. It was a missionary city from the beginning, founded to promote a certain unity of spirit, customs, and loyalty within the realm, a city-apostle as it were. It was a successful teacher. Before A.D. 19 Greek was the only language of the territory.

Amazingly, the devotion to Greek culture did not carry over to religion. There is little evidence of syncretism in Philadelphia, but loyalty instead to their old Anatolian religion. Rejecting the myths of the gods of Mt. Olympus, the Anatolian religion taught confession of sin, punishment of sin by the god, and the need to render thanks to the god for favors granted by publication of the circumstances to honor the god. However, a coin survives which shows the female goddess Artemis/Diana of Ephesus being introduced into the temple of Philadelphia. The coin seems to commemorate an alliance between Philadelphia and Ephesus showing two men whose identity in outward form symbolizes their unanimity and mutual affection, because these cities are joined in *philos* . . . brotherly love. Since Ephesus was John’s episcopal headquarters, and Mary lived in the vicinity, and Mary’s temple took the place of the ancient virgin goddess, this can signify that those who belong to this city-church of Philadelphia have a great loyalty to the apostolic tradition and to the Virgin Mary.

Let’s go ahead and mention Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on the Delaware River. Established as a Quaker colony by William Penn and others in 1681, it was the site, in 1776, of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and in 1787 of the adoption of the Constitution of the U.S.

Thus says the holy one, the true one, he who has the key of David

Jesus has nothing but praise for Philadelphia. He does not mention a single fault. He is the Holy One speaking to holy ones. The two titles “Faithful” and “True” are closely connected. In the Old Testament, Yahweh is frequently described as “faithful” [cf. Dt 32:4; Ps 145:13; Ps 117:2]. When this title is applied to Christ in the New Testament it suggests his divinity [cf. 1 Thes 5:24; Rev 1:5; 3:14] and shows that, through Christ, God has been faithful to the promises He made in the Old Testament. But the double title is also applicable to those who keep the true Faith with the help of God. To Jerusalem Yahweh said:

And I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city.

*Isa 1:26*

We find the expression later in the Book of Revelation:

These [i.e., the wicked] will battle with the Lamb, and they shall be conquered by the Lamb, because he is the Lord of lords, and the King of kings, and those that are with Him, called and chosen and faithful, shall conquer them

*and:*

And I beheld heaven opened, and lo! a white horse, and he who sits thereon is called faithful and true, and he judges with justice and giveth battle

*and:*

And He says, 'Write: for these words are faithful and true'

*and:*

And [He] said to me, "These words are faithful and true; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must speedily befall. And behold, I come quickly

*Rev 17:14; Rev 19:11; Rev 21:5; Rev 22:6*

"True" is used ten times in the Apocalypse, nine in John's Gospel, once in the First Epistle of Saint John, a very Johannine word. The insistence on truth impresses upon us the certainty of the judgments, the predictions, and the promises made in this book. It also tells us that those who follow the Holy One and the True One are authentic, even though they are surrounded by "those who lie."

Philadelphia was good soil. The lava-rich soil was extremely favorable to the growth of vines, and celebrated by Virgil for the soundness of the wine. It was the great wine market for the region. Strabo compared the soil with that of Catana in Sicily.

In Byzantine and in medieval times Philadelphia increased in importance because Roman emperors began to rule more from the east than the west. Trade flowed to Constantinople so Philadelphia became the guardian of the doorway in the system of communication. As centuries rolled by and Moslem-Turkish power began to dominate Asia, the Church of Philadelphia held up the banner of Christendom long after all the country round about had capitulated. During the 1300s it stood practically alone against the entire Turkish power as a free, self-governing Christian city amid a Turkish land. Twice it was besieged by great Turkish armies, and its people reduced to the verge of starvation; but they had learned to defend themselves and to trust to no king or external government. It was until almost 1400 that the city succumbed to a combined Moslem and Christian Byzantine army. What the Turks alone had never been able to do, they achieved by availing themselves of the divisions and jealousy among the Christians. Since that time Philadelphia has been transformed into the Mohammedan town of Ala-Sheher, meaning "the reddish city," because of the speckled, red-brown hills around it.

Thus says . . . He who has the key of David

Jesus is the keybearer, thus the gatekeeper of the David's City, that is, Jerusalem. He protects his sheep. In this letter He promises to keep the Philadelphians safe. The citizens of brotherly love are the citizens of the New Jerusalem. The key of David brings to mind the famous passage in Isaiah where a man named Eliakim (meaning "God raises up" or "God establishes") is given the keys of the city, after removing an unworthy minister:

I will depose you [Shebna] from your office, and I will pull you down from your station. Then it will come about in that day, that I will summon my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and I will clothe him with your tunic and tie your sash securely about him. I will entrust Eliakim with your authority, and Eliakim will become a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Then I will set the key of the house of David on his shoulder. When he opens no one will shut, when he shuts no one will open. And I will

fasten him like a peg in a sure place, and he will become a throne of glory to his father's house. And they will hang on him the whole weight of his father's house, the offspring and issue, even the small vessels, from bowls to all the jars

*Isa 22:19-24*

God has promised many times that the meek will inherit the earth, and this will begin in the household of God. The keys of the kingdom, all authority to bind and to loose, will be taken away from proud minister/bishops and given to the humble "angels of the Churches," bishops who are faithful and true to the magisterium.

***Thus says . . . He who opens and no one shall shut,***

and shuts and no one opens, I know your works. Behold, I have set before you a door opened, which no one is able to shut.

*Rev 3:7-8*

In our conference on lukewarm Laodicea we heard Jesus complain. He was standing at the door and knocking, begging to enter, but the response was reminiscent of Bethlehem. In the Book of Revelation, the door and the key are symbols of opening up to intimate friendship with God, the sharing of secrets between friends.

In Pauline terminology, an open door is a symbol for an opportunity to enter a new region and announce the Gospel.

I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, because a great door for effective work has opened to me.

*and:*

When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, a door was opened for me in the Lord.

*1 Cor 16:9; 2 Cor 2:12*

Saint Paul asked the Colossians to:

Pray for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ.

*Col 4:3*

But there is no reason to infer that Philadelphia, alone among the Seven Cities, had a special door of opportunity to announce the Good News. Each of the Seven Cities stood at the door of a district. All the Seven Churches had favorable opportunities opened to them by their particular geographical situation and the convenience of communication.

In chapter 3, verse 8, Jesus tells *Phila-delphos*, his beloved brother, that He, Jesus, holds the key to the door and this door will never be locked to these Christians whom He regards as his faithful and true brothers. Twelve verses later Jesus complains about the Laodiceans. And three verses later John declares:

I looked, and lo, in heaven an open door! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."

*Rev 4:1*

John recognized the voice as "the first voice." This takes us back to chapter one:

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, "Write what you see . . . Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like a Son of Man.

*Rev 1:10-13*

*“Come up here,”* He says, because He wants to show his friends what’s going to happen. *“Write what you see.”* This is an open door to peer into the future. He says this to the Beloved Disciple who laid on the breast of Jesus the night before his crucifixion. *“Lord who is it who will betray you?”* [Jn 13:25]. Jesus opened the door of his heart to John. *“I will show you the one. It’s the one to whom I will give a piece of dipped bread.”* This whole Book of Revelation is a prophecy which is an open door for anyone willing to step through that door, but it’s a door the size of the eye of a needle. Only the poor in spirit can pass through. It’s the door of the unhealed wound in the pierced Heart of Jesus, mentioned in the first few verses of the Apocalypse [1:7].

Those who are swollen with power, pride, wealth and the love of this world, can’t pass through that door. Only those of scanty strength, the meek, the despised who are passed by for chances of career advances in the Church because they refused to tow the party line. The Apostle John did not run after the traitor to impose his will upon him. He understood that Judas was already lost. *“After eating the morsel, Satan entered into him.”* John heard Jesus say: *“What you do, do quickly.”* And the traitor *“went out immediately; and it was night”* [Jn 13:27-30]. John stayed close to Jesus, to love Him, to comfort Him. Later in the evening John would be momentarily shaken in the Garden, but he immediately regained his composure and sought-after Jesus, unlike the other newly-ordained bishops. John stayed near Jesus and Mary until the death and burial. He had the stamina to look, to watch, to witness that which seemed the utter failure of everything, the gruesome crucifixion of the Son of God. The majority of Christians are too weak to handle prophecy. It shakes their comfort zone. They don’t want to know about anything that might be unpleasant. They run away like the ten Apostles. They don’t want to listen to witnesses. They have hands over their ears. The Book of Revelation is all about the Church of Philadelphia hearing voices and passing through open doors. This is the Church that genuinely loves their brothers because they have hearts open to the joys and sorrows of their fellow men, especially of the Son of Man. Three times Jesus invites the Philadelphians to look:

*Behold, I set before you an open door.*

*Behold I give you some of the [members of the] synagogue of Satan.*

*Behold, I will make them come, and prostrate themselves at your feet.*

Of the seven cities, history left the name of one prophetess, Ammia. Bishop Eusebius, a Church historian writing about A.D. 340 (v., 17, 2) and also the apologist Miltiades, probably a student of Saint Justin writing around A.D. 170, both praised this prophetess of the Philadelphian Church who lived between the years 100 and 160. Although we are left with no details or quotations, it’s a confirmation that this is a Church that does not despise prophecy.

***You have but scanty strength, and yet have kept my word and have not denied my name.***

Three times in this letter we have the word “keep.”

Because you have kept fast the lesson of my patience, I also will keep you from the hour of trial.

*Rev 3:8*

This letter is primarily addressed to the angels of the Churches, the bishops who hold a staff to guard the flock and keep the word of God safe from corruption or distortion, and to keep the wolves away lest any lamb be devoured. But Jesus the Good Shepherd is also watching over his watchmen. These bishops have scanty strength, little power. They are scattered throughout the six territories of the world. In each area there is a Bishops’ Conference, but their opinion is in the minority. A regional Bishops’ Conference is supposed to be a united, collective, authoritative voice that should have an impact on the local government, but these angels of brotherly love have little influence on their brother bishops who let themselves be led by the world. They naturally experience loneliness and sorrow, but Jesus is holding them fast to his Heart to help them stay the course, and Mary is appearing all over the world to encourage them, and offer solace to these who are carrying the cross.

451f—As apostles of the last times . . . you are unknown and despised by the world and by those who surround you; you are often obstructed, marginalized and persecuted, because this suffering is necessary for the fecundity of your very mission.

588j—Blessed are those persecuted for the sake of justice. See [Jesus] . . . during his public mission, He is obstructed, marginalized, and threatened, even to the point of being arrested, tried and condemned to death. It is He, the persecuted and stricken One, who brings healing to all.

*To the Priests, Our Lady’s Beloved Sons*

Saint Paul—The Lord is faithful; He will strengthen you and guard you from evil

*2Thes 3:3*

Behold, I am giving you some of the synagogue of Satan, that say that they are Jews and are not, but do lie. Behold, I will make them to come and to prostrate themselves before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.

*Rev 3:9*

We encountered troubles with the synagogue of Satan in the Church of Smyrna, the only Church besides Philadelphia for which Jesus had words of comfort, rather than warning. At first glance it would seem that Jesus' only problem with Jews is those who deny their Judaism by lying about it. Yet why would Jesus expect Jews to come and recognize that Jesus loves his followers? We have to get our New Testament terminology straight.

Most of the original Christians were either natural descendants of Abraham, or they were Gentile proselytes, meaning those who had put their faith in Judaism and regularly attended synagogue worship. It was in these half-Gentile synagogues where Saint Paul and others preached the gospel and where they made many converts. So in the early decades, most Christians were Jews or Jewish proselytes and they did not imagine that following Jesus as the Messiah was changing their religion but simply bringing it to completion. But as time went on some Jews became hardened in their stance against Jesus as Messiah because they were hoping for a Messiah who would overthrow Rome. Saint John wrote his Gospel in this latter period, so when Saint John said, "the Jews," it had become a reference to people (of whatever ethnic origin) who stood in opposition to Jesus as Messiah. These "Jews" refused to recognize miracles or testimony of Christ's divinity. Saint Paul wrote extensively about what it meant to be a true descendant of Abraham.

It is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise.

*and:*

We are the true circumcision who worship God in spirit, and glory in Christ Jesus.

*and:*

Neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

*Rom 9:8; Php 3:3; Gal 6:15-18*

The "synagogue of Satan" is an assembly (a church) of worshipers who deny Jesus' divinity. They say that they are the true "Israel of God" [Gal 6:16] but they do lie. The Blessed Mother never once accuses Jews in her locutions and apparitions. Instead, She constantly complains that the big enemy is the Lamb-beast with two horns. She explains that these are Catholics who adhere to the doctrine of Freemasonry. They are not interested in the kingdom of heaven; they worship worldly prosperity and will hail a false and worldly Messiah, the false prophet who will deceive the world. The synagogue of brotherly love is hated by these people. Jesus had predicted it at the Last Supper:

Father, I have given them your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

*Jn 17:14,16*

### ***Behold I am giving you some of the synagogue of Satan***

"I am giving"; but the Greek grammar breaks off in an incomplete sentence, and commences afresh in the future tense, "I will make them (who scorned you) to bow in reverence before you, and to know that you (and not they) are the true



Jews whom I have loved.”

I am giving you *some* of the synagogue of Satan. Not the whole synagogue. Only some will be converted, recognize the Holy and True One as the Messiah, and beg forgiveness from his messengers, whose message they previously scorned. But more than that, they will attract converts from other faiths. The Church of Philadelphia is the New Jerusalem. Ancient prophecies about Jerusalem are waiting to be fulfilled. Isaiah prophesied this three thousand years ago:

Thus says Yahweh, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations, the servant of rulers: “Kings shall see and arise; princes, and they shall prostrate themselves; because of Yahweh, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you . . .

Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Behold, I will lift up my hand to the nations, and raise my signal to the peoples; and they shall bring your sons in their bosom, and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders. . .

Kings shall be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers. With their faces to the ground they shall bow down to you, and lick the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I am Yahweh; those who wait for Me shall not be put to shame

*Isa 49:7, 22, 23*

The wealth of Egypt and the merchandise of Ethiopia, and the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over to you and be yours, they shall follow you; they shall come over in chains and bow down to you. They will make supplication to you, saying: ‘God is with you only, and there is no other, no God besides Him

*Isa 45:14*

Isaiah and the Philadelphians reach into the final chapters of the Apocalypse that describes the New Jerusalem.

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of Yahweh has risen upon you . . . And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. . . . Foreigners shall build up your walls, and their kings shall minister to you . . . Your gates shall be open continually; day and night they shall not be shut . . . The sons of those who oppressed you shall come bending low to you; and all who despised you shall bow down at your feet; they shall call you the City of Yahweh, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel. . . . The sun shall be no more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you by night; but Yahweh will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory

*Isa ch 60, passim*

It’s tempting to cite half the Old Testament but you get the idea. We could quote certain Psalms, Esther, Ezekiel about the glories of Jerusalem and peoples bowing down to the inhabitants. Many English Bibles translate *proskuneo* as “worship” but this is a broad term. It can mean to kiss someone’s hand, or fall upon the knees and touch the ground with the forehead as an expression of profound reverence and gratitude. It doesn’t mean that Christians are going to be revered as God, but only as people who stand in the place of God because they uphold authentic doctrine. Let’s continue with the letter.

**Because you have kept fast the lesson of my patience,**

I also will keep you from the hour of trial, which is about to come upon the whole world, to try those that dwell upon the earth. I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one seize your crown.

*Rev 3:10*

This is one of the major verses for those who argue that the good will be spared the tribulation and raptured away before the judgments come. I deal with this in the conference on the Seven Trumpets so there is no need to spend time on it

here. Let's just look at crown. Smyrna was promised a crown, but Philadelphia is already crowned.

**Smyrna:** Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life

**Philadelphia:** I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown

*Rev 2:10; Rev 3:11*

In this book several others are crowned:

**Jesus, High Priest:** Then I looked, and lo, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand.

*and:*

**Mary:** And a great portent appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.

*and:*

**Priests:** Round the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clad in white garments, with golden crowns upon their head.

*Rev 14:14; Rev 12:1; Rev 4:4*

The dragon and the beasts have diadems, a different Greek word which isn't always distinguished in English Bibles. The diadem is a more superficial word referring to the ornament worn by kings, whereas "crown" has a deeper connotation of royalty or personal merit, and even nuptial joy. After all the Apocalypse is all about the great wedding feast of the Lamb. We can also throw in the idea of the victory wreath worn by winners at athletic contests and in parades by military heroes. Crown is a very rich word, but these Philadelphians are already winners in God's eyes. However, they can still lose their crown because no one is completely safe unless he is faithful to the last breath. They must hold fast to the Faith and not compromise it in any way, and Jesus is coming soon. No other bishop-Angel of a Church was told that Christ's coming is imminent. Would any of these other bishops believe it?

***He that conquers, I will make him a pillar in the sanctuary of my God, and never more shall he go out of it***

The concept of pillars is very meaningful for Philadelphia which had been badly shaken by earthquakes more than any other city of all Asia. Due to fear of earthquakes, many camped out in the open country for weeks until tremors ceased.

The pillar is a symbol of stability. Saints Peter and John and James were pillars of the Church [cf Gal 2:9].

The Church, made of living stones, is a structure that upholds truth:

In case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.

*1Tm 3:15*

In the Old Testament, God Himself was a pillar of "fire" that guides the people, comforting them at night with his light.

Solomon's temple had two free-standing pillars which called to mind God's presence in the desert, but the old tent tabernacle had many pillars to support the tent-cloth and skin roof.

It's hard to imagine a greater honor for a Christian than for Jesus to call him a pillar of the Church!

***And I will write upon him the name of my God***

and the name of the city of my God—the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God—and my new name. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches!

*Rev 3:12*

Out of gratitude to aid sent for the earthquake and the remission of the burden of taxation while they rebuilt their city, ancient Philadelphia changed its name to Neo-caesareia Tiberius. *Neo* could mean “young” or “new” because Tiberius had succeeded the first and now, old, Caesar, namely Augustus. Tiberius ruled as the “imperial god” from A.D. 14 to A.D. 37, that is, during the years that the true son of God walked the earth. According to the Roman regulations, it was not permitted to a city to assume an Imperial name when it pleased. Such a name was regarded as highly honorable. Permission had to be sought from the Senate which would never grant permission without ascertaining what Caesar wished. Tiberius crowned his kindness to the city by permitting it to style itself Neokaisareia After the death of Tiberius, the city obtained permission again to assume another new name, this time, in honor of the next emperor: Titus Flavius Caesar Vespasianus, A.D. 39 -81.

Are the victorious citizens of Apocalyptic Philadelphia to be given three names?

*of my God—and the name of the city of my God—and my new name.*

Or is it one name in Three? Is at all-at-once the name of God, the name of God’s Church, and the new name of the Son of God? Or it is a cryptic reference to the Trinity

**Name of my God:** Yahweh or Father

**Name of the city of God,** the new Jerusalem: the Holy Spirit who lives in the Church

**And my new Name:** Jesus, who is speaking to the angels of the Churches

A name gives authority. Aaron’s triple blessing “puts the name on the person:”

Say to Aaron and his sons, thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them,

Yahweh bless you and keep you:

Yahweh make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you:

Yahweh lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them

*Nm 6:23-27*

And, since the time of Solomon, it’s a common practice to inscribe names on pillars.

Aaron wore a miter inscribed with the Name = Holy to Yahweh. This could also be an allusion to the crown already mentioned in this letter. This crown-like miter was for a High Priest and for a priestly people.

You shall make a plate of pure gold, and engrave on it, like the engravings of a signet, ‘Holy to Yahweh.’ . . . It shall be on Aaron’s forehead, and Aaron shall bear the iniquity of the holy things . . . and it shall be always on his forehead, that they may be accepted before Yahweh.

*Ex 28:36-38*

For you are a people holy to Yahweh your God; Yahweh your God has chosen you to be a people for his own possession, out of all the peoples that are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that Yahweh set his love upon you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples.

*Dt 7:6-7*

Let’s close with Isaiah’s wedding scene of the Bride Jerusalem:

The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name which the mouth of Yahweh will give. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of Yahweh, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. You shall no more be termed Forsaken [can we translate that

“Marginalized?”], and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called “My delight is in her,” and your land “Married”; for Yahweh delights in you, and your land shall be married. For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you. Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen; all the day and all the night they shall never be silent. You who put Yahweh in remembrance, take no rest, and give Him no rest until He establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth.

*Isa 62:2-7*

Amen! Alleluia!