

Seven Churches and Seven Seals



1
Ephesus

White Horse = pure doctrine

A.D. 31 - 100

Church under the direct personal influence of the first Apostles; this church opposed the influx of theological error referred to by Christ as "Nicolaitan" (Gnosticism)



2
Smyrna

Red Horse = church suffered; martyr's blood ran like water

A.D. 100 - 313

Suffered severe persecution under pagan Rome



3
Pergamos

A.D. 313 - 538

Black horse = black clouds of error engulfed the church

Development of the papacy as paganism and Gnostic philosophy are exalted into the worship practices and doctrines of the Christian Church ("the daily" developed); as Paul warned, there came a "great falling away" during this period when pure Bible truth was cast down to the ground; cf. Daniel 7:25; Daniel 8:11-12; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; 1 John 4:1-3



4
Thyatria

A.D. 538 - 1350

Morning Star promised and fulfilled in John Wycliffe when he began to translate the Bible into the common English language



Church of the Dark Ages during which Bible truth and learning of all types was nearly blotted out

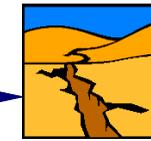
The idea of an "awakening" implies a slumber or passivity during secular or less religious times. The first awakening essentially came to an end during the revolutionary times of the late 1700s and early 1800s, when the American revolution and the French revolution interrupted the advance of Bible understanding. After the French revolution ended, the Second Great Awakening began and culminated in the fulfillment of the 2300 day prophecy of Daniel 8:14.



7
Laodicea

1844 until the 2nd Coming

Laodicea means "judging of the people" Daniel 7:9-10; 8:14; Rev. 11:18; 14:15-19



6
1740 - 1844

Lisbon earthquake and the signs prophesied by Christ fulfilled Matthew 24:29; cf. Revelation 6:12

6
Philadelphia

Under the sixth church we find two "Great Awakenings" during which Bible truth was preached around the world by missionaries



5
Sardis

1350 - 1740

Between 1478 - 1700 the Spanish Inquisition tried an estimated 150,000 persons as heretics, and killed more than 10,000. In France under Louis XIV Protestants were persecuted, killed and exiled (1685 - 1714). It is a period during which the "saints under the altar" symbolically cry out with their blood for deliverance from persecution (cf. Genesis 4:10; 18:20; Exodus 3:7; and James 5:4)

Church of the Renaissance and Protestant Reformation

NOTE: While some dates are absolutely fixed with their fulfillment in history, some are approximate as those events developed over a period of time; we will discuss these in class

Titles and Main Characteristics

- First Church (Ephesus) = White Horse Seal (Rev. 2:1-7; 6:2)
- Second Church (Smyrna) = Red Horse Seal (Rev. 2:8-11; 6:3-4)
- Third Church (Pergamos) = Black Horse Seal (Rev. 2:12-17; 6:6:5-6)
- Fourth Church (Thyatria) = Pale Horse Seal (Rev. 2:18-29; 6:7-8)
- Fifth Church (Sardis) = characterized by martyrdom (Rev. 3:1-6; 6:9-11)
- Sixth Church (Philadelphia) = characterized by the signs in the heavens and earth (Rev. 3:7-13; 6:12-13)
- Seventh Church (Laodicea) = characterized by complacency, arrogance and judgment (Rev. 3:14-22; 6:14-17)