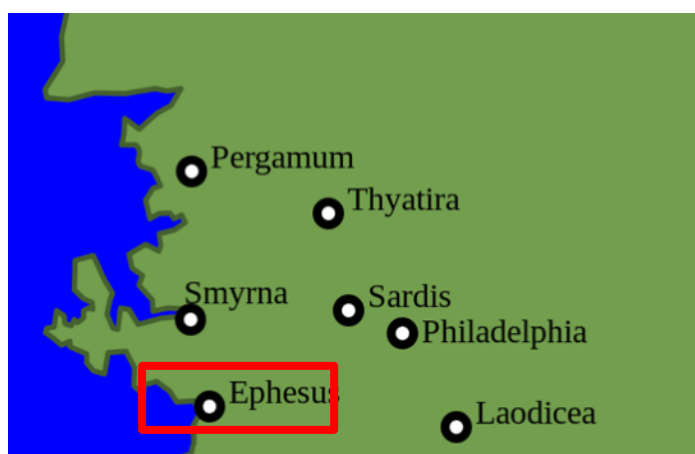


The Church at Ephesus, Revelation 2. 1-7 – Part 1.

Our subject is the first of the seven letters to the churches in Asia¹ (in what we know as Asia Minor) – namely, the letter to the church in Ephesus.



THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:

These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands.

I know your works, your toil and your endurance, and how you cannot bear those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and have found them liars, and you are enduring and have borne for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary.

But I have against you that you have left your first love.

Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the works you did at first. But if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

But this you have, that you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

INTRODUCTION

You may be sorry to learn that, in considering this passage, I have prescribed a full dose of “Seven C’s”.



As a memory aid as much as anything else, I plan to structure our study around the following seven headings:

- (i) **the Church addressed through its angel;**
- (ii) **the Character of the Lord Jesus²**

- (iii) **the Commendation given;**
- (iv) **the Criticism levelled;**
- (v) **the Counsel provided;**
- (vi) **the Call for attention;** and
- (vii) **the Compensation promised.**

In passing, I should note that it isn't possible to use all these headings for all the seven letters. This is for the simple reason that

'The Lord's letters to the seven churches do not all conform rigidly to the same structure; for example, not all include words of commendation and praise (see those to Sardis and Laodicea), and not all include words of censure and blame (see those to Smyrna and Philadelphia)'.³

1. THE CHURCH ADDRESSED THROUGH ITS ANGEL

The angel – and the church.

I say '*the church* addressed through its angel' because it is clear from what is recorded in some of the later letters that the recipients were believers in the seven churches themselves. I note, for example, the expressions: 'some of you',⁴ 'among you',⁵ and 'if any man'.⁶

The full line of communication of the seven letters runs (i) from God to the Lord Jesus, (ii) from the Lord Jesus to an angel, (iii) from the angel to John,⁷ and (iv) from the Lord Jesus through John to *both (a) the 'angel of the church' and (b) the believers in the local church itself*. For this reason, in the letter to Thyatira, for example, whereas many of the Lord's words, being in the *singular*, are addressed to *the angel*,⁸ some of His words, being in the *plural*, are addressed directly to *the members of the church itself*.⁹

The angel – identity.

As I understand it, the 'angels of the churches' are just that ... 'angels'.

'In that the "angels" are themselves symbolised by "stars" (Rev. 1. 20) ... they cannot themselves be symbols of something (or someone) else, any more than the "churches", which are symbolised by "lampstands", are themselves symbols of anything else. The "churches" are literal churches and it follows that the "angels" are literal angels ...

'In the book of the Revelation, all the other occurrences of the word (all 68 of them) unquestionably describe literal angels ... John was "in the Spirit" when he saw the events he records and would therefore have had no more difficulty in writing to an angel (Rev. 2. 1, 8, 12 etc.) than he would have had in conversing with one (Rev. 17. 1; 19. 10; 22. 9-10)'.¹⁰

I do not pretend to understand the relationship between the angels and the churches. But then, for that matter, I do not pretend to understand the relationship either between angels and the nations¹¹ or between angels and individual believers.¹² But it seems clear that, in some way, each local church is represented in the heavenly world by an angelic figure who, to some extent, personifies and represents that church.¹³

But why, we may wonder, were these particular seven churches selected? And why is it that Ephesus is mentioned first?

Why these seven churches?

Why *were* these seven chosen? For chosen they certainly were; we know there were many other churches in the Roman province of Asia, churches such as those at Colossae,¹⁴ Hierapolis¹⁵ and Troas,¹⁶ together, in all likelihood, with those at Magnesia and Tralles.¹⁷

I suggest that the selection of these seven was due to three main factors:

(i) that the main road-circuit around the province, ran through the relevant cities, and so a book addressed to these seven churches could be circulated easily;¹⁸



(ii) that these particular churches were each well placed to disseminate copies of the book to other churches situated off the main post route. It was, for instance, only six miles from Laodicea to Hierapolis and eleven miles from Laodicea to Colossae;

(iii) most important of all, given that these churches represented a very wide spectrum of spiritual experience (with differing strengths and weaknesses and differing problems and pressures), that our Lord's messages to these particular churches would be of direct and continuing relevance to all local churches throughout the whole of the church age.

Why is the church at Ephesus mentioned first?

(1) The city. It could be argued that the city of Ephesus itself was by far the most important of the seven cities named.

(i) It was the most important politically:

'Pergamum was the official capital of the province of Asia but Ephesus was by far its greatest city ... Ephesus was the Gateway of Asia. One of its distinctions, laid down by statute, was that when the Roman proconsul came to take up office as governor of Asia, he must disembark at Ephesus and enter his province there'.¹⁹

(ii) It was the most important commercially:

'The city [of Ephesus], because of its advantageous situation in other respects, grows daily, and is the largest market in Asia'.²⁰

(iii) It was the most important religiously:

With its boasted great Temple of Artemis, Ephesus was the religious centre of the whole province:²¹

(a) 'Ephesus ... was chiefly famous for the celebrated temple of Diana (the Roman name for Artemis) ... about four times larger than the Parthenon in Athens'.²²

(b) 'I have set eyes on the wall of lofty Babylon on which is a road for chariots, and the statue of Zeus by the Alpheus, and the hanging gardens, and the colossus of the Sun, and the huge labour of the high pyramids, and the vast tomb of Mausolus; but when I saw the house of Artemis that mounted to the clouds, those other marvels lost their brilliancy'.²³

(c) '... first among the Seven Wonders of the World'.²⁴

(2) The church. But more significant than the importance of *the city* of Ephesus ranked the many privileges and favours enjoyed by *the church* located there.

(i) The inspired letters received there. We find in our New Testament, not only (a) that there are seven letters (or epistles) known as 'General Letters',²⁵ and (b) that there are seven letters addressed to seven churches by name here in Revelation 2 and 3, but also (c) that the apostle Paul wrote letters to seven separate churches or groups of churches.²⁶

Interestingly, the *only* church which received letters from both Paul and the Lord Himself was the church at *Ephesus*.

Indeed, I note that Paul's first letter to Timothy was sent to Timothy when he (Timothy) was at Ephesus,²⁷ which means that, in one sense, *the church was thrice blessed, in being the recipient of no less than three inspired letters.*

Not only that, but, over the years, the church had benefited from the labours and ministry of many of the Lord's prominent and gifted servants in New Testament days.

(ii) The Lord's servants who laboured there.

(a) There was, most obviously, the apostle Paul, who had laboured extensively at Ephesus.

Although, at an early stage of his so-called second missionary journey, the Holy Spirit had expressly forbidden him to preach in Asia,²⁸ later, on the same journey, the apostle did spend a short time in Ephesus.²⁹

On his so-called third missionary journey, Paul stayed (teaching what he later termed 'the whole counsel of God'³⁰) at Ephesus for the best part of three years³¹ (longer than in any other place of which we know) and utilised Ephesus as a springboard from which to evangelise throughout the whole province.³²

It was from Ephesus that he wrote his first letter to the Corinthian church, in which he speaks of 'a great door for effective work' having opened for him at Ephesus.³³

(b) But, apart from Paul himself, the church there had benefited also from the labours of such sterling workers as Priscilla and Aquila,³⁴ Apollos,³⁵ Timothy,³⁶ Onesiphorus,³⁷ and Tychicus,³⁸ together with (if early tradition can be trusted) none other than the apostle John.³⁹

(3) The location. And yet, although the Ephesian church was unquestionably blessed above many of the early churches (possibly, above any other early church), I do not believe that this accounts for its being listed first of the seven.

I think it more likely that Ephesus was listed first because the book of the Revelation was written on the island of Patmos,⁴⁰ and any messenger crossing the Aegean Sea would naturally land at Ephesus (which was about 60 miles from Patmos) and then make his way from there around the churches on the usual loop road.

And so, to the two-part self-description given by the Lord Jesus.

2. THE CHARACTER OF THE LORD JESUS

(i) He who holds the seven stars in His right hand.

When introducing Himself to 'the angel of the church in Sardis', the Lord declares that He '*has*' the 'seven stars',⁴¹ and, back in chapter 1, we are told that He '*had*' the seven stars 'in His right hand'.⁴² Whereas, here we are told that He '*holds*' (that He 'grasps', that He 'grips'⁴³) them 'in His right hand' – the 'right hand' being the place of power. That is, the emphasis falls on the Lord's total authority over the seven angelic 'stars'.

The Bible speaks of 'the Pleiades',⁴⁴ a star cluster known from Greek mythology as 'the Seven Sisters'.⁴⁵

And, when I read our Lord's words here in Revelation 2, I am reminded of the challenge which the Lord issued to Job in chapter 38 of the book which bears his name: 'Can you bind the cluster of the Pleiades?'⁴⁶ Here, our Lord asserts, not that He holds together the starry 'Seven Sisters', but that He holds the seven *angelic* 'stars' firmly in His grasp.

But, given that (as we have seen), through the angels, it is the churches themselves which are addressed, I think we are entitled to detect here an assurance that every true believer is held securely in the all-powerful right hand of Him, who (as John records elsewhere) once promised concerning His spiritual 'sheep' that 'they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch ('seize', 'catch away') them out of my hand'.⁴⁷ Precious promise!

(ii) He who ... walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands.

We read in chapter 1 of the Lord Jesus simply as, 'in the midst of the lampstands',⁴⁸ presumably standing there. But now the Lord presents Himself as '*walking*' there, conveying, I suggest, not so much, as in chapter 1, *His constant presence with* and among the churches, but *His active and unwearied ministry for* and among the churches.

Elsewhere John speaks of our Lord:

- (i) 'walking' before men when He was *'in the world'* ('Jesus as He walked'⁴⁹) and
- (ii) 'walking' one day with His glorified saints *in heaven* ('they shall walk with me in white'⁵⁰).

Gerhard Tersteegen captures this thought beautifully:⁵¹

'Where no shade nor stain can enter,
Nor the gold be dim,
In His holiness unsullied,
I shall walk with Him ...

He and I, in that bright glory,
One deep joy shall share—
Mine, to be forever with Him;
His, that I am there'.

But here John speaks of His:

- (iii) 'walking' in the midst of His churches in *the here and now*.

When I read of our Lord's walking *'in the midst'* of His churches, I am reminded of what Moses said to Israel concerning the Lord their God; namely, that He 'walks *in the midst* of your camp ... therefore your camp must be holy'.⁵²

And here, our Lord is viewed on what we might describe as 'a walking inspection tour' of His churches, requiring that *they too* must be holy.

'I know', He says,⁵³ and nothing escapes His all-seeing eye – nothing!

Which brings us to the commendation which He gave to the church at Ephesus.

3. THE COMMENDATION GIVEN

Praise – first and last.

We observe the Lord's tenderness and graciousness in that He opens His letter with the features which He could praise⁵⁴ before He draws attention to that one feature which He is compelled to reprove.

And, what is more, His recital of the praiseworthy features of the Ephesian church occupies a much greater proportion of His letter to them than does His approval of any of the other churches in His letters to them.

And we can hardly miss that, having administered His sharp and well-deserved rebuke and counselled the church to retrace its steps back to Himself, He does not end His communication on a negative note. Rather, He resumes – and, in one sense, concludes with – additional words of high commendation.⁵⁵

And you and I should note, in passing, that the One before whose judgement seat we must each one day appear⁵⁶ keeps careful account of all that is done for Him, and that no genuine service rendered to Him will ever prove to be 'in vain in the Lord'.⁵⁷

Four positive features.

In verses 2 and 3, the Lord Jesus commends the Ephesian church for four positive features:

- (i) their *labours* for Him ('your works, your toil');⁵⁸
- (ii) their *perseverance* ('your endurance ... you are enduring and have borne for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary');⁵⁹
- (iii) their *intolerance* of evil men ('you cannot bear those who are evil');⁶⁰ and
- (iv) their *spiritual discernment* ('you ... have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and have found them liars').⁶¹

This was certainly a most exceptional church.⁶² In the eyes of any outside observer, it must have seemed that the Christian company at Ephesus possessed all the characteristics and features of an ideal local church. Certainly, there were no perceptible flaws or failures in either (i) its activity, (ii) or its organisation, or (iii) its doctrinal stand.

And the commendation which the Lord gives is certainly extensive and wide ranging. He speaks of:

(i) Their labours for Him.

Whatever else it was, the Ephesian church was certainly no rest camp for idle saints.



The word rendered 'toil' indicates 'labour to the point of weariness and exhaustion'.⁶³ It is the noun form of the verb used by Peter to describe the disciples' night of fruitless activity⁶⁴ and describes all-out effort, demanding everything a person has to give—physically, mentally, and emotionally.

In his day, C. H. Spurgeon observed:

'There are ... Christians who do not approach to labouring. A lifetime of such work as theirs would not exhaust a butterfly'.

To which Mr Spurgeon characteristically added:

'If you need to be feather-bed soldiers, go and enlist somewhere else'.⁶⁵

(ii) Their perseverance.

Whereas their 'toil' stresses the degree to which they worked energetically for the Lord, their patient 'endurance' and steadfastness stresses their staying power and ability to continue in that work when under pressure. It is a quality necessitated by the fierce opposition which they encountered for the sake of,⁶⁶ as the Lord says, 'my name' ... opposition which they may well have faced because their very existence constituted an attack on one of the principal trades of Ephesus, the manufacture of idolatrous shrines in honour of Artemis.⁶⁷

But the believers had proved over the long haul, through all their labours and faithfulness, that they possessed the reserves of strength necessary to persevere in their service without flagging.

(iii) Their intolerance of evil men.

The Lord introduces this component of His commendation with a deliberate play on words; the word translated 'bear' in His expression, 'you cannot *bear* those who are evil',⁶⁸ is one and the same as that in His expression, 'you are enduring and have *borne* for my name's sake'.⁶⁹

The Saviour, that is, is praising the church because, whereas they willingly and patiently *bore* persecution from *outside*, they steadfastly refused to *bear* evil men *inside*! For them to 'bear' *opposition* with fortitude was an evidence of *strength*, whereas for them to 'bear' *ungodly men* in the church would have been an evidence of *weakness*.

One commentator expressed it well:

'The Ephesian church can bear anything except the presence of impostors in her membership'.⁷⁰

The church guarded itself carefully against the intrusion of unholy and ungodly men with their wicked behaviour.

(iv) Their spiritual discernment.

The church had put to the test any pretended ‘apostles’ – the title ‘apostles’ clearly being used here in its wider sense of itinerant teachers who professed, in this instance, to come with a mission which elevated them above the local elders.⁷¹ But the church wasn’t fooled.

‘The elders of the church’ at Ephesus had been warned many years before by the apostle Paul to be on their guard against two distinct sources of danger to the flock; on the one hand, against predators from *without*, and, on the other hand, against home-grown false teachers from *within*.⁷²

And the church had demonstrated that they were (in words taken from the letter which Paul had once written to them – or more likely to their fathers):

‘no longer [spiritual] infants ... blown about by every shifting wind of the teaching of deceitful people, who lead others into error by their cunning’.⁷³

For, having examined the self-professed ‘apostles’ and their doctrines, they had quickly seen through their disguise and had unmasked them for what they really were – deceivers and charlatans.

And today?

I’m fairly confident that, if the glorified Lord paid our local church a visit and gave *us* a glowing commendation such as He gave to the Ephesian church, we should be more than a little excited about it.

But that brings us, fourthly, to the criticism which the One who walked ‘in the midst of the seven golden lampstands’ is compelled to level at the otherwise exemplary church at Ephesus.

To be concluded.

Notes

¹ Rev. 1. 4.

² The description which the glorified Lord gives of Himself (as having seven stars in His right hand and being in the midst of the seven golden lampstands) feeds through directly from the vision which John saw in Rev. 1. 13, 16. The descriptions which the Lord gives of Himself at the opening of most of the other letters also echo the vision of Rev. 1. 13-18, that to Laodicea's being the sole exception.

³ Malcolm Horlock, '*The Seven Golden Lampstands*', Precious Seed Magazine, Volume 50, Issue 5, 1995.

⁴ Rev. 2. 10.

⁵ Rev. 2. 13.

⁶ Rev. 3. 20.

⁷ Rev. 1. 1.

⁸ 'And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write ... I know your [*singular*] works, your [*singular*] love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your [*singular*] latter works exceed the first. But I have this against you [*singular*], that you [*singular*] tolerate that woman Jezebel', Rev. 2. 19-20.

⁹ 'I will give to each of you [*plural*] according to your [*plural*] works. But to the rest of you [*plural*] in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, I do not lay on you [*plural*] any other burden. Only hold fast what you [*plural*] have until I come', Rev. 2. 23-25.

¹⁰ Malcolm Horlock, '*The Seven Golden Lampstands (Additional Note)*', Precious Seed, Volume 50, Issue 6, 1995.

Some have imagined that there is at least one instance in the book of the Revelation where the interpretation of a symbol is itself a symbol of something else. They point to the 'seven heads' of the scarlet Beast (Rev. 17. 9), which are said to be 'seven mountains', and claim that these mountains themselves symbolise seven 'kingdoms' or empires. (See, for example, Thomas Constable's note on Rev. 17. 9.)

But by far the majority of commentators agree that the verse refers unmistakably to literal 'mountains' or hills, and that the expression. 'seven mountains', serves to identify the city-mistress of the world as Rome by alluding to the common classical allusion to Rome as 'the City of the Seven Mountains'.

See, by way of example only, the notes on Rev. 17. 9 of H. Meyer, H. B. Swete, W. H. Simcox (The Cambridge Greek New Testament) and W. Kelly ('all the world is aware that such is the well-known characteristic of Rome. In prose or in poetry, if any city were described as being seated upon seven hills, everyone would say, "That must be Rome"', '*Lectures on the Book of Revelation*', page 364).

'There can be no doubt as to the allusion ... Rome was frequently described as the city of the seven hills. Propertius spoke of her as 'the lofty city of the seven hills, which governs the whole world', and Virgil said that 'Rome ... alone has surrounded for herself seven heights with a wall', F. A. Tatford, '*The Final Encounter*', page 500.

¹¹ Dan. 10. 13-21.

¹² Matt. 18. 10; Heb. 1. 13-14.

¹³ But far more important than the identity of the angel is the Person who addresses the angel/church and how He is described.

¹⁴ Col. 1. 2.

¹⁵ Col. 4. 13.

¹⁶ Acts 20. 5-7.

¹⁷ Ignatius of Antioch addressed letters to churches at both Magnesia and Tralles less than 20 years later. He was brought to Rome during the reign of Emperor Trajan (AD 98-117) and was exposed to the wild beasts. On the way to Rome, he wrote seven letters – one each to the Christians at Ephesus, *Magnesia*, *Tralles*, Rome, Smyrna and Philadelphia, and one to Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna. These seven letters are listed both by Eusebius ('*Church History*', Book 3, Chapter 36) and by Jerome ('*De Viris Illustribus*', 16).

¹⁸ 'The seven were located on a loop road which circled the interior of the province. This road was the common post route; an inscription of 50 BC at Miletus lists the names of eight Asian cities, including Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos and Sardis in that order', Malcolm Horlock, 'The Seven Golden Lampstands', Precious Seed Magazine, Volume 50, Issue 5, 1995.

¹⁹ William Barclay, 'The Revelation of John', page 58.

'Already it was a centre for the imperial cult: it included a temple built in honour of the dead Emperor Claudius', D. A. Carson, 'Love in hard Places', page 176.

²⁰ Strabo, 'Geography', Book 14, Chapter 1, Section 24; accessed at ...

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0198%3Abook%3D14%3Achapter%3D1%3Asection%3D24>.

²¹ 'In the Ephesian calendar the month of the spring equinox was named after Artemis . . . and during that month the city celebrated a yearly festival in honour of the goddess', Henry Barclay Swete, 'The Apocalypse of St. John', page lvii.

²² D. A. Carson, *op. cit.*, page 176.

²³ Antipater of Sidon, 'Greek Anthology' (IX. 58). See ...

http://penelope.uchicago.edu/~grout/encyclopaedia_romana/greece/paganism/artemis.html.

²⁴ Robert Grant, 'Gods and the One God' (SPCK), page 28.

²⁵ James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude.

²⁶ At Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossae and Thessalonica.

²⁷ 1 Tim. 1. 3.

²⁸ Acts 16. 6.

²⁹ Acts 18. 19-21.

³⁰ Acts 20. 27. I note that the apostle was speaking to 'the elders [plural] of the church' at Ephesus, Acts 20. 17; there can be no suggestion, therefore, that 'the angel' of the church there was some form of 'clergyman' or 'pastor'! Interestingly, Paul's address at Miletus to the elders of Ephesus is the only oral message of Paul to believers that we possess, Acts 20. 17-35.

³¹ Acts 20. 31; cf. Acts 19. 8, 10.

³² Acts 19. 10.

³³ 1 Cor. 16. 8-9.

³⁴ Acts 18. 18-19.

³⁵ Acts 18. 24-26.

³⁶ 1 Tim. 1. 3.

³⁷ 2 Tim. 1. 18.

³⁸ 2 Tim. 4. 12.

³⁹ 'John, the disciple of the Lord, going to bathe at Ephesus ...', Irenaeus, 'Against Heresies', Book 3, Chapter 3, Section 4.

Irenaeus lived and wrote in the late 2nd century, but as a young man he had met Polycarp and been taught by him. Polycarp, in turn, is said by Tertullian ('Prescription against Heretics', Chapter 32) to have been placed in Smyrna by the apostle John.

⁴⁰ Rev. 1. 9.

⁴¹ Rev. 3. 1.

⁴² Rev. 1. 16.

⁴³ 'When κρατέω (the word translated "holds") takes an accusative after it, it means that the whole object is gripped within the hand. Here, (the word translated 'holds') takes the accusative and that means that Christ clasps the whole of the seven stars in his hand', William Barclay, *op. cit.*, page 61.

⁴⁴ Amos 5. 8 RV.

- ⁴⁵ Pleiades is an open star-cluster located in the constellation of Taurus.
- ⁴⁶ Job 38. 31 RV.
- ⁴⁷ John 10. 28.
- ⁴⁸ Rev. 1. 13.
- ⁴⁹ John 1. 36 with John 1. 10.
- ⁵⁰ Rev. 3. 4.
- ⁵¹ In his hymn, 'Midst the darkness, storm, and sorrow'.
- ⁵² Deut. 23. 14. Compare 'I will make my dwelling among you ... and *I will walk among you*', Lev. 26. 12.
- ⁵³ 'I know your ...' in itself expresses neither praise nor blame; blame is conveyed in Rev. 3. 1, 15, but praise here in Rev. 2. 1 and in Rev. 3. 8.
- ⁵⁴ Rev. 2. 2-3.
- ⁵⁵ Rev. 2. 6.
- ⁵⁶ 2 Cor. 5. 10.
- ⁵⁷ 1 Cor. 15. 58; cf. Heb. 6. 10.
- ⁵⁸ Rev. 2. 2.
- ⁵⁹ Rev. 2. 2-3.
- ⁶⁰ Rev. 2. 2.
- ⁶¹ Rev. 2. 2.
- ⁶² The best counsel which the Lord can give to the church is to do as they did of old, Rev. 2. 5. Other churches may need to improve; the church at Ephesus is urged not to fall short of their earlier standard.
- ⁶³ See Friedrich Hauck, '*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*', volume III, pages 827-830.
- ⁶⁴ Luke 5. 5.
- ⁶⁵ C. H. Spurgeon, '*Labouring And Not Fainting*', a sermon preached on 8 September 1872 at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London.
- ⁶⁶ The word 'δία'.
- ⁶⁷ See Acts 19. 23-27.
- ⁶⁸ Rev. 2. 2.
- ⁶⁹ Rev. 2. 3.
- ⁷⁰ James Moffatt, '*The Expositor's Greek New Testament*', on Revelation 2. 3.
- ⁷¹ Acts 20. 17.
- ⁷² 'I know that after my departure fierce wolves *will come in among you*, not sparing the flock; and *from among your own selves will arise men* speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them', Acts 20. 29-30.
- ⁷³ Eph. 4. 14.