

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST SERIES

RLJ-804

JOHN S. TORELL

JANUARY 20, 2002

PART 8: UNTO THE ANGEL OF THE CHURCH OF LAODICEA

CHAPTER FOUR: THE CITY OF LAODICEA

This city was located on the banks of the river Lycus, approximately 40 miles east of Ephesus. The city was first known as Diosopolis, then as Rhoas. Antiochus II (261-246 B.C.) was a king of the Seleucid Kingdom, which existed between 312-64 B.C. This kingdom came into being when Alexander the Great died and his empire disintegrated into four parts. The Seleucid kingdom stretched from the border of India to the province of Thrace in Greece. Antiochus II spent most of his time in war with Egypt. After some time as king, he added the title "theos" to his name and proclaimed himself to be a god.

Antiochus II decided to enlarge the city of Rhoas, and at the same time he renamed the city Laodicea after his wife, Queen Laodice. Some years later he divorced Laodice and married the Egyptian princess Bernice. At his death in 246 B.C., civil war broke out between the two queens.

Laodicea became a Roman city when Rome conquered the region in 64 B.C. In 60 A.D. the city was destroyed by an earthquake and rebuilt. The city was so rich that it refused the customary imperial aid to restore the damage caused by the earthquake.

At the time that the Book of Revelation was given, Laodicea was a banking center for the region. It had a large textile industry, producing cloth and carpets from the special glossy-black wool produced in the region. It had a medical school and there was also a pharmaceutical center, producing ear ointment and the "Phrygian powder" used in making eye salve. The people in this city were rich and could buy anything they wanted. Laodicea is a heap of ruins today.

VERSE 14

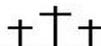
Jesus identifies Himself as the Creator. He demands respect from the people in the church. **John 1:1-3, 14; Colossians 1:9-20; Hebrews 1:2**

VERSE 15

The church in this city consisted of people who were not excited one way or the other. Compare this with the teaching that Jesus did. **Luke 14:16-27, 9:58-62**

VERSE 16

Jesus threatened to spew them out, He was sick of them. There was no faith, since they had no needs. **James 1:5-8**



VERSE 17

Most of the Jews in this city would have worked in the banking system. Some of them had accepted Christ as their Messiah and had brought gold and other riches into the church. There was no spiritual growth among the members; instead, they were spiritually blind. **1 Corinthians 2:9-16; Romans 8:5-15**

The Church of Jesus Christ in the United States is rich in earthly possessions, but we are more than poor in spiritual things. Preach in America on the power of God and people will yawn and just sit there. Preach it in a third world nation and people will come running to the altar in faith to receive all that God has for them.

VERSE 18

Jesus rebuked the very items which made up their economy, their gold, their textile industry and their famous eye salve. Jesus said, come to me and I will give you eternal gold, garments and eye salve that will open you spiritual eyes. **Matthew 13:13-23**

VERSE 19

Jesus wanted to redeem the people living in Laodicea. God will only correct those that are his and whom He loves. **Hebrews 12:1-13**

VERSE 20

Jesus told them that He was not in the midst of this church, but was knocking on the door outside. If they opened it, He would come in and fellowship with them. **Matthew 18:18-20; John 14:20-27**

VERSE 21

Jesus invited them to come and sit with Him on the throne of God! **Matthew 19:27-30**

VERSE 22

Jesus asked them, *"Do you have an ear with which to hear?"* History tells us that they did not. Today the city of Laodicea is in ruins and the church did not survive. None of the seven churches had ears with which to hear. They are gone and each of their candlesticks has been removed! Are we as a local church going to survive?

Do you have an ear to hear with?