

The Mysteries of the Seven Churches

I. Understanding the failure of the Church (Rom. 11:22).

1. The churches represent:
 - 1) The things which John had seen—the image of the Son of Man (vv. 10-18).
 - 2) The things that are—the existent churches (Ch. 2 & 3).
 - 3) The things that are about to begin after the two previous things—prophecy of the churches changing.
2. There are two sets of mysteries for each of the seven churches (Rev. 1:20).
 - 1) The “seven stars” are the seven messengers of the churches.
 - i. They are humans who are responsible for the behavior of the churches.
 - ii. They are the bishop/pastor of the church.
 - 2) The “seven lampstands” are the seven churches.
 - 3) Each church will be evaluated by Christ:
 - i. Its behavior will be compared/contrasted to the symbolic image.
 - ii. Its destiny is prophesied.
 - iii. And will have a promise to the overcomer.

II. The history of the church at Ephesus—West-Turkey today.

52 AD	Paul leaves Corinth and goes to Ephesus and starts the church.	Acts 18:21
53 AD	Apollos, aided by Aquila and Priscilla, continued to grow the church.	Acts 18:24-28
54-56 AD	Paul teaches them for three years and covered concepts not recorded in the N.T. (Acts 20:27).	Acts 19:8; 20:31
58 AD	Paul meets with the elders, bishops, pastors at the Island of Miletus.	Acts 20:17-38
64 AD	From prison in Rome, Paul writes the Letter to the Ephesians.	
66 AD	<i>The Apostle John comes to Ephesus and is reported to have brought Mary with him.</i>	Jn. 19:27
96 AD	<i>John is banished to the Island of Patmos</i>	
107 AD	<i>Ignatius of Antioch, a student of John writes to the church admonishing them to stop rebelling against the bishop. Down to one church?</i>	Acts 20:20
200 AD	<i>The church is dead—gone.</i>	