



Learn Your Bible

Resources to help you learn and understand the Bible

Short Study 036: Letters to the 7 Churches 2: Smyrna

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Read Revelation 2:8-11

Introduction. This is the second of the seven letters, dictated by the risen Lord Jesus in a vision, to be written down by the Apostle John and sent to churches in Asia Minor. The letters follow a similar pattern: (1) A description of the Sender (Christ), (2) things the Lord found pleasing and/or displeasing about the church, (3) assurances and/or warnings, (4) call to repent, (5) the consequence of repentance or refusal to repent. (where necessary), (6) promise to the overcomer.

- 1. The Sender.** What does the Lord mean by calling Himself "The First and the Last"?
- 2. Commendations.** For what were the Smyrnan Christians commended? How can they be rich yet in poverty? What do the Commentators say reckon the "synagogue of Satan" to be?
- 3. Reassurance.** The persecution these Christians were to experience would be a testing time (AV 'trial'). What is God's purpose in allowing Satan to put Christians through times of testing? The reference to ten days" probably means of short duration, suggesting that the Lord limits times of testing. How does this compare with 1 Cor 10:13?
- 4. Call.** Not to be fearful.
- 5. Promise to the overcomer.** What is the "second death"?

To think about:

1. Trials come in all sorts and sizes, and many may be times of testing. How do I cope with them? Does faith make a difference?
2. In what ways am I rich?

To dig deeper: Find out what you can about the life and culture of 1st Century Smyrna and consider how the Church there might have suffered persecution from their society.