

**Answers to The Book  
of Revelation  
Doctrine and Covenants 77**



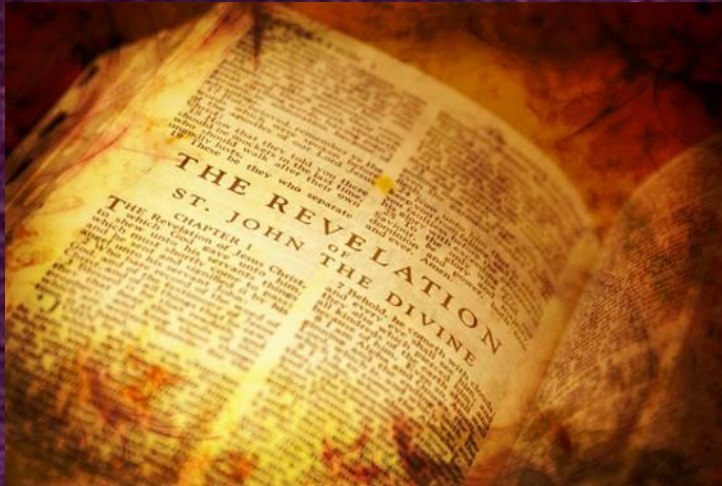
# Background

February-  
March 1832

After Joseph returned from Amherst, Ohio he resumed translating from the New Testament and desired to know the meaning in the book of Revelation



Some question arose in regard to the meaning of some of the figurative and symbolical writings of John in the Book of Revelation



In the form of questions and answers, the Prophet unlocked the book of Revelation by the spirit of revelation.

*“In connection with the translation of the Scriptures, I received the following explanation of the Revelation of St. John.”*

*Joseph Smith*

# The Key to Revelation

“The Book of Revelation is one of the grandest books in sacred literature, and the Lord clearly designs that the Saints should become familiar with it.

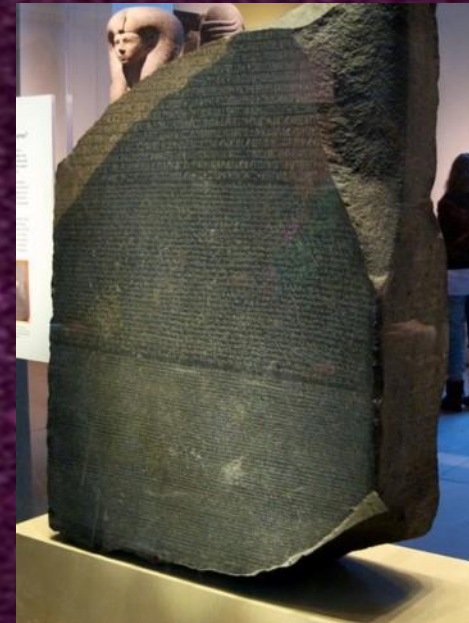
Else, why this Revelation in the Doctrine and Covenants?



“But [section 77] is not a complete interpretation of the book. It is a key. A key is a very small part of the house. It unlocks the door through which an entrance may be gained, but after the key has been turned, the searcher for treasure must find it for himself. ...

“The Lord has, in this Section, given His people a key to the book. ... As Champollion, by the key furnished in the brief test on the Rosetta stone, was able to open the secrets of Egyptian hieroglyphics, so the Bible student should be able to read the Apocalypse with a better understanding of it, by the aid of this key.”

Smith and Sjodahl



# Revelation

John the Beloved the ancient author of Revelation.

Revelation is a book of holy scripture. It came by revelation from the Lord.

Revelation deals with those things that interest people who have received the gift of the Holy Ghost, and those who have hope of eternal life.

Before John was born Nephi saw John in a vision and angels identified him as “One of the 12 apostles of the Lamb.” That John was appointed and foreordained to write the very visions now found in the book.



# The Sea of Glass

John describes heaven in earthly terms



“Angels do not reside on a planet like this earth; but they reside in the presence of God, on a globe like a sea of glass and fire, where all things for their glory are manifest past, present, and future, and are continually before the Lord.”

Joseph Smith



“In the Temple of Solomon there was an immense basin called “a molten sea” –

[cleansing basin]

(1 Kings 7:23)

Smith and Sjodahl



Glassy=Calm

The earth in its sanctified, immortal, and eternal state

# The Four Beasts

Lion—King, predator, wild

Calf—docile, friendly,  
domestic, heart

Ancient Idea:

Mark=lion

Matthew=man

Luke=ox

John=eagle

Smith and Sjodahl

Eagle---dignified, birds,  
mighty

Man—Thought, highest  
order

The most noble of  
beasts with energy  
emulating from God



“John saw the actual  
beasts in heaven,  
showing to John that  
beasts did actually exist  
and were giving glory  
to God.”

Joseph Smith



# Eyes and Wings

Eyes—light and knowledge



The Prophet Jeremiah uses wings as an image of power swooping down upon Moab and Bozrah (Jeremiah 48:40)



Power to Move and Act



“More often than not, ancient and modern iconography depicts heavenly beings as possessing wings. This image is purely symbolic, however, for “an angel of God never has wings.”

Joseph Smith

# 24 Elders—in the future

“had on their heads  
crowns of gold”

Who might these  
representatives be?



Not as they  
were... but as  
they will be

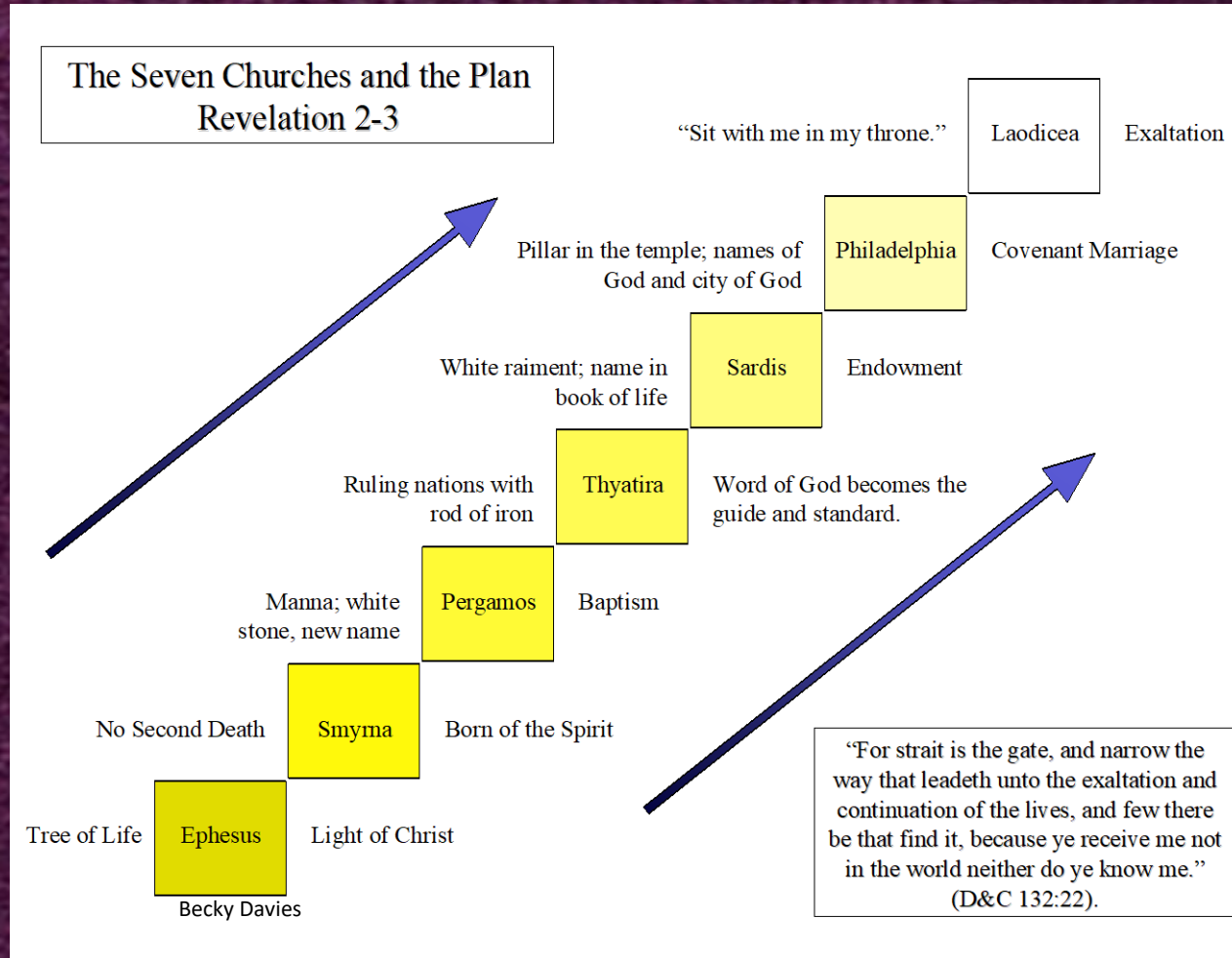
## Can Prophets see into the Future?

Joseph saw his mother and father in  
heaven, even though they were still  
alive, in a revelation (D&C 137)



# 7 Churches

These were the 7 churches—the last strongholds of the Church that existed during the time that John was at Patmos, where he received the account of Revelation



Patmos was a penal colony in Greek isles where John was sent by emperor Domitian because he was a Christian leader and would not deny his faith.





# 7 Seals

“The book contains the history of the seven thousand years of the temporal existence of the earth”  
Smith and Sjodahl



“The time from Adam through the end of the Millennium. Each thousand year period is represented by its respective seal.”  
McConkie and Ostler



“John had the curtains of heaven withdrawn and by vision looked through the dark vista of future ages, and contemplated events that should transpire throughout every subsequent period of time, until the final winding up scene.”

Joseph Smith



# 4 Angels

Those who warn and save

Example: The Wheat and the Tares Parable Matthew 13:24-30

Those who have the everlasting gospel to commit to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people



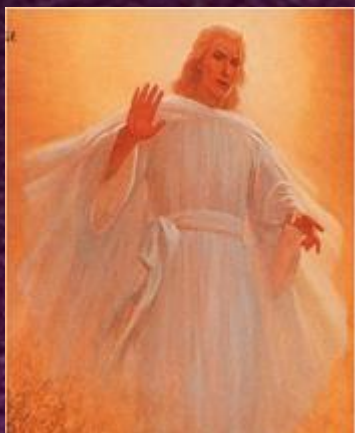
Those who judge and destroy=divine executioners

Those who restore keys and knowledge in opening the dispensation of the fullness of times

Example: Elias—title of someone who is a forerunner-- to restore all things

# An Elias

Seal of God over the  
12 Tribes of Israel



Angels ready to  
destroy and Elias  
'holds back the  
wind' ready to  
save—by  
covenants—seal in  
their foreheads



A title of someone who is a  
forerunner-- to restore all things

John the Baptist (JST John 1:21-28)

Noah (D&C 27:6-7, Luke 1:5-25)

John the Revelator (D&C 77:9, 14)

“Four destroying angels holding power  
over the four quarters of the earth until  
the servants of God are sealed in their  
foreheads, which signifies sealing the  
blessing upon their heads, meaning the  
everlasting covenant, thereby making  
their calling and election sure. When a  
seal is put upon the father and mother it  
secures their posterity, so that they  
cannot be lost, but will be saved by virtue  
of the covenant of their father and  
mother.”

Joseph Smith



# The 6<sup>th</sup> Seal

The time we live in now



Joseph Smith's ministry

Restoration  
World-wide Church

Zion Established

World-wide calamities



D&C 77:10

# 144,000

Those ordained to the Holy Order of God

Tribes of Israel:  
12,000 of each tribe.

“Opinions are divided as to whether this refers to Israel, literally, or to believers generally.”

Smith and Sjodahl



“It is not only necessary that you should be baptized for your dead, but you will have to go through all the ordinances for them, the same as you have gone through to save yourselves. There will be 144,000 saviors on Mount Zion, and with them an innumerable host that no man can number. Oh! I beseech you to go forward, go forward and make your calling and your election sure.”

Joseph Smith

# Opening of the 7<sup>th</sup> Seal

Sounding of the Trump: CALL ATTENTION TO

“The Angels announce the desolation and wars at the sounding of their trumpets. The destruction attendant to the return of the Lord both finishes his work in mortality among the wicked and prepares the world for the Millennium”

McConkie and Ostler



“The completion of man’s salvation in the seventh millennium”

Smith and Sjordahl



John recorded that when he [Christ] had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.(Rev. 8:1-2)

Perhaps a moment of reverence

# Little Book—Feasting on the Words of Christ



“John’s act of eating a book containing the word of God to him was in keeping with the custom and tradition of ancient Israel. The act signified that he was eating the bread of life, that he was partaking of the good word of God, that he was feasting upon the word of Christ—which was in his mouth sweet as honey.

But it made his belly bitter; that is, the judgments and plagues promised those to whom the Lord’s word was sent caused him to despair and have sorrow of soul. ‘How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!’

Such is the exulting cry of the Psalmist. And conversely, how bitter is the penalty for rebellion and disobedience.

Ezekiel had a similar experience. He was commanded to eat a roll (a book), which was in his mouth as honey for sweetness, but in the writing itself there was ‘lamentations, and mourning, and woe.’ “

Elder Bruce R. McConkie





# Two Witnesses

Those of sack cloth—  
two persons who are not in political power, or stardom



Two—as witnesses—We go out in  
two's to preach the gospel

“These prophets will also of necessity  
have been called and commissioned by  
him who stands at the head of the earthly  
church and kingdom of God.”

McConkie and Ostler



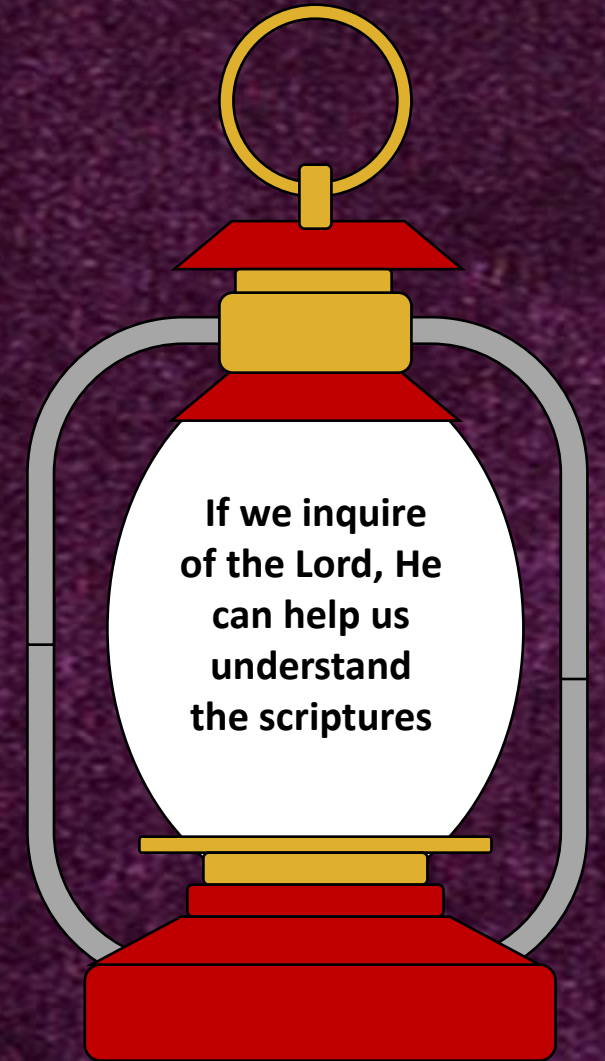
# Through the Prophets



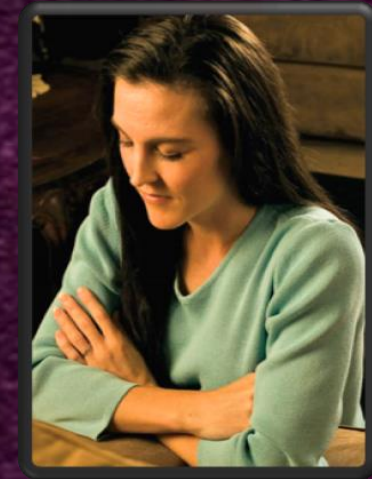
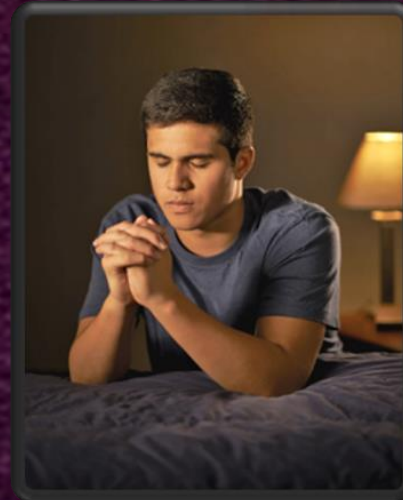
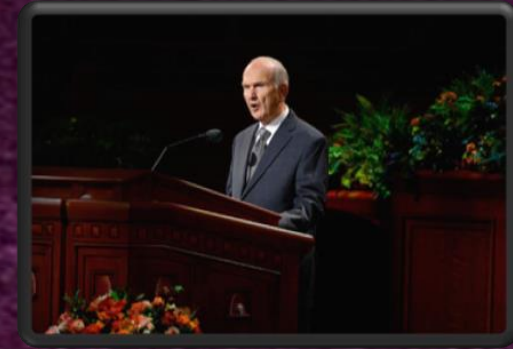
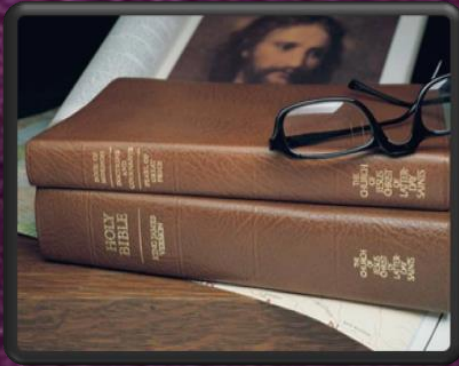
“Prophets gave the scripture, and prophets must interpret it. Holy men of old received revelation from the Holy Ghost, which they recorded as scripture; now men must have the same Holy Spirit to reveal what is meant by the scripture—

Otherwise, there will be a host of private interpretations and consequently many different and disagreeing churches, which is precisely the condition in the religious world today”

Bruce R. McConkie



# Where Can I Find What the Scriptures Mean?



## Sources:

Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjodahl *Doctrine and Covenants Commentary* pgs. 473-474, 478

Joseph Smith *History of the Church* 1:253

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Joseph Fielding McConkie and Craig J. Ostler *Revelations of the Restoration* pg. 555, 558

*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* pg. 247,321,366

Elder Bruce R. McConkie (in Conference Report, Oct. 1964, 38).

(*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3:507.)

Becky Davies and Lesley Meachum Poway Institute (Chart)

### The Four Beasts

“I suppose John saw beings there of a thousand forms, that had been saved from ten thousand times ten thousand earths like this,—strange beasts of which we have no conception: all might be seen in heaven. The grand secret was to show John what there was in heaven. John learned that God glorified Himself by saving all that His hands had made, whether beasts, fowls, fishes or men; and He will glorify Himself with them.

Says one, ‘I cannot believe in the salvation of beasts.’ any man who would tell you that this could not be, would tell you that the revelations are not true.

John heard the words of the beasts giving glory to God, and understood them. God who made the beasts could understand every language spoken by them.

The four beasts were four of the most noble animals that had filled the measure of their creation, and had been saved from other world, because they were perfect: they were like angels in their sphere. We are not told where they came from, and I do not know; but they were seen and heard by John praising the glorifying God.” Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 291-92

### God Giving Visions:

The Prophet Joseph Smith said: “I make this broad declaration, that whenever God gives a vision of an image, or beast, or figure of any kind, He always holds Himself responsible to give a revelation or interpretation of the meaning thereof, otherwise we are not responsible or accountable for our belief in it.

Don’t be afraid of being damned for not knowing the meaning of a vision or figure, if God has not given a revelation or interpretation of the subject.”

(*Teachings*, p. 291.)

“‘The book which John saw’ represented the real history of the world—what the eye of God has seen, what the recording angel has written; and the seven thousand years, corresponding to the seven seals of the Apocalyptic volume, are as seven great days during which Mother Earth will fulfill her mortal mission, laboring six days and resting upon the seventh, her period of sanctification. These seven days do not include the period of our planet’s creation and preparation as a dwelling place for man. They are limited to Earth’s ‘temporal existence,’ that is, to Time, considered as distinct from Eternity.” (Whitney, *Saturday Night Thoughts* ,p. 11.)

**A seal**, as the term was used by John (see Revelation 5:1–2), was a bit of wax that secured a folded letter or document and bore the impression of a signet. Once sealed, the document could not be opened without the seal’s being broken. In the case of the earth’s history and destiny, there is only one who is worthy to open the seal and reveal the contents: Jesus Christ (see Revelation 5:2–9). Only through the Atonement of Christ is the temporal existence of the earth of any value. He alone holds the key to the fulfilling of the purpose for which the earth was created. Because of Him the plan of salvation will succeed; without Him all would fail and come to naught, or remain sealed.

### Elias:

“By revelation we are also informed that the Elias who was to restore all things is the angel Gabriel who was known in mortality as Noah. Teachings of Joseph Smith, 157

**Angels** President Joseph Fielding Smith explained that “these angels seem to fit the description of the angels spoken of in the parable of the wheat and the tares, (Matt. 13:24–43 and D. & C. 86:17), who plead with the Lord that they might go forth to reap down the field. They were told to let the wheat and the tares grow together to the time of the end of the harvest, which is the end of the world (Matt. 13:38–39). ...

“These angels have been given power over the four parts [quarters] of the earth and they have the power of committing the everlasting Gospel to the peoples of the earth. The fulness of the Gospel was not restored by any one messenger sent from the presence of the Lord. All the ancient prophets who held keys and came and restored them, had a hand in this great work of restoration. There are, we learn from this revelation, four angels unto whom the power has been given, to shut up the heavens, to open them and with power unto life and also unto death and destruction. These are now at work in the earth on their sacred mission.” (*Church History and Modern Revelation*, 1:300–301.)

Susa Young Gates reported an address by President Wilford Woodruff in which he declared: “Those angels have left the portals of heaven, and they stand over this people and this nation now, and are hovering over the earth waiting to pour out the judgments. And from this very day they shall be poured out.” (*Young Women’s Journal*, Aug. 1894, p. 512; see also Notes and Commentary for D&C 86:5.)

# The 6 Time Periods – Revelation 6

Seal 1 Enoch and Zion	Seal 2 Wickedness/ flood/Noah	Seal 3 Famine/ Abraham/ Israel	Seal 4 Age of Empires	Seal 5 Age of martyrs	Seal 6 Latter Days
4000-3000 BC Adam and Enoch White horse- Victory Enoch Conqueror Moses 7:13-17	3000-2000 BC Enoch translated Red horse- bloodshed Tower of Babel-Jaredites Flood-2348 BC	2000-1000 BC Abraham to Moses Black horse- famine/death  Jacob/Joseph- famine/ bondage Law of Moses	1000-0 BC Saul David Israel Judah scattered  Pale horse-war, pestilence  Divided Kingdom  Lost 10 tribes Apostasy	0-1000 John the Baptist  Christ's birth Kingdom set up  Atonement Resurrection  Gospel to Gentiles  Great Apostasy Dark Ages	1000-2000 Renaissance Reformation  Joseph Smith's ministry  Restoration World-wide Church  Zion Established  World-wide calamities

### Who Are the 144,000?

“Before the Lord shall come ... there is to be a great work among the nations. ... The ten tribes will have to come forth and come to this land, to be crowned with glory in the midst of Zion by the hands of the servants of God, even the Children of Ephraim; and twelve thousand High Priests will be elected from each of these ten tribes, as well as from the scattered tribes, and sealed in their foreheads, and will be ordained and receive power to gather out of all nations, kindreds, tongues and people as many as will come unto the general assemblage of the Church of the first-born.” (Orson Pratt, in *Journal of Discourses*, 16:325.)

**Trumpets** were used anciently to herald or announce something or to draw attention to something. The seven angels who sound trumpets in Revelation 8–10 will signal events that will take place in the beginning of the seventh thousand years (after the seventh seal is opened; see Revelation 8:1), before the Lord comes in His glory.

### Bible Dictionary explains the book of Revelation:

“Also known as the Apocalypse, a Greek word meaning revealed or uncovered. The message of Revelation is the same as that of all scripture: there will be an eventual triumph on this earth of God over the devil; a permanent victory of good over evil, of the Saints over their persecutors, of the kingdom of God over the kingdoms of men and of Satan. This is the subject on which Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Paul, Peter, and all the prophets have written. They spoke of a day of victory that would come, and that the end would be better (more glorious) than the beginning. The victory would be achieved through Jesus Christ.

“Such is the theme of the Revelation. The details about the beasts, the wars, the angels, the men, etc., contribute to the development of this theme. By a little study, the theme can be perceived even if the details are not completely identified. It may be in this sense that the Prophet Joseph Smith said that Revelation was ‘one of the plainest books God ever caused to be written’ (HC 5:342). However, the more fully the details are understood, the greater will be the appreciation of the theme. If we fail to catch a glimpse of the theme, we fail in our comprehension, no matter how many details we are able to understand” (Bible Dictionary, “Revelation of John”).

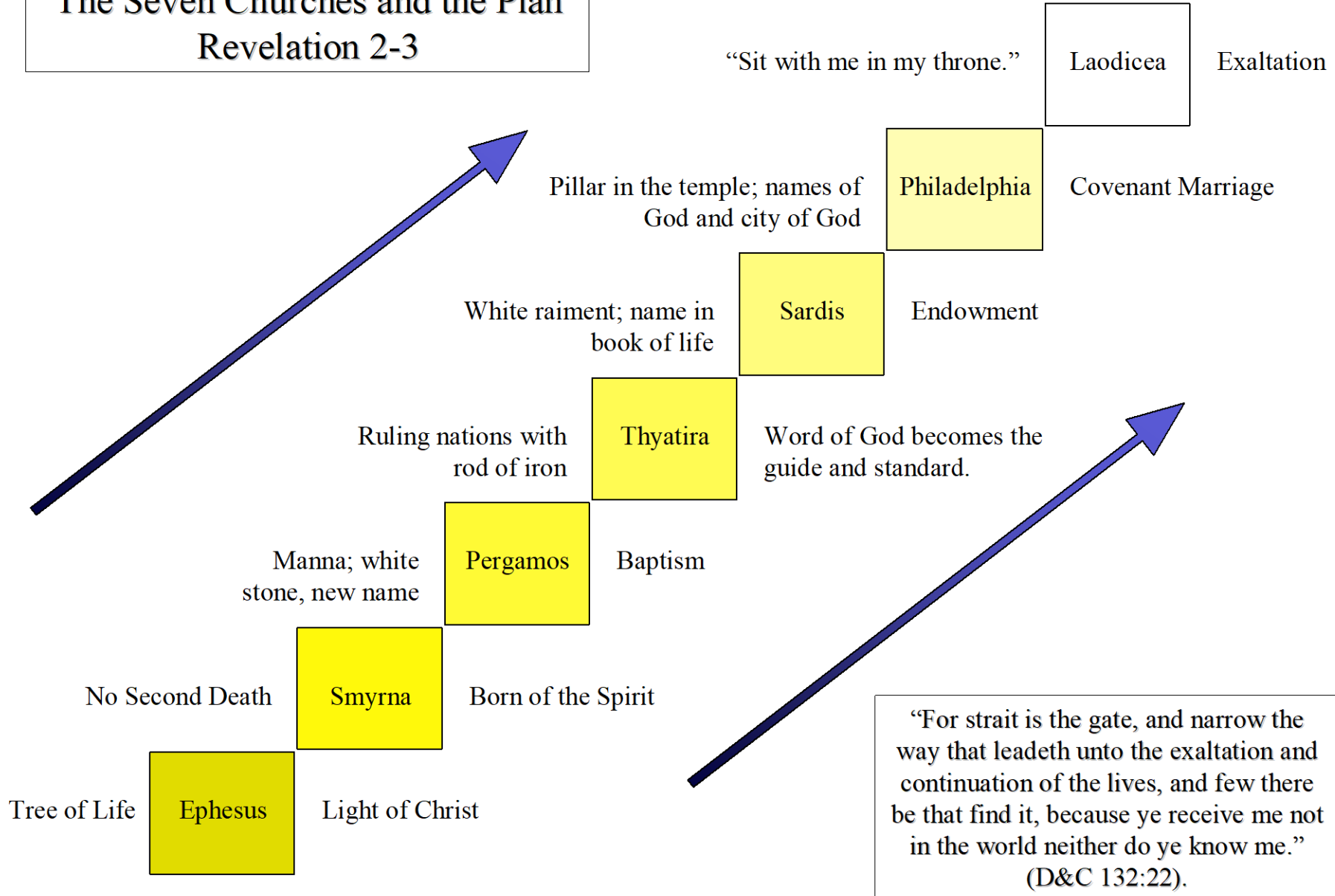
### Two Witnesses:

Elder Parley P. Pratt wrote: “John, in the eleventh chapter of Revelation, gives us many more particulars concerning [the great war in Israel after the Jews are gathered there]. He informs us that after the city and temple are rebuilt by the Jews, the Gentiles will tread it under foot forty and two months, during which time there will be two prophets continually prophesying and working mighty miracles. And it seems that the Gentile army shall be hindered from utterly destroying and overthrowing the city, while these two prophets continue. But, after a struggle of three years and a half, they will at length succeed in destroying these two prophets and then overrunning much of the city; they will send gifts to each other because of the death of the two prophets, and in the meantime will not allow their dead bodies to be put in graves, but suffer them to lie in the streets of Jerusalem three days and a half, during which time the armies of the Gentiles, consisting of many kindreds, tongues and nations, passing through the city, plundering the Jews, will see their dead bodies lying in the street. But after three days and a half, on a sudden, the spirit of life from God will enter them; they will arise and stand upon their feet, and great fear will fall upon them that see them. And then they shall hear a voice from heaven saying, ‘Come up hither,’ and they will ascend up to heaven in a cloud, with enemies beholding them.” (*Voice of Warning*, p. 33.)

Elder Bruce R. McConkie identified the two prophets as “followers of that humble man Joseph Smith, through whom the Lord of Heaven restored the fulness of his everlasting gospel in this final dispensation of grace. No doubt they will be members of the Council of the Twelve or of the First Presidency of the Church.” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3:509.)

The two witnesses are raised up “to the Jewish nation” and are not necessarily *from* the Jewish nation (see D&C 77:15–16; italics added.)

The Seven Churches and the Plan  
Revelation 2-3



"For strait is the gate, and narrow the way that leadeth unto the exaltation and continuation of the lives, and few there be that find it, because ye receive me not in the world neither do ye know me."  
(D&C 132:22).