

# MAGNIFICENT PROMISES FOR FAITHFUL BELIEVERS

Revelation 3:7-13

## 1. THE CHURCH IN ANCIENT PHILADELPHIA, verse 7

Founded 189BC. 75 miles inland from the Aegean coast. Situated at a major point of travel into the central plateau of the sub-continent.

A “missionary” city for Greek culture and language. Rebuilt by Emperor Tiberius. Caesar cult established in gratitude.

A well-established Jewish synagogue was in Philadelphia.

Its members would have been strong social, political, and economic opponents of the Church seeing it as a corruption of ancient Judaism.

## 2. THE ONE SENDING THIS MESSAGE WAS JESUS, THE EXALTED MESSIAH.

A. Jesus identified Himself as the One who is holy and true, verse 7.

A claim of divinity and authority to inspire the Christians.  
The claim of holiness, a mandate for obedience.

B. The Holy and True One also claimed to possess the key of David.

A reference to Isaiah 22:22--authority over the household of God was now in His control to the ultimate extent. Jesus’ enemies would be vanquished and His control over access to His Kingdom was absolute.

## 3. THE CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE CHRIST WROTE TO, verse 8.

The church lacked size and stature. The Christians were easily looked down on and ridiculed. But they had been obedient to what they had been taught. They had not shrunk back into the pagan mainstream of the community. They had maintained a clear testimony of commitment to Christ and the gospel.

## 4. PROMISES FROM CHRIST FOR THEIR SITUATION, verses 8-9.

A. First promise: Unhindered access to the coming Kingdom of Christ.  
The door to the Kingdom opened for them by Christ who has the key. Access to the eternal Kingdom was a privilege supremely superior to membership in an earthly Jewish synagogue.

B. Second Promise: Vindication by God before those who openly deny Jesus is the Messiah.  
Those who claimed to be loyal to God but rejected Christ as Messiah, Jesus branded as **false** Jews.

A day will come when the spiritual veil over the eyes of most Jews will be removed by God and they will turn in faith to Jesus as their Messiah, Romans 11:25-32

C. Third Promise: Deliverance from the world-wide tribulation that God will send, verse 10.

More precisely, the beginning of this verse should read: “*Since you kept the testimony about my example of endurance. . .*”

Not an exhortation to persevere but acknowledgement that they have been following the example of Jesus’ endurance.

A time of world-wide trial is coming. The purpose of this trial is **not** to test believers’ loyalty to Christ, but to prompt **unbelievers** to repent.

“*Those who live on the earth*” = people who living in rebellion against God and Christ. (Revelation 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8, 12, 14; 17:2, 8).

The promise is **removal from** the scene of coming tribulation.

The promise remains for the Church of true believers today because this trial has not yet come.

## 5. INSTRUCTIONS TO BELIEVERS WHO ARE FAITHFUL BUT OPPRESSED, verse 11.

The Tribulation will come suddenly and for most, unexpectedly. Keep up your commitment to the gospel, your loyalty to one another, and your endurance of social rejection and ridicule.

What crown were they to protect? Their open door into the Kingdom; their vindication before enemies; their deliverance from world-wide tribulation.

## 6. TWO PROMISES OF ETERNAL SIGNIFICANCE, verse 12.

A. First promise: a firm relationship with God and absolute assurance of eternal life. The believer who holds fast and overcomes does **not** earn his salvation by this. Rather, salvation is **confirmed** to his own heart by this.

B. Second Promise: Certification of official and personal recognition as a citizen of heaven.

- 1) Adoption papers into God’s eternal family, signed by Christ.
- 2) Citizenship in the eternal city of God authorized by Christ.
- 3) An identity with Christ signed by Christ (Revelation 19:12, 16).

## 7. JESUS’ CHALLENGE TO HIS CHURCH TODAY, verse 13.

Christ is glorified by **faithful** churches. That means: no manipulation of Scripture; authentic mutual love; loving husbands, respectful wives, obedient children. Diligent, high-integrity workers. Unashamed worship and witness. Loyalty to one another and laughter.

RDL@CrossWay/11-7-2021

# MAGNIFICENT PROMISES FOR FAITHFUL BELIEVERS

Revelation 3:7-13

## 1. THE CHURCH IN ANCIENT PHILADELPHIA, verse 7

Founded 189BC. 75 miles inland from the Aegean coast. Situated at a major point of travel into the central plateau of the sub-continent.

A “missionary” city for Greek culture and language. Rebuilt by Emperor Tiberius. Caesar cult established in gratitude.

A well-established Jewish synagogue was in Philadelphia.

Its members would have been strong social, political, and economic opponents of the Church seeing it as a corruption of ancient Judaism.

## 2. THE ONE SENDING THIS MESSAGE WAS JESUS, THE EXALTED MESSIAH.

A. Jesus identified Himself as the One who is holy and true, verse 7.

A claim of divinity and authority to inspire the Christians.  
The claim of holiness, a mandate for obedience.

B. The Holy and True One also claimed to possess the key of David.

A reference to Isaiah 22:22--authority over the household of God was now in His control to the ultimate extent. Jesus’ enemies would be vanquished and His control over access to His Kingdom was absolute.

## 3. THE CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE CHRIST WROTE TO, verse 8.

The church lacked size and stature. The Christians were easily looked down on and ridiculed. But they had been obedient to what they had been taught. They had not shrunk back into the pagan mainstream of the community. They had maintained a clear testimony of commitment to Christ and the gospel.

## 4. PROMISES FROM CHRIST FOR THEIR SITUATION, verses 8-9.

A. First promise: Unhindered access to the coming Kingdom of Christ.  
The door to the Kingdom opened for them by Christ who has the key. Access to the eternal Kingdom was a privilege supremely superior to membership in an earthly Jewish synagogue.

B. Second Promise: Vindication by God before those who openly deny Jesus is the Messiah.  
Those who claimed to be loyal to God but rejected Christ as Messiah, Jesus branded as **false** Jews.

A day will come when the spiritual veil over the eyes of most Jews will be removed by God and they will turn in faith to Jesus as their Messiah, Romans 11:25-32

C. Third Promise: Deliverance from the world-wide tribulation that God will send, verse 10.

More precisely, the beginning of this verse should read: “*Since you kept the testimony about my example of endurance. . .*”

Not an exhortation to persevere but acknowledgement that they have been following the example of Jesus’ endurance.

A time of world-wide trial is coming. The purpose of this trial is **not** to test believers’ loyalty to Christ, but to prompt **unbelievers** to repent.

“*Those who live on the earth*” = people who living in rebellion against God and Christ. (Revelation 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8, 12, 14; 17:2, 8).

The promise is **removal from** the scene of coming tribulation.

The promise remains for the Church of true believers today because this trial has not yet come.

## 5. INSTRUCTIONS TO BELIEVERS WHO ARE FAITHFUL BUT OPPRESSED, verse 11.

The Tribulation will come suddenly and for most, unexpectedly. Keep up your commitment to the gospel, your loyalty to one another, and your endurance of social rejection and ridicule.

What crown were they to protect? Their open door into the Kingdom; their vindication before enemies; their deliverance from world-wide tribulation.

## 6. TWO PROMISES OF ETERNAL SIGNIFICANCE, verse 12.

A. First promise: a firm relationship with God and absolute assurance of eternal life. The believer who holds fast and overcomes does **not** earn his salvation by this. Rather, salvation is **confirmed** to his own heart by this.

B. Second Promise: Certification of official and personal recognition as a citizen of heaven.

- 1) Adoption papers into God’s eternal family, signed by Christ.
- 2) Citizenship in the eternal city of God authorized by Christ.
- 3) An identity with Christ signed by Christ (Revelation 19:12, 16).

## 7. JESUS’ CHALLENGE TO HIS CHURCH TODAY, verse 13.

Christ is glorified by **faithful** churches. That means: no manipulation of Scripture; authentic mutual love; loving husbands, respectful wives, obedient children. Diligent, high-integrity workers. Unashamed worship and witness. Loyalty to one another and laughter.

RDL@CrossWay/11-7-2021