

2: Jesus revealed to His Churches. Revelation 2:1- 3:22.

Jesus Mashiach came as the only **source of spiritual light** to a world ruled by Satan in darkness and death (Lk. 4), so he is the one with eyes like “flames of fire” and a face like the “sun shining in its full strength” (Rev. 1:14, 16). So, he establishes the **Churches** as **seven “lampstands”**—golden with faith but shining for a set time of “seven” seasons (1:20). For, these Churches are meant to fulfill his purposes on earth while Israel is still under Satan’s darkness (2:9). For, when Israel chose to reject her God-given Mashiach in order to cling to her religious works of Jewish identity and faith, she also abandoned her fruitfulness (Matt. 21:18-46) and chose to **remain** under **Satan’s kingdom** of darkness (2:9, 3:9). So, the seven **Churches** will **shine** the light of **Mashiach’s kingdom** until the **Day of the Lord**, when Israel finally claims Jesus as her own and the **Kingdom** is **birthed** in the **land** (6:12). When the Kingdom of God takes hold in Israel, then the world and its kingdoms will fall under the rule of Jesus Mashiach, for **Satan** will **attack** God’s Kingdom, Israel, signalling his final doom (11:15).

So, the Seven Churches bridge Jesus Mashiach’s Kingdom work until Israel and her children are reborn into the Kingdom of God. The **first churches** establish a kingdom beachhead in Satan’s dark world. The witness of Ephesus, the Jewish church, would be removed but re-emerge in the Sixth church to continue its testimony to Israel (2:5), leaving Smyrna to bear the brunt of Satanic persecution from both Jew and Roman Gentiles (2:9). The **formative churches**-- Orthodox Pergamum and then its outgrowth, the Roman Catholic Thyatira—grew up in the Roman empire, whose classical culture shaped ecclesiastical practice. Shaped by modernism, the **final churches**- Protestant Sardis, evangelical Philadelphia, and prospering Laodicea broke from past tradition but dead-ended in worldliness.

When Israel comes home to the Kingdom of Jesus, she will know him with a native understanding. Nourished by the pure sap of the Tanakh (Rom. 11:24), she will bear the fruit of salvation for the entire world (11:15; Mt. 24:14). Because the Kingdom for her spiritually-reborn children will be not a matter of mere “eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 14:17), Israel can learn from the unfolding mystery as Jesus Mashiach revealed the Kingdom through the Church’s seven movements.

To the **(1) first churches**, Jesus Mashiach reveals the reality of a **Kingdom Life** centered around himself (Rev. 2:1-11). From the very beginning, Jesus reveals that He is Immanuel, the Lord God who “walks” among His people and who “holds” all spiritual power to work among them (2:1). So, kingdom life emanates from this intimate “love” relationship between the Mashiach and his people (2:4). Their “toil” and tireless service for his “name’s sake”(2:3) should be the fruit, not the substance of Kingdom life. And, this Kingdom life from “first to last” is rooted in his resurrected “life” (2:8), calling his servants to be “faithful unto death” for they cannot be hurt by permanent loss or spiritual “death” (2:11).

As the **(2) formative churches** took root and grew in the world, Jesus Mashiach reminded them that **Kingdom Growth** was only rooted in his spiritual life as the Son of God (2:18). Still, the churches strayed from His sufficiency, adulterating his words (2:12) with fleshly teaching (2:14) and proclaiming an ecclesiastic identity separate from his name (2:20).

The **(3) final churches** sought to reform the failings of the earlier churches, but only the weak evangelical church, Philadelphia (3:8), saw an “open door” for **Kingdom fruit** (3:8) rather than deadness in the protestant Sardis (3:1) or worldly unfaithfulness in prospering Laodicea(3:17).

2.1. Jesus Revealed as the Living One to His First Churches: 2:1-11

- Revelation (v.1)

2.2. Jesus Revealed as the Living Word to His Forming Churches: 2:12-29

- Revelation (v.1)

2.3. Jesus Revealed as the Spirit-Giving Holy One to His Final Churches: 3:1-22.

- Revelation (v.1)