

The Seven Churches Of Asia  
The Path Of The Chosen Revealed  
Second Edition

A Messianic Jewish Commentary

By P.R. Otokletos

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## **Dedication**

This work is dedicated to the great and awesome G\_D Most High; the Infinite G\_D of all existence whom no man has seen but the only begotten Son; the G\_D of Israel: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Psalms 9:11: “And they that know thy Name will put their trust in Thee; for Thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek Thee.”

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## [About P. R. Otokletos](#)

The author Andrew A. Cullen has been writing under the pen name of P. R. Otokletos since 2004 when he began writing/blogging Messianic Jewish/Hebraic Roots commentaries across a broad range of topics.

The author is part of an emerging movement of believing Jews as well as former Christians recapturing the Hebraic roots of the Messianic faith. A movement that openly receives not just the redemptive grace of the Gospel but also the transformational lifestyle that comes with joyful pursuit of G\_D's Sacred Torah ... just as it was in the first century Ce!

Despite a successful career in politics and business, the author is driven first and foremost by a desire to understand the great G\_D of creation and humanity's fate. To this end the author has spent years studying the Hebrew and Greek Holy Scriptures, in a Hebraic context in order to get past the delusions of mainline religions ... to get at the truth!

In 2005 the author completed this first book "The Seven Churches of Asia - The Path of the Chosen Revealed". A work which provides a Messianic Hebraic look into the Revelation of Jesus Christ (Yeshua HaMashiach in Hebrew/Aramaic) respective to the seven church messages found in the Book of Revelation.

In his second full length book completed in 2013 "Exposing Mystery Babylon - An Attack On Lawlessness", a broad sweeping overview is provided regarding how G\_D's adversary works against the children of men through confusion, lies and deceit to keep people from the truth of the Gospel Message and the Covenantal relationship offered by G\_D. The work exposes the false framework of wisdom woven into this temporal world (olam hazeh) and the genuine solution for humanity (Grace and Torah) provided by G\_D through Yeshua HaMashiach. This work undertakes a broad overview of the Torah Commandments and present day applicability within a Messianic context provided to us by Yeshua ... The Master Rebbe and Lord!

His most recent book "The Biblical Festivals - Messiah's Aliyah of Glory" was completed in 2014. In this work the Traditional and Messianic Hebraic perspectives relative to the Sacred Festivals are surfaced, discussed and reviewed in order to reveal the glory of G\_D through the awesome fulfillment and perfection of the Festivals by, in and through Messiah Yeshua. This

work essentially reveals Yeshua's great "aliyah" (ascent) to glory and consequently the great aliyah of Mashiach's faithful community ... a.k.a... Israel!

The author is convinced that nearly two thousand years of wayward understanding of the Biblical texts and man-made doctrine has significantly shrouded humanity's view of G\_D ... his Messiah ... and even the very Gospel message itself. Consequently the author has dedicated his time and efforts to offer humanity a different perspective of the G\_D of Israel ... a different perspective of Messiah Yeshua ... a different perspective of the Gospel message in the hopes that some might be awakened to and pursue a relationship with G\_D as defined within Holy Scriptures.

There is indeed a veil of ignorance that thickens all around us and is keeping us from our destiny ... from our restoration. Like others who can see past this shroud, the author labors for no other reason than to give G\_D the glory he is due and G\_D's just due comes by way of the Hebraic bias ... as the reader will soon see!

The author hosts a web-site at <http://pr.otokletos.org/> where numerous Messianic Hebraic materials are provided free of charge.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Preface

According to estimates published by the United States Census Bureau, Earth's population reached 6.5 billion on February 25, 2006. In line with projections, this figure continues to grow at unprecedented rates. Approximately one fifth of all humans that have existed in the last six thousand years are currently alive. (i)

According to David Barrett's World Christian Encyclopedia there are currently more than two billion professed or practicing Christians in the world,(ii) approximately 10% of all Christians reside in the United States of America. Biblical Scripture is clear however that only a remnant, or few, will choose the narrow path to the Kingdom of Heaven. This logically implies many purported Christians will not choose or find the narrow path. Subsequently vast amounts of Christians are operating under an extremely weakened or even false faith. Consequently the end days as predicted in the Book of Revelation will be a virtual slaughter house for the Earth's population; even for a vast number of professed Christians.

How and why are modern Christians in such dire circumstances?

With this new look into the Revelation of Jesus the Messiah (Yeshua HaMashiach in Hebrew/Aramaic) we will see the prophesied historical path of the Earthly Church traveled throughout the last 2000 years. See how the Church has failed to heed the prophetic warnings so mercifully provided and drifted from its scripturally ordained roots because of political and cultural influences. Most importantly see and understand what a person needs to know about faith, practical living and salvation which one will not get from the main stream Christian movement.

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## Introduction

Generations of believers in the G\_D of Israel, both Jew and Gentile, have anxiously awaited the coming of the Biblical Messiah. For the vast majority of Jews in the world they still await a Messiah who has yet to come. For the vast majority of Gentiles whom shall be recognized as “Christians,” it is the second coming of Messiah, Yeshua of Nazareth that is anticipated. For all believers in the G\_D of Israel there is certainly one belief common to all: Messiah will be on Earth in the future.

Regarding the return of Messiah the greatest debate amongst believers is “When will he return?” The purpose of this work however is not to declare the specific “when” regarding the coming of Messiah; this information is simply known to only G\_D himself. So what then is the primary purpose of this work?

The last of all Scriptural Writings gifted to people is “The Apocalypse,” or “Revelation to John,” otherwise commonly referred to as the “Book of Revelation.” Most readers will recognize this as the last book of the Christian New Testament Writings or the “B’rit Chadasha” (Renewed Covenant) as it is known in Hebrew. Because this writing is meant for believers who live after the first coming of Yeshua, it is easy to understand why this inspired writing has enthralled believers throughout the ages. After all, believers anticipate with great hope the prophesied second coming of Messiah; it is the destiny of all mankind!

Unarguably much debate regarding portions of this Revelation, or even the entirety of this writing, has raged throughout the ages relative to meaning and interpretation. The broad utilization of symbolic and literal components within this writing causes much confusion and leads to significant variances in interpretation. Despite these complexities many individuals have genuinely attempted to understand and interpret this blessed Revelation. The author however is convinced that previous works regarding the messages to the Seven Churches of Asia have not fully developed the cultural, historical, theological and scriptural context needed to enable proper interpretation of this enigmatic writing.

The vast amount of interpretive discourse relevant to the Revelation, glosses over the seven messages to the churches and for the most part the entire first three chapters. Perhaps these messages to the seven churches do not seem exciting, or perhaps these messages are not relevant

in these modern days? These messages however are pertinent to the Body of Messiah throughout the ages, as well as today, and the revelations contained within the first three chapters of this writing are indeed worthy of detailed review.

The purpose of the work then is to relay findings and insights regarding G\_D's holy word in the hope that people of faith in the awesome G\_D of Israel can join together at the table of reason. At the table of reason we come together for truth, clarification, strength and to reaffirm our common faith and join akin so we do not stay apart. Most importantly however we come together to know G\_D better so we can bring glory unto him.

So one may ask, "Reason about what?" When the end times will begin? When will the rapture take place? Who is the anti-Christ? Unfortunately for many who seem to have such an appetite for these inevitable cataclysmic events, this discourse will not deal with these sensational topics in tremendous detail. This work will be limited to the first three chapters of this blessed Revelation. But do not for one moment think this discourse will be unexciting or lack provocation. Within these three chapters of this writing is revealed a prophetic expose of the historical path to be followed by modern civilization from the time this Revelation was given until the time Messiah returns. Furthermore our Creator has provided for us a lasting doctrinal guide which we can use to live by and cleave to him.

The analysis and findings indicate the messages to the Churches represent not just exhortations pertinent to people of their time but prophetic messages pertinent to the entire Body of Messiah throughout its entire history. Subsequently each individual message to the Church corresponds to a specific time frame throughout the last two millennia. Each message further depicts the relative spiritual health of the Church within a particular era or identifies easily enough with defined historical events or movements so we can readily ascertain a defined time period for each of the seven Church messages. The Revelation then not only contains historical details of the "end days" but historical details regarding all the days from Messiah's first coming to his second coming.

Of all the gifts provided within this blessed Revelation it seems however the greatest of all have been overlooked. These are the gifts of truth regarding faith and salvation which G\_D, through Yeshua the Messiah, provided within this Revelation. These truths represent the key to unlocking the bindings of doctrinal differences which have kept believers apart for far too long.

Doctrinal differences also most certainly have resulted in jeopardizing many people who call emptily upon the name of Messiah. From the Gospel of Luke Yeshua declares,

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built a house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great. (Luke 6:46–49)

The day of the Lord is fast approaching. Can it not be felt as the Earth heaves in anticipation of his glorious coming while the nations are in an uproar? It is imperative we understand what our Lord meant when he told us to do as he says and build our faith on a firm foundation! Unfortunately most people are dull and not paying attention in spite of their belief to the contrary.

From the Gospel of Matthew: Who has ears to hear, let him hear. And the disciples came, and said to him, Why speak unto them in parables? Yeshua answered them, Because it is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whoever has, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but who so ever has not, from him shall be taken away even that he has. Therefore I speak to them in parables: because they seeing, still see not; and hearing they still hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this peoples' heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. (Matthew 13:9–15)

Consider Revelations then to be parable-like. The masses will see and hear but not understand. Most people think they understand G\_D's plan but do not. Messiah's condemnation of the waxed gross heart is valid today far more than in other days. So come and let us reason together in his Word and in his Holy Spirit!

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### **Author's notes:**

1. It is necessary to qualify the term “Church of Messiah” for its use is prominent throughout this work. In general this term should be used to recognize any congregation or individual who believes in the G\_D of Israel and accepts Yeshua (Jesus) the Messiah as the divine Word of G\_D who descended from Heaven to Earth for the propitiation of human sins through his blood atoning self-sacrifice. Consequently the Body of Messiah includes believers of most Christian faiths as well as Messianic Jews.

From a purely historical perspective however this term will be used mainly to describe the Apostolic Roman Catholic Church and close relatives; this grouping represents roughly 65% of all Christians in modern times and certainly a more significant percentage at various stages throughout history—most notably prior to the reformation efforts of the sixteenth century.<sup>(iii)</sup> More importantly it is the Roman Catholic Church which is, though contentious to many, most recognizable historically as the seat of apostolic authority handed down from the early Church. This is noted despite issues regarding orthodoxy and Papal primacy which continue to fuel the separation from the Eastern Catholic Orthodoxy and other Christian communities.

Please note as well that simply utilizing the term "Church of Messiah" in no way shape or form should imply that the author believes that any so called entity represents a replacement, either spiritual or physical, to Israel.

2. Regarding historical time periods and dating, the terminology utilized within this work will be that of “The Common Era” (Ce), sometimes referred to as the “Current Era.” It is the period of measured time beginning with the year 1, the traditional but debated birth date of Yeshua of Nazareth, to the present. The notations Ce and BCe (Before the Common Era) are alternative notations for “ad” (Anno Domini, Latin for “in the year of the Lord”) and “BC” (Before Christ), respectively.

3. As for Messiah's NAME ... although Jesus is how Messiah is commonly referred to by greater Christianity and history itself, Messiah's Hebrew/Aramaic Name "Yeshua" meaning G\_D's Salvation will be utilized herein as a matter of respect as well as historical and theological accuracy. Messiah's NAME is holy and should be very carefully handled.

4. The Revelation of Yeshua to John is considered of course to be "a revelation" ... however it is clear by any standards that Messiah delivered to humanity many, many different revelations within this sacred writing. As such the author at times will refer to the Revelation in both singular and plural forms and does so to maintain grammatical uniformity and context.

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## Part 1 - Contextual Development

Because of the complex nature of the Revelation, as well as significant portions of other Sacred Scripture, it is imperative to define the framework from which any interpretive analysis will take place. When dealing with symbolic representation caution should be exercised and the basis of any interpretation be exposed and explained, lest the resulting interpretation be unsupported, overly presumptuous and without merit.

Ultimately much prophecy-related scriptural interpretation is subject to criticism simply because the nature of symbolic representation is typically not a product of defined facts until after prophesied events occur. Still further the fulfillment of prophecy is often debated even upon completion simply due to differences in subjective perspectives. Subsequently any contention of prophetic interpretation at best can be described as “possible” until such time it is found to be historically accurate. This being declared does not in itself constitute a permit for anyone to haphazardly claim scriptural discernment capability and put forth contentions which are often times baseless and hurtful to either individuals or collective groups. Within this work then a process will be defined from which the reader will be able to follow along and determine if the author has established valid arguments and positions.

As indicated there have been previous attempts to properly discern the meanings contained in the Book of Revelation. Some attempts have included genuine efforts to approach the materials professionally while sadly others have not. Some attempts have been made without apparent self-serving motives while others have not. In all cases however no interpretive works developed a contextual framework surrounding the land mass of Asia Minor, the Apostle John and the Seven Churches. It would seem impossible to even consider discerning the Church messages properly without first seeking to understand what if any contextual impact there might be regarding: a) the land mass of Asia Minor; b) the Apostle John and c) the Seven Churches.

In all previous cases regarding this subject matter each commentator fails to begin with the basic questions: Could the common geographical land mass of Asia Minor be significant? What is the relevance of the Seven Church communities? Why was John the Apostle selected by Yeshua to receive this divine Revelation?

As humans we all are influenced by culture, history and experiences. Hopefully it is the goal of the Biblical commentator to have these personal influences remain on the sidelines and let deductions be influenced by facts, scripture and of course where applicable the Holy Spirit. Subsequently we must look at this Revelation objectively in the context of the culture and history of the days long past and not from a modern day perspective. Ultimately we may find this review yields little in the way of insights or improved context. On the other hand we may find while we are looking for context that we will find much more than what was anticipated.

Here then is the defined process by which the author will proceed during this work.

- Initially basic historical background information relevant to the land mass of Asia Minor, the Apostle John and the Seven Churches will be provided.
- The next step will entail formulating observations and insights relative to the provided background information.
- Step three will entail synthesizing these observations and insights into a solid framework of contextual understanding which will provide the foundation for establishing interpretive outputs.
- Step four will entail utilizing the synthesized contextual framework to apply to the first three chapters of the Revelation for the purpose of discernment and interpretation.

If the reader is wondering what relevance background material review has regarding Scriptural interpretation, it will be noted “context” in scripture is most often paramount to proper comprehension. So as Messiah spoke in parabolic fashion so most people would not understand him . . . by design; we must acknowledge the Word at times is also non-obvious . . . by design. Most assuredly there are plenty of scriptural elements which are obvious; then there are elements which are both obvious and non-obvious at the same time; and still further there are elements which tend to be simply esoteric. By reviewing basic known facts we at least set the stage for developing proper context; a context which can assist us in understanding non-obvious meanings of Scriptural components.

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## Background Information

The background information being provided is organized as follows: A map of the region, general information about Asia Minor, general information about the Seven Church communities and general information about John the Apostle.

The visual below provides general geographic details pertinent to the region and seven communities addressed in the Revelation. Scaling is approximate.



\* \* \* \* \*

## Asia Minor-Background

Asia Minor, (Lesser Asia), lies east of the Bosphorus between the Black and Mediterranean Seas. Anatolia, as it is known in Greek, is a region of Southwest Asia which corresponds today to the Asian portion of Turkey. Anatolia means “rising of the sun” or “East.”

The approximately 180,000 square mile land mass is predominantly a plateau varying in heights from two to five thousand feet with mountain ranges running in both the north and south in generally an east to west direction along the coastlines. At its extreme northwestern limit it nearly connects with the European mainland by the narrow straits of the Bosphorus.

In between these two dominant mountain ranges various isolated peaks rise up from seven thousand to well over ten thousand feet. Throughout history this topography posed great challenges to intercommunication and travel of the inhabitants. There are only a few viable mountain passes tending to run at high elevation. The most notable being the famous “Gates of Cilicia” at the easternmost extremity of Asia Minor. This narrow gorge at over 3,000 feet in elevation represents the only viable entrance from the plains of Syria and was the route followed by the Eastern intruders and conquerors of Asia Minor. At the extreme west the mountains taper gradually but do so in a manner creating numerous rises and projections into the sea. This topography ultimately produced many bays, inlets and harbors which are the predominant reason why Asia Minor was able to become such a historically and commercially prominent land mass!

As far back as recorded history Asia Minor has been the proverbial transport highway between peoples migrating east to west and often west to east. From earliest historical eras, evidence of the Halizones-Chalybes culture can be found here. Close by are other ancient tribes. At the western extremity evidence of the ancient Thracian tribes are prevalent while peoples of Semitic origin can be affiliated with the inland region and the historical roots of ancient Cappadocia.

History suggests the ancient Hittites overran much of the land mass between 1500 and 1000 BCE. Archeological evidence attests to their once prominent presence. Before the Hittites, there is scant evidence that some Turanian (northern Caucasus) peoples may have long been settled in the land.

Because of its strategic location at the intersection of Asia and Europe and close proximity to Africa, Asia Minor has been a cradle for numerous civilizations since prehistoric times. Archeological evidence supports settlements from the Neolithic Age onward. The settlement of Troy starts in the Neolithic and continues forward into the Iron Age.

Major civilizations and peoples that have settled in or conquered Anatolia include the: Colchians, Hattians, Luwians, Hittites, Phrygians, Cimmerians, Lydians, Persians, Celts, Tabals, Meshechs, Greeks, Pelasgians, Armenians, Jews, Romans, Goths, Kurds, Byzantines, Seljuk Turks, and Ottomans. Obviously these peoples belonged to many varied ethnic and linguistic traditions. Through recorded history, Anatolians have spoken both Indo-European and Semitic languages, as well as many languages of uncertain affiliation.

From time immemorial Asia Minor has been the cross roads between Eastern and Western cultures vying for supremacy and looking to use this land mass as the spring board for conquest and expansion. In essence Asia Minor has been that one place where Eastern and Western cultures have traditionally met and waged their unending battles. (iv)



A modern satellite view of Asia Minor

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## **The Seven Churches-Background**

### **Ephesus**

Ephesus was purportedly founded in the eleventh century BCe by Greek colonists and is now just a place of antiquity in present day Turkey.

During the Roman Republic, Ephesus was the capital of pro-consular Asia, which covered the western part of Asia Minor. The city bore the title of “the first and greatest metropolis of Asia.” The population of Ephesus has been estimated to be in the range of 400,000 to 500,000 inhabitants in the year 100 Ce. In addition to the great Temple of Artemis, purportedly the largest building of the ancient world, Ephesus boasted a civic library and a theater, which was the largest in the world, capable of holding 50,000 spectators. Also built in Ephesus around this time were the Roman Baths, including what is believed to be the first instance of indoor plumbed toilets.

From a Christian perspective Ephesus has a rich and storied history. Having the faith introduced by Jews it eventually rose in prominence second only to Antioch in the early Church. With the likes of Paul, Timothy and John the Apostle ministering within the community, as well as being the traditional post-resurrection home of Yeshua’s mother Mary, the fame of this early Church community is forever cemented in history.

The Roman city of Ephesus was abandoned in the sixth century Ce when, despite repeated dredges during the city’s history, the harbor completely filled in with river silt, removing its access to the Aegean Sea and of course its first and most prominent attribute. The final ruin of Ephesus was completed by the Mongol conqueror Timur-Leng around 1403 Ce and by nearly a half-century of civil wars among its Turkish masters.

Today the modern and quaint town of Selcuk is well reputed for its closeness to the ancient city of Ephesus, the Virgin Mary’s House and other Seljukian works of art. Selcuk is famous for its fascinating mixture of all historical periods. Its strategic location has made it a popular place to settle down during the centuries. The name “Selcuk” comes from the Turkish tribes settled in the region by the twelfth century. (v)

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