

Revelation from YAHSHUA Sent to the Churches of Asia Minor (2)
(The Church in Ephesus the Loveless Church)

Write promptly what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia; write the things you see, what they are and what is to take place hereafter (Rev. 1:11, 19).

The Church of Ephesus was the first to receive the message from YAHSHUA. This church is the church of the apostles' era; the time when the Gospel of YAHSHUA was spread to the world of that time (AD 33-100). It was the time when the fervor of the Christians for YAHSHUA sprung from the love they had for Him as we read Dr. Luke's report in the book of Acts 1: 14: After the ascension of YAHSHUA the apostles continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of YAHSHUA, and with His brothers. They stayed in the upper room, a place for prayer meetings, waiting for the promised HOLY SPIRIT, Who came at the time of Pentecost. He manifested Himself with a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, with divided tongues, as of fire, and they were filled with the HOLY SPIRIT and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:1-3).

The city of Ephesus prided itself on its location which was at the mouth of the Cayster River, on the east side of the Aegean Sea, with a flourishing commercial and export center. The city of Ephesus was also known for the famous temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. It is believed that the gospel was first brought to Ephesus by Priscilla and Aquila when they were left there by Paul on his second missionary journey (Acts 18:18, 19, 26). Firmly established by Paul on his third missionary journey, the Church of Ephesus was also pastored by Timothy and Tychicus. It was from Ephesus that the apostle John was arrested and exiled to Patmos. Paul's letter to the Ephesian's Church is considered the "Bank account of the believer". It is one of encouragement, spiritual blessings, the believer's position in Christ, how to fight the enemy, etc.

YAHSHUA commended the church of Ephesus for her persistence and purity; her diligence in the doctrine in their deeds, toil and perseverance. But the church of Ephesus was found lacking the most important ingredient of the faith: love. It was considered the loveless Church; for it had left the love that it had first- The love of YAHSHUA. He said to them, I have this against you: **that you have left the love that you had at first.** He advised the Ephesus church (1) to remember from what heights she had fallen; (2) to repent and (3) do the works she had done previously, or else He would visit her and remove her lampstand from its place. To remove the lampstand is to bring an end to the Ephesian Church.

When the Church of Ephesus abandoned her first love, all her good deeds were considered as nothing, for love is YAHWEH and love is the greatest gift of all; exercised among the brethren, it becomes the brotherly love. Paul expressed the importance of love in the letter to the Corinthians this way: Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal, and though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains but have no love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor,

and though I give my body to be burned, but not love, it profits me nothing; love never fails. . . and now abide faith, hope, and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love (I Cor. 13: 1-3; 8a, 13). The apostle John in his first letter defined love as YAHWEH. And he who dwells and continues in love dwells and continues in YAHWEH and YAHWEH dwells and continues in him; in this, love is brought to completion and attains perfection with us, that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as He is, so are we in this world; and this command we have from Him: that he who loves YAHWEH shall love his brother also (I John 4:16b-17, 21). "Because as He is, so are we in this world", so we should act as being in His love while we are in this world.

The judgment for the church of Ephesus was her removal. The Ephesus Church fell when she left the essence of her faith. YAHSHUA said to her, repent and do the works you did previously. When Ephesus church fell from her first love, she was no longer compelled by love to do the works of faith; therefore, the church of Ephesus was found lacking. James in his letter asks the question, What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, depart in peace, be warmed and filled, but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself if it does not have works, is dead (James 2:14-17). The faith which the Church of Ephesus was acting upon was not founded on love, for love mingled with faith compels the action toward others. Lacking love in our action all we do will be mechanical and orthodoxy. It is like playing an instrument without interpreting the sentiment of the music. YAHWEH'S love has the feelings of compassion, mercy, self-denial, unselfishness. His love calls us to divide our bread with the hungry; to bring the homeless and the poor to our house, to dress the naked, to satisfy the need of the afflicted; doing these for others we will be doing unto Him and it will be counted to eternity. Without this love, we lose our position of the light of the world; nothing we do will show whose we are and bring glory to YAHWEH. YAHSHUA said, You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor do men light a lamp and put it under a peck measure, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your moral excellence and your praise worthy noble, and good deeds and recognize and honor and praise and glorify your Father Who is in heaven (Matt.5:14-16). Love then is the light that shines in the darkness of this sinful and needed world. The Church of Ephesus, in the continuous loveless actions could lose her position in the world- her lampstand and so can we, if our love for YAHWEH does not compel us to serve Him.