

~**LAODICEA (273)**

(La-o-di-ce'a)[Laodiceans, La-o-di-ce'ans]

- A city in the western part of Asia Minor, the ruins of which lie near Denizli, about 150 kilometers (90 miles) East of Ephesus. It was known earlier as Diospolis and Rhoas but was evidently rebuilt in the **Third Century B.C.E.**
- Seleucid ruler Antiochus II and named it after his wife **Laodice**. Situated in the fertile valley of the Lycus River, **Laodicea** lay at the junction of major trade routes and was linked by roads with cities such as Ephesus, Pergamum, and Philadelphia.
- **Laodicea** enjoyed great prosperity as a manufacturing city and as a banking center. Indicative of the city's great wealth is the fact that when it suffered extensive earthquake damage in the reign of Nero, it was able to rebuild without any financial assistance from Rome. [Tacitus Annals, XIV, XXVII]
- The glossy black wool of Laodicea and the garments made therefrom were widely known. The seat of a famous medical school, this city probably also produced the eye medicine known as Phrygian powder. One of the main deities venerated at **Laodicea** was Asclepius, a god of medicine.
- This city had a major disadvantage. Unlike the nearby city of Hierapolis, with its hot springs famed for their healing properties, and Colossae, with its refreshing cold water, **Laodicea** had no permanent water supply.
- From a considerable distance away, water had to be piped to **Laodicea** and likely was lukewarm on reaching the city. For the initial part of the distance the water was conveyed by means of an aqueduct and then, closer to the city, through cubical stone blocks that were bored through the middle and cemented together.
- **Laodicea** seems to have had a considerable number of Jews. According to a letter from Laodicean magistrates, as quoted by Josephus, the Jews, in compliance with the injunction of Gaius Rabirius, were allowed to observe their Sabbaths and other sacred rites. [Jewish Antiquities, XIV, 241-243, x, 20]

- At least some of the Jews there were quite wealthy. This may be deduced from the fact that, when Governor Flaccus ordered the confiscation of the annual contributions that were meant for the temple at Jerusalem, the amount reportedly was found to be more than 20 pounds of gold.
- In the **First Century C.E.**, a Christian congregation existed at **Laodicea** and apparently met in the home of Nympha, a Christian sister there. Doubtless the efforts of Epaphras contributed to the establishment of that congregation.
- Epaphras, who is from among you, a slave of Christ Jesus, sends you his greetings, always exerting himself in your behalf in his prayers, that you may finally stand complete and with firm conviction in all the will of God. (**Colossians 4:12**)
- I indeed bear him witness that he puts himself to great effort in behalf of you and of those at **Laodicea** and of those at Hierapolis. (**Colossians 4:13**)
- Give my greetings to the brothers at **Laodicea** and to Nympha and to the congregation at her house. (**Colossians 4:15**)
- Also, the effects of Paul's work at Ephesus likely reached as far as **Laodicea**.
- This took place for two years, so that all those inhabiting the district of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks. (**Acts of Apostles 19:10**)
- Although not ministering there personally, Paul was nevertheless concerned about the **Laodicean** congregation and even wrote a letter to them.
- For I want you to realize how great a struggle I am having in behalf of you and of those at **Laodicea** and of all those who have not seen my face in the flesh. (**Colossians 2:1**)
- And when this letter has been read among you, arrange that it also be read in the congregation of the Laodiceans and that you also read the one from **Laodicea**. (**Colossians 4:16**)
- However, some scholars believe that Paul's letter may have been simply a duplicate of the one he sent to Ephesus. Of course, that is

only a theory, an effort to account for the fact that the Bible contains no letter from Paul to the **Laodiceans**, although Paul wrote to them.

- The letter to **Laodicea** may simply have contained information not necessary for us today, or it may have repeated points adequately covered in other canonical letters.
- The congregation at **Laodicea** was one of the seven in Asia Minor to which the glorified Jesus Christ, in a revelation to John, addressed personal messages.
- Saying; What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven congregations, in Ephesus and in Smyrna and in Pergamum and in Thyatira and in Sardis and in Philadelphia and in **Laodicea**.
(**Revelation 1:11**)
- At that time, toward the close of the **First Century C.E**, the **Laodicean** congregation had little to commend it. Though materially rich, it was spiritually poor.
- Instead of the literal gold handled by the Laodicean bankers, instead of the garments of glossy black wool made locally, instead of the eye medicine doubtless produced by the Laodicean medical profession, instead of the boiling hot medicinal waters from the springs of nearby Hierapolis, the Laodicean congregation needed things like these in a spiritual sense. It needed gold refined by fire to enrich its personality.
- According to the undeserved kindness of God that was given to me, as a wise director of works I laid a foundation, but someone else is building on it. But let each one keep watching how he is building on it. (**1 Corinthians 3:10**)
- For no man can lay any other foundation than what is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (**1 Corinthians 3:11**)
- Now if anyone builds on the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood materials, hay, stubble. (**1 Corinthians 3:12**)
- Each ones work will become manifest, for the day will show it up, because it will be revealed by means of fire, and the fire itself will prove what sort of work each ones is. (**1 Corinthians 3:13**)
- If anyone's work that he has built on it remains, he will receive a

reward. (**1 Corinthians 3:14**)

- In this fact you are greatly rejoicing, though for a little while at present, if it must be, you have been grieved by various trials. (**1 Peter 1:6**)
- In order, that the tested quality of your faith, of much greater value than gold that perishes despite its being proved by fire, may be found a cause for praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (**1 Peter 1:7**)
- White outer garments to give it an irreproachable Christian appearance with no unchristian features that were as shameful as bodily nakedness.
- Look! I am coming as a thief. Happy is the one that stays awake and keeps his outer garments, that he may not walk naked and people look upon his shamefulness. (**Revelation 16:15**)
- Yes, it has been granted to her to be arrayed in bright, clean, fine linen, for the fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the holy ones. (**Revelation 19:8**)
- It needed to have spiritual **eyesalve** applied to take away its blindness to Bible truth and Christian responsibilities.
- And in that day the deaf ones will certainly hear the words of the book, and out of the gloom and out of the darkness even the eyes of the blind ones will see. (**Isaiah 29:18**)
- Yes, for this very reason, by your contributing in response all earnest effort, supply to your faith virtue, to your virtue knowledge. (**2 Peter 1:5**)
- To your knowledge self-control, to your self-control endurance, to your endurance godly devotion. (**2 Peter 1:6**)
- To your godly devotion brotherly affection, to your brotherly affection love. (**2 Peter 1:7**)
- For if these things exist in you and overflow, they will prevent you from being either inactive or unfruitful regarding the accurate knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (**2 Peter 1:8**)

- For if these things are not present in anyone, he is blind, shutting his eyes to the light, and has become forgetful of his cleansing from his sins of long ago. (**2 Peter 1:9**)
- For this reason, brothers, all the more do your utmost to make the calling and choosing of you sure for yourselves, for if you keep on doing these things you will by no means ever fail. (**2 Peter 1:10**)
- But he that hates his brother is in the darkness and is walking in the darkness, and he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes. (**1 John 2:11**)
- It could buy these things from Christ Jesus, the one knocking at the door, if it let him in hospitably to entertain him.
- Hey there, all you thirsty ones! Come to the water. And the ones that have no money! Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk even without money and without price. (**Isaiah 55:1**)
- Why do you people keep paying out money for what is not bread, and why is your toil for what results in no satisfaction? Listen intently to me, and eat what is good, and let your soul find its exquisite delight in fatness itself. (**Isaiah 55:2**)
- It needed to become stimulatingly hot.
- For sheer zeal for your house has eaten me up, and the very reproaches of those reproaching you have fallen upon me. (**Psalms 69:9**)
- For I know your readiness of mind of which I am boasting to the Macedonians about you, that Achaia has stood ready now for a year, and your zeal has stirred up the majority of them. (**2 Corinthians 9:2**)
- Who gave himself for us that he might deliver us from every sort of lawlessness and cleanse for himself a people peculiarly his own, zealous for fine works. (**Titus 2:14**)
- Refreshingly cold
- Just like the coolness of snow in the day of harvest is the faithful envoy to those sending him, for he restores the very soul of his

masters. (**Proverbs 25:13**)

- As cold water upon a tired soul, so is a good report from a distant land. (**Proverbs 25:25**)
- But not to stay lukewarm.
- And to the angel of the congregation in Laodicea write. These are the things that the Amen says, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation by God. (**Revelation 3:14**)
- I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were cold or else hot. (**Revelation 3:15**)
- So, because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of my mouth. (**Revelation 3:16**)
- Because you say; I am rich and have acquired riches and do not need anything at all, but you do not know you are miserable and pitiable and poor and blind and naked. (**Revelation 3:17**)
- I advise you to buy from me gold refined by fire that you may become rich, and white outer garments that you may become dressed and that the shame of your nakedness may not become manifested, and eyesalve to rub in your eyes that you may see. (**Revelation 3:18**)
- All those for whom I have affection I reprove and discipline. Therefore be zealous and repent. (**Revelation 3:19**)
- Look! I am standing at the door and knocking. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into his house and take the evening meal with him and he with me. (**Revelation 3:20**)
- To the one that conquers I will grant to sit down with me on my throne, even as I conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. (**Revelation 3:21**)
- Let the one who has an ear hear what the spirit says to the congregations. (**Revelation 3:22**)