

Cultural/Historical Context

Old Testament Text

Eumenes II and Attalus II
“love between two brothers”

Isaiah 60:10-22, Ezekiel 48:30-35,
Isaiah 22:22-25

Philadelphia was established as a
“gateway” or “door” to Phrygia,
Lydia, Mysia, to spread Hellenism.

Isaiah 22: 20-22

Philadelphia was plagued by
earthquakes. In the quake of 17 AD
it was destroyed. For many years
after that the city was in constant
fear due to continued tremors.

Isaiah 45:1

See Paul’s use of ‘door’ in
1 Cor 16:8-9, 2 Cor. 2:12,
and Col. 4:3

Domitian – by edict – forced all
farmers to uproot ½ of their grape
production. The result was a multi-
year famine which many died.

Isaiah 60:14

The Flavians (Vespasian, Titus, and
Domitian) had just recently (70AD)
removed those pillars when they
destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem.

⁷ “To the angel of the church in **Philadelphia** write:

These are the words of him who is holy and
true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no
one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.

⁸ I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you
an open **door** that no one can shut. I know that you
have little strength, yet you have kept my word and
have not denied my **name**.

⁹ I will make those who are of the synagogue of
Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but
are liars—I will make them come and fall down at
your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you.

¹⁰ Since you have kept my command to endure
patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial
that is going to come on the whole world to test the
inhabitants of the earth.

2 Chron. 3:15-17 – Solomon
placed two pillars in front of
the temple to God and placed
‘names’ on them.

“Pillar” is a symbol of stability in
a city plagued by earthquakes.

¹¹ I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so
that no one will take your crown.

Numbers 6: 22-27
Placing the “name” of God
on the people.

The name of the city was changed
multiple times. When Tiberias
Caesar provided to funds to rebuild,
they renamed the city
“*Neocaesarea*.” A new city named
after an emperor that the Imperial
Cult called a god.

¹² The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in
the temple of my God. Never again will they leave
it. I will write on them the **name** of my God and the
name of the city of my God, the new
Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven
from my God; and I will also write on them my new
name.

Isaiah 60 is also a picture of
the New Jerusalem.
Isaiah 60:14 includes “call
you the city of the LORD”

¹³ Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit
says to the churches.

Also see Ezekiel 48:30-35
New Jerusalem and the name
“The LORD is there”