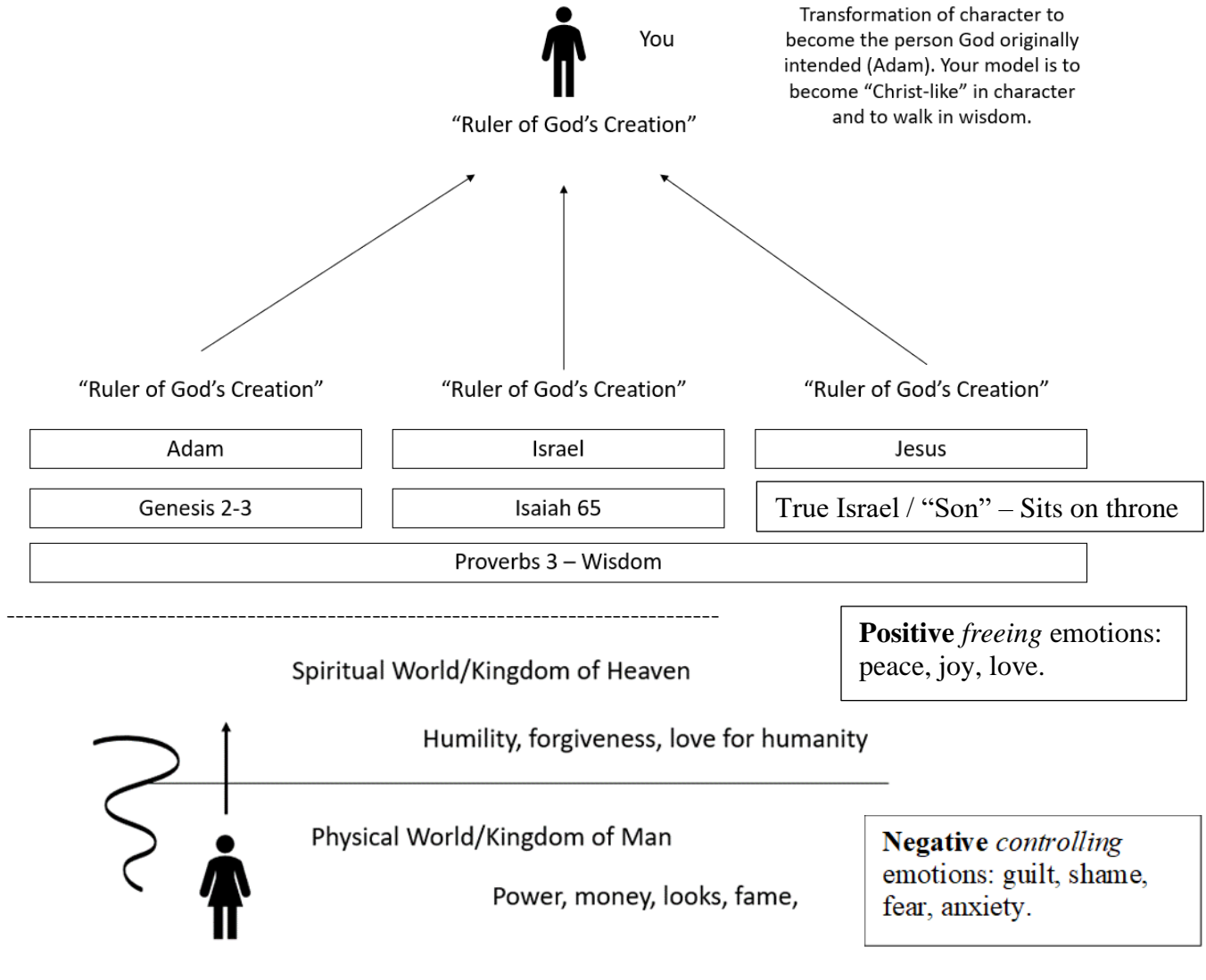


The overarching message of the Letter to Laodicea:



1. Geography:

- Lycus River valley.
- In the first century, Laodicea was the valley's most important and wealthiest city.
- Two other cities: Colossae and Hierapolis.
- Historically, the region called Phrygia – is distinctly *Eastern* rather than Greek (western).

2. Three cities are connected:

- **Hierapolis**
 - Resort town due to hot baths and mineral springs.
 - Eventually, it became the home to the disciple Phillip (also from Bethsaida).
- **Laodicea**
 - Wealthy banking center.
- **Colossae**
 - Oldest city and on the decline in the first century.

3. Letter to Colossae:

- Col. 2:1-3
- Col. 4: 12-15, Col. 4: 16 – a letter was sent to Laodicea

4. Phrygia:

- Central Anatolia / Ancient people group with a mythical past.
- King Midas.
- Cybele – "Mother Earth" goddess.
- "Gordian knot" from Phrygian Gordium.

5. King Midas

- Ideal King / ideal sovereign / ruled with a "golden touch" / Archetype of an Ideal King.
- Ruled by wisdom
- Sovereignty provided by Cybele.
- Ability to hold **fractious parties together**.

6. Two Points Concerning the history of the Phrygian people:

1. Midas, the ideal king, ruled over all creation-
- **Rev. 3: 14**

2. Herodotus (484-425 BCE) – "Father of History" – writes a strange story about what people were "first of mankind." The Egyptians said they were "first" – but then changed and said the Phrygians were "first of mankind."¹

- **Colossians 1: 15- 20**

¹ Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book 2.

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0126%3Abook%3D2%3Achapter%3D2>

7. Proverbs 3: 18-20 –

- In the Old Testament and Jewish thought, "Wisdom" existed in the beginning.
- Additionally, they noted that God said, "Let there be Light" (Gen. 1:3), yet the sun and moon weren't created until day four (Gen. 1:16).
- So, we have a paradox.
- To this paradox, they asked, "Who is the light?" A Westerner would ask, "What is the light?" but based on Prov. 3:18, they recognized a personal creative force in wisdom.
- The answer they derived was that the light was the Messiah.

- The Messiah IS the archetype of the ideal king who
 - rules by wisdom (Isa. 11:2)
 - will rule the nations (Isa. 11:4)
 - and his rule will bring together **fractious parties** (Isa. 11:6-9).

The Messiah is the embodiment of wisdom.

Wisdom = intimate *knowledge* of God, the nature of reality, and the ability to *put it into action*.

8. God wants you to put wisdom into action in your own life to become a "ruler of God's creation" in the micro-sense.

- As we draw closer to God, we naturally transform in an ascending nature.
- We rise above the earthly realm into the heavenly realm and perceive the world from a different perspective.