

# Rev. 3:7. the Key of David

by Horatius Bonar

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*Christ's name is 'He who has the key of David,' and this title brings comfort and encouragement to know that He has power to open and shut, at His own gracious pleasure.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 23:5, Isaiah 22:22, Matthew 7:7, Matthew 28:18, John 10:9, John 14:6, 2 Corinthians 1:20, Hebrews 4:16, Revelation 3:7, Revelation 3:20

**Topics:** "Christ's Authority", "Access to God's Blessings"

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## Description

Horatius Bonar emphasizes the significance of Christ as the Holy One, the True One, and the possessor of the Key of David in his sermon. He explains that Christ's holiness and truth are foundational to His character, and that He holds the keys to various aspects of life, including the house, castle, city, treasure-house, and banqueting-house of David. Bonar encourages believers to approach Christ for access to these blessings, reminding them that He opens doors that no one can shut and closes doors that no one can open. The sermon serves as a source of comfort and motivation for ministers, churches, and individuals, affirming that Christ's power and grace are always at work. Bonar concludes with a call to respond to Christ's invitation to enter into His presence and blessings.

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## Transcript

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write--These things says He who is Holy, He who is true, He who has the key of David, He who opens, and no man shuts; and no man opens."--Revelation 3:7.

Here is another of Christ's names, or designations, or descriptions given Himself. There are seven in all, and this is the sixth. Let us consider this sixth.

I. He who is HOLY. Christ's name here is that of 'the high and lofty One, who inhabits eternity, whose name is holy.' He is the holy One of God--hating sin, loving righteousness. Thus, while He is the holy One, He deals in love with the feeble, and makes their enemies to 'know that He loves' (verse 9). With all Christ's infinite tenderness and pity, there is holiness conjoined, and He says, 'Be holy, for I am holy.

II. He who is TRUE. This is frequently said of Christ--He is 'faithful and true;' the 'true light;' 'the true bread;' the 'true vine;' the 'true witness;' the 'true God.' He is--the reality, the truth, the substance, the wisdom, the filling up of all promises, and of all symbols. All the promises in Him are yes, and in Him Amen. His words are true, His works are true, His ways are true, His invitations are true, His love is true.

III. He who has the KEY of DAVID. Both as David's Son and David's Lord, He had a right to all that David had. Of David's crown, and throne, and land--He was the rightful heir. But it is only of David's key that He is here spoken of as the possessor. He had the key--the right and the power of opening the gate, and admitting those who had the right of entrance. He could open and no man could shut--this was grace. He could shut and none could open--this was sovereignty. This combined grace and sovereignty which He here proclaims is that which Philadelphia specially needed, for encouragement on the one hand--and for stimulus on the other.

The reference here is to Isaiah 22:22--'The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder.' This was said to Eliakim, who was thus set up as a type of a greater than himself--a greater than David. Eliakim was royal chamberlain--a keeper of the house, like Joseph in Pharaoh's palace. So Christ is represented as not only being the royal possessor of the house, but He also to whom the keeping of its gate was entrusted. He is 'the door' and He is the 'porter too;' He is the pasture and the Shepherd too. 'All power is given to Him in heaven and in earth.' 'The Father loves the Son, and has committed all things into His hands.' He has, we may say--many keys.

1. The key of David's HOUSE. The palace is His, and He keeps the key of it, as the Father has given to Him. He opens and shuts according as He will. Would you enter David's house? Apply to Him who has the key. He is the true David, the true Eliakim--He is David's Son and David's Lord.

2. The key of David's CASTLE. Beside his palace, David had a fort on Zion which he took from the Jebusites--a stronghold against the enemy. So has our David a strong tower and fortress, into which we run and are safe. This is the true 'tower of David, built for an armory.' Would you get into this impregnable fort? Apply to Him who keeps the key. He opens, and no man shuts.

3. The key of David's CITY. Yes, the key of Jerusalem, both the earthly and the heavenly! 'Open the gates.' 'Lift up your heads, O you gates.' These cries shall be heard, the key shall be applied, and the gates flung open, and the great multitude that no man can number shall enter in. Would you enter in to this glorious city? You must go to Him who has its keys. No application was ever made in vain to Him. No other key but His will open the gate to you.

4. The key of David's TREASURE-HOUSE. That storehouse contains all we need. The unsearchable riches are here--and David says to us, 'I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich.' But not riches alone--the bread of heaven is here--the hidden manna is here--the white clothing is here--the royal wine of the kingdom is here. All store of goods of every kind is here. Our David has the key. Would you be rich? Come and get freely all you need--gold, silver, gems, bread, water, wine and milk.

5. The key of David's BANQUETING-HOUSE. Here the feast is spread--a royal feast; a bridal feast; a divine feast; a feast of fat things! The king brings us into His banqueting-house, and His banner over us is love. He spreads a table for us here in presence of enemies--He will spread it for us before long in the presence of the angels. He says here, Eat, O friends; drink, yes, drink abundantly, O beloved!

Some have said 'the key of David's harp,' inasmuch as Christ is the theme of the Psalms of David, and they cannot be unlocked without Him. But this sense is strained, though striking. Yet David does sing of Him--'My heart is inditing a good matter. I speak of the things which I have made concerning the King.' Messiah is his theme--his Alpha and Omega--his first and last.

What comfort (1) to a minister, (2) to a church, (3) to a saint--is the truth that Christ has the keys! The keys of the universe--the keys of every sphere of labor--the keys of life, of death, of the grave! What comfort is the truth that He has power to open and shut, at His own gracious pleasure! All things are in His power. The keys are in pierced hands! They hang upon the cross. Work on, O Philadelphian, with your little strength! He opens great and effectual doors--however many the enemies may be. He opens and none can shut. He shuts and none can open. How blessed when He says, 'I have set before you an open door!' O feeble Philadelphian, labor on. He is with you, and who can be against you? 'I have set before you an open door.'

There are four tests, which, though not strictly connected with the text, I would hang upon it, as suggested by the key and the door:

(1.) Knock, and it shall be opened. He who keeps the key of every door is always ready to open--more ready to open than we to knock.

(2.) The doors of it shall not be shut at all by day, and there is no night there. An ever-open door! Sometimes it is said knock, and sometimes you don't need to knock--for it is open. Just enter in--enter at once--enter in as you are.

(3.) The door was shut. Yes, shut at last! Then knocking is too late. For when He shuts, no man can open. Oh, that eternally shut gate! How dismal to those who, all their lifetime, saw it open, but would not go in! They might have gone in, but would not. This is their condemnation, and their eternal sorrow.

(4.) Behold, I stand at the door and knock. It is not merely we standing at Christ's door--but Christ standing at ours! As if He would say to us, Take the key--open and let me in. Shall Christ's knock be in vain? It is the knock of love, earnest, patient, condescending love. He really desires admittance. His knocking is no pretense. He wants to make our souls His dwelling. Admit Him, and be blessed!

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