

Revelation Chapter 7 – Verse by Verse

Revelation 7:1-17

- **Vs 1** – Like the previous chapters, we see the first word here is “and”. Things are still happening sequentially, as Jesus said he would show John in **Rev 1:19**. Note what John saw “after these things”, which is after the 6th seal was opened. Four angels standing on the four corners of the earth holding the four winds of the earth so that there is no wind. It should go without saying that these are spirit angels as defined in **Heb 1:14** as no human could do such a thing. After an earth remodeling earthquake, the winds are perfectly still.
 - Does the phrase “four corners of the earth” mean that the earth is flat? The Greek word for “corner” can mean corner or angle or meeting place (gonia). Always remember to check context. We have the phrase four winds associated with this vision. What is that referring to? Are there only four winds in the entire world? This is referring to the four principal directions: North, South, East, West. “Corner”, (Greek gonia) is referring to the intersection of these as North changes to East, to South, and to West. This verse does not support either the flat earth or global earth model, but simply is saying that all winds are stopped at this time.
 - The Greek “gonia” is also used in **Rev 20:8** where it is rendered “quarters” and the context helps us to further determine God is referring to the four principal directions here in **Rev 7:1**
 - This would produce an eerie calm before further wrath is poured out. Recall this came after one of the most powerful earthquakes the earth has known in **Rev 6:12**, as well as the sun turning black and the moon to blood. Now there is an unnatural calm while God acts before opening the 7th seal.
 - It may be interesting to note that “holding” in this verse is not the typical Greek “echo”, but “krateo”. This has the meaning of “having dominance” over the winds rather than just holding on.
- **Vs 2** – While John perceived this, another spirit angel ascends from the east with God’s seal. This is important to note that this angel was bearing the authority of God and coming with a message ultimately from God. This could be one of the seven angels that are before God’s throne, though we are not given a name to confirm
 - The message of this angel is directed to the four that are currently holding the winds from blowing
 - These four angels are noted to be given power to hurt the earth and sea
- **Vs 3** – The angel who was bearing God’s seal instructs these four not to hurt anything until the servants of God are sealed.
 - We can understand at this point that after much death and destruction upon the earth, there is an unknown period of calm where God places a seal upon His servants for the remainder of Tribulation period.
 - We have precedence of this in scripture in **Eze 9:1-11**. The context there goes back to **Eze 8** where Ezekiel sees visions of the abominations of Israel and the reason for God bringing destruction upon them. Note in this passage that God sets a mark upon the faithful, and the unbelievers are destroyed.
 - What is the seal? We’re not told what it looks like, but we can know what it means. In scripture, the seal is a sign of security and authority, as in Daniel being thrown in the lion’s den and King Darius setting his seal upon the mouth of it (**Dan 6:17**). We also know that it speaks of ownership, as in **2 Tim 2:19**. With these things in mind, we can be

sure that these servants of God will be safe and secure, protected by God during this Tribulation period, as they belong to Him. We see an example in [Rev 9:1-10](#)

- [Vs 4-8](#) – Here we are given the number of those that were sealed: 144,000. Please see that these are clearly “of all the tribes of the children of Israel”. These are not Gentiles, and the Jehovah’s Witnesses greatly err by ignoring this, leading many to believe a lie. It is even written in their bible that these are “sealed out of every tribe of the sons of Israel”.
 - Israel was under a covenant relationship with God to keep all the works of the Law, which is why the letters to the 7 churches in Asia all start with “I know thy works.” Today, we are “not under the Law, but under grace” ([Rom 6:14](#)). Paul is the only biblical writer that tells us to “rightly divide the word of truth” ([2 Tim 2:15](#)). We need to recognize the difference in how God worked with mankind through Israel under the Law and how He is working with mankind today through grace, or we may fall prone to false doctrines.
 - We must take care to distinguish this mark given the 144,000 to seal them and that of the Holy Spirit which seals us into the Body of Christ. These are different. The seal we enjoy today of the Holy Spirit guarantees our place in Heaven at the mystery coming, which most call the rapture ([Eph 1:13-14](#), [Rom 5:5](#), [2 Cor 1: 21-22](#), [5:1-5](#), [1 Thess 4:13-5:11](#)). We in the Body of Christ will not see one second of the Tribulation period. On the other hand, the seal the 144,000 receive protects them **through** the Tribulation period. They are untouchable during the time of Jacob’s trouble.
 - Whatever this mark looks like, visible or invisible, Satan does attempt a counterfeit, which most know as the mark of the beast in [Rev 13:16-18](#).
 - We are told these are the 12 tribes of Israel, but we note that Dan and Ephraim are not part of this list, but Manasseh, Joseph’s other son, is numbered with the twelve tribes. Why? There are a few things to note of this list:
 - Judah is listed first, though he wasn’t the firstborn. Reuben had lost his birthright when he defiled his father’s bed ([Gen 35:22](#), [1 Chron 5:1-2](#)). Judah is the tribe where Christ was born ([Heb 7:14](#), [Matt 1:1-17](#), [Luke 3:23-38](#)), and is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah ([Rev 5:5](#)).
 - Dan is the first tribe recorded to lapse into idolatry in [Judges 18:30-31](#), but this may not be the only reason. Jacob seems to prophecy of the Beast/Antichrist coming from the tribe of Dan in Genesis 49 where he tells his sons what will happen in the last days ([Gen 49:1](#)). Note especially [Gen 49:16-17](#) where Dan is said to judge Israel and that he will “be a serpent by the way...that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward”. Very interesting that right after that, Jacob says, “I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.” The passage seems to indicate the Beast’s/Satan’s deceptive practices, causing the fall of many in God’s chosen nation, and ultimately to dethrone Christ. But God will have the victory ([Gen 3:15](#)) and bring salvation to Israel.
 - Ephraim was also given to idolatry. At the split of the kingdom after Solomon had passed, Jeroboam took the crown for the northern 10 tribes, and happened to be of Ephraim ([1 Kings 11:11-13](#), [26](#)). Jeroboam led the 10 tribes astray to idolatry in an effort to keep his people from worshiping at Jerusalem ([1 Kings 12:20](#), [25-33](#)). The northern 10 tribes became synonymous with Ephraim since this time ([Eze 37:15-20](#) e.g.)
 - The prophet Hosea also says to let Ephraim alone in [Hos 4:17](#)

- Even though this list excludes Dan and Ephraim, most likely as a judgment for their idolatry, they will still have a part in the promised Kingdom when God brings salvation to all Israel ([Eze 48:1-5](#), [Rom 11:25-27](#))
 - This elite group is also described in [Rev 14:1-5](#) and will fulfill the commission set forth by Jesus Christ to the 12 and the Little Flock ([Luke 12:32](#), [Matt 28:16-20](#), [Acts 1:8](#))
 - This 144,000 will help establish the faithful remnant that the 7 letters were written to in [Rev 2-3](#). Note that they are established after the opening of the 6th seal, after the “beginning of sorrows” have taken place in the Tribulation period ([Matt 24:4-8](#)).
 - Interesting to think of the effect of their ministry as they go to the uttermost parts of the earth with the kingdom message and will be untouched by any plague of the Tribulation or Antichrist/Beast
- [Vs 9-10](#) – Once John witnessed the sealing of the 144,000, the scene before him changes to an innumerable amount of people before the Lamb and worshiping the Lamb. We will be told who they are in the coming verses, but we should note these are **not** the 144,000 only, since they **have** been numbered.
 - These are also human beings, in contrast to the spirit beings in [vs 11-12](#), and can be understood with the description “all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues.”
 - Note they are clothed in white robes. This is defined for us in the remaining verses of this chapter, [Rev 3:4-5](#), and [Rev 19:8](#)
 - They are also holding palms in their hands. This Greek word is only used here and in [John 12:13](#) where the multitude heralded Jesus coming into Jerusalem, commonly known as the “Triumphal Entry”. Why the palm branches? This is associated with the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles ([Lev 23:33-44](#), [Neh 8:13-18](#)), which happens to be the last of the 7 feasts in the Jewish calendar. Remember that the things given the Jews were a shadow of things to come ([Heb 8:1-5](#), [9:1-12](#), [10:1](#)). The Feast of Tabernacles is a picture of the salvation of both Jews and proselytized Gentiles out of the Tribulation period, whether they are martyred or survive. This is the “times of refreshing” and “restitution” that Peter spoke of in [Acts 3:19-21](#). At the beginning of this feast, Israel gathered in the fruits of the harvest ([Lev 23:39](#)). It appears these 144,000 will preach the good news of the earthly kingdom of God and salvation to Israel, and the innumerable multitude are the fruit to be gathered in. We would do well to recall the parable of our Lord Jesus about the tares and wheat ([Matt 13:24-30](#)). This describes a harvest to gather and separate the wicked from the just. Here in [Rev 9:9-10](#), we see the harvest of the just, which is explained in the next couple of verses
 - In [Vs 10](#), they say “Salvation to our God...” which is reminiscent of the “Hosanna” shouted during Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem
- [Vs 11-12](#) – The angels respond to the innumerable multitude in praise to the Lamb and the one on the throne with praise of their own.
 - Interesting to note that this praise begins and ends with “Amen”, a word that means “truly” or “so be it”.
 - Also interesting that thanksgiving is part of this list. We ought to always thank God for His grace and what He does for us as it is right.
- [Vs 13-14](#) – One of the elders asks John who this multitude is, and John wisely replies “thou knowest”. He perceived that the elder already knew the answer to the question and would tell him.

- Here we have the clear answer that the innumerable multitude came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes. How were their robes washed? By the blood of the Lamb. Their faith in Jesus Christ as their Messiah made them without sin, or “arrayed in white robes”.
- These are the faithful that come out of the Tribulation period and will enter into the Lord’s rest
- **Vs 15-17** – Do not gloss over **vs 15** here. This innumerable multitude will be before the throne of God and serve Him day and night where? **In His temple**. Remember that John is writing to Israel under the Law, to those in the covenant relationship of Law keeping with God. They will be a “kingdom of priests” (**Ex 19:5-6, 2 Pet 2:9-10, Rev 1:5-6**), which mean they will serve God in the temple.
 - God Himself will dwell among them. Jesus Christ will rule with a rod of iron as it has been prophesied (**Psalm 2:6-9, Rev 2:27**). He will sit on the throne of David in Jerusalem (**2 Sam 7:1-17**). Jesus will receive the sure mercies of David (**Isa 55:1-5, Acts 13:33-34**)
 - Those that have been washed are then said to hunger and thirst no more in **vs 16**. So **where** is this temple? **When** are we seeing these people? Finally, **who** is in this multitude? Good questions since chronologically we’re in the middle of the first 7 judgments of the day of God’s wrath.
 - God chose His dwelling place with mankind as Jerusalem, so we know that the temple will be located there (**2 Sam 7:13, 16, Acts 2:29-30**)
 - To answer the question “when”, we need to understand God’s timeline. There will be a temple in the Tribulation period, but there will be such great tribulation during that time, this couldn’t be when they will hunger and thirst nor more and have tears wiped away (**Vs 17**). This temple will also be desecrated by the Beast (**Dan 11:31, 2 Thess 2:3-4**), so they couldn’t be serving God in the temple during that time
 - There will be a temple in the Millennial Kingdom as described in **Eze 40-48**. **Eze 43:7** indicates that this temple will remain holy and be undefiled. The Millennial Kingdom is the rest that Israel is looking forward to (**Heb 3:8-11, 4:1-11**).
 - There will be **no** temple in the New Earth and New Heavens because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple (**Rev 21:22**). With this in mind, John must be seeing the multitude that will enter into the Millennial Kingdom to serve God in the Millennial temple, which is the prophesied physical place where Jesus will reign prior to all things being made new. The Millennium is a precursor to the eternal state where there is no temple.
 - Now, who are all these people? These are both born Israelites and proselytized Gentiles that are “steadfast unto the end” (**Heb 3:14**). How do we know that? There is a purging of both Israel and the Gentiles after Jesus returns to the earth before ushering the believers into the kingdom (**Matt 25:31-46, Eze 20:30-38**). Works are in question here as the passage in **Matt 25** indicates. Today in the dispensation of grace, works aren’t required for salvation, but works are a big deal after this dispensation comes to close. The Gentiles are judged on how they treated Israelites in **Matt 25:31-46**. Israel is judged on how they kept the Law in **Eze 20:30-38**. This judgement event may take place in the remaining days expressed in **Dan 12:11-12**.

- There will be saved Jews and Gentiles during the Tribulation period. Passages such as [Isa 66:10-24](#) give us an idea of life during the Millennial reign of Christ. Interesting in that passage that of these saved Gentiles, God will choose them as “priests and for Levites” ([Isa 66:21](#)). It then makes sense that these saved Gentiles may also serve God in His temple.
- [Vs 16](#) – What a blessing it will be for those who “came out of great tribulation” to hunger and thirst no more ([vs 14](#))! These would not take the mark of the beast and would not be able to buy or sell during the Tribulation ([Rev 13:16-18](#)) but have now entered into God’s rest. The destruction will be turned to a paradise of sorts as the curse is partially lifted for the Millennium. Abundance will surround those that have had their robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb ([Isa 34:16-35:10](#))
 - This saved multitude will enjoy the supernatural protection from God, similar to Israel through the wilderness ([Isa 4:2-6](#))
- Strange as it is to understand, there will still be death during the Millennial Kingdom ([Isa 65:19-25](#)). There will be those who rebel against Jesus even though He is physically present. Ultimately, they will be done away with after the Millennial reign and Satan loosed for a little season ([Rev 20:7-15](#)).
- [Vs 17](#) – This verse should remind us of the encounter of Jesus and the woman at the well ([John 4:7-14](#)). Jesus was teaching this to the woman, telling her what she could be a part of if she were to believe He was Christ ([John 4:26, 39-42](#)). What a blessed day that will be when Jesus Himself provides all things for his elect of the earth!