

Revelation 7:1-17 After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth to prevent any wind from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree. ² **Then I** saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea: ³ **“Do not** harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God.” ⁴ **Then I** heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel.

⁵ **From** the tribe of Judah 12,000 were sealed, from the tribe of Reuben 12,000, from the tribe of Gad 12,000, ⁶ from the tribe of Asher 12,000, from the tribe of Naphtali 12,000, from the tribe of Manasseh 12,000, ⁷ **from the** tribe of Simeon 12,000, from the tribe of Levi 12,000, from the tribe of Issachar 12,000, ⁸ from the tribe of Zebulun 12,000, from the tribe of Joseph 12,000, from the tribe of Benjamin 12,000.

⁹ **After** this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰ **And** they cried out in a loud voice: “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.” ¹¹ All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² **saying:** “Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!”

¹³ **Then** one of the elders asked me, “These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?” ¹⁴ I answered, “Sir, you know.” And he said, “These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ¹⁵ **Therefore,** “they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. ¹⁶ **‘Never** again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat down on them,^[a] nor any scorching heat. ¹⁷ **For the** Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; ‘he will lead them to springs of living water.’^[b] ‘And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.’^[c]”

REVELATION 7

12-3-23

Intro: In Chapter 6, the exponential increase in violence worldwide, widespread famine and plagues, including an earthquake where every island & mountain is removed from its place—people long to die, but can't. Chap. 6 ends with the statement **"the great day of wrath has come...and who can stand."** Now chap. 7 is an interlude between John's vision of the outcomes of the first 6 seals and the 7th seal being opened.

Revelation 7:1-17 After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth to prevent any wind from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree.

Angels at the four corners (north, south, east, west) are holding back the winds of judgment from blowing on the earth. The judgments of chap. 6 are viewed either as what John saw as coming...not that it happened when he saw it, or immediately following the first wave of judgment. This prelude presents a calm before the storm.

² Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea: ³ "Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God."

An angel "from the east" called out in a loud voice NOT to harm land, sea, or trees until God's servants were sealed! In John's day people were familiar with a king's seal—as one with authority.

In **Genesis 41:41-42** (NIV) "...Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt."

⁴² Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph's finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. [authority was given to Joseph, w/protection]

This seal—the seal of the living God, represents the highest authority—individuals identified as belonging to Him and being under His care & protection.

SERVANTS (Rev. 7:3) – Also slaves—those who are in subjection to—the mark of possession. These are not people who just "believe in God," or who call themselves Christians, but those who live as the possession of God.

Ephesians 1:13-14 (NIV) "And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory."

In contrast to God's servants who are sealed (marked) with the Holy Spirit, the antichrist will issue a "copycat" mark for the followers of the beast (antichrist). In Rev. 13, during Tribulation, no one will be able to buy/sell unless he has the mark of the beast (antichrist).

⁴ Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel. ⁵ From the tribe of Judah 12,000 were sealed, from the tribe of Reuben 12,000, from the tribe of Gad 12,000, ⁶ from the tribe of Asher 12,000, from the tribe of Naphtali 12,000, from the tribe of Manasseh 12,000, ⁷ from the tribe of Simeon 12,000, from the tribe of Levi 12,000, from the tribe of Issachar 12,000, ⁸ from the tribe of Zebulun 12,000, from the tribe of Joseph 12,000, from the tribe of Benjamin 12,000.

There are several interesting things about this list, as it does not follow the normal list of the "tribes of Israel," such as the omission of the tribe of Dan. The tribe of DAN is the only tribe that did not claim its God-assigned inheritance in the Promised Land when Joshua led them in. "Dan" moved to a land close to the Philistines and turned to idolatry. Therefore, Dan is NOT included in this list. Although in Ezek. 48:1 the tribe of Dan will have its place in the millennial kingdom. **Jehovah Witnesses believe it's them...the only ones who will go to heaven.** What is important is that these 144,000 are sealed (literally stamped, marked)...by the Holy Spirit. It is believed that they will serve as Messianic evangelists during the Great Tribulation to see multitudes come to Jesus...and probably die for their decision of faith. They will be servants (slaves) to the God of the Universe!



2nd vision: The Great Multitude in White Robes

The scene now changes from earth to heaven (STANDING BEFORE THE THRONE & THE LAMB).

⁹ After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰ And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

John sees a "great multitude—a number so great, no one could count

They stand before the throne AND the Lamb!

They are invited to be near God and Jesus Christ. To KNOW Him... to be WITH HIM!!!

Every nation, tribe, people and language

Today, and in the tribulation period there will be so much anger, fear, fighting, killing. But here...the all-nation's throng comes together—brothers/sisters...under the banner of the of Jesus Christ!

Wearing white robes – sinners, saved by the blood of Jesus – made to be a people... a family!

Holding palm branches--The palms are symbols of celebration, triumph, victory, deliverance, and joy. The redeemed before God celebrate their triumph over the terrible tribulation and the sin, evil, death, and corruption of the world.

- They celebrate their victory in Christ.
- They celebrate their deliverance in Christ.
- They celebrate their joy in Christ.

Crying out with a loud voice (v10)! SALVATION BELONGS TO OUR GOD!!!



We are moved when sports figures embrace after a victory

<https://giphy.com/explore/manpile>

Stadium full of people rush the field...hugging...crying for joy

Announcer says, 'it's not heaven, it's Iowa!'

We are moved when hostages are released and returned to their families.

And...We are moved when a man or woman who have served our country is reunited... I'm home!

None of this will compare to how we'll be moved when the people of God, saved by the blood of Jesus, come together from all the ages, to bow before Jesus Christ the Lamb. Here's a video from Nigeria, the service where over 1 million were saved! VIDEO—MULTITUDES IN WORSHIP... we'll look around...we'll embrace... we'll cry tears of joy... we'll run, shout, dance WHOA! We've endured... we've won! The stories...oh, the stories!!!

There comes mom! There's my dad! There's your child that died in the womb or at birth or as a child!
There's your sister! OH MY! What a glorious day!

¹¹ All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!"

Wow... the praise of the saints of all ages so moved the millions upon millions of angels... the elders that they spontaneously had to join in!

¹³ Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?" ¹⁴ I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have

washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. **15 Therefore**, “they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence.

An elder asked John...who are they? ... where did they come from? John answered, ‘sir, you know.’

The elder said THESE ARE THEY!!!....

They faced unmentionable horrors, excruciating circumstances, and have made it to the finish line! Victory!!!

16 ‘Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat down on them,^[a] nor any scorching heat. **17 For the** Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; ‘he will lead them to springs of living water.’^[b] ‘And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.’^[c]”

For the children of God, they will never hunger again! Coming out of the Great Tribulation!

They will never thirst again!

While this could be the physical...coming from earth...even the Great Tribulation

This could also be the hungering/thirsting of life...fulfillment...joy – Jesus changes everything!

ETERNAL FULFILLMENT HAS ARRIVED!!!

We experience suffering, deficiency, lack while on earth – NEVER AGAIN!

THE LAMB...JESUS... WILL BE OUR SHEPHERD. HE WILL...

Feed us

Protect us

Lead us to springs of living (life-giving) water

ALL TEARS WIPED AWAY!

SONG: WHAT A DAY THAT WILL BE in 1955 James Hill...mother in law (50 yrs old) stroke... he wrote this song

There is coming a day when no heart aches shall come,

no more clouds in the sky, no more tears to dim the eye;

all is peace forever more on that happy golden shore.

What a day, glorious day that will be.

There'll be no sorrows there No more burdens to bear No more sickness and no more pain

No more parting over there But forever I will be

With the one who died for me What a day, glorious day that will be

I CAN ONLY IMAGINE

I can only imagine

What it will be like

When I walk by Your side

I can only imagine

What my eyes would see

When Your face is before me

I can only imagine

Yeah

Surrounded by Your glory

What will my heart feel?

Will I dance for You Jesus

Or in awe of You be still?

Will I stand in Your presence

Or to my knees, will I fall?

Will I sing hallelujah?

Will I be able to speak at all?

I can only imagine

I can only imagine

Today...we should know...this is what John saw — it’s real... and we have a glorious future.