



The Revelation of Jesus Christ

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Chapter Seven

- **Habakkuk 3:2 I have heard all about you, LORD. I am filled with awe by your amazing works. In this time of our deep need, help us again as you did in years gone by. And in your anger, remember your mercy.**
- **In many ways I want to write big letters over chapter 7 that read, “Yeshua”, which means Jehovah is Salvation.**
- **In the midst of pouring out His anger on sin and sinners He is still the God who saves – that is His nature.**

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- In chapter 7 we will see that as all encompassing as the Great Tribulation is, there will be a remnant of people who will survive all of it.
- These ones that make it through will all be believers who turned to Christ in the Great Tribulation.
- 2nd Thes 2:11 For this reason (they would not receive the truth) God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, 12 in order that they *all may be judged who did not believe the truth*, but took pleasure in wickedness.

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- **Rev 7:1** Then I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds so they did not blow on the earth or the sea, or even on any tree. **2** And I saw another angel coming up from the east, carrying the seal of the living God. And he shouted to those four angels, who had been given power to harm land and sea, **3** “Wait! Don’t harm the land or the sea or the trees until we have placed the seal of God on the foreheads of his servants.” **4** And I heard how many were marked with the seal of God—144,000 were sealed from all the tribes of Israel: **5** from Judah 12,000, from Reuben 12,000, from Gad 12,000 **6** from Asher 12,000, from Naphtali 12,000, from Manasseh 12,000, **7** from Simeon 12,000, from Levi 12,000, from Issachar 12,000, **8** from Zebulun 12,000, from Joseph 12,000, from Benjamin 12,000. (note, Manasseh in, Dan out because of Dan’s severe idolatry)

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- **Chapter 7 of Revelation is a chapter that demonstrates that the visions John sees are not in exact chronological order.**
- **In this chapter we will see people in Heaven who, from a chronological timeline, have not died yet.**
- **God is providing detailed visions of the future to John, but the visions, while chronological in how each unfolds, are not in perfect chronological order.**

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- **Chapter 6 ends with “17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”.**
- **Chapter 7 will help to answer that question – and the answer is ‘no one’ will be able to stand up against the wrath of God unless God Himself protects them.**
- **And in this chapter we learn about 144,000 witnesses who will be divinely marked and protected throughout the Great Tribulation.**

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- Before we dive into the text of chapter 7, let's think about something the church has wanted for a long, long, time – revival.
- Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; 2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; 3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”
- This is the Abrahamic covenant – it is still in force today.

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- **God divinely elected the nation of Israel, not as an end in itself, but as a means to an end – the salvation of the whole world.**
- **He worked with Israel to give the world His Word and His Son – the word to point men to God, and His Son to be the propitiation for the sins of the world.**
- **In the first round of this effort, Israel stumbled and fell – they got caught up in their own importance and missed the call of God – Rev 7 tells of round #2 in God's effort to reach the world through the Jew.**

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- **Rom 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them (Israel) is for their salvation. 2 For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. 3 For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.**
- **We now know that God had to set Israel aside for a time because of their disobedience, and has been reaching the world through the church from Pentecost until now.**
- **That same method will continue until the Church is removed through the Rapture.**

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- **Rom 11:1** I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. **2** God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew.
- **Rom 11:11** I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous. **12** Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be!
- Paul is saying that if God could do something as wonderful as the church by the stumbling of Israel, just wait until you see what He can do when they recover and return to Him.

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- **So what is going on here? God's original plan was to reach the world through Israel, but they got all caught up in being God's "chosen" people.**
- **So He set them aside and grafted in the Church to work through for a season – this is commonly called the "Church age".**
- **But they are not cast away, the Jew has merely been set aside and has been generally blinded to the gospel. (some Jews are still saved in our day, but the Jew is for the most part blinded to the gospel)**

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- **So now, in Rev 7, we see that God is going to once again use the nation of Israel to reach the world in a way that is way beyond anything the world has ever seen.**
- **What am I saying? I am saying that during the tribulation period people will get saved in numbers never seen before.**
- **And isn't this just like our God – that in the midst of the greatest judgment of all time, He is pouring out His grace on people and saving those who had previously hated and rejected Him!**

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- **The chapter begins with 4 angels holding back the four winds of the Earth – winds that evidently had power to do great damage to the Earth and to people.**
- **Then another angel standing in the east commands that the winds continue to be held back until God has sealed His servants.**
- **So what does it mean that God would 'seal' his servants?**

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- The Greek word for seal 7:2 is sphragizo – it means to mark, and by implication having the full protection of the one to whom the seal belongs.
- Eph 1:13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.
- Same word for 'seal' is used in Rev 7:2 and in Eph 1:13 – we eagerly 'get' what it means for the 144,000, but seem less sure when it comes to ourselves.

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- For reasons beyond me there are lots of debates over exactly who the 144,000 are, but there shouldn't be – the text is clear that they are all Jews who were saved during the early days of the Tribulation.
- Rev 14:1 Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.
- By Revelation 14 the Lord is back on the Earth and the 144,000 are with Him and here we see they had His name (the mark) on their foreheads.

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- **Rev 7:9** After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands. **10** And they were shouting with a great roar, “Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne and from the Lamb!” **11** And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living beings. And they fell before the throne with their faces to the ground and worshiped God. **12** They sang, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and strength belong to our God forever and ever! Amen.”

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- **Rev 7:13** Then one of the twenty-four elders asked me, “Who are these who are clothed in white? Where did they come from?” **14** And I said to him, “Sir, you are the one who knows.” Then he said to me, “These are the ones who died in the great tribulation. They have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb and made them white. **15** “That is why they stand in front of God’s throne and serve him day and night in his Temple. And he who sits on the throne will give them shelter. **16** They will never again be hungry or thirsty; they will never be scorched by the heat of the sun. **17** For the Lamb on the throne will be their Shepherd. He will lead them to springs of life-giving water. And God will wipe every tear from their eyes.”

Chapter Seven

- **Rev 7:9** After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands.
- In verse #9 a new vision begins – John sees a vast crowd of believers “too great to count” standing in the throne room of God.
- And in verse #14 we read this – “These are the ones who died in the great tribulation”.

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- **So what could we conclude? That in the Great Tribulation, when it will cost the most to come to Christ, that the most ever will come to Christ.**
- **Does that not boggle your mind? What does it say that hard times produces a hunger for God?**
- **The church has been praying for revival and a great move of God for years, and those prayers will be answered in great measure in the Great Tribulation.**

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- When God answers our prayers for souls to be saved we should not be surprised as it is the nature of God to save.
- 1st Tim 2:1 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. 3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.
- 2nd Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

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- **I do not now mean to give the church in America of our day an 'out' or an 'excuse', but we may have the worst possible set of conditions for effective evangelism.**
- **Think about it – in the Great Tribulation when no one is safe, nothing is stable, and people are perishing all around it becomes self-evident that God exists and that He is angry at sin.**
- **There is no place to run, no place to hide from Him – so when people hear that He also is willing to forgive and save why wouldn't many, many come to Him?**

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- **The irony here is that what most Americans treasure the most, the fact that we are an affluent nation, could turn out to be the condition that keeps more people from the Kingdom than anything else in history.**
- **To stretch the irony further, even for the Christian, knowing that our affluence inhibits our spiritual lives, I have never prayed to have less, or hurt more.**
- **What do you think?**

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- Rev 7:16 “They will never again be hungry or thirsty; they will never be scorched by the heat of the sun. 17 For the Lamb on the throne will be their Shepherd. He will lead them to springs of life-giving water. And God will wipe every tear from their eyes.”
- More evidence that Rev 7 is not just an incident in the prophecy John is given, but a vision that runs throughout the Great Tribulation. (through chapter 6 no one has been scorched by the sun)
- Rev 16:8 The fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire. 9 Men were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory.

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- The special status of the martyrs of the Great Tribulation – along with the 144,000 and the other believers who survive the Great Tribulation, the martyrs of the Great Tribulation will populate the millennial kingdom through resurrection.
- Rev 20:4 Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Questions