

THE SAINTS OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION—REVELATION 7

1. Introduction

- Chapter 7 introduces us to 2 visions
- The Gospel has now been preached to all nations—our own internet is proof

“The questions has often been asked, Will any be saved after the rapture? The Scriptures clearly indicate that a great multitude of both Jews and Gentiles will trust in the Lord after the church is caught up to glory. Though the children of God living on earth at the time will be translated when Christ comes for His church, immediately a testimony will be raised up to the name of Christ through new converts among Jews and Gentiles. Though these are never described by the term “church,” they are constantly called saints, that is, those set apart as holy to God and saved through the sacrifice of Christ.

The presence of saved people in the world after the rapture has puzzled some because according to 2 Thessalonians 2:7 the one who now restrains sin, often identified as the Holy Spirit, is pictured as being removed from the world. The question then is how can people be saved in the tribulation if the Holy Spirit is taken out of the world? The answer, of course, is that the Holy Spirit is removed from the world in the same sense in which He came on the day of Pentecost. People were saved before the day of Pentecost when the Spirit of God came to indwell the church, and it should be clear from other Scriptures that the Holy Spirit is always omnipresent. He has always been in the world and always will be, in keeping with the divine attribute of omnipresence. Though the special ministries which are characteristic of the present dispensation may cease, there will be the continued ministry of the Spirit in a similar way to that which existed before Pentecost.”

(taken from A Revelation of Jesus Christ by John F. Walvoord)

2. The Vision of the Four Angels—Rev. 7:1-3

- There are angels of winds as of churches, fire and water

“There is a remarkable passage in the Book of Ecclesiasticus in reference to the period of time now under consideration which, while it is not inspired, must nevertheless have been take from inspired sources, for it is a most graphic description of the Biblical forecasts of this period, in an unusually terse and compact form. The passage reads: “There be winds that are created for vengeance, and in their fury lay on their scourges heavily; in the time of consummation they pour out their strength, and shall appease the wrath of him that made them. Fire, and hail, and famine, and death, all these are created for vengeance; teeth of wild beasts, and scorpions and adders, and a sword punishing the ungodly unto destruction.” While this sentence was written centuries before the Book of Revelation, it would be difficult to write a more exact epitome of judgments in progress subsequent to the sounding of the first trumpet.”

(taken from A Revelation of Jesus Christ by J.D. Smith)

- The angel from the East commands them to refrain until the servants of God are sealed on their foreheads
- Prior to Judgment God wants to set apart His servants eg. Noah, Rahab, Lot

3. **Sealing of the Twelve Tribes**—Rev. 7:4-8

- These are Jews
- The ten tribes are not lost
- They are seals and are witnesses during the Tribulation
- Dan is listed in Millennial Israel—Ezek. 48:32

4. **The Martyred Dead of the Great Tribulation Seen in Heaven**—Rev. 7:9-10

- The Antichrist will be furious against all believers
- These are Gentiles, they are martyred, therefore they stand before the Throne
- White robes and palms show their triumph
- Suggestion of pre-resurrection bodies
- It also applies to us

5. **Praise of the Heavenly Host**—Rev. 7:11-12

- The angels and all those in heaven
- A seven-fold praise

6. **The Martyred Dead Are Identified as Tribulation Saints**—Rev. 7:13-14

- v. 13 one of the elders asks, “Who are these?”

“What are these? The elder’s query is noteworthy, especially as it appears in the original: These arrayed in white robes, who are they and whence came they? As the “Venerable Bede” remarks, “he questions that he may teach” A Greater Teacher on a previous occasion used a similar method to draw the confession of ignorance and consequently the need of instruction from His pupil: “And he [the Lord] said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live” (Ezekiel 37:3)? The answer was, “O Lord God, thou knowest.” So here, Sir, thou knowest (implying I don’t. And with the curiosity now aroused, implying in addition “you tell me”). The answer comes forthwith: These are they which came of the [Greek] great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

(taken from A Revelation of Jesus Christ by J.D. Smith)

- Many Gentiles will be saved during the Great Tribulation
- In spite of difficulties there will be world-wide preaching

“That they are distinct from the church appears from the following considerations: those were kept out of the great tribulation (3:10); these came out. Those wear white raiment; these white robes. Those sit on thrones round the throne; these stand before the throne. Those wear crowns; these are uncrowned. Those have harps and vials; these have palms in the hands. Those sing a new song; these cry with a loud voice. Those are kings and priests and reign with Him; these serve Him day and night.

Furthermore, they are not identical. If they were, John who had previously seen the glorified church (chapter 4) would have recognized them. The angel would not have inquired of John who they are.

They are distinct from the previous group (the 144,000) as held by a noted recent commentator. Briefly these points may be noted: The previous group consists of Israelites only; these come *out of all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues*. The former consist of a specific number; these of a great multitude which no one was able (Greek) to number. The former are still upon earth in an unglorified state (verse 3; cf. 9:4); these are in a state of glory before the throne of God.”

(taken from *A Revelation of Jesus Christ* by J.D. Smith)

7. **The Heavenly Bliss of the Martyred Saints**—Rev. 7:15-17

- They are continually before the Lord
- v. 16—they are delivered from the afflictions they endured
- The 144,000 used of God and safely preserved through the Tribulation

“Chapter 7 of the book of Revelation serves as a review of the situation described in the previous chapters and emphasizes two important facts. First, God is going to judge Israel in the period of great trial, and 12,000 from each tribe, totaling 144,000, will be protected and sealed from judgments which will fall upon the world in general. Second, a great multitude of Gentiles will also be saved, but many of these will be martyred, and a multitude of the martyred dead are found in heaven rejoicing in the presence of the Lamb and representing every tongue and nation. It is an indication that even in the tragic closing hours prior to the second coming of Christ to the earth, countless souls will find Christ as Saviour and be saved by His grace.”

(taken from *A Revelation of Jesus Christ* by John F. Walvoord)