

The Raptured Church Revelation 7:9-17

I. A Glorious Sight – 7:9-12

1. John, having seen God's protection for Israel –1-8
His attention is turned to a sight in heaven – 9-10
2. What he sees, a great multitude "that no one could number" – 9
This is in comparison to 144,000 believers in Israel
They are sealed as belonging to God & protected
3. This number is beyond ability to count – 9
Also from every nation, from all tribes, people & languages
This multitude is from every people group in this world
4. They stand before the Lamb – belonging to Him – 9
Having been purchased by His own precious blood
Clothed in white robes - declared righteous by His cleansing
"With palm branches in their hands"
Expressions of praise & worship (celebration)
5. Crying out in worship, with a loud voice – 10
"Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, & to the Lamb"
They rejoice over God's provision, sending His Son, to save us from our sin
His sacrifice on Calvary cleanses us & restores us to God

6. All heaven rejoices in the work of redemption –11-12
All the angels standing around the throne - 11
Around the elders (believers already in heaven) – Rev. 4:4
And the four living creatures (Cherubim) – 4:6-8
These angels fall on their faces before the throne & worshipped God – 12
Saying "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen"

All heaven rejoices in God's work of redemption and restoration
The glory of His new creation has been won in Jesus Christ

II. Who is this Multitude? – 7:13-17

1. One of the elders asked John this question -13
"Who are these, clothed in white robes?"
"And from where have they come?"
2. John looks to the elder to answer these questions – 14
"Sir, you know"
The elder gives answers to these questions
3. "These are coming out of the great tribulation"
Jesus promised this to the Philadelphia Church- 3:10
"I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world"
Great tribulation: time when God's wrath is poured out
God's wrath was poured out on His Son. Rom. 8:1

"There is therefore no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus"

"They have washed their robes & made them white in the blood of the Lamb"

4. "Therefore they are before the throne of God" - 15
They can stand before God in righteousness of Christ
"They serve Him (God) day and night in His temple
What a privilege to serve God in His temple
"He who sits on the throne will shelter them with His presence"
Protects those who are His children with His own presence
5. As a loving Father He will provide for all their needs – 16
"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore"
"The sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat"
6. "For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their Shepherd and He will guide them to springs of living waters" 17
Note that He (The Lamb) is in the "midst of the throne" Father and Son are together in "oneness" on the throne Jesus is the shepherd who leads and guides those who are His to the living waters that satisfies our need
7. All of earths sorrows will be forever gone – 17
"God will wipe away every tear from their eyes"
They are the believing church to whom the rapture was promised
Jesus promised His return to take His believers – John 14:1-3
Angels promised His return at His ascension – Acts 1:11

III. Rapture Means New Life – 1 Cor. 15:50-58

1. Rapture means more than just escape from Tribulation
More than just a safe place where life is perfect
2. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God - 50
If we could go to heaven as we are we would not fit in
"The perishable cannot inherit the imperishable"
3. "We shall all be changed" – 51
It is not just that we must be forgiven of our sins
That is accomplished in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ
We must all be changed, there is a basic need in our fallen nature - 52
"This perishable body must put on imperishable" – 53
"And this mortal body must put on immortality" – 54
Christ died to save us from out sins but He also died to deliver us from death - 55
4. Christ died to deliver us from "death" – 56
To transform us into "eternal life" – 2 Cor. 5:17
As Christ lives in us He seeks to transform us into His likeness
When He comes we shall be like Him – 1 Jn. 3:2
God's eternal plan is to conform us to image of His Son – Rom. 8:29
Rapture will bring His plan to fulfillment
Eternally living together as God's children through His Son

God Protects True Israel Revelation 7:1-8

I. Holding Back the Winds of Wrath – 7:1-3

1. Four angels stand at 4 corners of earth – 1
Assignment: “Hold back the winds of wrath”
“Do not allow the winds to blow on earth or sea”
“Not even against any tree”
There is further instruction from God
2. Another angel comes with God’s seal – 2
This angel speaks with a loud voice (clear instruction)
Message is for these 4 angels holding back the winds of wrath
God’s grace must prevail
3. “Do not harm earth and sea or trees” – 3
“Until God’s servants are sealed on their foreheads”

II. Full Measure of God’s Protection – 7:4-8

1. God’s seal is placed on 144,000 – Sons of Israel
The number of Israel’s sons was 12
12,000 sealed is 12,000 from each tribe
Suggesting that each tribe has a full compliment
2. When God sent 10 plagues on Egypt
He spared the people of Israel
God again marks His people of Israel from “God’s Wrath”
3. This seal is seen again in Rev. 14:1-5
The 144,000 are seen with the Lamb on Mt. Zion
Not only protected but also redeemed by the Lamb
Celebrating this fact of redemption provided by the Lamb

III. Israel’s Path to Redemption – Dan. 9:24-27

1. God’s plan for Israel – 24
As Daniel prepares for return after 70 years of exile
God sends an angel extending it to 70 times 7
490 years Israel will be under Gentile control
2. Those 70 x 7’s will restore Israel to God – 24
Israel’s path will ultimately bring redemption
Finish transgression, put an end to sin, atone for iniquity
Bring in everlasting righteousness
Seal both vision and prophet
Anoint a most holy place
3. Sixty nine 7’s would mark rejection of Israel’s Messiah – 25-26
Jesus would fulfill the work of redemption
But Jesus weeps for Israel’s rejection – Lk. 19:41-44
And prophecies of troubles for Israel
4. Daniel also predicted this trouble - Dan. 9:26
Destruction of Jerusalem & its Temple
End would come like a flood
There would be war & desolations are decreed
5. But there must be a 70th period (Tribulation) – 9:27
Gentile powers still over Israel
Beginning with a strong covenant with many (Israel)

Covenant for 7 years

But this ruler will break the covenant after 3 1/2 years
“Putting an end of sacrifice and offering”

6. Jesus spoke of this as “abomination of desolation” –
Matt. 24:15-24

This term comes from Daniel’s prediction under Greek rule
When Alexander the Great died 4 generals took over
Antiochus Epiphanes created an abomination in the Temple by offering a sow as a sacrifice desolating the Temple

The Jews rose up with God’s help, defeating him
The Feast of Hanukkah remembers this victory
Jesus used this event to warn of antichrist’s abomination

7. Consider words in 2 Thess. 2:3-4 & Rev. 13:5-8, 11-15
When man of sin sits on God’s throne & is worshipped as god
This marks the abomination shortening the Tribulation
Jesus warns Israelites to flee for His protection

IV. God’s Messengers – Rev. 11

1. Two witnesses appear – like 2 lampstands - 11:4
They have power to protect themselves – 5-6
Power to bring fire out of his mouth (like Elijah)
Power to shut the sky that no rain may fall during their prophesying
Power over waters to turn water into blood (like Moses)
Power to strike the earth with every kind of plague
2. Note: Moses & Elijah appeared at Jesus’ transfiguration -
When Jesus spoke with them about His departure, which
He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem –
Luke 9:28-31
3. When these witnesses finished their testimony to Israel – 7
The beast out of the bottomless pit killed them
Their dead bodies will lay in the streets of Jerusalem for 3 1/2 days
4. People on earth will celebrate their death – 10
But their celebration was brief
5. After 3 1/2 days breath of life from God entered them – 11
They stood on their feet & great fear fell on those who saw them
6. A loud voice from heaven said, “come up here” – 12
They went to heaven in a cloud & their enemies watched them
7. At that hour there was a great earthquake – 13
A tenth of the city fell & 7,000 people were killed
The rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven

He will do something to desolate the temple
 Partial fulfillment with Antiochus and the sow
 But Jesus speaks of this abomination & desolator

- Consider words in 2 Thess. 2:3-4; Rev. 13:5-8, 11-15
 This anti-christ sits in the temple, worshipped as god
 Brings on the “Great Tribulation” and many martyrs
- Is this not a worthy reason why God should judge?

II. Disturbance in God’s Creation – 6:12-14

- God shakes what man thought was unmovable – 12-14
 When the Lamb opens the 6th seal
 All creation seems to come apart – Col. 1:17
 The God who created this universe can cause it to come apart
- Note how the various parts begin to unravel – 12-14

There was a “great earthquake” – (God’s Word says (“great”) - 12
 So “great” that it may be felt all over the earth
 The sun became “black as sackcloth” – 12
 That which was made to give humans light is now hidden in darkness
 Those separated from God in sin get a taste of “outer darkness” – Matt.22:13
 The full moon became “like blood” – 13
 The glory of the “full moon” becomes marked by “bloodshed”
 The “stars of the sky fell to the earth” - 13
 As a fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale”
 Man has for a long time dreaded “falling stars”
 The Sky vanished “like a scroll that is being rolled up” – 14
 God seems to remove, for at least a brief time, when these heavenly things disappear
 The land masses begin to shift from place to place – 14
 “Every mountain and island was removed from its place”
 It is difficult for us to imagine such a shaking when God removes His hand

III. Humans Try to Hide from God – 6:15-17

- Man seeks a place to hide - 15
 When creation seems to come apart
 Like Adam & Eve, guilty sinners try to hide from God
 Some men may appear to have greater opportunity
 To hide
 The Kings and the great ones, generals of earth may have a bunker
 Surely the rich and the powerful must have a place
 But, not so, everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in caves

Opening 5th & 6th Seal Revelation 6:9-17

I. Cry of the Martyrs – 6:9-11

- The Lamb opens the 5th seal – 6:9
 John saw souls under the altar
 This altar is the altar of “incense”
 Where the prayers of God’s people rose like “incense” to God – Rev. 8:3-4
 These souls under the altar were souls of the martyrs – 9
 “Souls of those who had been slain for the Word of God”
 “And for the witness they had borne”
- These souls cried out with a loud voice – 10
 “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true,” – God is absolutely “Just”
 “How long before you will judge and avenge our blood” -
 “On those who dwell on the earth?”
 Cry for Justice
- Think of how great that number of those martyred
 Think of those listed in Scripture
 Like John the Baptist, Stephen, James
 Those listed in Church History
 Like Peter, Paul, most of the Apostles
 Like those listed in Foxe’s Book of Martyrs
 Those in our own life-time
 Like missionaries killed by Auca Indians
 Like those now being killed in “Persecuted Churches”
- They were each given “a white robe” – 11
 “Told to rest a little longer” – God declares them righteous
 “Until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers”
 “Should be complete who were killed as they themselves had been
- These 4 horses lead to more martyrs – Matt. 24:15
 This prince will break his covenant with Israel – Dan. 9:27

- Hid themselves among the rocks of the mountains
- 2. Man, in terror calls to the mountains & rocks – 16
 - Crying out for the rocks and mountains to fall on them
 - “Hide us from the face of Him who is seated on the Throne”
 - “And from the wrath of the Lamb”
- 3. “For the great day of their wrath has come” – 17
 - “And who can stand”
- 4. There is one more seal to be opened – 8:1
 - And that 7th seal will open two other descriptions of God's wrath
 - The 7th seal will unfold 7 trumpets sounding God's judgment
 - And the 7th trumpet will sound two descriptions of “Bowls of wrath”
 - But chapter 7 gives bright hope for God's people