

The book of Revelation

7:1-17

Welcome to the weekly verse-by-verse bible study in the book of Revelation. Make sure you pray before you start this, or any bible study.

This week we get started in the next chapter, which is chapter 7. So let's jump into it.

✚ **Rev 7:1** *After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree.*

After these things, after what things? After the six seals were opened that we read about in chapter six.

But you may be thinking, “*Ok, but what about the seventh seal, what happened to this one?*”

Good question, and we will find the answer when we get to chapter 8. But until then, what is happening right now is that there is absolutely no wind blowing on the earth. Talk about a dry heat, this is the ultimate. I'm not even sure that we could imagine such a thing, with no wind or even a small breeze blowing. We can't even imagine the smell on the earth at this point, and the stench just lingering in the air, as hundreds of thousands, if not millions of people who have died at this point with no breeze to blow the stench away.

But then isn't that the way sin is? No matter how much we try to hide it or even sugar coat it; its stench is always around. Also with no breeze there would be little, if any evaporation of the water, making it dry and hot with no rain, if any. I think that during this time that the world will really realize how important the wind is to the earth. It will be something beyond what we could imagine.

And how is the wind stopped? Well as we just read that, *four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth.*

Now the earth is pretty big, at least in our aspect of big, can you imagine how large these four angles must be? *that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree.* Because the *four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth.*

With the wind not blowing on the earth, there will be a lot of disease, as viruses will linger in the air from all the death. Also remember there was an earthquake, which would also bring along many fires, and now the smoke from these fires as well as the smog will

just linger, once again with no wind on the sea, no evaporation, and with no evaporation, no rain, no rain means famine. No wind on the trees or the plants means that there will be no wind to carry the seeds to pollinate the earth and to cause food to grow. This will not be a fun time on the earth, but then it's not meant to be, that's why they call it the tribulation period.

✠ **Rev 7:2-3** *Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads."*

When you read that, you may be wondering, "Are these four angels the same ones holding back the wind?" Good observation, but I think it is four of the angels mention in chapters 8 & 9 during the trumpet judgments:

The first angel harms the earth.

✠ **Rev 8:7** *The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.*

The second angel harms the sea.

✠ **Rev 8:8-9** *Then the second angel sounded: And something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.*

The third angel harms the drinking water.

✠ **Rev 8:10-11** *Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter.*

The sixth angel releases four angles that are to kill 1/3 of mankind.

✠ **Rev 9:13-15** *Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind.*

Could these four be these angels spoken of in verse 2 in Revelation 7?

✠ **Rev 7:3** saying, *"Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads."*

If you have read the Left Behind series it talks about those left behind who became believers receiving a mark on their forehead that only other believers could see and the mark was a cross.

But there are two little problems I have with this, first is that the mark being a cross is just a good guess and we do not know what it will be, I have heard teachings that it will be the name of God. I'm not sure so I wont guess, all I can do is give you God's word and the things I have heard.

Second in the book those who receive the mark on their forehead are all believers, but as we will read, only 144,000 will receive this mark and they are all from the 12 tribes of Israel.

✠ **Rev 7:4-8** *And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:*

of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed.

A lot of different cults claim to be these 144,000, and none of them are Jewish. If they were, then they must be expecting to go through the seven-year tribulation period. Who

in their right mind would want to go through this? Not me, so I am thankful I am a Christian and will be in heaven during this time.

But if you want to think you are one of these 144,000, and you are not from one of the 12 tribes of Israel (*And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed*), then you are being deceived, and if the rapture were to happen and you do have to go through the seven year tribulation, you will be sorry you waited. But there still is a chance for those who do go through the tribulation period as we will read next, but the things they will have to experience will not be fun.

Some say that this is spiritual Israel that God is talking about here and that's why they say they are these 144,000. I think God may have known that man would make up this lame excuse, so He wanted to make it clear that this is real Israel by naming the 12 tribes of Israel. Nowhere in the bible can you find the 12 tribes represented as spiritual tribes. When God mentions them, He is talking about physical Israel, not spiritual, which we are as the church.

✠ **Gal 3:7** *Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.*

And it never mentions that the 12 tribes in a spiritual sense as the twelve churches. There is never any correlation between the 12 tribes of Israel and 12 different churches (there are only 7), even in the letters from Jesus to the churches; there are only seven churches, not twelve.

Simply put, don't take what God has made so simple for us to understand and try to confuse it or spiritualize it. Just thank God that He did make it that simple for even someone like you and me to understand it.

✠ **Rev 7:9-13** *After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying:*

*"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom,
Thanksgiving and honor and power and might,
Be to our God forever and ever.
Amen."*

Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?"

I like verse 13, the question is asked, "**Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?**" We will find out later, so just hang in there.

But here we see thousands upon millions, **which no one could number**, of people worshipping before the throne of God. In their worship they are using palm branches which signify the following:

Palm branches appear from early times to have been associated with rejoicing. On the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles the Hebrews were commanded to take branches of palms, with other trees, and rejoice before God;

† **Lev 23:40** *'And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days.*

We also know they were used when Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

† **John 12:12-13** *The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out:*

***"Hosanna!
'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!
The King of Israel!"***

Little did the people know that this same man (Jesus) that they were worshipping, that within a week's time, they would be yelling out "crucify Him".

But not in heaven, because the people understand and know who God and Jesus is as they cry out:

***"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom,
Thanksgiving and honor and power and might,
Be to our God forever and ever.
Amen."***

Another thing I notice about these people is that they are, ***standing before the throne and before the Lamb***

We often think of heaven and how we will bow down and worship God. Which is true, because in the presence of His Holiness and Awesomeness we will not be able to stand but will fall down and worship at His feet.

But isn't it good to know that we can stand and worship as well. A lot of times in church during worship, we are asked to stand, or sometimes during your worship you can't contain yourself and you want to get up and stand before the Lord with hands lifted high.

This is a good thing to do, because, as we just read, this is something that is and will be practiced in heaven for all eternity, and we as believers will be a part of this worship before the Throne of God.

The last thing we read about these people is what they are wearing, *clothed with white robes*

White represents purity and a cleansing.

† ***Psalms 51:7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.***

Also we remember Jesus' transfiguration here on the earth and how *His clothes became as white as the light*.

† ***Matt 17:1-2 Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.***

If you think about it, everyone of these people were once sinners like you and I. They were murders, drunkards, prostitutes, liars, cheaters, adulterers, thieves, and vulgar disgusting people, just like you and I were. It just goes to show you that the Lord will cleanse anyone from their sins if they just ask Him.

So what have you done so bad lately that you think the Lord won't forgive you? I wonder how many of these people committed the same sin, yet they trusted in the salvation of God and not their own human efforts to be forgiven.

So next time you think the Lord won't forgive you of a sin, or sins, just remember that every time you do, you are saying that the work that Jesus did on the cross was not enough, meaning that His death was all in vain and for nothing. But Jesus made it very clear that.

† ***John 19:30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.***

Meaning that those sins that you committed were all paid for on the cross 100%, just confess them to Him and He WILL forgive you.

† ***1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.***

Notice it doesn't say to confess your sins, except for that sin, or to even give excuses for why you sinned. It does say that He will *cleanse us from all unrighteousness*, not some or every one except your particular sin, but rather ALL *unrighteousness*.

Going on in Revelation it says that, *Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?"*

So who are these people anyway? Let's find out.

✠ **Rev 7:14-17** *And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 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 dwell among them. They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; "for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*

Remember the fifth seal back in chapter 6?

✠ **Rev 6:9-11** *When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.*

A couple of key things here that would make us believe that these people are the same ones spoken of here in chapter 7.

Chapter 6: *Then a white robe was given to each of them*

Chapter 7: *clothed with white robes,*

Also

Chapter 6: *and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.*

Chapter 7: *After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number*

The number of people (*fellow servants and their brethren*), have now been completed. Some think this is the church, but John says:

And I said to him, "Sir, you know."

Meaning that he did not know these people. I don't know about you, but I hope my pastor knows me in heaven along with all the other brothers and sisters in the Lord I knew here on this earth.

But John didn't know who they were, because the church was already in heaven enjoying the marriage feast of the lamb, as the church (us His bride). But these were a bunch of new people that John had not seen before, and their eternal destiny is to be: ***before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple.***

Yet they are all happy to be there and to serve the Lord day and night in His temple.

✠ ***"They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."***

These people had experienced famine, hunger, pain, lost loved ones, martyrdom, and extreme heat not to mention the earth quakes and every thing else we have read about in chapter 6. But no more, because they chose to repent and turn to Jesus. One encouraging thing I read in this is back in verse 9.

✠ ***a great multitude which no one could number***

This means that hundreds of millions of people WILL be saved during the tribulation period. Some think how can God do such a thing to the people here on the earth for these seven years? But the result is that millions are saved through it. Also God is just giving the people what they wanted, and we see that millions decide that their lifestyle has been wrong and turn to Jesus, ***And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.***

So even though we don't want our loved one to have to go through the tribulation period, isn't it comforting to know that if they do, that some, if not all of them may be included in this multitude of people!

Maybe you are one who thinks that if the rapture really happens, that you will believe then, so you will wait until then to turn to Jesus.

Jesus says:

✠ ***John 20:29 Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."***

Jesus doesn't want you, or anyone else to have to go through this horrible time. Because yes, you may turn to Jesus during this time, but you will also have to experience famine, a great earthquake, death, pain, suffering, tremendous heat, lack of water and rain, stench from dead bodies, disease, murder, rape, incest, and on and on and it will be nothing compared to what we have now, because it will all be freely done with no regard for each other. Not even Hollywood could make a movie to show how bad it will be.

So don't wait because:

† **2 Cor 6:2** *For He says:*

***"In an acceptable time I have heard you,
And in the day of salvation I have helped you."***

Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Today is the day, not later during the tribulation period. But the choice is yours. I choose to be saved now and be a part of the bride of Christ, rather than wait until during the Tribulation Period and have to suffer all those terrible things, and not be a part of the bride.

Well, that's it for this week. The next study we will get into chapter 8 and see what happens when the seventh seal is broken.

May the Lord richly bless you in His love, grace and mercy, and may you be a part of the bride of the Lamb. AMEN!