

Revelation 7 Split-Screen of Encouragement

Thursday, March 13, 2025 • Read Revelation 7

Questions from the Scripture text: Whom does John see, where (v1)? What are they holding? In order to keep it from doing what? What does he then see in v2? What did this angel have? To whom did he cry? What did he say not to do (v3)? Until when? What does John hear in v4? What is the number? Of whom? How many from which groups in v5-8? What does John now see in v9? What is the number of this multitude? From what nations are they? Where are they? How are they clothed? What do they have in their hands? What are they doing (v10)? What do they cry? Who else are around the throne (v11)? What do they do? What do they say (v12)? Who answers in v13, asking what? How does John answer him (v14)? What does the elder say about them? How did they whiten their robes? Where are they (v15)? What do they do? When? Who will do what with them? What doesn't happen to them anymore (v16)? Who sees to this (v17)? What will He do for them? What will God do for them?

What comfort do believers have in this age of tribulation? Revelation 7 looks forward to the hearing of God's Word, publicly read, in the holy assembly on the coming Lord's Day. In these seventeen verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **believers in this world are sealed unto salvation, and go to the blessedness of this salvation when they pass from this world.**

There are two multitudes in this chapter, one on earth and one in heaven.

The timing of the first multitude is made plain by the positioning of the angels in v1 and the prohibition in v3. The end of this world is not permitted until God's seal has been placed upon the elect in this world. That is to say: the world cannot end until they have been brought to faith in Jesus Christ and received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (cf. Eph 4:30).

As indicated by the number 12 (12 tribes of 12 thousands), these belong to the church in this world. The number 12 has this designation from God Himself, being the number of tribes that He gave the church in the administration under Moses, and the number of apostles by whom the Lord Jesus laid the foundation of the church in the administration under Him as Christ.

It is a great comfort to know that, in this age of so many tribulations (cf. 6:3-8), not only is the gospel successfully conquering (6:1-2), but God has a specific regard for ensuring the salvation of every, specific believer. He has specific regard for you, dear Christian.

The second multitude is not on earth but in heaven. And, while 144,000 is a comparatively small number, the emphasis with this second multitude is how many they are. They are, of course, a set number (cf. 6:11, 2Tim 2:19). But, there are so many that it's higher than you can count. Believers are a sealed minority in this world, but in eternity there are more than can be counted (cf. Lk 13:23-30).

The timing of this group is also clear, as this is the same assembly (v11) that has been seen in ch4-5, dressed in the same garments (v9) as those in the fifth seal (cf. 6:9-11), participating in the same activity that we have seen from that assembly (v11-12).

As they pass from this life, they pass from the experiences in seals 2-4 (the "great tribulation" of v14) and into the experiences of chapters 4-5, the "resting" referred to in 6:11. More attention is given, now, to their white robes. What laundry detergent has gotten them so white? The blood of the Lamb (v14)! Now they worship, night and day, with absolutely no tribulation whatsoever (v16-17). They have come to experience the blessedness of Psalm 23 in its ultimate form.

What a great comfort to know that, throughout this entire age of tribulation, there is that innumerable multitude of witnesses (cf. Heb 11:39-12:1) that has come through already, with whom the church on earth joins, when in public worship (cf. Heb 12:22-24). We join with them now, Sabbath by Sabbath, by faith. And we shall soon join them finally and fully.

Who is keeping this world from being destroyed? Why? What comfort does this give you, if you are sealed by the Holy Spirit? How are you participating in the gathering in of believers? What are you looking forward to when you leave this world?

Sample prayer: Lord, forgive us for when we are more impressed with the tribulations of this age, than with Your preservation of Your saints in it. Forgive us for when we do not value visible church membership, when You number every church member. And forgive us for how we have not found our rest in Your public worship, the way that You have given Your glorified saints to find rest in the worship of heaven. Be our Shepherd, and grant that we would lack nothing, until You bring us into everlasting and perfect blessedness, we ask, through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP23B "The Lord's My Shepherd" or TPH404 "The Church's One Foundation"

"(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Revelation 7 these are the words of God. 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. Then, I saw another Angel ascending from the East, having the Seal of the Living God.

And he cried out with a loud voice to the Four Angels, to whom? It was granted to harm the earth and the Sea. Do not harm the Earth, the sea, or the trees. Till we have sealed the Servants of our God on their foreheads. And I heard the number of those who were sealed.

144, 000 of all the tribes. The children of Israel were sealed of the tribe of Judah. Twelve thousand were sealed. The tribe of Reuben, 12, 000, were sealed to the tribe of God, 12, 000 were sealed. Of the tribe of Asher, 12, 000 were sealed of the tribe of NAFTA, 12, 000 were sealed.

Drive of Manasseh 12, 000 are sealed. Of the tribe of Simeon, 12, 000 were sealed. For the tribe of Levi, 12, 000 were sealed. Of the tribe of visakar, 12, 000 resealed. About the tribe of zebulun, 12, 000, received of the tribe of Jesus, 12, 000, were sealed. Benjamin 12, 000 were sealed.

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, palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne into the lamb.

While 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 red and white robes? And where did they come from? 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 the 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 showed me their hunger anymore, nor thirst anymore. The son shall not strike them or any heat. For the lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, will Shepherd them and lead them to living Fountains of water.

And God will wipe away. Every tier. From their eyes. Amen. So far, the reading of gods inspired. Inerrant word Revelation 7 gives us something of a split screen. This is a technique. Television or film, where there are two things happening at the same time that have a certain relationship to one another, and you put them

next to one another as it unfolds so that you can see the significance of each one in relation to the other and what we have is a split screen of that entire time between the two returns between the two comings of Christ.

one view of Earth and one view of. And the view of Earth. That which is waiting for? The end of the world, those angels at the four corners of the Four Winds. Are going to participate in the end of this age, but they are not yet permitted. to do their work.

And the reason is the same as the reason given. And answer. the fifth seal with those who are under the altar, crying out how long and the answer being not until the number of your brothers. And the, and the number of those we're going to be martyred, who are?

die. Be killed. As. As you were so as completed, and so that is. What the end is waiting for. As Peter says. God is not slow as some count slowness, but with him a. Days is a thousand years and a thousand years this day because he doesn't want any of his elect to perish.

He is bringing all of them. To the knowledge of the truth, and that's what determines the second coming of Christ. It's actually what we have seen, you know. Throughout, scripture determines everything God does everything. Out of his love for the Saints, who he is saving, and his plan, to save them.

So, that's what's keeping? This world from being destroyed is that God is still saving, is still in this case sealing. Now we know that. Holy Spirit is given to us as a seal. Ephesians 4 verse 30s. Significant that? That is the seal there, because in Ephesians, one of the things that is key from chapter two is that God has torn down the dividing wall between the Jews and.

The Gentiles that God's Israel, now his church in the earth, is made up of. People from all the nations. And so, just like in. Exodus chapter 12 if someone wanted to? But if a Gentile wanted to participate in the Passover, he would have to be incorporated into one of the tribes of Israel there.

Now, you don't have to be incorporated into one of the tribes. but you are grafted into. The tree. If you're a gentile who believes in Jesus Christ? So the seal is especially the Holy Spirit and this fifth angel, the angel that says, wait until I've done the ceiling.

It may actually be a Christophany. Another appearance of the Lord Jesus. We know that throughout the Old Testament. almost all, if not all, indeed of the appearances of the angel of the Lord are actually appearances of the Lord Jesus, our great Prophet. Messenger of God, the word. and so this fifth angel may be.

A Christophany or he just may be an angel that is being employed by God. Somehow, in the spread of the Gospel by which the Holy Spirit does come down. Upon people, and again, the fact that they are sealed upon their foreheads. Reminder of the way in which the scripture describes Jesus, baptizing us with the Holy Spirit by means of pouring out so this ceiling.

The ceiling is done upon the foreheads of those who receive him, and this is one of our great Comforts. That we have the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit that if we are. Striving against our flesh that this comes only from. the Holy Spirit. If we know God as our father and our hearts, call him Abba that this is one of the indicators that we have the spirit of Christ sent into our hearts, like Galatians, chapter 4, says.

Galatians again. I'm describing. Circumcision or uncircumcision, but Faith working in love. That which is the fruit of the work of the Holy? As that which particularly marks a Believer, and at the end of Galatians, the blessing that is given is upon quote unquote, the Israel of God, which is over against those who are Judaizers against too much of that letter.

Much of that book Galatians has argued, so these 12 tribes and this 12, 000 is. Are in the first half of Revelation 7, but it doesn't refer to the exact number of those who are saved. It is reminding us that there is a very specific exact number of the elect.

As. second, Timothy 2, verse 19, says. The Lord knows who are his? known to the Lord are his works from all eternity, says another scripture, and the Lord knows whom he is saving. That's the number that must be completed from chapter 6 and verse 11, and the answer to the souls under the altar in the fifth seal.

The idea is. That there is an exact number and the reason it's 12 times 12 times a thousand here is because 12 is a number identifying particularly the church. And particularly the visible. it was God in his Providence, who gave exactly the 12 tribes to Jacob. It was God in.

It was God, the son, in his Humanity, who picked exactly 12 Apostles, and so it's God himself, who has given the number 12 as an indicator of his church, and so you have a 12-12 a, an emphasis, almost a hebraic. We've mentioned many times that in Hebrew when they want to say something extremely or intensely or whatever.

Use the same verb. Twice in a row. two different conjugations to double the verb, and so a 12-ish 12. And thousand being 10 times, 10 times 10 is another. Form of completion, and so the whole point of this 144, 000, is that God has his elect whom he gathers into his invisible, whom he gathers into his visible.

We saw isn't in the parable of the wheat and the tares. The. Not everyone in the church. were wheat, but? Well, the wheat could only be found in the church. he hides the treasure in the field and buys the field. The field is the church, the elect, his treasure in the church.

Net catches all of the good fish that he wants. Now, there are other fish who are in the net. The net does the church, but the good fish are the elect, and so there's this. There's this. Gathering into the visible church and bringing to genuine saving faith in Christ.

Of his elect that is still taking place. So that's what's going on on one side? And on that side, where the Four Angels are waiting to end the Earth and sea and trees and all those things. Remember, it's the age of se. Two, three, and four. It's the age of War being made.

It's the age of, things like. Famines and shortages and inflation. And hunger and? Persecution and earthquake. It's the age of all those things, but it's also the age of the first seal. The age in which the gospel goes out as it were on the White Horse conquering and to conquer and the gospel must certainly go to everyone whom the Lord has determined to save, and so there's this.

Yes, tribulation. All these troubles that fill this age between Christ's two comings, but it is ultimately an age of confidence and an age of accomplishment as the gospel goes and gets and saves everyone for whom Christ came, everyone for whom Christ died. And so that's on. The one side of the split screen, and it gives us great confidence and hope.

the Lord very specifically for every individual elect person is doing everything in order. Just everything he does in history in order to save them in order to gather them in. His church in order to gather them to himself, and he seals them with his Holy Spirit. And so, whether you're talking about participating in.

Your own salvation work out your own salvation with fear and trembling and pursuing Holiness, those kinds of things, or participating in God, saving others. Evangelism, which a big part of the work of evangelism is Christian parenting. Is a great work of evangelism and discipleship and then evangelizing others. Ministering the gospel, telling the truth about Jesus.

You are participating in a work that must succeed. You are participating in a work that is so important that it is literally the reason that this world has not yet ended. And so. What, and encouraging? side of the split screen, even in the picture of what, how things are on Earth.

But the other side of the split screen is even more encouraging. Because it's the picture of how things are in heaven. And we know that this is also the time between the two comings of Christ. It's the same throne room scene that we have that we saw already in chapter four and chapter five, particular with the.

And the 24 Elders. and the angels, and now we have this multitude and. It's the multitude that is being. gathered out of the tribulation, but now it's presented as one, which is so great that no one could number it. And. This doesn't mean that there isn't an exact number, of course.

There's an exact number. And even more. Of course, God knows what the exact number is. It's not like, there's an actually indeterminate multitude so that, you know, there might be some question as to how many there are. It's just so great that it's beyond our counting. And so the emphasis in the first multitude, the multitude on Earth, was exactness and specificity, and the emphasis in the second multitude.

The multitude in heaven is how very many there are. This of course helps us. With one of the great questions that the disciples once asked you Jesus in Luke 13. verse 23, they asked him if there were just few who are going to be saved, because, the varying responses that they were getting to the gospel during Jesus's Earthly Ministry, seemed to indicate that.

Of the proportion of those who responded in Saving Faith was not going to be that many. And so they ask, are there few who are going to be saved and he answers? That narrow is the gate, and hard is the way. and they so. On the one hand, the answer is, yeah, comparatively.

Few are going to be saved. but it's just comparatively few, because by the time he's done answering their question in Luke. The next six or seven verses there. In Luke 13, he's talking about people coming from East and South and north and west and sitting down, with Abraham at the kingdom, and there's this great multitude.

So, although there are comparatively few in this age, and the emphasis is not on how few they are, but how exact the number is. In the first half. And yet, as we are gathered out of this world, in, to the Lord in glory, a multitude accumulates in glory.

That is so great that no one can number them. So you have this massive number, and not only are they identified with? Those who are singing praises and chapter 4 and chapter 5, and you remember, the praise in chapter four, holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty was and isn't is to come, and then you are worthy Lord to receive glory and honor and power.

You created all things, and by your will, they existed and are created and then appraising, especially the lamb, and him who sits on the throne, but especially the lamb in chapter five Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength, and honor and glory and blessing, blessing, and honor and glory and power be to him who sits on the throne and to the lamb forever and ever.

And it's the same group doing the same stuff in chapter seven. Amen. Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power, and might be to our God forever and ever and?

What do they have that we saw the martyrs in the fifth seal had? They have the white robes. And so this is that resting for a while that those who are given the white robes are given to do? They rest by rejoicing. They rest by praise. They have their resting in the worship of God.

Does that sound like anything else? Is that not what we do on the seventh day, which is now the first day of the week is the one day in seven? But is that not what we do on our day of rest? Does it not set apart for the worship of God, and especially now that the Lord Jesus has come and has been slain for our sins.

Is that not what the Lord's day is for? Worship Him who sits upon the throne and the lamb, and to Proclaim his salvation and to rejoice in him. And so that which we get to do that which we join in a small way, every Lord's day, and you remember that I hope from Hebrews chapter 12.

This disassembly here is. The assembly that, in Hebrews chapter 12, is called Zion. When it says you have come to Zion and you have the Holy Angels? gathered for feast, and you have the souls of the just made perfect. Who are the the souls that come to life and reign with God for a thousand years again?

A number of completeness, as we'll get to to them or the souls that are under the altar. That we just heard about in the fifth seal last chapter. So, Hebrews chapter 12 talks about the souls of the just made perfect, so you have the angels and The Souls of the just made perfect and God, our Father and Christ, our mediator whose blood speaks better than the blood of Abel.

And so we only get to do it one day a week. We only have one day a week of rest, but when we depart from this world, we enter our rest. And all of our? Mixed up priorities and all of our inhibitions where we don't desire the praise of God or find it as enjoyable or have as much resting in him or rejoicing in him as we ought.

All of that will have been corrected. And we will both desire to enjoy him as we're in worship like we should and. Be granted to enjoy him in worship. Forever. Well, continually, yes, forever, because we'll also be doing it in the new heavens and new Earth. But continually, and until the return.

And. You know, John, gets to see this amazing, glorious scene. But the ones on the white robes. They didn't start out in that scene. And so. This Elder, I guess. takes a break comes. It takes an aside from participating in verse 13 because he wants to make that point to John.

Then, one of the elders answered, saying to me. Who are these arrayed in white robes? Where did they come from? John gets that the Elder isn't asking him because the Elder wants to know that it's a rhetorical. A question, teaching technique, and so, John says, you, sir, you know?

And he answers. 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. So, he's he's pointing out. They didn't get to start here. In the perfect blessedness on this side of the split screen, they started on the other side of the split screen.

They started on the earth. They started in the tribulation. Of seals two, three, and four. They started. In a tribulation during which the gospel was going forth assuredly and making sure that every single one whom God has elected and for whom he has sent Christ and for whom Christ has died will certainly receive that salvation and will certainly receive the Holy Spirit who seals them unto the day of redemption and are identified.

Longing to God. And he points out their tribulation is over. Their tribulation is over. Because Psalm 23. Doesn't end at the grave. Yahoo is my shepherd, I shall not want. Makes me to lie down in Green Past Jersey. That leads me beside Still Waters. He restores my soul. Says.

They neither hunger or thirst anymore. They shall not want. The son shall not strike them or any heat you know. Psalm 121 blessings for the lamb, who is in the midst of the throne will Shepherd them and lead them to living Fountains of water. He leads me beside living Fountains of water.

Now, God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Surely, steadfast love and faithfulness, Covenant love and faithfulness. Will persecute me. We'll be hot on my heels all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of Yahweh forever. Well, Psalm 123 Yahweh is my shepherd.

Whom does that turn out to be in verse 17? For the lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, will Shepherd them. yes, our God sits on the throne and the lamb verse 10. But it is the lamb, especially who is identified here as the shepherd, who is Yahweh?

the lamb as Yahweh in his human. Nature is not the son in his human nature. Who is the Lord? And so that also is a great comfort to us, not just the certainty of the specificity. Of God's saving work. In this age, which we get from the first half of the chapter.

But. The greatness in quantity and intensity in excellence. Of the praise and the fellowship and the provision and the rest, and the rejoicing in the second half of the chapter in that split screen. And that it is precisely those who had begun in the troubled world and were redeemed and sealed.

Who upon their death come and join the other side of the split screen and enjoy the greatness of that blessing so that we may be encouraged not just by the certainty that we shall be saved. But by the greatness of that into which we are being saved. And then, of course.

when we get to chapter 12, and we read about those against whom the dragon rages. As Satan attempted to destroy Christians, he can't. Because they overcome him. By the blood of the Lamb. And by the word of their testimony. And they love, not their lives, even unto death, and when they die.

That blood by which they overcame. Will have washed their robes. perfectly, and completely. And they will enjoy that praise that worship. They will enjoy their God and their Redeemer. The lamb in this way in that assembly until the end of this age. And then perfectly so forever in a new heavens and a new Earth.

And so, how marvelously encouraging now? Before we get to the seventh seal and the seventh seal gives way to seven trumpets and the last trumpet, especially announcing the arrival of the last day and the seventh poles and the pouring out of the wrath of God. The Holy Spirit grants to us to have John between the sixth seal and the seventh seal.

He gives us this split screen. That we may be so encouraged. By the certainty of God's saving work and the supremacy of what he is bringing us into by that saving work. Payment spray. Lord, encourage us, we pray. By this certainty. and this Supremacy and. Grant that it would not just be, oh, I understand Revelation chapter 7 now.

But that your spirit would really drive home to our hearts. The comfort that we should be taking. From the fact that we have been sealed unto Glory. And our Salvation is sure. And the greatness of the multitude and the greatness of the worship and the greatness of The Fellowship of being shepherded by the lamb.

Give us to have great comfort and joy. From this, we ask, as we live through this world, so that we too will overcome. By the blood of the lamb and by the word of Our Testimony. And love, not our lives, even unto death. Grant that we ask in the name of the Lamb, even Jesus.

Amen.