

MASTER THE CONTENT OF SCRIPTURE



The Book of Revelation

Volume III

Chapters 6-7

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Study of the Book of Revelation

The Victory of Christ and the Church

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CONTEXT

Revelation 6–7 marks the opening of the seals of the heavenly scroll, revealing a series of divine judgments and a pause for reassurance amidst the chaos. these chapters symbolize God's imminent judgment on covenant-breaking Israel, culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. The imagery conveys the unfolding of God's redemptive plan and His protection of the faithful amidst judgment.

Chapter 6 begins the Lamb's opening of the first six seals, unveiling symbolic judgments that bring conquest, warfare, famine, death, and cosmic upheaval. The four horsemen of the apocalypse represent the Roman conquest and the socio-political turmoil leading up to the Jewish War (AD 66–70). The fifth seal highlights the cries of the martyrs, representing the early Christian community's suffering and their plea for divine justice. The sixth seal's depiction of cosmic disturbances signals the imminent collapse of the old covenant order. these events align with the first-century context, emphasizing God's judgment upon Israel for rejecting Christ.

Chapter 7 provides a dramatic pause in the midst of judgment. John sees the sealing of 144,000 from the twelve tribes of Israel, symbolizing God's preservation of a faithful remnant amidst the coming destruction. Following this, John witnesses a great multitude from every nation worshiping before the throne, representing the inclusion of Gentiles in God's redemptive plan through Christ. This chapter reassures readers that God's faithful are protected spiritually, even amid physical tribulation. This as a message of hope for both Jewish believers who remained faithful to Christ and Gentile converts during the first-century upheaval.

Revelation 6–7 presents a vivid depiction of judgment and grace. These chapters describe God's response to Israel's covenant unfaithfulness, the suffering of His people, and the preservation of a faithful remnant. They underscore the transition from the old covenant to the new, demonstrating that God's justice and mercy work together to bring about His redemptive purposes. These chapters call for steadfast faith and trust in God's sovereignty amidst trials.

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3 And when he opened the **second seal**, I heard the second living creature saying, Come. 4 And another horse came forth, a red horse: and to him that sat thereon it was given to take peace from the earth, and that they should slay one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

5 And when he opened the **third seal**, I heard the third living creature saying, Come. And I saw, and behold, a black horse; and he that sat thereon had a balance in his hand. 6 And I heard as it were a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, A measure of wheat for a shilling, and three measures of barley for a shilling; and the oil and the wine hurt thou not.

7 And when he opened the **fourth seal**, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, Come. 8 And I saw, and behold, a pale horse: and he that sat upon him, his name was Death; and Hades followed with him. And there was given unto them authority over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the wild beasts of the earth.

9 And when he opened the **fifth seal**, I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: 10 and they cried with a great voice, saying, How long, O Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? 11 And there was given them to each one a white robe; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little time, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, who should be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course.

12 And I saw when he opened the **sixth seal**, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the whole moon became as blood; 13 and the stars of the heaven fell unto the earth, as a fig tree casteth her unripe figs when she is shaken of a great wind.

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14 And the heaven was removed as a scroll when it is rolled up; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. 15 And the kings of the earth, and the princes, and the chief captains, and the rich, and the strong, and every bondman and freeman, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains; 16 and they say to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: 17 for the great day of their wrath is come; and who is able to stand?

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REVELATION 6 OUTLINE

VI. Chapter 6

A. The Seals

1. I saw when the Lamb opened one [**first seal**] of the seven seals, and
 - a. I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, Come. (1)
 - b. I saw, and behold,
 - a white horse, and
 - he that sat thereon had a bow; and
 - there was given unto him a crown: and
 - he came forth conquering, and to conquer. (2)
2. when he opened the **second seal**, I heard the second living creature saying, Come. (3)
 - a. And another horse came forth,
 - a red horse: and
 - to him that sat thereon it was given to take peace from the earth, and that they should slay one another: and
 - b. there was given unto him a great sword. (4)
3. when he opened the **third seal**, I heard the third living creature saying, Come. And
 - a. I saw, and behold, a black horse; and he that sat thereon had a balance in his hand. (5)
 - b. I heard as it were a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying,
 - A measure of wheat for a shilling, and
 - three measures of barley for a shilling; and
 - the oil and the wine hurt thou not. (6)

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4. when he opened the **fourth seal**, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, Come. (7)
 - a. I saw, and behold, a pale horse: and
 - b. he that sat upon him, his name was Death; and Hades followed with him. And
 - there was given unto them authority over the fourth part of the earth,
 - to kill with sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the wild beasts of the earth. (8)
5. when he opened the **fifth seal**,
 - a. I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain
 - for the word of God, and
 - for the testimony which they held: (9)
 - they cried with a great voice, saying,
 - * How long, O Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? (10)
 - b. there was given them to each one a white robe; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little time, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, who should be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course. (11)
6. I saw when he opened the **sixth seal**, and
 - a. there was a great earthquake; and
 - b. the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and
 - c. the whole moon became as blood; (12)
 - d. the stars of the heaven fell unto the earth,
 - e. as a fig tree casteth her unripe figs when she is shaken of a great wind. (13)

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- d. And the heaven was removed as a scroll when it is rolled up; and
- e. every mountain and island were moved out of their places. (14)
- f. the kings of the earth, and the princes, and the chief captains, and the rich, and the strong, and every bondman and freeman, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains; (15)
- g. they say to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us
 - from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and
 - from the wrath of the Lamb: (16) for the great day of their wrath is come; and who is able to stand?

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REVELATION 6 COMMENTARY

6:1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, Come.

In verse 1, John reports that he saw the Lion-Lamb open the first of seven seals. John heard one of the four living creatures speak with a voice of thunder. What was the message of the creature? It was an invitation. The creature said, "Come."

2 And I saw, and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon had a bow; and there was given unto him a crown: and he came forth conquering, and to conquer.

In verse 2, John reports that he saw a rider sitting on a white horse. The rider carried a bow and wore a crown. The text does not report who gave the rider his crown. It does, however, state that he came forth conquering and to conquer.

What is the meaning of the first rider? The imagery may be drawn from Zechariah 1:8-11. There we find horsemen sent to patrol the earth. In Zechariah 6:1-8, we discover four chariots. The horses pulling them are red, black, white and grizzled. They represent the 4 winds of heaven. While a horse is associated with strength and conquest, the riders of the Apocalypse represent judgement. `

Who is the rider on the white horse? Revelation 19:11-16, give us a clue. The rider is none other than Jesus himself. The Lion-Lamb identifies himself as one of the riders. There are several things that point to this fact. First of all, Jesus is revealed as a conqueror repeatedly. While writing his letter to the church in Laodicea (3:21), Jesus identifies himself as a conqueror. (See Rev. 17:14, John 16:33)

John also writes that the first rider is armed for battle (a bow). He is already victorious and rides on to further victory.

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In the first seal, the rider is an agent of divine judgment. The first seal announces what is to come. During the time this book was written, Rome had already made plans to war against Israel. (See Matthew 24, Lark 13 and Luke 21) Jesus prophesies the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple

3 And when he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, Come.

4 And another horse came forth, a red horse: and to him that sat thereon it was given to take peace from the earth, and that they should slay one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

In verse 3, the Lion-Lamb opened the second seal. John heard the voice of the second living creature. (This is the creature with the face of an ox) The voice invited him to draw near. Verse 4 introduces a second rider sitting on a red horse. He is given the authority to take peace from the earth. His work causes humans to slay each other. The rider is given a great sword.

This second seal deals with war. It is possible that this passage makes reference to the war leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple. Jerusalem was under siege in A.D. 67 until it fell in A.D. 70. In his book, War of the Jews, Josephus points out that during this period of time the Jews literally killed each other while besieged by the Romans.

The rider in this passage is given the authority to take away the conditions of peace. History reports that while Jerusalem was under siege, the Jews were in a state of civil war among themselves. The city had been divided into 3 factions. These factions fought each other over who was going to be in power while Rome surrounded their city. Josephus writes, "the day was spent in the shedding of blood, and the night in fear... It was then common to see cities filled with dead bodies, still lying unburied, and those of old men, mixed with infants, all dead, and scattered about together; women also lay amongst them, without any covering for their nakedness."

5 And when he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, Come. And I saw, and behold, a black horse; and he that sat thereon had a balance in his hand. 6 And I heard as it were a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, A measure of wheat

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for a shilling, and three measures of barley for a shilling; and the oil and the wine hurt thou not.

In verse 5, the writer reports the Lion-Lamb opened the third seal. The third living creature (This is the creature with the face of a man) invited John to draw near. John saw a rider on a black horse. The rider had a balance in his hand. John heard something like a voice in the midst of the four living creatures. The voice delivered the following message: "A measure of wheat for a shilling, and three measures of barley for a shilling; and the oil and the wine hurt thou not."

The passage reveals a limited scarcity. The message speaks of famine. This rider was to deliver economic deprivation. During the time leading up to the fall of Jerusalem, the people were forced to weigh their food carefully. The details can be found in The Jewish Wars, ii.xviii.2 by Josephus. (Read books ii – iv for details).

In the Old Testament, famine is one of God's curses on men whenever they rebel (Deut. 28:15-34). In the gospel according to Matthew, Jesus also prophesied famine would come upon the Jews. (Matt. 24:7) During the time in which Jerusalem was under seige, Titus: destroyed gardens, olive trees and vineyards outside of Jerusalem . Again, Josephus records the details regarding mass starvation in Jerusalem.

⁷When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" ⁸And I looked, and behold, a pale horse! And its rider's name was Death, and Hades followed him. And they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth.

In verse 7, the Lion-Lamb opened the fourth seal. John heard the voice of the fourth living creature. (This is the creature with the face of an eagle) It invited him to approach. In verse 8, John records that he saw a rider on a pale horse. The name of the rider was Death. Hades followed death. Both Death and Hades were given authority over a fourth part of the earth.

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What was their mission on the earth? Their mission was to kill by means of the sword, famine, pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth.

Note that the rider is given limited authority to destroy. What are the tools the rider uses to destroy? They are the sword, famine, pestilence and wild beasts. These tools were used in Ezekiel 14, when the Jews rebelled against God and broke the covenant. The prophet writes,

“For thus says the Lord GOD: How much more when I send upon Jerusalem my four disastrous acts of judgment, sword, famine, wild beasts, and pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast!

These are the tools that Death used in order to destroy those who had rebelled against God. Note that the first 4 seals give us a preview of the judgement that came against the Jews in A.D. 70. The riders brought War, Economic Distress, Death by sword, famine, plague and wild beasts.

⁹When 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 witness they had borne. ¹⁰They cried out with a loud voice, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” ¹¹Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.

In verse 9, the Lion-Lamb opened the fifth seal. John saw an altar. Under the altar were the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. Verse 10 indicates that the souls were crying out with a loud voice. They were making a petition to God. What was the petition? It was a petition for justice.

Their prayer was directed to the Sovereign Lord who is both holy and true. Their request is offered up in the form of a question. How long before you judge and avenge our blood? Again, in heaven, the

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martyrs were asking for justice. (Luke 18:7) When was justice done? It was done in A.D. 70 during the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple.

Verse 11 reveals that the martyrs were each given a white robe. Their question was answered. They were to wait a little longer until the number of fellow servants and brothers should be complete.

The altar was a place where offerings were offered to God. (Exod. 40:29) Though Christians had been unjustly martyred, the believers had made the ultimate sacrifice. (See also Rom. 12:1, 2 Tim. 4:6; Phil 2:17; Phil. 3:10; Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 4:10; 1 Pet. 4:13)

John records that the prayer of the martyrs was answered. A great multitude in heaven sang when God judged those who had killed the righteous. (Rev. 19)

¹²When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, ¹³ and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. ¹⁴ The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. ¹⁵ Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, ¹⁶ calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, ¹⁷ for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

In verse 12, the Lion-Lamb opened the sixth seal. John writes about the things he witnessed:

- a. He saw a great earthquake. (12)
- b. He saw the sun become black as sackcloth.
- c. He saw the full moon become like blood.
- d. He saw the stars of the sky fall to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. (13)
- e. He saw the sky vanish like a scroll that is being rolled up. (14)

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- f. He saw every mountain and island removed from its place.

In verse 15, John introduces the reader to others who also witnessed the events outlined above.

Who else was present during these events?

- a. the kings of the earth
- b. the princes
- c. the generals
- d. the rich
- e. the mighty
- f. and everyone else, both slave and free,

In verses 15-16, John reveals how the above witnesses responded to the events:

- a. They hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. (15)
- b. They called to the mountains and the rocks,

Did the witnesses understand the meaning of the events? They understood that judgment was coming. They understood that the one sitting on the throne and the Lamb were angry. (16)

The events are identified as the great day of (Father and Son's) wrath. The witnesses understood that there was no way to hold back the wrath or survive it.

The images in verses 12-16 are apocalyptic. They are symbolic. They all point to coming judgement. (The destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in A.D. 70)

Great Earthquake:

In the Old Testament, a **great earthquake** represents significant divine intervention, judgment, or upheaval of an established order. It symbolized God's judgment on nations, marking their collapse and demonstrating His power over human empires. (Isa. 13:13; Haggai 2:6-7; Psa. 18:7; Amos 1:1)

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Sun Turning Black:

The sun turning black as sackcloth serves as a symbol of God's judgment on Israel and the end of the Old Covenant order, culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

Specifically, this symbolizes the downfall of political and religious leaders (often represented by the sun, moon, and stars in apocalyptic literature) or the darkening of an age: The Old Covenant is passing away, making way for the New Covenant under Christ. (Isa. 13:10; Ezek 32:7-8; Joel 2:10, 31; Amos 8:9)

Moon Turning to Blood:

In biblical symbolism, the moon turning to blood signifies a time of violence and divine retribution. It echoes the apocalyptic language of the Old Testament prophets, who often used celestial signs to describe divine judgment on nations. This fulfills the prophecies concerning the end of the Jewish age and the establishment of the New Covenant through Christ. (Joel 2:31, Isa. 13:10; Ezek 32:7-8)

Heavens Rolled up like a Scroll:

This marks the dissolution of the religious and political structures tied to the Old Covenant, particularly the Temple system in Jerusalem. The imagery reflects the passing away of the old heavens and earth, making way for the New Covenant in Christ. (Isa. 34:4)

Islands and Mountains being moved: This apocalyptic language again reflects profound societal and political transformations, often tied to God's judgment. In the Old Testament, similar imagery is used to signify the fall of nations, divine intervention, and the end of established orders. The destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 is seen as a seismic event that destabilizes the old religious order, fulfilling Old Testament prophecies of judgment. (Isa. 54:10, Nahum 1:5-6, Isa. 40:4)

Men hiding themselves in caves: This draws on Old Testament themes where similar language is used to describe people seeking refuge during times of God's wrath and judgment. The Roman siege of Jerusalem led to widespread fear and desperation. Many sought shelter in caves or strongholds, as described in historical accounts (e.g., Josephus' *The Jewish War*).

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(Isa. 2:12-21; Judges 6:2; 1 Samuel 13:6; Jer. 16:16)

The expressions in Revelation 6:12-17 share a common purpose: to depict God's sovereign judgment using apocalyptic imagery that draws from Old Testament prophetic traditions. This points to the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the Old Covenant order, signifying a monumental transition in God's redemptive plan.

Note that Jesus spoke about the destruction of Jerusalem in Luke 21:9-11. He mentioned wars, earthquakes, famines, pestilence, terror, and signs in the heavens.

Ezekiel 14:21 also makes allusions to judgement in its use of sword, famine, evil beasts, pestilence.

In Luke 23:27-30, Jesus said to the women: The days are coming ... they will say to the mountains, fall on us.

Matt. 23:29-38 states that the Jews would incur judgement because "their (Abel to Zachariah) blood shall come upon this generation." Jesus also declared "Your house is left unto you desolate."

Again, the 6th seal is an answer to the martyrs' prayer who seek vengeance or justice for their death. The Jews rejected the Messiah and now the Messiah will reject the Jews. The wrath of God is mentioned 16 times in Revelation. In the passages mentioned, judgment comes to those who killed the prophets and the Messiah.

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REVELATION 7 CONTENT

1 After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that no wind should blow on the earth, or on the sea, or upon any tree. 2 And I saw another angel ascend from the sunrising, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a great voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, 3 saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we shall have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads. 4 And I heard the number of them that were sealed, a hundred and forty and four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel:

5 Of the tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand;

Of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand;

Of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand;

6 Of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand;

Of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand;

Of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand;

7 Of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand;

Of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand;

Of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand;

8 Of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand;

Of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand;

Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

9 After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands; 10 and they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto our God who sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb.

11 And all the angels were standing round about the throne, and about the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, 12 saying,

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Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, These that are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and whence came they? 14 And I say unto him, My lord, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they that come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore are they before the throne of God; and they serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them. 16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: 17 for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.

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REVELATION 7 OUTLINE

I. Chapter 7

A. After this I saw ...

1. four angels standing at the four corners of the earth,
2. They were holding the four winds of the earth, that no wind should blow
 - a. on the earth, or
 - b. on the sea, or
 - c. upon any tree. (1)

B. I saw another angel ...

1. ascend from the sunrising,
2. The angel had the seal of the living God: and
3. The angel cried with a great voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, (2)
 - a. Hurt not the earth,
 - b. Hurt not the sea
 - c. Hurt not the trees,
 - till we shall have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads. (3)

C. I heard the number of them that were sealed, a hundred and forty and four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel: (5)

1. Of the tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand;
2. Of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand;
3. Of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand; (5)
4. Of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand;
5. Of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand;
6. Of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand; (6)
7. Of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand;

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8. Of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand;
9. Of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand; (7)
10. Of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand;
11. Of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand;
12. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand. (8)

D. After these things I saw, and behold,

1. a great multitude, which no man could number, out of
 - a. every nation and of
 - b. all tribes and peoples and tongues,
2. the great multitude was standing
 - a. before the throne and
 - b. before the Lamb,
3. the great multitude was arrayed
 - a. in white robes, and
 - b. palms in their hands; (9)
 - c. they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto
 - our God who sitteth on the throne, and
 - the Lamb. (10)

E. And all the angels were standing round ...

1. about the throne, and
2. about the elders and
3. the four living creatures; and
4. The angels fell before the throne
 - a. on their faces, and
 - b. worshipped God, 12 saying, Amen:
 - Blessing, and
 - glory, and
 - wisdom, and

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- thanksgiving, and
 - honor, and
 - power, and
 - might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. (12)
5. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me,
- a. These that are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and whence came they? (13)
 - b. And I say unto him, My lord, thou knowest. And he said to me,
 - c. These are they that come out of the great tribulation, and
 - they washed their robes, and
 - made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (14)
6. Therefore are they before the throne of God; and
- a. they serve him day and night in his temple: and
 - b. he that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them. (15)
 - They shall hunger no more,
 - neither thirst any more;
 - neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: (16)
7. the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne
- a. shall be their shepherd, and
 - b. shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and
 - c. God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.

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REVELATION 7 COMMENTARY

7 After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, that no wind might blow on earth or sea or against any tree. ² Then I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, ³ saying, “Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.” ⁴ And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:

Chapter 7 includes two visions. The first vision of 144,000 is found in verses 1-8. The second vision of the multitude that could not be numbered is discussed in verses 9-17. The chapter is a continuation of the sixth seal. It also forms an interlude or intermission. Here we find a period of delay between the 6th and 7th seal.

In verse 1, John introduces the reader to four angels. They are standing on the four corners of the earth. They are holding the four winds of the earth so the winds do not blow on the earth, the sea or trees.

Who are the four angels? They are symbolic of divine agents or messengers.

What is meant by the four corners of the earth? They represent the totality of the earth or land.

What do the winds represent? Wind is used in connection with the coming of God and the action of His angels in either blessing or curse (See the following passages: Gen. 8:1; 41:27; Ex. 10:13; 19; 14:21; 15:10; Num. 11:31; Ps. 18:10; 104:3-5; 107:25; 135:7; 148:8; John 3:8; Acts 2:2) The wind is referring to the sirocco, the hot desert blast that scorches vegetation. Throughout the Bible, God uses weather as an agency of blessing and judgment. The wind in this passage refers to the judgment faced by the Jews.

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What are the four angels doing in these passages? They are restraining the winds from blowing on earth, sea or trees. What do the earth, sea and trees represent?

The Earth: In apocalyptic language, the "earth" often represents the land of Israel or inhabitants of a specific region under judgment. (Isa. 24:1) In this passage, the earth refers to Israel as the central focus of judgment.

The Sea: In apocalyptic language, the sea represents the Gentile nations or chaos and instability. (Isa. 17:12; Rev. 17:15) In this passage, the "sea" represents the non-Israelite nations subject to upheaval during God's judgment.

The Trees: Again, in apocalyptic language, "Trees" often symbolize individuals, especially those in positions of strength or influence. (Jer. 17:7-8)

Verse 2 introduces the reader to another angel. He is ascending from the rising of the sun. He possesses the seal of the living God. This angel calls out to the four angels who have been given power to harm the earth and sea.

The angel is rising from the East. In the Old Testament, the East often symbolizes the source of divine intervention or deliverance. The sun rises in the east, signifying light, hope, and new beginnings. (Ezek. 43:2; Matt. 24:27)

The angel is said to possess the seal of the living God. What does this mean? The seal of the living God symbolizes God's ownership, protection, and authentication of His faithful servants. Seals in ancient times were used to validate documents or prove ownership. The seal marks those who are spared from the imminent judgment on Jerusalem in AD 70, signifying their covenantal relationship with God and His commitment to preserve them during this period of upheaval. (2 Tim. 2:19; Ezek 9:4-6; Eph. 1:13-14)

Verse 3 includes the message that one angel communicates to four other angels? "Do not harm the earth, sea or trees until the servants of God have been sealed on their foreheads. What is meant by the sealing of the forehead?

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This refers to a symbolic act of marking God's faithful servants with His seal. This mark signifies protection, ownership, and identification with God. This sealing represents God's act of safeguarding His faithful people, particularly Christians in Jerusalem, during the impending judgment on the city in AD 70. (Ezek. 9:4; Rev. 14:1)

The sealing represents **the protection of faithful Christians** during the judgment on Jerusalem in AD 70. Early Christians were warned by Christ (e.g., in Matthew 24:15-16) and escaped the destruction by fleeing to the city of Pella.

Verse 4 identifies the sealed. They belong to the 12 tribes of the sons of Israel. Their number is 144,000.

Verses 5-8 provide the reader with a list of the sealed.

It is important to remember that God has not destined his people for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess 5:9) The church was preserved from the judgement that came upon Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Jesus had given them detailed instructions about how to escape from the tribulation or destruction that would come. (See details: Matt. 24:15-25; Mark 13:14-23; Luke 21:20-24) It is estimated that over 1.1 million Jews lost their lives in the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple. None of them were Christians.

Who are the 144,000 sealed by the angel? The number 144,000 is symbolic. The number 12 represents the children of God. (Twelve gates, twelve tribes, twelve foundation stones, twelve Christian was now the new Jew.

The majority of the Christians in Jerusalem were Jews. The gospel went to the Jews first (Rom. 1:16) The 144,000 refers to the Jewish Christians. (See Rev. 14:4) First-fruit refers to the very beginning of the harvest.

Note that in the first vision, Israel is mentioned. In the second vision, the Gentiles are included. Paul speaks of both Jew and Gentile being saved. God fulfilled His promise.

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9 After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands; 10 and they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto our God who sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb.

11 And all the angels were standing round about the throne, and about the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, 12 saying,

Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, These that are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and whence came they? 14 And I say unto him, My lord, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they that come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore are they before the throne of God; and they serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them. 16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: 17 for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.

Verse 9 introduces the reader to the second vision in the chapter. After witnessing the first vision, John states that he saw a great multitude that no man could number. The multitude is identified belongs to every nation, all tribes, peoples and tongues. What is the multitude doing? They are standing before the throne and before the Lamb. John informs that reader that they are arrayed in white robes. They are holding palms in their hands.

The great multitude in this passage represents the Gentile believers. The first vision in verses 1-8, the Jewish believers are identified. In this second vision, we come to a multitude of

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Gentile believers. Here we find the fulfillment of salvation for all nations. Several Old Testament passages allude to this verse. (Isa. 2:2-3; Hosea 2:23) (See Acts 2:5-11 and Eph. 2:13-14) The two visions in this chapter show how the Jew and Gentile are united in Christ to form one people of God.

Verse 10 reveals the great multitude is crying with a great voice. What are they declaring? "Salvation unto our God who sits on the throne and unto the Lamb.

In this passage, we find the work of God and the Lamb. God conceived the redemptive plan (Psa. 3:8; Jonah 2:9) and the Lamb carried it out to completion. The use of the word Lamb highlights the sacrificial role of Jesus in securing salvation. (Isa. 53:5-7; Acts 4:12) Here we find the fulfillment of Isaiah 49:6 who declared salvation would reach the "ends of the earth." In verse 11, John reveals that the human multitude is not alone. All the angels were also standing around the throne, around the elders and the four living creatures. What did both human and angelic beings do? They fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God.

In this passage, John reveals the universal worship of God in response to his sovereign and redemptive work. The angels are the messengers and servants of God. The 24 elders symbolize the 12 tribes of Israel in the Old Testament Covenant and the 12 apostles in the New Testament Covenant. The four living creatures represent the fullness of creation continually praising God.

The text states that they fall on their faces. This act signifies reverence, submission and awe before God. Ezekiel fell on his face when he saw the glory of God. (Ezek. 1:28) The disciples fell on their face on their face when Jesus was transfigured before them. (Matt. 17:6)

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Verse 12 reveals that the human and angelic multitudes declared, "Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

Verse 13 reveals that one of the elders spoke to John. The elder asked John to identify the human multitude arrayed in white and tell him where they came from.

In verse 14, John answers the question the angel asked him. John acknowledged his ignorance. The angel identified the human multitude as those who had come out of the great tribulation. John states that they are those who have washed their robes and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

The New Testament believers suffered under both Jewish and Roman persecutions. The great multitude in this passage refers to believers who have been martyred prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. The white robes symbolize the righteousness and purity of the believer, achieved through the sacrificial death of Christ. (Heb. 9:14)

In verse 15, states that the above is the reason the human multitude is before the throne of God. The multitude served God day and night in his temple. He that sits on the throne will spread his tabernacle over them.

The passage reveals that God's people stand before His throne. This symbolizes their access to God's presence and their victorious status as His people. There is an allusion to this in Psalms 27:4: "One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple." The writer to the Hebrews alludes to this idea when he states, "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. 4:16) Through and because of Christ, believers now have access to God's very presence.

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God's people are no longer confined to a physical location like the Old Testament Covenant Temple. Now, under the New Covenant, the true worshipper will worship the Father in spirit and truth. Today, the believer's worship is continual and free of the limits of a physical structure.

Verse 16 identifies the current condition of the multitude. They will no longer hunger. They will no longer thirst. The sun will no longer strike upon them nor its heat.

In this passage John reveals the eternal provision, protection, and comfort provide by God to His faithful people who suffered great tribulation leading up the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

The passage indicates that God's people will no longer hunger or thirst. What does this mean? This imagery represents complete spiritual satisfaction and provision in God's presence. Believers will no longer experience trials or deprivation associated with life on earth.

The same verse states that the sun will not strike them, nor any heat. What does this mean? This refers to protection from harm and the removal of suffering. The intense heat of the sun is a symbol for hardship or affliction in the Bible. (See Psa. 121:5-6)

The hunger, thirst, and exposure to the sun's heat represents the tribulations faced by the early church. Though they may have died as martyrs, they were rewarded with eternal comfort and sustenance in God's presence.

Verse 17 reveals the relationship between the great multitude and the Lamb. The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd and guide them unto fountains of waters of life. God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. (See Isa. 49:10; John 6:35)

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In this passage, the Lamb is depicted as a shepherd who guides His people to living fountains of water. The Lord as shepherd is an allusion to Psalm 23:1-2. The same idea is found in John 10:11. The living waters symbolize eternal life, spiritual refreshment and the abundance of blessing. (See Isa 49:10; John 4:14)

The passage also states that God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. This represents the end of suffering, sorrow and pain. The believer will find complete comfort and restoration in God's presence. This same idea is also found in Revelation 21:4. This passage provides comfort to those undergoing tribulation in the first century. Christ is a shepherd who cares for, guides and comforts his people.