

Revelation Ch. 7

INTRODUCTION:

- Chapter 7 is a parenthetical chapter. The story stops long enough for an explanation of concurrent events and as an introduction of other events prior to the opening of the 7th seal.
- This chapter answers questions that might arise at this time such as:
 1. What about those who accept Jesus during the tribulation?
 2. What about God's chosen people, the Jews?
- There are similar explanatory breaks after the sixth bowl and the sixth trumpet.
- The Holy Spirit is still present (how could He not be?), He is simply not restraining evil as He once did.
- Before: The Holy Spirit had to restrain evil to allow the gospel to penetrate a Satan controlled world.
- Another reason for a "break" is explained in the first 3 verses.
- The Church / Bride of Christ is in Heaven.
- On Earth there are 2 groups of believers.
 1. 144,000 Jews sealed by God.
 2. A great multitude from every nation, tribe, and language that don't take the mark of the beast.
 - *Grace even in the midst of judgment.*
- Many people will come to a saving faith during the tribulation, but they will suffer and die for their belief.
- Seals 1-6 take place during the first half of the tribulation; seal #7 starts the second half of the tribulation.
- Chapter 7 covers the whole 70th week. Many things are happening all at once throughout the world and universe - concurrently.
- After the 1st 6 seals, God's enemies figure they can fight and win against God because they have survived thus far. Huge mistake, mistake of epic proportions.
- New believers get a little more time to get grounded and understand their faith.

V:1 *"After these things"* – the stuff from chapter 6.

- "I saw" - personal account / testimony, an eyewitness account.
- Four angels stationed to restrain the wind on all the Earth - stillness.
- Four corners: North - South - East - West.
- *"Corners"* - Greek: "Gonia", reads literally "four quarters".
- Winds are used for judgment:

Psalm 148:8 "Fire, and hail; snow, and vapors; stormy wind fulfilling His word."

- Holding the winds back could be tied to the previous judgments from Ch. 6. The winds being one of the engines that moves our atmosphere around. Water moves from one place to another, rain Vs drought.
- As John records these events, they have already been "holding" the four winds so it could be related to the events of chapter 6.

V: 2 Another angel rises from the east, sealed, identified as belonging to God.

- As the saints are identified with God, it looks like the angels are also.

Revelation 3:12 "Him that overcometh... and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God..."

Psalm 37:37 "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace."

- As one angel commands 4 others this implies a hierarchy, chain of command.

Colossians 1:16 "For by Him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible, and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him."

Ephesians 6:12 "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

- This one angel speaks loud enough that the other 4 angels each at the 4 corners of the earth hear him. I wonder if earth's inhabitants will?

- The power to “hurt” / “wrong” could mean a drought that would cause crops to fail, rivers, streams, and lakes to dry up. Trees, plants, and grass all dry up – all of which lead to wide spread starvation and suffering.
- This angel brings a message of grace and mercy in the midst of judgment. This “hurt” is held back until God’s chosen are sealed by the Holy Spirit, sanctified, guaranteed of sorts.

V: 3 The one angel says to the other 4 to wait until God’s servants are marked / sealed on their foreheads.

- Does this mean that the 4 angels are stopped in mid-process, or before actually holding the four winds of the earth?
- This remnant is sealed prior to the remainder or continuations of God’s judgments similar to:

2 Peter 2:9 “The Lord knows how to deliver the Godly out of temptations, and to preserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.”

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Romans 5:9 “Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.”

Matthew 24:22 “And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.”

- The purpose of this halt in operations is to “mark” God’s servants – separating them from the crowd and insuring their survival.
- This group is protected by God to fulfill His will so that they would be able to do His will in the midst of this great tribulation. They won’t be touched or harmed.
- The Holy Spirit is called the seal of God during the church age and would probably seal the tribulation saints the same way.

2 Corinthians 1:22 “Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”

Ephesians 1:13 “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise,”

Ephesians 4:30 “And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”

- Once sealed, these saints belong to God.

Romans 8:35-39 ³⁵“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. ³⁷Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. ³⁸For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, ³⁹Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

- As this group is marked, sanctified for God’s purpose, there is a brief respite allowing these new believers to be quickly grounded in their new faith and prepared for what is next.

Habakkuk 3:2 “... O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.”

- Possibly being sealed in their “foreheads” refers to a special blessing of wisdom or understanding of scriptures.
- This seal on their foreheads could also be a physical mark or identifier of sorts.

V: 4 John “hears” as well as sees, meaning he is fully conscious of what is going on.

- John “hears” the number, having been told or hearing the count of all those that are sealed from the tribes of Israel.
- 144,000 Jews are sealed during the great and terrible tribulation.
- We see a similar situation in ancient Israel as God’s judgment is carried out just prior to their being sent into captivity.

Ezekiel 9:4-6 ⁴“And the Lord said unto him, go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. ⁵And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: ⁶Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon who is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house.”

Exodus 12 *Preparation for the Passover, being passed over.*

- This seal only applies to the 144,000 Jews. No one else.
- No where in the Bible is the church spoken of as the “children of Israel”, nor is Israel spoken of as being the “church”.
- We have already been “sealed”.

Ephesians 4:30 “And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”

- During this time God has turned His attention back to Israel.
- The next two verses corroborate the application to the Jews.

Psalms 102:13 “Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yea, the set time, is come.”

Isaiah 59:20 “And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord.”

- When God deals with Israel He is always specific with numbers and dates as it is with this verse.
- When He’s dealing with the gentiles, He never gives numbers or dates.
- Paul never indicates how many gentiles are saved, or when prophetic events will occur, date setting. We hear multitudes too great to number, or a great company, but not 12,000 or 144,000 etc.
- This is contrary to many modern preachers who are very prone to counting, and or setting dates.
- There are qualifications listed for who are eligible to be in the 144,000 club.
 1. Jewish male
 2. Righteous by Jesus / know the revelation of Jesus (Rev. 11)
 3. Be a virgin, Revelation 14:1-5
 4. Be chosen by God.

V: 5-8 There are 29 listing of the 12 tribes in the Bible, 28 different ways.

- In this listing the tribes of Dan and Ephraim are not listed. Why?

Deuteronomy 29:18-21 describes how any person, kindred, or family, or tribe who leads Israel into idolatry will be cut off from among the nations.

- Both tribes led Israel into idolatry.

Judges 18:30 “And the children of Dan set up the graven image.”

1 Kings 12:28-30 “Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, it is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan.”

Hosea 4:17 “Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone.”

- Later they each receive the grace and mercy of our Lord. Blessed be the name of the Lord!

V: 9 The redeemed multitude of tribulation saints / martyrs from Rev. 7:14 onward representing all nations, tongues, and tribes gather before the throne of God.

- These are Gentiles; Jews are named as such.
- These martyrs are clothed in white, the righteousness of Jesus.
- Jesus had “commissioned” the apostles and church to preach the Gospel unto all nations, tongues, and tribes; to the uttermost parts of the Earth, and this is the result. (Matthew 28:19, 24:14, and Acts 1:8)
- With palms in their hands: Palms were characteristic of an oasis in the desert and watered places, a place of rest.
- Images of palms were used as decorations in the Temple, and were included in Ezekiel’s vision of the new temple. (Ezekiel 40:16, 22, 26). Palms were used to cover the little lean to huts during the festival of “tabernacles” / “booths”, and the people gathered palms and laid them in the past of Jesus as He made His triumphant entry into Jerusalem.
- Palms are also a sign of victory – Maccabean revolt

“Which no one man could number” or count. Just like the stars in Heaven or like the dust of the earth, just like:

Genesis 13:6 “And I will make thy seed as the dust of the Earth: so that if a man could number the dust of the Earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.”

Genesis 15:5-6 “... look now toward Heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, so shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness.”

- We're talking about a lot of people! The number who come to Christ during this 7 year period is incredible and sure to outnumber those of the last 2,000 years of church history.

Matthew 24:13 "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

- Not by their / our own power, by the blood of Jesus.

V: 10 Everyone praises God, the Lamb of God, upon the throne.

- Salvation is the reason for the praise, just as it should be, then and now.
- Salvation to our God = Hosanna!
- Add up verses 9 & 10 and it looks a lot like the scene when Jesus made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem amongst the multitude waving palm branches and singing hosanna!

John 12:12-19

V: 11 The angels gather around the gathering around the throne.

- Everyone fall prostrate worshipping an awesome God!
 1. The church
 2. The Old Testament saints
 3. The tribulation saints
 4. The angels

V: 12 The doxology continues: saying "Amen", affirming.

- "Amen" #543 - Hebrew: sure; faithfulness; truly; [so be it](#), truth.
#281 - Greek: trustworthy; surely; [so be it](#); verily.
- 7 - part doxology, saying: blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honour, power, might.
- Ending with "Amen", truly, trustworthy, [so be it](#).
- Emphasizing that God is worthy of all praise, honor, and glory that exists.

V: 13 One of the elders asks a rhetorical question intended to be instructive.

- Question: who are the people in the white robes? Where did they come from?

V: 14 John: “sir you know”, John asserts that the elder knows.

- Mike’s translation: “I dunno, you tell me....”
- The elder then answers his own rhetorical question.
- The elder says: “These are the tribulation saints / martyrs, whose robes were washed in the blood of the Lamb, robes of righteousness.
- The result of the 144,000 evangelists sealed by God.
- John would have recognized the church, which he was a part of. This is a different group that he’s not familiar with, the tribulation saints.
- There are 3 kinds of people. Jews – Gentiles – Saints.

1 Corinthians 10:32 “Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God.”

Note: The tribulation saints exclude those who heard and rejected the Gospel prior to the rapture.

2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 “And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” (all past tense)

- Just as death ends ones ability to choose Heaven or hell, so apparently does the rapture for those that have heard and rejected the Gospel of truth.
- There are however still billions who have not heard.
- Salvation still works the same during the tribulation, as it does now, through the blood of Jesus.

Hebrews 9:22b “... without shedding of blood is no remission.”

V: 15 The elder is still speaking and explaining.

- The tribulation saints are standing before the throne of God, servicing God day and night, and not ruling, as the Bride of Christ will be.

(V: 15 – cont.)

- They are brought to a different position.
- The martyrs have special rewards called “the crown of life”.

Revelation 2:10 “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

James 1:12 “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him.”

- Serving day and night in the temple refers to the millennial age. Later, there is no temple as such, God becomes the temple.

Revelation 21:22 “And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.”

- Either they are before the throne serving and it ends when there is no more temple in one sense. Or it continues for eternity as God becomes the temple and we dwell and serve in Him for eternity.
- I prefer the latter.

Psalms 27:4 “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; 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 enquire in his temple.”

- God dwells among them.

V: 16 There will be no more hunger, or thirst. This is in contrast to the tribulation period during which there is widespread famine, and drought.

- The tribulation saints won’t be allowed to buy or sell food. Many will starve; many will flee to the wilderness areas, and still be hungry.
- Here, Jesus is telling us in contrast that He will feed us, and give us water to drink just like:

John 6:35 “And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”

John 4:14 “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

Psalm 23 “¹The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. ²He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. ³He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. ⁴Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. ⁵Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. ⁶Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

Isaiah 40:11 “He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.”

- No more sun light or heat, now it’s Son light.

7:17 The Lamb of God will feed us.

John 6:48 “I am the bread of life.”

Deuteronomy 8:3 “... that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.”

- Jesus will lead us to fountains of living waters – He is the fountain of living water!

John 4:10 “... If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, give Me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water.”

- No more tears, no more sorrows.

Isaiah 65:17-19 “¹⁷For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. ¹⁸But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. ¹⁹And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.”

Psalm 16:11 “Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”