

# Bringing Down the House

## Revelation Seven

I wouldn't be surprised if there is a special session in heaven for all of us who have attempted to teach or expound upon the scriptures to set us straight on all the goofs we made. Fortunately, the Lord promised to wipe away all tears – ha! When it comes to discussing prophecy that is as yet unfulfilled, I'm especially leery of making strong stances yet in looking at Revelation, this is mostly the case so I'll try to be conservative with my 'table-pounding'.

The coming Tribulation is going to be the most perilous time the people of this planet have encountered. The stakes are high – eternity is in the balance. The power of deception will be supernatural. Herein, we'll try to shed light upon the topic by continuing our study of this last book in the Bible.

Our last study focused upon chapter six where we noted that the mostly gentile church was already in heaven (see chapter four and five). Safely ensconced to the Lord's presence, the believers observed as four riders proceeded from the heavenly scene to reek havoc on the earth. The chapter ends with the stubbornly rebellious haters of Christ hiding under rocks and crying out, *"Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"*

Thus, we begin chapter seven. *"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 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.'"*

Even though the mostly gentile church is indeed, at this point in the text, departed from the earth, God is always faithful to provide a witness to the truth. Although the entire Tribulation should be viewed as the time of God's judgment and wrath upon a Christ-rejecting world, it can be seen as a three fold progression. The opening of the seals is, as we noted in our last lesson, the wages of sin, a payment of the lien so to speak on the planet. As the last seal is about to be opened, we can consider the next events each announced by a trumpet as a series of severe warnings coming from the throne of heaven; like God proverbially grabbing sinful man by the collar and shaking him. This is apparently very successful for we will later find a huge number of people getting saved.

In any event, at this point, holy angels are about to bring great harm to the earth and sea, but before this wake-up call begins, the servants of the Lord must be sealed. It is very important to note that they are termed servants – they have a

service to perform. Why are they sealed? What does this mean?

Consider John 6:27 – Jesus was sealed as the Son of Man, providing us with everlasting life. Look also at 2 Cor 1:22, Eph 1:13 and 4:30 – we have been sealed for salvation. These people are sealed for salvation AND service. Indeed, this seal is most likely the gift of God's Holy Spirit and may be the fulfillment of Romans 9:27. If so, what is the service they perform? *"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Mat 24:14*

Mat 24 is widely understood to be speaking of the Tribulation. Now, the church has been given the great commission to spread the gospel and to varying degrees has done so for the last two millennia. This passage, however, is nestled in the midst of Christ's message to the Jews specifically concerning the Tribulation and as such should be kept in its context. Jesus said that during the Tribulation years that the gospel will be preached in all the world. If the church has been raptured to heaven, who will do this?

I believe there are at least two sources of this final witness – in Rev 14:6 we read, *"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people..."* Somehow, an angelic power will broadcast to the world God's truth.

In addition, I believe there will be a second group of witnesses – saved to serve. Sealed by the Spirit of

God, with a holy commission. It is not some aspiring cult or sect of the current 'gentile' church. I'm convinced that it will begin with 144,000 Jewish believers in Christ. In fact, the following verses in our study chapter are very specific – 12,000 are sealed from each of twelve specific 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:"* Judah, Reuben, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph and Benjamin are specified in order (See Rev 7:5-8) Could God be any more clear? *"Why is Dan left out? Some think it is because Dan is thought to be the tribe of the Antichrist (based on Daniel 11:37 and Jeremiah 8:16); but without doubt, Dan was the tribe which introduced idolatry into the nation of Israel (Genesis 49:17; Judges 18:30)"* –David Gusik

Be that as it may, I believe that this will be both an expression of gratitude – a response to grace – as well as one of repentance. What repentance? Ezekiel the prophet recorded for the Lord concerning the Jewish people, *"And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which you have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I [am] the LORD, says the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes."* (Eze 36:23)

Even now, some of the most fervent believers I know are Jewish. Herein, it appears that they will be highly effective under God's anointing for if we view this whole

passage as 'cause and effect', the very next scriptures display the results of this divine sealing --  
*"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 worshipped 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?'*

*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.'"*

It is wonderful to note that all of those close to God are in unity of praise – all the angels, the elders and the four living creatures. You know they couldn't do this sincerely if they didn't care. We sometimes think that when our loved ones go home that they are just so enjoying the heavenly scene that they must not give much thought to our state here on earth. This passage shows

that those in heaven do indeed care deeply and thus when they behold the wisdom, power and love of God as evidenced in this countless number of people being saved in the middle of the most horrendous judgments, they fall on their faces and praise Him. Heaven, along with us is perhaps learning -- God knows what He's doing!

*"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."*

What a great promise to these tribulation saints – they will continually be with Father God and in fact, He will dwell in their midst. As a result, *"They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat;"*

The comfort they will be afforded is perhaps in contrast to the miseries they experienced on earth. And like most if not all of us, they will have some adjustments for heaven is quite different than earth – there, the lowliest is the greatest, the Lamb is the Shepherd. The One who died for all knows the way to the fountains of life. *"...for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters."*

Unlike our day, being a true Christian during the tribulation will be a time of unimaginable extremes – hunger, thirst, suffering, grief and death. No one in their right mind will be offering the opportunity to be saved then by advertising health and wealth or better self esteem. Anointed witnesses will be talking about heaven not heaven on earth.

They'll be pointing people to Christ - crucified, risen and returning, not trendy self-helps, social or political agendas. They'll know their time is short, and they'll not waste it. Persecution will be horribly severe and undoubtedly, there will be a great deal of mourning. But when they get home, the Bible says, *"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*

You know, for thousands of years now, the Jewish people have enjoyed God's special attention. They've had great anointings and great disappointings. They've had great strength of character and great failure. They remind me of the life of Samson. They began by way of God's special design, they entered the promised land with supernatural strength. They were seduced by the pleasures of this world and were blinded to their own Savior, Jesus. However, they will finish strong and by returning to their Lord in sincerity, enduring the persecution of believers in a Christ-hating world, and by a supernatural anointing of God's Spirit, they'll bring Satan's house down so to speak – countless people will come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ – clean escaped from the devil's grasp. And like dear Samson, it will cost them their lives – *"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and [I saw] the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received [his] mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and*

*reigned with Christ a thousand years."* Rev 20:4

Hallelujah! May we all finish strong!