

Those Who Stand Before Jesus in Heaven

Chapter Seven of Revelation

Chapter 6 ends with the question who is able to stand the wrath of the Lamb? The six seals of human history have been loosened by Jesus to reveal our sinfulness and the devastation it unleashes on the earth, and on those who reject Jesus and the God who sits on His throne in heaven.

The answer to this question is revealed in chapter 7. As the forces of evil represented by the hurricane winds, held back by God's four angels, we are told for them to not release their judgments until all of God's servants are sealed from harm.

Then we are told who the servants of God are. They are the 144,000 representing the fullness of all the tribes of Israel and all the Gentile believers of all nations, tribes, peoples and tongues.

First the 12 tribes of Israel are listed with Judah at the top. This truth is so vital for our day as far too many believers have failed to see the importance of the descendants of Abraham and the brothers and sisters of Jesus. Here they are sealed by God to worship with the Gentile believers forever in the presence of God.

As Paul wrote in Romans, we should humble ourselves in the truth that the Jews are God's chosen people. We, by the blood of the Lamb, have been grafted into their family and the covenants of God.

I take this chapter to teach us that all of us will worship together and it will be the Jews who, led by Jesus, will lead us into the next age as Jesus will reign as the King of heaven

and earth. Jerusalem will be His capital as He rules the nations of the earth.

Next, we are given a new vision into God's throne room where the Gentile believers stand before the throne and the Lamb as those sealed by God, dressed in their white robes of holiness and cleansed by the blood of the Lamb.

They worship God, saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen."

We are then told these are the ones who have come out of the Great Tribulation. Many different interpretations are presented by this section of Scripture. I tend to see it differently than most scholars. For most of the Rapture and Great Tribulation, explanations were given before Israel was reborn and Jerusalem was reestablished as her capital.

I see this as the assembly of all believers through the gathering up, as given in Matthew 24 and 25 and in Thessalonians: Jew and Gentiles, throughout human history, who have suffered the terrible persecution of Satan and nations for their faith. The promise of Revelation 21 and 22 is given to them of no more hunger, thirst or heat. God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. No more tribulation.

When you study history, great tribulation has occurred throughout our history. Again, it begins in local areas in the Roman Empire then spreads to nations and now to the global community. Look at the last 70 years of the horrors that Jew and Gentiles have suffered. Six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust, with millions more robbed and tortured of all they owned.

Look at the great tribulation of the last 20 years in the Middle East: beheadings, burned alive, murdered and enslaved as sex objects. It is almost too much to believe what Jew and Gentiles have suffered at the hands of Muslims and secular

humanists and communists not just in the Middle East but throughout the world.

Thus, we see all of this age has been fulfilled in chapter 6 and 7 in a shorthand version. This will lead us into chapters 8-22 where we will gain a more in-depth vision when Jesus loosens the seventh seal. This unfolds the Judgments of God that led to the wrath of the Lamb in chapter 6 and the salvation of Jew and Gentile believers in chapter 7.

This is the linear vision of ever-expanding circles throughout human history until the entire global community has been encompassed, as Jesus prophesied in Matthew 24 and 25 concerning global events that will happen before He comes. Revelation expands on His prophecies!

I know this goes against many of the Rapture and Great Tribulation teachings and I agree their interpretations are valid, but I see it slightly different in how history has unfolded since the modern Rapture and Great Tribulation teachings were developed.

We see the importance of Israel and Jerusalem and the Jews in this season of preparing for Jesus to return. Plus we see in history the ever-expanding tribulations that lead to one final Great Tribulation, which is global.

The Seventh Seal

Revelation Chapters 8 and 9

As I read my Bible notes on Jesus opening the seventh seal, I am a little delighted that the author has the same interpretation as I do. The trumpet judgments are symbolic, not literal. These judgments happen throughout human history and intensify as we grow closer to Jesus' return.

They are partial judgments in contrast to the complete judgements of the seven golden bowls of judgment poured out

later in Revelation.

The judgments are similar to the plagues God sent upon Egypt as Moses led the Hebrews' deliverance from bondage. The first four affect the natural world and the final three concern those who reject God and His Son Jesus Christ as Pharaoh and the Egyptians did with God and Moses.

God is answering the prayers of the saints with His judgments. I believe it is tied to the prayer of the martyrs in chapter 6. In Judaism, it was believed that seven angels presented the prayers of the saints to God.

The trumpets represent God's warning and call to repentance, as in Exodus 19:16, 19. Seven signifies the fullness and completeness of God's action in judgment to bring about the salvation of Jesus Christ to the world. God is just to send these terrible calamities to awaken those dead in their sins, which are not in consecutive order but poured out as God deems necessary.

Chapter 8 ends with the announcement of three more woes after the first four plagues have struck the earth. These new woes and judgments are directed against the unredeemed. The sad truth is that after the final three judgments, they did not repent of their false "worship to demons, their murders, their sorceries and their sexual immorality."

We can see today in our postmodern global community how true these prophecies are. We have legalized the killing of babies in over a billion abortions. We have not only legalized sexual perversion but we have made sexual immorality the common practice of nations. The global spread of secular humanism is the disguise of demonic worship as are the false religions of the world.

The unredeemed not only want us to recognize their sins as normal living, they flaunt their sins and persecute those who seek to honor and please God in their lifestyles. The power of

the increase of demonic activity can be witnessed in how many churches have compromised with the world.

God called the Hebrews out of Egypt to teach them who He is and what it means to be holy in an unholy world. We would do well to relearn what it means to be His holy people in the midst of a global community that now teaches every tribe and nation to shake their fist in the face of God and say, "This is the age of Man. We will determine how we will live. We reject the teachings of Moses and Jesus as they worship at the feet of demons."

Let our prayer everyday be in humble repentance, crying out to God for us to live as His holy people in the love of Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Teach us Your ways, o God, and lead us in the path of righteousness. Let us be Your witnesses. Let us be Your light and salt in a world of darkness and hopelessness to Your glory.

In Greater Love, author Blake Lorenz shares a captivating story of one man's journey through time after God has chosen him to prepare Israel and the world for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. All the proceeds will go to our mission and evangelism work around the world and in Central Florida. {eoa}

*Once a professional baseball player with the Chicago Cubs Organization, **Blake Lorenz** was called to Asbury Seminary after a radical encounter with Jesus, where he received his master's degree. He has pastored in the Orlando area for 33 years and has been blessed with the opportunity to evangelize globally, visiting five continents and preaching the gospel to tens of thousands. Blake has also helped plant 500 churches. He has been working in Israel for the past 20 years, includes serving on the board of the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast in connection with the Knesset. In 2020, and the Awaken podcast launched to teach and challenge others to join him on a journey of anticipating the return of Jesus. He has used the three books he's written in his seminars and conferences. He and his wife, Beverly, share three children and six grandchildren.*

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