

The Book Of Revelation Study 39

Revelation 7:9-17 (NKJV)

⁹ *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,*

¹⁰ *and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"*

¹¹ *All 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,*

¹² *saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen."*

¹³ *Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?"*

¹⁴ *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.*

¹⁵ *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.*

¹⁶ *They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat;*

¹⁷ *for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*

We want to look again at the rest of the key words that introduce this group:

1. ~~Their Description,~~
2. **Their Location,**
3. **Their Action,**
4. **Their Association,**
5. **Their Origination,**
6. **Their Function**
7. **Their Protection,**
8. **Their Provision.**

We have looked at their Description in our last study, today we will look at the next few of these key words, starting with their location.

THEIR LOCATION

Rev 7:9b

Standing before the throne and before the Lamb,

John saw this vast, uncountable crowd of victorious, joyous saints **standing before the throne** of God in heaven

They were also in the presence of the Lamb; which John saw in his earlier vision

Revelation 5:6 (NKJV)

⁶ And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

Many had suffered death at the hands of Antichrist;

Revelation 20:4 (NKJV)

⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

This of course speaks of violent death for refusing to take his mark or worship him.

Here they are no longer seen under the altar praying for divine vengeance as in chapter 6, but they are now triumphantly standing before the throne of God.

Hebrews says they are, "*the spirits of righteous made perfect*" *Heb 12:23*

Their location then is now standing before the throne of God in the presence of the Lamb.

But what are they doing?

THEIR ACTION

Rev 7:10

And they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.

As do all in heaven, the redeemed martyrs constantly **cry out with a loud voice** [5:12; 6:10; 11:11, 12, 15; 12:10; 14:7; 16:1; 19:1; 21:3).

They **cry out** with in joyous, exuberant worship.

The Lord desires loud praise;

Psalms 66:1 (NKJV)

¹ Make a joyful shout to God, all the earth!

Psalms 100:1 (NKJV)

¹ Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands!

Their prayers of intercession have ceased and they are glorifying and praising God.

The one responsible for their triumph. Salvation is the theme of their worship, as it is throughout Revelation.

In his vision of God's throne recorded in chapter 5 John noted;

Revelation 5:8-10 (NKJV)

⁸ Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

⁹ And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,

¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth."

In chapter 12:10 of Revelation

Revelation 12:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

In Rev 19:1 John wrote;

Revelation 19:1 (NKJV)

¹ After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God!

We see then that the continual occupation of those in heaven is eternal praise of the Almighty God They identify God as **our God**, claiming, as do all the redeemed, God as their own.

Their actions then are made of Praise and Worship which is their work in heaven.

THEIR ASSOCIATION

Revelation 7:11-12 (NKJV)

¹¹ All 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,

¹² saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen."

The innumerable believers before God's throne were not alone in their loud worship. The first group identified along with them in praise was **all the angels** who **were standing around the throne**.

Their number too was uncountable to John.

John described earlier the number of angels as;

Revelation 5:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,

We read in the Old Testament;

Deuteronomy 33:2 (NKJV)

² And he said: "The Lord came from Sinai, And dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, And He came from the midst of ten thousand holy ones.

Daniel 7:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ *A fiery stream issued And came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him.*

The writer of Hebrews also saw;

Hebrews 12:22 (NKJV)

²² *But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels,*

And so on we go;

So the angels, ringing God's glorious, magnificent throne, also surrounded the other two groups involved in worshipping God.

The elders and the four living creatures.

The twenty-four **elders** are best viewed as representatives of the church brought up into the presence of God as He promised. They also sing the songs of redemption, praising God and lifting Him up in Worship.

And then the **four living creatures** are Cherubim, an exalted order of beings, praising God and lifting Him up as well.

Overwhelmed by God's majesty, glory, and the splendor surrounding His throne, all present **fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God.**

It is the appropriate reaction of all creatures, including those who are holy and perfect, to prostrate themselves in humble adoration before the unequalled glorious and majestic presence of the only true and holy God.

Recognizing God's sovereignty, supremacy, holiness, and majesty, the worshipers in John's vision utter a benediction bracketed front and back with the solemn affirmation **amen**, which means, "*so let it be*".

Their prayer is that **blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be attributed to our God forever and ever (4:11; 5:12)**

Worship is the constant occupation of those in heaven.

There was praise in chapter 4 and 5, before the seals were opened and judgment began. Now, as the final climactic judgments approach, there is praise again, praise not for judgment anticipated but for judgment realized.

The mounting crescendo of praise began with the four living creatures, then grew as the twenty-four elders, the angels, and the ever-increasing number of tribulation martyrs joined in.

Finally all heaven rings with praise to God.

The phrase **forever and ever** indicates, as did the doxology of 5:13, that this praise is not temporary or momentary, but will continue eternally. What is described here is worship that will never cease through all of endless eternity. By all inhabiting heaven. All together. Thus we see the associations. Saints, Angels, twenty-four elders, cherubim, all with one voice praising God.

Now on to;

THEIR ORIGINATION

Revelation 7:13-14 (NKJV)

¹³ *Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?"*

¹⁴ *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."*

John became an active participant in the vision when one of the twenty-four **elders** asked him; **These who are clothes in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?"**

The Elder was not asking for information because he did not know it, but to underscore his point both for John and all readers of John's record.

Dr Robert Thomas comments on the significance of the elder's question;

"This exemplifies the dialogue format used from time to time to convey an explanation of a vision. [Jer 1:11, 13; Amos 7:8; 8:2; Zech 4:2, 5]

This tool shows that visions were not given for the purpose of spectacular displays, but to convey revelation, the details of which were not to be missed"
(*Revelation 1-7: An Exegetical Commentary*[Chicago: Moody, 1992], 493).

The Elder's question specifies and emphasizes the truth that people will be saved during the time of tribulation. Some may doubt that, given the intensity of God's judgments during that terrible time.

And there will come a point in the Tribulation when those who continue to reject the gospel will be confirmed in that rejection.

Revelation 9:20-21 (NKJV)

²⁰ *But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk.*

²¹ *And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.*

Revelation 16:9 (NKJV)

⁹ *And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory.*

Paul said there are those:

2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 (NKJV)

¹⁰ *and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*

¹¹ *And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,*

¹² *that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

Now who does the Elder say they are:

"the ones who come out of the great tribulation Matt 24:21

These are those who lived into the great Tribulation, who were redeemed during it, and have now come out of it through death by violence, natural causes, and martyrdom.

The Phrase **the ones who come out** translates the present durative participle of the verb *erchomai*. It depicts a prolonged process; this group will keep growing as people keep dying during the Tribulation (especially from the last half, the **great tribulation**)

The Elder further described the redeemed and heavenly Tribulation believers as to how they gained the privilege of being in the presence of God and the holy angels.

It is because they are **clothed in the white robes**, which **they have washed** and made **white in the blood of the Lamb**.

Their brilliant dazzling white robes here speak of righteousness, holiness, and purity.

Soiled garments in Scripture is often pictured as the defilement of sin.

Isaiah 64:6 (NKJV)

⁶ *But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away.*

Zechariah 3:3 (NKJV)

³ *Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel.*

Salvation is often pictured as a washing;

Psalms 51:7 (NKJV)

⁷ *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*

Isaiah 1:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ *"Come now, and let us reason together," Says the Lord, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.*

Titus 3:5 (NKJV)

⁵ *not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,*

The sacrifice that could once and for all cleanse from sin, is through **the blood of the Lamb**. This refers to **"Christ's sacrificial death on the cross which provided cleansing from sin for every believing sinner in every age**

Christ's substitutionary death atoned for the Tribulation believers' sins and by repentant faith they were justified and reconciled to God.

Romans 5:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ *For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.*

2 Corinthians 5:18-21 (NKJV)

¹⁸ *Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,*

¹⁹ *that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and*

has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

²⁰ *Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.*

²¹ *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

So that is their origin.

And their function now?

THEIR FUNCTION

Revelation 7:15a (NKJV)

¹⁵ *Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple*

The **reason** these Tribulation believers were allowed to stand **before the throne of God** is that they were purified and cleansed from their sins by the sacrifice of the Lamb of God on their behalf. They were thus fitted for the presence of God that they might **serve Him day and night**.

Day and night here is an idiomatic way to indicate their continuous occupation: there is no actual day and night in Gods eternal heaven.

They were rendering a spiritual service of worship. I am reminded of;

Romans 12:1 (NKJV)

¹ *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

Saved to serve; and the place is in a current temple in heaven.

This heavenly temple currently is the holy domain where God's presence dwells outside the fallen universe, but that will be unnecessary in the new heavens and new earth where sin has been forever done away with.

Then there will no longer be a temple building, because God will occupy all places and all believers everywhere throughout the eternal state will continue to worship and serve Him forever.

There function is then to serve continually.

In this place they will be protected'

THEIR PROTECTION

Revelation 7:15b (NKJV)

¹⁵ *And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them. (Or He will spread His tabernacle over them.)*

This is the Eternal God of Heaven the One who sits on the throne, He will spread His Shechinah presence over these persecuted believers.

Leviticus 26:11-12 (NKJV)

¹¹ *I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you.*

¹² *I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.*

His presence is their shield, their comfort, their safety.

And He will provide for them there;

THEIR PROVISION

Revelation 7:16-17 (NKJV)

¹⁶ *They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat;*
¹⁷ *for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*

This comforting promise of further provision is drawn from and almost identical to the words of Isaiah;

Isaiah 49:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ *They shall neither hunger nor thirst, Neither heat nor sun shall strike them; For He who has mercy on them will lead them, Even by the springs of water He will guide them.*

All the tribulations and torment of the earthly life are over and gone, but they will have eternal satisfaction.

He is pictured here as the Great Shepherd. He will provide everything that is needed for complete living for His saints.

Psalms 23:1-6 (NKJV)

¹ *A Psalm of David. The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

² *He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.*

³ *He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.*

⁴ *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.*

⁵ *You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.*

⁶ *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever.*

He is seen in the Old Testament and in the New as the Shepherd of His people.

Hebrews 13:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ *Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,*

1 Peter 2:25 (NKJV)

²⁵ *For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*

The result: Revelation 21:3-4 (NKJV)

³ *And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.*

⁴ *And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."*

What a glorious reassurance to all believers, one day it will all end, and we will be at home, praising God, protected, by Him and provided for by Him. A true dwelling place in Christ.