



I AM

A MULTITUDE FROM THE GREAT TRIBUATION

Revelation 7

The Daily Word from Laura Martin

After the sixth seal was opened, John described an angel from the east sealing 144,000 servants of God from every tribe of Israel. Then he described *a vast multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language standing before the throne* and before the Lamb in heaven. The Lamb refers to Jesus, the redemptive sacrifice for the whole earth. Robed in white, the innumerable crowd cried out in a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

How will a “vast multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language” know about the Lamb? This image seems to fulfill Jesus’ Great Commission to His disciples to *go* because all authority had been given to make disciples of all nations. Even today, Jesus commands believers to *go* and share God’s love to the nations. Who in your life needs to hear about Jesus, the sacrificial Lamb of God, who died for the sins of every nation, tribe, people, and language, offering redemption and eternal life? As you *go* and share, you will receive power from the Holy Spirit to bear witness wherever the Lord leads you. Today, it’s time to *go*.

“After this I looked, and before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands! And they cried out in a loud voice: ‘Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’”

— Revelation 7:9–10

FURTHER SCRIPTURE

- *Matthew 28:19–20* — “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
- *Acts 1:8* — “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”
- *Revelation 7:3–4* — “‘Don’t harm the land or the sea or the trees until we seal the slaves of our God on their foreheads.’ And I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 sealed from every tribe of the Israelites.”



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Teaching Notes

INTRO

As I prepared for this week's lessons, I'm convinced that this is probably the most meat we've had to chew on so far in reviveSCHOOL.

I pulled together about 30 charts from different institutions and theologians on the end times. As I laid these out and started comparing them, I noticed that they don't follow what is presented in Revelation. Just a reminder to us all that if something doesn't make sense, pull back a little and take time to consider what you're reading and hearing. I think the reason no one's timeline matches up to Revelation is because no one knows God's timeline. I do believe that as we get closer to the end times, more and more will become clear. I think it's all just starting.

Our phrase for how Jesus is seen in Revelation is *I AM* (Revelation 1:7–8). In chapters 6 and beyond is the picture of how Jesus will reveal Himself. Christ said, "*I AM* the beginning and the end."

Tom Scheifer led us through the six of the seven seals. Chapter 7 provides a pause in the giving of the seals. Only Jesus is worthy to open up the seals. Each scroll is opened completely to reveal what's inside. The first six seals are:

1. The first horseman on a white horse appears and is the Antichrist. This parallels Matthew 24 to Revelation 6 and is the beginning of the seven-year period of tribulation. The Great Tribulation begins halfway through that seven-year period.
2. A second horseman on a red horse appears to take peace from the people—there will be wars and rumors of wars (Matthew 26).
3. A third horseman on a black horse with a balance scale represents scarcity, inequity, and famine (6:5–6).
4. A fourth horseman on a pale green horse appears who represents death and hades.
5. An altar in heaven appears with faithful martyrs under it (Matthew 24:9; Revelation 6:9–11). We can't be sure of the timeline of all this, but we can be sure that believers will feel the fury during the fifth and sixth seals.
6. An earthquake occurs, the sun turns black, the moon becomes like blood, and a breakdown of all created order begins, announcing the end of the world is at hand.

TEACHING

Revelation 7:1–8: In Revelation 7 there are two main groups—the 144,000 Jewish evangelists and the great multitude who put their trust in Jesus. This happens before the seventh seal is opened and God's wrath is released. John saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth who were restraining the four winds (Revelation 14:18). A fifth angel rose up from the east holding a seal who cried out to the four angels who had the power to harm earth and seas not to harm anything until the seal had been placed by God on the foreheads of the 144,000 from every tribe of the Israelites.

Scholars disagree about how to understand the 144,000. Some say it is literal 144,000 people, and others say it is a symbolic number. I would like it to be a literal 144,000, because that just feels right to me. In Genesis 12 and 49, God promised that He would spare His people. Why wouldn't it make sense that God will raise a remnant up from each of the 12 tribes?

Revelation 7:9–10: Verse 9 begins a shift. Even with all the things that will happen, there will always be a remnant that will survive. God will use a little group to bring the people to Him. The seals reflect the birthing pains of this new age to come. John then saw a vast multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language—so vast no one could number—who were standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were robed in white and held palm branches (v. 9). Currently there's almost 200 nations and thousands of languages on earth.

The multitude cried out in a loud voice that salvation belongs to God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb (v. 10). More than likely, these are people who have come to know Christ, possibly even martyred.



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Revelation 7:11–14: The angels stood around the throne with the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces and worshipped God (vv. 11–12). One of the elders asked who all these people robed in white were (v. 13). John responded to the elder, “Sir, you know.” The elder responded that these had come out of the great tribulation. Their robes had been washed in the blood of the Lamb (v. 14).

Revelation 7:16–18: Because of their salvation, they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night. And He will shelter them (v. 15). They will no longer be hungry or thirsty, and the sun will no longer strike them (v. 16). This is a description of what they had experienced in the tribulation. The Lamb will take care of them and will guide them to springs of living waters. God will wipe every tear from their eyes (v. 17).

CLOSING

So we’ve seen two groups of people here: the 144,000 Jewish evangelists from the 12 tribes and the vast multitude. Tomorrow, chapter 8 reveals the seventh seal.



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Reading Guide Questions

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1. What did the angel, with the seal of the living God, tell the four angels who had been given power to hurt the earth and sea? (Revelation 7:2–)
 2. Twelve thousand from each of the 12 tribes will be sealed on their foreheads. What do we know about these seals (Revelation 14:1)? Look at Ezekiel 9:4. How was this situation similar? According to John 6:27b; 2 Corinthians 1:21–22; and Ephesians 1:13, who else has been sealed?
 3. Do you believe these 144,000 are actual Israelites or are symbolic of the church or other group? What specific descriptions are given about these in Revelation 7:3–8 and 14:1–5?
 4. A multitude is described in Revelation 7:9–10. What details are given? In Revelation 7:14–17, what was John told about this multitude?
 5. Even though these came out of great tribulation, according to Revelation 7:14, to what or to whom do they attribute their salvation? (Revelation 7:10)
 6. What did the Holy Spirit highlight to you in Revelation 7 through the reading or the teaching?

