

Sealed - Revelation 7:1-17

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[0 : 00] All right, y'all, I'm going to turn to Revelation, chapter 7. We've been taking Revelation in very small chunks as we go through it, but tonight we're going to do all of chapter 7.

Remember where we're at in our journey through the book of Revelation. There is the heptatic structure, if you remember. It's the sevens of Revelation.

So we are doing the seven seal judgments, which is in chapter 6. And then here we are at chapter 7, and you see there's like a parentheses. And the seventh seal opens the next set of judgments.

So, or the seventh in sequence of judgments. So the seventh seal is going to open the seven trumpets. The seventh trumpet is going to open the seven bowls or seven vials.

And before the seven, there's always this kind of like parentheses, this kind of like pullback view to kind of get an overview of what's going on in the book. The other view is right there.

[0 : 59] So we've gone through chapter 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and now it's 7. And that seventh seal will unveil the next set of judgments.

So that will be in chapter 8, where he's going to pop the seventh seal, and then we'll get into the trumpet judgments. But between that, between 6 and 7, is chapter 7, which is this parentheses. If we backed up into chapter 6, we saw that wrath had come.

Because at the end of chapter 6, if you look at verse 16, the people are crying to the mountains and the rocks, fall on us and hide us from him that sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. Wrath has come for all those that are under wrath. And that's kind of logical. But those who are under the wrath of the Lamb will stand before a throne of judgment.

[2 : 08] Right? Those under the wrath of the Lamb, they stand before a throne of judgment. Those who are under the wrath on the Lamb, us, we are under the wrath that's on the Lamb.

We stand before a throne of grace. So if you're under the wrath of the Lamb, you'll end up before a throne of judgment. But if you come under the wrath that is upon the Lamb, that was poured out upon him at the cross, well then we will stand, and we do stand before a throne of grace.

We saw how 1 Thessalonians 1, verse 10, that we are to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered, past tense, us from the wrath to come.

Future tense. We have been delivered from the wrath, which is to come. It's not a question of, will we be delivered? I hope I'm delivered. Am I delivered? It's a done deal. It's a past event of being delivered from that which is to come.

We saw how man was created a spiritual being. Man is still a spiritual being. The problem is he's a dead spiritual being. And man believes he can affect the spiritual through the natural, not realizing his natural state is also spiritual.

[3 : 25] Man thinks that, well, I can somehow affect what's happening around me, the spiritual through the natural, where they're like, fall on us rocks, hide us mountains. I'm going to hide from something that's taking place spiritually by taking refuge in the natural.

That's what man believes. They're not realizing that their natural state, our natural state is also spiritual. Fallen, a fallen spiritual state, but it's still a spiritual state. We are still spiritual beings. And we cannot hide from that fact by anything we do in the natural. As we get into chapter 7, our theme verse kind of getting into this is 2 Corinthians 4.17.

It says, For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Our light affliction. Does anybody have any light afflictions in their life? Some light afflictions. As we go through this chapter, as we've looked already at some of these tribulation saints that we're going to see even more tonight, I mean, our light affliction can't even compare to theirs.

[4 : 28] And yet I think, I imagine myself as we go through these chapters, every time I read a verse like this, I think, what would it be like reading that during this time of the tribulation? What would it be like to read that?

I've missed the rapture. I'm now in the tribulation. And reading my light affliction is but for a moment, but it works a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Let's jump into verse 1.

So John says, And after these things. Well, that kind of rings a bell. Remember we saw that phrase before? In Revelation chapter 4, verse 1. Good job, guys.

That's good. And after this, I looked and behold, a door was opened in heaven. After these things. There's this big pause that's going to happen here for the after effect.

There's an after effect of these seal judgments. And there's this big pause that happens in chapter 7. That phrase, after these things, appears multiple times in Revelation.

[5 : 26] And it always precedes something positive. After these things. We're not going to go through all those, but if you want to write it down or take a picture and check me on it. That the after these things always precedes something positive.

After this, I looked and saw a door in heaven. And we're going to see tonight that despite what seems like it could be a very difficult time, it's actually a very positive thing.

So he says, And after this, I looked and behold, a door. I'm sorry, that's Revelation 4, verse 1. And after these things, I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, like representing the compass of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

Here we have the calm before the storm, right? They're holding it all back. No wind at all. Anybody like wind? I don't really like wind. I like that we live in a place that's not super windy. I don't think I could do it living like, you know, in the UK, up in Scotland, or, you know, in Seattle or wherever, where it's windy, windy, windy.

But here's this calm before the storm, where there's literally no wind upon the earth. God's judgment will come, but judgment must also wait for his mercy. James 2.13 says, and mercy triumphs over judgment.

[6 : 42] There's a point and a purpose for God's judgment, but right now, God's hitting pause and said, yes, judgment, but it must wait. More judgment's coming, but it must wait for mercy. Psalm 46, beginning in verse 8, says, Come, behold the works of the Lord.

What desolations he's made in the earth. He makes wars to cease under the end of the earth. He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in sunder. He burns the chariot in the fire. So in a sense, there's a pause, but it's not like all of a sudden, everything just stopped on planet earth.

So we've seen the Antichrist set up his kingdom. We've had war. We've had false peace. We've had war. We've had famine, and we've had pestilence. We've had where we've seen the heavens shaken an earthquake that shook the whole world.

So all of these cataclysmic events and the fallout from them are still taking place, but at the same time, God's able to say, kind of, whoa, just hold on for a minute with all of this.

When we think of God's judgment, we think of his mercy being counterposed to it, like the opposite of it. Here's God's judgment, and here's God's mercy. In reality, God's judgment is ultimately his mercy.

[7 : 51] Matthew 18, 8. We read, There were people in like the Middle Ages who took that serious.

It's not saying don't physically do that. Saying, in essence, the thing that is causing you to stumble, get rid of it. Don't make any provision for the flesh. It's better for you to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.

It's kind of harsh, is it? I get to enter into life. What is it worth for you to enter into life? What is it?

Profit a man if he gained the whole world and loses soul.

Better to lose the world and gain your soul. God's judgment? Cut it off. Get rid of that. God's judging that. Yeah, but so we can enter into life. 1 Corinthians 11, 31.

1 Corinthians 11, for if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. God's judgment is to protect us.

[8 : 56] It's for his mercy. It's to bring us and keep us into a place of mercy, if we'd respond to it. If you look at like at the end of chapter 6 here, they looked at God's judgment, and they said, no, no, no, no. We're going to hide from that.

Instead of doing what? Responding to it. Responding to the fact that the judging God is a merciful God. We all know this verse, Hebrews 12, 6. For whom the Lord loves, he chastens and scourges every son whom he receives.

I want to be loved and received of the Lord. Well, then I should expect chastening and scourging. I'm not like asking for it. But in a sense, isn't that ultimately what we're saying?

We're like, Lord, Lord, just, I'm sorry, Lord, forgive me. Cleanse my heart. Change my mind.

Change my attitude. We're saying, Lord, chasten me. Lord, bring something into my life that'll reshape my life in a way that'll please you.

But here this judgment is on pause for the sake of mercy, but ultimately God's judgment is mercy, as we're going to see all these people getting saved. We have the four winds. I don't know what the four winds means, except that it's saying that, like, everything's held back at this moment.

[10:04] But it is interesting that we just came through the four horses, the four that were released, the four horsemen. Maybe it's likening it to that, that the four winds. But we know that in the midst of any storm, there's one who can calm that storm.

In Matthew 8, 26, And he said unto them, Jesus said, Why are you fearful? Are you of little faith? And then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.

But the men marveled, saying, What manner of man is this? That even the winds and the sea obey him. So this is not climate change. This is climate control.

The creator determines the course of his creation. Man does not determine the course of God's creation. We think we do. God has given us dominion over it, but we don't determine its course, and we don't determine its purpose.

God does that. The purposes of creation are the purposes of God. Turn to Isaiah 40, if you would.

[11:09] Is anybody hot? It's hot in here. Isaiah 40.

We're going to pick up in verse 21. The Lord speaking through Isaiah. It says, Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundation of the earth is he that sits upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers, that stretches out the heavens as a curtain and spreads them out as a tent to dwell in, that brings the princes to nothing.

He makes the judges of the earth as vanity. Yea, they shall not be planted. Yea, they shall not be sown. Yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth. And he shall also blow upon them, and they shall wither.

And the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble. To whom then will you liken me, or shall I be equal? Sayeth the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold, who has created these things that brings out their hosts by number?

He calls them all by names, by the greatness of his might. For that he is strong in power, not one fails. Why sayeth thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from God, and my judgment is passed over from my God?

[12:32] Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the creator of the ends of the earth? He faints not, neither is weary. There is no searching of his understanding.

He gives power to the faint. To them that have no might, he increases strength. Even the youth shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

They shall mount up with wings as eagles. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint. The purposes of creation are the purposes of God. They're for his purpose. No one's going to gainsay that.

Who's going to speak against that? We're like grasshoppers to him. And I saw another angel in verse two, 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 given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

[13:33] So before this judgment comes, and if you looked over to chapter eight, we see the first thing to go when the seventh seal is open, which starts the next, the first of the next judgments, which is the first of the trumpets.

We see that it's the trees and the plants and seas are all under judgment. But right now, it says, hold on, because first, we have the seal of the living God.

What is the seal of the living God? Well, you know, Ephesians tells us as the church, in Ephesians one, verse 12, that we should be to the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ, in whom you also trusted.

After that, you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and whom also after that, you believed you were sealed. The Holy Spirit of promise. You were sealed, just like one of those seals that are one of the seven seals on that scroll.

Essentially, you were sealed. God put his stamp upon you. Ephesians 4.30 says, and grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed under the day of redemption.

[14:38] And the idea isn't, if you grieve him so much, he's going to pop the seal and leave, and then you're lost. No, not at all. But he's the one who keeps us. He's our hope and our help. I don't want to grieve the only hope I have.

2 Corinthians 1.21. Now he which established us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God. All saying, we didn't make this up on our own, folks. We didn't just decide we're going to do this in this way and write a book about it. It's God who anointed us and called us, who has also sealed us and given us the earnest or the down payment of the Spirit in our hearts.

You say, okay, well, that's the New Testament, right? But that's for the church. The church isn't here. The church has been taken to heaven in the rapture. So how does this work?

Well, if we look all the way back in the Old Testament, Ezekiel chapter 9, verse 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.

[15:44] So at this time, when Jerusalem and Israel is being judged, God says, before we bring judgment, go throughout the city and all of those who are grieved over the sin and over the abominations, put a seal, put a mark in where?

Their foreheads. Their foreheads. Again, everything in Revelation you can find in the Old Testament. Revelation doesn't quote the Old Testament, but it's full of the Old Testament. And lastly, Paul would tell us in 2 Timothy 2, 19, Nevertheless, the foundation of God stands sure. Having this seal, the Lord knows them that are his.

And let everyone that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity. Then we have that idea of not grieving the Holy Spirit. He's the one who keeps me. He's the one who seals me. I don't want to grieve the one who is keeping me in this life.

But ultimately, God's seal cannot be broken. Nothing's going to pop his seal. As we just saw, that John wept much because no man, under the earth, above the earth, below the earth, none could open the seal, could loose the seals on the scroll.

[16:48] Only the Lamb could. So if the Lamb has sealed us, nobody's going to loose that seal. If he sealed us and said, I have sealed you unto the day of redemption, you are mine.

To be sealed here, as we see in verse 3, the ones that have been sealed in their foreheads, these servants of God, they're sealed specifically for service, to be his servants.

A seal is irremovable. It's not something you can take off once God has sealed you. It's incomparable. There's nothing that can compare to being sealed by God's seal.

Nothing in this life. No status, no badge, no tattoo, no identification, no club, nothing than being like sealed with God's seal. It's invincible.

It stands against all attacks. And it's individual. Each one of these will be sealed. It's not a group seal. And it's also in view.

[17:50] It's on their forehead. It's not a hidden place. It's something that can be seen. And he says, I heard the number of them which were sealed. And they were sealed 144,000 of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

The 144,000 who received this seal. This irremovable, incomparable, invincible, individual seal that's in view. 144,000. Turn to Revelation 14, if you would.

It's going to give us a little more insight into who these people are. Beginning in verse 1. And I looked, and lo, a lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with him 144,000, having his father's name written in their foreheads.

And I had heard a voice from heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder. And I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps. And they sang, as it were, a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts and the elders.

And no man could learn that song but the 144,000. So just when you thought that we had the only exclusive song in heaven, worthy as the lamb was slain, was redeemed us back to God, man, they get their own song that nobody can know.

[19 : 07] But we will when they sing it. They have a song that no man can learn but the 144,000 which were redeemed from the earth.

These are they which were not defiled with women for they are virgins. These are they which follow the lamb whithersoever he goes. These were redeemed from among men being the first fruits unto God and to the lamb.

And in their mouth was found no guile for they are without fault before the throne of God. And turn over back to Revelation chapter 7. 144,000 sealed in their foreheads written with what?

What is the seal? Having his father's name written in their foreheads. That's pretty cool. The one who sits on the throne, the one who we don't even have any likeness to or she says, well, but his name's going to be written in their foreheads.

In Joel chapter 2, I'll just read it to you beginning in verse 28. He writes, and it shall come to pass afterward that I'll pour out my spirit upon all flesh and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. Your old men shall dream dreams and your young men shall see visions.

[20 : 06] That should ring a bell because we see that in the book of Acts regarding when the Holy Spirit comes. Peter says, hey, this is what's happening here like what's written in the prophet Joel. And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

Then he says this, and I will show wonders in the heavens and the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and terrible day of the Lord.

And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance as the Lord has said and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.

So Peter stops with, I'll pour out my spirit. But then there's this pause which we're living in now the age of grace before it picks up with and I'll show wonders in heaven and in the earth as we're reading about here in Revelation.

So who are these people? Well, they're all from the tribe of Israel. Verse 5, of the tribe of Judah were sealed 12,000. Well, we see Judah, interesting, is first. Who's the firstborn of the 12 sons of Jacob?

[21 : 12] Reuben. Well, Reuben got displaced because if you remember he went up and defiled his father's bed and so Judah gets raised to be number one here and we know in Genesis 49, 8 it says, Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise and then it begins to prophesy, Jacob does, of the coming Messiah through him.

And of the tribe of Reuben were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed 12,000. And of the tribe of Asher were sealed 12,000. And of the tribe of Nephtali were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Manasseh were sealed 12,000.

Manasseh here is listed instead of Dan. When you get through the rest of these there's no Dan. Dan is not listed among the 12 tribes. Remember when Jacob prophesied regarding his son Dan, which has got to be rough.

You know, you hear your other brothers, oh yeah, Judah, no, and then it gets to Dan. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path that bites the horse heels so that his rider shall fall backwards. Ouch.

Ouch. But in Judges, chapter 18, verse 30, tells us that the children of Dan set up the graven image. And Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land.

[22 : 27] Dan is the one who led Israel into idolatry. Set up in the north of Jerusalem. And I've been there, right? Yes, we were there. I remember that.

There's still remnants of an altar there. Well, no, north of Israel. Did I say Jerusalem? North of Jerusalem. Way up to the north. But Dan is the one to lead Israel into idolatry. And so they're not here.

Well, it's a lost tribe. And oh my word, if you want to just don't do it. Look, this is the lost tribe and that's the lost tribe. And that's, there's no lost tribes. God knows where they are and he didn't want to call them.

But he will call them because they will be part of his people as he establishes his kingdom. The redeemed people. There are no lost tribes, only lost souls. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Zebulun were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed 12,000.

[23 : 26] And of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed 12,000. So here we have Joseph and Manasseh. Joseph being like Ephraim, Manasseh in place of Dan. So we have those two tribes.

Joseph's single tribe split into two, replacing Dan. So who are the 144,000? Well, you know who they're not? They're not a bunch of Jehovah's Witnesses. They're not.

They didn't make it. They had to redo that whole thing. Well, we've got more than 144,000 people now. It must be that they're just the ones who go to the special heaven. They're not. They're also not the church.

If we look at the 144,000 characteristics of them, we see they're children of Israel in verse 4, specifically. They each have a specific tribe they came from.

They are preserved through wrath, as we read in Revelation 14.1. Not preserved from wrath. They are preserved through wrath. They are also the beginning of the harvest.

[24 : 27] As we read in Revelation 14.4, the first fruits. Romans 11.1 and 26, it tells us that they will say, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, that Israel will be saved.

And they are faithful. They follow the Lamb. They are faithful. Jesus in Matthew 23, standing there, looking over Jerusalem, as he's coming to be crucified, coming to give his life there.

So Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee for judgment. No, they were sent for mercy. How often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not.

Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, you shall not see me henceforth till you shall say, blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.

These 144,000 are the first fruits of that, of the ingathering of Israel, not as a people back into their land, but as a people back to their God. And after this, verse 9, I beheld in low a great multitude which no man could number.

[25 : 35] So here we have another. After this, after these 144,000 have been sealed, so whatever they do as they follow the Lamb wherever he goes, there seems to be quite a result from it.

And lo, a great multitude which no man could number of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues stood before the throne and before the Lamb clothed with white robes and palms in their hands.

After this, heaven has an order and a sequence that is independent of time, completely independent of our time, heaven's order and sequence, but it greatly affects time.

Heaven's order greatly affects our time, not the other way around. After this, I saw this great multitude. No man could number.

Who is this multitude? I think we get an idea of that in Revelation 20. We fast forward to the end of the book in verse 4, we see, I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God in which had not worshiped 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.

[26 : 47] So we have this innumerable company standing before the throne. Well, how did they get there? They got there through tribulation. Psalm 119, verse 75, I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right and that thou in faithfulness has afflicted me.

Let I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be my comfort before my comfort according to thy word under thy servant. To be able to look and to say, Lord, this affliction that's come is because of your faithfulness to me.

God, you're so faithful to me and in turn, I'm faithful to you and then this affliction comes. But let your merciful kindness be my comfort. So here we see in heaven is this great multitude and what does it say specifically about them?

No man could number them. Heaven could, but no man could. Here in the midst of the greatest judgment the world has ever seen of the greatest revival that's ever happened. Greater than the great awakening. Greater than any revival that's ever taken place on this earth.

In the midst of all of this, we think, God, you're judging the world. No, God is saving the world. He hasn't changed. It's the same yesterday, today and forever. The church has been removed and the age of grace is over. Yes, it's the age of God's judgment but his judgment is for the purpose of mercy.

[28 : 04] They are of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues. It's a very diverse group. Maybe you've heard of DEI. Anybody heard of that? That's what this is. It's diverse, it's eternal, and it has identity.

Heaven is full of DEI. Matthew 24, 14 says, 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.

But you know what? The identity that they had on earth has been superseded by this identity they now have in heaven. Yes, they were from all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues but now they share something.

They share the same standing before the throne, the same relationship to their father, the same worth that were clothed in white and the same occupation to worship him. All kindreds and nations and peoples and tongues and yet this diverse eternal group is identified now with an identity that makes them one in Christ.

They are all clothed in victory as those palm branches are, the sign of victory. God is not judging this earth because of his anger but because of his mercy.

[29 : 19] God judges the righteous and God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not he will wet his sword he has bent his bow and made it ready. He has also prepared for him the instruments of death. He ordained his arrows against the persecutors.

God's angry with the wicked. What do you mean it's not because of his anger? But what is the operative phrase in there? If he turn not. If he turn not.

Yes, God is angry. Yes, judgment's coming but all you gotta do is just turn away from it. Ezekiel 33 11 the Lord instructs Ezekiel to say unto them as I live saith the Lord God I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked but that the wicked turn from his way and live.

Turn you, turn you from your evil ways. Why will you die a house of Israel? Why will you continue to grieve the thing that has sealed you? Grieve the Holy Spirit.

Israel you're my people. I have a place for you. I have a plan for you. You have standing, relationship, you have worth. You just turn. Turn from judgment to mercy.

[30 : 24] And all of these who stood before the throne innumerable they cried with a loud voice in verse 10 saying salvation to our God which sits upon the throne and unto the Lamb. Salvation to our God.

Salvation belongs to our God but it is given to man. Titus 2.11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.

It belongs to God. Salvation belongs to our God but it's given to man. 1 Corinthians 15 I think we read this Sunday 1 through 2 Moreover brethren I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you which also have you received and wherein you stand by which also you are saved if you keep in memory what I preached unto you unless you have believed in vain.

It doesn't mean like if I go through my day and it's like oh no I stopped thinking about salvation. Ah! Not at all. He's just saying this is something that will be continual in your mind your life and your heart if it's a true work.

Otherwise you've believed in vain but we've not. We do not have an empty faith. Salvation belongs to our God but it's given to man. It's not something that's empty. Salvation under grace looks like Titus 2.11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.

[31 : 40] Well what's it look like under judgment here in Revelation? We just read it in verse 10. Revelation 7.10 And cried with a loud voice saying salvation belongs to our God which sits upon the throne and under the Lamb.

Well wait a minute that sounds an awful lot like salvation under the age of grace. Salvation belongs to the Lamb. Well what is it under the law? Probably different.

Isaiah 12.2 Behold God is my salvation I will trust and not be afraid for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song and he has become my salvation. It's the same. It's the same salvation.

We all come by the same way whether we're under the law in that age whether we're in the age of grace or whether in the age of judgment it's all by way of the Lamb. Isaiah 43.11 says I even I am the Lord and beside me there is no Savior.

Salvation belongs to our God but it's given to men. God is not withholding that in this time here where he's bringing judgment to the world but it's for the sake of mercy that they might turn and live. [32 : 46] And all the angels stood round about the throne verse 11 and about the elders and the four beasts and so all the angels I mean you think it was an innumerable company of people this is all the angels that's a lot I don't know how many you know how many can fit on the head of the pin I don't know but even the pin heads were there all the angels and all the angels stood round about the throne and about the elders and the four beasts and they fell before the throne on their faces and they worshipped God saying amen blessing glory wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be unto our God forever and ever amen why are they worshipping him?

Because he's a God who's a saving God they worship him because he is a saving God we worship him because he is our saving God the angels can't worship him that way they worship him and say God blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor as they see this innumerable company standing before the throne God is a God of unending worth he's worshipped by those of unending worship so we see that our faith is not empty but it's also not powerless saying amen blessing and glory wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power be unto our God it's also not momentary it's an eternal thing forever and ever we have a faith that's not empty it's not powerless and it's not momentary and one of the elders answered saying unto me what are these which are arrayed in white robes and whence came they and so one of these 24 elders turns to John who's just you know kind of off there in the corner writing all this down and he says who are these? didn't he know? he's like hey John who do you think these are? well clearly they're not part of the elders group right? you have 24 elders and he's saying who are these? they're not part of that group that was appeared in chapter 4 this is another group he's not asking John who they are because he doesn't know I think he's asking John because he says John you see the 24 elders you know who they are you know they represent that's the church that's been brought up you know they worship the lamb say blessing and honor because he has redeemed us back to God now who are these?

who are these John? they're not the church but they are chosen they've not come by rapture but they have come by redemption and John says unto him well sir you know and he said to me these are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb very quick lesson in hermeneutics the study of the bible if the scripture gives the interpretation we don't get to change the interpretation into anything else so we can't say well who I really think these people are I think they're a group of the church that might have no he said these are they which came out of great tribulation the word great tribulation there is a very specific very poignant word it's not just tribulation but it is the great tribulation and it's actually referring to their great personal tribulation it's very specific it's not just troubles and tribulation you know we talk about the tribulation we think because the world is in so much turmoil but it's not the world that's going through tribulation it's God's people will be under great tribulation not just any tribulation but a great and personal tribulation specific to these saints

Isaiah 1.18 says come now and let us reason together saith the Lord though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool how reasonable it is to expect our God who has gone through his own personal tribulation on our behalf to then faithfully deliver us from our tribulation right it's reasonable let us reason together our faith is not empty our faith is not powerless our faith is not momentary our faith is reasonable it's very reasonable to expect a God who would go through tribulation on my behalf then deliver me from tribulation therefore are they before they serve him day and night in his temple he that sits on the throne shall dwell among them they shall hunger no more neither thirst any more neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat their sacrifice did not go unheeded unnoted it was honored and it was rewarded and yet as Paul would say if I give my body to be burned and I have not love profits me nothing how great their sacrifice was at this time to stand in the face of the greatest tribulation that God's people will ever know and yet they didn't enter into heaven because well wow you were martyred man come on in you're so amazing!

[37 : 55] they still had to come by way of the Lamb they still had to come through a sacrifice that was not their own before their own sacrifice would be honored noted and rewarded and what is the greatest of all honors that they are given?

they're in God's presence they get to be in God's presence Romans 8 18 for I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared the glory which shall be revealed in us

