

SRMBC Family Bible Study

Revelation - The Triumph of God

June 12, 2019

Reverend Thomas A. Keys, Pastor

Lesson 6: Living Faithfully Through the Holocaust Revelation 7, 16

Some preachers speak of the Christian life as one great success story. They say that if we attend church, live right, tithe and exercise faith, we will prosper financially and be free of illness and distress. But the relative peace some of us enjoy at this moment is exceptional in the world and in history. From the ascension of Christ to his return, the normal lot of believers is suffering.

Group Discussion. Share some of the hard times you've had during the last year. Which ones were a result of being followers of Jesus?



Courageous Movie: *"The Job is yours..."* Javier Martinez has been asked by his boss to fudge numbers on the company inventory as condition of receiving a big promotion.

Questions:

- What do you believe Javier thinks about his answer to Mr. Tyson before going into the office?
- How does Javier's Christian faith influence his decision? What risk(s) does he take?
- What are your thoughts after hearing Mr. Tyson's response to Javier's refusal to lie – even for a promotion?
- What could've been the result(s) had Javier compromised his integrity? What lessons do we learn?

Read Revelation 7

1. Picture this chapter as a two-act play. Describe the scene and the characters in Act 1 (vv. 1-8).
 - **The Four Angels (7:1):** One for each corner of the earth. – holding back the Final Judgment of the 7th Seal.
 - **The Angel Rising from the East (7:2 – 3):** The Angel that seals the foreheads of the 144, 000 with the seal of the Living God.
 - **The 144,000 (7:2 – 3):** 12,000 of each of the 12 tribes of Israel – martyrs for sake of the Gospel that were killed during the Great Tribulation.
2. What answer does this chapter give to the question, "For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?" (6:17).

At the moment of maximum dramatic intensity in each of the series (between the sixth and the seventh), John gives us a dramatic pause:

- Those who have heard and responded to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and have been sealed by the Holy Spirit.

- Those who are bold in their personal faith in Christ.
- Those who trust and believe in the eternal promises and rewards of the Word.
- Those who live lives of faith and holiness in an evil world.
- Those Who Keep The Faith in the Face of Persecution.

Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. (Eph. 6:13)

3. In verses 1-8 an angel seals 144,000 people. What do you think “the seal of the living God” means (7:2-3; 9:4)?
 - John gives us a dramatic pause, an interlude. Here he gives us his most important messages:
 - God’s people are sealed, protected, saved and certain of complete victory.
 - Revelation shows us that history is going somewhere.
 - The process of getting there has meaning.

“...the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” (Eph. 4:30)

4. Some people interpret the 144,000 literally as believing Jews living during the great tribulation. Others see it as a symbolic number of all Christians, both Jews and Gentiles, living during the tribulation. What do you think John means, and why?

Four Views of Revelation

- 1) **Preterist** (which sees all or most of the events in Revelation as having already occurred by the end of the 1st century);
- 2) **Historicist** (which sees Revelation as a survey of church history from apostolic times to the present);
- 3) **Idealist** (which sees Revelation as a depiction of the struggle between good and evil);
- 4) **Futurist** (which sees Revelation as prophecy of events to come).

The question “who are the 144,000?” will depend on which interpretive approach you take. The passage leads to interpreting the 144,000 as a literal number of Jews—12,000 taken from every tribe of the “sons of Israel.”

5. In Act 2 the scene shifts from earth to heaven. Describe the characters and setting in verses 9-17.
 - **The Great Multitude (7:9 -10):** The ones who came out of the Tribulation.
 - **The Angels in Heaven (7:11 – 12):** The great host of Angels around the Throne of God.
 - **One of the Elders (7:13 – 17):** One of the 24 Elders around the throne who cast their crowns in worship to God (Rev. 4:4).
 - **The Lamb on the Throne (7:17):** The depiction of the Crucified and Risen Savior who conquered death, hell and the grave – to be given a Name Above all names to Rule Earth and Heaven.

6. How did the great multitude in verse 9 come to stand before the Lamb? Why does the multitude cry out with praise, worship and thanksgiving (vv. 10-12)?

- The idea of the multitude is they were martyrs for their Christian witnesses.
- Physical death for Christ would only be the logical conclusion of the great reversal in their lives.
- Being found in Christ, believer overcome the wrath of humanity are literally untouched by the wrath of God.
- They have the exquisite destiny of worshipping the Lamb forever.

Note: Martyr-witnesses have already lost their lives in this world when they become disciples (See **Voice of Martrys** - <https://www.persecution.com>).

7. How do the blessings these martyred Christians enjoy compare with the tribulations they suffered (vv. 13-17)?

Tribulations Endured	Blessings Received
These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation	and washed their robes and made them white...
hunger thirst	the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters.
sun shall not strike them, nor any heat	before the throne of God, serve Him day and night in His temple
in the blood of the Lamb	And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

8. This vision comes at the point of maximum dramatic intensity: between the sixth and seventh seals. How can the vision encourage us to be faithful no matter what happens in the world?

- God does not necessarily reward success (as the world see it) but faithfulness.
- Tribulation – no matter how intense, cannot hinder or thwart our eternal rewards in Christ.
- My eternal future is so bright – it cuts through the darkness of this world.
- The Lord sees my/our struggle and when I respond correctly – it pleases Him.
- I am not the only one that is going through persecution. Believers all over the world see worse.

Pray for those who suffer for their faith.

Keys For Living



God knows who are His and will remain faithful – even during the toughest times. The Lord has promised to place His Name on us and seal us for His glory.



Even in the face certain death during the Great Tribulation, faith in Christ enable to believers to stand strong.



One thing that will help us endure and have hope during tough times is to look our eternal future that is safe and secure in Christ.

Bible Study Homework

9. The Seven Bowls of God's Wrath: Quickly scan Revelation 16:1-21, noting the similarity between these plagues and those brought on Egypt (blood, frogs, gnats, flies, livestock, boils, hail, locusts, darkness, firstborn; Exodus 7—12). What might be meant by this comparison?

<u>Plague</u>	<u>Egypt</u>	<u>Tribulation</u>	<u>Comparison Meaning</u>
#1 - Water becomes blood.	Ex. 7:20	Rev. 16:3-6	To seek the Lord Jesus – the Living Water for renewal and salvation.
#2 - Frogs	Ex. 8:6	Rev. 16:13	To break the will of the stubborn and unbelieving by ordering the natural to do things unnaturally
#6 - Boils	Ex. 9:10	Rev. 16:2	Personal affliction, to get people to repent and return to the Lord
#7 - Hail	Ex. 9:23	Rev. 16:21	That the Lord can overthrow the rules of nature and the will of man
#9 - Darkness	Ex. 10:22	Rev. 16:10	The darkness is sent by the Lord is designed to have unbelievers see “the Light” (Jesus the Light of the World)

The seven last plagues are poured out just prior to the Second Coming. They are poured out upon those who, like Pharaoh, hardened their hearts against God's redeeming love and would not repent (see Rev. 16:11). Divine wrath is God's righteous judgment on the choices people have made (see Rom. 1:26–28), and at that time the lost are reaping the consequences of their own choices.

10. How could the same events lead to worship on the part of some (vv. 5-7) and cursing on the part of others (vv. 9, 21)?

<u>Worshippers</u>	<u>Cursers</u>
When the calamity comes worshippers know the coming of the Lord is near.	They will increase in unbelief – saying “ <i>If God exists, why does He allow bad things to happen?</i> ”
The fulfillment of the Scriptures/Prophecy gives glory to God.	They will not believe that God rules the world and that His Word and precepts are right.
The ultimate end – where we will be eternally with God in His kingdom.	They will continue to live selfishly for pleasure and only for the present. Believing that there is no future consequences or judgement.

11. If we realize that the wrath of God will one day be fully expressed, what difference should it make in our attitude toward sin?

Look around at the world today, which is going to get only worse. The fact that the plagues have been delayed this long teach us about God's mercy and patience. That mercy and patience however, does not excuse sin. We see how God feels about sin in His wrath suffered by Jesus on the Cross and in the judgment to come

a. In our attitude toward unjust suffering?

To be truthful there is no "unjust" suffering (Rom 3:23; 6:23)- however we God's people do suffer for the sake of the Gospel we do know that our eternal rewards far outweigh whatever suffering we must endure

b. In our attitude toward non-Christians?

Our attitude toward non-Christians (non-believers) is one of concern, pity and maybe even desperation to do all that is necessary to have them hear the Gospel and be saved before that Great Day of Judgement comes.