

## Unit III. Visions of Praise

# The Rest of the Story

DEVOTIONAL READING: Revelation 1:1-8

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Revelation 7:9-17

PRINT PASSAGE: Revelation 7:9-17

### Key Verse

These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Revelation 7:14b, KJV)

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“These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” (Revelation 7:14b, NIV)

### Lesson Aims

As a result of experiencing this lesson, you should be able to do these things:

- Understand how God’s salvation and justice for all people inspire praise and worship.
- Embrace the significance of praising God in unity.
- Respond to God’s love, goodness, and grace with joy and exaltation.

### \*Key Terms

Beheld (verse 9)—Greek: *idou* (id-oo’): saw; “looked” (NIV).

Multitude (verse 9)—Greek: *ochlos* (okh’los): a crowd; the common people.

Nation(s) (verse 9)—Greek: *ethnos* (eth’-nos): a race(s); the nations (as distinct as Israel).

Salvation (verse 10)—Greek: *sótēria* (so-tay-ree’-ah): deliverance; salvation.

Throne (verse 11)—Greek: *thronos* (thron’-os): a throne, seat; dominion.

Voice (verse 10)—Greek: *phónē* (fo-nay’): a voice, sound.

\*(Word Study Supplement—Refer to page 2)

### Life Happens

Joe and Kamala have been struggling financially. They both have great jobs. But, with three kids in college simultaneously, their monthly expenses have diminished. Joe and Kamala thought that selling their house would help.

Kamala is now working an extra job, and her husband is interviewing like crazy to obtain a higher paying job. Also, the kids are pulling their weight by working odd jobs. This has definitely been a stressful time for all involved, but their love of family and God holds them together.



### Overview

The book of Revelation proclaims God's ultimate triumph over evil and the reality of life with Him through eternity. It confirms the second coming of Jesus, the judgment of evil, the resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment of humanity leading to eternal life or condemnation. For the righteous, Revelation offers a present hope for the future, especially for those who have been persecuted for their faith. This week's lesson from Revelation 7:9-17 focuses on John's vision of a great multitude of victorious believers. These faithful saints of God have not only been redeemed from sin but have also overcome intense tribulation on earth and joined the angels and the twenty-four elders in worshipping at God's throne.

Good news! Joe landed a lucrative position with a top firm, and now the family will relocate to a place that has a lower cost of living. The entire family is so relieved and grateful.

### Questions

1. Have you ever experienced a circumstance that worried you immensely but worked out better than okay in the end?
2. Share the pain points that enabled you to persevere and stay the course.
3. How faithful and merciful is God, especially during rocky times?

### COMMENTARY ON THE BIBLICAL TEXT

## We Worship God (*Revelation 7:9-11*)

### KJV

9 After this I *beheld*, 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;

10 And cried with a loud *voice*, saying, *Salvation* to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

11 And all the angels stood round about the *throne*, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

### NIV

9 After this I *looked*, and there 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.

10 And they cried out in a loud *voice*: "*Salvation* belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

11 All the angels were standing around the *throne* and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,

John sees a huge multitude of people gathered at God's throne—a crowd too large to count. Representing every race, tribe, people, and language, they are witnesses of the fact that those who endure to the end will find that the glory of God's presence is worth all the suffering (**verse 9**). This diverse crowd of believers is united through their shared sufferings, faith in Jesus Christ, and victory over life's troubles. In their hands is a palm branch, the sign of victory (**verse 9**). The multitude is heard shouting praises to God and declaring that salvation belongs to God. God is the one who has saved them, making



them triumphant through their trials and tribulations and distresses (**verse 10**). He is their great Savior and mighty deliverer. They join the angels, the elders, and the four living creatures in giving God glory (**verse 11**), not because He has given them an easy life and spared them from the experience of trouble, but because He has given them strength to endure and enabled them to come out victorious on the other side.

**? What Do You Think?** Notice that the crowd gives God praise and glory in spite of what they have endured. When you experience troubles in life, are you more inclined to praise God for helping you overcome in the end, or complain and blame God for your pain? Why do you think God sometimes chooses to strengthen believers to endure their sufferings rather than deliver them from it?

## Amen! Praise and Glory (*Revelation 7:12-14*)

### KJV

12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. 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.

### NIV

12 saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!"

13 Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?"

14 I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

John sees a massive gathering of all the inhabitants of heaven. This sanctified multitude shouts praises to God followed by the angels. Every word of the angelic praise is meaningful (**verse 12**). They assign blessings to God. Believers must always bless God for His goodness as Creator, Redeemer, and Provider of all things. The angels give God glory. Believers must never forget God's majesty as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. They assign wisdom to God. He is the giver of all knowledge and the originator of all truth. The angelic worshippers give thanks to God. Believers are grateful for God because He is the one who created and sustains the entire world, and the giver of everything that is good (see James 1:7). They give God honor. Believers worship God because they owe Him all that they have. The angels assign power to God. By His unlimited power, God has ruled the world throughout the ages and will rule forever in His eternal kingdom. Finally, the angelic multitude assigns strength to God. Believers can face life's demands by no other source than the God who strengthens them (see Philippians 4:13). The white-robed multitude are those who have been washed and sanctified by God (see 1 Corinthians 6:11). Isaiah noted that the sins which are like scarlet will be as white as snow, and those that were red like crimson will be as wool (see Isaiah 1:18). God's grace not only forgives the sin that stains our garments, but also makes them clean (**verses 13-14**).

**What Do You Think?** Jesus Christ died so that one day you would stand in God's presence to worship Him. How have you incorporated worship into your daily walk with God? In what ways is the worship you observe in church different from or similar to this image of heavenly worship?

## Before the Throne of God (*Revelation 7:15-17*)

### KJV

15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

### NIV

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 shelter them with his presence.

16 "Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat down on them, nor any scorching heat.

17 "For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water.' And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

The faithful will have access to the very presence of God to worship at His throne (**verse 15**). Remember the words of Jesus: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). Righteousness is the qualification for seeing God. The entrance to the very presence of God has no barriers based on race, status, or gender. It is open to every faithful soul. Thus, the promise of eternal comfort extends to all who have overcome the world in the name of the Lord. Spiritually speaking, Jesus will fulfill the longing of every human soul (**verse 16**). Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness shall be satisfied (see Matthew 5:6). Additionally, the second promise of this text is that in Christ, all who trust in Him will find the end of the world's greatest problems—hunger, pain, and sorrow (**verse 16**). Long before John's vision, the prophet Isaiah wrote, "They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them" (Isaiah 49:10). This prophetic dream will be perfectly fulfilled through Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd (see John 10:11), who will make everything all right. He will satisfy their longings and will wipe away their tears (**verse 17**).

**What Do You Think?** How might a Christian who is facing sufferings find comfort in these verses? Can you recall and share a time when you have been comforted by God?

### Your Life

When life is hard, you may be tempted to feel that God has abandoned you or is not concerned about your situation. This lesson teaches that God is very aware of His children's sufferings. When life's circumstances cause you to feel hopeless, you as a believer should remember this vision of hope and know that your future is secure in Jesus.



## Your World!

When the circumstances of this world seem overwhelming, Paul taught believers to “set your minds on things above, not on earthly things” (Colossians 3:2, NIV). God is greater than everything that troubles you on the earth. No matter how rough it gets or what things look like, don’t let go of your confidence in God. He has everything under control.



**Closing Prayer** Dear God, we worship You because You are worthy, and we praise You because You are good. When life is hard, settle our hearts and help us to find peace and hope in You. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

## Home Daily Bible Readings

<b>MONDAY</b> , November 8	“Clap Your Hands, All You Peoples”	(Psalm 47)
<b>TUESDAY</b> , November 9	“An Everlasting Kingdom”	(Daniel 4:34-37)
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> , November 10	“Glory to God, Now and Forever”	(Jude 20-25)
<b>THURSDAY</b> , November 11	“The Lord Is King Forever”	(Psalm 10:12-18)
<b>FRIDAY</b> , November 12	“God’s Faithful Witnesses”	(Revelation 11:3-10)
<b>SATURDAY</b> , November 13	“The Lord Is Robed in Majesty”	(Psalm 93)
<b>SUNDAY</b> , November 14	“A Crescendo of Praise”	(Revelation 11:11-19)

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