

# The Revelation



## Chapter 7



# REVELATION 7

John's interludes and asides are a way for him to fill in the details in his material. Revelation 7 is no exception. Fast paced events on Planet Earth are headed for the denouement; six seals have led us to the final act. Everyone on earth, including rulers and those in prominent positions, the rich and the strong are asking the question: "Can anyone survive what's happening?"

Chapter 7 is John's resounding answer that question.

*Revelation 7:1 - After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, that no wind might blow on earth or sea or against any tree.*

Meanwhile back at the ranch, in the words of the Old Bar S commercial, we look in on the loyal subjects of God's Kingdom of Light and see what's going on with them at this time.

John writes, "I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth holding back the four winds of the earth so that no wind could blow on earth or sea or against any tree."

Wind in the Bible, when it is used symbolically, is always associated with God - especially the Holy Spirit - either directly or through the work of his angelic messengers.<sup>254</sup>

*Revelation 7:2-3 - Then I saw another angel ascend from the rising of the sun, with*

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254 Ezekiel 1:4-5; Ezekiel 13:8-16; Hebrews 1:7; Psalms 104:4; Matthew 13:41-42

*the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God upon their foreheads."*

After John sees the four angels at the four corners of the compass holding back the winds of God's destructive power on earth, another angel appears on the scene, ascending into the sky from the East. He is carrying God's personal seal or signet, the symbol of his authority as God's representative, and he shouts a message to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea. "Don't harm the earth, the sea, or the plant life of earth until we have finished sealing the servants of God on their foreheads.

This passage occurs within the context of the fifth, sixth and seventh seals of Revelation 6 and Revelation 8. In the fifth seal there is a cry asking how much longer God can allow events on planet earth to continue as they are. In the sixth seal God responds with a thunderous "Get ready!" In the seventh seal we see God preparing to unleash the full force of his righteous anger against Satan's Kingdom of Darkness and its loyal soldiers on the earth.

In this interlude we discover a parallel to 2nd Peter 3:8-11 where Peter reminds us that God is not just procrastinating when it comes to his promise to return; he is not too busy doing other things; he hasn't forgotten his promise. He is waiting for a good reason; he doesn't want anyone to die and he is giving rebels just a little bit longer to change their allegiance. But the day is coming, he promises; it is coming like a cat burglar who steals the silverware in the middle of the night when you least expect it. When that day arrives, "then the heavens will disappear with a great noise and the heavenly bodies will disappear in fire and everything on the earth will be burned up.

God in Revelation 7:3 sends a message to the destroying angels: "Hold off a little longer - there's still a few who haven't made their decision yet! Wait until we have finished sealing the loyal subjects of our God on their foreheads."

Throughout the Revelation we see an interesting contrast: God's loyal followers receive his seal on their foreheads,<sup>255</sup> while Satan's loyal subjects are either marked on

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255 Revelation 7:3; 9:4; 14:1; 22:4

their forehead or on their hand.<sup>256</sup> Science tells us that the power to make intentional choice, what we call the “will,” resides in the frontal lobe of our brain behind our forehead. In English we often speak of “will power” or way he is “willing to do” something. It denotes a deliberate choice to do or not to do something, a firmness and fixity of purpose. It is interesting that the ancients somehow knew this and used the forehead in these and other passages to represent a conscious choice.<sup>257</sup> Those people who are citizens of God’s Kingdom of Light are those who have made a conscious decision to be a part of it; they have deliberately and intentionally chosen to go contrary to the flow and to continue doing so even when the going gets difficult; they are the ultimate counter-culturists and contrarians who purposefully choose to live their lives as citizens of the Kingdom of Light as opposed to the Kingdom of Darkness.

Those who are residents of the Kingdom of Darkness either are marked by the Lord of Darkness

in their forehead or in their hand.<sup>258</sup> The hand in the Bible, when used symbolically, is used to portray our acts or actions. In these passages it describes people who have not made a conscious decision to be committed to Satan’s Kingdom but who choose to go along with it for expediency; they passively choose not make waves even though they may not agree in their head or heart with what is happening. They are very similar to the millions of Germans during the Third Reich who chose to go along with Hitler and the Holocaust and the persecution of all of the others who were trampled by the Reich even though the very idea of it, if you were to ask them, was abhorrent. They acquiesced because it was the convenient thing to do. The same thing could be said of those who are horrified by what is happening to the Palestinian people, today, but who choose to ignore it for the same reasons.

We do not have to make a conscious choice to remain a citizen of the Kingdom of Darkness. We are born to it and often remain so just because it is too much trouble to change. On the other hand, to be a part of God’s Kingdom of Light involves an intentional, ongoing, deliberate choice. Satan’s “mark” or God’s “seal” are not visible; neither goes around branding people on their foreheads. It is, instead, a final determination that a person’s eternal loyalties are finally and absolutely decided.

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256 Revelation 13:6; 14:9; 20:4

257 Isaiah 48:4; Jeremiah 48:45; Ezekiel 3:7-9

258 Revelation 13:16; 14:9; 20:4

The die is cast and there is no turning back.

*Revelation 7:4-8 - And I heard the number of the sealed, a hundred and forty-four thousand sealed, out of every tribe of the sons of Israel, twelve thousand sealed out of the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand of the tribe of Reuben, twelve thousand of the tribe of Gad, twelve thousand of the tribe of Asher, twelve thousand of the tribe of Naph'tali, twelve thousand of the tribe of Manas'seh, twelve thousand of the tribe of Simeon, twelve thousand of the tribe of Levi, twelve thousand of the tribe of Is'sachar, twelve thousand of the tribe of Zeb'ulun, twelve thousand of the tribe of Joseph, twelve thousand sealed out of the tribe of Benjamin.*

The English translation of Revelation 7:3 and the parallel passage in Revelation 14:9, while technically correct, does not give the sense of the meaning of the original language. A translation which better conveys the meaning would be: "And I heard the number of those already having been sealed, a hundred and forth-four thousand . . ." "For the Greekophiles among us, the tense of the first sealing in Revelation 7:4 is a perfect passive participle which is best translated as "something which happened at a previous time and remains so."

Who are these 144,000 and where do they fit into the drama we have been studying?

First of all, it is most probable that the number is symbolic - both as regards the actual number and the tribal ascription. In that sense it would signify a complete group spanning all of God's people from a wide range of sources. That is not to say that it could not be a literal number and that there were not definitely 12,000 from each of the original Jewish tribes. There is nothing to prevent this being so, but it is highly unlikely.

These 144,000 are described as already having been sealed some time prior to John's day and remaining so. The angel of Revelation 7:2 tells the angels standing at the four corners of the earth to hold off harming earth or sea or tree until God's citizen saints are sealed. Then John hears the number of those already sealed prior to this time. Revelation 14:3 describes these sealed ones as already in heaven at the time when the three angels announce the beginning of the judgement, singing a song only they were allowed to sing celebrating God's power to ransom and redeem captives from Satan's Kingdom of Darkness.

In Matthew 27:51-53 we read that when Jesus died, “the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom; the earth shook, and the rocks were split; the tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many.” And in Ephesians 4:8 we read that “When he ascended on high, he led a host of (Satan’s former) captives, and he gave (spiritual) gifts to men;”

There are several possible reasons why God took these people back to heaven with Jesus when he returned after his resurrection:

- They are there as evidence. When a prospector prepares to stake a claim and register it, they bring evidence to show the quality of the oar. Jesus brought back a group of first fruits to show the universe evidence of the return God was getting on their investment.
- God was excited about what was accomplished in Jesus life and death. Like a homeowner going out and picking the first sweet Mandarin Oranges off the tree in the fall and savoring the smell and flavor, he wanted to enjoy the fruits of his investment in us. I can imagine him spending quality time with these first fruits, eating with them, discussing events on planet earth, asking about their impressions of what is happening, stopping by their house and just hanging out with them.
- God has gone overboard to make certain that we are satisfied and comfortable with how he is handling final events on planet earth. He has invited these first fruits to heaven to observe the process so that they can give witness, when we arrive in heaven, that God was fair and just and gracious.
- God wished to establish in Satan and his fallen angelic followers that Jesus sacrifice was sufficient and could stand up to the universe’s scrutiny. If anyone in the universe, including Satan himself, wanted to mount a challenge, he wanted to be certain that it was taken care of before they came to the end.
- The Holy Spirit was poured out for a new purpose at Pentecost. The Holy Spirit was there and involved at the Creation,<sup>259</sup> After Adam and Eve sold

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259 Genesis 1:2

the world into Satan's control, the Holy Spirit was constantly moving in the world to draw people back to God. But when Jesus successfully completed his mission on earth, the war between good and evil entered a new phase. The Church was to go forth as conquerors in Jesus' name to bring an end to Satan's rule on earth. At Pentecost, when Jesus triumph at the Cross was established, God now had the "right" to empower us in ways he never had before. The First Fruits were the living proof of that right.

In Revelation 14:4 we discover that these 144,000 were the first fruits of Jesus sacrifice on the cross, the beginning of the harvest of those ransomed from Satan's Kingdom into God's glorious Kingdom of Light.

It interesting that Paul connects Jesus leading these first fruits of his labors to heaven and the giving of the "Gifts of the Spirit." or "Spiritual Gifts" as they are sometimes called.<sup>260</sup>

Apparently, Jesus returned to earth taking the First Fruits of his mission to earth with him and, on the day corresponding to Pentecost right after his ascension, presented them to his Father. It is then, after establishing the success of Jesus work on earth, that the Holy Spirit was poured out for the purpose of finishing carrying out Jesus' mandate to finish what he had started.

*Revelation 7:9-12 - After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no man could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels stood round the throne and round the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen."*

Had he not remembered Jesus' promises concerning the gospel going to the whole world, it would have been easy for John, at this point, to assume that this group of

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260 Note 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12 and Ephesians 4 for the most comprehensive, though not necessarily exhausting list, of these gifts.

144,000 people, whether he understood the number to be literal or symbolic, were all that would make it to heaven.

There are those in the religious world who make that mistake today. God wanted no misunderstanding so John was next shown another group, a crowd of people so great that no human could ever number it out of every nation, from all tribes and tongues and people. They were standing before the throne praising God for saving them.

To understand what is happening with these two groups of people you have to understand a prophetic passage every good Jew would have known and understood. Daniel and the Revelation are twin complementary books. In fact, The “Little Book” the Lamb is unsealing is most probably the Book of Daniel. The Revelation, in many ways, is a commentary on Daniel. In Daniel 9:24 we discover the beginning of what is known in Biblical circles as the “70 week prophecy:” “Seventy weeks of years are decreed concerning your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time. And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off, and shall have nothing; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war; desolations are decreed. And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week; and for half of the week he shall cause sacrifice and offering to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.” Daniel 9:24-27

When God called Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees and led him to Canaan and promised him that he would be the father of a huge number of nations he wasn't just referring to the Jews and all of the Arab nations. We begin to discover the meaning of this fatherhood when we come to Mt. Sinai with the Israelites after their 400 year captivity in Egypt. God's intention for Israel was that they would become a “holy

nation, a kingdom of priests.”<sup>261</sup> God carried them out of Egypt on eagles wings<sup>262</sup> for a purpose; he didn’t set Israel aside because they were better than anyone else; they were not to serve themselves but they were his means of taking the Good News of the Kingdom of Light to the rest of the world. Every Israelite, rich and poor, prominent and hardly known, male and female, servant and freeman was to be actively involved in taking the Gospel to the nations. Their’s was to be a servant priests role of ministry.

In Exodus and Leviticus we discover the tribe of Levi set aside, perpetually, to be trainers constantly preparing each new generation to minister effectively. God designed that every Israelite would be spoken of as “ministers of our God”<sup>263</sup> and that they would bring those from all nations and tongues who accepted citizenship in the Kingdom of Light and that they too would be chosen and trained to be priests and Levites.<sup>264</sup> It was to be an ever widening circle of people called to relationship with God, trained in ministry, and sent out to tell others. The Gospel, to use Jesus’ words in Matthew 28:18-22 “was to go to the whole world - to every nation, tribe, tongue and people” until the whole world knew about him and his love for humanity. The day would come, God desired, that “every pot in Jerusalem and Judah would be sacred to the Lord of Hosts” and that anyone coming to Jerusalem to sacrifice could “choose any pot in the country and use it to make his sacrifices.”<sup>265</sup>

Unfortunately, Israel began to imagine that they were chosen because they were somebody; that they were somehow better than everyone else and that their value lay in their specialness to God rather than in God’s ability to use them. Instead of becoming a nation of priests taking the Gospel to the world, they became exclusive and hoarded the Good News to themselves. The Levite males, who had indeed been chosen by God for the special task of leading the rest of the people, men and women alike, into ministry became clannish and cliquey. The males in Israel began to imagine that they were more privileged than the women and instead of leading them into intimate relationship with God and ministry for him subjugated them and relegated them to secondary position in the spiritual life of the community and nation.

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261 Exodus 19:5-6

262 Exodus 19:4

263 Isaiah 61:6

264 Isaiah 66:18-21

265 Zechariah 14:20-21

God did everything he could to reverse this exclusive trend including allowing Israel to be invaded and scattered so that they were interspersed among the nations where they could spread the gospel. Israel's response was to cloister themselves wherever they went, believing that they were in danger of contamination. It was almost as if the salt decided to stay in the saltshaker where it could remain pure and white rather than allowing itself to be mixed into the food where it could preserve and flavor and enhance. God finally put a limit on their recalcitrance; he gave them a deadline. We find that deadline in Daniel 9:24-27

“Seventy weeks of years are decreed concerning your people and your holy city. You have that long to get serious and finish your task of taking the gospel to the whole world - to put an end to rebellion and breaking of God's law; to offer people knowledge of the ransom price for their rebellion; to bring about righteousness that lasts forever; to bring to fruition the promises of prophets and prophetic visions; to prepare the temple for the coming of Messiah. Here is the timetable with several anchor points you can use to see how the time is progressing.”

In the time prophecies of Daniel and Revelation a day is symbolic of a year of the Jewish calendar which has 360 days. God says to Daniel, 490 years are declared concerning your people (the Jewish nation). “Be certain and understand,” Gabriel tells Daniel, “and understand that from the going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince shall be seven weeks.”

There were three major decrees by a Persian king concerning the restoration of Jerusalem: In 538 B.C. King Cyrus ordered that the temple in Jerusalem to be rebuilt.<sup>266</sup> Then in 457 B.C. Artaxerxes ordered Ezra to rebuild the walls of the city and to restore it.<sup>267</sup> Finally in 445 B.C. Nehemiah was ordered to finish the rebuilding of the city walls which Ezra had not been able to accomplish.<sup>268</sup> Of the three only the second qualifies as the “decree to rebuild the city.” So, we have the beginning point of this prophecy concerning the Jewish nation's probationary time.

49 years later, in 408 B.C., the rebuilding and restoration of the city was finally

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266 Ezra 1:1-4

267 Ezra 7:6,7; 9:9

268 Nehemiah 2:8

completed - the first waymark. Nehemiah's work was completed and Bigvai (Bagoas) was appointed governor of Judea in his place. For 434 years Jerusalem remained intact while the years of her people's final probation ticked by with little or no attempt to fulfill their destiny as a corporate people. The city was attacked and taken by the Greek ruler Antiochus IV, "the Madman, at one point, and the temple destroyed, but the city was left intact. Then in 31 C.E. we arrive at the second waymark - the time is almost up.

It is more than coincidence that exactly 483 years after King Artaxerxes orders Ezra to rebuild the walls of the city and restore it, Jesus is baptized. And it is much more than chance that exactly three-and-a-half years later he is crucified - with the 18 inch thick curtain between the Holy and Most Holy places of the temple torn in two from top to bottom by unseen hands. Finally, it is definitely more than fortuitous serendipity that three-and-a-half years after Jesus' crucifixion Stephen, the Deacon, is stoned by the ruling secular and religious leadership of Israel while Paul, the future apostle, holds their coats.

Something very significant changes in the opinion of the early Christians after the stoning of Deacon Stephen. What God had dreamed would happen when Israel fulfilled its destiny occurred through the medium of the Church - the gospel went to the whole world through the new inheritors of the promises made to Abraham.<sup>269</sup> God had tried for over a thousand years to get his chosen nation to be and do what he had chosen it for and they had refused; now he appointed new ambassadors - not a nation but "the called out ones" from every ethnic and cultural background - men and woman who had answered God's call and had been "brought out of darkness into his marvelous light."<sup>270</sup> It is the direct fulfillment of God's dream of the day when people from every ethnic and cultural background would become ministers of the Good News.<sup>271</sup>

As a visible indication of the end of Israel's position as a special chosen people of God, called to the mission of leading the rest of the world into relationship with God and charged with ushering the Kingdom of Light back to this world, 36 years later God allows Roman legions to sack and completely destroy Jerusalem and the

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269 Romans 9:8; Galatians 3:1,29; Ephesians 3:4-6; Romans 4:16-17)

270 1st Peter 2:9

271 Isaiah 66:18-21

temple.

There have been those anti-Semites down through the so called “Christian Era” who take this and other prophecies to mean that probation had completely closed for any Jew and that all were destined to be lost because of their cultural and ethnic inheritance - much as the Amalekites and others were annihilated in Old Testament times because they were so committed to their rebellion that they were unredeemable.

There is absolutely no support for this idea in the Bible!

What changed in 34 C.E. was the most favored nation status of Israel, or by that time Judea and the Jewish people, as God’s chosen medium of taking the gospel to the whole world. That does not mean, in any way, that he rejected or rejects individual people of Jewish ethnic inheritance or cultural background or even religious persuasion who choose to become his loyal followers and who accept the ransom he paid in Jesus to rescue us from the Kingdom of Darkness.

It is important to understand the relationship between the 144,000 and the rest of this group. The 144,000 are nothing more than the “first fruits” of this larger group;<sup>272</sup> they are the down payment return on God’s incredible investment in humanity.<sup>273</sup> Until the rest of the saved arrive in heaven after the Second Coming, they stand with the Elders and the four living creatures in the presence of God and are able to sing a song in heaven that no one else can sing because only they have experienced salvation. In heaven they follow Jesus wherever he goes assuring the un-fallen citizens of God’s Kingdom of Light that God’s gift of Jesus ransom sacrifice was worth the cost.

The 144,000 are a symbolic or representative group of all of those saved by faith in Jesus’ sacrifice prior to the cross as first fruits of his sacrifice and the whole Plan of Saving.

John would have understood very easily the identity of this group. He had seen and heard many of them in the days between Jesus’ crucifixion and his ascension tell-

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272 Revelation 14:4

273 Revelation 14:1-5

ing the world that Jesus was alive.<sup>274</sup> But, they were not to be the only ones saved through God's grace and welcomed from darkness into God's marvelous Kingdom of Light.

John would have thrilled when he saw that second group. The fledgling church may have been a relatively little ragtag group, ridiculed, opposed and persecuted by Romans and Jews alike for their faith in Jesus, but they were going to be successful in their mission. An innumerable group is to join the first fruits one day - people "from every kindred, nation, tongue and people" who have responded to God's call. That multitude comprises a crowd from every country, ethnic classification, clan and language group so huge that no human could hope to count it.<sup>275</sup> And John was going to have a part in many of them being there!

These saved ones join the 144,000 standing before Father and Son clothed in white robes, carrying palm branches in their hands shouting triumphantly at the top of their lungs: "Our God who sits enthroned and the Lamb saved us!"

The thunderous ovation of the saved evokes such a powerful response in the courts of heaven that every angel and the elders and the four living creatures fall on their faces before the throne in homage and worship saying "Right on! It's true!"<sup>276</sup> God deserves blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might as long as time lasts."<sup>277</sup>

*Revelation 7:13-15 - Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and whence have they come?" I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "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.*

One of the Elders who sit on the Universe's Cabinet turns to John and asks: "Do

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274 Matthew 27:51-53

275 Revelation 7:9

276 Often our English Bibles use the literal term, "Amen." Justin Martyr, the first to describe the corporate worship of the early church about 60 years after The Revelation was written, when he describes the Amen! that concluded the Christian services uses the Greek word meaning "thunderous applause."

277 Revelation 7:12

you know who these people dressed in white robes are and where they've come from?"

John answers: "It would only be a guess; tell me."

The Elder answers, "Every one of these have endured incredible pressure to compromise away or give up their faith; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

As noted previously, one of the themes in Revelation is a call for the citizens of God's Kingdom of Light to endure, to hang in there, to refuse to give up no matter how tough the going. The men and women in this massive uncountable crowd have answered that call; they have undergone incredible pressure and remained faithful and now they are about to receive their reward.

They are wearing white robes because they "washed them in the blood of the Lamb."<sup>278 279</sup> These are the ones who have trusted in the righteousness of Jesus instead of their own; they have had faith in him and the efficacy of his sacrifice on Calvary's Cross to pay the ransom demanded by the Kingdom of Darkness for their freedom.<sup>280</sup> They are the ones who chose to switch allegiance from the King of Darkness to the King of Light; they are his citizens and are about to receive the return of what Adam and Eve lost for the human race when they chose to rebel against God.<sup>281</sup> In the war between Satan and Jesus these faithful troops have stayed in the battle and have been victorious; they refused to retreat in the face of the assault of the King of Darkness and his gang of spiritual thugs; they have remained faithful at all cost.

*Revelation 7:16-17 - That is the reason they are constantly before the throne of God, serving him day and night within his temple. The One who sits on the throne*

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278 Isaiah 1:18; Zechariah 13:1; 1st Corinthians 6:10-11; Ephesians 5:25-27; Hebrews 9:14; 1st John 1:7

279 The term "washed them in the blood of the lamb" refers to the symbolic robe/clothing of sinlessness which a person must have on if he is going to enter heaven. Since all have rebelled against God and have soiled that robe, none of us on our own merits can ever hope to be saved. Jesus, by his death, provided a way for us to be forgiven. That is the meaning of washing a robe in the blood of the lamb - Jesus blood cleanses us of all sin. (1 John 1:9) It is the spiritual soap that washes away our sin.

280 1st Peter 1:18-19

281 Daniel 7:18,22,27

*will shelter them with his presence. They will never again hunger or be thirsty; the sun or any other scorching heat will ever parch and burn them. The lamb who is up by the throne will be their shepherd and he will guide them to springs of living water. God himself will wipe every tear from their eyes.*

Every time heaven is tempted to get discouraged with what is happening down on earth, all they have to do is look over at this group and be reminded that it is worth it; every time they wonder if these ransomed ones are really loyal, all they have to do is sit down and talk with one of them to hear the wondrous story and their commitment to God's Kingdom.

Is it any wonder, then, that they spend the majority of their time before the throne of God, serving him day and night. In amazement we watch God hovering over and around them, assuring these men and women abused and battered by Satan of his commitment to always be there for them, to heal their spiritual and emotional wounds; to wipe every tear from their eyes. We hear him promise them that they will never be hungry or thirsty again; that he will shade them from the sun and protect them from the heat.

Like a shepherd, the Lamb will guide them to springs of living water where they will lie down in green pastures and their cup of contentment and joy will fill to the rim and run over.