



## World Christian Fellowship

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### Revelation 32 Joy of the Tribulation Saints! Revelation 7:13-17

**Revelation 7:9-12**, *After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands,<sup>10</sup> and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"<sup>11</sup> All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,<sup>12</sup> saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honour and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen."<sup>13</sup> Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?"<sup>14</sup> And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.<sup>15</sup> 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 dwell among them.<sup>16</sup> They shall neither hunger anymore*

*nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat;<sup>17</sup> for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”*

This will be a revival that will be unlike any in human history because it will involve people from every nation, every tribe, every people, and every tongue coming to know the Lord Jesus Christ. There is coming a great revival, a great awakening that has no rival in history, when God will save millions of people in a very brief period all over the globe.

An international awakening, an international harvest of souls exceeding anything that’s ever known. As we look at Scripture, it is clear to us that the redeemed have always been few and the unredeemed, the unregenerate have been many. We have always been identified as the little flock. But the time is coming when there will be many and they will be a large flock, a great and immense flock.

Seeing a group of redeemed people shouldn’t surprise us, since our God is a saving God.

**1 Timothy 2:3-4**, “God our Savior who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

**2 Peter 3:9**, “God who is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”

**John 3:16**, “God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son for the purpose of paying the price for sin, so that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

God is a saving God.

God our Saviour.

God will move in a massive movement of salvation at the most unexpected time. The worst of times in human history.

The time we know as the tribulation.

This time of revival will be at the time of Satan’s full fury.

At that time, the time of wars, rumours of wars, famines, earthquakes, pestilence, plagues, the time of a disintegrating and collapsing universe, a fracturing earth killing billions of people, a time which ends in the holocaust known as the day of the Lord. God’s full and unmitigated fury, it is that time during the period we know as the seven-year tribulation that in the midst of it all God will save millions of people, both from Israel and from the nations of the world.

### **Who will do the evangelizing?**

We met some of them in **chapter 7**, 144,000 Jews, twelve thousand out of every tribe, who will be redeemed and sealed with the seal of God to be protected from any harm being done to them.

These 144,000 will preach the gospel of Jesus Christ be greatly instrumental in the conversion of Israel. As well as the salvation of this massive multitude in the Gentile world.

Then there are **two witnesses** described in chapter 11.

Two witnesses who have supernatural powers who can cause the rain not to fall, who can do supernatural deeds, who will even die in front of the whole gazing world and then rise again from the dead.

They will be powerful preachers.

Then there is a **heavenly angel** described in **Revelation 8:13**, **Revelation 14:6**, flying through the heavens preaching the everlasting gospel.

Of course, there are believers, those who come to faith through the instrumentality of these other agencies and through personal witness of those who have come to know Christ will be spreading the gospel.

**Matthew 24:14**, the gospel will be preached extensively and then the end will come.

There is going to be a great force of individuals that will be proclaiming the gospel and people will repent and will believe.

The terrorizing judgments that are described in the first six seals are going to cause people to take at reality and many of them will repent.

Here we meet this massive group that have repented and gone on to heaven in this time called the tribulation.

**Revelation 6:9-11**, we have a description of the same believers in different circumstances. We find under the description of the fifth seal, underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the Word of God, because of the testimony which they had maintained.

Here is a group of people who have come to faith in Christ sometime early in the tribulation period. They have already been martyred.

There will be a great amount of animosity raging against those who know Christ. They will be the casualties of that animosity. They will be slain because of their faithfulness to the Word of God and the testimony concerning Jesus Christ which they will uncompromisingly maintain.

**Revelation 6:10**, they are crying out to the Lord and asking for vengeance. They are asking God to bring vengeance on these evil people who hate God, Christ and hate His children.

Each of them is given a white robe and they were told they should rest for a little while longer until the full number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who were to be killed even as they had been, should be completed also.

We have the first vision of martyrs who have come to faith in the tribulation, who have been slain for their faith.

In the **fifth seal, chapter 6**, they are pleading for vengeance.

Suddenly in **chapter 7** they are joined together with the rest of the redeemed multitude who have died as martyrs and some who have died natural deaths.

But all of those who have come out of this period of time are collected together. They are no longer under the altar pleading for vengeance because vengeance has already come in full blazing form in the sixth seal. Now the seventh seal is about to be unleashed in even greater measure.

The group of people only is **not in a position of petition, but in a position rather of celebration.**

**V 9** that they had white robes and suggested to you that that refers to righteousness, purity on the one hand.

On the other hand, to victory and celebration and exaltation. Both of those are conveyed here.

Perhaps the idea of exaltation, celebration, victory, and triumph is even the more primary thought when you see the addition of palm branches in their hands because those were used in ancient festivals to express joyous celebrations, such as the Feast of Tabernacles, which we described to you last time.

The **description** of the group.

Then we saw their **location**.

**V 9**, *“They were standing before the throne and before the Lamb.”*

We know that the throne is in heaven the Lord God sits on it. The Lamb is in the midst of the throne, He, too, is in heaven, so they are in heaven.

They then have died.

They have been martyred.

They have been killed in the disasters, or they have died natural deaths.

Yet they are in heaven.

They have not necessarily received their glorified bodies. The white robes, the palm branches are emblematic of their triumph and victory and their purity.

John, in his vision, he must see something because you can't see a soul. So, he is visually able to see the vision of robes and palm branches which helps him to identify who these people are.

They yet wait for the body, the idea of palm branches and white robes being symbolic.

**Action.**

They are involved in worship.

They are crying out loud voice and worshipping the Lord.

*“Salvation to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb.”*

**Revelation 5:8**, tells us that the 24 elders, they represent the church that has been raptured and taken into heaven. They have harps which are associated in the Old Testament with prophetic ministry. They have golden bowls full of incense which are associated with prayer.

So here are those who are those who have heard the Word of God and those who have prayed and they are singing a new song. It is a song of redemption.

Men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

## Association:

**V 11-12**, *All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, <sup>12</sup> saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honour and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen."*

They join in on the praise.

These people who have been redeemed and their souls are now in the presence of the Lord in heaven, near the throne, waiting for the moment of resurrection of their bodies and the return to the glory of the millennial kingdom.

They are in firsthand association with the glorious angels of heaven. It is a marvelous association.

*All the angels stood around the throne*

A large group.

**Revelation 5:11**, *Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,*

The Greek word is **Murian**.

If we multiply that then we get into the billions.

There may be billions of angels, an innumerable host of angels.

**Hebrews 12:22**, *But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels,*

The innumerable angels, some translations say.

These are creatures created by God and they were created by God for the express purpose of serving and adoring and praising Him.

**Colossians 1:16**, *For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.*

Those are descriptive terms of angels.

They are the invisible thrones, dominions, rulers and authorities created by God for His service and for His praise.

They chime in. Here are these unworthy sinners, who have literally turned their backs on God.

They have missed the rapture.

They have rejected the gospel of Jesus Christ.

They were not taken in the church when the church was raptured and glorified before the tribulation began.

They are the rejecters.

Many cases, probably living in parts of the world where they never even heard the gospel.

God in His marvelous mercy, even after the church has been taken out and all hell breaks loose on the earth, He reaches out and in wrath remembers mercy, gathers them to Himself.

They are not second-class citizens, either.

God takes them right to the throne and they mingle with the holy pure angels.

These worshiping celebrating saints even stimulate the praise of heaven. Because the angels can't personally experience salvation, they wouldn't be stimulated to praise God for it unless some other redeemed creatures showed them that joy.

Here are these redeemed people who stimulate the angels into praise.

The angels, obviously, have always been fascinated by this.

**1 Peter 1:12**, *To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.*

**Ephesians 3:8-11**, *To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,<sup>9</sup> and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ;<sup>10</sup> to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places,<sup>11</sup> according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,*

God takes great pleasure in displaying His attributes, and particularly His redeeming power before His holy angels.

This is the throne described in **Revelation chapter 4**, this magnificent throne where God sits.

God is like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance and there is a rainbow around the throne like an emerald. Around the throne 24 thrones and on the thrones the 24 elders sitting clothed in white garments and golden crowns. From the throne proceed flashes of lightning, sounds, and peals of thunder, of course, anticipating judgment.

There is the Holy Spirit around the throne and in front of the throne is a sea of glass like crystal.

In the center and around the throne, four living beings.

This is a magnificent scene.

**Revelation chapter 5**, the One sitting on the throne takes a book and then comes the Lamb, standing right in the midst of the throne. It is a glorious place.

God is there,  
Christ is there,  
The Holy Spirit is there.

- These special unique living beings which are unique cherubim are there.
- The 24 elders representing the church are there.
- All the millions and billions of angels are all there.
- Together with them are redeemed out of the tribulation.

Note again that it tells us further in verse 11, not only were the living beings there but the elders were there.

They were there as well. The elders and the four living beings.

The elders represent the raptured church. Each time they appear in the prior visions it seems clear that they are singing the song of redemption.

They have experienced that redemption, and they represent the raptured church. So here is an association of praising beings, both men and angels.

*All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,*

Talks about all the angels and the elders, as if perhaps they have a unique category of their own.

Certainly, the four living creatures among all angels are somehow also unique.

**What do they do?**

*and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,*

They prostrate themselves to worship God. The posture they continually take. They are committed to that.

**Revelation 4:10**, we see the same.

**Revelation 5** we see that same kind of prostration.

**Revelation 11:16**. eternal activity is to fall before God and worship.

- They recognize His sovereignty.
- They recognize His supremacy.
- They recognize His majesty.
- They utter a glorious benediction.

It doesn't need to be explicated; it only needs to be read.

They say, "Amen," at the beginning and they say, "Amen," at the end.

But the word "amen" means "let it be, let it be." It is an affirmation.

Let it be that blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honour, power, and might be given to our God forever and ever.

Very much like that glorious benediction.

**Revelation 4:11**, *"You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honour and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."*

**Revelation 5:12-14**, *saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honour and glory and blessing!"* <sup>13</sup> *And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing and honour and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!"* <sup>14</sup> *Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.*

The scene is worship because that's the occupation of heavenly beings. They worshiped before the seals were opened, before the judgment began.

Now they are worshiping again as it comes to an end. This must be a greater and a more exhilarating praise because of what they have already seen.

Seal one, seal two, seal three, four, five, six broken as the Lamb breaks the seals and the judgments fall. This mounting crescendo of praise comes in response to what they once anticipated and now have seen.

They stand on the brink of the seventh seal and the final explosion of judgment that comes in the trumpet judgments and the bowl judgments that are to follow.

**Do you remember when we studied chapters 4 and 5 earlier how the praise started with a small group?**

First there were four living creatures and then there were twenty-eight and then there was a massive innumerable host of angels.

Now, we have added another group.

It was the four living creatures and the church and the angels and now we add the redeemed out of the tribulation.

The multitude of praising beings in heaven is larger than it's ever been. What an association for those persecuted, murdered, humble, faithful believers to take their place in this kind of glorious group.

But that's God's plan for all His redeemed, His wonderful plan.

**Luke 15:7**, *I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.*

**Luke 15:10**, *Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."*

The angels rejoice when someone is saved, and we see that played out in the parable of the prodigal where there's this tremendous party which symbolizes the rejoicing of heaven over the repentance of sinners.

Here we see the greatest praise that heaven has ever known taking place, ever known since the creation.

## **Origination.**

**Who are these newcomers who are now around the throne added to the rest of the host?**

**Where did they come from?**

*V 13, Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?"*

One of the elders representing the church asks John who they are and where they came from. He is not asking for his own information, he knows it. He knows who this group is.

He is a heavenly being now, he is a glorified believer. He has experienced full resurrection and translation and is like Jesus Christ.

He knows this representative of the church.

He is not asking for his own information, but he is asking to make sure John knows.

This tool shows that visions were not given for the purpose of spectacular displays, but to convey revelation the details of which were not to be missed.

The elder wants to be sure that John is getting the picture here and understanding it.

Lest John and everyone else somehow miss the point.

Because we might assume that there isn't going to be any salvation in the tribulation. We might assume that. We have read about all these horrible judgments.

**Revelation 9:20-21**, *But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk.<sup>21</sup> And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.*

A time is coming still people aren't going to repent.

The final bowl judgments the ones that come in rapid fire at the very end.

**Revelation 16:9**, *And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory.*

We might read that and assume that all this fury of judgment produces no repentance.

**Revelation 9:20-21 and Revelation 16:9** tell us that those people who have rejected all the way to the very end are going to be so hard they won't repent.

But during the time of the seven seals, they are going to be people who repent. This is important.

John has been given seven letters to send to seven churches and five of those seven spell doom for those churches.

From John's perspective, this does not look like a world-conquering movement. To read these revelations, he would conclude that Christianity in the end will fail, and God is just going to damn the whole world. Not so.

John is not to see it that way and we aren't either.

We are to understand that even though evil runs its course and the ultimate and final destruction of the power of God will fall, there will be even in that hour the greatest revival the world has ever known, and the gospel will triumph in the hearts of millions.

John and we are getting some very good news.

The Lord wants to make sure that he understands so one of the elders poses the question.

John responds to the query.

**V 14,** *And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

John admits that he needs revelation.  
He is confessing I don't know, you do.

It is another way of saying, "Please tell me."

Out of the great tribulation.

- They have come out of it.
- They lived into it.
- They were redeemed during it.
- They have now come out of it.

The only way out is death by martyrdom, in the holocausts, by natural course.

**Matthew 24:22**, *And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.*

Lots of death, billions will die, including believers.

They have come out of the tribulation.

They have heard.

They believed it.

They have been dying since the first half, but the great massacre occurred in the great tribulation and this group has continued to come out.

These people didn't go with the raptured church, since they weren't saved. They were Christ-rejecters.

They perhaps, who never heard the gospel.

During the seven-year period, especially in the last half, judgment increases, Antichrist terrorized, they are saved, and they escape. They are the opposite of the ones described in 2 Thessalonians.

**2 Thessalonians 2:10**, *and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*

During the time of Antichrist when Satan comes with power and signs, false wonders, and sends his emissary, the man of sin, the man of lawlessness.

There are many who will not receive the love of the truth. But these are the ones who did. These are the ones who received the love of the truth who believed and who received.

**Does this mean that you have a second chance?**

No.

It just means you have your lifetime and if you happen to have some of your lifetime left during the tribulation, you still have your lifetime.

If the church is raptured out and you are still alive, you still have the time, whatever time you have.

They would all have to be under seven years of tribulation, for obvious reasons.

**Do these are people who never heard the gospel ever in their whole life will have this chance?**

We can't find that anywhere in the Scripture.

No, you have a chance only in your lifetime.

Some would say as soon as the rapture occurs, I will fall on my knees and confess Christ the first time. Don't presume on God. But you have your lifetime.

So here are the saints who have come out of the tribulation. It shows a prolonged process, the ones who are coming out. This group keeps accumulating as people keep dying. It therefore doesn't lend itself to describing a rapture.

A rapture is in the moment.

In the twinkling of an eye, in a split second, in an instant everybody goes.

This is not that a continual process, prolonged, going on of people coming out over the years of the persecution and the death that is occurring.

Anyone who loves souls is going to have to rejoice in this because Antichrist is doing his big thing, trying to destroy the work of Christ.

Satan is pouring out all his fury trying to stop anything that the Lord would want to do for His glory, trying to withstand the forces of God in terms of redeeming power.

Yet, in the middle of all of it and even in the middle of wrath, God is redeeming souls, and they keep coming out.

This is written to encourage us of the ultimate gospel triumph, when the few will become many and to encourage preachers and witnesses to be faithful in that time.

Those who live in that time will bear fruit.

**V 14, “*the ones who are coming out,*”**

Clearly separates these believers from any other group of saved people throughout history.

They aren't just blended into the church.

If this were to refer to the rapture, why not identify all those people as the redeemed church?

**Why isolate this group?**

**Why not just call it the triumphant church, the glorious church who lived and died before and during?**

**Why not say it is the redeemed and raptured church?**

No, these are a uniquely separate group of believers who are coming out of this time of tribulation.

Not at one moment, but in a process, as their lives are taken. Some believers will survive. They must because they must populate the 1000-year Kingdom with human beings, earthly beings who can marry and have babies and repopulate the millennial world.

**Matthew 24** at the time when the Lord returns, two will be in a bed, one will be taken, the other will be left.

- One will be taken in judgment,
- The other will be left to go into the Kingdom.

Two will be in a field.

- One will be taken in judgment,
- The other will be left to go into the Kingdom.

There will be believers who survive. They will make it through.

**Revelation chapter 12** tells us that many of them will be Jewish. The Lord is going to find a place to hide them. He is going to hide them there for the **1260 days** of the years of great tribulation so that they will be alive to go into His Kingdom.

An innumerable host of people will die and go to glory.

Another large group of people will be redeemed and not die. They will survive having been saved and spared and protected, including the **144,000** and many other Jews, according to **Revelation 12**.

Many Gentiles who also will be spared and God will protect, and they will go into the Kingdom.

They will repopulate the world so that there will be nations all over the globe of many kinds of peoples who will all come to Jerusalem and there ten Gentiles will hang on the robe of a Jew and say, in effect, "Take me to see your King."

But these have died, and they are not all the redeemed. More will live right on into the millennial kingdom.

**V 13**, "These who are clothed in the white robes"

**V 14**, "they have washed their robes."

We would conclude that while the primary emphasis earlier on the white robes is celebration, exaltation, victory, triumph, joy, there is also the idea of righteousness and purity and here that is the emphasis, these are white robes because they have been washed.

They have been washed and made dazzling by the blood of the Lamb.

Blood doesn't get anything clean. It stains and must be cleaned.  
But here is a precious paradoxical truth.

Blood doesn't stain, blood cleanses every stain.  
The divine detergent removes sin all together.

This wonderful theme of the blood of the Lamb is not new to  
the book Revelation.

**Revelation 1:5**, *and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness,  
the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the  
earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His  
own blood,*

**Revelation 5:9**, *And they sang a new song, saying: "You are  
worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were  
slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood.*

The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.  
The Bible says we have received forgiveness through His blood.

We couldn't be redeemed by the blood of bulls and goats, but  
by the blood of Jesus Christ we have been redeemed.

Peter calls it precious blood, the blood of a Lamb without  
blemish and without spot.

Here are redeemed people whose sins have been washed away in the blood of the Lamb. They have died and they keep coming out of the time of the tribulation to take their place around the throne forever to praise the Lord.

## **Function.**

### **What are they doing?**

*V 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 dwell among them*

They are there to serve Him.

The word “serve” is a priestly word. It is not a menial word, or a common slavish word, but a priestly word.

They are rendering spiritual worship.

Part of spiritual worship may involve service, but the idea is that they have been washed in the blood of the Lamb for the very reason that they may come before the throne of God to worship Him day and night in His holy place, in His temple.

In the final glorious kingdom of Christ in the Millennium, there will be a temple.

**Ezekiel 40 to 48** describes it. There will be what we call the millennial temple. There is a temple here in heaven. There will

be a temple on earth. It will be God's temple come down from heaven on earth during the Millennium.

When we are looking at the new heaven and the new earth. This is passed what John sees in his vision, this is passed the Millennium that Ezekiel describes in 40 to 48.

**Revelation 21:22**, *But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.*

They are the temple. There isn't any temple in the eternal state. God is everywhere.

**1 Corinthians 15:28**, *Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.*

In John's vision is the temple.

A special holy place where God abides in.

During the Millennium there is a temple, a special holy place where God dwells in an otherwise still-fallen universe, partially restored and not fully.

In the eternal state, God doesn't need a temple because there's no evil in the universe and He is the temple.

**What would our function be?**

From the time we get there throughout all eternity is priestly worship.

## **Protection.**

*V 15, And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them*

### **What is that talking about?**

Protection, security.

God will put His tent around them.

His Shekinah presence will become their protection, a canopy of shelter to protect them from the terrible things they have suffered in the world.

Many of these are martyrs. All of them have seen horrors indescribable horrors. They have seen millions, billions of people, some of them die.

They have seen the disasters of the four horsemen of the apocalypse and the following sixth seal when the universe collapsed. They have seen all of this.

They have suffered a lot. But when they come into the presence of the Lord, they come to a secure place, a canopy of shelter to protect them from all the terrors of the fallen world.

Several times in **Revelation, chapter 13, chapter 21**, it talks about God becoming our tabernacle, our tent in whom we dwell and in whom we find our safety.

What a wonderful promise.

Never again will anyone harm them, never again will they suffer pain.

### **Provision.**

*V 16, They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat;*

They experienced that during the time of the tribulation.

They experienced hunger.

### **Do you remember chapter 13?**

It says that if anybody wanted to buy or sell, they had to do take the mark of the beast.

Those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ refuse the mark.

### **What happens?**

They hunger, they thirst because they refuse to worship the beast, the Antichrist.

Furthermore, they probably experienced some of the terrifying reality of the scorching sun that we read about earlier in God's judgment.

They know what it is to hunger, they know what it is to thirst, they know what it is to have the sun pounding down on them.

**Revelation 16:9**, *And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory.*

As the sky begins to disintegrate, the universe begins to collapse, normal temperatures are skewed.

They will see the destruction of water.

Things coming out of the sky pollute the waters.

The destruction of animals and plants, the limitation on food and drink. All of this they will have experienced but never again.

**V 17**, *for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*

It almost gives you the idea that they came to heaven weeping.

The Lamb is the center as He was in the midst of the throne. He becomes their shepherd.

That metaphor is everywhere from **Psalm 23** all the way to **Hebrews 13:20**.

- ✓ The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.
- ✓ Here is a Lamb who becomes a Shepherd.
- ✓ He gives them all they need.
- ✓ He provides all they could ever desire or want as well as complete security.
- ✓ He guides them to the springs of the water of life.

### **Who is the water of life and where are its springs?**

God is the water of life, and His springs are in His presence in glory.

Protection, feeding, leading, all thirst is quenched and never another tear to be shed. As you go through the book of Revelation there are many tears.

But they stop being shed when the saints reach the presence of God.

**Revelation 21:4**, *And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."*

The world in which we live today, we could certainly get the idea that Christianity is on the way to being defeated, couldn't we?

**Do you see it advancing in America?**

No.

**Do you see it advancing in Asia?**

No.

**Do you see it advancing in Europe?**

No.

**Do you see it advancing in Africa?**

Some places.

But as you look over the world, what you see as the church, organized Christianity, seems to be fast moving toward a very obviously defective kind of Christianity, doesn't it?

We seem to be losing. It is good news that in the end the gospel triumphs, Amen!