



FAITH PRINCETON SUNDAY SCHOOL
REVELATION 7:9-17 Multitudes and Martyrs
SUNDAY, MAY 10, 2026

REVELATION 7 Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

A Multitude from the Tribulation

9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; 10 and they cry out with a loud voice, saying,

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

11 And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying,

“Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen.”

13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?”

14 I said to him, “My lord, you know.”

And he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them. 16 They will hunger no longer, nor thirst anymore; nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; 17 for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes.”

Enduring Word Commentary: Revelation 7:9-17

Multitudes and Martyrs

A. The 144,000.

B. The Great Multitude.

1. ([Revelation 7:9-10](#)) More worship at the throne of God.

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, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

a. A great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues: The diversity here is evidence that the Great Commission will be fulfilled before the end, even as Jesus promised ([Matthew 24:14](#)).

i. Because John knew they came from different **nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues**, we know that there will be *differences* among people in heaven, just as there is on earth. We will not all be the same. We will be individuals.

ii. “I suppose as he looked at them he could tell where they come from. There is individuality in heaven, depend upon it. Every seed will have its own body. There will sit down in heaven not three unknown patriarchs, but Abraham — you will know him; Isaac, you will know him; and Jacob, you will know him. There will be in heaven not a company of persons, all struck off alike so that

you cannot tell who is who; but they will be out of every nation, and kindred, and people, and tongue.” (Spurgeon)

b. Standing before the throne and before the Lamb: Again, John saw everything in heaven in reference to the *throne* of God. “This is a peculiar subject of their joy: that God has a throne, that he sits upon it, and that he ruleth over all things, and all things do his bidding. The central thought of heaven, then, is divine sovereignty.” (Spurgeon)

c. Clothed with white robes: These **robes** remind us not only of the covering righteousness of Jesus, but also of *priestly service*. “They are *arrayed* for holy service, and arrayed at once, for they wear white robes fitted for their priestly service.” (Spurgeon)

d. Palm branches: These remind us of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem ([John 12:12-16](#)), where Jesus was also praised as Savior and King. The word *Hosanna* means “save now!”

i. **Palm branches** were emblems of victory. It shows this **great multitude** celebrates a great victory. “The palm, the ensign of triumph, indicates most certainly a conflict and conquest. As on earth palm would not be given if not won, we may conclude that the Lord would not have distributed the prize unless there had been a preceding warfare and victory... From the very fact that the glorified carry palms, we may infer that they did not come from beds of sloth, or gardens of pleasure, or palaces of peace, but that they endured hardness, and were men trained for war.” (Spurgeon)

e. Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb! Having an emblem of

righteousness (**white robes**), they worship God for **salvation**. They recognize that *God* is the source of salvation, and no one else. Salvation isn't something we earn, it is something God gives.

i. Sometimes believers on earth take their salvation almost for granted. This isn't true of this great multitude in heaven.

2. ([Revelation 7:11-12](#)) All heavenly creatures join in worship.

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, saying:

“Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen.”

a. **All the angels... the elders and the four living creatures... worshiped God:** As the great multitude worships God, the others in heaven are compelled to join their voices in praise. All created beings around the throne join in.

b. **Blessing and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honor and power and might:** As these other created beings hear the worship the great multitude brings to God, *they* see more clearly the power and wisdom and majesty of God. They can worship God all the more by seeing the salvation He brought to the great multitude.

3. ([Revelation 7:13-14](#)) The identity of the great multitude.

Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?” 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.

a. **Then one of the elders answered:** It was important that John knew the identity of this great multitude. But he didn't know that he should ask, so **one of the elders** prompted him to ask.

b. **These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation:** This vast multitude, from every tribe and tongue and nation, are those rescued for God's kingdom in the period of **the great tribulation**.

i. They had trouble on the earth during **the great tribulation**. In the ancient Greek grammar of this passage, “**the**” is emphatic. This was a time of **great tribulation** *for this multitude*. This leads many to believe that most, if not all, of these are *martyrs* from **the great tribulation**.

ii. The presence of so many tribulation saints is a powerful statement of God's grace and mercy. Even in this time of judgment and wrath on the earth, many are saved.

iii. Because the great multitude are mentioned right after the 144,000, many think they are — at least in part — due to the work of those 144,000 servants of God. Perhaps the 144,000 are evangelists who help reap this huge harvest for the kingdom during **the great tribulation**.

c. **Washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb:** Those saved in the great tribulation are saved just like everybody else, by **the blood of the Lamb**. Even if they are martyred, their martyrdom does not save them. Only the work of Jesus can cleanse and save.

i. “They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Not one of them became white through his tears of repentance, not one through the shedding of the blood of bulls or of goats. They all wanted a vicarious sacrifice, and for none of them was any sacrifice effectual, except the death of Jesus Christ the Lord. They washed their robes nowhere but in the blood of the Lamb.” (Spurgeon)

ii. **White by blood** is an interesting phrase; we don’t think of things being made white by the application of blood. But the blood of Jesus cleanses us: *Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.* ([Isaiah 1:18](#))

4. ([Revelation 7:15-17](#)) What this great multitude does, and how it is blessed.

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 shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; 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.”

a. **They are before the throne of God:** In heaven, the redeemed enjoy the immediate presence of God. They can come right into the throne room and be with God. There are no barriers, no waiting lists.

i. These saints knew affliction on earth, and they triumphed over it. But it wasn’t their affliction that saved them. It was Jesus and their relationship of faith with Him. “Affliction of itself does not sanctify anybody, but the reverse. I believe in

sanctified afflictions, but not in sanctifying afflictions.” (Spurgeon)

b. **And serve Him day and night:** In heaven, the redeemed **serve** God. We don’t know exactly how, but they do. “Heaven is not only a place of rest from earthly toil but also a place of privileged service.” (Walvoord)

c. **He who sits on the throne will dwell among them:** In heaven, God **will dwell** with His people. This is the ultimate fulfillment of King David’s great desire in [Psalm 27:4](#): *One thing I have desired o the LORD, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house o the LORD all the days o my life, to behold the beauty o the LORD, and to inquire in His temple.*

d. **The Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them:** In heaven, the redeemed will know the loving care and nurture of their Savior. He will protect them from every affliction (**they shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat**). He will also provide for their every need (**lead them to living fountains of waters**).

i. Jesus does **shepherd** us now, and He is close to us and cares for us now. Yes, but in heaven it will be so much more. “The true Christian life, when we live near to God, is the rough draft of the life of full communion above. We have seen the artist make with his pencil, or with his charcoal, a bare outline of his picture. It is nothing more, but still one could guess what the finished picture will be from the sketch before you.” (Spurgeon)

e. **God will wipe away every tear from their eyes:** In heaven, the redeemed will know no more sorrow or pain. The hurt and the struggle of this earthly life are gone, and tears are a thing of the past, because **God will wipe away every tear.**

i. What tender love! We think of a mother's loving hand, brushing away the tears from her child's face. God loves us with that kind of nurturing care.

ii. We also understand from this that **every tear** will only be wiped away in *heaven*. On this earth, we have our share of pain and tears to endure and bring to God. He shows His love *now* with sweet consolation and strength for our tears; but *one day* — in heaven, not now — He will wipe them away forever.

iii. This passage *does not* have the idea that in heaven, we will weep over our wasted life or unconfessed sin, but God will still wipe those tears away. That idea may be a powerful, guilt-inducing motivator, but it has nothing to do with the meaning of this verse. “The point is that the grief and tears of the past, speaking of their trials in the tribulation, will be over when they get to heaven... God will wipe away all tears resulting from their suffering on earth.” (Walvoord)

iv. Some wonder, “How can there be no sorrow in heaven if we have relatives or loved ones who perish in hell? Won't we be sorry for them?” Spurgeon answered this question well: “Now, how is this? If you will tell me, I shall be glad, for I cannot tell you. I do not believe that there will be one atom less tenderness, that there will be one fraction less of amiability, and love, and sympathy — I believe there will be more — but that they will be in some way so refined and purified, that while compassion for suffering is there, detestation of sin shall be there to balance it, and a state of complete equilibrium shall be attained. Perfect acquiescence in the divine will is probably the secret of it; but it is not my business to guess; I do not know what handkerchief the Lord will use, but I know that he will wipe all tears away from their faces, and these tears among them.”

©2019 David Guzik – No distribution beyond personal use without permission

References:

1. Seiss, Joseph A. "The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation" (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1987)
2. Spurgeon, Charles Haddon "The New Park Street Pulpit" Volumes 1-6 and "The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit" Volumes 7-63 (Pasadena, Texas: Pilgrim Publications, 1990)
3. Walvoord, John F. "The Revelation of Jesus Christ" (Chicago: Moody Press, 1966)