

KING OF THE JUNGLE

“SELAH”

REVELATION 7:1-17

At 8:30 AM on Wednesday, August 29, Patrick Marsh, a meteorological student at the University of the Oklahoma sat in a field outside Houma, Louisiana.

He said the experience was surreal. Grey skies loomed in all directions, but there was an eery quiet.

Fifty miles away in New Orleans, Hurricane Isaac had the city underseige. Governor Jindal ordered a mandatory evacuation. A serious storm surge and high winds damaged 59,000 homes. More than a million families lost power. There were several fatalities.

Yet in Houma you could hear the birds chirp.

And so it is in the eye of a hurricane - one of nature's strangest phenomenas. A storm batters and batters - *then for about 10-15 minutes there's a peculiar quiet* - followed by another onslaught from the furious storm.

Well, this is a good picture of Revelation 6-8.

The King of the Jungle, the Lion of Judah, is in heaven. He's worthy to receive title to the universe.

John sees Jesus as a sacrificed Lamb. His scars give testimony to the price He paid on Calvary. But He doesn't just *buy back* what was lost, He'll *take back* possession. This is what Jesus does when He pops the seals, opens the scroll, and evicts the squatters...

Revelation 6 records the breaking of six of the seven seals - and the awful judgments that they unleash...

Remember the sixth seal knocks the Earth off its hinges... *Meteors, earthquakes, smoke, tsunamis...*

The inhabitants of the Earth head to the hills, and plead for an avalanche to put them out of their misery.

[The whole Earth shutters at the wrath of the Lamb.](#)

And the Sixth Seal closes with the challenge, *“For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”* This is the question hanging in the air at the end of Chapter 6 - and it's the subject of Chapter 7...

Revelation 6-19 describes a future time-period it calls *“Great Tribulation.”* The seven seals John sees binding up the title deed are an eviction sequence.

As Jesus pops the seals, judgments are released on Earth. Each broken seal gets us one step closer to shutting down Satan, and restoring the reign of Jesus.

Six seals are cracked open, but the seventh seal is like a box of Cracker Jacks. *It has a surprise inside...*

It holds seven more judgments called trumpets.

The trumpet blasts signal to the Earth that God means business - sin has to be punished... Then seven bowls bubbling over with God's wrath are poured out...

Add it all up and the world gets what it deserves.

But interspersed between all the judgment - the seals, and trumpets, and bowls - are several vignettes or parenthetical passages, that focus on people or groups or other details related to this Great Tribulation.

And chapter 7 is the first of these vignettes...

Think of Revelation 7 as a **“Selah within the Seven Seals.”** You'll find the word **“Selah”** used 74 times in the Bible - three times in Hosea, and the rest in Psalms.

The root of the Hebrew word means **“to hang”** - or by implication **“to measure.”** Commerce in the ancient world was done through scales and balances. The idea behind the term **“Selah”** is **“to weigh in the balance...”**

In the Hebrew hymnal **“Selah”** denoted a musical interlude. The lyrics ended, but the music continued.

It was a break where you could digest the words and absorb its implications. The Amplified Bible translates the term **“Selah”** to mean **“pause and think about it...”**

This is how I treat Revelation 7 - in one sense, it's the eye of the storm. But it's more... it's a **“Selah.”**

It's not just a time to catch your breath from the devastating judgments that God unleashes on the rebel planet. *It's also a reflection of what it all means...*

Here is an opportunity to see these events from heaven's perspective... And this is in keeping with the theme of the last book of your Bible! Remember, this book isn't the *Revelation of the Four Horsemen*, or the *Revelation of the seals and trumpets and bowls*, or the *Revelation of the two witnesses*, or the *Revelation of the New Jerusalem*, or even the *Revelation of the Antichrist*... it's the **Revelation of Jesus Christ**.

The world is a jungle. *It's a jungle out there* - in the Revelation the world is over-run with beasts, dragons, locust, horsemen - but Jesus is the King of the Jungle!

And in every chapter of the Revelation we should ask ourselves, “**what does this teach us about Jesus?**”

Chapter 7 is no different. Here we'll see **His mercy, His diversity, His priority, His glory, and His eternity**...

First, you should check out the Lion's **mercy!**

Verse 1, “**After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth...**” Or the four points of the compass... *east, west, north, and south*.

Four angels spread out over the globe are “**holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree...**” This is amazing, *a mere four angels are restraining the wind!*

The circulation of the Earth's atmosphere - the westerlies and the easterlies - are powerful engines driven by the sun's energy, and the planet's rotation.

We see the force of the wind clearest when it blows like a Hurricane Isaac, or a tornado. Yet, there's also the trade winds, and the sea breeze, and the El Nino.

The wind is a mighty force - *and here just four angels wrestle the Earth's jet streams into submission.*

This is a display of God's supreme power.

Nothing in creation can rival the might of the Creator.

A mere four of God's strongmen bring global air movements to a screeching halt. *Earth grows quiet...*

A few seconds ago, the winds of judgment were howling, but now God has a few issues for us to weigh and consider. *Judgment is not all that's on His mind...*

Verse 2, "Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea..." Notice, the angels who harness the wind were dispatched to judge the Earth. God sent them to harm the land and the sea.

But they're interrupted in the midst of their mission.

God orders them, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads." *This pause is a cause for meditation...*

The King of the Jungle is about to *seal the fate* of the wicked world - but first He has *His own people sealed*.

Jesus has run out of patience. Judgment has come.

But the Lion interrupts Himself to show **mercy!** Ponder this... Jesus *stops judgment to show mercy!*

Hopefully by now you know the meaning of a seal...

We're not talking Navy Seals, or Easter Seals, or barking seals, or adhesive seals, or Seals and Crofts...

In the Bible a seal was an insignia stamped into hot wax. It was a mark of ownership. A merchant identified his cargo with his seal. When it reached its destination he went to the docks to retrieve what he had sealed.

And the seal prohibited anyone from tampering with the box, or the package. If the owner's seal was broken he knew that his merchandise had been violated.

The NT teaches that all true Christians belong to Jesus. We're His purchased possession. And our Lord has a unique way to seal what's His. Ephesians 1:13, tells us, we're "**sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.**"

God's Spirit is the Lord's mark of ownership on our lives. The Spirit's presence and power in us is what affirms to us and others that we really do belong to God. Romans

8:16 reads, “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God...”

The way you know you’re a Christian is not whether you go to Church - or that you’ve memorized a few verses - or that you wear cool Christian T-shirts - or that you’ve kept all the rules and are morally superior...

Knowing that you’re a Christian is all about one thing... As Jesus put it, “you must be born again!”

Are you spiritually alive? Has God put His Spirit in you? Are you *filled with the Spirit or full of yourself?*

Colossians 1:27, “Christ in you, the hope of glory!”

In the Great Tribulation, as well as right now, the people who are able to stand, are those who’ve been sealed by their Lord Jesus with the Holy Spirit of God?

Even in the midst of the judgments in Revelation 6 we learn that people will embrace Jesus, and He’ll seal them with the Holy Spirit. He’ll stamp His mark of ownership on the foreheads of His servants.

Sometimes we think we're all alone - the last of the faithful Christians. But that's almost never the case.

It’s amazing to me that even with the world in its death throes, there’s new life in the hearts of a few.

Jesus always has a living and faithful remnant.

In 1 Kings 19 Elijah threw a pity party. He thought he was all alone fighting against Jezebel's idolatry?

But God straightened out Elijah's attitude. He wasn't alone. God tells him, "Yet I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him."

These were some of the darkest days in Israel's history - idolatry was the state religion - yet God was still at work drawing out a people for Himself.

It just goes to show - whether it's an Ahab on the throne - or an Obama, or a Romney occupying the Presidency - God's plan never fails. His mercies are new every morning. God doesn't abandon *His* people.

Wild winds are about to blow again as the Lord seals His servants. But even in judgment there's mercy...

Verse 4, "And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:

of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed.”

It’s ironic, but every cult that comes down the pike will usually claim to be the 144,000 of Revelation 7.

For a while the Jehovah’s Witnesses identified themselves as the 144,000 - until their rolls swelled to more than that number. That’s when they modified their view - the 144,000 became an “*elite group*” of JWs.

The Worldwide Church of God claimed to be part of the 144,000 - as did some Seventh Day Adventists.

Yet you have to ask, “*Has anybody read verse 4?*”

It clearly identifies this group as “*144,000 of all the tribes of the children of Israel...*”
These guys are Jews!

If someone tells you they’re one of the 144,000 - ask them, “*which tribe?*” *Seminole* or *Cherokee* don’t count.

These are 12,000 from the 12 tribes of the nation Israel! The 144,000 is an exclusively Jewish fraternity!

Understand, how God sees the human race...

When I'm sitting in the airport I love to people watch.

All kinds of people stroll by... there's *short people, tall people - fat people, skinny people - colored people, pale people - bouncy people, sullen people - young people, old people* (and old people trying to look like a young people) - *hurried people, hungover people - sad to leave people, and happy to be home people...*

Yet in the OT there were only two types of people.

God chose the Jews - descendants of His servant, Abraham - for special treatment. The nation Israel was a distinct group. Everybody else were called Gentiles.

When God divvied up the human race He grouped us all into one of two categories - Jews or Gentiles.

But this changes in the NT. In Ephesians 2 Paul explains how that in Christ He's created a new man.

Today, God sees a third group - **the Church**. It's a combination of believing Jews and believing Gentiles.

Go to Hartsfield-Jackson Airport this afternoon and you'll see three types of people - Jews, Gentiles, and the Church. But soon, the Church is going to fly away.

We're outbound. Headed home.

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we'll be snatched away. We'll be caught up in the clouds with Jesus, and we won't even need an airplane ticket. It's called the *rapture*. Faith in Jesus is the boarding pass.

But here's what that means on Earth... There's only two groups again - Jews and Gentiles. And the judgments that occur at this time are staged for them.

Referring to the Church, 1 Thessalonians 5:9 states, "God did not appointed us to wrath." Paul says of Jesus in 1 Thessalonians 1:10, "who delivers us from the wrath to come." A great escape awaits you and me.

The Great Tribulation is for unbelieving Jews and Gentiles. It's the final opportunity for both. Apparently, this is the jolt needed to open eyes blind to God's truth.

These 144,000 Jews will believe - *and with the Church in heaven* - God will seal these Jews, equip them, and use them to spread the Gospel of grace.

Before Jesus ascended to Heaven, He told His followers, "Go and make disciples of all the nations..."

This is the job of ever generation of believers - we need to share the Gospel... But in the Great Tribulation the Church is in Heaven - absent on Earth - and God will resort to several interesting evangelistic methods...

In Revelation 14 He sends angels that fly through the skies declaring to humanity the everlasting gospel. Revelation 11 speaks of two witnesses who grab the world's

attention by performing miracles. And here Jesus empowers 144,000 Jewish Billy Grahams...

Revelation 9 describes a bizarre scene. Hell, the bottomless pit, opens up and empties out creatures that roam the Earth to torment the rebels who remain.

Chapter 9:4 speaks to these demonic beings, “They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.”

Notice, the group who can't be touched by these tormentors... the 144,000 Jewish servants of God from Revelation 7. The Lion affords this army supernatural protection against all things devilish and demonic.

John Phillips paints a picture of the protection God provides. He writes, “The concentration camps and torture chambers of the Beast's fearful inquisition will leave them unscathed. The fire will not kindle upon them, nor the smell of smoke be on their garments... The secret police will have dossiers as thick as prison walls, but they will be unable to harm them.

The seal of God rests upon them, and they are saved and secured, come what may. They will be living proof to the devil that not only is his power strictly limited by divine decree, but in the end he cannot win.”

When the devil and his henchman rise up in the end he's going to have a 144,000 burrs in his backside!

Yet why do these Jews get turned into superheroes?

The Lord Jesus knows there's limited time left, and He wants nothing to disrupt these witnesses from completing their mission of proclaiming the Gospel.

And imagine their effectiveness. Non-messianic Jews suddenly converted to Jesus, now sealed and filled with the Spirit, armed with supernatural protection, preaching on the heels of the rapture...

Prop that up against the backdrop of horrible judgments - *the end of the world as we know it* - and you can expect millions of people to rush to conversion. Folks will not only get saved during the Great Tribulation - there will be a colossal revival...

Did you know that everywhere in the world today, apart from North America and Europe, Christianity and the Church are experiencing unprecedented growth.

Not since the book of Acts has the Church grown at such a pace. In 1900 Korea had no Protestant church. Today, there're 7000 churches just in the city of Seoul.

At the end of the 19th century the southern portion of Africa was 3% Christian. Today the population is 63% Christian. African churches add 34,000 members daily.

It's estimated that in China today, Jesus has more disciples than the Communist party has members. Very soon, more Christians will live in China than any other country on the Earth. It's amazing what's going on...

In India 14 million untouchables are now Christians.

In Islamic Indonesia the percentage of Christians has grown so high (somewhere around 15%) that the muslim government refuses to publish the statistics.

Even in the traditional Muslim world more people are converting to Christianity than at any time in history.

Across the planet the Church is growing by 80,000 members per day. We start 3500 churches every week.

Yet understand, the largest and most sweeping spiritual awakening is still future. And ironically, it won't occur until the Church is raptured off the Earth.

In Matthew 24:14 Jesus predicted, “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

Jesus foresaw a final worldwide burst of evangelistic activity prior to His return. And it gets carried out largely by this supernaturally protected army of Jews.

Notice the immediate results of their efforts...

Verse 9, “After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number...” Here's another group of believers coming out of this period of Great Tribulation – this time it's a horde of Gentiles.

Remember this is not the Church. We're in heaven.

This group consists of people who believed in the Gospel witness of the 144,000 Jews, and embraced Christ in the midst of this terrible time of punishment.

And pay attention to the size of this group... John calls it “*a great multitude which no one could number...*”

Later in Revelation 9 John will see an army he numbers at 200 million. If this group is a size that can't be numbered it has to exceed 200 million. Perhaps a billion people will be saved in the Great Tribulation.

When *the Lion in Jesus* roars and judges, *the Lamb in Jesus* will see to it that everyone who can be saved, will be saved. After the rapture folks are still converted.

Notice, this great multitude is no longer on Earth.

They're before the throne in Heaven. It seems many of them died for their faith. Here are future martyrs.

I've heard well meaning preachers imply that after the rapture all hope is lost. You've missed the bus.

That's not biblical. You can be saved, but it's a deadly proposition. By this future point, the tide has turned. There's no more tolerance. Leaders defiant of God will make it a capital crime to be a Christian...

And it's not just martyrdom that you should fear.

Throughout human history evil men have devised tortures that made death look like a welcomed friend.

Even today, from Egypt to Pakistan - from China to Vietnam - from the Sudan to parts of Nigeria - believers are tortured for Jesus sake. There were more Christian martyrs in the 20th century than any previous century.

Yet persecution today pales in comparison to the hardships post-rapture believers can expect. Imagine, living for Christ under the tyranny of the Antichrist.

One author writes of their future challenges, “They leave life through the terrifying gates of the most horrible deaths that Satan can devise. The maggot and the fires, the rack, the thumbscrew and the wheel, the scalpel and the sword are their means of exodus.” The Great Tribulation will become *the Christian holocaust*.

If you miss the rapture, but decide to follow Christ it won't be pretty - or easy - but thankfully, there's hope.

This great multitude in verse 9 is proof.

Even after Jesus comes for His Church those who remain will still have the opportunity to embrace Him.

And this is the important lesson Chapter 7 teaches.

It reveals the Lord's never ceasing commitment to extend salvation as far and wide and long as possible.

Even in the throes of judgment... And by this point the Lion has the Earth in a headlock, and an arm bar, and a sleeper hold - but rather than a pin, He prefers a surrender. He pauses, so sinners can tap out - *repent*.

Is it possible for Jesus to serve justice, and stay true to God's righteousness, yet have a bigger heart?

Under this Lion's roar is the love of a Lamb.

He never gives up on love! Even when wrath from Heaven rains down, forgiveness can still be found.

God forbid that you're still here. Be saved today. But if you are, never give up a merciful God. Jesus will serve as this Earth's rightful judge, but He never stops being its Savior! Jesus is rich in mercy to the very end.

And there's another revelation into the heart of Jesus that comes out of Chapter 7... Recall, we're in the eye of a hurricane - winds of judgment are about to howl again. Jesus has just a brief window of opportunity to wake up a sleeping world... Notice, how He does it?

He raises up an army of Jews to preach the Gospel.

His strategy isn't to defeat the Antichrist in the next election - or hire a hit squad to take out the False Prophet - or send Heavenly drones to attack the corrupt Babylon...

His solution is spiritual not political.

Jesus arms His end-times army with the Gospel and seals them with His Spirit. And these two forces remain the most powerful change agents known to humanity.

And if that's what the Lion relies on to transform the hearts of men in the darkest, most challenging of days, why would we resort to lesser methods in our day?

Realize the world's greatest need is the Gospel. And the Gospel preacher's greatest ally is the Holy Spirit.

Paul said to the Romans, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes..." In a world of un-grace, God's grace is the poultice - the healing balm.

And don't kid yourself, that would still be true no matter who occupied 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue...

The Gospel certainly makes an impact in the Great Tribulation - an innumerable multitude get saved.

But notice, not only the *number*, but the *nationalities* of this crowd in Heaven... "of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb..." Recall the question at the end of the Sixth Seal in chapter 6, "Who is able to stand?"

This multitude who believed in the Gospel - they now stand before the throne and before the Lamb.

And notice their make-up...

They're from "*all nations*" - not one of the Earth's 169 countries is missing... "*All tongues*" - not a single language group remains unreached... "*All peoples*" - every race, skin tone, background is represented...

Expect to see a rich diversity in Heaven.

In the aftermath of this week's election one of the big issues discussed was the changing demographics of the United States. Our country is turning browner.

Next summer I plan to work on a nice tan.

But diversity has never been an issue in Heaven. It's multi-racial, multi-cultural, multi-colored - probably even multi-lingual... *Although I'm sure you know, everyone in Heaven speaks with a southern accent. :)*

Heaven is certainly brown, and red, and black, and yellow, and beige. It's the ultimate rainbow coalition.

Understand, Heaven won't fall victim to a uniformed sameness. Heaven will be fun - not boring. It won't be full of cookie-cutter folk. We won't all be stamped from the same mold and occupied with the same duties.

Everybody in Heaven will be acutely aware that God created them with unique gifts and personality. This is part of being made in God's image. On Earth sin distorted that image, and diminished our gifts - but in heaven we'll be free to be all that God made us to be!

In Heaven our creativity will flourish - there'll be no inhibitions - talents won't be buried under the fear of failure - we won't worry about rejection or disapproval.

Rather than suppress individuality - it's celebrated. There's great diversity in Heaven, but also strong unity!

I made a mistake last Christmas by having an African Christmas Party at my house. Understand my heart... I want everyone in our fellowship to enjoy all our events.

I'd like to see all members equally involved.

And it was my desire to help the members of CC with an African heritage feel more a part of their church.

Certainly, the folks who came to the party were polite and appreciative. But here's what I was told. **"Pastor Sandy, we don't want to divide into African Christians and European Christians. Just treat us as Christians!"**

And that's what happens in Heaven. Though this multitude is culturally-diverse, they're spiritually-united.

Before the throne and the Lamb they come **"clothed with white robes..."** Heaven is multi-racial and multi-cultural - *and maybe our robes are designed differently.*

Perhaps there'll be some flowing dashikis and some hoodies, and some bathrobes, and some capes, and some graduation robes - lots of various robe styles...

But they're all the same color - "*white*" represents the purity that's in Christ. Isaiah puts it, "*though your sins are like scarlet they shall be as white as snow.*" Jesus is the commonality that's greater than our differences.

And notice in Heaven we all worship alike. The crowd stands, "*with palm branches in their hands...*"

In Heaven it's Palm Sunday every day! We've been *saved to sing* – we've been *washed to worship!*

The Lamb doesn't saved us and cleanse us just so we can go to heaven. There's a job to do once we arrive. Heaven's chief occupation is to praise the Lord!

And this is what John hears... Verse 10 describes a deafening roar that goes up from the multitude - "*crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"*"

Heaven is the most racially and culturally diverse place you'll ever go. If you like diversity, you'll love Heaven! But spiritually, Heaven is homogenous. You've never been to a place more united - in total agreement.

Everyone in Heaven got there the same way. They understand, "*Salvation belongs to God and the Lamb!*"

Muhammed didn't get them to Heaven. The Roman Catholic Church, and the Pope, and the Virgin Mary didn't get them to Heaven. The Buddha didn't get them there.

The book of Mormon and the Angel Moroni didn't get them to Heaven. *They couldn't even get Mit to the White House.* They certainly can't get you to Heaven.

Listen to Heaven itself - if you want to go to Heaven listen to the multitude that's already before the throne...

“Salvation belongs to our God... and to the Lamb!”

Only Jesus Christ can get you to Heaven!

And notice how the praise of these Tribulation saints stirs the song of other inhabitants of Heaven... In fact, this often happens. Praise is contagious. When one person or group gets their eyes on God, others follow...

We're told in verse 11, *“All the angels stood around the throne...”* That's an understatement. *“All the angels”* equals billions. *“And the elders...”* The twenty-four elders include members of the Church. *“And the four living creatures...”* These are Heaven's secret service.

Everyone combined *“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.”* Heaven begins and ends its praise with an exclamation, *“Amen.”* Praise is the priority of Heaven.

The most commonly-held concept in the universe is that God is worthy of blessing, and wisdom, and glory, and honor, and thanks, and might - forever and ever.

Only Satan and stubborn men still debate it.

Verse 13, “Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?” I’m sure John is a little stunned. *Why does an elder in Heaven ask him anything?* He’s the new kid. John still wears a visitor’s badge. He replies, “And I said to him, “Sir, you know.”

Even though he’s a Heavenly rookie, John still doesn’t like admitting his ignorance. He tosses it back..

“So he said to me (and the heavenly elder ends up answering his own question...), “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.”

Here’s an oxymoron, “*made... white in the blood...*”

Bloodstains don’t usually turn a robe white. But the blood of Jesus has *holy hemoglobin*. His sacrificial blood takes out *the grimmest grime* and *the dirtiest dirt*.

The only way to get spiritually clean in the eyes of God is to wash your robe in the blood of the Lamb.

In chapter 8 the Lion will order the angels who are holding back the wind to stand down. Judgment will resume. But at the moment there’s a “Selah”...

Chapter 7 is some breathing room to ponder and consider... [the Lord’s desire to show mercy, His trust in the Gospel, diversity in Heaven, hardship on Earth...](#)

But in the next three verses we get a glimpse at the conditions in Heaven - *and this will blow your mind...*

Verse 15, “Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple.”

The elder is speaking of “*the great multitude*” that come out of Great Tribulation - but these pictures are in the travel brochure Heaven sends to all believers.

Notice first, the focus in Heaven isn't the glassy sea, or the tree of life, or the four living creatures, or the saints of old, or all our unanswered questions, or even the people we're anxious to see again - it's the throne.

Life in Heaven revolves around the throne of God.

And we'll have specific assignments - projects - vital activities. We won't be trampolining on cumulus clouds, or learning to play the harp. We'll be busy - not bored.

Heaven is all about strategic business. We'll worship at God's throne, and serve the Lord “*day and night.*”

“*And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them.*” This is what makes Heaven heavenly. We're finally with our Lord Jesus unhindered, unencumbered.

In Heaven when you pray the Lord's Prayer it'll be different. You'll begin, “*Our Father who art... here!*”

Verse 16, **“They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore...”** And this was the problem for the believers who came out of the Great Tribulation.

Later we learn they get blackmailed. To buy and sell they have to deny their allegiance to Jesus, and submit to Antichrist. Their refusal leads to starvation and thirst.

Now in Heaven there’s lots to eat and drink. Heaven is the land of second-helpings and stocked pantries.

And there’s protection from the harsh environment the judgments cause on Earth. Heaven brings relief...

“The sun shall not strike them, nor any heat...”

Verse 17 conveys one of the most beautiful thoughts in the Bible, **“For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters.”** **The Lamb will be their Shepherd!**

“And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

But there will be tears to wipe away. The folks that come out of Great Tribulation will have suffered much!

You don’t want to be one of them... I hope you’ll make the Lamb your shepherd today!