

Things to Come

#12 The End of the Interlude

(Rev. 7:9-17, 8:1-5)

I. Introduction

II. The great multitude (7:9-17)

- A. Their identity
 - 1. Likely martyrs (17:6, 18:24, 19:2, 20:4)
 - 2. Different than the 144,000 Jews (every nation is mentioned)
 - 3. Perhaps they represent those "future" martyrs who are killed during the second half of the tribulation.
- B. Clarification regarding the term "tribulation"
 - 1. Can refer to the trials of all Christians in all ages (John 16:33, Acts 14:22, Rom. 5:3)
 - 2. Can refer to the very severe tribulation on those alive during the "time of great distress." (Dan. 12:1)
 - 3. Can refer to the wrath that is to come on all unbelievers: "the great day of their wrath." (Rev. 6:17)
- C. A four-fold description
 - "Every nation, tribe, people and language" (see Rev. 5:9, 11:9, 13:7, 14:6, 17:15)
 - Note the position of acceptance and honor (Isa. 52:10 and Matt . 24:14)
 - Note too the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 12:1-3)
- D. White robes and palm branches
 - Washed in the blood: See Lev. 17:11 and Heb. 9:22
 - Palm branches: See John 12:13 and Lev. 23:40
 - They are symbols of victory
- E. Their worship
 - To God forever...
 - Praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, honor, power, strength
 - Amen! So be it!

- F. Their service (vs. 15)
 - 1. Sheltered before the throne (He spreads his tent or tabernacle over them. His protective presence...Zech. 2:10-11, 8:3,8)
 - No hunger, no thirst, no heat
 - 2. Was their shepherd at springs of water (see John 10 and Ps. 23)
- G. And then God will wipe away all their tears. Note the timing.

III. The Seventh Seal (8:1-5)

- A. Note that the opening of the seventh seal triggers the trumpets.
- B. 30 minutes of silence
 - 1. Praise for Almighty God is continuous in Heaven (Rev. 4:8)
 - 2. Perhaps the silence allowed the voices of the martyrs to be heard above the angels.
 - 3. This represents a kind of Sabbath or break just before the great wrath of God descends
 - Ps. 76:8-9 "From heaven you pronounced judgment, and the land feared and was quiet— when you, God, rose up to judge, to save all the afflicted of the land."
 - Hab. 2:20 "The LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him."
- C. The seven angels
 - A word about angels
 - 1. Mentioned directly or indirectly 300 times in the Bible
 - 2. The term (Hebrew and Greek) means "messenger"
 - 3. Other designations which are also applied to angels:
 - a. "Men": Gen. 18:2, Acts 1:10
 - b. "Sons of God": Job 1:6, 2:1, 38:7
 - c. "Watcher" and "Holy Ones": Dan. 4:13, 17, 23
 - d. "Rulers in the Heavens" (both the good and evil) Eph. 3:10, 6:12, Col. 1:16, 2:15
 - e. "Ministering Spirits": Heb. 1:7, 14
 - 4. Christ taught regarding the existence of angels. Matt 13:9, 18:10, 25:31, 25:41, 26:53
 - 5. Angels were created (Neh. 9:6, Ps. 148:1-5)

6. They may temporarily adopt the appearance or form of men (Gen. 18:2, 22, 19:1)
 7. They have personality
 - a. Intellect 1 Pet. 1:12
 - b. Will Heb. 1:6, Jude 6
 - c. Emotion Job 38:4-7, Luke 2:13, 15:10
 8. They are designated by masculine gender in the scripture. Dan 9:21, 10:10-21, Matt. 28:5, Mark 16:5, Luke 24:4, 23, Acts 10:3, 30-31
 9. They do not reproduce (Mark. 12:25)
 10. They do not die (Luke 20:36)
 11. They are distinct from human beings (1 Cor. 6:3, Heb. 2:6-7, Heb. 12:22-23)
 12. A word about guardian angels (Ps. 91:11-12 and Matt. 18:10)
 13. You may meet one...Heb. 13:2
- D. The trumpets: the most significant musical instruments in the Bible.
1. Old Testament: Called Israel (to war, feast, to see new kings, and for worship)
 2. New Testament: Will announce the rapture (1 Cor. 15:52, 1 Thes. 4:16)
- E. The Golden Censer (a fire pan)
- In the Tabernacle and temple, twice a day, priests took fiery coals from the brazen altar (sacrifice of animals) to the incense altar. The incense was a symbol of the prayers of the saints. (See Zachariah in Luke 1:8-10)
- The answer to "how long?" is about to be answered! "...a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries." (Heb. 10:26-27)

IV. So What?

Does God really care? Does He listen to the prayers of His saints? Yes! So, pray!