

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 350 – December 16th – Revelation 7:1-17

Works frequently referenced in these notes on the book of Revelation

Morris, Leon	<i>The Revelation of St John</i> (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries), Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1969
Mounce, Robert H	<i>The Book of Revelation</i> (New International Commentary on the New Testament), Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1977
Peterson, Eugene H	<i>Reversed Thunder</i> , San Francisco, HarperCollins, 1991
Witherington, Ben	<i>Revelation</i> (New Cambridge Bible Commentary), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003

Chapter 7

Chapter 7 comes as a parenthesis between the sixth and seventh seals. Mounce writes, "Chapter 7 ... serves as a dramatic interlude. It delays for a brief moment the disclosure of that which is to take place when the seventh and final seal is removed from the scroll of destiny. The chapter consists of two visions – one, the sealing of the 144,000, and the other, the blessedness of the great multitude before the heavenly throne. A great deal has been written about the identity of the 144,000 as well as the relationship between the two visions..." The view taken by Mounce is that "in both visions it is the church which is in view, but from two vantage points. Prior to the trumpet judgements the last generation of believers is sealed so as to be saved from the destruction coming on the earth and to be brought safely into the heavenly kingdom. The second vision is anticipatory of the eternal blessedness of all believers when in the presence of God they realize the rewards of faithful endurance."

Verse 1

Μετὰ τοῦτο εἶδον τέσσαρας ἀγγέλους ἐστῶτας ἐπὶ τὰς τέσσαρας γωνίας τῆς γῆς, κρατοῦντας τοὺς τέσσαρας ἀνέμους τῆς γῆς, ἵνα μὴ πνέῃ ἄνεμος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς μήτε ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης μήτε ἐπὶ πᾶν δένδρον.

ἐστῶτας Verb, perf act ptc, m acc pl ἵστημι stand

γωνία, ας f corner

κρατεῶ hold, hold back

ἄνεμος, ου m wind

Cf. Zech 6:1-8 which associates horsemen and winds.

πνεῶ blow (of wind)

μητε and not; μητε ... μητε neither ... nor

θαλάσσα, ης f sea

δένδρον, ου n tree

A picture of destruction kept back or delayed.

Verse 2

καὶ εἶδον ἄλλον ἀγγελὸν ἀναβαίνοντα ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς ἡλίου, ἔχοντα σφραγίδα θεοῦ ζῶντος, καὶ ἔκραξεν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ τοῖς τέσσαρσιν ἀγγέλοις οἷς ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς ἀδικῆσαι τὴν γῆν καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν,

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

ἀναβαίνω go up, come up, ascend

ἀνατολή, ης f rising sun, dawn, east

ἡλιος, ου m the sun

σφραγίς, ἰδος f seal

ζῶω live, be alive

κραζῶ cry out, call out

ἐδόθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s δίδωμι

ἀδικεῶ harm

Verse 3

λέγων· Μὴ ἀδικήσητε τὴν γῆν μήτε τὴν θάλασσαν μήτε τὰ δένδρα, ἄχρι σφραγίσωμεν τοὺς δούλους τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν ἐπὶ τῶν μετώπων αὐτῶν.

ἄχρι prep with gen/conj until

σφραγίζω seal, secure/mark with a seal

μετώπον, ου n forehead

Cf. 9:4; 14:1; 22:4; Ezek 9:4; Isa 44:5; 2 Cor 1:22; 2 Tim 2:19. Signifies ownership and protection. Witherington writes, "What sort of sealing is in mind? Possibly it is the sort mentioned in Ezek 9:4, or possibly the Exodus painting of blood on the doorpost is being echoed. If the former, the symbol painted was the Hebrew letter tau, sometimes written in the form of a cross or X. This would indeed be appropriate as a symbol for the people of the cross."

Verse 4

Καὶ ἤκουσα τὸν ἀριθμὸν τῶν ἐσφραγισμένων, ἑκατὸν τεσσαράκοντα τέσσαρες χιλιάδες, ἐσφραγισμένοι ἐκ πάσης φυλῆς υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ·

ἀριθμὸς, ου m number, total

ἐσφραγισμένων Verb, perf pass ptc, gen pl

σφραγίζω

ἑκατὸν one hundred

τεσσαρακοντα forty
 χιλιας, αδος f (group of) a thousand;
 χιλιοι, αι, α thousand

12 x 12 x 1,000 – a number signifying completeness. Witherington comments, "A clue about who these servants are is found in Rev 9:4, where everyone but believers is called upon to repent, and they are said to be the ones without the sealing. This suggests that the 144,000 are coterminous with the total number of believers. Here as elsewhere the language about Israel is applied to Jew and Gentile united in Christ... [144,000] here is a symbolic number for the whole people of God."

φυλη, ης f tribe

Verse 5

ἐκ φυλῆς Ἰουδα δώδεκα χιλιάδες
 ἐσφραγισμένοι,
 ἐκ φυλῆς Ρουβὴν δώδεκα χιλιάδες,
 ἐκ φυλῆς Γαδ δώδεκα χιλιάδες,

Ἰούδα Noun, gen s Ἰουδας

Priority is given to Judah because Christ was from Judah.

δώδεκα twelve

Verse 6

ἐκ φυλῆς Ἀσὴρ δώδεκα χιλιάδες,
 ἐκ φυλῆς Νεφθαλὶμ δώδεκα χιλιάδες,
 ἐκ φυλῆς Μανασσὴ δώδεκα χιλιάδες,

One peculiarity is that Manassah, one of Joseph's sons, is included in place of Dan. Dan may have been omitted because of early associations with idolatry (cf. Judg 18:1; 1 Kings 12:25-33).

Verse 7

ἐκ φυλῆς Συμεὼν δώδεκα χιλιάδες,
 ἐκ φυλῆς Λευὶ δώδεκα χιλιάδες,
 ἐκ φυλῆς Ἰσραῆλ δώδεκα χιλιάδες,

Verse 8

ἐκ φυλῆς Ζαβουλὼν δώδεκα χιλιάδες,
 ἐκ φυλῆς Ἰωσήφ δώδεκα χιλιάδες,
 ἐκ φυλῆς Βενιαμὶν δώδεκα χιλιάδες
 ἐσφραγισμένοι.

Verse 9

Μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον, καὶ ἰδοὺ ὄχλος πολὺς, ὃν ἀριθμῆσαι αὐτὸν οὐδεὶς ἐδύνατο, ἐκ παντὸς ἔθνους καὶ φυλῶν καὶ λαῶν καὶ γλωσσῶν, ἐστῶτες ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου καὶ ἐνώπιον τοῦ ἄρνιου, περιβεβλημένους στολὰς λευκάς, καὶ φοίνικες ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτῶν·

ὄχλος, ου m crowd, multitude

πολυς, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου i)
 much, great, many

This is no longer a number on earth but a multitude in heaven who have come out of trial (v.14.) and have entered glory.

ἀριθμῶ count, number

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμία, οὐδεν no one, nothing
 δυναμὶ can, be able to, be capable of

They are a vast multitude that no one can number. "As God promised Abraham, they are in number as the stars of heaven (Gen 15:5) and the sand of the sea (Gen 32:12)." Mounce. Witherington comments, "Although at the end of the first century the total number of Christians cannot have been huge, the point would be that this vision encourages John about the eventual success of the Christian mission."

ἔθνος, ους n nation

For this phrase see 5:9.

ἐστῶτες Verb, perf act ptc, m nom pl ἵστημι
 ἐνώπιον prep with gen before

ἄρνιον, ου n see 6:16

περιβεβλημένους Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc
 πλ περιβαλλω put on, clothe, dress

στολή, ης f robe, long robe

λευκος, η, ον white, shining

Cf. v.14.

φοίνικες Noun, nom pl φοινίξ or φοινίξ,
 ἴκος m palm branch

χειρ, χειρος f hand

A picture of festal joy as on the day when Jesus entered Jerusalem (Jn 12:13).

Verse 10

καὶ κράζουσι φωνῇ μεγάλῃ λέγοντες· Ἡ σωτηρία τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν τῷ καθήμενῳ ἐπὶ τῷ θρόνῳ καὶ τῷ ἄρνιῳ.

κραζω cry out, call out

σωτηρια, ας f salvation

"The great multitude joyfully acknowledges that their deliverance rests on the sovereign will of God and the redemptive activity of the Lamb." Mounce.

Verse 11

καὶ πάντες οἱ ἄγγελοι εἰστήκεισαν κύκλῳ τοῦ θρόνου καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ τῶν τεσσάρων ζώων, καὶ ἔπесαν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου ἐπὶ τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν καὶ προσεκύνησαν τῷ θεῷ,

πάντες Adjective, m nom pl πας

εἰστήκεισαν Verb, pluperfect act indic, 3 pl
 ἵστημι

κύκλῳ prep with gen round

ἔπесαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl πιπτω

προσωπον, ου n face

προσκυνηω worship

Verse 12

λέγοντες· Ἀμήν· ἡ εὐλογία καὶ ἡ δόξα καὶ ἡ σοφία καὶ ἡ εὐχαριστία καὶ ἡ τιμὴ καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ ἰσχὺς τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων· ἀμήν.

A sevenfold doxology of praise. "How unbelievably great will be the joyful adoration of the heavenly host when *all* the redeemed stand before their God!" Mounce.

εὐλογία, ας f blessing, praise
δόξα, ης f glory
σοφία, ας f wisdom
εὐχαριστία, ας f thanksgiving
τιμὴ, ης f honour, respect
ἰσχὺς, υος f strength
αἰῶνας Noun, acc pl αἰων, αἰωνος m age, eternity

Verse 13

Καὶ ἀπεκρίθη εἷς ἐκ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων λέγων μοι· Οὗτοι οἱ περιβεβλημένοι τὰς στολὰς τὰς λευκὰς τίνες εἰσὶν καὶ πόθεν ἦλθον;

ἀπεκρίθη Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s
ἀποκρίνομαι answer, reply
εἷς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one
περιβεβλημένοι see v.9
στολή, ης f see v.9
ποθεν interrog adv. from where, how
ἦλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3 pl ἔρχομαι

Verse 14

καὶ εἶρηκα αὐτῷ· Κύριέ μου, σὺ οἶδας· καὶ εἶπέν μοι· Οὗτοι εἰσὶν οἱ ἐρχόμενοι ἐκ τῆς θλίψεως τῆς μεγάλης, καὶ ἔπλυναν τὰς στολὰς αὐτῶν καὶ ἐλεύκαναν αὐτὰς ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ ἀρνίου.

εἶρηκα Verb, perf act indic, 1 s λεγω

Charles interprets the present participle to mean 'these are such as come from...' implying they still continue to come. Mounce thinks the context "favours a point in time when the complete number of the redeemed stand before God and the blessings of the eternal state are about to be realized."

θλιψις, εως f trouble, suffering

The definite article points to a particular 'Great Tribulation' (cf. Dan 12:1).

ἔπλυναν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl πλυνω
wash
ἐλεύκαναν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl λευκαίνω
make white

For white or splendid robes as a picture of righteousness see Is 61:10; Rev 3:4,5,18; 19:8.

αἷμα, ατος f blood

"The idea of making robes white by washing them in blood is a striking paradox. It is the sacrifice of the Lamb upon the cross which supplies white garments for the saints."

Mounce.

The picture of robes washed in blood is a complex one. It may owe something to the ceremony by which the old covenant was ratified and the blood of the covenant sprinkled on the people, signifying their part in the covenant and its benefits (Ex 24:8 – perhaps combined with Ex 19 where the children of Israel wash their garments in readiness for the descent of the Lord on Sinai).

Verse 15

διὰ τοῦτό εἰσιν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ λατρεύουσιν αὐτῷ ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς ἐν τῷ ναῷ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὁ καθήμενος ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου σκηνώσει ἐπ' αὐτούς.

λατρεῶ serve, worship
νύξ, νυκτος f night
ναος, ου m temple, sanctuary

"In John's vision heaven itself is the sanctuary: within, all God's children are worshipping priests (1:6; 5:10)." Mounce.

σκηνοῶ live, dwell

"For the tabernacle to be *over* his people is a way of saying that the immediate presence of God will shelter and protect them from all harm (Isa 4:5-6). It is the fulfilment of the OT promise that God will dwell in the midst of his people (Ezek 37:27; Zech 2:10)." Mounce.

Verse 16

οὐ πεινάσουσιν ἔτι οὐδὲ διψήσουσιν ἔτι, οὐδὲ μὴ πέση ἐπ' αὐτούς ὁ ἥλιος οὐδὲ πᾶν καῦμα,

"The eternal blessedness of the redeemed is pictured in phrases drawn for the most part from Isaiah's description of the exiles returning from Babylon (Isa 49:10)." Mounce.

πεινάω be hungry
ἔτι still, any more
διψήσουσιν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl διψάω
be thirsty

Cf. Mt 5:6.

πέση Verb, aor act subj, 3 s πίπτω fall
ἥλιος, ου m the sun
καῦμα, τος n heat

Verse 17

ὅτι τὸ ἀρνίον τὸ ἀνά μέσον τοῦ θρόνου ποιμανεῖ αὐτούς, καὶ ὀδηγήσει αὐτούς ἐπὶ ζῶης πηγᾶς ὑδάτων· καὶ ἐξαλείψει ὁ θεὸς πᾶν δάκρυον ἐκ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτῶν.

ἀνα μεσον among, between

ποιμανεῖ Verb, fut act indic, 3 s ποιμαινω
keep sheep, tend as a shepherd

"The idea of the Lamb as the shepherd of God's flock is an intriguing exchange of roles. Elsewhere in the writings of John, Christ is pictured as the good shepherd (Jn 10:1-30; 21:15-17; cf. 1 Jn 3:16 with Jn 10:11). The metaphor builds on the OT picture of God as the shepherd of Israel. Such passages as Psalm 23:1 ('The Lord is my shepherd') speak of the gentle care and daily provision of the ancient shepherd. God through Ezekiel tells of a coming shepherd – 'my servant David' – who is to tend his flock (Ezek 34:23). Christ is this promised good shepherd." Mounce.

ὁδηγεω lead, guide

ζωη, ης f life

πηγη, ης f spring, fountain

ὕδωρ, ὕδατος n water

Cf. Ps 36:8-9; Jn 4:14; 7:38. "As a fresh-water spring in a semi-arid land would be to a shepherd and his thirsty flock, so will be the eternal presence of God to redeemed man in his longing for spiritual wholeness." Mounce.

ἐξαιρεω wipe away, remove

δακρυον, ου n tear (as in weeping)