

Revelation 7:1-7

Before the seventh seal is opened, there is a very important pause in the narrative. God has sometimes provided a way of protecting His own during times of judgment –

1. Noah and his family during the flood. (Genesis 6-9)
2. Lot and his family when Sodom was judged. (Genesis 18-19)
3. Israel in Egypt. (Exodus 11-15)

In Revelation 7:1-8, certain members of the tribes of Israel are given protection in the form of a seal. These will survive the Tribulation.

However, in Revelation 7:9-17, thousands upon thousands of Gentile believers are seen in heaven. They were martyred during that same Tribulation. Some will live; some will die; all are honored.

Revelation 7:1-8

It's interesting to note that at the beginning of the Seventieth Week of Daniel not one saved person was on the earth (because the Rapture removed all the Church to heaven). Every saved person mentioned in Rev. 7 got saved after the beginning of the tribulation. In other words, there are multitudes that get saved among both Jews and Gentiles without one evangelist, without one believer telling them, and without one preacher preaching the Gospel at the beginning. How could that happen except by Bibles and media being available?

It's also interesting to see the focus these verses put on the people of Israel. During the Seventieth Week of Daniel it is Israel again in the center of God's plan and work, not the Church. The coming Kingdom of Christ will be a fulfillment of promises made to Israel. The Church is involved, but not the focus of the Kingdom.

Revelation 7:9-17

This multitude of Gentile believers stands in heaven as martyrs for Christ. They believed in Jesus during the Great Tribulation and died soon after for their faith. They probably had little time to grow in their walk with the Lord or in their knowledge of the Bible. We might consider them all novices, and yet they are highly honored by the Lord.