

Tribulation Saints

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Recently I have been interested in learning about believers during the time of the great tribulation. What does the Bible have to say about the tribulation saints? How many people will get saved after the rapture? I always thought that very few people would be saved during the tribulation. What does the Bible say? The book of Revelation held some wonderful treasures to find. Things will end happy and triumphant for the people of God even those who suffer and die during that time of great tribulation.

The rapture is referred to briefly in Revelation chapter four when God tells John to "come up hither." *"After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter."* (Revelation 4:1) So, what does the book of Revelation say about the saints, the people of God in "hereafter"?

Chapter six

Perhaps the first mention tribulation saints is found in Revelation chapter six. Here the Bible says, *"⁹And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: ¹⁰And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? ¹¹And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."* (verses 9-11)

First these verses show that the souls of those who were slain for the word of God and for their testimony were under the altar, and they cried to the Lord for Him to avenge their blood. However, the Lord told them to wait because there were more that would be slain for the Lord's sake, their fellowservants and their brethren. These saints were given white robes to wear.

Chapter seven

In Revelation chapter seven, the 144 thousand Jewish virgin men, servants of God, were given the seal of God in their foreheads. *"⁹After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; ¹⁰And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb... ¹³And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? ¹⁴And I said*

unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ¹⁵Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. ¹⁶They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. ¹⁷For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” (verses 9-10, and verses 13-17)

What a wonderful and happy thing!

1. First the tribulation saints will be *a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.* There will be many, many tribulation saints. (The number here may also include all those who have suffered for the Lord's sake since the beginning, after the fall of man.)
2. They came out of great tribulation and they have white robes to wear because they have washed their robes white in the blood of the Lamb.
3. They are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in the temple.
4. They will never suffer again.
5. Jesus Himself will feed them, lead them to living fountains of waters, and God will wipe away all their tears.

It appears that the 144 thousand will witness for the Lord and that there will be many who will be saved. Those who are saved in the great tribulation will come out of that tribulation with their robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb, and they will be greatly blessed by God.

Chapter eight

“³And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. ⁴And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. ⁵And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.” (Revelation 8:3-5)

These verses are very interesting. The incense that the angels had in their censer was to be offered with the prayers of all saints. It ascends with the prayers of the saints up to God. What follows seems to be part of God's answer to the prayers of the tribulation

saints in Revelation chapter six. In verses nine and ten of that chapter, John says, *"I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: ¹⁰And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"* Two chapters later the prayers of the saints ascend with the smoke of the incense that the angel offered along with the prayers. The smoke rose up from the censer that the angel held. After the prayers and the incense were offered to God, the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and cast it into the earth. Once the fire from the altar was cast into the earth, *"there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and an earthquake."* The rest of the chapter goes on to describe terrible judgment and destruction and ends with these words in verse thirteen, *"Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!"* Terrible destruction had come after the actions of one angel, and the other angels had yet to sound their trumpets and bring destruction. God hears the prayers of His saints – both living and His saints whose souls are under His altar. God will one day avenge the blood of His own.

Chapter Nine

In chapter nine, there is only a brief mention of the tribulation saints, in particular those who had received the seal of God in their foreheads. Chapter six mentioned the 144 thousand Jewish male virgins, God's servants, as those who would receive His seal in their foreheads. God will not allow the plagues of His wrath that are poured out upon the earth to harm these servants. Only those who did not have the seal of God in their foreheads would be harmed by these dreadful judgments. *"³And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. ⁴And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads."* (Revelation 9:3,4)

Chapter eleven

The Two Witnesses

Regarding saints, chapter eleven speaks only of the two witnesses that God sends on the earth during the time of tribulation. Verse three says, *"And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth."* These two witnesses have power to devour their enemies with fire that comes out of their mouth and to shut up the heaven so that it will not rain. They

will have power to turn water into blood and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will.

One day these two witnesses will finish the work God sent them to do. These verses explain, *"⁷And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. ⁸And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. ⁹And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. ¹⁰And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth."* After these two prophets are killed, the people on earth will rejoice and make merry because these two had tormented those who dwelt on the earth. They think they have overcome these two witnesses. But, God is not finished with His two witnesses yet, *"¹¹And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. ¹²And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them."* (verses 11,12)

When the prophets are resurrected, great fear will come upon the people. Then God will tell the prophets to come up thither, and they will ascend to heaven in the sight of their enemies. After this, God will pour out more wrath upon the earth, *"And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven."* (verse 13) It does not pay to fight against God's servants and His witnesses, for God will surely avenge them, and He will surely judge sin.

Chapter Twelve

Chapter twelve speaks not only of the tribulation saints but seems to speak of the saints in general. It is the wonderful chapter that speaks of the time when Satan, the accuser of the brethren, will be cast down. Once he is cast down, he can no longer accuse believers before God. It will be a wonderful time!

"¹⁰And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. ¹¹And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." (Revelation 12:10,11)

Chapter Thirteen

Once the beast arises and the false resurrection is staged, it will be required that everyone receive the mark of the beast. True believers, however, will not receive this mark. Things will be very hard for them, but they will have patience because they will remember that God will avenge His own. Those that persecute God's people will receive the things done to them that they did to God's people. Verses eight through ten say, *"⁸And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. ⁹If any man have an ear, let him hear. ¹⁰He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints."*

Chapter Fourteen

This chapter once again talks about the 144 thousand Jewish virgin men that were redeemed from among men, whom God had sent to do His work. *"¹And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. ²And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: ³And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. ⁴These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. ⁵And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God."* (Revelation 14:1-5) These were people chosen especially by God to do a special work for Him during the great tribulation. God taught these servants a special song that nobody else could learn. They follow the Lamb wherever He goes, and no guile is found in their mouths.

This chapter also teaches about other tribulation saints. These saints will see the judgment of God poured out on those who persecuted them. They will have patience, and they will be blessed. Verses nine through thirteen say, *"⁹And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, ¹⁰The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: ¹¹And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and*

whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. ¹²Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. ¹³And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

Those who worship the beast may get along better at first, but they will have a terrible end for all eternity. Those who reject the beast and worship God and keep His commandments and the faith of Jesus will be blessed and will rest from their labors for eternity.

Chapter Fifteen

Revelation chapter fifteen tells about the tribulation saints who get victory over the beast, over his image, over his mark, and over the number of his name. Their story can be found in verses two through four, "*²And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. ³And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. ⁴Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."*

Chapter sixteen

In chapter sixteen, the saints are mentioned only briefly, almost as if in passing. First the chapter shows that some of this pouring out of God's wrath is God avenging His own. "*³And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea. ⁴And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. ⁵And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. ⁶For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. ⁷And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments."* (Revelation 16:3-7)

This chapter describes some of the horrible judgments that await those who rejected Christ and persecuted His people. It also has this encouragement for those who do not reject Him. The Lord says, "*Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and*

keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.” (verse 15) In contrast to those who reject Christ and are judged and receive of God’s wrath, those who know Him and watch for Him and keep their garments clean will be blessed.

Chapter Seventeen

Chapter seventeen describes the judgment of Babylon. Babylon is judged because it controlled all the people’s of the earth and because in it was found the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. This seems to be a figurative Babylon, perhaps Rome, as it is described as sitting on seven mountains or seven hills. This is not a geographical description of Babylon in the middle east, but of Rome. *“³So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. ⁴And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: ⁵And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. ⁶And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.”* (Revelation 17:3-6a)

Chapter Eighteen

Chapter eighteen describes the judgment of Babylon. The saints are mentioned – not just the tribulation saints, but all the saints that have been put to death for the Lord’s sake. Here are a couple of verses from the chapter, *“⁴And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. ⁵For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities... ²⁰Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. ²¹And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all... ²⁴And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.”*

Chapter Nineteen

Chapter nineteen continues the rejoicing in heaven and rejoicing by God’s people that Babylon is fallen and judged. It is after the fall of Babylon that the marriage supper of the Lamb is ready. It seems that all the company of saints, the persecuted, and the martyrs is now complete. Chapter nineteen is a chapter of victory and triumph! Here are some verses from this chapter, *“¹And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the*

Lord our God: ²For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. ³And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. ⁴And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. ⁵And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. ⁶And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. ⁷Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. ⁸And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. ⁹And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God... ¹¹And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. ¹²His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. ¹³And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. ¹⁵And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

Chapter Twenty

Chapter twenty tells about the first resurrection and those that take part in it. This is the time when Satan is bound and Jesus rules the earth for a thousand years. The saints will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him a thousand years. *"¹And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ²And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, ³And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. ⁴And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years... This is the first resurrection. ⁶Blessed and holy is he that hath part in*

the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

Chapter Twenty-one

Chapter twenty-one describes the new Jerusalem and the Lamb's bride. It is a beautiful chapter. *"⁹And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. ¹⁰And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, ¹¹Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal."* (Revelation 21:9-11) After this, John goes on to describe the city. He tells about the angel measuring the city and how big and beautiful it is. Then he continues, *"²²And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. ²³And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. ²⁴And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. ²⁵And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. ²⁶And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. ²⁷And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."* (verses 22-27)

The new Jerusalem, the home of the saved, will be a wonderful city, *"²And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. ⁴And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. ⁵And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new... ⁶And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."* (from verses 2-6)

Such a beautiful place awaits the saints – the saints of yesteryear, the saints of today, and the saints of the tribulation period! Be ready. You do not want to miss this wonderful time in this wonderful place!

Chapter Twenty-two

Chapter twenty-two has a brief description of the saints that will live in the holy city and an invitation from the Spirit and the bride. Here are some excerpts from the chapter.

"³And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: ⁴And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. ⁵And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever... blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book... behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. " ¹³"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. "

¹⁴Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city... I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

¹⁷And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

If you have not yet come, why not come now? The water of life is offered freely to whosoever will.