**Revelation 7:9-17**

**The Church Triumphant**

1. The Christians in Heaven: verses 9-12
   1. Innumerable: verse 9
      1. Christians come from every nation.
   2. Arrayed in white: verse 9
      1. In Rev. 4:4 we see the twenty-four elders dressed in white. Rev. 6:11 also souls who were martyred for the faith given white garments.
      2. These white garments symbolize purity and righteousness of Christ.
         1. Purity and righteousness is the result of the cleansing blood of Jesus (Rev. 7:14).
   3. Carrying palm branches: verse 9
      1. John 12:13 is the only other place in the New Testament we see palm branches.
         1. They are used for celebratory reasons, as well as a sign of victory.
   4. They sing a hymn of praise: verses 10-12
      1. In this hymn of praise God’s people attribute their salvation to God and to the Lamb.
         1. The greatest praise we can ever bring to God is by thanking Him for our salvation.
2. Identification of the Christians in Heaven: verses 13-14
   1. The elder’s question
      1. It seems like John should be the one asking the question. Perhaps the elder senses John’s wonder. He is awestruck!
      2. In Rev. 5:5 one of the elders around the throne helped John understand that Jesus, the Lamb of God, is worthy to open the scroll (the message of Revelation).
   2. Identity and origin of the host
      1. It is those who are coming out of the great tribulation.
         1. In Rev. 6:1-8 John was given the vision of all the persecution and sufferings brought about by the four horsemen.
         2. In other places of Revelation like chapter 1:9-20 we see tribulations are a part of being a Christian. Jesus says in Rev. 2:9,10 to the Christians in Smyrna they would experience persecution and imprisonment.
            1. None of these are called great tribulations, however.
         3. “Great tribulations” maybe a reference to what will happen when Satan is let loose for a short time (Rev. 20:7).
            1. Jesus does describe in Matthew 24:15-31 terrifying days at the end of this world right before His second coming.

He uses the world great tribulation in verse 21.

* + - 1. “coming out of the great tribulation”
         1. In Greek this is a present tense participle

“The present participle describes a continuous action and is formed from the present stem of a verb.” (William Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek*)

* + - * 1. Verse 14 is not just those Christians that will come out of the last bit of time before the Lord’s return (the time we call the great tribulation) but also Christians coming out of any tribulations from the time of Christ’s ascension and His return.

1. Christians in Perfect Communion with God: verses 15-17
   1. Sheltered with the presence of God
      1. The word shelter (v15) is the same word used in John 1:14 where we read that the Word (God) became flesh and dwelt among us.
         1. This word can be translated as shelter, tent, tabernacle, home, or dwelling-place.
         2. The Tabernacle in the Old Testament was the “Tent of Meeting” for God’s presence.
            1. It housed the Ark of the Covenant. We know this is where God met and talked with Moses (Exodus 25:22).
   2. All needs are met
      1. In verse 16 we see that God meets the very core of our natural needs.
         1. How much of our life here on earth filled with concern over food, drink, and shelter?
   3. With the Lamb forever
      1. Psalm 23 is fulfilled
      2. “springs of living water”
         1. Jesus is our source of life (Psalm 36:8,9; John 4:14)
      3. He will wipe every tear from their eyes
         1. Shedding tears/mourning is part of the experience and character of God’s people here on earth.
            1. Mary shed tears over her brother’s death (John 11:33).
            2. Paul shed tears over the Christians in Corinth (2 Cor. 2:4)
            3. Jesus shed tears over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41) as well as the tomb of Lazarus (John 11:35).