

## Angelic Participation (v.11)

**VERSE 11** **And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures** (καὶ πάντες οἱ ἄγγελοι εἰστήκεισαν κύκλῳ τοῦ θρόνου καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ τῶν τεσσάρων ζώων [*conj kai + adj.nom.m.p. pas all + art.w/noun nom.m.p. angelos angel + pluperf.act.ind.3p. histemi stand + prep kuklo in a circle, around + art.w/noun gen.m.s. thronos throne + conj kai + art.w/noun gen.m.p. presbuteros elder + conj kai + art.w/adj.gen.nt.p. tessares four + noun gen.nt.p. zoon living being*]; **and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God** [καὶ ἔπεσαν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου ἐπὶ τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν καὶ προσεκύνησαν τῷ θεῷ [*conj kai + aor.act.ind.3p. pipto fall + prep enopion before + art.w/noun gen.m.s. thronos throne + prep epi + art.w/noun acc.nt.p. prosopon face + pro.gen.m.p. autos it; "their" + conj kai + aor.act.ind.3p. prokuneo worship + art.w/noun dat.m.s. theos God*]),

ANALYSIS: VERSE 11

1. The resounding song of the saints of the tribulation prompts the angelic host of heaven to engage in worship.
2. Though angels do not experience salvation in the same sense as humans, they still rejoice in the victorious advance of the plan of God and over the conversion of just one repentant sinner (Lk. 15:10).
3. In 5:11 elect angels form a semi circle around the throne along with the elders and living beings forming concentric circles respectively.
4. Here, at the threshold of the second coming, the elect angels, who will form a part of the entourage of the Second Advent, are seen responding to the joy and celebration of the tribulation saints.
5. The angelic hosts begin their worship by prostrating themselves before the eternal throne.
6. In this verse the angels at large are engaged in three activities: (1) they are standing around the throne; (2) they prostrate themselves before the throne in worship of God; and (3) the sing in tribute to the victory of the multitude (v.12).
7. The elders and the four living creatures remain in their respective places but do not engage in an overt act of worship or singing.
8. This fact is seen in that the noun “angels” (nom. pl.) and the nouns “elders” and “living creatures” (both genitive plurals) are different in voice in the Greek.
9. The phrase “and the elders and the four living beings” is a reminder of their continued association with the new development with the angelic hosts at large.
10. The verbs “stood,” “fell,” and “worshipped” are all aorist indicatives and have as their subject “all the angels” and not the elders and four living beings, since these two nouns are in the genitive case and not the nominative.
11. Furthermore, the elders are not represented in the posture of standing but rather sitting (cf. Rev. 4:4; 11:16).
12. From time to time they are seen prostrating themselves before God (cf. Rev. 4:10; 5:8, 14; 11:16; 19:4).

13. Christ, the Lamb, is seen standing (cf. Rev. 5:6) while God the Father is always portrayed as sitting (cf. Rev. 4:2,3, et al).
14. The general angelic hosts are mentioned at 5:11; 7:11; 12:7; 14:10.
15. So here the angelic hosts pay tribute to God in response to the acclaim of the tribulation saints.

#### Angelic Tribute (v.12)

**VERSE 12 saying, "Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen** (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 [*pres.act.part.nom.m.p. lego say + part. amen, truly, amen + art.w/noun nom.f.s. eulogia good or fine speech; praise; "blessing" + conj kai + art.w/noun nom.f.s. doxa glory + conj kai + art.w/noun nom.f.s. sophia wisdom + conj kai + art.w/noun nom.f.s. eucharistia thanksgiving + conj kai + art.w/noun nom.f.s. time honor + conj kai + art.w/noun nom.f.s. dunamis power + conj kai + art.w/noun nom.f.s. ischus might + art.w/noun dat.m.s. theos God + pro.gen.p. ego "our" + prep eis into + art.w/noun acc.m.p. aion age + art/noun gen.m.p. aion age + part amen*])."

#### ANALYSIS: VERSE 12

1. The worship by the angelic host consists of an endorsement of the tribute of the multitude.
2. The worship of the trib. saints is complemented with a tribute of their own.
3. The first "Amen" is an emphatic confirmation of the tribute of the saints who were casualties in the tribulation.
4. After the "Amen" follows a seven fold doxology similar to the one found in 5:12.
5. Unlike the doxology at 5:12, this one has a definite article with each item in the list of seven.
6. This follows the pattern of doxologies at 4:11 and 5:13.
7. The repetition of the article serves to lend added emphasis to each item.
8. The seven items in this doxology do not mimic the seven in 5:12, or with any of the previous doxologies.
9. No particular significance to the order of the items has been detected.
10. The item (*euogia*), "Blessing" means literally "good speaking" or "praise."
11. This is what is due God on behalf of the liberated multitude.
12. "Glory" (*doxa*) is a tribute to the essence of God or the radiance of the divine person.
13. "Wisdom" (*Sophia*) looks to the divine viewpoint or to God's knowledge that articulates His eternal plan for the ages.
14. "Thanksgiving" (*eucharistia*) denotes gratitude.
15. Such gratitude is inevitable in light of the blessed state of those delivered from all of earth's ills.
16. "Honor" (*time*) is the "esteem" due to God's faithfulness to His promises of which these most recent additions to the family of God are the beneficiaries.
17. "Power" (*dunamis*) is a reference to omnipotence as applied to God's ability to act effectively on behalf of His people no matter how dire the circumstances.

18. “Might” (*ischus*) refers to inherent strength whether used or not.
19. In this case, God exhibits His strength in history in delivering this multitude from the schemes of evil.
20. In voicing their praise, the words “to our God,” they claim God as their own.
21. Like the multitude before them, they assert their relationship to God.
22. The final “Amen” validates the truthfulness of their ascriptions to God, just as the opening “Amen!” asserts the accuracy of the praise of the multitude.
23. This tremendous angelic chorus along with the acclaim of the tribulational saints stirs up the elders and one of their numbers approaches John and asks him a question.
24. What follows demonstrates the effect this display on the part of the tribulational saints and the angelic hosts has on the 24 elders.

Interview with John (vv. 13-17)

**VERSE 13** **Then one of the elders answered, saying to me** (Καὶ ἀπεκρίθη εἷς ἐκ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων λέγων μοι [*conj kai + aor.pass.ind.3s. apokrinomai answer; hebraistically, as a formula to control the flow of discourse + adj.nom.m.s. eis one + art.w/noun gen.m.p. presbuteros elder + pres.act.part.nom.m.s. lego say + pro.dat.m.s. ego “me”*], **“These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from** [Οὗτοι οἱ περιβεβλημένοι τὰς στολὰς τὰς λευκὰς τίνας εἰσὶν καὶ πόθεν ἦλθον [*pro.demon.nom.m.p. houtos this; “These” + art.w/perf.mid.part.nom.m.p. periballo clothe oneself + art.w/noun acc.f.p. stole flowing outer garment + art.w/adj.acc.f.p. leukos white + interrog.pro.nom.m.p. tis who + pres.act.ind.3p. eimi is + conj kai + interrog.adv. pothen whence, where + aor.act.ind.3p. erchomai come*])**?”**

1. At this juncture commences an interview between John and one of the 24 elders, which results in the identification of the great multitude.
2. This sequence exemplifies the dialogue format used from time to time to convey to John an explanation of a vision (cf. Amos 7:8; 8:2; Zech. 4:2,5).
3. This device demonstrates that visions were not for the purpose of spectacular displays but to convey specific information, information that is not to be missed.
4. This time, an elder intervenes as at 5:5 to supply understanding with respect to the vision, by anticipating a question that John was getting ready to ask.
5. The verb “he answered” is unusual because no question has been asked before the elder speaks.
6. There is a frequent usage of the verb in LXX and NT in imitation of the Hebrew idiom that introduces an utterance called for by something, not necessarily an actual question.
7. The larger construction “and he answered...saying” is Semitic and is frequent in the gospels (e.g., Matt. 25:45; Mk.15:9; Lk. 3:16; Jn. 1:26; 12:23).
8. It occurs only here in the Apocalypse.
9. With his question the elder immediately directs attention to the white-clad multitude.
10. Their garments naturally attract special attention and serves as their main identifying mark.
11. He inquires only as to their identity which indicates their standing before God.

12. The question of the elder is twofold.
13. He asks John if he knows who they are and their origins.
14. The aorist tense of the verb “come” suggest that their numbers are complete (cf. 6:11).
15. This would place this episode on the threshold of the Second Advent.
16. Otherwise some future additions would be left out of the celebration before the throne!

#### John’s Honesty (v. 14)

**VERSE 14 I said to him, "My lord, you know** (καὶ εἶρηκα αὐτῷ, Κύριέ μου, σὺ οἶδας. καὶ εἶπέν μοι [*conj kai + perf.act.ind.1s. eipon say + pro.dat.m.s. autos him + noun voc.m.s. kurios lord, sir + pro.gen.s. ego “My” + pro.nom.2s. su + perf.act.ind.2s. oida know*])."

**And he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation** (καὶ εἶπέν μοι, Οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ ἐρχόμενοι ἐκ τῆς θλίψεως τῆς μεγάλης [*conj kai + aor.act.ind.3s. eidon say + pro.dat.m.s. ego “me” + demon.pro.nom.m.p. houtos “these” + pres.act.ind.3p. eimi is “are” + art.w/pres.dep.part.nom.m.p. erchomai come + prep ek from + art.w/noun abl.f.s. thlipsis tribulation + art.w/adj.abl.f.s. megas great*]), **and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb** [καὶ ἔπλυναν τὰς στολὰς αὐτῶν καὶ ἐλεύκαναν αὐτὰς ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ ἀρνίου [*conj kai + aor.act.ind.3p. pluno wash; only 3x: Lk.5:2; Rev.7:14; 22:14 + art.w/noun acc.f.p. stole robe + pro.gen.p. autos “their” + conj kai + aor.act.ind.3p. leukaino make white, whiten; only 2x: Mk.9:3; Rev.7:14 + pro.acc.fem.p. autos “them” + prep en + art.w/noun loc.nt.s. haima blood + art.w/noun gen.nt.s. arnion lamb*]).

#### ANALYSIS: VERSE 14

1. John’s response to the elder manifests his integrity.
2. John is not presumptuous and is not willing to venture a lucky guess.
3. He may have had a pretty good idea of who they were, but he is unwilling to venture a guess, even an educated guess.
4. He knows they are people as opposed to angels; he knows that he is viewing prophetic history after the conclusion of the church age.
5. By this time in his long career as a student of the WOG, he knows the basic prophetic scheme of things (cf. 2Pet.1:16; 3:1ff.).
6. He certainly knew by this time the divine outline for the ages to come.
7. Why wouldn’t he venture an answer.
8. A lot of it has to do with John’s makeup.
9. Plus, being a mature believer he had nothing to prove.
10. He kept his ego and STA out of it.
11. John could have responded with the correct answer, but rather demonstrated his humility and simply replied, “Sir, you know.”
12. I suspect he knew, but he chose not to answer, figuring there might be something in the answer that would be more fulfilling.

13. In any case, he played it close to the vest, deferring to the man in his vision a greater wisdom.
14. John recognized from his first failing with an elder in chapter 5:4-5, that it was best to defer to a superior intellect.
15. In his visions John was granted complete freedom to fail or not.
16. He realized he was in the presence of perfection whether it be God or man or angels.
17. John is unwilling to offer an answer as it may be incomplete, so he defers to one who is superior.
18. It is of interest to note that an elder approaches him and not an angel (as at 10:8-9; 17:7; 22:6,8,16).
19. So on two occasions John speaks to an elder; once he is under fear and fails, and once he takes no chances playing it safe.
20. John's response is emphatic, "My sir, you know."
21. Also, the vastness of the multitude may have thrown him off.
22. A number of factors contributed to John's reserve in answering a superior intellect.
23. The elder's response is a full one, occupying the balance of this chapter.
24. The opening words are more specifically helpful in identifying the multitude.
25. One approach to the participle "these are the ones coming out from the great tribulation" is to accentuate its function as a substantive.
26. In this case, no essential time element or aspect of action is in view.
27. "Such people as come" or "the comers" is the idea.
28. The time aspect of the exit must be determined from the context, which in this case shows them to have departed already at the time of the vision.
29. We should not necessarily hold that the time of the vision and its fulfillment are identical.
30. The aorist indicative of 7:13 suggests a completed number, and this should govern how we take the present participle "come" here.
31. The scene in heaven, versus the previous scene on earth in connection with the sealing of the 144,000, shifts to the end of the tribulation.
32. John saw an incomplete company of tribulational victims under the 5<sup>th</sup> seal, but here he sees a completed company.
33. Otherwise, we have an orchestrated celebration before their number is made complete, and we do not have the fruit of the ministry of the 144,000 as a part of that company.
34. Then comes the question of why link the 144,000 to this multitude since they would have had nothing to do with the people in the vision of this chapter.
35. The durative nature of this participle does not require with the article is of a gnomic nature like the phrase "everyone who divorces his wife" does not mean "repeatedly divorce."
36. Here the present participle of "come" refers to a class of people and should not be used to support an on going process.
37. The aorist tense of the same verb (*erchomai*) in 7:13 takes precedence.
38. One should not force the present participle into the mold of continual action as in Matt. 5:28 "everyone who looks at a woman" with lust does not mean "continually looking."
39. These believers point of departure is the earth, the scene of "the great tribulation."
40. The same meaning attaches to the expression here as was adopted in 2:22 in Christ's message to Thyatira.
41. This is a period of eschatological wrath immediately prior to Christ's return in power to establish the kingdom.

42. This represents a world-wide crisis of unprecedented proportions (cf. Dan. 12:1).
43. The definite article lends support to the idea of a special time versus general tribulation that nations and people experience from time to time.
44. This relates to a future time of punitive action anticipated in Rev. 3:10 as “an hour of testing” and spoken of in Rev. 6:17 as “the great day” of the wrath of God and of the Lamb.
45. Jesus coined the term “the great tribulation” (Matt. 24:21) and limited it to the second half of the Daniel’s 70<sup>th</sup> week (Matt. 24:15-22//Mk. 13:14-20; cf. Dan. 9:27).
46. It will be a time that will exceed all past and subsequent sorrows endured by humanity whose length will be 1260 days (Rev. 11:3; 13:5).
47. Paul prophesied such a time (1 Thess. 5:3; 2 Thess. 1:6-10).
48. It is the superlatively great crisis of testing through which all humanity, believer and unbeliever alike, must pass on the way to the promised kingdom.
49. Some say believers will not be affected by God’s wrath only the wrath of their persecutors.
50. This is not true, as believers will experience the ill effects of war and famine and environmental catastrophe.
51. In the end all unbelievers will be put to death, even those who survive to the judgment of nations mentioned in Matt. 25.
52. Some believers will likewise survive to enjoy and populate the millennial civilization.
53. John witnesses those saints who for a variety of reasons do not survive the seven years of wrath.
54. He sees them coming “out from” the great tribulation.
55. The final words of the teaching elder tell how the constituency of the innumerable multitude gains the right to be part of the victory celebration at the end of the seven years.
56. In modern thought, making anything white by washing it in blood is paradoxical, but it was not so with John and those with an understanding of the OT.
57. To them such washing denoted spiritual cleansing.
58. Not just any blood would accomplish the cleansing.
59. It had to be the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 1:5; 5:9; cf. Rom. 3:25; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:20; Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 1:2, 19; 1 Jn. 1:7).
60. The aorist indicative of “they have washed” and “made...white” look back to the time when the cleansing occurred in the life of each member of the crowd, while they were still on earth.
61. Though saving faith, an exercise of their positive volition at gospel hearing, in the cleansing provision of the Lamb’s work on the cross toward sin the members of the multitude were cleansed.
62. The washing and whitening are two, separate acts related to the salvation adjustment.
63. They are here by virtue of believing in Christ and receiving forgiveness (“washed” and imputed righteousness (“made...white”).
64. The Lamb’s blood makes it all possible.
65. The Lamb’s blood is a representative analogy harking back to the literal animal blood of the OT sacrificial system.
66. Jesus Christ did not bleed to death on the cross.
67. Physical bleeding associated with the sufferings of crucifixion was not the cause of Christ’s death.
68. Christ physical death is not is the basis for salvation.

69. It was Christ bearing sins during the three hours of darkness that supplies the representative analogy called in the NT, “the blood of Christ.”
70. If it were Christ’s literal physical blood that saves, then it would mean that literal blood would somehow provide the cleansing.
71. The cleansing here is equivalent to Ph 1 forgiveness.
72. Forgiveness of all past sins is one aspect of the salvation adjustment.
73. This is brought out here theologically in the phrase “washed their robes.”
74. Obviously “robes” is a metaphor for the cleansing of the soul.
75. While the white garments/robes that they wear in heaven refers to literal garments symbolizing the reality of saving grace.
76. The faith of each member of the multitude under gospel hearing is seen in the active voice of the two aorist indicatives (“washed” and “made...white”).
77. The former refers to forgiveness of sins and the latter the doctrine of justification.
78. The spiritual death of Christ during the three hours is represented by the phrase “in the blood of the Lamb.”
79. Neither “blood” nor “Lamb” is to be taken literally.

#### Their Heavenly Service (v.15)

**VERSE 15** **"For this reason, they are before the throne of God** (διὰ τοῦτο εἰσιν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου τοῦ θεοῦ [*prep dia + demon.pro.acc.nt.s. houtos this + pres.act.ind.3p. eimi is + prep enopion before + art.w/noun gen.m.s. thronos throne + art.w/noun gen.m.s. theos God*]); **and they serve Him day and night in His temple** [καὶ λατρεύουσιν αὐτῷ ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς ἐν τῷ ναῷ αὐτοῦ [*conj kai + pres.act.ind.3p. latreuo serve, officiate + pro.dat.m.s. autos him + noun gen.f.s. hemera day + conj kai + noun gen.f.s. nux night + prep en + art.w/noun loc.m.s. naos temple + pro.gen.m.s. autos his*]]; **and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them** [καὶ ὁ καθήμενος ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου σκηνώσει ἐπ’ αὐτούς [*conj kai + pres.dep.part.nom.m.s. kathemai sit + prep epi on + art.w/noun gen.m.s. thronos throne + fut.act.ind.3s. skenoo lit. live in a tent; used of temporary residency; “will spread”*; cf. 12:12; 13:6; 21:3; also *Jn.1:14 + prep epi + pro.acc.m.p. autos “them”*]).

1. The white robes (7:9,13; cf. 6:11; 22:14) and the cleansing they represent (7:14) are the basis for the position of the multitude before the heavenly throne.
2. The phrase “For this reason” (*dia touto*) bases the multitude’s heavenly presence on the washing-whitening process accomplished in Ph2 mentioned by the interpreting elder at the end of v.14.
3. The multitude’s heavenly standing, based on faith in the Lamb while on earth, qualifies them to stand in the presence of God in the throne room
4. Standing before God does not imply inactivity as the elder goes on to explain to John.
5. This is seen in the words “and they serve Him day and night in His temple.”
6. Priestly service is indicated by the choice of verbs.

7. The verb is *latreuo* which is technical for the religious service (Matt. 10:4; Lk. 1:74; 2:37; Acts 7:7, 42; 24:14; 26:7; 27:23; Rom. 1:9, 25; Phil. 3:3; 2Tim. 1:3; Heb. 8:5; 9:9, 14; 10:2; 12:28; 13:10; Rev. 7:15; 22:3).
8. In Heb. 8:5 this word is used of ritual worship under the Law.
9. Its connection with “temple” (*naos*) in this verse shows that priestly service is in view.
10. Of course this is not the service of external rites, but of spiritual worship.
11. It constitutes praise and adoration of God such has already been voiced in v.10, the same service referred in 22:3.
12. Their service continues uninterrupted as seen in the idiomatic expression “day and night.”
13. It must be presumed that a distinction between day and night does not exist in heaven, because that is the condition in the New Jerusalem that excludes night (22:5).
14. The location of their worship is “in His temple.”
15. This temple is the whole of heaven as a sanctuary in which God’s people are priests.
16. Remember these saints are not in their final state of glory as they await future resurrection (cf. Rev. 20:4).
17. The elder’s explanation of the multitude’s identity next turns to three of God’s future provision for these people (vv. 15-16).
18. The first provision comes at the end of v.15: “and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them.”
19. The verb “will spread...tabernacle” (*skenoo*) only occurs in John’s writings (Jn. 1:14; Rev. 12:12; 13:6; 21:3).
20. It has the idea of tent-covering or camping.
21. It reflects in what in the OT was typified by the Shekinah, or the immediate presence of God, above the mercy seat (Ex. 40:34-38; 1 Kgs. 8:13).
22. It is further seen in the Tabernacle in the wilderness (Lev. 26:11-12), and the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night (Ex. 13:21-22).
23. The verb behind Shekinah is *shakan* which means “he dwells.”
24. It has practically the same consonants as the Greek verb *skenoo*.
25. The immediate presence of God shelters and protects them from all harm is what is promised here (cf. Isa. 4:5-6).
26. It corresponds to the OT promise that God will dwell in the midst of His people (Lev. 26:11-12; Ezek. 37:27; Zech. 2:10, 11; 8:3, 8; cf. Rev. 13:6; 21:3).

#### Two More Provisions (v.16).

**VERSE 16 "They will hunger no longer, nor thirst anymore; nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat** (οὐ πεινάσουσιν ἔτι οὐδὲ διψήσουσιν ἔτι οὐδὲ μὴ πέση ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ὁ ἥλιος οὐδὲ πᾶν καῦμα [neg. ou + fut.act.ind.3p. peinao be hungry + adv eti still + conj oude nor, neither + fut.act.ind.3p. dipsao be thirsty + adv eti still + conj oude nor + neg me + aor.act.subj.3s. pipto fall; “beat down” + pro.acc.m.p. autos “them” + art.w/noun nom.m.s. helios sun + conj oude nor + adj.nom.nt.s. pan “any” + noun nom.nt.s. kauma heat, scorching heat]);

**ANALYSIS: VERSE 16**

1. Two more grace provisions are granted to the tribulational multitude existing under intermediate Ph 3 blessing.
2. The first has to do with basic needs for bodily nourishment.
3. This promise, along with several others remaining in these final verses, is drawn from Isaiah's description of the exiles returning from Babylon (Isa. 49:10, LXX).
4. The wording is identical except for the addition of the two occurrences of "anymore" in this verse and verse 17.
5. This promise was particularly attractive in an ancient land where both hunger and thirst were constant threats.
6. These words of comfort were all the more meaningful to those who had just come out of the great tribulation, where hunger and thirst were the lot of the persecuted.
7. The point of the language is that the miserable conditions recently experienced on earth will never afflict these believers again.
8. Ironically, hunger and thirst are not a part of the Ph 3 experience for anyone.
9. So the promise is a source of comfort, not a promise of ample food and drink, since food and drink is not a necessity in Ph3, only a source of enjoyment.
10. This multitude exists in the intermediate state, which includes the soul but not the final resurrection body.
11. The soul does not require physical food and drink, only spiritual food and drink.
12. Paradoxically, the redeemed in Ph 3 will always thirst for God, and that thirst will always be satisfied.
13. The other provision stated in v. 16 also alludes to Isa. 49:10: "nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat."
14. The wording in the Isaiah passage is "nor will scorching heat or sun strike them down."
15. The "scorching heat" was the burning wind from the desert, or the sirocco.
16. It is changed in Rev. 7:16 to "any heat", a scorching wind of any kind that does not have the local geographical connotations of the other term.
17. The overpowering reality of the sun is familiar to practically everyone, regardless of where he lives.
18. Under the 4<sup>th</sup> bowl of wrath the heat of the sun will become more oppressive than ever before.
19. The multitude in Ph 3 will never again be made miserable by heat from any environmental source.

#### How God Provides Ph 3 Relief (v.17)

**VERSE 17 for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd** (ὅτι τὸ ἀρνίον τὸ ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ θρόνου ποιμανεῖ αὐτούς [*conj hoti for + art.w/noun nom.nt.s. arnion lamb + art.w/noun nom.nt.s. mesos middle + prep ana with mesos= "in the midst" + art.w/noun gen.m.s. thronos throne + fut.act.ind.3s. poimaino shepherd, tend + pro.acc.m.p. autos "their"= "them"]]), **and will guide them to springs of the water of life** [καὶ ὁδηγήσει αὐτοὺς ἐπὶ ζωῆς πηγῶν ὑδάτων [*conj kai + fut.act.ind.3s. odegeo escort, lead the way; "guide" + pro.acc.m.p. autos them + prep epi upon + noun gen.f.s. zoe life + noun acc.f.p. pege spring,**

*fountain; “water”]; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes [καὶ ἐξαλείψει ὁ θεὸς πᾶν δάκρυον ἐκ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτῶν [conj kai + fut.act.ind.3s. exaleipho wipe away (of tears)]; erase; eliminate + art.w/noun nom.m.s. theos God + adj.acc.nt.s. pas every + noun acc.nt.s. dakruon tear + prep ek from + art.w/noun abl.m.p. ophthalmos eye + pro.gen.m.p. autos “their”].”*

ANALYSIS: VERSE 17

1. How God provides for His people is explained in this verse.
2. The “because” introduces the cause of which the provisions (food, drink and shelter) just listed are the effects.
3. In short, the respective roles of the Lamb and God will bring the benefits promised.
4. Of course, this will be accomplished in a heavenly setting.
5. Actually, the shelter provision has already been mentioned as God the Father spreading His tabernacle over them.
6. Here the Lamb is the source of rest and comfort.
7. The Lamb occupies a slightly different position from the one in 5:6.
8. There He was “in the midst of the throne,” but here He is literally, “at the midpoint in front of the throne.”
9. The preposition *ana* with the adjective *mesos* usually means “between” or “among.”
10. This meaning does not fit here.
11. The Lamb now stands in the foremost place before the middle of the throne.
12. He is between the one sitting on the throne and the four living beings with the 24 elders who sit around the throne.
13. The Lamb’s function as shepherd comes into view with the verb *poimaino* (“he will shepherd them”).
14. The idea of Jesus as shepherd is well known in the NT (Jn. 10:11, 14; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:2-4), but the idea of a lamb shepherding is an intriguing change of roles because of the boldness of the mixed metaphors.
15. The shepherd figure is common in John’s writings (Jn. 10:1-30; 21:15-17).
16. It builds on the OT picture of God as shepherd (Isa. 40:11; Ezek. 34:23).
17. It is particularly relevant to Ps. 23:1-4.
18. The other three uses of *poimano* (“I shepherd”) in Revelation (2:27; 12:5; 19:15) deal with His ruling the nations with corporate punishment.
19. The gospel accounts view Christ shepherding in relation to life on earth (Matt. 2:6; Jn. 10:1, 16) but the Apocalypse sees the saints in heaven as God’s flock.
20. In Isa. 53:6, 7 (cf. 1 Pet. 2:25), the wayward habits of sheep illustrate the proneness of God’s people to wander, and the patient submissiveness of the lamb for sacrifice pictures the patience of the servant of the Lord.
21. The characteristic of wandering is absent from the present context, but the quality of the Lamb’s patience is still prominent.
22. He will patiently care for His sheep, guarding them from any possible threats such as plagued their earthly sojourn.
23. In addition, He will “lead them to springs of the water of life.”
24. Besides protecting the sheep, the shepherd is responsible to provide for their refreshment.

25. “He will lead” continues the picture of shepherd care as a means to showing the eternal blessedness awaiting believers in the eternal state.
26. Along with *poimano* (“shepherd”) the verb *odegeo* (“guide”) presents the shepherd’s place as leader of the flock versus someone who herds a flock.
27. The destination of the flock under Christ’s care in heaven is “to springs of the water of life.”
28. The word order puts greatest emphasis on “life.”
29. In heaven there are “springs” (*pegas*) with literal water that symbolizes the eternal life possessed by the saints.
30. Even so, this water commemorating eternal life via the salvation adjustment will be available in the river flowing out from the New Jerusalem.
31. The other means of providing for the needs of believers in heaven or in their final Ph 3 state is God Himself will counteract all sorrow.
32. Tears in the eyes denote sorrow, a sorrow these future saints will experience to the maximum during life on earth.
33. The OT source of this promise is Isa. 25:8.
34. The contrast between the recent struggles of this multitude and the exuberance in which they are engaged (cf. 7:10) is obvious.
35. In Ph 3 there is no more sorrow or tears.
36. This promise is repeated almost identically in Rev. 21:3 in connection with the saints in the New Heavens and Earth.
37. The ultimate fulfillment of these seven promises (7:15b-17) will come in the eternal state described in Rev. 21-22, but John’s snapshot of this multitude sees them in heaven just before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent.

End: Revelation Chapter Seven

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