

## Day 1: Revelation 7:9-10

**9** After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. **10** They cried out in a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!'

In the preceding verses (7:1-8) the number of those sealed represents not a literal number but represents completeness. Verse 9 then completes the vision as John looks and sees the complete number of those sealed. John is seeing all those in the family of God and the number is so large that he cannot even see or count all of them, but he knows they stand around the throne of God giving thanks to God for salvation. It is interesting to note that John begins his list of peoples rejoicing with "nation" – which is the broadest term in the list - and goes to language - which is the narrowest.

**Question:** What does the term *Lamb* refer to?

**Challenge:** Do you find this image of heaven helpful? Why or why not?

**Scripture:** Hebrews 11:29-12:4

## Day 2: Revelation 7:11-12

**And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, 12 singing, 'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.'**

In the verse above the people around the throne are waving palm branches. This is a reference to Jesus' entry into Jerusalem where the people waved palm branches to hail Him king and messiah. In this scene the heavenly beings are standing around & encircling the "great multitude." They fall down on their faces and join with the others around the throne in worship. When we worship today we worship with all the heavenly beings and those who have gone before, as we gather in Jesus' name to praise God. When we have an attitude that worship is not necessary then we give up the chance to worship with all those who have gone before.

**Question:** Why do you think they fell on their faces?

**Challenge:** Make a commitment to be at all the Advent services.

**Scripture:** Revelation 21:1-6, Daniel 7:1-3, 15-18

## Day 3: Revelation 7:13

**Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, 'Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?'**

It is a rhetorical question because John is not expected to know the answer. John has been brought to this heavenly scene to understand why the church is suffering and the difference between tribulation and God's judgment.

**Question:** Why white and why robes?

**Challenge:** In what ways does the modern church experience suffering in this country?

**Scripture:** I John 3:1-3, Psalm 149

## Day 4: Revelation 7:14

**I said to him, 'Sir, you are the one that knows.' Then he said to me, 'These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'**

The churches that John is writing to have been under persecution and they naturally wonder if this persecution means that God is not pleased with them. John sees that the Christians, even though they are in Christ, are not protected from the suffering they are experiencing. However the suffering does not mean they will suffer the judgment of God. The reason the churches are suffering is because they are sealed and have a place in God's house.

**Question:** If blood makes something red, not white - what can the term white and blood mean?

**Challenge:** When you have experienced suffering do you think that God is displeased with you?

**Scripture:** Colossians 1:1-14

## Day 5: Revelation 7:15-16

**For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. 16 They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, or any scorching heat;**

John describes not just those who have been martyred in his time but sees all future Christians who have completed their course in faith. God protects them from every physical need by taking away the reason for hunger, thirst and shelter.

**Question:** What do you think the temple mentioned above looks like?

**Challenge:** If you are sheltered from the things in verse 16 (hunger, thirst, sun and heat), what does the shelter look like?

**Scripture:** Psalm 34:1-10, Psalm 24:1-6

## Day 6: Revelation 7:17

**for the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'**

Finally God protects them from all the fears that have bothered them and caused them to weep. We are secure in Christ even when we have times that are beset by troubles. Jesus our shepherd will lead us to clean, fulfilling water and eliminate any reason for crying. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

**Question:** In what gospel is the term "living water used"?

**Challenge:** Read the Psalm below by adding the first phrase - the Lord is my shepherd - after each punctuation mark before the next phrase. At verse 4 add - because the Lord is my shepherd- before each new phrase. Do that until you believe the Lord will lead you to living water.

**Scripture:** Psalm 23