

4th Sunday of Easter
May 8, 2022
“Crying out with a loud voice...”
(Revelation 7:9-10)
By Rev. Ed Weber

“Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, today’s text for this 4th Sunday of Easter is from our Epistle reading Revelation 7:10.

“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!””

Here ends our text.

The sights and sounds of heaven! This portion of Scripture from the vision given to John of the things to come is much beloved by Christians. It has no doubt been heard before by all of you in an occasion when you needed and received from it much comfort. This is a passage that is most always included in the readings at the funeral of a Christian, and at each of our funerals. Yes, John’s vision moves us beyond our present circumstances to the reality also of our coming future.

This is a passage gives much comfort at the death of one of God’s saints. And for good reason! Our physical sight which has taken in the last days of our loved ones, the resting body of our loved ones at the funeral home, and the closed casket of our loved ones is now elevated to view the sights of what are loved ones are beholding in heaven! A great multitude of people from all nations – too many to count, standing before.... the Lamb! And they are clothed in white robes with victory palm branches in their hands!

We are comforted that our loved ones are in heavenly bliss with other believers. They are in the afterlife prepared for them by the Lamb of God. And because of the faith they were given by the Holy Spirit they believed in the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, were faithful unto death and received the crown of life. That’s also from Revelation, chapter 2 verse 10.

White robes. So, today also, we remember the mothers who have kept the faith in the Lord and are with Him and all the saints in heaven. They wear white robes and we still on earth honor them with white carnations.

Their sins, like ours, have been washed away by the blood of the Lamb and so are counted worthy to stand in His presence. They are no longer enduring the suffering and sin of this world.

And that's exactly the context of how our text begins with the phrase, "after these things". After what things? After the things that John had just seen and heard in chapter 6 as six of the seven seals were opened to reveal the future.

Remember last week, John heard an angel with a loud voice proclaim, **“Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?” And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.”**
(Revelation 5:2-3)

And John wept because no one was worthy...until the Lamb came and took the scroll out of the hand of God the Father and then in chapter 6 the 7 seals began to be opened. The Lamb is worthy for He is the perfect Lamb of God makes the future of what we are seeing now in chapter 7 possible! That is again, after these things of chapter 6.

For as each of the seals were opened there is much anguish and tribulation that is endured by the saints. We live in the great Tribulation right now. We're still going through it. The believers in white robes around the throne of the Lamb have passed through these things. What things?

Go back and read Revelation 6. Here is a quick summary. John is told to "Come and see" each of the 6 seals being opened. And he saw the antichrist making war on his white horse, posing as the truth in white, but making war with false doctrine against the souls of the people. John then saw widespread death, famines and scarcity, the death of martyrs and cosmic disturbances. No doubt, the Covid 19 pandemic that we have been going through is part of the tribulation common to all men.

Yes, we are in the Great Tribulation right now. These are the sights that we see right now in our lives. And they will continue until we finish our race or Christ returns, whichever happens first.

In the meantime we are comforted by the sight of the end of all tribulation in our text around the throne of the Lamb. “Come Lord Jesus!” is also our prayer that ends this book of Revelation in chapter 22.

But not only are we comforted with the sights of heavenly bliss, we have the sounds. “With a loud voice” is a phrase that is repeated 21 times in Revelation, more than any book in the Bible. The volume in heaven with all the worshipping and exquisite singing of angels and saints is going to be turned up.

We think of sporting events here on earth where the home team has an advantage because of the fan base’s cheering. In football, there are some stadiums that no one likes to play at like the Kansas City Chiefs Arrowhead stadium. They call their fanbase the 12 man – an extra teammate to the 11 that are playing on the field. Yes, it’s loud. But, it is just noise.

The voice that John heard in chapter 1 of Jesus, like a trumpet was loud and the voice of the angel in chapter 5 was loud, and the voices of the angels and believers around the throne is loud and clear and not just noise, but beautiful words of salvation! The Alpha and Omega speaks clearly in chapter 1 that he was once dead but now is alive. And the saints around the throne now raise their voices to God that salvation belongs to Him. For He alone was able to accomplish it through the death and resurrection of the Lamb, Jesus Christ!

“Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

Acts 4:12 tells us that...

“there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

It is this name of the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit that we profess in our faith in the Apostles Creed that has saved us. It is in this name that Matthew, Karen, Hailey, Byron, Pam, Mick, Cheyanne, John and Irene will profess before us that they are also saved and will be faithful with us as we await the glorious vision of John to become not just a vision but a life free of tribulation!

With a loud voice, the saints in heaven proclaim their honor and praise to the God who has made this all possible through the death of the Lamb.

Yes, it was with a loud voice that Jesus cried out on the cross, **“Father, why have you forsaken Me?”** It made no sense. Jesus was innocent and sinless. But He was forsaken because He became sin for us that we might become the righteousness of life. Yes, salvation belongs to our God!

And with a loud voice, Jesus cried out, **“Father, ‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.’** And then He breathed His last.

But the living, reigning Lamb proclaims to us in chapter 1 of Revelation, **““Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. 18 I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore**

We need not fear though we pass through many tribulations yet in this life. Jesus has won the victory! And we raise our voices this day in song to give Him all glory that this is our salvation!

We are not timid but raise our voices to the world where salvation alone can be found, in the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. And mothers especially, raise their voices to tell their children with great love who the Savior of the world is. So that they know loud and clear, above the noise of this world that there is forgiveness, comfort, peace, joy and eternal life in Jesus. What a most important and beautiful work Christian mothers and fathers have been given – to give this faith to their children through His word.

John himself says in his 3rd epistle in chapter 1 verse 4,

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”

Yes, there is no greater joy for a mother, father to know that their children walk in the truth and will one day join the saints in heaven! All glory to God. Amen.

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your heart and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)