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Revelation 7

There are two realities for Christians and only one for non-believers. For the Christian, there is the reality of physical life here on earth that we all see and there is the Spiritual reality that we know exists but can't see. How do we know a Spiritual reality exists?

It is not a feeling or a burning in your bosom as some cults are taught but it is Spiritual knowledge gained by accepting the Truth from God. The Truth comes from God's Word. God nor His Word does not change to suit circumstances, it does not change with time or age, it is constant and therefore we can trust in it.

God knows the beginning from the end and therefore can prophecy. The future revealed to us in God's Word is called prophecy but to God it is simply knowledge as to what is going to happen. He has already seen it. God allows clues to us called "prophecy" along the way like trail markers to help us stay on the right path as to Spiritual Truth and Spiritual

Reality. In other words, if we study prophecy, we should be able to understand the times we are in. Jesus told us as much by being aware of nature and of prophesy we should be able to decipher where we are in the timeline of earth. If Israel's Spiritual eyes had been opened when they read much of the Old Testament "the Law and the Prophets" they would have been able to identify the Messiah when He came. But they did not, they only saw with their physical eyes, desiring power over others rather than submitting to God.

Physical reality can be a deception, lying to our very eyes and ears, convincing us that it is better to follow the physical reality than to learn and deal with Spirituality and Truth. One is temporal or worldly the other is eternal or Spiritual.

The pull is strong from the world and this physical reality, but it is deceptive in the end. Those who traffic in the physical reality even though they don't know it, they serve a master of that realm.

All those who deny the Creator are subject to the creation including evil within that creation. The master of this world

as we have learned in our studies is Satan, he is the Prince of the Air, the ruler of this world. Satan gives humans the ability to deceive other humans for personal gain, power, or just evil meanness. It is a means to an end for Satan. Satan hates God and the only way Satan can hurt God is hurt what God loves and that is mankind.

God gave us a warning through His Son Jesus how to walk through this time on earth, in Luke 16.

Luke 16:1 And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. **2** And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward. **3** Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. **4** I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. **5** So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? **6** And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. **7** Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. **8** And the lord commended (emphasis mine) the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. **9** And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may

receive you into everlasting habitations.

10He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. **11**If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the **true riches**? **12**And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? **13**No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. (emphasis mine)

("True riches" are Spiritual things not physical things.)

From vs 8 the word "Commended"

Cognate: 1867 *epainéō* (from 1909 /*epí*, "on, fitting" which intensifies 134 /*ainéō*, "to praise") – to praise in a fitting (apt) manner, i.e. as appropriate (adequate) to the situation; hence, *to accredit in full (proper) measure.*

God is saying that the children who give themselves to the reality of the flesh are wiser in the things of the flesh than those who give themselves to the Spiritual. You might be a winner in worldly things but you still lose in eternal things.

It is not a game we are engaged in, it is life and life has two aspects, the temporal or physical earthly and the eternal or Spiritual. The person who invests in the temporal may have

great gains for a season but for eternity those gains are meaningless, a total loss.

God could see how the evil and devious humans who reject Christ as Savior sometimes dupe us as believers in this world. So, what was God's advice to us as believers?

Matthew 10:16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

What God is saying is that the world, those who thrive by loving life in this reality of the flesh under the control of Satan will try to take your very lives, so we are to be skillful, as we move through physical life but being keenly aware of the danger that surrounds us.

Matthew 10:16 Behold, I am sending you out like sheep among wolves; therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.

John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

Jesus clearly says this world in its current condition at the time of His Crucifixion is not His Kingdom. If it "were of this world His servants would fight". So, where does that leave us with the idea of resisting to save our lives here? A great

question for another day, one that is worth pondering and searching out God's Truth. That time is rapidly approaching as to what lengths we should go to, to save our physical lives at the cost of other's lives?

One last comment on today's headlines;

https://www.theepochtimes.com/mkt_breakingnews/us-and-china-race-to-control-the-future-through-artificial-intelligence_4109862.html?utm_source=News&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=breaking-2021-11-27-4&mktids=42733775e6102161f1754f4ae395e27f&est=ye8qtXcgfYaQvgixN5cOQ0WNDER7VI2mVTTb3XkNMTs%2BM81u3wGlmZxzhA%3D%3D

The major nations of the world are in a new race; some have a big head start beginning back in the 60's trying to develop Artificial Intelligence. The new idea is called the Fourth Industrial Revolution which bring man and machine together in one entity. It is also called "singularity".

In the article the US has the decisive lead for the moment, but China is closing in fast. China will likely be the winner in some form simply due to their unfettered attitude of a single human beings have no value unless they are of a value to the state.

America still is constrained by some moral ethics, which are quickly dissolving into the abyss. Rapture would certainly

help the world and America in shedding any shackles of morality and allow for a headlong run at this new AI technology.

I sent the article to all of you so if you are interested in what the world is feverishly working on, take the time to read it. It is lengthy but well written.

One other news item, Gen Flynn was recently quoted as saying that America is a Christian/Judeo nation and should have one religion. The left and anyone who is a non-believer does not understand what he is saying and their ignorance is revealed in these editorial posts. You won't find a more liberal progressive company than yahoo, revealed by its readers who in some form claim some spiritual knowledge and truth.

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/letters-editor-want-one-nation-110023124.html>

Now to our study of Revelation 7

God's People will Be Preserved

1And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four

winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

Winds can be destructive or constructive; the good news is in this scenario no more destruction the bad news is, no more construction. With no wind there is no cloud movement, no cloud movement, no rain. Rain is a cleansing element as well as a nurturing element. When it ceases to exist all kinds of bad things happen. No pollination, no watering of the ground, no shade, little or subdued evaporation.

2And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, 3Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

A mighty angel rises from the east with orders to the four destroying angles not to begin yet; why the EAST? The east is associated with God at many levels; The tent of meeting always had its front facing East.

Numbers 3:38"And those to encamp before the Tabernacle on the east, before the Tent of Meeting toward the sunrise, were Moses and Aaron and his sons, having charge of the rites within the sanctuary, whatever had to be done for the people of Israel"

The front of the Temple in Jerusalem faced east and when God's presence departed from that temple in Ezekiel it departed to the east. This is not the mystical east and to be clear east has no terminus like north or south with one exception. That exception is the Temple or even Jerusalem. God's time clock on earth is Jerusalem, everything seems to revolve around that specific location. There is too much to discuss as to the importance of New Jerusalem that appears in Revelation 22. The significance of "east" goes all the way back to the beginning of Genesis, again too much to consider with just a few words. Perhaps we can look at it in depth someday, God willing.

Our world is round and if you exclude the importance of Israel/Jerusalem/Temple when you go east or west you continue as there is no place that east or west starts or finishes.

So why is this angel and all things associated with God centered on the East? The Bible has an answer from Jesus own lips.

Matthew 24: 27 For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

The east is a symbol of eternity, where Jesus and God and the Holy Spirit have lived, in eternity. East as in these verses is symbolic of not a direction but a time and a place combined. A time that is endless in either direction east or west and a dimension that is only visible in the Spiritual realm of God. If you were in space, which way is north, south, east or west? Cardinal directions mean nothing in space. God chose the direction of East on the earth because that is where He made the sun to seem to rise and start each day as a reference to Jerusalem and specifically the Temple. It is symbolic of His Son's eternal rising to save mankind. So as Jesus says again in a symbolic way just like lighting can be seen in the east it is also seen in the west as will Jesus' coming be seen around the world in an instant like a flash of lightening. There will be no time to prepare, Rapture will happen in an instant in the blink of an eye.

1 Corinthians 15:52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

So, the command from God through this Angel in the East is to hurt the earth itself but He puts that on hold for a short time and for a specific reason.

144,000 Sealed

4And I heard the number of them which were sealed: *and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.*

From the time that God called Jacob by renaming him Israel the number 12 has been significant.

*Genesis 35:10*And God said unto him, *Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel.*

Genesis 35:22.....Now the sons of Jacob were twelve: **23**The sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun: **24**The sons of Rachel; Joseph, and Benjamin: **25**And the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid; Dan, and Naphtali: **26**And the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid; Gad, and Asher: these are the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padanaram.

Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, Benjamin, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher

As we studied Revelation 4, we were introduced to the 24 seats and 24 elders that occupied them.

There are of course several tendered opinions each with their own evidence to prove their opinion. After reading several of them I lean toward the notion of the first 12 being the sons of Jacob; the 12 tribes of Israel. The second 12

would be the 12 Disciples of Christ. We will find later in Revelation a description of the construction pattern of the New Jerusalem that sheds light on this as well with 12 gates.

Revelation 21:12 It had a great, high wall, ^fwith twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed— ¹³on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. ¹⁴And the wall of the city had twelve ^afoundations, and ^bon them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

The twelve sons and the offspring of 12 sons of Jacob or Israel have been the apple of God's eye.

Zechariah 2:8 For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.

Israel was intended by God to be a light unto the world, to bring good tidings and bring through their lineage the Savior; to walk their lives with God as a demonstration to the world on how to worship the Creator God through obedience. The focal point was to be Jerusalem and specifically the Temple of God.

Israel was the Bride of God, and His intent was that she be beautiful in her walk and the whole world would see the

loving relationship between God and His Bride. Does any of that sound familiar about Jesus and the Church big(C)?

Israel failed in their walk with God time and time again just as you and I have. But unlike believers the ultimate failure of all of Israel was their rejection of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

God chose Jacob or Israel for a special purpose and the more time that elapsed from that moment of choosing until even now Israel has rejected the most important part of their mission; to be a Holy People set apart for God's purpose to bring the Good News to the world. They were to be the CHURCH as a visible sign to the World.

A friend in Israel estimated that only 10% of Israelis are practicing their religion today. At the same time Israelis with the genes of the 12 tribes are reuniting in Israel at an increasing rate. If you don't practice the religion of Israel, why would you want to go back there? It has to be predominately from the physical aspect that is drawing them, as there is very little spiritual draw for Israelis to return to their homeland.

God did not replace Israel with the CHURCH, He still loves Israel, but He needed a people that would bring the Good

News to the world. Through the Death of His Son on the Cross-the ultimate sacrifice that covered the sins of the world; Jesus Christ is that Good News. His delivery system was to be the Church, (Big C) the Bride and or Body of Christ.

We are all sinners, and we know that to sin in one thing causes us to be cast into the lot of all sinners; so, we are all sinners and sin leads to death.

Romans 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

Romans 6:16 *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?*

The Good News is that the Blood of the Lamb has redeemed you, the Blood of Jesus Christ on the Cross-was shed for you and is “Sufficient!”

Q. How many people does God want to save?

2 Peter 3:9 *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that **all** should come to repentance.*

A. All

Back to vs 5

5Of the tribe of **Juda** were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of **Reuben** were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of **Gad** were sealed twelve thousand. **6**Of the tribe of **Aser** were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of **Nephtalim** were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of **Manasses** were sealed twelve thousand. **7**Of the tribe of **Simeon** were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of **Levi** were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of **Issachar** were sealed twelve thousand. **8**Of the tribe of **Zabulon** were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of **Joseph** were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of **Benjamin** were sealed twelve thousand.

Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, Benjamin, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher

Q. Do you find anything peculiar about the list of the 12 tribes of Israel?

There is an interesting number at work here, but it requires some study and wisdom. These events are mostly yet to occur; we are getting a preview from God to John to us.

One of the interesting things is the removal of Dan from the list of actual sons of Israel and the insertion of two of his grandsons, Manasseh, and Ephraim, then the later demoting of Ephraim and the inclusion in the list of Manasseh.

Ephraim was the younger brother of Manasseh but when Jacob blessed his two grandsons, he crossed his hands and placed his right hand on his younger son Ephraim, so Ephraim received the birthright of his Grandfather Israel over Manasseh much to the chagrin of Joseph their father.

Genesis 48:8And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who are these? **9**And Joseph said unto his father, They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place. And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them. **10**Now the eyes of **Israel** were dim for age, so that he could not see. And he brought them near unto him; and he kissed them, and embraced them. **11**And **Israel said** unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face: and, lo, God hath shewed me also thy seed. **12**And Joseph brought them out from between his knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth. **13**And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near unto him. **14**And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn.

15And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day,

16The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.

17And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head. **18**And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head. **19**And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.

Now we see in Revelation when the 12 tribes are listed Dan is excluded, Ephraim is excluded, and Manasseh is included.

What did Ephraim do to be excluded from this list after being blessed by Israel/Jacob?

Psalms 78:9-17, 65-67

Psalms 78:9The men of Ephraim, though armed with bows, turned back on the day of battle; **10**they did not keep God's covenant and refused to live by his law. **11**They forgot what he had done, the wonders he had shown them. **12**He did miracles in the sight of their ancestors in the land of Egypt, in the region of Zoan. **13**He divided the sea and led them through; he made the water stand up like a wall. **14**He guided them with the cloud by day and with light from the fire all night. **15**He split the rocks in the wilderness and gave them water as abundant as the seas; **16**he brought streams out of a rocky crag and made water flow down like rivers. **17**But they continued to sin against him, rebelling in the wilderness against the Most High.

***Psalms 78:65**Then the Lord awoke as from sleep,as a warrior wakes from the stupor of wine.**66**He beat back his enemies; he put them to everlasting shame.**67**Then he rejected the tents of Joseph, he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim;*

The next verses are of great significance as to the Body of Christ in end times and have a good deal of controversy as to when this occurs. The following verses give the explanation as to who this untold number of people are. The controversy comes as to when this event happens and who are included.

Praise from the Great Multitude

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;

It sounds like all the saved of the world.

“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.

The Author of our salvation is the God Head (Three in One) alone. The sentence then includes of course the Lamb; Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit is understood to be included. These saved souls are praising God for His Love, Mercy and Grace.

11And all the angels stood round about the throne, and *about* the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

Perhaps we could look at this as two categories; the heavenly host that have been with God since they were created and secondly those who have been saved by the Blood of the Lamb from all time, that were born of woman.

The group called out in vs 11 is the first group those created beings that have been with God since they were created.

December 5, 2021

12Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, *be* unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

What is said to God giving all praise and worship to the only one who is worthy of any praise. There is no man or woman worthy of such an honor and we will have hearts filled with Thanksgiving for the blessing of Mercy and Grace.

Whether we say it or not God is God; He has been God and will remain God for eternity, His reign will never end. As one song puts it when we have been with God in for a thousand years, we are no closer to the end than when we first began.

13And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

In a sense this elder is asking a rhetorical question of a humble human that is Heaven and has no idea what he is seeing. It is simply a linguistic method of demanding an answer that will come from the one asking the question.

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.

The inference here is that these are from a specific time in history, namely the last 7 years of Tribulation or more specifically the last 3 ½ years called the Great Tribulation. According to many commentators who are linguistically

astute claim that the tense of the words used indicates a much broader sense of who these saints are. Those commentators believe that these dressed in white are the Church, the Bride of Christ saved through all time by the Blood of the Lamb. The reference according to many commentators (Great Tribulation) speaks to all the tribulations or in other terms (afflictions, reproaches, persecutions), that those that love God have endured since time on earth began.

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.

We really don't know exactly what this "serve Him day and night in His Temple" means as there is no Biblical indication of a Temple in Heaven. It likely means that each of us will have specific things to do that we will relish with great joy. God created an immense universe and perhaps that is the "temple" that is meant here. I have no idea if what He has in store for us is to serve Him throughout that creation, to what end other than serving in obedience out of Love for God, I have no idea, but I look forward to with great expectation.

16They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

Q. Did Jesus need to eat any food after His resurrection?

*Luke 24: **36And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. 37But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. 38And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? 39Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. 40And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. 41And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? 42And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. 43And he took it, and did eat before them. (emphasis mine)***

The issue of thirst also would indicate that we will not be thirsty either due to not needing drink or that ample liquid would be available to satisfy all.

The last is a combination of sunlight and heat that is generated from the sun most likely. Neither will be required which when we weigh all of this together might lead us to a speculative understanding.

We know that Jesus after His ascension was not bound by the laws of nature that God had created at vast creation.

Jesus could use them or disregard those laws. Gravity seems to have no effect on Christ, open wounds seem to have no effect on Christ; being visible and invisible was available to Christ as was walking through solid objects. Those things alone give us cause to understand that our existence after Rapture changes dramatically. God tells us we will not need the sun or heat?

1 John 3: Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

This verse from 1 John tells us several things that we already know and then sends us to some things we may not know first-hand but can rely on.

1. We are the sons of God
2. We don't know what we will look or be like other than we are told that we will be known as we were known.
3. We are told that when He, Jesus appears, we will be like Him.
4. We shall see Him as He is, and we will be like that.

What do we know about Jesus after His ascension? We covered some of those things that Scripture reveals about Jesus's person. He can move with ease throughout creation, both the Spiritual dimension and the visible physical dimension but His disciples recognized Him. He is not bound

by the laws of nature but can use them as He chooses or not use them at all. And finally, we will be like Him.

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.

As believers we recognize that it is all God; Jesus and the Father are the authors and finishers of our faith.

Hebrews 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

It is all in God's Hands as are we. If we walk in obedience to Christ's ordinances including being Born Again then we have nothing to fear. It is always preface by IF.

Jesus says;

John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

Note: the IF is on us, not on Him, He has done it all, there is nothing left to do but to do as He says.

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