

Before the Throne of God

Sunday, JAN. 31st, 1993

Revelation 7:9-17

I'm going to speak to you for a little while on this subject: "Before the Throne of God."

My text will be taken from Revelation Chapter 7 verses: 9-17. I want you to listen to John as he writes, *"After 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; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And 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, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, what are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And 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. Therefore 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. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For 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."*

My friends, it is one thing to read the scriptures with an eye of a scholar. That is the way that a lot of men read and preach them. They preach in intellectualism and with the eye of a scholar. They are seeking facts to argue and debate and to differ upon. It is one thing to read the scripture with an eye of a scholar, but it is another thing to read the scripture as a believer. You have to seek Him in His Word. You have to seek Him in His promises and His comfort.

I heard a story one time that illustrates what I am saying here. A group of people were having a great banquet, and they had asked an elderly preacher, an old servant of God, if he would read some scripture and offer prayer before the banquet. He got up and he chose this scripture, (Psalm 23), "The Lord Is My Shepherd." He began to recite that Psalm from his heart, *"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."* When he got to the end of the Psalm, there was a famous actor in the audience who had a friend sitting next to him. The friend turned to the famous actor and said, "I've heard you do that Psalm many times but you have never impressed a group of people like that "old simple preacher." The actor replied, "My friend, I know the Psalm, but that man knows the "Shepherd."

That makes the difference. You can know the Psalm and it not benefit you a great deal. If you know the Shepherd, you can say, *“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”* It is one thing to study the scriptures as a scholar, but it is another thing to study the scriptures as a seeker. Which are you? Are you a seeker?

I will tell you another thing; it is one thing to read the Word of God with the eye of a Poet. This is a way that a lot of people read the scriptures. They look for something good, something beautiful, and something mysterious or something unusual. I will tell you this; it is quite another thing to read about God’s kingdom and God’s country as a traveler who is about to go there.

You can take a book and thumb through it. Suppose it is a book about Russia. You thumb through it and look at the pictures and you may say, “Well, this is beautiful.” What if you were going there? There may be a possibility that I may be going there in a few months; I’ve been invited to come there and preach.

Now, I’m looking at some maps and pictures and I’m looking at Russia in a totally different attitude and interest. I’m not looking for something unusual or pretty; I’m looking to find out something about the people and the places that I will be going. At my age and at your age; we’d better be studying the scriptures about God’s kingdom and about God’s country and God’s heaven, as a traveler who is just about to catch the train. There may be some of us already packed for the trip.

Let’s look at this scripture here that I read to you a moment ago from Revelation Chapter 7. Let’s look at it as a secret, seeking Him, His Word, His promise and His blessings. Let’s look at it as one who is about to depart. *“The time of my departure is at hand.”* The Lord is about to take us to be with Him. Let’s see what this says in that frame of mind.

Here are three things that I want to talk to you about. I want to talk to you about what John saw first and then what John heard. John saw something and then he heard something. Thirdly, he learned something. What did he learn?

First of all, what did John see? He said, *“After this, I beheld, (I saw) and lo a great multitude which no man could number.”* Sometimes, you may read in the scripture about the thousands, and thousands upon thousands. That’s a definite number for an indefinite number. Here is the multitude that John saw, He saw, *“Such a multitude that no man can number.”* There were innumerable multitudes. *“They were as the stars of the sky.”* Can

you count the stars? God said, "Abraham look up and count the stars; he said, I can't, they are innumerable." God said, "That is how many seeds you will have." God said, "Abraham, can you count the sands of the seashore? That is how many seeds you will have."

Who are those seeds of Abraham? The seeds are those who believe in Christ. This must have shocked John to a certain degree, because here on the earth, he saw very few believers. John wrote one time, "*We are of God and the whole world lies in wickedness.*" Our Lord said to them, "*Fear not little flock.*" Another time, He said, "*Broad is the that leads to destruction and many there be that go in there. Narrow is the way that leadeth to life and few be there that find it.*" Here, John is saying, "*There is a multitude which no man can know.*"

You know something? I believe there will be more people in glory than there are in hell. I really do think that and I will tell you why. Look at this next line: John said, "*I saw a multitude, a great multitude which no man can number, standing before the throne of God, before the Lamb.*" They will be of all nations, kindred, people, tongues, tribes, and languages. In this multitude will be people from every tribe, every tongue and every nation under heaven.

How can this be? Every nation under heaven hasn't heard the gospel. There are tribes and tongues, languages, and dialects all over this world. There are hundreds and thousands of them. There are places where no missionaries have ever been or where the gospel has never been preached. They have all had infants to die. Every infant that is born and dies goes to be with God.

How do you know that preacher? All right, you listen to me. I was out in California in a meeting one time and an elderly man, a schoolteacher, came up to me. He said, "Preacher, I had a grandson that I loved so dearly; he was about three years old. We were very close and I loved him so much and he died. Do you have any scripture at all that would give me an indication that my grandson is with the Lord?" Oh, I said, "Yes."

There was a man called David, a man after God's own heart, who had a son that died in infancy. This man was a man after God's own heart. He knew God, he walked with God and he wrote under Divine inspiration. He was handpicked and was ordained to speak for God. I'm not talking about this ten-cent preacher or the one down the road, or the one that hollers and yells and rants and raves; I am talking about David. God Almighty said, "*He speaks for me.*" David said that when his son died, "*I know he can't come to me, but I will go to be with him. My son can't come back to earth, but I can go to him.*" Where was David figuring on going?

He said, *"I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever,"* and that is where my son is. That is where every infant and every child that God has taken out of this world is. They are with Christ. *"Out of every kindred, nation, tribe, tongue, language, (dialect) under heaven; God has a people, a number, which no man can number."* They were given to Christ and Christ redeemed them. I'm not saying that they were born without sin; they are born in sin but they are given to Christ. They are "elect infants;" they belong to Him.

That's right, they will be like Christ. They will be from every nation, tongue and kindred. They will retain their personal distinction. That's right, they will be the redheaded, freckle-faced Irishman and the blonde-headed Scandinavian and the dark-haired Greek or Italian. They will be like Christ and they will retain their identity. I am going to be me and you are going to be you. We're going to be perfect and without sin. We are going to be like Christ, but we are going to be like ourselves. Job said, *"Whom I shall see for myself, not another."* You say that you are going to know each other, well, certainly?

When Moses and Elijah came back to this earth, the disciples knew who they were. They were Moses and Elijah. He died Moses and he was Moses when he came back. Christ died on the cross and was buried and rose again. He was Jesus of Nazareth when He arose and when He went to glory. All these people are themselves. The scriptures say that they are *"Out of every tribe, kindred, nation, and tongue under heaven."*

Where are they? They are standing before the throne of God. Now, you read that over and think about it. You usually just roll over the scripture and don't think about it. The Word says, *"They are standing before the throne of God."* They are the sons of Adam, the sinners of all nations, tribes, kindred, and people like you and me. They are actually standing in the presence of God.

Psalm One says, *"The ungodly shall not stand."* These people are not ungodly. They were, but Christ has washed them. He has presented them Holy without blame. David said, in Psalm 24: *"Who shall ascend to the hill of the Lord; who shall stand in His presence?"* David came to the conclusion that the only way that a man could stand in God's presence was to be without sin. *"He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully."* How can these people stand before God?

Here is the key. *"They stand before God and before the Lamb."* There is a Lamb slain whose blood was shed. Read Revelation 5 sometime about the vision John had when he saw Him that sitteth on the throne. *"In His hand was a book, written within and*

without,” (which is the will of God and the purpose of God, the covenant of God, the glory of God, the salvation of God and the Book of God). He said, “And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.”

One of elders said, *“Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.”* There is just one Lion of the tribe of Judah, and that is Christ. He’s worthy.” He said that he looked and in the midst of the throne stood a Lamb as it had been slain, *“Behold the Lamb of God, slain before the foundation of the world.”* He’s worthy! He said (as he watched the Lamb standing in the midst of the throne), that he was God; He came from the throne. He walked right up to Him that sitteth on the throne and took the Book in his hands and opened that Book, and fulfilled all that was written therein concerning God’s will, God’s purpose, God’s justice, God’s righteousness and God’s kingdom.

Only in Christ do they stand. *“In Him they are washed in the blood of the Lamb, in whom we have forgiveness, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sin through His blood. He died the just for the unjust to bring us there to God.”*

We’re to stand before His Father in Him (Christ). *“In the fullness of time, God sent His son into this world, made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were born under the law”* that they might stand in His presence. God will bring an unrighteous man or woman before His throne in heaven only through the merits and righteousness of Christ.

God told Moses that he couldn’t even look on Him and live. *“No man can look on God and live.”* Manoah said to his wife, *“We’re going to die, we’ve seen God”* (Judges 13:22). If an unholy or unrighteous person, human being of flesh and blood were to stand in heaven, the very presence of God would destroy him. The Lord doesn’t have to do anything special to destroy man and put him out of existence; God’s presence will do that. The only way that these people can stand before the throne is in the Lamb. They have to be *“Washed in the blood of the Lamb. They have to be clothed in His righteousness.”*

If a man is unholy and unredeemed would stand in the presence of God, the presence of God would destroy him like darkness disappears before the sun. Darkness can’t stand before the Sun; it just goes. That’s the way natural man would be in the presence of God; His presence would annihilate him. It would just take him away. John saw the multitude, which no man could number. They stood before God and before the Lamb.

How were they dressed? John said, *“I saw them out of every tribe, kindred, nation, and tongue under heaven clothed; I saw them clothed with white robes.”* Why are the robes white? White signifies holiness and purity. God said, *“Though your sins be like scarlet, I’ll make them white as snow.”* Their dress was the same. They all had on white robes. They were different ages and a different service and different nations, but they were all dressed alike. They had on the wedding garment. They had on the robe of His righteousness.

They all had palms in their hands. Do you know what a palm leaf signifies? It signifies victory. The victory is theirs through the blood of the lamb. They are praising Him. The hymn writer said:

All the conquerors bring their palms,
To the Lamb upon the throne.
And they proclaim in joyful songs,
Victory, victory, through His blood alone.

John heard something. That is what he saw, a multitude that no man can number standing before the throne of God and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes and proclaiming victory over sin, over death, over hell, over Satan, over the grave and over all things. It was victory in Christ! *“Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (1 Cor. 15:57).

What did John hear? He says, *“And I heard, (they cried with a loud voice) saying, salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb.”* These people in glory give God all the glory for what they are and for what they have and for what they will be. They say, *“Salvation is of the Lord.”* That is what they are singing; “It’s all of the Lord; it’s not our works. The glory is not ours, it is not our merit, it is not our worthiness, it is not our works, it is not our deeds, and it is not our religion, it is all of His doing.” *“Salvation to our God and to the Lamb.”* It is glory to the Father and to the Son; it is *“Unto Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood and hath made us Kings and Priests unto our God. Unto Him be all the glory.”*

Down here on the earth, there may be people who are praising flesh; they aren’t praising the flesh up there. Down here on the earth there may be people who do not believe in sovereign mercy, but not up there. They all believe in sovereign mercy. There may be people on the earth boasting about their good works, righteousness and morality, but not up there. They sing unto Him, *“Salvation to our God, salvation is of the Lord.”*

On earth, there may be people who doubt the necessity of the blood, but not up there. On earth, there may be preachers who deny the efficacy of His precious atonement, but not up there. On earth, men may talk about salvation in duties and deeds and church membership, but nobody up there. Here on the earth they may say you need to belong to our church, be baptized or do this, that and the other to be saved, but not up there. They say, *“Salvation to our God and to the Lamb, unto Him who loved us and washed us.”* Down here they may say I chose God, but up there they know that He chose them. They may speak of other mediators down here, but not up there. Up there is one Mediator, one Advocate and that is Jesus Christ our righteousness, the Intercessor, and one Lamb.

I hear people say, “Well, you’re so narrow minded; you are so fanatical. You just claim that there is one way of salvation.” That is what they’re saying in glory, too! They are saying, *“Salvation to our God, salvation to the Lamb, unto Him who loved us and washed us from our sin, unto Him be the glory, both now and forever.”* That is the song of the Lamb. Those who sing that song there learned it here. John heard the whole heaven join in with them, the whole heaven. My, my, wouldn’t you love to hear that choir? I hope to, by His grace.

It says in the verse 12: all the angels sing it also. They sing, *“Salvation to our God and to the Lamb.”* All the angels stood round about the throne and about the elders. The four beasts and all the angels of God fell on their faces. This multitude, which no man can number, were saying, *“Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be unto our God forever and ever.”*

How do you get the idea of giving out of rewards, the giving out of crowns, and the designation of heroes from the earth? Where do you work this in? It’s not here. Here is a seven-fold praise to our God. This multitude, which no man can number, they aren’t praising the soul winners and the preachers; they are praising Him who loved them. It is, *“Salvation to our God.”*

They give a seven-fold praise or anthem. Here it is: *“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His Holy name. He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”* God will not share His glory. Christ is the wisdom and power of God. In Proverbs 8, He’s wisdom and He is thanksgiving. He’s the fountain of grace and the fountain of life. *“Every good gift cometh from God.”* Honor is due unto God the Father, the righteous judge. Power belongeth to God. Might and strength belongeth to God. *“Rock of ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee”*. That’s the seven-fold praise. This entire multitude and all the angels of heaven, the beasts, elders and everybody are joining together and are singing praise to God. That is what John heard.

You know, I gave you a message last week on that prayer that is certain to be answered when our Lord said, *“Father, I will that those whom Thou hast given me will be with Me where I am that they may behold my glory. For Thou lovest me before the foundation of the world.”* That is what I’m preaching, that glory. Listen, I’m preaching, that all this multitude, beholds and praises Him, with blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power, might, and strength to the Lord our God and to Him only, forever and ever. Then, they all said, *“Amen,”* (so be it)!

When are we going to quit bragging on ourselves and bragging on the flesh? I’ll tell you when. It will be when we see His glory. It says in John 12:41, *“When Isaiah saw His glory, he spake of Him.”* What did John learn? One of the elders answered and said, *“Who are these which are arrayed in white robes and where did they come from, who are these people?”* I said, *“Sir, you know.”* He said, *“Yea, these are they which came out of great tribulation.”* You’ll notice that he didn’t say, *“the great tribulation.”* No, every one of these people, the whole multitude, of every tribe, kindred, nation and tongue, all of them came out of tribulation.

Our Lord said, *“In this world you will have tribulation.”* They came out of trouble. All of the people of God suffer and have trouble. They washed their robes and they were made white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, are they before the throne of God and they serving Him, day and night.

You see, John learned that all these people during their time on this earth had troubles. They had troubles and sorrows, sufferings and sicknesses, trials, tribulations. Another thing about them, every one of them washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. No one washed his robe in the baptismal pool. Nobody washed his robe coming to the sacrament. Nobody washed his robe in a confessional booth, nobody washed his robe down at the old-fashioned mourner’s bench; they all washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.

They had a glorious future. John said, *“Therefore 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. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For 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.”*

What did John see? He saw great multitudes, which no man could number. The multitudes were *“Out of every tribe, kindred, nation and tongue under heaven.”* Where were they? They were before the throne and before the Lamb.

Where did they come from? They came out of great tribulation. They washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and they will praise Him.