

[REVELATION 7:9-17]  
Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> Apr 2008

# / Heavenly worship

## [Introduction]

Jane Doe was average Joe: medium height, shopped at Next, drank, oh, Frappuccino's... not Cappuccino's. She went to Carey Baptist Church. And listened well to the sermons, taking notes. She'd enjoyed the mini series on worship... but a nagging doubt troubled her: her worship didn't seem to be particularly vigorous or enthusiastic, even after all the sermons she'd heard. If we feel like Jane, what can we do? What will inject some life into our worship; what will cause us to worship with energy and joy? Revelation 7:9-17 tells us that two things will: salvation and heaven. We see salvation in v9-12 and heaven in v13-17, but first, some background to those verses...

## [1] The sealed will worship (v1-8)

The last part of Revelation ch6 contains a description of the end of the world. Christ will return and judge the world. The question is asked 'who will stand?'

7:1-8 tell us who will stand: the sealed (v3). Those who have God's seal on them will withstand evil in the world and will stand firm at the end of the world.

God's seal is the Holy Spirit (see Eph. 1:13). When a person believes, the Spirit lives in them, and is God's seal; the mark that they are God's. How many are sealed? 144,000 (v4). This symbolic number describes God's true followers. It is symbolically a *large* and *complete* number: A huge number will be sealed, and all God's people will be sealed; none will be forgotten about.

When Jesus returns, it is the sealed who will stand, and the sealed who will do heavenly worship.

A crucial question for you is:

Are you sealed?

Are you God's?

Have you believed?

Will you stand on the day of judgement?

Will you be in that huge crowd, doing heavenly worship around the throne of the lamb?

## [2] Salvation powers worship (v9-12)

In v9 we see what the worship which goes on in heaven is like.

This is worship as it should be done. Worship we should imitate. Their worship is pure and with no sin, so it is a good model for our worship.

There is a huge crowd. More than can be counted. And they are all facing the lamb.

And they are all crying out... loudly.

This is *loud* worship!

What are they being loud about?

They are shouting that salvation is God's and the lamb's. And that is the core of their worship. That is what they are worshipping God for, and the angels are agreeing with them and are worshipping too, sprawled out face down on heaven's ground.

Just as that is what is going on in heaven, that is what should go on on earth: Salvation should be the cause of our worship. That is what we should be worshipping God *for*.

Salvation powers our worship, so let's dwell on, let's linger on, let's think over, let's consider, let's realise, let's list the implications of, and let's meditate on, God and the lamb's salvation for us.

As we do that we'll find our personal and church worship has more life and vigour.

## [3] Heaven powers worship (v13-17)

v13-17 show us that as well as salvation powering worship, the prospect of heaven powers worship too.

An elder tells John that the people in the robes have come out of the great tribulation, that is, have come out of the tribulations, troubles and hardships of living as a Christian on earth. Then the elder describes heaven to John (v15-17):

God will be served perfect and He will protect with His glory those who serve Him (v15).

They will never get physically, emotionally or spiritually hungry or thirsty again, and the sun of pain and suffering will not beat them with its scorching heat (v16).

The lamb will watch over them and they will always be refreshed by Him. And God Himself will tenderly wipe away all their tears (v17).

It is the prospect of all that which causes us to look up to God, maybe through our tears of joy and pain, in gratitude and thankfulness. And that is worship.

When you are feeling low and/or when your worship is lifeless, read v16-17 and put 'I' & 'my' & 'me' in, instead of 'they' & 'their' & 'them'.

It is heaven, and the prospect of heaven; and what will happen to us in heaven, that powers our worship & gives us the strength to continue to worship.