

DAY 18: THE CENTRAL ROLE OF MARTYRDOM IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

9 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. 10 They cried out with a loud voice, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” 11 Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers[c] should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been. ([Revelation 6:9-11](#))

I. MARTYRDOM AND THE FIFTH SEAL

- A. Sees the souls of those who had been slain because of the gospel ([v. 9](#))
- B. The judgement event is that God has ordained the murdering of the saints
 - 1. Quantitative- “until the number” ([v. 11](#))
 - 2. One of the designs of the Great Tribulation is to bring the church to maturity through an experience similar to what Christ bore on the cross
 - 3. The Book of Revelation clearly describes the church’s role in the End Times
- C. The power of the fifth soul is that our eternal life is found in Jesus
 - 1. Crying out, “how long?” ([v. 10](#))
 - 2. The Lord answers with a call to wait, more blood must be shed ([v. 11](#))
 - 3. We can rest in the knowledge that losing our life right now does not take away from our eternal life in Christ
- D. On the subject of the rapture, Paul teaches that this will take place when Jesus returns ([2 Thessalonians 2](#))
 - 1. The church at the end of the age will face the Antichrist
 - 2. God designs the Great Tribulation so that we would bear witness
 - 3. Our bearing witness leads to being slain ([v. 9](#))
 - a) However, this is not to be feared because our hope is in eternal life through Christ

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9 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" 11 And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen." 13 Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" 14 I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ([Revelation 7:9-14](#))

II. BUILDING CONTEXT

- A. "A great multitude that no one could number" is distinct
- B. Looks at the impact of martyrdom of the fifth seal
 - 1. John now sees it in a different way ([v. 9](#))
 - 2. The elder responds "coming out of the great tribulation" ([v. 14](#))
 - 3. Confirming that we will not be raptured before the tribulation
- C. Every nation, tribe, and tongue will have a witness ([v. 9](#))
 - 1. Witnesses will be born before and during the great tribulation
 - 2. There will be hatred of believers seen in every nation, tribe, tongue
- D. Martyrdom will not just be the hallmark of the great tribulation, it will be the the provocation for the great, final declaration of the gospel
 - 1. Not just declaration, but will also be a demonstration of the gospel
 - 2. Lives will be laid down for the sake of the gospel
- E. The great harvest of souls, the blood of the saints
 - 1. Discipleship at the end of the age will look much more like that of Iran and Afghanistan than a church service in the USA
 - 2. The saints are conquering Satan ([Revelation 12](#))
 - 3. Satan is overcoming the saints ([Revelation 13](#))
 - 4. We overcome Satan by surrendering our lives for the sake of the gospel
 - 5. The saints will be given into his hands for a period of time ([Daniel 7](#))
- F. Your soul is stronger than the suffering you endure
- G. Jesus' death was horrific, but necessary
 - 1. So too is our suffering
- H. There are events that take place that God does not desire, but allows
 - 1. God's emotional will does not necessarily reflect his creed
 - 2. The cross
 - 3. Noah's flood
- I. How can there be redemption in the blood of so many saints?
 - 1. God has ordained us to fill up the full number of martyrs
 - 2. We don't seek martyrdom, nor do we run from it
 - 3. We seek Jesus above all else- overcome by the blood of the Lamb