

REVELATION 7 – ANGELIC EXPLANATION 1 – GOD GIVES DIVINE PROTECTION

1. ANGELIC EXPLANATION – GOD’S PROTECTION

- a. The **first angelic explanation** (Revelation 7:1-17) occurs immediately after the opening of the first six seals by Jesus, the Lamb of God (Revelation 6:1-17) and answers the question of Revelation 6:17 (Matthew 10:22; 24:13; Mark 13:13).

Revelation 6:17 *The great Day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand? (Joel 2:11; Nahum 1:6; Malachi 3:2)*

- b. Affirming the security of God's people, John sees a divine sealing on **two distinct groups**, releasing both **physical** and **spiritual** protection. Knowing that God has it in His heart to preserve His people in the midst of trouble is meant to inspire our faith to believe Him for more, for our families, friends and ourselves. He is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8; Malachi 3:6), therefore if He'll do it at all, He'll do it again.
- i First, **144,000 Jewish believers** from the “remnant of Israel” will stand in victory (7:1-8; 14:1-5)

Revelation 7:3 *“Do not harm the earth... till we have sealed the **servants of our God** on their foreheads.”⁴ I heard the number of those sealed. **144,000** of all the tribes of the children of **Israel** were sealed...*

- ii Second, a **great multitude of Gentile believers** from every nation will not yield to the Harlot’s seduction or the Antichrist’s persecution, even unto death (Revelation 7:9-17; 15:2-4; 20:4).

Revelation 7:9 *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,¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”*

- c. The juxtaposition of the **144,000 sealed** Israelites at the beginning of the Great Tribulation (Revelation 7:1-8) just preceding the **great multitude of martyred Gentiles** from every nation that have come out of the Great Tribulation (Revelation 7:9-17) seems to imply a causal relationship between the two groups.
- i The 144,000, preserved in safety, stand as a **testimony** to the power and grace of God to preserve a **remnant of Israel** (Isaiah 10:22-23; Romans 9:27-28; 11:1-6); even as God preserved 7,000 in the days of Elijah (1 Kings 19:18) and will preserve one-half of the city of Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:2) and bring one-third of the nation of Israel through the fire of judgment (Zechariah 13:8-9).
- d. These 144,000 are the **first fruits** to God of those from the nation of Israel, walking in their eternal calling as a kingdom of priests, “servants of God” (Revelation 7:3) who “follow the Lamb wherever He goes” (Revelation 14:1-5). In the closing moments of the Great Tribulation, just prior to the Millennium, “all Israel will be saved” (Jeremiah 31:1; Romans 11:26) as a “full harvest” of that which these “first fruits” were but an initial token.

Revelation 14:1 Then I looked, and behold... **144,000** having His Father's name written on their foreheads...

⁴ These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being **firstfruits to God** and to the Lamb.

⁵ And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

2. GOD'S SEVEN-FOLD SHAKING OF HEAVEN AND EARTH (HAGGAI 2:6-9)

- a. God promised to **shake everything** that can be shaken to bring forth an unshakable kingdom (Isaiah 13:13; Ezekiel 38:20; Joel 3:16; Haggai 2:6-9, 21; Luke 21:26; Hebrews 12:25-29). Every nation will be impacted by this shaking, including all the religious structures of the earth (1 Peter 4:17). The Lord is creating a global crisis with no solution apart from Him. He is the primary source of this shaking (Haggai 2:6-9, 21), although creation's groan (Romans 8:22), the sin of man (Daniel 8:23) and Satan's rage (Revelation 12:12) will all be involved.

Haggai 2:6 "For thus says the LORD of hosts... I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; ⁷ and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory..." ⁸ "The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine," says the LORD of hosts.

Hebrews 12:26 ...now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven."

²⁷ Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.

- i **Heavens** - Cosmic disturbances, sun darkened and intensified, moon to blood, stars falling (Matthew 24:29)
 - ii **Earth** - Volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, mudslides, blood, fire and smoke (Joel 2:30)
 - iii **Sea** - Coastal disruption, tidal waves roaring, tsunamis, flooding, sea to blood (Luke 21:25; Revelation 16:3)
 - iv **Dry Land** (vegetation) - severe drought, burning heat and fire, famines, pestilence, beasts (Revelation 8:7)
 - v **All Nations** - political structures in confusion, social upheaval, ethnic conflict (Matthew 24:7; Revelation 6:1-8)
 - vi **Church** - all man-made religious systems of the earth challenged, stretched and broken (Joel 2:28-32)
 - vii **Economy** - Financial structures, economic disruption, great transfer of wealth (Haggai 2:8; 1 Timothy 6:17)
- b. Even in the midst of this great shaking, there is a clear distinction between God's **redemptive judgments**, meant to redeem the objective of His judgment through discipline and His **punitive judgments**, which are meant to punish the object of His judgment through wrath. The Church is never appointed unto God's wrath, though she be disciplined (Romans 5:9; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9; Revelation 2:5, 16).

Romans 5:9 Having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

1 Thessalonians 5:9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

- c. The Father both tests and disciplines the son whom He loves (Job 5:17; Proverbs 3:11-12; Hebrews 12:3-11; Revelation 3:19), knowing that His goodness leads to repentance (change of heart and mind) and maturity (Romans 2:4). The Lord's correction is not His rejection, but rather His love and wisdom, which have the vantage point of eternity.

Hebrews 12:5 *My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; ⁶ For whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.*

- d. While it is true that **God's wrath is not directed at His people**, His judgments are directed to remove the darkness that hinders His love and without exception will touch those who are embracing darkness (Joshua 5:13-15). **Revelation 18:4** *And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her [Babylon], My people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. ⁵ For her sins have reached to heaven...*

Luke. 6:46 *[Jesus speaking to believers] "But why call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say? ⁴⁷ Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them... ⁴⁸ He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and **could not shake it...** ⁴⁹ But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house... without a foundation, which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of it was great."*

- e. In God's eternal love and wisdom He uses **natural circumstances**, our own **bad choices**, **evil humans** and **satanic pressure** to sift, test and purify His people (Daniel 7:21; 11:32-35; 12:11; 13:7, 15; Revelation 2:10, 13). God used Satan to sift Peter (Luke 22:31-32), test Job (Job 1:12; 2:6) and even put some of His own people to death through martyrdom. John the Baptist and all 12 Apostles, except Judas and John were martyred.

Revelation. 2:10 *Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be **tested**, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be **faithful until death**, and I will give you the crown of life.*

Revelation 2:13 *I know your works... And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was **My faithful martyr**, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.*

3. GOD'S REMEDY TO AVERT JUDGMENT

- a. God will establish many "**cities of refuge**" or "**pockets of mercy**" where, because of the **wholehearted lifestyle** (Sermon-on-the-Mount) and **intercession** of the saints, many people will be physically preserved, while the negative impact of God's judgments will be **lessened or diverted** altogether, and the positive affect of His judgments will be **maximized** for righteousness (Psalm 91; 2 Chronicles 7:14; Isaiah 26:20-21; Ezekiel 22:30; Joel 2:12-17; 3:16; Amos 7:1-9; Jonah 3:4-10; Nahum 1:7; Zephaniah 2:1-3). God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 33:11), but desires all men to come to a knowledge of the truth and be saved (1 Timothy 2:4).

Zephaniah 2:1 *Gather yourselves together... ² Before the [final] decree is issued... before the day of the LORD's anger comes upon you! ³ Seek the LORD, all you meek of the earth, who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility. It may be you will be hidden in the day of the LORD's anger.*

- b. Joel says, when God sends judgment to awaken love there is only **one response** - Sacred assemblies, or corporate gatherings of wholehearted prayer with fasting (Joel 2:12-17). The intensity of the crisis **hangs in the balance of prayer ministries** all over the earth for their

geographic region (Jeremiah 29:7; Ezekiel 22:30). “Who knows” if God will turn (change the decree) and send a blessing instead of judgment? (1 Samuel 14:6; 2 Samuel 16:12; Jl. 2:14; Zephaniah 2:3; Amos 5:15; Jonah 1:6; 3:9; Jeremiah 51:8; Daniel 3:17; 4:27; Habakkuk 3:16; Malachi 1:9).

Joel 2:12 “Now, **therefore** [in light of judgment],” says the LORD, “**Turn to Me** with all your heart, with **fasting**, with weeping, and with mourning.”¹³ So **rend your heart**, and not your garments; return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and He **relents** from doing harm.¹⁴ **Who knows** if He will **turn and relent**, and leave a **blessing** behind Him...¹⁵ Blow the trumpet in Zion, consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly;¹⁶ gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children and nursing babes...

4. THE FOUR ANGELS AND THE ANGEL FROM THE EAST (REV. 7:1-3)

Rev. 7:1 After these things I saw **four angels** standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree.² Then 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 granted to harm the earth and the sea,³ saying, “Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have **sealed the servants of our God** on their foreheads.”

- a. In Revelation 7, John first sees **four angels** at the **four corners** of the earth, controlling the **four winds** of the earth. A **fifth angel** then “ascending from the east”, commands these angels not to harm the earth, sea or trees until God’s servants were **sealed with a mark** on their foreheads. This type of protective seal or protective sign to preserve from judgment is commonly found throughout Scripture.
 - i During Passover, at the time of the exodus from Egypt, Israel received a **protective sign** on their doors that saved their firstborn from death (Exodus 11:4-12:30). Israel was also protected in Goshen from other plagues that affected the Egyptians (Exodus 8:22-23; 9:4, 6, 26; 10:22-23). This is the “Goshen principle” when God physically protects a geographic region in the midst of His judgment (Zephaniah 2:3; Psalm 91).

Exodus 12:12 ‘For I will... strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast...¹³ Now the blood shall be a **sign** for you on the houses where you are. And **when I see the blood, I will pass over you**; and the **plague shall not be on you** to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

- ii In Ezekiel’s day (586 BC), God placed a **protective mark** upon those who “sigh and cry” over Jerusalem in intercession, before releasing judgment on the city (Ezekiel 9:6). Similarities between Ezekiel and Revelation are an image of jealousy (Ezekiel 8:3; Revelation 13:14-15) and the sealing of the faithful (Ezekiel 9:4, 6; Revelation 7; 9:4), just prior to God’s fire being cast to earth in judgment (Ezekiel 10:1-2; Revelation 8:5).

Ezekiel 9:4 The Lord said, “Go through... Jerusalem, and put a **mark on the foreheads** of the men who **sigh and cry** over all the abominations...”⁵ To the others He said... “Go through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare...⁶ slay old and young men, maidens and little children... **but do not come near anyone on whom is the mark**; and begin at My sanctuary.”

- iii Rahab received a scarlet thread as a **protective seal** that preserved her entire household when Joshua defeated Jericho (Joshua 2:17-21).

Joshua 2:12 Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by the LORD... show kindness to my father's house, and give me a **true token**,¹³ and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death."...¹⁷ So the men said to her: "We will be blameless of this oath of yours...¹⁸ unless, when we come into the land, you **bind this line of scarlet cord in the window** through which you let us down, and unless you bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father's household to your own home. (Mt. 1:5; Heb. 11:31; Jas. 2:25)

- b. These 144,000 are called "servants of our God" (Revelation 7:3). The Greek word for "servant" is δοῦλος and was properly a **bond-servant** who **willingly, completely** and **permanently** subjected themselves to the will of another, apart from any specific act of service, for the focus was on the relationship and not on the service itself. The term was only used of believers such as Paul (Romans 1:1), Epaphras (Colossians 4:12), James (James 1:1), Peter (2 Peter 1:1), Jude (Jude 1:1) and Jesus (Philippians 2:7).

5. THE SEALING OF THE TWELVE TRIBES (REV. 7:4-8)

Revelation 7:4 I heard the number of those who were sealed. **144,000 of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:**⁵ of the tribe of **Judah** twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of **Reuben** twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of **Gad** twelve thousand were sealed;⁶ of the tribe of **Asher** twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of **Naphtali** twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of **Manasseh** twelve thousand were sealed;⁷ of the tribe of **Simeon** twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of **Levi** twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of **Issachar** twelve thousand were sealed;⁸ of the tribe of **Zebulun** twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of **Joseph** twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of **Benjamin** twelve thousand were sealed.

- a. In light of the impending judgment, an angel puts the "seal of the Living God" on **144,000 Jewish people** from all the tribes of Israel before He strikes the earth, sea and trees (Revelation 7:3). There are approx 12 million Jews in the earth today, so this is only 1%. The **144,000** is a special "guarantee", but may be representative of many others from the godly remnant as well, because we know that one-third of Israel will ultimately survive the great tribulation (Zechariah 13:8-9). If this 144,000 were the one-third, that would only be 432,000. By this we see that it's in God's heart to protect His people, because God's wisdom never changes
- b. Another important point is that although men's records may be incomplete, God's are not. There is no such thing as the "lost tribes of Israel" as far as God is concerned. The twelve tribes were all in existence at the time of James and Paul's writing (James 1:1; Acts 26:7) and according to Jesus, they will continue to exist even into the Millennium (Matthew 19:28; Luke 22:30) and beyond in the New Heavens and Earth (Revelation 22:12).
 - i There are some variations in this list, compared to other biblical accounts of the twelve tribes. In some lists both sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, are mentioned separately. Here however, Manasseh is mentioned, but Ephraim is not, substituting Joseph his father in his place (v. 8). No explanation is given.
- c. The erroneous idea that the Church is now the true Israel (replacement theology) is not sustained by any explicit reference in Scripture. The word "Israel" is never used of Gentiles, but refers only to those who are **racially descendants** of Israel or Jacob. **The remnant of Israel**

portrayed here should not be confused as the Church. It would be further ridiculous to continue the typology of Israel representing the Church so far as to divide it into “twelve tribes”. Instead, this is a clear indication of God’s continued purpose for the nation of Israel and their guaranteed preservation during the Great Tribulation period.

- d. Even despite the great **satanic pressure** (Revelation 12:13-17) and **global persecution** (Matthew 25:31-46), God still has a future purpose for the nation of Israel and the destiny of the Jewish people as a whole. A godly remnant will be preserved in the midst of trouble as a glorious testimony to God’s grace at Christ’s return.

Revelation 12:13 *Now the dragon... persecuted the **woman** [faithful Israel] who gave birth to the male Child [Jesus].¹⁴ But the **woman** was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is **nourished** for [3½ years], from the presence of the serpent...¹⁷ And the dragon was enraged with the **woman**, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

- e. There will be many more Israelites saved during the Tribulation, however some will give up their lives as martyrs. In any event, 144,000 are guaranteed to prevail victoriously, 12,000 from every tribe (Revelation 14:1-5).

6. THE GREAT MULTITUDE OF GENTILES FROM EVERY NATION (REV. 7:9-10)

Rev. 7:9 *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,¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”*

- a. In contrast to the 144,000 Israelites, here John sees a great multitude beyond computation that have come from every nation, tribe, people and tongue. Not only will a remnant of Israel be saved, but this shows forth the fruit of a great harvest that comes to Jesus in the Great Tribulation (Zephaniah 2:11; Haggai 2:7; Malachi 1:11).
- b. Although these saints were martyred, many Gentiles believers may also be sealed for physical protection by God, as seen in the fifth trumpet judgment (Rev 9:4).

Revelation 9:4 *They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the **seal of God** on their foreheads. (Luke 10:19)*

- c. The **white robes** are reminiscent of those given in Revelation 6:11, where they were told to be patient and **rest a little while longer** until the number of their brethren were martyred as they were. These Gentiles are coming out of the Great Tribulation (Revelation 7:14). The final two martyrs to be killed are the Two Witnesses (Revelation 11:7-13).

Rev. 6:9 *The fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.¹⁰ And they cried with a loud voice, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”¹¹ Then a **white robe** was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should **rest a little while longer**, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.*

- d. The **palm branches** are representative of their ultimate victory over the Antichrist (Revelation 15:2).

Revelation 15:2 And I saw... those who have the **victory over the beast**, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God.

7. THE PRAISE OF THE HEAVENLY HOST (REV. 7:11-12)

Revelation 7:11 All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honour and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen."

- a. Joining the multitude of saints, those in heaven fall down before the Throne to worship God in a sevenfold ascription of praise - blessing, glory, wisdom thanksgiving, honour, power and might.
- b. This is similar to the seven-fold exaltation given to Jesus in the Millennium (Revelation 5:11-12). Revelation 7:12 repeats five, while adding thanksgiving and might, whereas Revelation 5:12 adds riches and strength.

Revelation 5:11 I heard many angels around the throne... living creatures and elders... the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying... "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honour and glory and blessing!"

8. THE GREAT MULTITUDE COME OUT OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION (REV. 7:13-14)

Revelation 7:13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" ¹⁴ And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who **come out of the great tribulation**, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

- a. This is one of the Twenty-four Elders, which were first introduced in Revelation as being enthroned in the immediate presence of God surrounding His eternal Throne, **robed** in light and **crowned** in gold (Revelation 4:4; 5:6). Isaiah saw these exalted men (Isaiah 24:23).

Revelation 4:4 Around the Throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw **twenty-four elders** sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

Isaiah 24:23 Then [Millennium] the moon will be disgraced and the sun ashamed; for the LORD of hosts will reign on **Mount Zion** [Psalm 2:6] and in Jerusalem and before **His elders**, gloriously.

- b. The Twenty-four Elders are the top governmental ministry of the redeemed in eternity. Interestingly, as the most powerful and highest ranking men in authority, within the heavenly government of Almighty God, they spend the strength of their time and energies **beholding** the Person of God (Revelation 4:4; 5:5-6; 7:11; 14:3), unto the revelation of the knowledge of God expressed through **worship** (Revelation 4:10; 5:8-10, 14; 11:16- 17; 19:4), **intercession** (Revelation 5:8-10) and **proclamation** (Revelation 4:11; 5:4-5, 8-10; 7:13-17; 11:16-18).
 - i **4:4** Around the throne... I saw twenty-four elders **sitting**... (Revelation 5:6; 14:3)
 - ii **4:10** the twenty-four elders **fall down** before Him... and **worship**... and **cast their crowns**...
 - iii **5:8** the twenty-four elders **fell down** before the Lamb, each having a **harp** [music], and **golden bowls** full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. ⁹ And they **sang a new song**...
 - iv **5:14** the twenty-four elders **fell down** and **worshiped** Him who lives forever and ever.

- v **7:11** the elders... **fell on their faces** before the throne and **worshiped** God...
- vi **11:16** the twenty-four elders who **sat** before God... **fell on their faces** and **worshiped** God...
- vii **19:4** the twenty-four elders... **fell down** and **worshiped** God... saying, "Amen! Alleluia!"
- c. There will be multitudes of Gentiles saved in the Great Tribulation (Daniel 11:32-35; 12:3, 10; Matthew 24:14; 28:19-20; Revelation 12:10). The Tribulation Martyrs are explicitly referenced here who have sealed their testimony with their own blood and were washed in the blood of the Lamb (v. 14). Because they would not worship the Beast (Revelation 13:5) they were under a death sentence imposed by Satan himself (Revelation 12:10-17).

Revelation 12:17 *And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

Revelation 12:11 *And they overcame him by the **blood of the Lamb** and by the **word of their testimony**, and they **did not love their lives to the death**.*

9. THE HEAVENLY REWARD OF THE MARTYRED SAINTS (REV. 7:15-17)

Revelation 7:15 *Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them. ¹⁶ They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; ¹⁷ for the **Lamb** who is in the midst of the throne will **shepherd** them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*

- a. The entire thrust of Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation is the restoration of man to a place of full intimacy with God. These martyred saints occupy a position of great blessing in their proximity to the throne. By the sovereignty of God, they endured the most difficult time for people of faith of all of history. Nevertheless, they remained steadfast in their testimony and overcome the adversary by the word of their testimony and by the blood of the Lamb.
- b. There is great comfort in what the elder has to say. There may be some insight here as to how these martyrs met their death – through hunger, thirst and exposure.
- c. For these saints, they are now out of reach of all that would seek to harm them, and the Lord himself has become their place of safety and refuge, and he shelters them with his presence. Jesus himself will be their shepherd, guiding them to springs of living water.