

THE 144,000 REVELATION 7

INTRODUCTION:

III. The tribulation and the first 6 seals. The seventh is not opened until ch.8:1. This is a parenthetical portion of scripture. A lull in the storm if you will. God stops the activity for a period of time to draw back the curtain and allow us a glimpse at His heart. Men have rejected the grace of the Lamb and now, they must experience the wrath of the Lamb. However, before He pours out the final judgments upon the human race, God stops to answer a prayer prayed long ago by the prophet Habbakuk.

2 O LORD, I have heard your speech and was afraid; O LORD, revive Your work in the midst of the years! In the midst of the years make it known; In wrath remember mercy. (Habakkuk 3:2, NKJV).

God is going to extend His mercy to a group of individuals. This is encouraging to me! In the midst of so much hatred, pain and judgment; it is good to know that the Lord will still be in the business of saving souls during the tribulation!

Chapter 7 deals with two distinct groups of people. Verses 1-8 deal exclusively with the Jews; verses 9-17 with gentiles. We want to answer three questions tonight related to this first group.

1. Who are they?
2. What do they do?
3. Are they living tonight?

Let's spend some time tonight looking at the 144,000.

I. V.1-2a

HOW GOD PROTECTS THEM

A. **BY EARTHLY RESTRAINTS** - (4 is a prominent number, repeated three times: angels, corners, winds) (4 is the number of the world!)

1. Angels - Messenger - *14 Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? (Hebrews 1:14, NKJV).*
2. Corners - Not flat - *22 It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in. (Isaiah 40:22, NKJV).*
3. Winds - Type of Judgment - Holding = restrained; *7 "They sow the wind, And reap the whirlwind. The stalk has no bud; It shall never produce meal. If it should produce, Aliens would swallow it up. (Hosea 8:7, NKJV).*

B. BY HEAVENLY RESOURCES - A fifth angel- 5 number of grace - Rises like the sun, *2 But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves. (Malachi 4:2, NKJV).* Could it be? This angel comes to dispense grace to these men. They are to be sealed by God's seal. (III. Seal = Protection - Noah, Ark; Israel, Blood; Cain, Mark)

II. V.2b-3

HOW GOD PRESERVES THEM

A. **WHY THEY ARE SEALED** - They are the servants of God! (II.Nothing else can happen until they are sealed!)

1. A mark on the forehead.

A. Possession - III. Signet

B. Protection - III. Tomb

C. Preservation - (III. Canning) - To preserve from slaughter, from Anti-Christ. Nothing can kill them! III. The government will try! But, will not succeed!

B. **WHERE THEY ARE SEALED** - In the forehead, an outward, observable sign. (III. Passover - Blood on the doorposts!)

1. Believers are sealed with an inward seal -

113 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, (Ephesians 1:13, NKJV).

By His seal, we are guaranteed delivery to the throne of God.

III. An inward seal now, but an outward one then.

2. This seal will be a constant reminder to Satan that he is defeated. The church now, the 144,000 then.

3. Satan will be able to do nothing to these men, they are protected, kept and preserved by the mighty hand of God!

III. V.4-8

HOW GOD PRESENTS THEM (III. 3 Questions)

A. **THEY ARE PRESENTED AS A FAMILY** (Who they are? #1)

III. Cults who claim to be the 144,000: Worldwide Church Of God; Jehovah's Witnesses; Seventh Day Adventists. None of these are right!) These men are not gentiles, they are not Christians.

They are not any group, they are members of a family. They are Jews! What does this tell us?

1. God is not through with the Jew - Rom. 9-11

2. These are Jews who have received Christ - Witnesses,

1 Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there.

2 "But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.

3 "And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."

4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth.

5 And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner.

6 These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.

(Revelation 11:1-6, NKJV).

3. 12,000 from each of the 12 tribes. No living Jew, but Jesus, knows which tribe he is from. (III. All records were destroyed in 70 AD) But, God knows!

4. Notice that Dan is missing. Why? Probably Idolatry. They were spiritual weaklings and they are not needed here?

17 Dan shall be a serpent by the way, A viper by the path, That bites the horse's heels So that its rider shall fall backward. (Genesis 49:17, NKJV).

B. V.3 THEY ARE PRESENTED AS TO THEIR FUNCTION

(What they do? #2)

1. Servants - They are evangelists - *14 "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. (Matthew 24:14, NKJV).*

2. III. The zeal of a converted Jew!

C. ARE THEY ALIVE? #3 Probably! We are in the last days!

Conclusion: The important matter is your personal salvation. Do you know the Lord? I do not know how you feel about it, but I am encouraged that God is going to raise up an army of redeemed

Jews who will preach the gospel of the Kingdom, and that a multitude will be saved from tribulation. We serve a truly awesome God!

THE TRIBULATION SAINTS

Revelation 7:9-17

INTRODUCTION:

I praise the Lord that there will still be people saved during tribulation times! This is good news. Here is a number totaling more than one man could count! These verses give us the opportunity to look at what awaits those who come out of tribulation. It also affords us the privilege of getting a little sneak preview into the goings on of glory. I don't know about you, but I tend to get a little bit homesick every now and then. This is God's way of pulling the curtain aside and letting us look into the things that will happen when we finally get home. Let's notice some facts about this great multitude.

I. V.9-12 **THEIR DESCRIPTION** (Includes the souls under the altar! *16 and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! (Revelation 6:16, NKJV).*

A. *They are Gentiles* - God dealt with the Jew in verses 1-9, now He turns to the gentiles. Acts 1:16 - Thank God, He loves the gentile. Rom. 1 :16

16 "Men and brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus; (Acts 1:16, NKJV).

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. (Romans 1:16, NKJV).

B. *Standing* - Not the church - The church was removed before the tribulation.

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. (Revelation 4:4, NKJV).

10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. (1 Thessalonians 1:10, NKJV).

C. *White Robes* - Virtue, purity,

7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:7, NKJV).

18 "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.

(Isaiah 1:18, NKJV).

D. *Palms* - Victory, (III. Victory over tribulation And devil!)

13 took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' The King of Israel!"
(John 12:13, NKJV).

E. *Praises* - These saints lift their voices together and praise the Lord for His saving work!

III. We ought to be about the same business - 20 *"Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."*

(Luke 10:20, NKJV).

III. When we are redeemed by God and are with Him, we have reason to praise - 5 *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."*
(Hebrews 13:5, NKJV).

II. V.13-14 HEIR DELIVERANCE (III. Elder and John)

A. *Came OUT OF tribulation!* Saved as a result of the witness of the 144,000!

B. *Saved by the blood* - III. Slaughterhouse religion! The Blood is THE ONLY WAY TO GOD!

Heb. 9:22 In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

*18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,
19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.
(1 Peter 1:18, 19, NKJV).*

III. V.15-17 **THEIR DESTINY**

A. V.15 *Service* - They will serve God continually. Service never ends, here or there.

B. V.16 *Blessings*:

1. No hunger - III. Famine, 6:5-6

2. No Thirst - III. Water to blood - 8:8, 11

3. No Sunburn - III. Sun - 16:8-9

C. V.17 *Joy*

1. Jesus Himself will feed them.

2. Will give them plenty and they shall never want!

3. God will wipe their tears away, III death of saints, II. All they saw. One day God will extend his grace in a personal way! (III. Us too - Rev. 21 :4)

4 “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”
(Revelation 21:4, NKJV).

The Seventh Seal - Revelation 8

I. INTRODUCTION

A. During our study of chapter 6, (during the 5th seal), we caught a glimpse "of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held."

1. Clothed in white robes, they were asking the Lord how long it would be before He would avenge their blood!

2. HE told them to rest and wait a little longer for there were more to be martyred during this great tribulation.

B. Chapter 8 is an answer to the prayers of these saints as well as the saints of every generation!

1. It is an answer to the prayers for the Lord to "make things right", to judge the enemies of the Lord!

2. As Dr. Henry Morris (author of *THE REVELATION RECORD*) puts it, "There was only one seal yet to be opened, but it would unleash more fury than all that had gone before."

a) Please keep in mind that this "seventh seal" of judgment has within it "seven trumpets" containing judgments of their own!

b) The death and destruction which is about to be sent upon earth is so staggering that even the inhabitants of heaven are taken with silence, and it is there we begin our study!

II. TEXT

A. *Revelation 8:1* 1 When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. (NKJV)

1. Before and after this time, heaven and earth are filled with sound!

- a) Just previous, we heard a great multitude shouting and praising before the throne.
- b) On earth were the noises of war and shouts of fear and blasphemy.
- c) But here, heaven is silent as they contemplate (and surely pray) about the coming events of this 7th seal.

B. *Revelation 8:2* 2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets. (NKJV)

- 1. Many believe that these are none other than Michael, and Gabriel, and five other "archangels" not mentioned specifically in scripture.
- 2. Jewish tradition, in a book called "Enoch", suggests that the names of the other five angels are, Raphael, Uriel, Sarakiel, and Raguel.
 - a) Whatever the other's names, here they are before the throne ready to carry out what the Lord has had planned since they were created on that first day.

C. *Revelation 8:3* 3 Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. (NKJV)

- 1. This angel operates in a privileged role that the other's do not have!
 - a) We see Him preparing to present the intercessions of God's people to the Lord Himself!
 - b) He acts as a "mediator" between men and God!

(1) Yet *1Timothy 2:5* tell us that . . . *there is one. . . Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,* (NKJV)

2. Based upon the Priestly ministry of this "Angel", it appears to be none other than the Lord Himself!!

a) *Revelation 5:8* helps us to better understand what is going on here, *Now when He (the Lamb of God) had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.* (NKJV)

(1) The "incense" He is offering is the prayers of the saints!

(a) When God's people pray is a "sweetness" to Him because of Jesus!

(i) *Romans 8:34* 34 *Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.* (NKJV)

(ii) *Hebrews 4:15* 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. (NKJV)

(iii) *Psalm 141:2* 2 Let my prayer be set before You as incense, The lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. (NKJV)

(2) Notice also that He is offering it with the "prayers of allsaints".

(a) In other words every prayer from every saint that had ever prayed for justice to prevail was about to be answered!

D. *Revelation 8:4* 4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand. (NKJV)

1. The prayers of the saints are only acceptable because of Jesus Christ!

a) How appropriate that these prayers "ascend before God from the angel's hand."

b) Without the cross there would be no "saints" and prayers would be futile to an angry God!

c) It is only through the cross that the cries of humanity become the sweetness of prayers.

E. *Revelation 8:5* 5 Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. (NKJV)

1. Notice that it is the same golden censer that carried the sweet prayers of the saints that becomes a fiery weapon of judgment for those who dwell upon the earth!

a) The same fire that purifies, also destroys!

b) It is amazing that people can hear the message of God's love Sunday after Sunday and still reject His forgiveness.

c) Why would someone prefer to walk in the fire of sin, alienated from God, rather than be purified by the fire of His Holy Spirit?

(1) *Hebrews 10:26-27* puts it this way, 26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. (NKJV)

(a) Let it be known that today you have "received the knowledge of the truth"!

(b) What affect will the fire have on you, destruction or purification?

2. The silence is broken!!!!!! And on earth there are cataclysmic disturbances!

a) No doubt, atmospheric physicists will be attempting to "scientifically" explain these events rather than deal with their sin!

F. *Revelation 8:6-76* So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. 7 The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up. (NKJV)

1. The earth dwellers had just experienced an electrical storm plus a violent earthquake, and now it is followed by a heavenly hail storm!

a) We've seen this once before in *Exodus 9:23-24* 23 And Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven; and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire darted to the ground. And the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt. 24 So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, so very heavy that there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. (NKJV)

(1) The first was local, this one will be world-wide!

(2) And different than Egypt, this one will be mixed with blood!

(3) "One third of the trees" and "all of the green grass" was burnt up!

Keep in mind this will follow a severe drought, making the fire that much easier.

G. *Revelation 8:8-98* Then the second angel sounded: And something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. 9 And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed. (NKJV)

1. This "mountain" doesn't seem to be like anything John has ever seen before! In fact he says it was, "something like a great mountain..."

a) It is very possible that this is a giant meteorite, or asteroid, or perhaps even an orbiting satellite that lands in the ocean!

b) Whatever it is, it has only one impact point but the whole world will know about it!

(1) Maybe scientists will see it coming and the world will watch the splashdown via satellite!

(2) The affect and destruction will be greater than that of an atomic bomb!

(a) 1/3 of all sea life will die and the tidal wave will be so intense so as to destroy 1/3 of all the ship on that ocean!

(b) 1/3 of that ocean will be as blood!

(c) Imagine what affect this will have on the food chain?

H. *Revelation 8:10-11* 10 Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. The name of the star is Wormwood.

A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter. (NKJV)

1. This great star is more "fluid" in nature and that "fluid" causes it to burn "like a lamp or torch".

2. This star even has its own name: WORMWOOD! (C.S. Lewis = SCREWTAPE LETTERS)

a) It's only used in the New Testament here and is of uncertain origin.

b) In the Greek it is *absinthos* from which we get our English word *absinthe*.

c) Webster's defines *absinthe* as "a green, bitter liqueur having the flavor of licorice and wormwood."

d) It is translated in the Old Testament as "hemlock"!

(1) Whatever it's origin, it is deadly and "many men died from the water.."

I. *Revelation 8:12* 12 Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night. (NKJV)

1. I don't know how the scientists can justify or explain this one away!

a) This is not just haze or clouds, the text tells us that the angel "strikes" the sun, moon, and stars and dims their output by 1/3!!!

b) What is even more staggering is that [Rev. 16:8,9](#) tell us that latter, the sun's output is actually intensified!

(1) *Luke 21:25-26* 25 " And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; 26 "men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. (NKJV)

J. *Revelation 8:13* 13 And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!" (NKJV)

1. I think a flying angel would be enough to cause me to repent, but it seems to have little affect upon the hardened hearts of the "earth dwellers".

a) Please notice, he is visible to those upon the earth. It is to them that he cries his message!

b) Basically the message is , "you ain't seen nothin' yet!"

(1) Even in the midst of setting all things right the Lord is still merciful and *longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*
(NKJV) [2 Peter 3:9](#)