

A Study Of The Book Of Revelation

October 4, 2020

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Revelation

I. Struggle on Earth (1-11)

- A. *John's Vision* (1)
- B. *Letters to 7 churches* (2-3)
- C. *God in control* (4-5)
- D. *Opening of seven seals* (6-11)

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Revelation 7

The Question:

Revelation 6:17
*"For the great day of His wrath has come,
 and who is able to stand?"*

What will happen to God's people?

The Answer:

God's People (Chapter 7)
 Note: Amos 3:3, 7
 Protected by God

3

Revelation 7

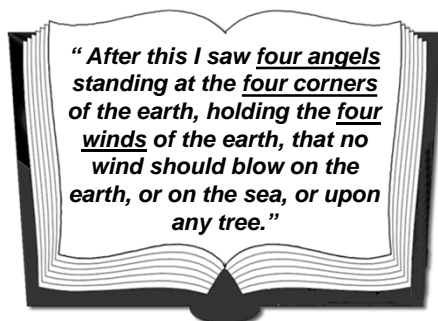
"An Interlude: The Sealing of God's People" Outline

- I. Sealing of 144,000 (verses 1-8)
- II. The Great Multitude Around The Throne (verses 9-17)

4

Revelation 7

Revelation 7:1



Revelation 7

Four Angels Holding Back the Four Winds

- Continuation of events surrounding the **sixth seal** from the previous chapter
- Chapter 7 seems to be a "divine interlude" between chapters 6 and 8
 - Another interlude is seen in Revelation 10:1-11:13, both answering the question ...
 - What happens to the Christians during this terrible destruction?
 - Judgment (winds) brought by God in (Jeremiah 49:36; 51:1; Daniel 7:1)
 - Judgment (winds) is held back until the saints are "sealed."
 - Similar occurrence in Ezekiel 9

Revelation 7

Four Angels Holding Back the Four Winds

- All **suffering** is **not** the judgment of God. Sometimes the innocent suffer along with the guilty, but they are not being **punished** with the guilty unless specifically noted in the revealed word.
- Punishment and suffering are not **synonymous**. (cf. Job)
- Righteous are sealed against judgment – still do not find **exemption** from pain and death.

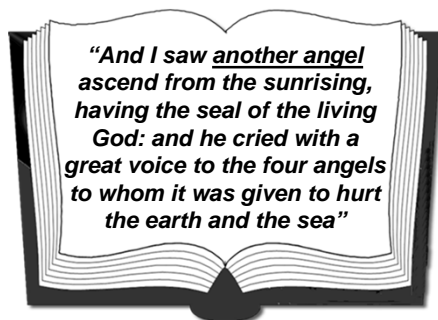
Revelation 7

Four Angels Holding Back the Four Winds

- Four – **man's** number – **world**
- **"Angels"** standing and ready to act
- **"Corners"** – North-South-East-West (Note: that it is the earth that was to be hurt, not merely Judea. Here is another internal evidence that the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 is not the object of God's wrath in Revelation.)
- **"Winds of the earth"** – Before the four winds designed to hurt the earth and sea are turned loose, an angel cries to hold the winds in check until God's seal is placed on the foreheads of believers.
- Holding back the judgment until the command to attack is given.
- **NOT** talking about final judgment!

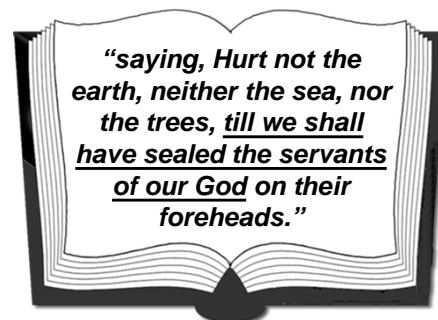
Revelation 7

Revelation 7:2



Revelation 7

Revelation 7:3



Revelation 7

Seal God's Servants – Church Militant on the Earth

- Another **angel** ascending ... cf. Hebrews 1:7 God's messengers.
- From the **east** – rising of the sun
- He has **"the seal of the living God"**
- **"Mark"** – safety in time of trouble
- Cried with a loud voice to the **four angels** at the corners of the earth
- Hold back the **"winds of judgment"**

Revelation 7

Seal God's Servants – Church Militant on the Earth

- **"Do not harm"** (*release judgment*) until God's slaves have been sealed!
- Sealing protects against **tampering**.
– Matthew 27:66
- Sealing shows **ownership**.
– 2 Timothy 2:19
- Sealing certifies **genuineness**.
– Esther 3:12
- Christians are under God's protection, purchased by the blood of Christ, and certified by the Spirit, to be the sons of God (Ephesians 1:13; Romans 8:16).
- **In the days of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 9:1-11), those with the mark were spared from wrath.**

Revelation 7

Revelation 7:4

“And I heard the number of them that were sealed, a hundred and forty and four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel”

Revelation 7

Revelation 7:5

“Of the tribe of Judah (were) sealed twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand.”

Revelation 7

Revelation 7:6

“Of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand”

Revelation 7

Revelation 7:7

“Of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand”

Revelation 7

Revelation 7:8

“Of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Benjamin (were) sealed twelve thousand.”

Revelation 7

Seal God's Servants – Church Militant on the Earth

- “And I heard the number of those who were **sealed**” ...
- The number **144,000** is symbolic; it is not a literal number.
 - Seal is not.
 - Four corners are not.
 - Of twelve tribes. (more later)
 - If already have 144,000 – can't be 144,001!

Revelation 7

**Seal God's Servants – Church
Militant on the Earth**

- “And I heard the number of those who were **sealed**” ...
- The number **144,000** is symbolic.
 - **12 times** – organized religion (*now raise it to a higher power in order to emphasize its inner quality*)
 - **12 = 144** times – ultimate in completeness. Here the number twelve is multiplied by itself, then multiplied by the number ten ($12 \times 12 \times 10 \times 10 = 144,000$).
 - **Which means “All my saints under my care – all of them!”** (cf. Isa. 40:26-27).
- Two groups are contrasted in the book of Revelation:
 - (1) Those with the seal of God (7:3; 14:1; 15:2; 20:4; 22:4).
 - (2) Those with the mark of the beast (13:15-18; 9:4; 14:9-11; 16:2; 19:20).

Revelation 7

**Seal God's Servants – Church
Militant on the Earth**

- 144,000 – The tribes do not stand for fleshly Israel but for spiritual Israel! (cf. James 1:1; 1 Peter 1:1; Matthew 19:28; Galatians 6:16; Philippians 3:3; Romans 2:28ff; 9:6).

Revelation 14:1-5

- Those who sing the new song (cf. 5:9-10)
- Those not defiled with women. (Faithful and true. Not literal ... cf. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11)
- Those who follow the Lamb. (cf. 7:13)
- Those purchased out of the earth. (14:3-4; cf. 5:9)
- Those who are the firstfruits unto God and the Lamb.
- Those who do not lie and are without blemish. (False teaching)

Revelation 7

Who Are The 144,000?

- Futurist interpretations have problems if the text is to be understood literally ...

- (1) Are only literal Jews under God's protection?
- (2) Must they be men who have never married (14:4)?
- (3) And if these are Jews, how will one be able to identify which tribe they come from, since the genealogies have long been lost?
- (4) Again, why are the tribes of Dan and Ephraim left out?

Revelation 7

**Seal God's Servants – Church
Militant on the Earth**

- **Who Was Sealed?** “From **every tribe of the sons of Israel**” (7:4; 14:3-5)
- **God's people** in the age of the context of Revelation
- These are God's people (cf. Hebrews 12:22ff – **Christians**)

Revelation 7

**Seal God's Servants – Church
Militant on the Earth**

- **Why this particular listing of tribes?**
- Normally we do not think of Joseph as a tribe.
 - Because Joseph received the birthright [double portion] (1 Chronicles 5:1-2), his sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, received territory in the promised land.
 - But in this listing, Ephraim is omitted, but Manasseh is included along with Joseph.
 - Dan is omitted.

Revelation 7

**Seal God's Servants – Church
Militant on the Earth**

- Perhaps Dan and Ephraim are omitted because of their association with idolatry.
 - The golden calves were set up in Dan and Bethel (1 Kings 12:28-29).
 - The theme of idolatry is prominent in Revelation. (2:14, 20; 9:20; 13:14-15; 14:9-11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4)
 - Those who practice idolatry have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone. (21:8; 22:15)

Revelation 7

Seal God's Servants – Church
Militant on the Earth

- *“And I heard the number of those who were **sealed**” ...*
- Though God's judgments are coming (see Romans 1:18ff.), the protection that God furnishes the righteous does not mean they will be spared from earthquakes, pestilence, imprisonment, or death.
- He did promise however, they would be “**more than conquerors**” through their relationship with him (cf. Romans 8:35-39).