

Study Notes – Revelation 7

After this – Chapters 4 through 6, Seals 1 through 6.

Rev 7.1 ¹ After this, I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth so that no wind would blow on the earth or on the sea or against any tree.

- ✓ After this – meta tauta (grk): indicates a significant transition in the development of John’s vision. The judgements have been communicated and carried out with preparation for the 7th seal which contains the 7 Trumpets & 7 Bowls has begun (an interlude between the 6th & 7th seal).

Note: Remember Revelation moves through chronologically. Four Angels at the Four Corners (Ezk 7:2); **number 4, Global worldwide effect.**

- ✓ Standing – estotas (grk): perfect tense – having stood.
- ✓ Holding – kratountas (grk): present tense. The angels had taken their positions earlier and were already actively restraining the winds when John saw them (the calm before the storm).
- ✓ four winds – It is best to understand the use here is literal because of related passages to follow in Revelation (locust, grass, trees, water) from every direction in divine judgement – literal wind. Jer 49:36, Dan 7:2, 8:8
- ✓ so that no wind would blow – held back.
 - On Earth (ge): land, ground, earth – 1/3 earth is burned up Rev 8:7
 - The sea (Thalassa): the sea. 1/3 of the sea becomes blood. Rev 8:8
 - Any tree (dendron): a tree. 1/3 trees are burned up Rev 8:7

Note: **When the Bible references the “Four Winds” it is about some remarkable, unusual or devastating event.**

Note: The **Earth Dwellers have made earth their idol**, they have placed more value on trees & animals than humans, even worse despise God the Creator of all things.

7.2 ² Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He cried out with a loud voice to the four angels who were permitted to harm the earth and the sea,

- ✓ another angel – are you making your lists?
- ✓ from the east – often the direction of the **deliverance or judgement of God**. Gen 41:6, 23, 27, Exo 10:13, 14:21, Psa 48:7, 78:26, Isa 27:8, Jer 18:17, Ezk 19:12, Hos 13:15, Jonah 4:8, Rev 16:12
- ✓ the seal – sphragida: signet, emblem of ownership, security. **The ones to be sealed are being secured from destruction and marked for reward.**
 - This is not a seal itself but the instrument with which one seals or stamps. What the seal is, is uncertain but **Rev 14:1 suggests that it is the name of the Lamb and that of the Father**. Isa 44:5
 - There are 4 groups that survive this horrific time of judgement:
 - The 144,000 Jewish Evangelists (sealed).
 - Those who will be martyred and are protected in Heaven. Rev 7:9-17
 - Those who come to faith during the Tribulation and manage to stay alive to enter into the Millennial Kingdom.
 - Those who help Yeshua’s “brothers” during the Tribulation (fed, clothed, sheltered, visited in Prison..). Matt 25:31-46
- ✓ This angels’ powerful command to the Four Angels at the 4 corners of the earth, who are granted permission by the living God to harm – not yet!

7.3 ³ saying, "Do no harm to the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God."

- ✓ until we have put a seal ;
 - until we: Angels of God – doesn't say how many, may be one or more.
- ✓ on the foreheads – metonym: forehead, occurs only in Revelation, which is used to describe the location on a branded slave. **They belong to God**. Rev 14:1
 - Satan is a master imitator of God and through the antichrist will mark those who are his with a mark on their foreheads or right hand. Rev 13:16-18, 14:9-10

7.4 ⁴ Now I heard the number of those marked with the seal: 144,000 from every tribe of Bnei-Yisrael—

- ✓ those marked with the seal – esphragismenon: perfect past participle "one having been sealed." The angel recounts for John the total number of Jews who by this time have been sealed.
- ✓ 144,000 – This is a literal number, it is made very clear how many **Jews** and the names of **their tribes** of Israel.
 - 12 is the number of God's people. It is squared to indicate completeness and multiplied by 1,000 to show vastness.
 - This book is Jewish, Daniel's 70th week, Yeshua is Jewish, the Prophets were Jewish, the 12 Disciples were Jewish. Salvation itself is of the Jews.
- ✓ every tribe of Bnei-Yisrael – huion Israel: literally means "sons of Israel". Zch 9:1
 - **The tribes of Israel are not lost**. God has preserved all of them & knows where each and every one is.

7.5-8 ⁵ 12,000 from the tribe of Judah; 12,000 from the tribe of Reuben; 12,000 from the tribe of Gad; ⁶ 12,000 from the tribe of Asher; 12,000 from the tribe of Naphtali; 12,000 from the tribe of Manasseh; ⁷ 12,000 from the tribe of Simeon; 12,000 from the tribe of Levi; 12,000 from the tribe of Issachar; ⁸ 12,000 from the tribe of Zebulun; 12,000 from the tribe of Joseph; 12,000 from the tribe of Benjamin.

- ✓ Judah – 4th son of Jacob by Leah. Gen 29:35 Judah means "praise" and is the line that led to the Messiah. They led the procession of the Tribes (Num 10:14) even into battle (Jdg 20:18, 2 Chr 20:21, Psa 149:6)
- ✓ Reuben – 1st son of Jacob by Leah. Gen 29:32 Reuben means "see ye a son".
- ✓ Gad – 7th son of Jacob by Leah's handmaiden Zilpah Gen 30:11 Gad means "troop".
- ✓ Asher – 8th son of Jacob by Leah's handmaiden Zilpah. Gen 30:13 Asher means "happy am I".
- ✓ Naphtali – 6th son of Jacob by Rachel's handmaiden Bilhah. Gen 30:8 Naphtali means "my wrestling".
- ✓ Manasseh – One of Joseph's two sons. Gen 41:51 Joseph was the 11th son of Jacob by Rachel. Gen 30:24 Manasseh means "causing to forget". Ephraim is omitted from the list of those sealed.
- ✓ Simeon – 2nd son of Jacob by Leah. Gen 29:33 Simeon means "hearing."
- ✓ Levi – 3rd son of Jacob by Leah. Gen 29:34 Levi means "attached or joined."
- ✓ Issachar – 9th son of Jacob by Leah. Gen 30:18 Issachar means "he will bring a reward."
- ✓ Zebulun – 10th son of Jacob by Leah. Gen 30:30 Zebulun means "dwelling or habitation."
- ✓ Joseph – 11th son of Jacob by Rachel. Gen 30:24 Joseph means "adding." One of Joseph's sons Ephraim is not mentioned in the list of those sealed, although Manasseh is. This may not be significant since the tribe of Joseph would normally denote both sons.
- ✓ Benjamin – 12th son & last son of Jacob by Rachel. Gen 30:18 Benjamin means "son of my right hand."

Note: the tribe list has irregularities from other listings of the tribes in the Bible. 1 Chr 2:10 the tribes are listed at least 18 times throughout scripture and always 12 are given. Jacob had 13 sons, counting the 2 sons of Joseph, instead of the father as Jacob's, one or the other is always omitted.

- ✚ In this list Dan & Ephraim are omitted. None of the lists in the Old Testament agree with this list given in Revelation.
- ✚ The tribe of Levi is the priestly tribe was to the Lord himself.
- ✚ **The tribe of Dan practiced idolatry** (Deu 29: 18-21). When the tribe of Dan moved North from their original location, they persuaded a renegade Levite in Ephraim to join them, along with his graven image. Jdg 18:2-31, 1King 12:28-30, 2 King 10:29
- ✚ Dan and Ephraim are included in Ezekiel's prophecy of their inheritance in the Millennial Kingdom. Ezk 48:1-6, 32

The purpose of this **special group of 144,000 Jews** is **to evangelize** the unbelievers. Isaiah describes a worldwide Jewish mission to the gentiles. The context is immediately before the gathering of the Jews for the Millennial Age. Isa 66:19-20

Note: As long as the "Church" is on earth, all saved Jews & Gentiles become part of the body of Christ. Col 1:26-29, 3:11, Eph 2:14-22, 3:1-7 During the 70th week the church must be absent **for out of the saved remnant of Israel (Messianic) God seals 144,000 Jews**. God again is dealing with Israel. They are the witnesses to the nations, indicating the church must no longer be on earth.

Countless Worshipers Before the Throne

7.9 ⁹ After these things I looked, and behold, a vast multitude that no one could count—from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues—was standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands

- ✓ After these things – chronological cause & effect; the 144,000 Jews will evangelize a multitude of people in the **2nd half of the Tribulation who will come to faith in Yeshua**.
- ✓ a vast multitude – that no one could count.
 - This is a different group of people, not from the church age group.
 - Most will die for their faith
 - **John did not recognize them**. Rev 7:13-14
- ✓ every nation – goyim (Heb): when in plural, it always refers to Gentiles.
- ✓ all tribes – phule: a clan, kindred, of all the tribes of Israel.
- ✓ Peoples – laos: people of the same race.
- ✓ Tongues – glossa: a language.
- ✓ standing before the throne and before the Lamb – the only way to get there is by having faith in Yeshua.
- ✓ white robes – like the Martyrs of the 5th seal they will be clothed in white & they have not been resurrected yet – bodiless souls wear a robe of white.
- ✓ palm branches – the waving of palm branches became a symbol of national liberation, blessing and were used at the first coming of the King of Jerusalem (Palm Sunday) John 12:13. Here they wave palms in anticipation of his return to Jerusalem when the 7 years are completed.

7.10 ¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne,

- ✓ Salvation belongs to – soteria: includes both deliverance and preservation. **This group was delivered out of Tribulation by way of death** and are souls preserved for life in the Millennial Kingdom. Salvation is by grace through faith. Luke 7:42, 50, Acts 13:39, Heb 10:38
- ✓ our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb – Isa 43:11, Luke 1:69-70, Rev 5:9, Acts 4:12, John 5:23
- ✓ worshiped – prosekynesan: to prostrate oneself before a person, kissing his feet, the hem of a garment, the ground. A frequent response of the Elders and Living Creatures.

7.12 ¹² saying, "Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might belong to our God forever and ever. Amen!"

- ✓ Amen – begins and ends this blessing, When said by God "It is and shall be so". When said by men "so let it be".
- ✓ Blessing – eulogeo: to praise, to celebrate with praises of that which is addressed to God acknowledging His goodness, with desire for His glory.
- ✓ Glory – doxa: honor, praise, dignity, worship.
- ✓ Wisdom – Sophia: insight into the true nature of things.
- ✓ Thanksgiving – eucharistia: gratitude, to give freely – to God as an act of worship.
- ✓ Honor – time': a valuing, esteem of the highest degree.
- ✓ Power- dunamis: ability, might, of mighty works, miracles, authority, dominion.
- ✓ Might – ischus: ability, power, strength, ability to perform anything.

Note: a seven-fold blessing; perfection & completeness.

7.13 ¹³ Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these dressed in white robes, and where have they come from?" I said to him, "Sir, you know."

- ✓ Then – time mark
- ✓ Answered – apokrinomai: to begin to speak. Where an address is expected. Where the speaker is replying to the unuttered thought or feeling of those addressed by him.
- ✓ Who are these – **John did not know this group of people.**
- ✓ where have they come from – They are new arrivals in Heaven, they were not among the multitude of the redeemed worshipping the Lamb when He first took the scroll from His Father. Rev 5:9

7.14 ¹⁴ Then 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."

- ✓ ones coming out – erchomenoi: present participle. **They are continually coming out,** probably ongoing persecution and refusing to accept the mark of the antichrist which will allow access to food, shelter, medical care..

Note: **The "rapture of the church" is a single instantaneous sudden event, not an ongoing event during the Tribulation.** 1 Cor 15:51-52

7.14 (continued)

- ✓ the great tribulation – This is the unique time of intense tribulation which Yeshua prophesied in Matthew 24:24.
 - 1) During this time billions of people will die, both unbelievers in judgement and believers through martyrdom and extremely harsh conditions. Rev 14:13, Matt 24:22
 - 2) This is “the hour of testing” which will come upon the whole earth. To test those who dwell on the earth. Rev 3:10
 - 3) This is the time of Jacob’s Trouble will be very difficult for Israel. Jer 30:7, Dan 12:1, 7, Matt 24: 16-20
- ✓ blood of the Lamb – required for salvation.

7.15-16 ¹⁵ For this reason, they are before the throne of God, and they serve Him day and night in His Temple. The One seated on the throne will shelter them.¹⁶ They shall never again go hungry, nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not beat down on them, nor any scorching heat.

- ✓ For this reason – Therefore in most Bible translations.
- ✓ before the throne of God – A position of great blessing to be close to God. By the sovereignty of God they did not come to faith before the rapture, but endured the most difficult time for people of faith in all history. They remained steadfast in their testimony and overcame the “Beast” (the antichrist). Rev 12:11
- ✓ they serve Him – they serve God day & night in His Temple. Their calling is different from the “Church”, so is their destiny.
 - The church, as the bride of Christ, is with the bridegroom Yeshua always and we are that of rulers, judges, kings & priests. 1 Cor 6:2-3, 1 Peter 2:9, Rev 1:6
 - This group serves God the Father as Temple servants.
- ✓ The One – God the Father
- ✓ will shelter them – will spread His tabernacle over them.
 - Like Boaz covered Ruth
 - God will dwell, skenosel: literally live or camp in a tent among them.
 - God’s promise is directly tied to the following promises:
 - They will never go hungry again
 - No more thirst for water.
 - Sun will never scorch them again.

Note: The Tribulation Saints will suffer physically during their time of persecution. (Matt 25: 31-46, Rev 13:17) and think of the extremely harsh conditions upon the earth at this time; Famine (Rev 6: 5-6), lack of water (Rev 8: 10-11), scorching sun (Rev 16: 8-9). **They will come from all phases of the Tribulation judgements in Revelation.**

7.17 ¹⁷ For the Lamb in the midst of the throne shall shepherd them and guide them to springs of living water, and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes."

- ✓ For the Lamb – not only will the Father dwell with them (Rev 7:15), they will also be near the Lamb who is in the midst of the Throne.
- ✓ springs of living water – eternal life. John 4: 10-11,13-14, Isa 49:10, 55:1
- ✓ God shall wipe away every tear – they went through unimaginable persecution & hardship till the day of their death, with many tears shed during that time. Isa 25:8, 65:19 (Millennial Kingdom), Rev 21:4