

The 144,000

(Revelation 7)

- I. The content of this chapter is to be understood in connection with the sixth seal which had just been opened. **REV 6:12-17.**
- II. This chapter is a description of the redeemed in glory, the full gathering/assembly of the elect.
 - A. The language is in the style of prophecy: terms which are a sign or symbol of something. c/w **REV 1:1.**
 - B. signify: *trans.* To be a sign or symbol of; to represent, betoken, mean.
- III. **vs. 1-3.** John saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth holding the four winds of the earth.
 - A. The four winds cover the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven. **MAR 13:27.**
 - B. These angels were restraining the wind from blowing on the earth, the sea and the trees.
 1. It was given to these angels to hurt the earth, the sea, and the trees.
 2. Having the four winds, these angels had in their power to inflict damage upon all the earth, to its uttermost parts.
 - a. These four winds under their control are not the favorable winds which facilitate evaporation, cloud movement, temperature moderation, spread of seed, etc., things which even the ungodly and heathen desire.
 - b. These four winds are destructive winds that overwhelm and undo the favorable conditions. c/w **1TH 5:2-3.**
 3. Damage to the trees would be very damaging to mankind since men live by trees. **DEU 20:19.**
 - C. An angel ascended from the east having the seal of the living God. **v. 2.**
 - D. The angel from the east commanded the four angels not to hurt the earth, the sea, or the trees until they had sealed the servants of God in their foreheads.
 - E. Wind is used in Scripture to symbolize judgment. **JOB 30:21-22; JER 4:11-12; 18:17; 49:34-37; 51:1.**
 - F. This judgment does not fall until God's servants are sealed in their foreheads.
 1. God's grace makes servants of God out of those who were servants of sin. **ROM 6:18-22.**
 2. seal: v. To attest by a seal. To place a seal upon (a document) as evidence of genuineness, or as a mark of authoritative ratification or approval.
 3. This is a distinguishing mark in their foreheads.
 4. Compare this sealing in the forehead with **EZE 9:1-4.**
 - a. A mark was placed on the foreheads of all who grieved over the abominations being done in Jerusalem.
 - b. When the men with the destroying weapons were commanded to slaughter the inhabitants of the city, they were forbidden to come near any man upon whom was the mark.
 - c. This compares with **REV 9:4** where the locusts out of the bottomless pit are permitted to hurt only those men who have NOT the seal of God in their foreheads.
 - d. This mark secures God's people from judgment.
 5. The seal is the Father's name. **REV 14:1.**
 - G. The Lord will not destroy this earth until He has secured a people for His name.

c/w **LUK 17:26-30**.

- H. The sixth seal announces that the day of the wrath of the Lamb has come. **REV 6:17**.
- I. In this vision we see that God has provided for the protection of His people in that day. He Who shall come to judge shall also remember His saints. **2TH 1:7-10; HEB 9:27-28**.

IV. **vs. 4-8**. John HEARD the number of the sealing of the 144,000.

- A. These 144,000 are plainly identified in **REV 14:1-5**.
 - 1. They are with the Lamb on Mt. Sion.
 - a. Jerusalem is in Sion. **PSA 135:21; ISA 30:19**.
 - b. There is an earthly Sion and a heavenly Sion. **GAL 4:25-26; HEB 12:22-23**.
 - c. Christ is situated in the heavenly Sion. **PSA 2:1-6; 1PE 2:6-7**.
 - (1) Christ is even now set as the chief cornerstone. **ACT 4:11**.
 - (2) The earthly Sion has been cast out. **GAL 4:30**.
 - (3) Christ is set as the head of the corner in heaven. **EPH 1:20-22**.
 - d. The 144,000 are in heaven with Christ.
 - 2. The 144,000 are the redeemed from among men, the elect of God. **EPH 1:4-7 c/w 1PE 1:2**.
 - a. They are harping upon harps as the redeemed are doing in **REV 5:8**.
 - b. They sing the new song of the redeemed. **REV 5:9**.
 - c. All those who are numbered are ransomed. **EXO 30:11-15**.
 - 3. Their condition in heaven is described.
 - a. *They are virgins*; they appear without evidence of their spiritual defilement. **EPH 5:25-27**.
 - b. *They follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth*, and He leads well. **JOH 10:27-28; REV 7:17**.
 - c. It is because they were redeemed that they are thus before the throne of God without fault. He is well able to *present them faultless*. **JUDE 1:24**.
 - 4. They are the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.
 - a. Being firstfruits, they were redeemed FROM AMONG men.
 - b. The firstfruits of Israel's increase were especially set apart for the Lord. **EXO 23:19; PRO 3:9**.
 - c. God's redeemed, His elect, are especially set apart from among men for Himself. **DEU 32:7-9; JOH 15:19; JAM 1:18**.
 - (1) The firstfruits were to be set aside from the increase (profit).
 - (2) In the N.T., Paul instructs saints to set aside their offerings on the first day of the week *as God has prospered*. **1CO 16:2**.
 - (3) Having completed His work on the cross and in the grave, Christ raised up on high the first day of the week and set aside/apart His elect according as God had prospered Him. **JOH 20:1, 17 c/w ISA 53:10**.
 - (4) Christ being Himself the firstfruits of the children of the resurrection guarantees their entire persons set apart for God. **1CO 15:20-23 c/w PHIL 3:20-21**.
- B. The 144,000 are sealed in their foreheads with the Father's name. **REV 14:1; 22:3-4**.
- C. The 144,000 are sealed of all the tribes of Israel. **REV 7:4-8**.
 - 1. In this enumeration of the tribes, the tribes of Dan and Ephraim are missing.
 - a. The enumeration of twelve is made up by adding the tribe of Levi and the tribe of Joseph, the father of Manasseh.

- b. This is not an historical enumeration of Israel, but a spiritual enumeration.
- 2. There is no hope outside of the Israel of God. **EPH 2:11-12.**
- 3. Elect Gentiles have been made nigh unto Israel.
EPH 2:13-17; ROM 9:23-26; 11:16-17.
- 4. God's Israel consists of those who belong to Christ, be they Jew or Gentile.
GAL 3:28-29.
- 5. 144,000 is arrived at by multiplying 12 X 12 X 1000.
 - a. There are twelve tribes of Israel representing the people of God under the Old Testament.
 - b. There are twelve apostles representing the people of God under the New Testament.
 - c. The number 1000 represents fulness or completeness. **PSA 50:10; 105:8.**
 - d. Here is a representation of the totality of God's elect in both O.T. and N.T. times.

D. The meanings of the tribal names may be applied to God's children.

- 1. Judah means "praise." **EPH 1:6; ROM 2:29.**
- 2. Reuben means "behold a son." **HEB 2:13.**
- 3. Gad means "that troop." **HEB 2:10.**
- 4. Aser means "happy." **DEU 33:29; PSA 144:15; 146:5; 1PE 4:14.**
- 5. Nephthalim means "my wrestling." **GEN 32:24-30; ROM 7:21-23; EPH 6:12.**
- 6. Manasses means "causing to forget." **ISA 65:17; HEB 8:12; PHIL 3:13.**
- 7. Simeon means "hearing." **JOH 17:1-2 c/w 11:42; 1JO 5:14-15.**
- 8. Levi means "joined." **1CO 6:17; EPH 5:30-32.**
- 9. Issachar means "bearing hire, reward." **1CO 6:19-20; COL 3:24.**
- 10. Zabulon means "dwelling." **1JO 4:15; ROM 8:11; REV 7:15; 21:3.**
- 11. Joseph means "adding" or "increaser." **JOH 10:16; 15:5; ACT 2:47; 1TH 3:12.**
- 12. Benjamin means "son of the right hand." **MAT 25:33; REV 1:17.**

V. **vs. 9-17.** After John HEARD the number of the sealed, he BEHELD a great multitude before the throne and before the Lamb.

- A. The words "of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues" identify this multitude with the redeemed of **REV 5:9.**
- B. God's redeemed are a multitude which no man can number.
- C. This multitude is before the throne just as the 144,000 are described in **REV 14:5.**
- D. They have white robes.
 - 1. The white robes denote purity.
 - 2. Only the pure may dwell in the Mount Zion, the hill of God. **PSA 15; 24:3-6.**
 - 3. They are undefiled, just as the 144,000 are described.
- E. They have palms in their hands.
 - 1. In ancient times palm branches were carried in triumphal processions.
JOH 12:12-19.
 - 2. This is a victorious multitude. They are "more than conquerors" through Christ.
ROM 8:37.
- F. They ascribe salvation to God upon the throne and to the Lamb.
 - 1. This is fitting since there is no Saviour other than God. **ISA 43:11; PSA 3:8.**
 - 2. The Lamb is God manifest in the flesh for the salvation of sinners.
MAT 1:21-23; 2CO 5:19.
- G. The hosts of heaven consent to the praises of the multitude and worship God ascribing to Him the same things they ascribed to the Lamb in **REV 5:11-13.**

- H. This multitude came out of great tribulation.
1. It is through MUCH (great) tribulation that we enter into the kingdom of God. **ACT 14:22.**
 2. Those who suffer with Christ shall share His glory. **ROM 8:17; 2TI 2:12a; 1PE 4:13.**
- I. They are before the throne because their robes are washed in the blood of the Lamb. **v. 14.**
1. This fact connects this multitude with the redeemed of **REV 5:9** who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.
 2. It is said that THEY washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
 - a. However, **REV 1:5** teaches that Christ washed us from our sins in His blood.
 - b. Christ, **BY HIMSELF**, without our help, purged our sins. **HEB 1:3; 9:12.**
 - c. Compare this with passing from death unto life.
 - (1) It is said that the dead hear and shall come forth. **JOH 5:28-29.**
 - (2) Lazarus came forth from the tomb. **JOH 11:43-44.**
 - (3) However, it is only by the power of Christ's voice that the dead come forth.
 - (4) The dead are passive in coming forth.
 - d. So, too, the redeemed are passive in washing their robes.
- J. The glory this multitude inherits is described. **vs. 15-17.**
1. They are before God's throne. **v. 15.**
 2. They serve God day and night in His temple. **v. 15.**
 - a. "Day and night" suggests that their service is always or continual. **c/w MAR 5:5; LUK 18:1, 7; 2TI 1:3; REV 4:8.**
 - b. Compare this with the promise of **REV 3:12**: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and HE SHALL GO NO MORE OUT..."
 - c. They will never tire in God's service.
 3. God dwells among them. **v. 15 c/w REV 21:3.**
 4. They shall neither hunger nor thirst any more. **v. 16 c/w MAT 5:6.**
 5. Neither the sun nor any heat shall light upon them. **v. 16.**
 - a. Jesus compares tribulation and persecution to heat. **MAT 13:5-6, 20-21.**
 - b. There will be no persecution in heaven.
 6. The Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them.
 - a. The Greek word translated "feed" is "poimano" and means to *tend as a shepherd*. It is translated "rule" in **REV 2:27; 12:5.**
 - b. They shall live under the perfect, beneficent government of the Lord Jesus Christ. He shall supply all their needs out of His own pocket, not out of others' pockets. **c/w PHIL 4:19.**
 - c. They shall know political oppression no more.
 7. They are led of the Lamb just as was said of the 144,000 in **REV 14:4.**
 8. They will be led to living fountains of waters. **v. 17 c/w REV 21:6**
 9. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. **v. 17 c/w REV 21:4.**
 10. This description matches the one of the new heavens and the new earth in **REV 21-22.**
 11. This description of glory matches the one foretold by the prophets in **EZE 34:23-31; ISA 49:10; 25:6-9.**
- K. This great multitude is the same as the 144,000 which is the same as the redeemed of

REV 5:9.

1. John HEARD the number of the 144,000 sealed ones.
2. However, when he BEHELD them, they were a multitude that no man could number.
3. Truly, Christ is the firstborn among MANY brethren! **ROM 8:29; HEB 2:10-11.**