

**Lesson: Revelation 7: 1-8**

*“144, 000 From Israel”*

**Introduction**

**Revelation 7:1-8 [King James]**

**“[1] And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.**

**[2] And 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 given to hurt the earth and the sea,**

**[3] Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.**

**[4] And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.**

**[5] Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.**

**[6] Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.**

**[7] Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.**

**[8] Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand”**

## THE MYSTERY OF THE 144,000

### Introduction

- \* The Lord *Jesus took possession of the title deed* to this planet in [Revelation 5](#)
- \* He began opening the *seven seals of that title deed*.
- \* He is beginning the process of redeeming this planet out of the hands of sin, sinners and Satan.
- \* In [Revelation 6](#) we were witnesses to a world under a storm of divine judgment.

We watched Jesus open six of the seven seals on the scroll. Before He did, there was a great noise of thunder in Heaven

### [Revelation 6:1](#)

“1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see”

Thus thunder signaled the approaching storm of God’s divine wrath

- \* As each seal was opened judgment and wrath began to be poured out upon the earth.
- \* I just want to remind you that we haven’t seen the worst of the suffering and sorrow that coming upon this world.
- \* After the *seals seven trumpets* will sound and *seven bowls will be poured out upon the earth*.
- \* As we move deeper into the heart of this book we are going to see death, judgment and sorrow intensify.

But remember were is the church?

[Chapter 7](#) is a parenthetical passage that represents a pause in God’s plan to judge the earth.

### Note

[Parenthetical: The act of inserting: a set of parenthesis to emphasis a short deviation from the flow of the theme]

## Revelation 7

\* The Lord extends grace to a select group of people right in the midst of the Tribulation Period.

### Two groups of people are in view here in Revelation 7

- \* The first group is identified as the 144,000 in verses 1-8
- \* The second group is identified as a redeemed multitude in verses 9-17

Let's take these verses and see what God has to say about the 144,000

### **A DELIBERATE PAUSE**

#### Revelation 7: 1-3

“1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

2 And 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 given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads”

### **The Reason For This Pause**

\* God calls for a momentary peace to fall upon the earth because He has some *divine business to transact*.

\* As God's wrath is rained down upon the earth, He pauses to answer a prayer that was prayed many centuries ago by the prophet Habakkuk:

#### Habakkuk 3:2

“1 A prayer of Habakkuk ["embrace"] the prophet upon Shigionoth  
{Shig – guy- oh – naw}

[Word used here is the Hebrew word used in the Title of Psalms 7]

Shiggaion {Shig- ga- ion}: Meaning Song:

“Prayer and Praise for Deliverance from Enemies”

Psalm 7

“O Lord my God, In you I put my trust; Save me from all those who persecute me; and deliver me...[17] I will praise the Lord according to His righteousness, and will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High”

Habakkuk 3: 2 [Message] God Racing on the Crest of the Waves

“1-2 A prayer of the prophet Habakkuk, with orchestra: God, I've heard what our ancestors say about you, and I'm stopped in my tracks, down on my knees.

Do among us what you did among them. Work among us as you worked among them. And as you bring judgment, as you surely must, remember mercy”

Habakkuk 3:2 [King James]

“1 A prayer of Habakkuk ["Embrace"] the prophet upon Shigionoth ["Song"]  
2 O LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy”

By the way, this chapter is a great encouragement!

\* Even during a time when death, suffering and wrath will reign supreme, *God will still be extending grace and saving souls for His glory!*

**This has always been the Lord's method of operation**

1. He remembered mercy in wrath when the blood of the lamb was applied to the doorposts of the houses in Egypt: **Exodus 12**
2. He remembered mercy in wrath when He delivered Lot from Sodom: **Gen. 19**
3. He remembered mercy in wrath when He saved Noah and his family from the flood: **Gen. 6.**

5.

### **The Results Of This Pause**

We are told that four angels stand on the four corners of the earth holding back the four winds of the earth.

#### Revelation 7: 1-3

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2 And 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 given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads”

### **Who are these angels?**

- \* It is clear that these angels have been *given the power to execute God’s judgment upon the earth.*
- \* The word “*hurt*” carries the idea of “*injury without mercy*”
- \* It is a picture of absolute destruction.
- \* These are avenging, judging angels.

### **What are they doing?**

- \* They are *holding back* the *four winds of the earth.*
- \* When these angels appear, there will not be as much as a breeze blowing anywhere on earth.
- \* The winds will cease for a time.

### **This is an awesome display of divine power.**

- \* The winds that race through the atmosphere of this world are driven by tremendously strong forces like the sun and the rotation of the earth.
- \* Yet, *four angels* are able to restrain the winds.

6.

The word “holding” translates a strong word.

- \* It was used to speak of horses straining against their bits.
- \* These winds are struggling to break free from the hold of the angels.

What is meant by the winds?

- \* The word winds should be taken literally.
- \* As I mentioned there will be no winds blowing upon the earth.

However, there is a sense in which the Bible uses wind in a spiritual sense.

Hosea 8:7

“For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind”

- \* So, these angels are holding back the wind of divine judgment from off the earth as well.
- \* There is a lull in the storm as God takes care of His servants.
- \* God harnesses the winds of His divine judgment that they should not blow for a season.

What is meant by “the four corners of the earth?”

- \* Does this mean that God thinks the earth is flat? Of course not!
- \* He answered that in Isaiah 40:22 “He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in”

The four corners of the earth is an idiomatic expression that refers to the four points of the compass

- \* It is merely a figure of speech. (The ancient Jews superstitiously believed that winds which blew out of the north, south, east or west were favorable or good winds.
- \* They also believed that winds which came from between these directions, hence from the four corners of the earth were ill-favored winds.
- \* These winds could certainly be described as ill-favored winds!)

7.

### What is the significance of *the number four*?

- \* The book of Revelation uses numbers a lot.
- \* Often, these numbers have spiritual meaning attached to them.
- \* For instance, the number seven is the number of divine completion.
- \* There are seven days in a week and seven colors in the spectrum.
- \* Revelation identifies seven churches, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven bowls, seven horns, etc.

### Four is the number of the earth.

- \* There are *four seasons*, *four elements* – **earth, wind, fire and water**, directions, etc.

### Revelation 7: 1

“1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

- \* Here, *four angels* hold *four winds* at the *four corners* of *the earth*.
- \* This number just lets us know that we are dealing with events that are transpiring upon the earth.
- \* This is a time of earthly judgment!

### A Deliberate Pause

### Revelation 7: 1-3

“1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that *the wind should not blow* on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

2 And 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 given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads”

8.

## A DIVINE PERSONALITY is now stepping on the scene

### The Identity Of This Angel

- \* As John watches, *a fifth angel* appears on the earth.
- \* This angel rises from the east like the morning sun.
- \* Some have taken this to mean that this angel is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

However, the word “*another*” translates the Greek word “*allos*”, us that this angel is just that, an angel and tells.

- \* We may not know who he is, but we do know that he has power awesome.
- \* He comes *commanding the first four angels* to refrain from their mission of destruction upon the earth.

### The Intentions Of This Angel

- \* This angel has come to “*seal the servants of God in their forehead.*”
- \* By the way, if you don’t know it by now, Satan is an imitator.
- \* Throughout this book he is seen attempting to duplicate many of the things God has done and is doing.

We will see him place a mark on his servants:

### Revelation 13:16-17

“16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, *to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:*

17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is *the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six*”

9.

He will give them the “mark of the beast”

\* This mark will identify them as his servants / servants of Satan

But now let's look what the happens to the Lords servants

Revelation 7: 2-3

2 And 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 given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads”

\* In this passage, we are going to see the Lord God as He seals His servants.

\* The word “*seal*” refers to an official stamp.

\* It brings to mind the signet rings used by kings to mark documents as official.

A piece of wax would be placed on the document and the king's signet ring pressed into it.

This seal signified

1. *Possession*
2. *Protection*
3. *Preservation*

This is seen several times in the Word of God

Genesis 41:42

“41 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.

42 And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck...”

10.

Daniel 6:17

“ 17 And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and *the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel*”

Matthew 27:66

“ 63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.

64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can.

66 So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch”

In the Bible, there are several instances of God sealing His people.

- \* **Noah** and his family were sealed up in the Ark - **Genesis 7:16.**
- \* **Rahab** was sealed by a scarlet thread hanging from her window - **Joshua 2:18.**
- \* **The children of Israel** were sealed by the blood of the lamb on the doorposts and lintels of their homes, **Exodus 12:13.**

The clearest example of this is in:

Ezekiel 9:3-6 “3 And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; 4 And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and *set a mark upon the foreheads* of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. 5 And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: 6 Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house.

11.

\* Just as God sealed His servants in Ezekiel's day and protected them, He will do the same for His servants during that Tribulation Period.

**(Note:** While we are on this subject, let me just remind you that if you are saved today, you too have been marked by God.

\* You have been sealed by Him.

\* You can stay sealed – if you live out your salvation daily

\* Saved is only completed when your ticket is punched

In [Ephesians 1:13-14](#), the Bible says, “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, *ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, 14* Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”

**When you were saved, an invisible mark was placed upon you.**

No one can see it, but it is there. God sealed you at that instant and He marked you as His Own. What does this invisible mark mean?

**It is a Seal of Possession**

God places His seal upon your life and marks you as being His possession!

**It is a Seal of Protection**

Since we are His, we can expect Him to protect us from the attacks of the enemy.

**It is a Seal of Preservation**

We have been sealed by God and we are safe in Him until the day we make it home to Heaven.

1. A Deliberate Pause
2. A Divine Personality
3. A Distinct People

12.

### Revelation 7: 4-8

**“ 4 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.**

**5 Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.**

**6 Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.**

**7 Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.**

**8 Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand”**

### A DISTINCT PEOPLE

**(Now, we are introduced to the people the angel has come to seal. He calls them the “*servants of our God*”**

### Revelation 7: 2 -3

**“Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea: 3" Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put *a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God*"**

**The word “*servants*” is the word for “*slaves*”  
These people are saved, sealed, sold out servants of Jesus.  
But, who are they and what do they do?)**

### Their Origin

**The Bible is very clear as to where these people come from. They are from “*all the tribes of the children of Israel*”**

13.

**Over the years, many groups have tried to claim that they are part of the 144,000.**

- \* *The Jehovah's Witnesses, the World Wide Church of God, the Seventh-Day Adventists*, among others, have all tried to make that claim.
- \* Well, if anyone ever comes up to you claiming to be part of the 144,000, just ask them which tribe they are from.
- \* That will usually put them on the run.
- \* Others have said that these 144,000 represent the church.
- \* The text is clear, however, these 144,000 are Jews, called and saved out of the tribes of Israel.

### **Why are there exactly 12,000 from each of the 12 tribes?**

- \* Twelve in the Bible is a number associated with Israel.
- \* There were 12 tribes in Israel.
- \* There were 12 loaves of bread on the table of Shewbread in the Tabernacle.
- \* There were 12 gates into the city of Jerusalem.
- \* There were 12 stones in the breastplate of the high priest.
- \* The Lord is showing us that these men are from the nation of Israel.
- \* This teaches us a valuable lesson: God is not finished with Israel!
- \* He has a plan for their future restoration and redemption [Romans 9-11](#)

### **Why are some of the tribes not mentioned?**

- \* The tribes of Dan and Ephraim are not mentioned, while the tribe of Levi, which did not receive an inheritance among the other tribes is.
- \* You will also notice that the tribe of Joseph is mentioned.
- \* Back in [Genesis 48](#), Joseph's two sons Manasseh and Ephraim were adopted by Jacob and given an inheritance in Israel.
- \* It appears that Dan and Ephraim are not mentioned here because they went away into deep idolatry during the kingdom years.
- \* Therefore, they are left out of the list.

### **How and when will these 144,000 be saved?**

- \* I believe they will be saved by the preaching of the Two Witnesses mentioned in [Revelation 11:1-12](#) [[The Two Witnesses](#)]

14.

God will send two preachers to preach the Gospel in Jerusalem.

These 144,000 will be converted and will be sealed to a special ministry by the Lord.

What makes the 144,000 so special?

\* To answer that question, we have to fast forward to Revelation 14:1-5

Revelation 14: 1-5

“ 1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.

5 And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God”

There, we learn that these men are sexually pure.

\* They are virgins.

\* We are also told that they are completely dedicated to the Lamb of God.

\* They follow Him wherever He goes.

\* They do His bidding without question.

\* They are also called to *“firstfruits”* to God and to the Lamb. They are the first of a vast multitude that will be saved during the dark, dangerous, deadly days of the Tribulation.

15.

**Another thing that marks them as special is that God knows who they are!**

**\* There is only one Jew in the entire universe who knows which tribe He is from.**

**\* There is only one Jew who still possesses an accurate genealogy of his ancestry and His name is Jesus Christ. He is from the tribe of Judah, [Matthew 1](#).**

**No other Jew knows which tribe he is from because all the genealogical records were destroyed in 70 AD when Titus, the Roman general, destroyed the temple in Jerusalem.**

**The birth records were stored there and they were destroyed forever.**

**God He knows how to find them / He knows how to save them / He knows how to use them.**

**Their Occupation**

**\* Now that we have a little more information regarding these men, let's look at what their mission will be during the Tribulation.**

Back in [Matthew 24:14](#) the Bible says **“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come”**

**Despite 2,000 of evangelism and mission work, this has verse has never been fulfilled. There are hundreds of millions of people in our world who have never heard the name of Jesus, much less the Gospel of grace.**

**They will fulfill the prophecy of [Matthew 24:14](#).**

**\* The Antichrist will try to stop them, but he will be powerless to hinder their ministry.**

**\* He will not be able to silence them, kill them or stop them.**

**\* They have been sealed by God and they will be protected until their ministry has been fulfilled.**

**\* Have you ever met a converted Jew? When a Jew comes to faith in Christ, you have never seen anyone with as much zeal for souls as a born again Jew!**

16.

## **Conclusion**

**For all intents and purposes, the church has failed in her efforts to reach the world.**

**We have spent trillions of dollars and still the world is filled with the unconverted and the un-reached.**

**We live in a day of global communications and still we have not been able to take the Gospel to all the peoples of the earth.**

**God help us, we won't even take the Gospel to our own city!**

**You might not imagine it, but the Tribulation will see the greatest evangelistic effort the world has ever witnessed.**

**\* These 144,000 redeemed Jewish preachers will take the Gospel to the whole world and a vast multitude will be saved as a result.**

**The 144,000 we will study them in some more depth when we get to chapter 14.**

**\* For, now, we should take a moment thank God for His grace.**

**\* We should praise Him that He has a great plan to save many people during the most horrible time earth will ever know.**

**\* We should also thank Him for His sealing ministry in our lives.**

**\* What a blessing it is to know that we have been sealed and that we are safe and secure in the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**\* We should also look at our efforts to share the *Gospel in these days*.**