

**Series Title: The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Behold I Am Coming Soon**

**Today's Message: Who Can Stand In The Day of Wrath? pt1; Revelation 7:1-17**

Can you hear the terror erupt from the mouths of the people suffering the wrath of God and the Lamb at the end of chapter 6. The chapter ends with the statement and question of those who now know that they are suffering divine judgment, "For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

Revelation 7 appears to be an interlude between the sixth seal and the seventh seal and therefore serves us well by answering the question of those whose hope is lost at the end of chapter 6. God, in His great wisdom, comforts us by providing us a sharp contrast between the panic of the inhabitants of the earth who are suffering the judgment and wrath of God with the very ones marked by God for eternal life in His presence. The world is struck with fear, dread and terror at the sight, sounds, and smells of God's wrath, while the people of Revelation 7 are marked by God's seal and the Lamb's precious blood!

Therefore, these, the saints of chapter 7, are they who can stand in the Day of the Wrath "of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!"

Remember, chapter 7 answers the question, "Who can stand?" There are two groups of people that will stand: The select and sealed people of Israel; and the saved and sanctified people of the nations!

Today we will study Revelation 7:1-8 concerning the select and sealed people of Israel.

- I. (Revelation 7:1-8) The Sealed Select People of Israel: The 144,000 Servants/ Evangelists
  - A. (7:1) A Suspension of The Seal Judgments: A break between the 6th and 7th Seals
    1. "After this"
      - a) After the sixth seal (6:17) and before the seventh seal (8:1)
        - (1) This pause lets us see a great distinction between the people of earth suffering the terrors of judgment with the people whom God claims for His own.
          - (a) They are marked/ sealed for
            - (i) Protection
            - (ii) Preservation
    2. Four angels stationed at the four corners of the earth
      - a) This number, *four*, is significant in Revelation, indicating global effect
        - (1) The *four* living creatures (4:6-8; 5:6,8; 8:1; 14:3; 15:7; 19:4)

- (2) The *four* horsemen of the first *four* seals (6:1-8)
- (3) The *four* angels standing at the *four* corners of the earth holding back the *four* winds of the earth (Rev. 7:1-2)
- (4) The *four* horns of the altar (9:13)
- (5) The *four* angels bound at the Euphrates River (9:14)
- (6) The *four* corners of the earth from which Satan gathers the nations and kings of the earth for battle against the Lord (20:8)
- 3. Holding back the *four* winds of the earth... (indicating that judgment is restrained)
  - a) The *four winds* is a phrase in Scripture indicative of God's judgment
    - (1) Daniel 7:2: "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea."
      - (a) Read Daniel 7:2-8. Count how many times the number *four* is mentioned. Remember: four is associated with judgment, and often with having a global effect.
    - (2) Jeremiah 49:36: "And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven. And I will scatter them to all those winds, and there shall be no nation to which those driven out of Elam shall not come."
  - b) *Holding back* the *four* winds
    - (1) MacArthur paints a picture of the winds pressing hard against the angels' restraining hand!
      - (a) The Greek word describes the use of mighty strength to restrain.
      - (b) This is important, because soon, in chapter 8 as the Trumpets are sounded, the fury of wrath and judgment are released, producing a cascade of terrible judgment.
    - (2) "...from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree."
      - (a) Soon, the first trumpet:  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the trees burned (8:7)
      - (b) Soon, the 2nd Trumpet  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the sea turns to blood (8:8)
        - (i) Then the 2nd bowl the whole sea turns to blood (16:18-20)
      - (c) Also, the 1st trumpet  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the earth burned (8:7)
        - (i) Then, the 4th bowl the earth is shaken (16:18-20)

\*But, none of this can happen until the 144,000 are selected and sealed.\*

B. (7:2-3) The *Sealing* of the *Select* 144,000 Servants from "all the tribes of Israel."

- 1. Another Angel: Not the Lord Jesus Christ, but one "like" the *four* angels

2. From the “rising of the sun” (ESV, NASB), or “east” (KJV, NIV)
  - a) Direction in Scripture matters. In Scripture *east* is of the direction from which the deliverance, or judgment of God comes. It is the direction from which the Lord Jesus will eventually return. It is also the direction in which the glory of the Lord departed from the Temple when God judged Israel.
    - (1) East: Judgment: Ez. 10:18-19; 11:22-23
    - (2) East: Return: Ez.43:2-4; 44:1-2
    - (3) East: Protection/ Sealing: Rev. 7:2
3. “...the seal of the Living God.”
  - a) The angel is carrying the *instrument* with which the seal is made, like a “signet ring, or stamp” (MacArthur and Garland)
  - b) What is the seal?
    - (1) Revelation 14:1: “Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with Him 144,000 who had His name and His Father’s name written on their foreheads.”
4. Those that are sealed are one of three groups that survive the terrible judgments to come: (Garland)
  - a) The 144,000 survive the seal, trumpet and bowl judgments, and the Antichrist!
  - b) The Martyrs of 7:9-17. They will die, but will enter heaven preserved and kept!
  - c) And Jesus mentions a group that will survive the tribulation. Having come to faith during the Tribulation they are alive at the Second coming. (Matt. 25:31-40)
5. (7:3) The fifth angel commands the *four* angels
  - a) “Do not harm...”
    - (1) Judgment has to wait!
  - b) ‘...until we put a seal on the foreheads of the bond-servants.’
    - (1) “...on their foreheads”
      - (a) The mark is similar to the promise of Revelation 3:12 written to the faithful overcomers in Philadelphia. Jesus would write on them “My new name.” (also 14:1)
      - (b) In Ezekiel, when God pronounced judgment on Jerusalem for wholesale idol worship, God commanded an angel to put a “mark on the foreheads of the men who

sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it.” (Ez.9:4)

- (i) And everyone without the mark of God was killed. (Ez. 9:5-6)

(c) Application: Right now, every born-again Christian is marked with a seal– the seal of the Holy Spirit!

- (i) Ephesians 1:13b-14: “Having believed, you were marked in Him with a **seal**, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are **God’s possession**—to the praise of His glory.”

(d) Satan is the master thief

- (i) By way of “the Beast” Satan will mark everyone allied with him. These are unredeemable! (Rev. 13:16;14:9-10. Not written in the Book of Life.

(2) These 144,000 are called “bond-servants”

(a) MacArthur supposes that the recognition of these 144,000 as bond-servants indicates that they are already redeemed.

- (i) They are sealed/ protected so that they can continue witnessing about Christ and his gospel!

(b) This should give us encouragement to witness Christ. Having been sealed by the Holy Spirit nothing can bring eternal harm. Go and be His witnesses!

\*Revelation 14:1-5 describe the moral character and purity of these “sealed” witnesses! Holiness and purity should be an prevalent characteristic of Christians who are “sealed” by the Holy Spirit.

#### C. (7:4-8) The Sealed

1. They have now been sealed and are under the ownership and protection of God.

a) God knows His own

- (1) John 10:14: “I am the Good Shepherd; I know My sheep and my sheep know Me—”

b) The seal is not visible to the eye, but is evident to God and to the angels and demons. But they cannot be eternally harmed!

2. They are sealed Jewish people/ believers.

- a) The genealogical records for Israel was destroyed in AD 70 with the destruction of the Temple. But because God sealed them with His Name, His knows them, literally by name!
      - (1) John 10:3b: "He calls His own sheep by name..."
  - 3. Revelation 14:4 calls them "firstfruits"
    - a) They are representative of a coming harvest of Jewish people to Christ!
      - (1) These future Jewish believers will "obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus." (Rev. 12:17)
  - 4. (Revelation 7:5-8) The *select* Jewish people from the 12 tribes of Israel
    - a) 12,000 from the 12 tribes of Israel
    - b) The interesting facts about the list of tribes
      - (1) Judah is listed first, even though Reuben was first born
        - (a) Judah is the Tribe of Jesus, the Messiah!
        - (b) Reuben forfeited his birthright because of sin.
      - (2) Dan is omitted. This tribe was a tribe of raging idolators
        - (a) See Deuteronomy 29:18-21
        - (b) Dan will share in the millennial blessings upon Israel
          - (i) See Ezekiel 48:1-2, 32
        - (c) Dan will not be protected during the Tribulation
      - (3) Ephraim is omitted, and Joseph is substituted.
        - (a) Ephraim defected from Judah and chose to be aligned with the northern kingdom of Israel.
        - (b) Ephraim was noted for their idolatry (Hosea 4:17)
      - (4) Manasseh is included because he was faithful.
  - 5. The Bright hope for Israel
    - a) God is not finished with Israel.
    - b) We must reject the "Replacement Theology" that states that Israel is no longer part of God's program. God is NOT FINISHED with Israel.
      - (1) Read Romans chapters 9-11!
    - c) The Jewish people will become "the greatest missionary force the world has ever known." (MacArthur)
- D. Our Hope
- 1. Jesus came into the world to save and seal His people!
    - a) His death was an atoning sacrifice for sins. By His blood He turned away God's wrath, satisfied God's justice, saved His people from God's judgment, and secured each and every believer's eternal salvation!
    - b) Do you know Him today?

II. (Revelation 7:9-17) The Saved and Sanctified People of the Nations: By the blood of the Lamb