



Chapter 7

The 144,000



An Interlude

Revelation 7:1-3 (NASB), ¹After 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 on any tree. ²And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, ³saying, “Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads.”



Chapter seven opens with four angels standing on the four corners of the earth holding back the winds from blowing on the earth and the sea. A fifth angel comes down having the seal of the living God that will seal the bond-servants (the 144,000 young Jewish men) on their foreheads. The winds are representative of the coming judgments that are the Trumpet and Bowl Judgments. These judgments must wait till the sealing of the 144,000 happens. Afterwards the judgments of God will not affect them, or anyone who believes in their message and repents of their sin.

Revelation 7:4 (NASB), "And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:"

The twelve tribes of Israel are listed in c7:5-8 and in a different order than you would find in other scriptures when speaking of the twelve tribes.

Rachel and Leah made prophetic statements for all 12 of Jacob's sons. Here are the names of the tribes that make up the 144,000 in the order listed in Revelation c7, together with the meaning of each name:

1. Judah = "I will praise the Lord"
2. Reuben = "He has looked on me"
3. Gad = "Granted good fortune"
4. Asher = "Happy am I"
5. Naphtali = "My wrestling"
6. Manasseh = "Making me to forget"
7. Simeon = "God hears me"
8. Levi = "Joined to me"
9. Issachar = "Purchased Me"
10. Zebulun = "Dwelling"
11. Joseph = "God will add to me"
12. Benjamin = "Son of His right hand"

Now notice what happens when the meaning of the names are combined, in the same order, into a paragraph, the words in italics are supplied to complete each thought.



A Pearl of
Scripture

"I will praise the Lord *for He has looked on me and granted good fortune. Happy am I because my wrestling God is making me to forget. God hears me and is joined to me. He has purchased me a dwelling. God will add to me the Son of His right hand.*"

These names describe the story of the church's struggle, redemption, victory, and marriage to the Lamb.

Let's look at who scriptures says these 144,000 are.

Revelation 14:1-4 (NASB), Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb *was* standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads. ² And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard *was* like *the sound* of harpists playing on their harps. ³ And they

sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth. ⁴These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These *are* the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb. ⁵And no lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless.

From chapter 7 we are told these 144,000 come from the sons of Israel. They are not the fathers or the grand-fathers, but the sons from out of the twelve tribes of Israel. Remember the angel of chapter seven that had the seal of the living God? In chapter 14 we are told what that sealing is ... it is the **NAME** of the **LAMB** and **HIS FATHER** and it was written on their foreheads.



This group of 144,000 spiritual apostles, primary mission is to reach the world with the message of the Gospel and the news of His second coming. The largest revival in the history of man will take place by the influence and preaching of the 144,000 following the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain (last days just before Jesus return).

Please keep in mind that the 144,000 are not the only ones preaching the gospel in the last days. Just as the 12 apostles were part of a larger group of 120 disciples (Acts 1:13) coming out of a Pentecostal revival, so the 144,000 are leaders in the end-time revival, but they are not the only ones preaching.

I believe it is also significant to note that Jesus chose the 12 apostles from the laity, not the priesthood. In the same way, the 144,000 will not likely be composed only of ordained ministers. Rather, I believe it will largely be made up of lay persons.

Acts chapter 1 describes an interesting sequence of events that took place just before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the former rain. First, the disciples focused on Jesus (verses 10, 11). Then they prayed and put aside their differences (verses 13, 14). Finally, they chose Matthias to replace Judas, the apostle who had died (verses 16-26). Notice that as soon as the number 12 was complete, the Holy Spirit was poured out in the Upper Room (Acts chapter 2).

During the tribulation, Jesus will have an army of Special Forces to lead in this final mission of rescuing God's children, who have become Satan's prisoners of war. Revelation 14:4 proclaims of the 144,000: "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes."

If we desire to be among those who follow the Lamb throughout eternity, we must first learn to follow Him here, now. Then together we can sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

A Multitude from out of the Tribulation

Revelation 7:9-13 (NASB), ⁹ After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and *all* tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches *were* in their hands; ¹⁰ and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.” ¹¹ And all the angels were standing around the throne and *around* the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² saying, “Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, *be* to our God forever and ever. Amen.” ¹³ Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?” ¹⁴ I said to him, “My lord, you know.”

At first a simple reading of the above text you might think it was refereeing to the church in heaven. They are clothed in white robes the scripture says, but where did these saints get their robes? Let’s look again at the fifth seal judgment.

Revelation 6:9-11 (NASB), ⁹ When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; ¹⁰ and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” ¹¹ And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until *the number of* their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also.

This group is not the church, for the church (The Bride of Christ) can be found in her home called the New Jerusalem of in Revelation 21.

Revelation 21:9-10 (NASB), ⁹ Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, “Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.” ¹⁰ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,



So then who are they who worships before the throne of God in chapter 7.

In answer to the Elders question as to who this group was, John's answer was (v16) "My lord, you know." John the pastor of the church at Ephesus did not recognize those before the throne worshipping the Lord. So, who were they? The Elder was quick to tell John who they were.

Revelation 7:14-17 (NASB), ¹⁴And he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.¹⁵ For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them. ¹⁶They will hunger no longer, nor thirst anymore; nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; ¹⁷for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes."

These are the Martyrs of the Great Tribulation. These are those who Jesus spoke about to the Martyrs of the fifth seal judgment. In v11 they were given their white robes and told to "rest for a little while longer, until *the number of* their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also."

This is the accounting of the Martyrs who will lay their lives down for the testimony of Jesus. Their place in heaven is before the throne of God forever.