

## Riverview Baptist Church Wednesday Night Class: A Study in the Book of Revelation – Lesson 7

### Chapter 7 – The First Parenthetical Section – Tribulation Saints

After the first SIX seal judgments have taken place in chapter 6, we now move to a heavenly scene (see page 30 chart). This parenthetical section is the first of three ~~POVERTY~~ (7:14-17; 10:1-11:14; 16:13-16).

These three sections provide more information that the judgment sections do not provide. These sections may be RETROSPECTIVE (looking back) or prospective (looking forward) or possibly both.

There was a question asked in 6:17, "...and who is able to stand?" The question may be thought of as "who is able to be saved in the Tribulation?" This chapter answers that question. There are two groups of people who will be saved in the seven years, JEWS and GENTILES.

### Introduction – 7:1-3

These four angels are good angels who have been given the authority to control NATURE (compare 14:18; 16:5). Notice the first aspect of nature that they control: WIND. Henry Morris in his book, *The Revelation Record*, discusses man's dependence on the wind.

"...another angel..." – this word for "another" is the Greek adjective for "another of a different kind." He restrains the other four angels from harming nature on earth UNTIL the Jewish representatives of the tribes are "sealed." This word comes from the same word as the seals in chapter six. It is an indication of "ownership" and "protection." Notice the phrase, "bondservants of our God."

## 7:4-8 – The 144,000 Saved Jews of the “Twelve Tribes”

These servants of God are seen by most conservative scholars as being saved in the FIRST half of the Tribulation. This number is to be taken literally. However, these are not the only saved Jews in the Tribulation (6:10, 11; 12:17). Zechariah 13:8-9 states that only ONE-THIRD of the living Jews will be saved when He returns to earth at the Second Coming.

The tribes of Israel are listed several times and in different ways in the Bible.

Gen. 29:32-35:18 – birth order

Gen. 35:22-26; 46:8-25; 49:3-27 – order of Jacob’s blessing

Exodus 1:2-5

Num. 1:5-15 – order of the “princes”

Num. 2:3-31 – order of the encampment

Num. 13:4-15

Num. 26:4-51 – order of the census

Num. 34:19-28

Deut. 27:12-12 – order of blessing and cursing

Deut. 33:6-25 – order of Moses’s blessing

Joshua 13:7-22:34 – order of inheritance

Judges 5:12-18

1 Chron. 2:1-8:40 – order by wives and concubines

1 Chron. 12:24-37; 27:16-22

Ezek. 48:1-7, 23-28, 31-34 – order of the gates of the city

Rev. 7:4-8 – order of a special group within the Tribulation

### **Some Peculiarities of the Revelation 7 listing:**

1. Inclusion of LEVI - perhaps as a substitute for DAN.
2. Judah heads the list – REUBEN is the firstborn, but Judah is first probably because the MESSIAH is from Judah (Rev. 5:5; Heb. 7:13-14).  
**THERE IS GREAT EMPHASIS ON THE MESSIAH IN REVELATION.**
3. The tribes of Dan and Ephraim are omitted – Why? Both tribes were so involved with IDOLATRY (1 Kings 12:28-30; Judges 17:1-13; 18:2, 30, 31; 1 Kings 12:25-29; Hosea 4:17).
4. The tribe of Ephraim is replaced by JOSEPH.

### **Some Theological Positions related to the 144,000:**

1. Amillennialism and Covenant Premillennialism view the group as the Church.
2. Jehovah's Witnesses view the groups as their Heavenly-Eternity number. The FIRST 144,000 will live in heaven for eternity. The "rest" will be content to live on earth for eternity.
3. British-Israelism (Hebert Armstrong) views the group as the Anglo-Saxon peoples (the so called "ten lost tribes").
3. Some OLD dispensationalists view the omittance of Dan as the basis for the ANTICHRIST being a Jew.

## 7:9-17 – The Innumerable Number of Tribulation Saints

Notice in 7:9 – “After these things I looked...” This is a time distinction. This makes the 144,000 and this group different from one another. Notice the contrasts between the groups:

The first group: numbered, Jews, earthly.

The second group: innumerable, Gentiles, heavenly.

This group is made up of GENTILES from every nation, tribe, people, and language group. How are they clothed? WHITE ROBES Where are they? They are before the THRONE and the Lamb. What was in their hands? PALM BRANCHES (Lev. 23:40; John 12:13). What were they doing? WORSHIPPING GOD along with the angels, the elders, and the four living creatures (7:10-12).

7:13-14 – Notice the question that one of the elders asked of John. “Who are these who are clothed in white robes and from where have they come?” John’s reply clearly shows that he did not know. The answer is given by that same elder. “Those who have come out of GREAT tribulation...” This is a phrase that is usually reserved for the SECOND half of the Tribulation.

7:15-17 – Where are these saints? BEFORE THE THRONE OF GOD

What are they doing? ENJOYING THE BLESSINGS OF HEAVEN

