

# Revelation Chapter Seven

- Chapter 7 represents an “interlude” between the breaking of seal #6 and seal #7.
  - John observes angelic activity in a display of God’s abundant mercy [7:1-8].
  - John also observes a multitude of believers (Jews and Gentiles alike) who were martyred for their faith during the Tribulation [7:9-17].
  - This chapter describes a heavenly scene and is likely given as the answer to the question, “Who is able to stand?” from the last verse of chapter 6.
- John sees 4 angels withholding winds of judgment until a faithful remnant can be sealed [7:1-3].
  - The “four winds” describe God’s dealings with man taking place through the angels [Jer 49:36; Dan 7:2].
  - The “four corners” entail the full extent of the earth – no place is excluded [Isa 11:12; Rev 20:8].
  - Another angel appears and he discloses the purpose for this restraint – so that God’s faithful witnesses can be given a protective seal [7:2-3].
- 144,000 Jewish believers are designated for special divine protection during the wrath [7:4-8].
  - There are 12,000 believers mentioned from 12 tribes of Israel.
  - Given that John uses the indefinite term “great multitude” in verse 9, these numbers should be taken literally.
  - The fruitful evangelistic effort of these 144,000 Jewish believers becomes clear in the last 9 verses of this chapter.
- Notice that Dan and Ephraim are not mentioned in the tribal listing of verse 4-8.
  - Levi is mentioned here, but is sometimes excluded from the tribal listings with Ephraim and Manasseh (sons of Joseph) listed in its place [Num 1:5-15, 20-54; 13:4-15; 26:5-50; Josh 21:4-8].
  - The reference to Joseph [7:8] certainly included descendants of Ephraim as well as Manasseh.
  - Notably, the idolatry of the Northern Kingdom centered around Dan and Ephraim [1 Kings 12:29].
  - Even though Dan is not mentioned as part of the sealing, God will preserve Jews from every tribe to be part of the Millennial Kingdom [Ezek 48:1-29].

- The 144,000 Jewish evangelists are mentioned again in Rev 14:1-5 where we learn that they live a chaste and obedient lifestyle that Paul described as being entirely devoted to the Lord [1 Cor 7:26-34].
- John now sees a great multitude of saints who are martyred for their faith in the Tribulation [7:9-17].
  - They are from every nation, of all tribes, peoples and languages – Jews and Gentiles [7:9].
  - They are standing before the throne (the Father) and the Lamb (the Son) [7:9].
  - They cry out and attribute salvation to the Father and the Son [7:10].
  - The elders and angels join in the worship [7:11-12].
  - One of the elders of the Church asks John about the identity of these saints [7:13].
  - When John admits that he does not know, the elder explains that they are Tribulation martyrs [7:14].
  - They are rewarded with a special privilege of worshiping in the heavenly temple [7:15].
  - They apparently suffer hunger, thirst and even scorching heat while on the earth [7:16].
  - These sufferings of their earthly life are over as they are now under the shepherding care of the Lamb and they will drink from the waters of life [7:17].
- Keep in mind that the events of this chapter do not advance the narrative of events in the Tribulation.
- Note also that neither group (144,000/martyrs) seen by John are members of the Church.