

The Study of the Book of Revelation

Who shall be able to Stand?

Chapter 7

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."*

"four angels" - What "*Sanctuary Imagery*" does this give us? Where were the "*Four Angels*" [Four Living Creatures]? The four cherubim were around the throne of God, in the most holy place.

"four corners of the earth" - gives reference to the global nature of this event.

Ezekiel 7:2-3

*"Also, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD **unto the land of Israel**; An end, the end is come upon the **four corners of the land**. Now is the end come upon thee, and I will send mine anger upon thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense upon thee all thine abominations."*

Just as there the four corners of the land represented all of Israel, here it represents the four corners of the earth. In other words, it represents the whole world.

"the four winds" - We have previously seen that "*winds*" represent warfare and strife.

Jeremiah 49:35-38

*"Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will **break the bow** of Elam, the chief of their might. And upon Elam will I **bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven**, and will scatter them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come. For I will **cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies**, and before them that seek their life: and I will **bring evil upon them** even my fierce anger, saith the LORD; and I will **send the sword** after them, till I have consumed them: And I will set my throne in Elam, and will destroy from thence the king and the princes, saith the LORD."*

"the sea" - We have seen prophetically the sea represents the masses of people, heavily populated areas.

Revelation 17:15

*"And he saith unto me, **The waters** which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, **are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues**."*

"the earth" - The earth, as the opposite of the sea, represents the sparsely populated areas. i.e. - God's people, as opposed to the wicked "masses".

We saw in Revelation 10, with the unsealing of the Book of Daniel, that the Angel had one foot upon the sea and one on the earth, showing a UNIVERSAL MESSAGE - a message to ALL. Likewise, at the end time judgment, we see it again relating to ALL people (sea and earth) - again a UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

"nor on any tree" - A tree, symbolically, representative of God's People.

Psalms 1:1-3

*“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And **he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water**, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”*

Ps 52:8

“But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.”

“from the east”- We see the angel coming *“from the East,”* with the seal of the Living God. “From the East” is the direction of Christ’s coming from Heaven.

Matthew 24:27

“For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”

Therefore, this angel is coming from God to earth to *“Seal”* the people of God.

“sealed the servants of our God” - This seal is given to those that prepared themselves for the Coming of Christ. The *“Seal of God”* brings our attention back to the Seventh Day Sabbath and the recognition and obedience of the CREATOR GOD of Genesis. It is the main point of contention in the issue of the Mark of the Beast (of Revelation 13). The Seventh Day Sabbath is the sign that God is The Creator -- (Ex. 31:13-17).

Exodus 31:13-17

*“Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily **my sabbaths** ye shall keep: for **it is a sign** between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; **but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD**: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall **keep the sabbath**, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. **It is a sign** between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.”*

It is the external sign of loyalty of a final generation that will trust in the Creator God, even when creation begins to crumble around them at the time of the end. Verse 3 tells us that the global outpouring of His wrath upon the earth, which is the seven last plagues, will come after the sealing of God’s end time peoples. (i.e. The Mark of the Beast Issue)

Revelation 7:4-8 The 144,000

*“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 **Nephthali** 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.”*

We see here the 144,000, a symbolic number, **representative of God’s people living through the seven last plagues, to see Jesus come, and will be translated without seeing death.** They have been sealed with the Seal of God.

In the book *Early Writings*, Ellen White writes, “*Soon we heard the voice of God like many waters, which gave us the day and hour of Jesus’ coming. The living saints, 144,000 in number, knew and understood the voice, while the wicked thought it was thunder and an earthquake. When God spoke the time, He poured upon us the Holy Ghost, and our faces began to light up and shine with the glory of God, as Moses’ did when he came down from Mount Sinai.*” *Early Writings*, p. 14

“*Upon the crystal sea before the throne, that sea of glass as it were mingled with fire, so resplendent is it with the glory of God,—are gathered the company that have “gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name.” [Revelation 15:2.] With the Lamb upon Mount Zion, “having the harps of God,” they stand, the hundred and forty and four thousand that were redeemed from among men; and there is heard, as the sound of many waters, and as the sound of a great thunder, “the voice of harpers harping with their harps.” [Revelation 14:1-5; 15:3; 7:14-17] And they sing “a new song” before the throne, a song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand. It is the song of Moses and the Lamb,—a song of deliverance. None but the hundred and forty-four thousand can learn that song; for it is the song of their experience,—an experience such as no other company have ever had. “These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.” These, having been translated from the earth, from among the living, are counted as “the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb.” “These are they which came out of great tribulation;” [Revelation 14:1-5; 15:3; Revelation 7:14-17.] they have passed through the time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation; they have endured the anguish of the time of Jacob’s trouble; they have stood without an intercessor through the final outpouring of God’s judgments. But they have been delivered, for they have “washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” “In their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault” before God. “Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.” [Revelation 14:1-5; 15:3; Revelation 7:14-17.] They have seen the earth wasted with famine and pestilence, the sun having power to scorch men with great heat, and they themselves have endured suffering, hunger, and thirst. But “they shall hunger no more; neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” [Revelation 14:1-5; 15:3; 7:14-17.] Great Controversy 648-649*

Notice as we compare the original twelve tribes with the tribes listed in Revelation chapter 7.

Original Twelve Tribes

1. Reuben – Behold a Son
2. Simeon – Hearing
3. Levi – Joined
4. Judah – Praise of the Lord
5. Dan – Judged
6. Naphtali – Wrestled and Prevailed
7. Gad – A Troop or Company
8. Asher – Happy
9. Issachar – There is Hire
10. Zebulun – To Dwell
11. Joseph – May God Add
12. Benjamin – Son of the Right Hand

Revelation Chapter 7 Tribes

1. Judah – Praise of the Lord
2. Reuben – Behold a Son
3. Gad – A Company
4. Asher - Happy
5. Nephthalim – Wrestled and Prevailed
6. Manasseh – Causing to Forget
7. Simeon – Hearing [The Lord Hears]
8. Levi – Joined [To the Lord]
9. Issachar – There is Hire [Purchased]
10. Zebulun – To Dwell [God will Dwell]
11. Joseph – May God Add [Fruitful Bough]
12. Benjamin – Son of the Right Hand

These names and meaning, when placed in the order named in Revelation chapter 7, describe the Christian experience. When you realize what He has done, you **Praise God!** You are now a **Son** or Daughter of God, along with a **great company** of fellow believers. You are **happy and blessed** because you have **wrestled and prevailed**

with God. Knowing your own weakness, you forgive yourself and others, **causing you to forget** the wrongs others have done. **The Lord hears** your plea to be **joined to the Lord**. Because you were **purchased** by the Lord. **God will dwell** with you and make you **a fruitful bough**. You are now the **son of the right hand of God** and will reign with Him forever.

KEY Point:

The 144,000 is a Spiritual Body, symbolizing the righteous that have lived through the seven last plagues and will be translated without seeing death. It is symbolic number, not a literal number. (Remember - the Book of Revelation is steeped in Prophetic symbolism, not “*literalism*.”) What we see in these verses, in conjunction with Revelation 14, is a symbolic answer to the question of “WHO CAN STAND” we see the characteristics of those that CAN.

* The number 144,000 is made up of 12 x 12,000

* There were 12 Patriarchs, 12 tribes of Israel, 12 Apostles, and 12 Foundations in the New Jerusalem. (Rev. 21:14).

* The 12 Tribes names in Revelation 7 were not the twelve literal tribes of literal Israel. One of the literal 12 tribes are not included, and that is Dan. And one that were not part of the literal 12 tribes are added Manasseh. Also, where one of Joseph’s son’s (Manasseh) was included in this list, the other (Ephraim) was not. Since it is not the original, literal, twelve tribes we know that not only the number, but the names themselves are symbolic. Symbolizing the characteristics of the Christian experience.

* Why were Dan (one of the original 12 tribes) and Ephraim (Josephs other son) missing?

MISSING:

Dan: Gen. 49:16-17 tells us that Dan was judgmental, a backbiter, and was as a poisonous viper among people. This is a characteristic that does not fit it Heaven.

Genesis 49:16-17

*“Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. **Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.**”*

Ephraim: Ephraim went into Baal worship and idolatry.

Hosea 4:17

“Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone.”

We know that idolaters will not enter into God’s New Jerusalem

Revelation 21:8

*“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and **idolaters**, and all liars, **shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.**”*

Revelation 7:9-12

*“**9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; 10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God** which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. **11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, 12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.**”*

“After this I beheld” – After John saw the picture of the four angels holding back the four winds of strife and the angel flying through having the Seal of the Living God of which 144,000 were sealed, he now sees another picture of a great multitude, which no man could number.

“a great multitude, which no man could number” - The actual number was greater than a man could number (vs. the symbolic number of verse 4). Here we see a picture of the righteous dead that will be raised as the Second Coming of Jesus. The first fruits (144,000) are just a part of the bigger picture of the great harvest, of all the saved from every class, race and generation.

“clothed in white robes” - Here the white robes symbolize Christ Righteousness, the life of victory (over sin) of the saints, given as a gift from God. (See Rev. 19:7-8)

“palms in their hands” - The palm branches draw’s our attention to the Feast of Tabernacles imagery.

Leviticus 23:39-40

*“Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, [the Feast of Tabernacles] when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath. And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, **branches of palm trees**, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days.”*

“Salvation to our God” - We are saved **“BY FAITH”** - Our salvation comes through Jesus, as a gift from God, not through ourselves or what WE do.

Key Point:

Verses 11 & 12 - The heavenly universe gives its approval and praise to God’s final verdict on Judgment (See Rev. 19:1-2). In Revelation chapters 18 and 19 we see a **“Repeat and Enlargement”** of the same scenes as here.

Revelation 7:13-17

*“13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? 14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are **they which came out of great tribulation**, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and **serve him day and night** in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall **dwell among them**. 16 They shall **hunger no more, neither thirst any more**; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. 17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”*

“they which came out of great tribulation” - These are the saints of all ages, who were faithful and have been saved and washed in God’s righteousness. The Great Tribulation refers to times through the ages that God’s people have been tried and persecuted and remained faithful, such as, the Christian persecution under Diocletian (303-313 AD), the Dark Ages (538-1798 AD), and the Mark of the Beast and Seven Last Plagues, to name a few.

“serve him day and night” - They worship GOD **day and night** (Continually) in God’s sanctuary - in His eternal (Sabbath) rest - Compare the Four Living Creatures (Rev. 4:8) to the counterpoint of those who failed God and **“Worshipped the Beast”** (Rev. 14:11).

Revelation 14:11

*“And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have **no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image**, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.”*

Revelation 4:8

“And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.”

“dwell among them” - “Dwell” is the Greek word “*Skenoo*” - which is literally “*To Tabernacle With.*” Thus God will Tabernacle with His People. This also carries the idea of Sheltering or protecting them. (Isa 4:5-6)

Isaiah 4:5-6

*“And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence. **And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.**”*

“shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more” - Notice the Sanctuary imagery again - The people will be fed by God (remember the symbolism of the “manna” stored in the Ark of the Covenant) and will give them water -- (remember the water that flowed from “The Rock” - e.g. from the Throne of God).

Thus the question, “*Who shall be able to stand?*” (Rev. 6:17) is forever answered! God has and will always have a people that will love and serve Him, they are unwilling to compromise, even if it means death! When Jesus comes again there will only be two groups, the saved and the lost. We will be on one side or the other. Why not make a decision today to be on the side of Jesus!