

17. The Sealing of the One Hundred and Forty-Four Thousand

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain each of the seal judgments that will come upon the earth. We see that the world will recognize the judgments of the fifth and sixth seals as the wrath of God but it will not cause them to repent. Instead, they will ask the question, “Who is able to stand?” That question will be answered in Revelation 7, as we see two groups who will stand.

Revelation 7:1-2a says, “After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God.” All of the future judgments, that will happen during the rest of the tribulation, will be a part of the judgments of the seventh seal. We see two groups that will still stand at the end of the tribulation. The first group will stand throughout the entire tribulation, and the second group will be raised back to physical life at the end of the tribulation.

As we begin this chapter, we see that God told John that there are four angels who will hold the winds that blow in the four different directions. The winds from these four directions reach the entire earth and influence the heavens as well. Mark 13:27 says, “And then He will send His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven.” Here, we see that suddenly the winds will stop blowing throughout the entire earth. Since the winds affect both the earth and the heavens, this will have a tremendous impact on the weather throughout the entire earth. The air in many of the large cities will quickly become very polluted because there will be no wind or rain to remove the pollution from the air. This stopping of the wind will also have its effects on the seas and oceans. These changes will cause every person on the earth to be affected in one way or another.

Then, John saw another angel coming down from heaven. He saw that this angel had the seal of the living God. 2 Timothy 2:19 says, “Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: ‘The Lord knows those who are His,’ and, ‘Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.’” In this verse, we see that this seal shows that God knows those who belong to Him. Satan knows that he cannot touch those who have the seal of God unless God allows him to do so. Job 1:9-10 says, “So Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.’” We are going to see that this angel places the seal of God on certain people so that Satan will not be able to touch them throughout the remainder of the tribulation.

We see that this angel calls to the angels that hold the four winds. Revelation 7:2b-4 says, “And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, ‘Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.’ And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred *and* forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel *were* sealed.” Instead, we see that when the angels stop the four winds that it is going to bring harm to earth, the sea and the trees. The angel

tells the four angels not to stop the winds until he has sealed the servants of God on their foreheads. This seal placed on the foreheads of the servants of God will also protect them from any of the harm that will be caused by the stopping of the winds. The four angels of the four winds were not to stop the winds until the servants of God were sealed.

We also see that the stopping of the winds is going to bring harm to the earth, the sea and the trees. We will see some of the ways that the earth, the sea, and the trees will be harmed when we come to the trumpet judgments, in Revelation 8. Then, when we come to chapter nine, we will see that God stops the judgments on the earth, sea and trees and God allows Satan to hurt the people with locusts that come out of the bottomless pit. Revelation 9:2-6 says, “And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. And they were not given *authority* to kill them, but to torment them *for* five months. Their torment *was* like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. In those days, men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them.” Here, we see that the harm to the green things on the earth will stop and the people who are in rebellion against God will begin to experience such great pain that they will wish that they could die.

We also learn more about the servants of God who will receive the seal of God on their foreheads. A key thing to notice is that they are called “servants of God.” Earlier in the New Testament, God speaks about three groups of people. 1 Corinthians 10:32 says, “Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God.” These “servants of God” cannot be the church because we saw that the church was already taken to heaven in the Rapture which will happen at the beginning of Revelation 4. These cannot be the Gentiles because there are no servants of God on the earth once the Christians are taken to heaven. As a result, in Revelation 11:3, we read that God will send His two witnesses during the first half of the tribulation to be His witnesses. That verse says, “And I will give *power* to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.” These “servants of God” will be the first one hundred and forty-four thousand to respond to the message of the two witnesses.

We see that these servants of God are from the various tribes of the children of Israel. There are going to be sealed by God and protected from Satan and the antichrist so that they can take the Gospel to the people of all nations that have not heard and rejected the Gospel before Christ takes the Christians to heaven. God is going to fulfill all of the promises He made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the nation of Israel in the Old Testament. This will happen during and after the tribulation. Romans 11:25-26 says, “For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: ‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob.’” These “servants of God” are the firstfruits of the people of Israel that will be turned to God during and at the end of the tribulation.

Growing Godly Family Series – Helping Our Children Learn to Explain the Future 17. “The Sealing of the One Hundred and Forty-Four Thousand”

Updated July 2023

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This is the beginning of the fulfillment of the promise given to Israel, in Zechariah 12:10. That verse says, “And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.” In this verse, we see that God promised the Jews that the time would come when the people of Israel would all turn to Him. That is why Hebrews 8:8-12 quotes Jeremiah 31:31-34 when those verses say, “Because finding fault with them, He says: ‘Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah— not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.’”

Revelation 7:5-8 goes on to give us the number sealed from the twelve tribes of Israel, “of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand *were* sealed; of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand *were* sealed; of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand *were* sealed; of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand *were* sealed; of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand *were* sealed; of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand *were* sealed; of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand *were* sealed; of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand *were* sealed; of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand *were* sealed; of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand *were* sealed; of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand *were* sealed; of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand *were* sealed.” Instead, we notice a few key things. Joseph had two sons Manasseh and Ephraim. Manasseh and Joseph are both mentioned here as those were two of the twelve tribes of Israel. Levi was not one of the twelve tribes of Israel, because they were the Levites who assisted the priests, but they are mentioned here.

The tribe of Dan is not mentioned because they were the first tribe to begin worshipping idols as a tribe. Judges 18:30 says, “Then the children of Dan set up for themselves the carved image; and Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land.” As a result, this tribe will not have the privilege of having some of its members among the one hundred and forty-four thousand. This is just a reminder that sin can have a long-term effect on our descendants. In contrast, we want to help our physical and spiritual children commit their lives to Christ and learn to explain to others what the Word of God teaches. From this chapter we want to help them explain why the one hundred and forty-four thousand witnesses will come from the nation of Israel. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.