

What Must Take Place After This ("Who Can Stand?" The Great Revival of the Tribulation)

Text: Revelation 6:17, Chapter 7

Main Idea: Both, 144,000 Jews will be saved & sealed to preach the Gospel & an innumerable amount of Gentiles will be martyred for their faith during the Tribulation.



1. What is the significance of the phrase "after this?"

- This phrase is used repeatedly in Revelation: 4:1, 7:1, 7:9, 15:5, 18:1, 19:1.
- This phrase signifies that the vision of the 6th seal has ended and John is seeing a new vision and the events that come after the 6th seal chronologically.
- It reveals a shift from judgment to protection for the godly indicating an interlude. (see Chart of Interludes & Revelation's Scenes in Heaven)

2. What are the angels doing in v. 1-3?

- **God's Servants:** Angels are frequently associated with God's judgment. (2 Sam 24:16-17, 2 Kings 19:35, Ps 78:49, Matt 13:39-42, 49-50; 16:27, 25:31, 2 Thess 1:7-8)
- **Holding Back Judgment:** Four angels are given power over the elements of nature and are located on the four corners of the earth. They have "been given power to harm the earth and sea" (v. 2). They are "*holding back*" the imminent judgment of the trumpets (8:5) during this interlude. They are restraining God's wrath for a moment. Winds are often associated with God's judgment (Jer 49:36, Dan 7:2, Hos 13:15).
- **Sealing God's Servants:** Another angel (NOT JESUS), who arises from the east has the "seal of the living God." This seal is the official stamp of God indicating ownership & is a guarantee of authenticity & security (Gen 41:42, Est 3:10, Dan 6:17), which is the name of the Lamb & God written on their fore heads (Rev 14:1).



God marks or seals those who are His just like the antichrist will mark those who are his (Rev 13:16-17). In this case, the “bond-servants of our God” (redeemed) are sealed, or protected just like the Israelites who were sealed with the blood of the lamb on their doorposts (Ex 12:7-13, see also Ez 9:3-6). The seal that these servants will receive will protect them during the most severe times in order that they might preach the Gospel. The character of these 144,000 is seen in Rev 14:1-5.

3. Who are the 144,000 listed in Revelation 7:4-8? They are Jewish witnesses!

- **Crazy Option #1:** These sealed ones are the 7th Day Adventists who are members observing the Jewish Sabbath when the Lord comes back again and they are raptured up to glory.
- **Crazy Option #2:** These sealed ones are the members of the Jehovah Witness cult.
- **Bad Option #3:** These sealed ones are symbolic of the Church. The problem with this view is that in the New Testament, the Church is never equated with Israel. The word Israel is never used to describe Gentiles & only refers to those who are racially descendants of Israel or Jacob. Therefore, this group could not refer to the Church.



John Walvoord – “The prevalent idea that the church is the true Israel is not sustained by any explicit reference in the Bible, and the word Israel is never used of Gentiles and refers only to those who are racially descendants of Israel, or Jacob. The remnant of Israel as portrayed in Revelation should not therefore be taken as meaning the church. It would be rather ridiculous to carry the typology of Israel representing the church to the extent of dividing them into twelve tribes as was done here, if it was the intent of the writer to describe the church. It is instead a clear indication of God’s continued purpose for the nation Israel and their preservation through this awful time of trouble.”

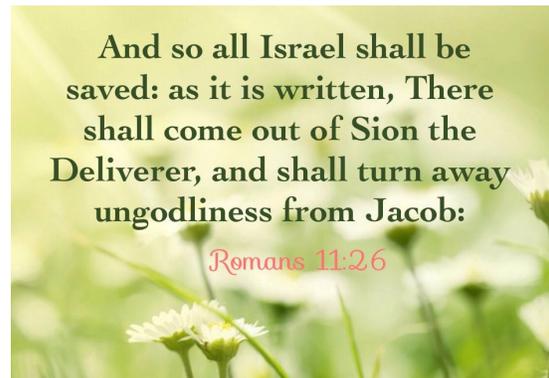
- **Bad option #4:** Some believe that this group is the same group listed in 7:9-18. But the comparison shows that these are 2 different groups:

Description	Revelation 7:1-8	Revelation 7:9-18
Number	144,000	Innumerable
Nationality	Jews	Gentiles
Location	Earth	Heaven
Condition	Protected	Martyred

- **Good option #5:** These sealed ones are 144,000 male Jewish believers who are elected, saved and sealed by God for His service during the Tribulation. The plain reading of the text reveals that they are clearly Jews “from every tribe of the sons of Israel” who have the “seal” of God on them protecting them and enabling them to be a faithful witness & spread the Gospel during the darkest period of earth’s history. God will use them to be a witness to the nations.

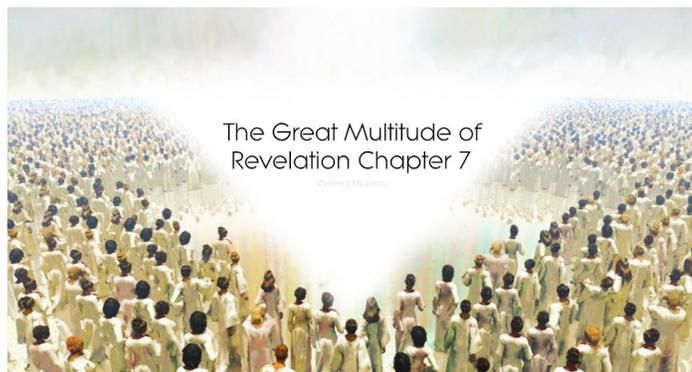
Note: The list of tribes is very random in Scripture (Gen 29:32-35:18, 49:3-27, Num 2:3-31, 26:4-51, Deut 27:12-13, 33:6-25, et al.) often according to birth, blessings, encampment, etc. There is an omission of the tribe of Dan, possibly due to the tribe’s proclivity for idolatry (Deut 29:18-21). They will share in the millennial blessings (Ez 48:1-2, 32), but will not be used by God for this particular mission. Also, Ephraim is omitted and instead Joseph’s name is mentioned possibly because Ephraim defected from the house of Judah (Is 7:17). Manasseh is included because he was the faithful son of Joseph.

MacArthur: “This critical passage reinforces the biblical truth that God is not through with the nation of Israel (cf. Rom 9-11). Though Israel failed in its mission to be a witness nation in the Old Testament, that will not be the case in the future. From the Jewish people will come the greatest missionary force the world has ever known. The result of their effort will be a redeemed Israel, as promised by God, and innumerable redeemed Gentiles” (MacArthur, *Revelation*, page 220).

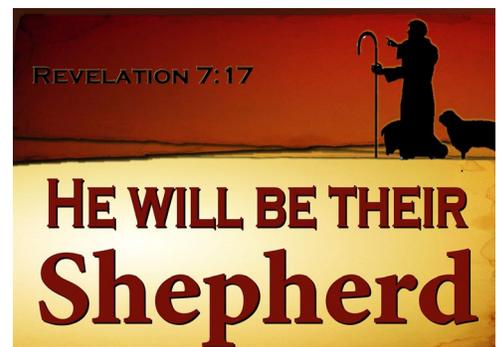


4. Who is the great multitude in Revelation 7:9-17? Martyred Tribulation Gentile Saints in heaven!

- **Their Description:** This group is NOT the Church (who has been raptured out prior to the Tribulation), but rather a multitude comprised of Gentiles who trusted Jesus Christ during the tribulation and are martyred for their faith during the Great Tribulation (2nd half of the Tribulation). Verse 14 says this group are “the ones coming out of the great tribulation.”



- 1) They were a great multitude which no one could number.
 - 2) They came from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages.
 - 3) They came out of the Tribulation and are clothed with white robes (same as the martyrs in 6:9-11) symbolizing their exaltation, & victory & holiness in Christ.
 - 4) They also held palm branches in their hands which symbolize celebration, deliverance & joy (Lev 23:40, Neh 8:15-17).
- ***Their Location:*** This multitude is “standing before the throne & before the Lamb” indicating that they have been martyred and are in ____ **heaven** _____. (v. 9b)
 - ***Their Praise:*** They are praising God saying “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb.” They have all received _____ **salvation** _____ from Jesus. (v. 10)
 - ***Their Association:*** The innumerable crowd was accompanied with myriads of angels, the 24 elders (representatives of the raptured church), & the 4 living creatures (Cherubim) all praising & worshiping God. (v. 11-12)
 - ***Their Origination:*** These are ____ **Tribulation** ____ believers who have been martyred for their faith in Jesus Christ & are in the presence of God with white robes washed in the blood of the Lamb. (v. 13-14)
 - ***Their Function:*** They were cleansed & fit to ____ **serve** _____ God continuously in His temple. (v. 15a)
 - ***Their Protection:*** The Lord will ____ **shelter** _____ them with His presence. (v. 17b)
 - ***Their Provision:*** Jesus as their Shepherd will provide them everything they need including sustenance, protection, guidance, and eternal ____ **joy** _____. (v. 16-17)



Sequence of Events in Revelation 6-20

Main Action: Revelation 6 (6 seals)
Intermission between the 6 th & 7 th seals – Revelation 7
Main action Returns: Revelation 8-9 (7 th seal which contains the 7 Trumpets)
Intermission between the 6 th & 7 th Trumpets – Revelation 10-15
Main Action Resumes: Revelation 16 (seven bowls)
Intermission describing the destruction of Babylon the Great – Revelation 17-18
Main Action Restarts: Revelation 19-20 (Second Coming & Millennial Kingdom)

Mark Hitchcock, *The End*, page 80

