

Sealed

Revelation 7:1-12



Big Idea: Only those sealed in Christ are safe from wrath.

- Revelation 7 depicts the heavenly realms in this PRESENT age.
- Chap. 7 is the response given to the question, “Who can stand?” (6:17).
- v. 1 – “after this” – Revelation is a sequence of VISIONS not a chronological progression of strictly future events.
- We know we have returned to a time before the final judgment, because in 7:1-3, John sees the angels holding back the final tribulation.

1.) The church is SEALED against wrath (v. 1-3).

- Our merciful God is holding back the final wrath of the sixth seal until the full number of His people are saved and sealed (2 Peter 3:9).
- The seal upon foreheads is symbolic of repentant faith in Christ that brings the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Rev. 14:1, Eph. 1:13-14).

2.) All God’s people are one CHURCH in Christ (3-10).

- Many sincere Christians and godly scholars believe that there will be a rapture of the church and then the salvation of 144,000 ethnic Jews.
- The 144,000 is a SYMBOLIC number representing the entire community of the redeemed.
 - a.) Israel has been radically redefined by the person and work of Christ and forever reconstituted in Him as the church (last week).
 - b.) If all of Satan’s followers are marked (Revelation 13), it makes sense that ALL of God’s people would be as well.
 - c.) Those who are sealed are identified as “servants of our God,” which always refers to the totality of God’s people in Revelation (v. 1:1).

- d.) This list of tribes emphasizes the centrality of **CHRIST** and the holiness of God's people that is only possible in Him.
- e.) Revelation 14 indicates that the 144,000 is taken from all people and not just those from one particular ethnicity.
- The 144,000 in this text equals the entirety of God's people from the old covenant (12 tribes) multiplied by the entirety of God's people from the new covenant (12 apostles) multiplied by 1000 (an indefinitely large number).
- f.) This vision seems to be specifically structured to make the point that spiritual Israel is **RECONSTITUTED** as the church.
- In the same way that Christ was introduced as the Lion but appears as the Lamb (ch. 5), so the church is introduced as the 12 tribes of Israel but appears as a great multitude (ch. 7).
 - Just as the Lion is also the Lamb, so **ISRAEL** is also the **CHURCH** (Ephesians 2:14-15).

Application

1.) Preach the Gospel to everyone of every **ETHNICITY**

- The only way to be secured against the coming devastation of God's righteous wrath is to be sealed in Christ (v. 10, Luke 3:8, Acts 4:11-12).
- Preach the Gospel urgently and indiscriminately to everyone of every ethnicity because anyone not saved in Christ will not be saved at all.

2.) Rejoice in **UNITY** among diversity in the church.

- God's glory is not about people boasting in their ethnic distinctives, but that people of different ethnicities boast together of Jesus Christ and His Gospel (John 17:20-21, Colossians 3:11).

3.) Live **CONFIDENTLY** in Christ!

- Anxiety, worry, fear, and stress are good signs that our hope is placed too much in this life and not enough in the next.
- We know that nothing will ultimately overtake us because we are eternally sealed in Him and by Him who has overcome.

