

Revelation 7

An Interlude

After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth so that no wind would blow on the earth, or on the sea, or on any tree. ²And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, holding the seal of the living God; and he called out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, ³saying, "Do not harm the earth, or the sea, or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads."

The 144,000

⁴And I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:

⁵from the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand *were* sealed, from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand, ⁶from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand, from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand, from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand, ⁷from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand, from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand, from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand, ⁸from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand, *and* from the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand *were* sealed.

A Multitude from the Tribulation

⁹After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and *all the* tribes, peoples, and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches *were* in their hands; ¹⁰and they **cried* out with a loud voice, saying,

"Salvation *belongs* to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

¹¹And all the angels were standing around the throne and *around* the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹²saying, "Amen, blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power, and might *belong* to our God forever and ever. Amen."

¹³Then one of the elders responded, saying to me, "These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?" ¹⁴I ^[a]said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ¹⁵For this reason they are before the throne of God, and they serve Him day and night in His ^[b]temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them. ¹⁶They will no longer hunger nor thirst, nor will the sun ^[c]beat down on them, nor any scorching heat; ¹⁷for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the ^[d]water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes."

We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions

What questions were provoked within you?

Did anything confuse you?

Did anything move you emotionally?

Did God instruct you to do something?

Did you gain any insight into God's character?

Paul's helpful insights

1. Why were the four angels at the four corners of the earth?
2. How can angels hold back wind?
3. Can you imagine no wind blowing on the earth, the sea and the trees?
4. What does the wind actually do?
5. Now there is another angel ascending with the sun. Is this angel more special than the others?
6. What is the seal of the living God?
7. This particular angel has a loud voice and cries out to the four angels instructed to harm the earth – 'wait'.
8. He tells them to not start harming the earth, until the bond servants on the earth, had been marked on the forehead with the mark of God.
9. These angels had been given a mandate to attack the sea, the trees and the earth.
10. The number of these people totals 144,000 and they are from the tribe of Israel, not the church.
11. Then the great multitude came forth, these were from all the tribes, tongues and nations, standing before the throne.
12. They were clothed in white. Who are these and what do the white garments represent?
13. They are holding up branches – what is the significance of the branches?
14. What does the declaration 'salvation to our God' mean and who is the Lamb?
15. At this declaration of the saints all the angels fall down in adoration and worship.
16. Amen means, as is, to the previous declaration, so be it.
17. They in turn celebrate with outbursts of praise and worship.
18. To cry out in a loud voice, is to have no embarrassment in regards to what you are saying.
19. Blessing is to bestow as to give to, these angels are giving to God: blessing; glory; wisdom; thanksgiving; honour; power; and might.
20. Forever is for always, no matter what.

21. One of the twenty-four elders asked John a question 'who are the people robed in white'?
22. John answers the elder 'you know'. If the elder knows why did he ask the question?
23. Then the elder answers his own question 'these came out of the great tribulation.'
24. They have washed their robes means, been forgiven and cleansed, justified and sanctified.
25. They have been honoured for their faithfulness.
26. They are allowed to serve Him who sits on the throne day and night.
27. To spread His tabernacle over them is to cover them, meaning to take good care of them forever.
28. All of their needs will be met by Him who covers them, there will be no more suffering at any level.
29. The Lamb is going to be their shepherd. Who is the Lamb?
30. He is the one who guides them to the springs of the waters of life, where there is no more pain of any kind.