

THE SEALING OF THE 144,000
REV. 7:1-8

Introduction:

- A. This is a future event.
 - 1. It has not happened.
 - 2. This is an interruption in the sixth seal.
 - 3. This is in the, "great day of His wrath."

- B. Why does God interrupt the judgments?
 - 1. There has been a great shaking, sixth seal.
 - 2. Far greater judgments are to come.
 - 3. God keeps His promises!

I. THE TEMPORARY INTERRUPTION OF JUDGMENT. V1-3

[The sixth and seventh seals]

- A. "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."
 - 1. standing = histemi - to stand.
 - 2. corner = gonia = an angle, a projecting corner.
 - 3. holding = krato = to grasp, to have power over.
 - 4. After the heavens being ripped in two, this quietness must be doubly frightening.
 - 5. Why does God stop the events? v8:7.

- B. "And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God."
 - 1. ascending = anabaino = to come down, to climb up.
 - 2. seal = sphragis = an instrument for sealing.
 - 3. The marking (branding) (tattooing) of a soldier, guild member, religious devotee, on the hand, brow, neck.

- C. "and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea."

1. cried = ekraksen = to scream, to cry out.
2. hurt = adikeo - to injure, to hurt.

D. "saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."

1. say = lego = to lay before, to relate.
2. hurt = adikeo - to harm, to injure.
3. sealed = sphragizo - to mark, to seal.
4. servants = doulos = a slave.
5. The four angels must not harm the sea, the earth, or the trees until the sealing.
6. foreheads = metopon = between the eyes.

II. THE SEALING OF THE 144,000. V4

A. "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."

1. heard = akouo - to hear.
2. sealed = sphragizo = to make fast with a seal.
3. tribes = phule = tribe.

B. The omission of two tribes.

1. Dan and Ephraim are not named.
2. Levi and Joseph are named instead.
3. "All the tribes of the children of Israel."

THE APOCALYPSE, J.A.Seis, Zondervan, 1980, Page 100.

But these 144,000 are not simply Jews, for there are many of Jewish blood, and even of the saved among them, who are not of this number. They are Jews of a particular class, singled out from the Israelitish populations on account of spiritual attainments and character not found in the rest. They are not only descendants of the Hebrew patriarchs, living in the time of the judgment, but such of those descendants as shall then correspond in their characteristics to the signification of the several tribal names by which they are designated.

In Genesis 5, we have the names of the antediluvian patriarchs, from Adam to Noah. In the meaning of those names, taken in the order in which they stand, we have a singular epitome of the history of the race, and of the principal teachings of holy Scripture from first to last. Taking these tribal names of the 144,000 in the same way, we also find a very striking indication of their personal character, on the ground of which their peculiar honours are based. All Jewish names are significant, and the meaning of those which here are given, is not hard to trace. Juda means "confession or praise of God;" Reuben, "viewing the Son;" Gad, "a company;" Aser, "blessed;" Nephthaim, "a wrestler or striving with;" Manasses, "forgetfulness;" Simeon, "hearing and obeying;" Levi, "joining or cleaving to;" Issachar, "reward, or what is given by way of reward;" Zabulon, "a home or dwelling place;" Joseph, "added or an addition;" Benjamin, "a son of the right hand, a son of old age." Now put these several things together in their order, and we have described to us: Confessors or praisers of God, looking upon the Son, a band of blessed ones, wrestling with forgetfulness, hearing and obeying the word, cleaving unto the reward of a shelter and home, an addition, sons of the day of God's right hand, begotten in the extremity of the age.

This certainly is very remarkable, and cannot be taken as mere accident, particularly as the order of the names, and some of the names themselves, are changed from the enumerations of the twelve tribes found in other places. The same will also account for the omission of the names of Dan and Ephraim, and the substitution of the names of Levi and Joseph in their stead. Those names are not of the right import to describe these 144,000. Dan means "judging, or the exercise of judicial prerogatives;" but these 144,000 are not judges, and never become such. Ephraim means "increase, growth by multiplication;" but these 144,000 are a fixed company, with none of the same class going before them, and none of the same class ever to come after them. "They are virgins." These names are therefore unsuitable, and are superseded by others better adapted to describe the parties to whom they are applied.

These 144,000, then, are Israelites, living in the period of the judgment, who are only then brought to be confessors and praisers of God, whilst the most of their kindred continue in unbelief and rebellion. Viewing the Son, as their fathers never would view Him, they acknowledge Him as their Messiah and Judge. As Jews, they thus constitute a distinct company to themselves, and are blessed. As the result of their conversion, they are also very active in practical righteousness. They strive and wrestle against their own and their nation's long obliviousness to the truth as it is in Jesus, hearing and obeying now the voice of the Lord, cleaving unto the shelter and heavenly home promised by the prophets as the portion of those who call upon the name of the Lord even at that late hour. They are not of the church proper; for their repentance comes too late for that. They are a superaddition to the Church -- a supplementary body -- near and precious to Christ, but made up after the proper Church has finished its course. As Paul in his apostleship was like one born out of due time, so they are in the position of children belated in their birth; -- sons of God indeed, and destined to follow the Lamb whither soever He goeth; but sons begotten in the day of God's right hand, in the period of His power and judgment, in the last extremity of this age. All this comes out naturally and distinctly, without the least straining of a single word."

III. GOD ALWAYS KEEPS HIS PROMISES.

A. God promised Abraham.

1. Gen. 13:14-15.
2. Gen. 15:18.
3. Gen. 17:1-8.
4. At this time the Jews have only a fraction.

B. God promised David. Ezekiel 37:21-28.

1. II Samuel 7:12-16, "And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established forever."
2. Rom. 1:3, "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh."
3. Matt. 22:41-46; Luke 1:31-33.

C. The Jews rejected Jesus as King.

1. Jesus sent to them first. Matt. 15:24, "(woman of Canaan) "...I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."
2. John 1:11, "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."

3. Rom. 11:20, "because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith."
 - a. [Olive and Wild olive.]
 4. Matt. 21:43.
- D. Israel, as a nation will be saved.
1. Rom. 11:1-2, 25-29.
 2. II Cor. 3:13-16.
 3. Ezekiel 37:1-14, [784 B.C.]
- E. The promise to the twelve Apostles.
1. Luke 22:29-30; Matt. 19:28.
 2. Luke 22:1-8.