

I. Book Structure Review

- A. The angelic explanations are parenthetical sections that follow the chronological sections. I like to use the imagery of a movie being placed on pause in order to explain further what's taking place in the sequence of events leading up to the return of Jesus. They answer the tough questions such as, "why are God's judgments so severe?," "what will happen to the saints?," and "how did the Anti-Christ achieve worldwide influence and power?."
1. In Revelation chapter 6-22, the book is broken up into 5 chronological sections with 5 angelic explanations bringing clarity to the chronological sections. This is the first of the angelic explanations. After seeing the chronological events of the first 6 seals John's heart and mind would be reeling and filled with questions. Jesus puts a pause on the vision of unfolding events to shore up John's heart and mind so he can handle seeing more events. This will happen 4 more times in the remainder of the vision.
 2. It is important to note that angelic explanations may or may not be confined to only explaining what's happening during the prior chronological events. In fact, most times they explain what's happening before, during, and after the chronological event that precedes the explanation.
 3. Revelation Chapter 7:1-17 is the first angelic explanation and will be addressing the topic of God's interaction and protection. Ethnic Israel is addressed first then the Gentile nations are addressed second.

II. God's Grace for Ethnic Israel to Stand (Rev. 7:1-8)

- A. As much as we would like them to be or sometimes think they are, the end time prophetic scriptures are not centered upon America or Europe. Specifically, in the book of Revelation much of the events and individuals are centered upon Israel. They elude mostly to the geographic region of Israel and the middle east, and the ethnically Jewish people living in that region during the events leading up to the coming of Jesus. (2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 11:2, 8, 14:1)

Book of Revelation Study (Session 16)
Angelic Explanation – 144,000 Sealed

Sunday Jan. 21st 2018
(Rev. 7:1-17)

1. God makes it abundantly clear through His inspired word that the calling of ethnic Israel is irrevocable and solely contingent upon His faithfulness to them not on their faithfulness to Him. They are the chosen people group in which He will use to bring forth His primary promises of redemption to the earth. With that understanding in place we should expect to see Israel at the forefront of the events that bring those promises to pass.

B. Chapter 7 begins with the mentioning of “four angels” who are holding back “four winds” at the four corners of the earth. The “winds” most likely refer to the four horsemen of the first four seals. Interestingly, the four horsemen in (Zech. 6:5) which many believe parallel the four in Revelation are called “winds”. Throughout the scriptures winds have many times referred to judgment (Ps. 18:10; 104:3-4; Is. 19:1; 66:15; Jer. 4:11-12; 23:19; 51:1)

1. Do not harm the earth: The angels were told not to harm the earth, sea, or trees until a protective seal was placed upon the foreheads of 144,000 Jewish men. The first 3 trumpet judgments in the next chapter affect the earth, sea and trees so it’s probable that they are sealed with this protection after the first 7 seals but before the trumpet judgments. (Rev. 8:7-11)

2. Seal the servants of God on their foreheads - The actual seal that is being given to the 144,000 are believed to be tied to the “seals” of the precious stones that were worn by the high priest. Or the seal placed on Aaron’s forehead, which represented Israel. Aaron’s seal was “consecration to the Lord” and it was to be written on the front and back of his turban. With this in mind, it is likely that the sealing in Revelation 7 should be best thought of as the consecrated possession of the Lord. (Ex. 28:10-11,21, 31-38;)

a) There are multiple other references to the sealing for protection and preservation of individuals by God in scriptures. (Ex. 12:7, 13, 22-28; Ez. 9:1-4; Jhn. 6:27; 2 Cor. 1:21-22; Eph. 1:13-14, 4:30)

3. 144,000 of the tribes of Israel were sealed – There is a host of opinions about who these men are and why they are uniquely protected by a seal. Here are a few biblical truths that we might apply to this group to gain more understanding of their purpose in the events leading up to the return of Jesus. It is my opinion that these men will be primarily living in Israel where tribulation will be the greatest. Currently, there are roughly 40,000 Jewish believers in Jesus living in the land.

Book of Revelation Study (Session 16)
Angelic Explanation – 144,000 Sealed

Sunday Jan. 21st 2018
(Rev. 7:1-17)

- a) Across the denominational landscape and through the centuries it is a universal teaching that this group is ethnically Jewish. Also, they are chosen because they are from a certain family or tribe of Israel by blood. They are divided among the 12 tribes, 12,000 from each. We know the number 12 is significant to God, 12 apostles, 12 tribes, 12 gates on the eternal city, the tree of life produces 12 fruits, ect..
- b) When numbering for a census takes place in scriptures it is generally to count the military force. Those counted in the scripture were males who are able to go to war. The repetition of “from the tribe” echo’s an almost identical phrase used in the census that was being taken in Numbers. It is very likely that this is a eschatological spiritual army of sorts, set apart to withstand darkness and take back ground for the Kingdom. (Num. 1:3, 18, 20, 21-43, 26:2, 4; 2 Sam. 24:1-9; 1 Chr. 27:23)
- c) If we jump ahead to (Rev. 14) we find that they are a form of first fruits. Many believe that it is this group which will be the first fruits and a powerful catalyst for the great end time harvest and the promises that all of ethnic Israel will be saved at the return of Jesus. (Isa. 45:17; Rom. 11:26)
- d) It is interesting to note that the tribe of Dan has been left out of this list and the tribe of Manasseh is instead in its place. There is a much debate about the reason for this. There is a future destiny for the tribe of Dan as it is the first tribe listed in Ezekiel’s millennial list of the tribes. (Ez. 48)

We want to encourage you to submit questions about our study in the book of Revelation!!
Please email Pastor Justin at justinfrie@restorationfellowship.net and we will take time to answer your questions on Sunday mornings so we can all benefit from the discussion.