

## Revelation Chapter 7 (The 144,000 and the Martyr):

(36)

Revelation 7:1-4: "After this" would almost force one to believe it is the next event, in order, to happen but it is not. "After this" just lets us know the next vision or circumstance that John was given a glimpse of. As I stated the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ is not a chronological Book. In this case John, I believe, is detailing behind the scenes look at the opening of the 7 year Tribulation period when the four angels standing at the four corners of the earth are holding back the four winds which are ready to wreak havoc and destruction on all of mankind (almost like four tsunamis). I believe this is accurate because "wind" is used in Scripture where God uses great force to exact His purposes. Furthermore, I am almost certain that these 144,000 arrive on the scene before God's wrath is poured out. Why? Because God never institutes His anger on the unbelieving world without first warning the unbelieving world to repent! Notice verse 3 also, once again, shows us that God does not allow His messengers to be affected by His wrath. In this case He is sealing His "servants" so that they can unimpededly preach the Gospel of the Kingdom throughout the fallen world. Again, I also put the timing of the 144,000 at the beginning so that all of mankind will know why God is allowing this perging to happen.

Revelation 7:5-8: The 144,000 sealed servants comprise 12,000 pure, direct descendants of each of the 12 tribes of Israel. Now this is where I get confused: The 12 Tribes are listed as Judah, Reuben, Gad, Asher, Naphtali,

Manasseh, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, (37) and Benjamin. Notice Dan, and Ephraim are not listed and Reuben is not listed first but second. Why? Probably because it is not important, doctrinally, for us to know why. And I was more than glad to just move on and let the Tribes be as the Tribes are but it wouldn't let me go (probably because I sometimes tend to read too much into things. Here are some explanations from David Jeremiah's commentaries: Dan, even though he was the son of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaiden (Gen. 30:6) some scholars have thought that the Anti-Christ would come from this tribe, perhaps because of their history of idolatry; when golden calves were set up for worship in Israel, they were located in Dan and Bethel (Lev. 24:10, 11; Judg. 17-18; 1 Kings 12:28-30; 2 Kings 10:29). Scripture refers to Dan as a serpent (Gen 49:17) and a lion (Deut. 33:22). The only other being associated with both animals is Satan. The oldest son of Jacob was Reuben and as such one would think that he would be listed first but we read that Reuben forfeited his birthright because of his sin with Jacob's concubine (1 Chron. 5:1, 2). Judah is possibly first because Jesus came from that tribe. In some lists of the 12 Tribes both of Joseph's sons - Ephraim and Manasseh - are named. Here Manasseh is mentioned and Joseph takes Ephraim's place. Like Dan, Ephraim was also guilty of idolatry (Hos. 4:17). Perhaps Joseph is listed here to show that all the tribes are reunited in the future distribution of the land, all 13 including Levi, Dan, Ephraim, and Manasseh - will have a portion (Ezekiel 48:1-29).

About the only conclusive thing that we can get (38) out of the specific naming of the Tribes of Israel is that

Replacement Theology (Also known as Supersessionism; the believe that the church replaced Israel) is a false religion! God never could have replaced Israel because He said that all of creation would cease to exist before Israel would cease to be a nation. For further proof, just turn on the news and see how Satan, and eventually all of the nations, are continually trying to wipe Israel off the map. Satan especially because he couldn't get rid of Jesus so he is determined to get rid of the Jew and remove them from their promised land. For if Israel ceases to exist, or reside, in Israel Christ can not return to set up His kingdom there. (Israel has always been the hour, the minute, and now the second hand of God's prophetic calendar.)

Revelation 7:9-14 (The multitude in heaven): Verse 14 makes it clear that this multitude (millions upon millions) are those that professed Jesus during the Tribulation. We, the church, are not in this picture (I believe). I say that because Ephesians 2:4-6 says, "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us (Paul writes only to the church), even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." In contrast these worshippers are "standing around the Throne" (verse 10).

Notice they are worshipping, once again, as was done in the Old Testament, in this case holding palm branches

as was the tradition for example in the celebration (39) of the Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:40). This was a time where the Jewish people (not the church) sat in booths and carried palm branches to recall the joy of God's complete deliverance from slavery in Egypt. And of course we remember the masses waving palm branches during Jesus' triumphant entry thinking that He was coming to deliver them from Rome and then set up His Kingdom. Which by the way reminds us that every single thing during the 7 year Tribulation period is worship as it was in Jerusalem when Jesus preached to the lost sheep of the house of Israel! Temple worship, sacrifices, Sabbath, Feasts and Festivals, The 10 Commandments all of it! No church, no Body of Christ, no saved by grace through Faith, and especially no mid-Trib or post-Trib Christians which throws those two denominations out the window!

Revelation 7:15-17 These believers are the same ones we read about last week when we read about the "cry of the Martyrs" when the 5<sup>th</sup> seal was opened. Remember how they cried, "How long before justice is served on those who martyred us" but this time they are rejoicing and have no recollection of those feelings. No more hunger, no more thirst, "He who sits on the Throne shelters them", no more scorching heat, He will be their Shepherd (Psalm 23) He will be their guide and He wiped every tear from their eye (No recollection of anything negative or sorrowful). The same promises are also ours! We will have no recollection of our past but will have absolute appreciation that He chose us forever.