

Chapter 7

1 After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, that no wind might blow on earth or sea or against any tree. 2 Then I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, 3 saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads."

1) The four winds: See the blog post "Be Certain of the Rapture." Read about the "Gathering Together of the Elect." That prophecy was fulfilled before the siege of Jerusalem, and it scattered the remnant of the followers to the four winds. Here we have the same four winds, staying calm. The region of Jerusalem would stay calm for a time. God would put his seal on the heads of his people, but then the winds would blow.

2) The seal of God was used in Ezekiel 9:4-6 to put a mark on rebellious men, and notice the angel put the mark on the men.

3) See Revelation 9:4. Chapter 9 deals with the judgment of the Byzantine Empire, formerly the Eastern Roman Empire. The tribes that were sealed are those in the promised land, and the Byzantine empire, earth and sea, and the trees and grass, would not see harm until chapter 9.

4 And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel: 5 12,000 from the tribe of Judah were sealed, 12,000 from the tribe of Reuben, 12,000 from the tribe of Gad, 6 12,000 from the tribe of Asher, 12,000 from the tribe of Naphtali, 12,000 from the tribe of Manasseh, 7 12,000 from the tribe of Simeon, 12,000 from the tribe of Levi, 12,000 from the tribe of Issachar, 8 12,000 from the tribe of Zebulun, 12,000 from the tribe of Joseph, 12,000 from the tribe of Benjamin were sealed

4) The word for seal here is from the same root as the word for being marked in verse 2. This is like the verse in Daniel 8:26 for sealing up the words. See also Ephesians 1:13. The tribes will have their prophetic fulfillment postponed, sealed, until chapter 14.

4) The prophecy for the tribes can be summed up in these verses in Isaiah: Isaiah 41:16 *You will winnow them, and a wind will carry them away; a gale will scatter them. But you will rejoice in the LORD; you will glory in the Holy One of Israel.* and later in (fulfilled in chapter 14) Isaiah 43:6 *I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' and to the south, 'Do not hold them back!' Bring My sons from afar, and My daughters from the ends of the earth.*

4) The number is a prophetic number, 12 x 10 x 10 x 10. There isn't a limit on the number of those that are kept in God's promise. Nearly every prophet and several psalms carry this promise of redemption for God's inheritance (Jeremiah 10:16 and Galatians 3:29)