

The Redeemed Of The Tribulation

(Revelation 7:1-17)

Intro: We concluded last Sunday with the opening of the sixth seal judgment, which resulted in devastating physical disturbances on earth and in the heavens. The seventh seal, which introduces the 7 Trumpet Judgments will not be opened until chapter 8. As we turn to chapter 7, the narrative sequence of judgment is interrupted by the first of four *literary parenthesis*, which provide the reader with parenthetical information. The severity of God's judgment released by the sixth seal would suggest that no one could or would be saved. This prompted the question contained in the closing words of verse 17, "Who is able to stand?" This *interlude* in chapter 7 answers this important question and demonstrates that even in the midst of judgment, God's mercy is still available to anyone who will turn to Him in faith.

I. Sealing Of The 144,000 Jews (7:1-8)

A. Four angels withholding judgment (vv. 1-3)

B. Identity of those sealed (vv. 4-8)

1. The sealed *are not* Christians in the Church
2. The sealed *are not* the Seventh-Day Adventists
3. The sealed *are not* the Jehovah Witnesses
4. The sealed *are not* so-called British "Anglo-Israelis"

C. Three problems with this list of 12 Tribes:

1. The inclusion of Levi among the twelve tribes
2. The mention of Joseph instead of Ephraim
3. The omission of Dan from this list

II. Salvation Of A Great Multitude (7:9-17)

A. Identity of the multitude (vv. 9-12)

B. Questioned posed to John by one of the 24 Elders (vv. 13-14)

Conclusion: The most important thought to take away from this morning's message is this:

"Even In The Midst Of Judgment, God Is Merciful!"

A fellow graduate from Dallas Theological Seminary, J. Hampton Keathley III, provides this helpful insight to the unfolding of the Book of Revelation:

“A fundamental factor in this book, too often passed over by commentators, is of great help in understanding these chapters when it is recognized. That is, many scenes of this book are located in heaven, while the judgments themselves take place on this earth; and the scenes in heaven always precede the earthly events to which they are attached. Thus, the messages to the seven churches are preceded by a vision of the ascended Lord. The opening of the six seals in chapter 6 is preceded by a vision of the Lamb in heaven, who alone is found worthy to open the book (chs. 4; 5). The judgments accompanying the blowing of the seven trumpets are preceded by a heavenly scene extending from 7:1 to 8:5. The dreadful events of chapters 11; 12; and 13 are again preceded by a heavenly scene of instructions to John. The devastations accompanying the seven plagues (chs. 15; 16) are preceded by the announcements of the angels and the showing of “the temple . . . in heaven.” And, after the final judgment of the Great White Throne in chapter 20, the book concludes with a picture of the heavenly home of the redeemed” (J. Hampton Keathley, III, downloaded from his series on *Revelation*, available at www.Bible.org).