

Revelation 7 – Jesus’ Reign Begins: Natural Disasters

By Holly Effiom

VV1-2

What does John see?

Is this taking place in the past, or in the future, from John’s point of view? How do you know?

Which other prophet that we studied mentioned four winds of the earth?

What are the four corners of the earth?

Is the wind always hurtful to the earth? What does wind do for the earth; as we experience it now?

When is wind hurtful to the earth? Give examples.

LESSON: Recall similar imagery from our study of Daniel 7. Daniel saw a sea with the four winds of the earth striving upon it, and out of that sea came 4 beasts. Though man was created on the same day as many of the beasts, you cannot get a man from a beast, nor can you get a man from water. You can, however, get a man from a group or “sea” of mankind – a man can distinguish himself from others in a group of men. Understand that in prophecy, sometimes, the “sea” is referring to the sea of humanity or group of mankind as a whole; and that the beasts that arise from among that sea of humanity, are kingdoms that have kings.

The four winds blow on all parts of the earth – North, South, East, and West – the whole earth is covered by the wind. Furthermore, wind, for the most part, serves a practical, helpful function in the earth, such that in Daniel 7, it strove upon the seas – it stirred up the group of mankind to produce a leader. However, in this section of Revelation, the purpose of the wind is to do harm to the earth.

Let’s take a step back and look at this understanding. If this interpretation is correct, from God’s perspective, leadership among mankind is a good thing; hence Jesus’s words in John 10:10-14. The earth was never meant to be a big commune, where everyone did whatever they wanted, and no one was in charge. As Jesus noted, where there is not good leadership there is danger. When you think about it, this book of Revelation... maybe the whole Bible... is about the installation of good leadership – what it looks like and the process required to get it done.

VV3-8

Why are the angels holding back the 4 winds?

Who are the servants of God that required sealing?

Why did they need to be sealed?

How many servants of God were to be sealed?

Were they the only ones who were going to heaven?

Are only 144,000 Jews going to be saved?

What does it mean to be a Jew? Are the feasts of the Lord or the Law associated with any other people on the earth?

LESSON:

Gen 49, Jacob’s end time prophecies and blessings	Rev 7:5-8 – 144,000 sealed
Firstborn – Reuben – “...shall not excel...”	Judah
Second – Simeon – “instruments of cruelty” – scattered	Reuben
Third – Levi – “instruments of cruelty” – scattered	Gad
Fourth – Judah – “scepter shall not depart from Judah”	Aser
Fifth – Zebulun – “an haven of ships”	Nephtalim
Sixth – Issachar – “became a servant unto tribute”	Manasses
Seventh – Dan – “shall judge... a serpent by the way”	Simeon
Eighth – Gad – “shall overcome at the last”	Levi
Ninth – Asher – “shall yield royal dainties”	Issachar
Tenth – Naphtali – “giveth goodly words”	Zabulon
Eleventh – Joseph – “blessings... shall be on the head of”	Joseph
Twelfth – Benjamin – “devour the prey... divide the spoil”	Benjamin

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The 4 winds were held back from harming the earth so that 144,000 Jews can be sealed from judgment. So, is being a member of one of these tribes the only qualification for salvation? I would say “No”. Notice that one of the tribes over which Jacob prophesied in Gen 49 is *missing* from the list of those who were actually sealed. And further, notice that the name of *one not listed* in the Gen 49 prophecy is sealed in Rev 7:5-8. One other point, scripture doesn’t say that everyone from every tribe, which just happened to number 12,000 each tribe, was sealed; 12,000 from among each tribe was sealed.

So, if just being a member of a Jewish tribe doesn’t qualify you for being sealed, what does?

VV9-10

Were the great multitude described here also sealed? How do you know?

Yet they are standing before the throne of God – how is this possible, if they are not sealed?

How is this group different from those who had to be sealed? How do you know?

What were those before the throne wearing?

According to Rev 3:5, where will this multitude get their particular raiment?

When did this scene take place?

What were those before the throne saying?

Where was this song initially sung? Rev 5:13

What song was sung prior to Rev 5:13? Rev 4:8-11

What is the significance of this great multitude being mentioned right after the sealing of the 144,000 Jews? How are the two images related?

LESSON: This section of scripture is so poignant. Understand that the significance of being a “Jew” is faithfully living your life under the Law – the commandments of God. This is not something to take lightly, and we can see from the previous section of scripture, only 144,000 will successfully achieve it; however, we know that many have, do, and will because there will be a great multitude, innumerable, of every nation, people, and tongue who will be able to stand before the throne of God and sing a new song of praise to the Ancient of Days *and* unto the Lamb. Would this be possible if Abraham wasn’t willing to sacrifice his only precious son by Sarah? Would this be possible if Moses hadn’t trusted God and willingly returned to Egypt, possibly to face the death penalty? Would this be possible if the children of Israel hadn’t trusted God and made a covenant with Him? Would this be possible if Joshua hadn’t trusted God and willingly taken on Moses heavy mantle? Would this be possible if Ruth, a Moabitess who loved and trusted her mother-in-law, Naomi of Judah, had not followed Naomi’s advice? Would it be possible if Boaz had not been a man of honor? Would it be possible if Hannah weren’t a woman of her word? Would it be possible if Samuel decided to pay no attention to the voices in his head? Would it be possible if David had taken matters into his own hands and killed Saul, the God-anointed king of Israel? Would this be possible if Bath-sheba had not protected Solomon from the plans of his brothers? Would this be possible if Mary had not trusted God and said “... be it unto me according to thy word”? Would any of this be possible if Jesus decided not to lay down His life?

All of these precious servants of God carried their faith and this word of God, hidden in their hearts, across the finish line of life. If they hadn’t done so, where would you and I be?

VV11-12

So, do you get the sense that God is bothered by the Lamb sharing in His glory?

What in this section of scripture lets you know that He’s fine with all this worship of the Lamb?

Why is it significant that we see the angels bowing and worshiping God?

What was it that they were saying to God?

Were there angels that were unable to say this before?

What happened to those angels?

VV13-17

Who are the people wearing white robes?

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Where did they come from?

How did they get their white robes? Rev 3:5

So, does this mean that the “church” will go through great tribulation?

Who will do the washing of and making the garments white?

How can a garment washed in blood come out white?

What is it to “overcome”?

What will God do for those who overcome?

Has this scene at the throne taken place yet?

LESSON: In Gen 1:20-27, we see that all the beasts in the sea, in the air, and in the earth were created on the 5th and 6th days of creation. Man was created on the 6th day and was given dominion over all the beasts in the sea and in the air, and on the earth. In the throne visions of the different prophets we’ve studied, notice that all these creatures had representation in the throne of God, all except Adam – who was supposed to be king over the earth. I think I now understand why John wept so bitterly in Rev 5:4, when he thought that there was no man worthy to open and read the book. There was NO man able to stand and represent his children before the throne of God!

Why are the angels bowing and worshiping God so clearly stated in VV11-12? Why did God ensure that this made it into the canon?

It was an angel that rebelled against God and His order, and tempted Adam into abdicating his God-given dominion over the earth. So, seeing the angels around the throne bowing and worshiping God means that they too have come in order, and accept Jesus, a man and indeed God – Jesus is holding the 7 stars in His right hand as He walked among the seven candlesticks (Rev 1:20). All who are in the throne of God, in heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth witness and affirm the investiture of Jesus into the Godhead, but also into His own throne of King of kings and Lord of lords over the earth. Rev 5:11-14

Revelation 7 provides an important confirmation of a couple of doctrinal arguments that have plagued the church for a long time – Jesus Christ is indeed God! Furthermore, this section of scripture plainly states that the church – corporately and individually – will indeed go through tribulation.

There is no promise of an escape from hard times, only a promise of peace and eternal life, living in the presence of God, for those who overcome the hard times.