REVELATION 7

The Sealed and the Multitude: Who Can Stand?

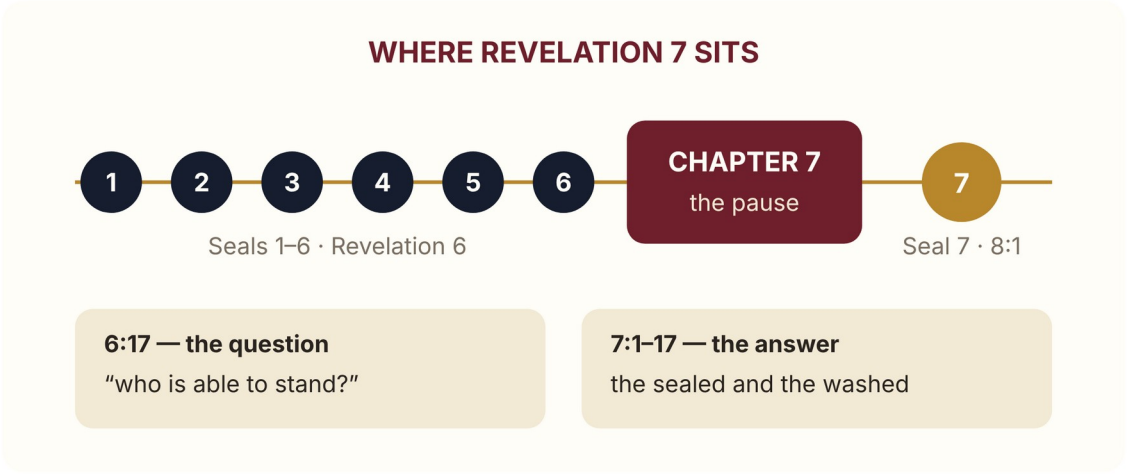
“These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”
REVELATION 7:14

A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · WITH MACARTHUR · GUZIK · JEREMIAH

Where John has brought us

1. Chapter 6 opened six of the seven seals on the scroll the Lamb took from the throne.

2. The seventh seal does not open until 8:1.



The Winds Held Back

Judgment waits until God's servants are sealed

REVELATION 7:3

saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads."

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik says the four corners of the earth are not a flat-earth map but the four points of the compass — the whole world.

JOHN MACARTHUR

MacArthur takes the sealed servants as the 144,000 Jewish evangelists of the tribulation — literal Israelites from literal tribes. His emphasis is the contrast of marks.

σφραγίζω
SPHRAGIZŌ · "TO SEAL"

To set a seal on something — to mark it as your own and to protect it. The noun in verse 2, sphragis (G4973), is a seal or signet, the mark of ownership and security a king pressed into wax.

The 144,000 from Every Tribe

Twelve thousand from each tribe — counted, named and kept

REVELATION 7:4

And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik, reading as a futurist, takes the 144,000 as Jewish believers in the tribulation — literally from every tribe of the sons of Israel, 12,000 from each, sealed for protection through the coming judgments.

DAVID JEREMIAH

Looking ahead from chapter 14, Jeremiah says to do the math of grace: 144,000 were sealed in chapter 7, and 144,000 stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion — not one is missing.

φυλή
PHYLĒ · "TRIBE"

A tribe, a clan, a people group.

The twelve tribes sealed (7:5–8)

144,000 · 12 × 12,000

Judah 12,000	**Reuben** 12,000	**Gad** 12,000	**Asher** 12,000
Naphtali 12,000	**Manasseh** 12,000	**Simeon** 12,000	**Levi** 12,000
Issachar 12,000	**Zebulun** 12,000	**Joseph** 12,000	**Benjamin** 12,000

Not named: Dan · Ephraim (only through Joseph)
Both had a history of idolatry — yet Dan is first in Ezekiel 48:1.

Twelve thousand from each tribe, Judah first; Dan is missing and Ephraim appears only through Joseph.

A Multitude No One Could Count

Every nation before the throne, crediting salvation to God alone

REVELATION 7:9

After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands;

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik sees here the Great Commission finished (Matt 24:14; 28:19) — every nation, tribe, people and tongue. And they are still distinct, not erased.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the other side of the storm. Chapter 6 ended with the earth hiding from the Lamb; here a crowd stands before Him with nothing to hide.

σωτηρία
SŌTĒRIA · "SALVATION"

Deliverance, rescue, salvation. It is the first word out of the multitude's mouth in verse 10: "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

Two companies who belong to God

ON EARTH · 7:4–8

144,000

- John HEARS the number
- From every tribe of the sons of Israel
- Sealed on their foreheads
- Kept through the judgments
- Counted — 12,000 per tribe

sealed by God

BEFORE THE THRONE · 7:9–17

A great multitude

- John SEES the crowd
- From every nation, tribe, people and tongue
- White robes, palm branches
- Washed in the Lamb's blood
- No one could count them

shepherded by the Lamb

John hears a number from Israel sealed on earth, then sees a countless multitude from every nation before the throne.

Washed in the Blood of the Lamb

Who they are, and what the Lamb-Shepherd gives them

REVELATION 7:13

Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?"

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik notes the elder has to prompt John, and John humbly answers, "My lord, you know." In Greek the article is emphatic — the tribulation, the great one.

WHAT IT MEANS

These people did not clean their robes with their own suffering or their own martyrdom. Only blood makes a robe white (Isa 1:18; 1 John 1:7).

σκηνόω

SKĒNOŌ · "TO SPREAD A TENT"

To pitch a tent, to dwell. In verse 15 God "will spread His tabernacle over them" — He pitches His own tent over His people.

What to carry from this chapter

1

The wind waits.

Four angels hold back judgment until God's servants are sealed — the pause is mercy, not cancellation.

2

Sealed means owned.

Sphragizō is a mark of ownership and protection; the forehead that bears God's seal is the place the beast will later mark.

3

Everyone wears a mark.

God's seal on His servants declares whose they are and that He Himself keeps them.

4

Not the church renamed.

The New Testament never calls the church Israel; the 144,000 are Jewish believers sealed in the tribulation.

More to carry

5

Two tribes missing.

Dan and Ephraim, both marked by idolatry, are left off the list — yet Dan is named first in Ezekiel 48.

6

Distinct, not erased.

The multitude comes from every nation and tongue, still recognizably themselves before the throne.

7

Salvation is received.

The crowd's first word is sōtēria, and they give all the credit to God and to the Lamb.

8

The Lamb is the Shepherd.

The One who was slain feeds His people, leads them to living water, and God wipes every tear away.

Talk it through

1. Why do the four angels hold back the winds, and what does the word “until” tell you about God's timing?

2. What is different about the 144,000 John hears and the multitude John sees?

3. What do the multitude credit for their salvation — and what do they leave out?

4. John answers the elder, “My lord, you know.” What does his answer teach you about studying hard passages?

5. Which of the promises in verses 15–17 speaks most to the pain in your own life right now?

CLOSING

Who is able to stand? Not the man who hides, and not the man who cleans himself up — the man the Lamb has sealed and washed. The wind is still being held back today. Come to the Lamb while it is still calm, and let Him write His name on you.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

O·I·A study, slides, reflection journal and film: see the Revelation study page.