

Revelation_7

Chapter 6 ends with the desperate state of sinful mind not willing to trust and obey the Word of truth and salvation offered by our blessed Redeemer. In the beginning of the chapter 7 the vision is focusing much higher revealing our Heavenly Father's care for His redeemed children to keep us all safe in Him. Angels have a whole spectrum of ministries given to them by the Lord, each one selected according to their particular assignment at the time appointed and the needs related. They are ministers, heralds, messengers, leaders, defenders, executioners, God's representatives, comforters... The list is very long.

1-3] John saw four angels: one in the east, another in the west, third in the north and the fourth in the south. All four together hold all four winds of the earth from blowing. Another angel, the fifth – so far – ascends from the east with the seal of the Living God; and he shouts God's order to the first four angels. "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." Here we look at these four angels holding the winds. I know not a man to tell us how big are the angels; how strong are the winds and in what way do they hold the winds from destroying the world. If we bring some of our new ideas to explain the meaning of these verses, we might be in the large group of people masquerading "revelation expertise". If we try to limit the meaning to its physical dimensions, we face the fact that we have no idea what these dimensions could be. John was in the Spirit to write it! In John 6: 63 our great Teacher says: "...the words I speak unto you are spirit and life." I might appear as another man attempting to explain inconceivable by unexplainable. I am considering the entire Holy Scripture as each part beaming bright light on all other parts; but my eyes are not used to so much light.

Heavenly Father, I pray for Thy guidance, protection, teaching and correction. Grant us understanding and grace to unfold more of the

abundant revelation given to us in honor of Thy bellowed Son, our Lord. After the great flood the new world multiplied and some empires were formed aiming for supremacy.

Think about Egyptian empire, Babylonian and Assyrian kingdoms. How much do we know about the rise and fall of Maya, Inca and Azteca kingdoms? The Bible is limited to the information and teaching we need to turn toward the Lamb of God and receive the seal of His Spirit to think, desire and do - His will. The winds of human corruption were blowing from all four sides of the world. One was destructive military might; another, dark and crafty superstition, and cruel exploitation, also pretence of higher power, attractions of lustful passions and wealth, and many others; usually joined together to deceive. All these winds would be blowing the entire humanity out of existence if the Lord's four angels would let loose Satan's fury to flare up human foolishness in pride. The angel rising from the east is bringing God's message of salvation since the fall of man until our Lord's appearance in glory: Open your heart & mind. The hurricanes of worldly corruption cannot disable the gentle voice of mercy and grace in Christ, God's Lamb, until all the redeemed receive the seal of salvation and truth upon their mind and heart to walk daily in the Gospel light. Threat of evil and calamities and, the call to the Savior urge us to have that seal. Another great mystery of old is unfolded hear with another bright revelation. Who can stand? [6: 17] In Romans 8: 29-39 we can glance at the mystery and revelation joined together. In John 6: 37, our Savior in no wise casts out any that comes to Him. In the verse 44 No man can come to the Son without the drawing power of God the Father. In 14: 6, no man comes to the Father but by Jesus Christ – in faith. In Ephesians 1: 13 and 4: 30 is the seal of both, the promise and the fulfillment; all by our Father's grace.

The Scriptures are intertwined with so much mystery and so much revelation teaching about this seal. Having this seal, we cannot claim the Savior while rejecting our Lord. Nor can we claim that we serve Him in our own power. The Spirit of our Lord works in us all that which is pleasing God.

The fifth angel said to the first four to wait until WE seal the servants of our God... Perhaps this fifth angel in this vision represents all the angels in God's service of securing His servants by the seal. Within the frame of this sight I understand that there is a significant and instrumental role of all these five in sealing the servants. In the early stage of our conversion the fear of uncertainty and threat of calamity is urging us not to return back to sin and death. By grace we experienced new life in Christ. Then He developed in us our awareness that the true fellowship in His Spirit is not obeying for fear of punishment, but striving to live for His pleasure and honor and rejoicing in His marvelous salvation. When we think, desire, labor, and live to please our Lord, we have a living testimony that we are sealed. Another meaningful teaching in these verses is this holding all winds until all the servants get sealed. In John 10: 29 our Father gave all sheep to His Son and our safety and security is not in anything we have done, but, in all He has done and is doing to keep us in His grace and mercy in Christ our blessed Savior. In Luke 21: 34-36 our Lord says that we must be prepared for any change at all time. A great change comes like a snare on all unprepared. Our Savior is not preparing a snare for His sheep. He is teaching us to be armed as the worriers of our Captain [Ephesians 6: 10-18]. Carnality is deadly. In Christ is victory.

4-8] John heard the exact number of the sealed: equal numbers of the twelve tribes listed: twelve thousand. As holding the winds and sealing God's servants reveal deep spiritual significance and meaning, so do these numbers, I suppose. In the book of Numbers: 1, Judah's sons numbered 75,600. Benjamin's sons totaled 35,400 and Manasseh listed 32,200. In this chapter 7, they had 12,000 each. In the land of Promise Joseph received double inheritance, Levi had none. Here, they all seem to be equal. Ephraim was a very prominent tribe in Canaan; in this chapter Ephraim and Dan are left out – not listed. I believe the differences mean something; and I wonder what is our Lord's message and teaching here for us. The Book of the Revelation is revealing significance and applications of the past

testimonies, of the present time and the future. Clearly, the present time applications are the most important for us. Judah is the first name listed among the sealed. He was the fourth child of Jacob. Judah was the largest tribe, but the same symbolic number of 12,000 has been applied to them as to the rest listed. The Lord says in Matthew 20: 16 “So shall the last be first and the first last: for many are called, but few chosen.” The name ‘Judah’ – ‘praise of the Lord’ – belongs to the sealed, the Lord’s people, in suffering & in glory. Ruben is the second listed in this chapter although he is the firstborn. His immorality removed him from the first place and his tribe never reached the number of the people in the leading tribes. It was God’s grace to take of Ruben’s sons the same symbolic number to elect for His people; as our Lord did promise. [Matthew 21: 28-32] Gad is the third here although he was the seventh by birth. The tribe was small in the number of children, yet our Lord elected no less than 12,000. Their father Israel predicted that they will be subdued by troops, but they will prevail at last. The violent take the Kingdom in Matthew 11: 12. Asher is number four in this chapter. He was born number 8. At birth he was named ‘joy’ or ‘cheer’ and Israel, his father, blessed him with abundance in choicest food. The grace of God elected the full number of his tribe. God’s chosen must not be distracted by the temporal blessings: they will enter eternal glory.

Naphtali is number five among the sealed although he was born second last. At his birth he was named God’s wrestling. In the farewell blessings his father gifted him with art and poetry. Our Lord sealed for Himself full number of Naphtali. The greatest art is our Father’s grace that made a sinner a child of God. The most magnificent poetry is in the praises offered to the Lord from the hearts indwelt by His Spirit. All God’s wrestlers obtain true victory by the power of His mighty Spirit. The sixth 12,000 sealed are of the tribe of Manasseh, one of the two sons of Joseph adopted by their grandfather Jacob, named Israel. Jacob replaced two of his own sons, Simeon and Levi, by adopting two Joseph’s sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. According to the grandfather Jacob’s command Ephraim, the

youngest was named as greater than Manasseh, Joseph's firstborn. Ephraim became one of the leading tribes & rebellious royal dynasty. The old prophecy in Ezekiel 18: 26 and our Lord's teaching in Luke 14: 11 were fulfilled: the humble man was exalted. An old law found its unusual application here. In Deuteronomy 24: 16 the fathers are not to be punished for their children's crime, nor are the children to be punished for their fathers' wickedness. The name of Ephraim is left out as his proud and rebellious people deserved, but the righteous children of Ephraim were brought under the name of their faithful grandfather Joseph. Ephraim's beautiful name is marred by wickedness and left out of God's grace. By God's grace, Joseph and Manasseh are sealed. Manasseh became number six among the sealed. Number seven is Simeon, a very amazing victory of our Savior's grace over the wickedness of sinner. At his birth, Simeon was named 'Lord's hearing'. Israel's last words were blessings for the other sons, but a curse for Simeon. God's grace prevailed and saved 12,000. Right after Simeon, is Levi. These two brothers were together under a curse, and now they are again together in our Saviors redemption. Levi's name was given in his mother's desire for affection and favor of Levi's father. All the sealed in this chapter have matchless favor and love of God, our Heavenly Father. The ninth place on the list of the sealed is given to Issachar. His mother named him 'hire' – 'labor reward' and his father predicted servitude for Issachar, but our Lord sealed him for eternal reward earned by God's Lamb in the promise land never polluted with idolatry, civil wars or foreign invasions; land of glory. Zebulon is the tenth among the blessed, just as he was by birth. Among the sealed is a full number of his. There will be full number sealed of those that were filled with the Holy Spirit in their entire earthly journey like John the forerunner [Luke 1: 15]. Zebulon's mother selected his name desiring life in sweet fellowship; a blessed family. His father predicted his living as sailors in harbors. God's grace brings more. All the sealed are in the glorious Family of our King of kings, forever blessed in the eternal haven of rest. Joseph, by the grace of God, the blessed sufferer and deliverer of his people is the eleventh on this list of the sealed,

right in front of his brother Benjamin whom he loved so much that he wept so vehemently. At his birth his mother desired increase. His father, dying, blessed him with beautiful patriarchal blessings. Joseph suffered much for a long time of God's schooling him, but he walked with God to the end of his journey. All his sealed children are blessed beyond the words his father was gifted to utter. The last one on the list of the sealed was Benjamin; a name with very turbulent history from the very beginning. His mother died giving birth to this child she desired so much. She named him 'son of my sorrow', but his father renamed him 'son of my right hand'; perhaps in memory of his beloved Rachel. The tribe was almost uprooted for forceful immorality and perversion, afterward given grace for a new beginning. In the Numbers 1 the tribe has the smallest number of children. The apostle Paul was of this tribe. The wonderful blessings of God's amazing grace gathered the full number of this tribe to seal.

Now we have the sum of all the sealed: 144,000 of all the tribes of Israel. I am obligated to clarify a point here. I used the sequential numbers for easier identification and clarity of this presentation. In this chapter the Lord didn't use any numbers or any marks distinguishing the tribes; only their good names. Considering the recorded history of all the tribes of the Hebrews, we can be assured that none of them deserved any recognition as righteous in their entire history. They all desperately needed God's grace to save and seal them. This, being the fact, gives us confidence that the number 12,000 is not $11,999 + 1$. This is a number indicating the fullness of God's salvation by grace. Our Savior elected the first twelve disciples to proclaim the Gospel. He multiplied their number ten times. For some reason, He likes that number, but He is not limited in His grace. He multiplied them by ten three times. God likes number 3. For our great Creator and Savior 12,000 is not too great a number, so He multiplied it by 12 this time telling us by one more symbolic number that the blessing of sealing the redeemed ones is not limited to the children of Israel according to the flesh. The number included our dear brothers Abel, Enoch & Noah.

Abraham, Isaac and Israel are also in the number. I also wonder how many of Abraham's worriers are in this number. God alone knows them all since the beginning until the last one sealed by the circumcision of Christ [Colossians 1: 9-12]. In Romans 2: 28&29 the truly circumcised, real Israelites, - are all in Christ. In Galatians 3: 26-29 there is only one nation of God: all that are in Christ; that number includes Abel and all the sealed until He comes in glory. All that is done in the flesh in our service to our Lord, or in our sin slavery, all is for a time. That what is done by Christ our Lord is since the beginning and, abides forever. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable! [Romans 11:33] In a very practical vision, sealing 144,000 has illuminated the Gospel facts as they have been unfolding to us in the Scriptures since the beginning. In His supreme authority, our Creator and Savior, by His grace saves full number of those we consider as being the most unworthy, and of the others that appear to us as most worthy. In this bright light John is prepared to see the next part of this same vision as it unfolds.

9&10 John beholds a great multitude, no man can number: nations, kindreds, peoples, and tongues, stand before the throne, and before the Lamb. They are in white robes with palms in their hands. They are exclaiming: Salvation to our God on His throne, and to the Lamb. Glory to God! What a blissful thrill! This numberless Congregation is filled with the glory and splendor of the Almighty, just as the entire universe has been forever and ever. Redeemed by grace in the Lamb, adorned in His holiness, they are filled with His glory and they adore Him in glory. I perceive a twofold meaning in their joyful adoration. All the redeemed recognize God as the Author and Finisher of their salvation [Hebrews 12: 2]. In God's Son, the Lamb of God, the Father and the Son have the same joy and full satisfaction beholding all of His ransomed, in full number, not one missing, gathered around His throne, glorified and glorifying God. The mighty Source of ever joyful blessedness is radiating with streams of endless blessings upon all beings in the entire Kingdom of His Majesty and the next

event is spontaneous. It is an echo of God's own grace and eternal love endlessly blessing their souls and continually returning to God with gratitude.

11&12] Around the throne, the elders, and the four living beings, all the angels bow down to worship God, saying: Amen! Blessings, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power, and might unto our God forever and ever. Amen. With the first 'Amen!' host of angels confirms the adoration of the redeemed. The second 'Amen!' confirms the sevenfold worship of the angelic and redeemed worshipers united in the everlasting elation. All true blessings come from our God to us, His children, and return to Him in our joyful worship with gratitude. God's glory fills the Kingdom; it fills the redeemed souls suffering on earth. Now, they are all together glorifying God. True wisdom comes from above to give us discernment to cherish God's gifts and resist deception. The entire Kingdom of worshippers is united in confessing that all the real wisdom is in God, from God, and honors God. Thanksgiving is our expression of gratitude. Praising our Heavenly Father is our soul's delight. Our Lord deserves so much honor from us that He is worthy that we honor our brethren for His sake. He deserves that we honor His Word in our dealings with the world around us. The more we honor our Lord in everything, the more of His Kingdom we have. I feel that 'power and might' includes His supreme authority and omnipotent ability. How many times during our journey we observed God's deliverance and wonder why did we worry and fear since God is always near. Once united forever with the entire ransom throng and the heavenly hosts, we'll see it all. The might of the Almighty is manifested in His creation and in His salvation. His might is in His patience and loving kindness, in His judgment and in His corrections. His might is in Solomon's building the temple and in the poor widow's offering of two coins. Every atom of the universe is filled with God's might. All these divine attributes are acknowledged in the endless delightful adoration of our Creator and Savior and the more we ponder on these words, the more we experience

Life in our daily walk, the more we are filled with His Kingdom and our long journey becomes short and our long waiting but a moment of hope. In Genesis 7 we see the great flood and destruction of the corrupted world. Human expectation of gaining a lofty name is the prelude of destruction. God's word, rejected by proud and rebellious sinners for a long time, comes to its fulfillment. Faithfulness of the few believers is greatly rewarded. God is true. Destruction by flood was a strong message of God's justice. In the chapters 8 & 9 we read about God's grace granting new beginning to Noah and his family to develop a new world. Here, in this chapter 7 we see the proof and the everlasting testimony of God's grace accomplished; and His glory fills the universe. By removing the sixth seal the mighty Lamb of God reveals to us the depth of peril He delivered us from and the grandeur of glory He transferred us into. The multitude of the heavenly hosts is blessed with abundance of God's character: they all partake of glory and joy in His salvation in measureless adoration. It appears as if one of the twenty four elders steps out of this splendid vision and starts talking to John.

13&14] One of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these arrayed in white robes, and whence came they? John replied Sir, thou knowest. The elder said, they came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. John must have wondered about all. Answering to John's amazement, one elder asked a question that was in John's mind. John is not an all-knowing proud man. He is a ready learner. In the chapter 6: 11, the souls of the martyrs are given white robes. Here, 144,000 sealed must have had the same robe of Christ's righteousness; there is none other. Apparently, John did not see any one of the 144,000 while their number was proclaimed. John only heard the number. After the numbering, John saw the multitude in white robes. In the chapter 14 we see 144,000 again, with more attributes and testimonies related to their number. All are the same people? All of them are Christ's sufferers. This is an encouragement to all of His sufferers - still suffering today. Beholding the glorious end of our journey contributes to

the victory of our journey that our suffering be less hard to us. Washing their robes in the blood of the Lamb is a multidimensional spiritual indication.

First they receive white robes when they are delivered from death to the new life in Christ. Then through all their tribulation-saturated journey, they keep washing their robes in the blood of the Lamb. The devil would battle to make our suffering unbearable to compel us to accept his attitude of blaming God. The greatest Martyr is with us always. His Holy Spirit is bearing us in His loving care; suffering with us and instead of us. These are the marvelous testimonies of Christ's sufferers. Knowing that we are in the flesh, our Savior is constantly purifying our thinking, emotions and affections. He removes stains of Satan's lie. Christ is the Vine; we are His branches [John 15: 5]. Our fellowship in His Spirit includes constant feeding, cleansing, correction, and improving. Our Father is cultivating us in faith and knowledge of Him, our Savior. In 2 Corinthians 4: 17, Paul has written: our light affliction is a moment, but His glory is eternal. Our Lord Jesus Christ invested into our eternal future all His suffering and death. His sacrifice is teaching us the truth: of all He would allow us to endure, there is nothing in this life on earth, life in the flesh, that could be too great an investment toward His eternal glory He has in His Father and our Father in him. Only life in Christ is worthy of living. Only Christ's testimony is worthy to die for. In Him we live forever.

15-17] Because they are made pure white by the blood of the Lamb they are before the throne of God. They serve Him day and night in His temple: and God on His throne dwells among them. They hunger no more. They thirst no more. Sun doesn't beat them; nor overheat them. The Lamb is in the throne-center. He feeds them and leads them unto living fountains of waters: and God wipes away all tears from their eyes. The children of our Heavenly Father in this world have their body of flesh like the people still in sin-bondage. The purpose of Christian living is not carnality, but to grow in faith and knowledge of our Lord. In following our Savior and Lord faithfully

through suffering and martyrdom we bear the testimony of having our soul adorned in the purity and holiness of our Redeemer. In our Father's house our Lord Jesus prepared a wonderful place for His faithful disciples [John 14: 2]. We pray and strive to live His Gospel. In I Corinthians 3: 16 the disciples are the Temple of God and the dwelling place of His Holy Spirit. Chapter 6 tells us in the verse 19 that the body of a true Christian is a temple of the Holy Spirit. In the Revelation 21: 22&23 the Almighty with the Lamb is the temple and it's Light in the New Jerusalem. In Luke 23: 46 our Redeemer marked the end of His martyrdom commanding His Spirit into His Father's hands. No endless journey to the Father was necessary; the Father was right there. Following God's Son, His martyrs are right around the throne of the Almighty when our Savior's arms carry them into His glory. In the psalm 125: 2 the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so our Lord is round about His people for ever. In Romans 6: 11 we are instructed to recon ourselves dead – not available – to sin, but alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Martyrs were in the flesh among men, but they lived a new life in Christ. Their testimony is our encouragement to live a life pleasing our Heavenly Father. We must not frustrate God's grace and His blessing of growing toward the likeness of His beloved Son. With our Savior, our Master, in our heat & life, we are around His throne already as we journey; we have a foretaste of glory. We do not thirst for worldly vanity and pride. We don't hunger for sinful abominable lusts. Our Lord is giving us opportunities to serve Him in His temple, which is our body and soul. Our God is inside of us and among us; His presence is manifested by His loving Lordship. He molds us by His perfect Mastership. God wipes every tear from our eyes and we don't weep for deceitful pleasures of this world because the flame of true and everlasting joy of salvation in Christ already glows in our souls.

True Church is built upon the Rock: the Son of the Living God & the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. [Matthew 16: 18] His love and grace has fashioned the first man in the beginning. His love and grace is cultivating

now His redeemed people to be His Bride in glory and splendor. Our King is victorious, our enemy is defeated. All the redeemed are saved in Christ and only in Him is our eternal life and joy, our everlasting adoration.