

Link to Lonnie Woodruff's *Revelation for Christians Today*, online:

<http://www.abiblecommentary.com/howtounderstandthebookofrevelation.htm>

A Study of Revelation 7

I. **Outline.** From Mike Vestal, "The 144,000," in *The Book of Revelation*, edited by Jim Laws, Pulaski, TN, Sain Publications, p. 287-307.

1. **The Sealing and Identity of the 144,000 (Revelation 7:1-8).**

- 1) Four angels of judgment (1).
- 2) Another angel appears having God's Seal (2-3).
- 3) 144,000 sealed (4-8).

2. **The Appearance and Identity of the Innumerable Host (9-17).**

- 1) Their description (9).
- 2) Their worship (10).
- 3) The heavenly response (11-12).
- 4) Two questions asked and the answer revealed 9:13-14).
- 5) Their heavenly state (15-17).

II. **Summary.**

Chapter seven presents a delay in the opening of the 7th seal. There are two visions here. First of the sealing of the 144,000 and the other the appearance of an Innumerable Multitude. It is quite obvious that the 144,000 is not a number to be taken literally, but is symbolic of faithful Christians. The sealing mentioned here would not keep them from persecution, but would help see them through it. That first vision seems to relate more to the living of a faithful Christian life on earth. The second vision of the Innumerable Multitude seems to describe the reward of that faithfulness. What a strong and beautiful word picture is given in verse 14 concerning making robes WHITE by washing them in the BLOOD of the Lamb! How is it possible to deny the essentiality of baptism, which is the point at which sins are washed away (Acts 22:16), and read Revelation 7:14?

III. **Chronology.**

BIBLE PERIOD: The Period of the Church.

If you are not familiar with the 15 Bible Periods, please click here:

<https://maplehillchurchofchrist.files.wordpress.com/2018/05/15bibleperiods.pdf>

IV. **Lessons & Applications.**

- **... HURT NOT THE EARTH, NEITHER THE SEA, NOR THE TREES, TILL WE HAVE SEALED THE SERVANTS OF OUR GOD IN THEIR FOREHEAD** (Rev 7:3). What an encouragement it is to think of the PROTECTION God provides to His faithful ones! There is no greater protection to be found anywhere from any source than to be sealed by Jehovah God!
- **AND I HEARD THE NUMBER OF THEM WHICH WERE SEALED: AND THERE WERE SEALED AN HUNDRED AND FORTY AND FOUR THOUSAND** (Rev 7:4). The very idea that comes from the Watchtower Society (JWs) that this number is to be taken literally and that only this number will be making it to heaven; all other righteous ones have to live eternally on this earth. If they do take this literally, no person except one in the tribes mentioned will be so rewarded—which excludes righteous Noah, Abraham, and so many others. Further, Revelation 14:3-4 reveals that only unmarried, virgin men are part of that 144,000. To take a figure from a symbol-filled book like Revelation and make it contradict other plain passages is the work of Scripture-twisters, who do that twisting to their own destruction (2 Peter 3:16).
- **... HAVE WASHED THEIR ROBES, AND MADE THEM WHITE IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB** (Rev 7:14). The very way this is stated should help us clearly to understand that the sinner is ACTIVE in the salvation

process. Yes, there is something for the sinner to do in order to have forgiveness and a white robe!

V. Questions.

True or False

- 01. _____ One of the tribes of the children of Israel listed in this chapter is missing.
- 02. _____ One of Jacob’s GRANDsons is listed in the listing of tribes.
- 03. _____ The means by which robes are made white is given in this chapter.
- 04. _____ This chapter mentions four angels, corners, winds, and seasons.
- 05. _____ We are told the Lamb will wipe away all tears from the eyes of the redeemed.

MATCHING

- | | |
|------------|----------------------------|
| a. number | f. thirst |
| b. Glory | g. believe |
| c. Amen | h. Joseph |
| d. 144,000 | i. Manasseh |
| e. weep | j. thousands and thousands |
- 06. _____ The number of them that were sealed.
 - 07. _____ This chapter speaks of a multitude which no man could _____
 - 08. _____ Before the throne no one will hunger or _____
 - 09. _____ One of two names listed NOT normally considered a tribe.
 - 10. _____ Angels standing around the throne said this word twice.

WHO Did/Will Do It?

- 11. _____ Cried: “Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb.”
- 12. _____ Ascended from the East.
- 13. _____ Asked: “What are these which are arrayed in white robes?”
- 14. _____ Will feed those whose robes are washed in the blood of the Lamb.
- 15. _____ Serve God day and night in his temple.

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week’s handout

ANSWERS to Revelation 6 Questions... **01**—True (6.8); **02**—False (12); **03**—False (2); **04**—True (17); **05**—False (6); **06**—h (15); **07**—a (13); **08**—f (2); **09**—c (6); **10**—I (9); **11**—4 Living Creatures, Creatures, (1, 3, 5, 7); **12**—Faithful Martyrs (10); **13**—7-Fold Multitude (15); **14**—Voice in Midst of 4 Creatures (6); **15**—7-Fold Multitude (17).

Questions on Chapter 7,

Revelation for Christians Today, by Lonnie Woodruff--page 129... Answers by DRL

1. **What were the angels doing who were standing on the four corners of the earth (Revelation 7:1).**
Holding back the four winds of the earth.
2. **When would the angels be allowed to hurt the earth (Revelation 7:3)?**
Till the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. LW: "This verse seems to be saying that God will not destroy this world as long as there are people who render obedience to the gospel." [p. 117] "We can rest assured that this earth will never be totally destroyed by man."
3. **How are we sealed (cf., Ephesians 1:13)?**
The Ephesian Christians had believed and were sealed. When we believe and obey the gospel today, we are sealed by that same Holy Spirit. To be sealed is to show that we belong to God. [p. 116]
4. **How many will be sealed (Revelation 7:4)?**
144,000. Some believe that ONLY 144,000 people will be able to enter heaven, but, as we know, this is completely contrary to the teachings of the New Testament. This number should be viewed as a symbolic descriptive number, just as in the case with most of the numbers found in Revelation.
5. **Who are the children of Israel today (Galatians 3:29)?**
If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, which means you are part of Spiritual Israel. If you are Christ's then you have been purchased by His blood (Acts 20:28). And in the same context of Galatians 3:29, you have put Him on by being baptized into Him (3:27). In other words, Christians, are the children of Israel today. The spiritual kingdom, the church, is a LIKENESS to the physical kingdom of Israel. The twelve tribes of Israel were God's chosen people under the Law of Moses, just as the church is the chosen people of God today. Actually the phrase, twelve tribes of Israel, is used to represent all those people who have ever lived upon this earth and have been faithful to God's commands. All who have their sins forgiven are, in this sense, in the church of God and are a part of the 144,000. [p. 118].
6. **Is the list of the twelve tribes given in this chapter the actual twelve tribes of Israel of the Old Testament (Revelation 7:5-8)?**
*No! The tribes of Dan and Ephraim are omitted, and the tribes of Joseph and Levi are added. Brother Woodruff points out that there must have been a reason for the fact that this listing is VERY DIFFERENT from any of the 19 slightly different arrangements of these names found in the Old Testament. He suggests that it is listed in this way as a **clue** to the readers that we should interpret the 144,000 as **NOT** referring to the literal tribes of Israel. [p. 119-20].*
7. **Who did John see standing before the throne of God and the Lamb (Revelation 7:9)?**
A great multitude which no man could number. This GREAT MULTITUDE refers to all the children of God, just as the number 144,000 did in verse 4.
8. **How was this great multitude clothed (Revelation 7:9)?**
They were clothed with white robes and palms in their hands.
9. **Give the symbolic meaning of the white clothing (Revelation 19:8).**
This should help us to see that the multitude, standing before the throne, were Christians. As Christians today, we are figuratively standing before the throne of God serving Him day and night in

His temple (v. 15). ... According to Cruden's Concordance, the palm tree is the usual emblem of constancy, fruitfulness, patience, and victory; which, the more it is oppressed, the more it flourishes; the higher it grows, the stronger and broader it is in the top. Every Christian should strive to gain these attributes. [p. 120-21].

10. What were the great multitude, angels, elders, and four living creatures doing before the throne (Revelation 7:10-12)?

They were crying with a loud voice: SALVATION TO OUR GOD WHICH SITTETH UPON THE THRONE, AND UNTO THE LAMB. The angels, elders, and four living creatures fell before the throne and worshipped God. They were saying: (1) Blessing, (2) Glory, (3) Wisdom, (4) Thanksgiving, (5) Honor, (6) Power, and (7) Might.

11. What question did one of the elders ask John (Revelation 7:13)?

What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

12. What was John's answer (Revelation 7:14)?

Sir, thou knowest.

13. How did the elder identify this great multitude (Revelation 7:14)?

These are those which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

14. Who does this great multitude represent?

*Many teach that immediately prior to the second coming of Christ, there will be a seven-year period of great tribulation in which the "Antichrist" will control the world. This is completely contrary to the teachings of the New Testament. Therefore, we must look for the biblical meaning of GREAT TRIBULATION. The ones coming out of great tribulation are the ones who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. **They are Christians.***

15. How do we wash our robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb (Acts 22:16)?

To understand properly this passage (i.e., 7:14), we must know exactly WHEN we make our robes white. When we wash our robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, we put on the white robes of righteousness (cf., 19:8). If our robes are NOT white, then we are living in a state of sin and following the ways of the devil. Cf., Acts 22:16. When we obey the gospel, in baptism, our sins are washed away, and our robes are made white by the blood of the Lamb. We know this to be true because, according to 3:4, there were some in the church at Sardis who had defiled their garments. They had gone back to the ways of sin after having their garments made white by the blood of the Lamb.

16. What is meant by great tribulation (Revelation 7:14; Acts 14:22)?

THE GREAT TRIBULATION is the place of spiritual bondage of sin in which all sinners find themselves before they obey the gospel of Christ. Read Luke 4:17-19, 21. Those who are outside of Christ are in the GREATEST BONDAGE known to man. They are SLAVES OF SIN and THE DEVIL. As people continue to be obedient to the Law of Christ, they are coming out of great spiritual tribulation, washing their robes and making them white in the blood of the Lamb, and being added to the church of our Lord. [p. 123-24].

17. What does this great multitude continually do (Revelation 7:15)?

Serve God day and night in the temple. The temple of God in the New Testament is His church. Cf., 1 Corinthians 3:16. If God's people are His temple, then, certainly, they make up His church (cf., Ephesians 2:21). As Christians we constantly serve God day and night in His temple. [p. 124].

18. What does it mean no longer to hunger and thirst (Revelation 7:16)?

Because of the language of this verse and also verse 17, most people interpret the events of this vision as taking place in heaven. But, we must remember we are dealing with figurative language. It is not the intent of these verses to describe our literal situation in heaven, but rather our spiritual situation in God's church. As Christians we shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore. This means we will no longer hunger or thirst after righteousness. Cf., Matthew 5:6. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness today can be filled by obeying the gospel and becoming a member of the Lord's church. Cf., Isaiah 49:10. We have righteousness because Christ died for our sins. [p. 125].

19. How are we fed by the Lamb (Revelation 7:17)?

The church is being fed by Christ today through His Word. Cf., Revelation 2:17. Just as the Israelites were fed literal manna from heaven to sustain their physical lives, Christians are fed spiritual manna from heaven to sustain their spiritual lives. The church is fed and sustained on spiritual food from God today, which is His Word. [p. 126].

20. What are our fountains of living waters (Revelation 7:17; 22:1, 17)?

These LIVING FOUNTAINS OF WATERS are waters which will sustain our spiritual lives for all eternity. We must partake of them here on this earth in order to enter into that eternal abode. Cf., John 4:7-15. We must partake of these living waters on this earth in order to enter into that eternal abode. This spiritual water is the gospel of Christ. Cf., Revelation 22:17. [p. 126].

21. How does God wipe away the tears of spiritual sorrows from our eyes (Isaiah 60:3, 11, 18-21; 61:8-10)?

Most people interpret this as taking place in heaven, and no doubt this will be true of heaven, but the point which is missed is that it also takes place SPIRITUALLY in the church TODAY! There are at least four passages in Isaiah which use wording similar to this statement to prophesy the coming of the church (Isaiah 25:8; 30:19; 35:10; and 60:20). Comparing Isaiah 25:7-8 with 2 Corinthians 3:14-16 shows that God wiped away tears when He established the New Law. We obviously still have the sorrows and physical tears of this life; then what were these tears which He wiped away? They were the tears of our spiritual life. Under the Old Law, actual forgiveness of sins was not attainable immediately. Their sins were remembered again every year (Hebrews 10:3). When Christ came, He did away with that Old Law and established a new one which made forgiveness of our sins possible. He gave us salvation. He wiped the spiritual tears from our eyes. There are no tears of unforgiven sin to those who are faithful members of the Lord's church. We have forgiveness of sin. [pp., 126-27].

22. When the great Day of Judgment comes, who shall be able to stand?

Faithful Christians!

VI. **Seek-A-Word Puzzle.** The words may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. –DRL



AMEN	ANGEL	CAME	CRIED	EARTH
ELDERS	EVER	FOUR	GREAT	HURT
LAMB	LIVING	LOUD	MORE	NEITHER
NUMBER	ROBES	SAID	SAYING	SEAL
SITTETH	STOOD	THINGS	THOUSAND	THRONE
TREE	TRIBE	TWELVE	VOICE	WHITE

VII. Crossword Puzzle.

Revelation 7 (KJV)															
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	4														
										5					
				6											
7	8									9					
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15															
								16							

<u>ACROSS</u>	<u>DOWN</u>
04) Where 4 angels were standing.	01) Sealed were an hundred, forty, and ____ thousand.
06) Where servants of God were sealed.	02) One angel was doing this from the East.
07) Number of tribes mentioned.	03) The Lamb leads the redeemed to living ____.
09) Tribe not mentioned in the list.	05) Tribe mentioned, not a son of Jacob.
10) God would wipe all of these away.	08) The angels ____ God.
14) Robes were washed in the blood of the ____.	11) John saw a multitude which no one could ____.
15) Besides AMEN, words of praise from the angels were this many.	12) These were washed in blood.
16) The great multitude had this in their hands.	13) Those before the throne would not have this on them any more.