

## **“An Encouraging Intermission: The 144,000 and the Great Multitude”** **Revelation 7:1-17**

**Last Sunday:** The fifth seal (martyrdom) and sixth seal (widespread destruction/terror)

**Today:** An Encouraging Intermission (before the seventh seal)—the 144,000 and the Great Multitude. Rev. 6:17, “The great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”

### **Outline:**

7:1-3, Holding Back the Winds

7:4-8, The 144,000

7:9-12, The Great Multitude

7:13-17, Explanation by an Elder

**7:2/** “I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with *the seal* of the living God,...”  
Seals are not typically symbolized as judgments; mostly in Scripture they are symbolic for:

- Completion. Eph. 4:30, “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were *sealed* for the day of redemption.”
- Ownership. Eph. 1:13, “In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were *sealed* with the promised Holy Spirit,...”
- Protection. 2 Tim. 2:19, “God's firm foundation stands, bearing this *seal*: ‘The Lord knows those who are his,’ and, ‘Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity.’”

**7:4-8/** “The 144,000” - Who are these people?

- Preterist (past)
  - The four winds? The Siege of Jerusalem in AD 70.
  - The 144,000? The remnant of Jewish believers preserved from the Siege of Jerusalem in AD 70 (Lk. 21:20). They found shelter in Pella.
- Historicist (timeline)
  - The four winds? The barbarians and false teaching of the fourth and fifth century.
  - The 144,000? The church being preserved from the barbarian invasions.  
\*Alaric the barbarian said he waged wars with the Romans, not with the apostles.
- Idealist (spiritual)
  - The four winds? The four horsemen (Zech. 6:5).
  - The 144,000? The church sealed by God while on the earth (the church militant).
- Futurist (future)
  - The four winds? The judgments that are about to occur (the Trumpets).
  - The 144,000? Two options:
    - Classical: The church in the Tribulation.
    - Dispensational: Jewish believers in the Tribulation.

**7:9/** “After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number...”  
What is this “Great Multitude?”

- Preterist (past): Either Christian martyrs after Jerusalem’s fall in AD 70, or the early church Christian martyrs.

- Historicist (timeline): The redeemed church of all ages.
- Idealist (spiritual): The 144,000 on earth are in reality the Great Multitude in heaven.
- Futurist (future):
  - Classical: The redeemed church of all ages.
  - Dispensational: The Gentile Tribulation Saints won to Christ by the 144,000 Jewish believers.

**7:17/** “...and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” – What does this phrase mean?

1. This is symbolic for no more sorrow (there will be no tears in heaven).
2. These are our tears as Christ answers our hard questions: particular trials, heartaches...
3. These are our tears from the loss of rewards we would have received if we had obeyed or had obeyed with better motives (1 Cor. 3).
4. These are the tears coming from reconciliation of one believer to another upon entering heaven:
  - a. Our tears of repentance toward those in heaven whom we have sinned against?
  - b. Our tears of forgiveness toward those in heaven who have sinned against us?