



TRINITY A.M.E. CHURCH

"God Our Father, Christ Our Redeemer, Holy Spirit
Our Comforter, and Humankind Our Family"

Bible Study Notes

Series: *Revelation*

Lesson Scripture: Revelation 7

Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020

Teacher: Pastor Grate

Revelation 7 – God’s Sealing Power

Review

- Revelation 6-10 constitutes a literary narrative that outlines the events that occur as the seven seals are opened.
- Revelation 6 describes the events that occur after the first six seals are opened.
- The sixth seal is:
 - I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red, 13 and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind. (Revelation 6:12-13)*
 - The devastation of the land alludes to the destruction of the earth. **Remember**, life is a product of the land. Adam was formed from the land (Genesis 1). We glean food and sustenance from the land. If the land is destroyed, then we are unable to survive.
 - **Life Application:** If we allow the land/environment in our communities to be destroyed today, we are inhibiting our children from being able to access the resources necessary rebuild communities and live healthy lives. Therefore, we are called to NOT stand idle while our communities are being destroyed.

Transitioning Into Revelation 7

- Revelation 6 concludes with a question:
 - For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand? (Revelation 6:17)*
- The response to the question posed in Revelation 6:17 is found in Revelation 7:2-3:
 - Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea: ³ “Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God.”*
 - While destruction of the world is both immanent and already begun, God through God’s Word conveyed by an angel/messenger stops the processes of destruction until God’s people can be sealed.
 - To be sealed is to be preserved to for an appointed time.
 - The number of persons sealed stated in Revelation 7:4 is 144,000. This is a combination of divine numbers 12X12 with place holder zeros. The number 12 refers to the concept of a whole nation whether the entirety of the nation of Israel composed of 12 tribes of Israel (Genesis 49) and/or the entirety of God’s church symbolized in 12 disciples (St. Matthew 10:2-4).
- Revelation 7:5-8 reconstructs this list of 12 tribes.

- **The 12 tribes of Israel are:** Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Benjamin, and the half-tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim.
- **12 Tribes listed in Revelation 7:** Judah, Reuben, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin
- **Question:** Why would the author change the historical listing?
- **Answer:** I don't know & neither do you because we're not the author.
- **Towards an Answer:** Perhaps because Dan was the seat of Bethel associated with the rival temple cult and the sin of Jeroboam. (The sin of Jeroboam refers to Jeroboam's rebellion against Solomon's successor and the House of David to establish the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the rival temple complex/shrine to YHWH in Dan at Bethel.)

Sealed with God

- Revelation 7:11-17 explains what happens to the children of God who are sealed but have died a physical death.
- The answer the author describes specifically in Revelation 7:13-14, they are clothed in a white robe. The white robe symbolizes according to Revelation 7:14,
These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Please Note: Being sealed/kept by God did not mean the people did not die, did not suffer, or did not face trials. RATHER, being sealed/kept by God is dwelling in the eternal presence of the Almighty.

Final Thought

Our Help in Ages Past and Hope for Years to Come is **NOT** that we'll be raptured out of tribulation **BUT** that God is with us in our tribulation. Because God is with us, we can overcome any obstacle aligned against us and work to end the Cycle of Social Death outlined in Revelation 6.

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