

The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Revelation Chapters 7: vs. 1-8 and Chapter 14: vs. 1-5

Bible Study Notes on The Sealed Servants

Revelation Chapters 7 and 14

What are the Subjects of these Chapters?

Chapter 7

The Sealed Servants – Chosen on the Earth	verses 1-8
The Tribulation Saints – Standing before the Throne	verses 9-17

Chapter 14

The Sealed Servants – Forever with the Lamb	verses 1-5
Three Angelic Proclamations	verses 6-13
The Reaping of the Earth	verses 14-20

What is the Nature of these Chapters?

These are not Sequential chapters that tell the story of the events of the Tribulation.

They are Overview chapters which take a step back from the narrative and review specific overall themes or features of the Tribulation

Hence the Sealed Servants are seen at the time of their being chosen and sealed, on earth in Chapter 7

‘After these things’ (Ch. 7 v. 1) – Greek: *‘meta tauta’*

In this case it is referring to what John saw next (after the sixth seal) but not necessarily following the sixth seal...John has been led to take a step back to get an overview

Hence their reappearance in Chapter 14...this time with the Lamb on Mount Zion

The Tribulation Saints in Chapter 7 are now seen in heaven standing before the throne; previously, in Chapter 6 vs. 9-11, they were seen as souls under the altar

‘After these things Ch. 7 v. 9 – Greek: *‘meta tauta’*

Again this is not referring to a sequential event but an overview showing the ultimate destiny and blessing of these saints ‘who come out of the great tribulation’

Chapter 7 details certain of the events of the time of tribulation from its beginning with the opening of the first seal through the seven seal, trumpet, and bowl judgments.

It is a parenthesis between the sixth and seventh seal – possibly indicating the linked chronology of the seventh seal, the seventh trumpet and the seventh bowl (each has a parenthetical interlude between the sixth and seventh)

Who Is Able To Stand? (*Revelation 6: 17*) – the passages about the Sealed Servants and Tribulation Saints give the answer to this question

- Two distinct groups will survive the divine fury:
 - Sealed Servants (*Revelation 7: 1-8*)
 - The Tribulation Saints (*Revelation 7: 9-17*)
- It is the Sealed and Saved Servants of God who will be able to withstand the great day of God's wrath
 - The Sealed Servants – Chosen on the Earth – *Revelation 7 vs. 1-8*

Ch 7 Vs 1-8 The Sealed Servants – On the Earth

Ch 7 V 1 The Four Angels

Where does John see the Four Angels?

- They are stood at the Four Corners of the Earth
- Corner (Greek: *gonia* – corner, quarter or quadrant) – they are surrounding the earth or covering all parts of the earth
- The four quadrants of the compass – a figurative expression, indicating all the earth's winds—those from north, south, east, and west
- The angels will take up key positions on earth.

What are the Four Angels doing?

- Holding (back) the four winds – so that they do not blow on the earth, sea or trees
- Holding (Greek: *krateō*) meaning to arrest, retain or hold onto
 - It probably indicates the holding back of the judgements (seals, trumpets & bowls) whilst the 144,000 are sealed – i.e. a sort of freeze frame
- Holding Back – Preventing the wind from blowing on the earth, the sea and the trees
- The Four Winds (Greek: *anemos*, meaning wind or winds)
 - Without wind there is no weather nor the same tidal flows – these would be instrumental in the judgements of the sixth seal and many of the following judgements
 - The four angels will turn off, for a brief interlude, the essential engine of our earth's atmosphere.

Ch 7 Vs 2-3 The Angel with God's Seal

What does John see Next?

- Another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God
- Another angel seems to order the four angels to wait...he has authority to command the four angels
- The angel ascends out of the east – coming from the east is symbolic of the returning of the Lord to His temple (the same way He departed – see *Ezekiel 10: 18-19*)
 - Ascending out of the East may be an allusion to Zion – for salvation of Israel comes out of Zion (*Psalms 14: 7*)

What does this Angel Have...and what is its Significance?

- The angel has the 'Seal of the Living God'
- Seal (Greek: *sphragis*) – a seal denoting ownership and/or authority

- A Seal often refers to a signet ring used to press its image into wax melted on a document – the resulting imprint implied authenticity and ownership and protected the contents (see *Ezekiel 9: 3-4* and *Revelation 9:4*)
- It is the seal with which the 144,000 are to be sealed
 - In this case, the mark is the name of God – see *Revelation 14: 1*
 - The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the believer’s seal for the day of redemption (*Ephesians 4: 30*)
 - It is ‘The Living God’ – whose life is the seal’s guarantee
- Seals in Scripture
 - The Father’s seal was on Yeshua *John 6: 27*
 - Circumcision was a seal of righteousness *Romans 4: 11*
 - Christians are sealed with the Holy Spirit *Ephesians. 1: 13*

What Order does this Angel give to the Four Angels?

- Not to harm the Earth, the Sea or the Trees
- The implication is that if the four angels release the winds then there will be harm
- Winds can do harm... but the seal, trumpet and bowl judgements are not by winds but by other means
 - The term ‘winds’ may be an allusion to the means of God’s judgements, which these four angels are holding back
- Not to allow ‘winds’ to harm the earth (possibly indicating mankind)
 - Mankind is harmed by the judgements – as in the second, third and fourth seal judgements, and the fifth and sixth trumpet judgements, and the first, fourth and fifth bowl judgements
- Not to allow ‘winds’ to harm the sea, possibly inclusive of the waters (rivers)
 - The Seas and Waters are harmed by the judgements – as in the second and third trumpet judgements, and the second and third bowl judgements
- Not to allow the ‘winds’ to harm the trees, possibly indicating all vegetation
 - The Trees and Vegetation are harmed by the judgements – as in the first trumpet judgement
- This delay, to allow the 144,000 to be sealed before judgement begins, clearly indicates that this chapter is an overview of the whole tribulation – since this must occur before the seal judgements begin
- The four angels may thus be some of those who will blow trumpets

What is the Purpose of this Delay?

- The other angel orders the four angels to wait...until the 144,000 are sealed
- The angel cries with a loud voice (as in *Revelation. 5: 2; 8: 13, 14: 6-7, 9; 18: 2*) – this usually indicates a command or an announcement
- The angel gives instruction to the four angels (who have power to harm the earth and sea) to ‘hurt not’ – until we have sealed the servants of God
 - Servants (Greek: *doulos*) also means slaves (same word as in *Revelation 6: 15*) – also translated as bondservant (see Paul in *Romans 1: 1* and *Titus 1: 1*)
 - On their forehead – a mark of ownership – and of protection
 - Contrasts with the mark of the beast (*Revelation 14: 9*)
- Sealed – by this mark they were set apart for mercy and safety in the worst of times
 - Before times of unusual trial God prepares for the safety of His people – see *Genesis 7: 1, 19: 16; Exodus 12: 13; Ezekiel 9: 3-5; Matthew 24: 15-16*

- F B Meyer comments: “*What a majestic conception this is and how comforting the thought that the winds are controlled by angels, and that the storms which sweep earth and heaven must obey the mandate of eternal love! God’s people are not always saved from trial, but they are kept safe in it.*”

Ch 7 V 4 The Number and Nationality of those Sealed

How many are Sealed and what is the Significance of this Number?

- The number of those sealed was 144,000
- 12 x 12 x 1,000 = 144,000
 - 12 the number of divine government
 - 1000 – the number of the millennium
 - 12,000 from each of 12 tribes – not symbolic but literal

Who is it that are Sealed?

- Of all the tribes of the children of Israel
 - The identification of these sealed saints can be none other than Jewish
 - From all the Tribes of the children Israel
 - They are descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
 - The earlier reference to the ‘four winds’ may indicate that they are from all parts of the world
- In *Revelation 14: 4-5* we learn more about them:
 - Male
 - Virgins
 - Redeemed from the earth (i.e. saved), ‘from among men’ – they are not angels
 - Follow the Lamb wherever He goes
 - They are firstfruits to God and to the Lamb
 - No deceit in their mouth – they speak only truth
 - Without fault before the throne of God

Ch 7 Vs 5-8 The Twelve Tribes

From which Tribes do those who are Sealed come?

- The tribes listed are
 - Judah (meaning ‘praise’ or ‘the Lord be praised’)
 - Reuben (meaning ‘behold a son’)
 - Gad (meaning ‘fortune’ or ‘granted good fortune’)
 - Asher (meaning ‘happy’)
 - Naphtali (meaning ‘wrestling’)
 - Manasseh (meaning ‘causing forgetfulness’)
 - Simeon (meaning ‘hearing’)
 - Levi (meaning ‘joined’)
 - Issachar (meaning ‘reward’ or ‘the rewarded’)
 - Zebulun (meaning ‘dwelling’ or ‘exalted house’)
 - Joseph (meaning ‘increaser’ or ‘may God add’)
 - Benjamin (meaning ‘son of the right hand’)

For meanings of Hebrew Names in the Bible see:

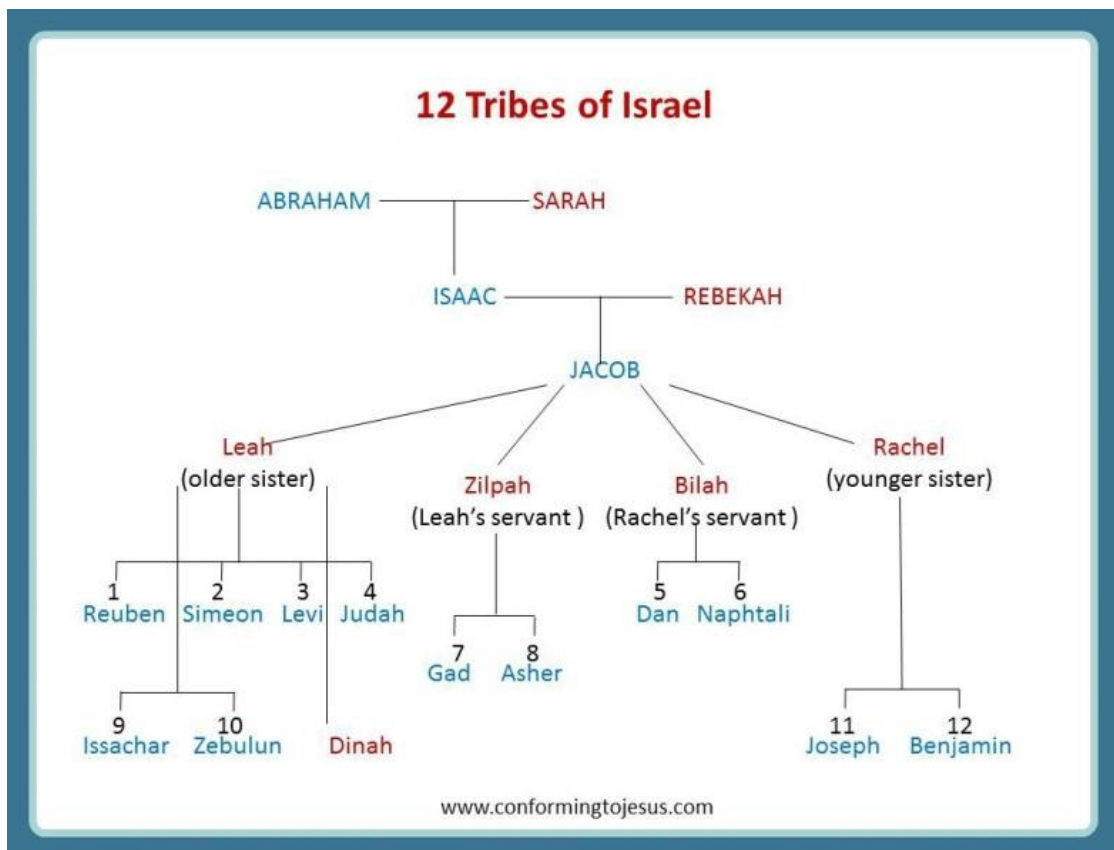
Biblical Hebrew Names

<https://www.behindthename.com/names/usage/biblical-hebrew>

Names of the Sons of Jacob

https://www.behindthename.com/names/tag/sons_of_jacob

- Notice what happens when the meanings of the names are combined, in the same order, into a paragraph:
 - *"I will praise the Lord for He has looked on me and granted good fortune. Happy am I because in my wrestling God is making me to forget. God hears me and is joined to me. He has purchased me a dwelling. God will add to me the Son of His right hand."*
 - This clearly is Israel's story of struggle with God (the meaning of 'Isra'el) and of God's faithfulness to Israel and His ultimate restoration of them both physical and spiritual)
- Jacob had 12 sons by four women – his wives Leah and Rachel, and his concubines Bilhah and Zilpah
- In order of their birth and showing their mothers:



- All of the above became the heads of their own family groups, later known as the Twelve Tribes of Israel
 - There is a common mistaken understanding that 10 out of the original 12 tribes are now lost – primarily the 10 tribes of Israel taken into captivity by the Assyrians

See Supplementary Note 42: 'The Myth of the "Ten Lost Tribes"'

- In many lists of the twelve tribes Joseph is omitted and his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh are listed instead, and one of the other tribes (usually either Levi or Dan) is omitted to make the listing still a total of 12
 - Jacob's Blessing in *Genesis 49: 1-28* lists his 12 sons
 - Moses Blessing in *Deuteronomy 33: 1-29* omits Simeon and Issachar but includes Ephraim & Manasseh as well as their father Joseph
 - Moses omits Simeon – possibly because of his sin in avenging Dinah, Jacobs daughter (*Genesis 34*)
 - Moses also omits Issachar – commentators seem to be silent on why this might be
 - In the listings of the tribes in the census of Israel in Numbers 1 (first census) and Numbers 26 (second census) - Joseph is included via his sons (Ephraim and Manasseh) being listed but Levi is omitted because they are not 'men of war'
 - In the division of the land of Israel amongst the tribes both Joseph and Levi are omitted (*Joshua chapters 13 to 19*)
 - Joseph is included via his sons (Ephraim and Manasseh) being listed
 - Levi is omitted because they have no inheritance (*Numbers 18: 26*) – instead the Lord is to be their inheritance (*Deuteronomy 18: 1-2*) – but they were given cities and common land from each of the other tribes (see *Joshua chapter 21*) as promised in *Numbers 35: 1-8*
- In all scripture lists the twelve tribes 29 times and each time there are 12 mentioned, but the specifics differ as to which tribe is included and which is not included

See Supplementary Note 43: 'Division of the Promised Land to the 12 Tribes of Israel'

- Notice those included
 - Reuben is included – even though he lost his rights as first born, as he had defiled his father's bed (*Genesis 35: 22, 49: 3-4*) - his inheritance was divided between the two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, and they became tribes (see *Genesis 48: 5-6*) – and shared in the division of the land conquered under Joshua
 - Levi is listed – even though they, being the priestly tribe, did not have a specific allocation of land in Israel
- Notice those excluded

Where is the tribe of Dan?

- Dan in Scripture
 - In Jacob's blessing of his sons he speaks of Dan as a serpent *Genesis 49: 17*
 - In Moses blessing he says that Dan will 'leap from Bashan' – see *Deuteronomy 33: 22*
 - This is before the conquest of the land and before the land was allocated
 - When Deborah needed help to defeat Sisera, some tribes did not help – Dan was one of those - 'Why did Dan remain on ships' *Judges 5: 17*
 - Dan left his allocated territories – Dan's allocation was on the coast (including Joppa & Ekron) near Benjamin...but the tribe moved north to Laish (Leshem) renaming it the city of Dan – see *Joshua 19: 40-48; Judges 18: 27-29*
 - Dan is omitted from genealogies *1 Chronicles chapters 1 to 8*

- Dan is not sealed in the tribulation – the implication of all of this is that Dan has sought his future outside of Israel, and a tribe which turned to idolatry, and so is omitted in Revelation chapter 7
 - Jeremiah prophesied that Invasion will come from the north (Dan)
 - see *Jeremiah. 8: 16-17*
- Dan is the tribe through which idolatry entered the land – see *Leviticus 24: 10-16; Judges 18: 1-2, 30-31*
 - Dan is a leader in apostasy under Jeroboam and is one of the sites for a golden calf
 - 1 Kings 12: 28-31*
 - Dan was still apostate 100 years later
 - 2 Kings 10: 29*
 - Dan is called ‘the voice of calamity’ (with Ephraim)
 - Jeremiah 4: 15*
 - Dan and the sin of Samaria
 - Amos 8: 14*
 - Idolaters names are to be blotted out – see *Deuteronomy 29: 14-21*
- And Yet – Dan has a destiny despite all this
 - Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel – *Genesis 49: 16*
 - Dan inherits in the millennium – *Ezekiel 48: 1-2, 32*
- It appears thus, that Dan will inherit, but is not protected during the tribulation
 - His apostasy would seem to bar Dan from being one of the sealed servant tribes – because the purpose of the sealed servants was to be witness of God
- No reason for Dan’s omission is given however
 - Because of Dan’s idolatry and his being called a serpent (*Genesis 49: 17*) – some commentators speculate that the antichrist will come from this tribe – but this is erroneous because the antichrist will clearly be a gentile
 - Other commentators suggest the false prophet will come from the tribe of Dan, but this is pure speculation, though scripture suggests he will be Jewish

Where is the tribe of Ephraim?

- The tribe of Joseph would include both Ephraim and Manasseh (his sons), but Ephraim is not referred to specifically
 - Joseph is listed as well as one of his sons, Manasseh
 - Manasseh, Joseph’s eldest son is listed - the younger son, Ephraim, is not
 - Possibly Manasseh’s specific listing is the restoring of blessing – the younger son (Ephraim) received a double portion in Jacobs blessing *Genesis 48: 8-20*
- Ephraim is linked with idolatry like Dan
 - Ephraim was also associated with Jeroboam’s idolatry *Hosea 4: 17*
 - In Ephraim was the other site for a golden calf - at Bethel *1 Kings 12: 28-29*
 - Thus, like Dan, Ephraim’s apostasy bars him from being one of the sealed servant tribes – his father, Joseph, is included because he was a righteous man
- Because of Joseph’s inclusion, Ephraim is in effect included
 - Such an interchange between Joseph and Ephraim is not unusual – it is seen in *Ezekiel 37: 16*
 - Hence it is best understood as Joseph representing Ephraim (otherwise Manasseh is effectively included twice)

Are the 144,000 Jewish Evangelists?

- It is not specifically stated that these 144,000 Jewish sealed servants are evangelists – but it is generally inferred, by most scholars, from the context of chapter 7, also from chapter 14, and from other prophetic scriptures

- In the next part of this parenthetical chapter, *Revelation 7: 9-17*, we see the vast multitude of Tribulation Saints – from every nation, tribe, people and tongue (*Revelation 7: 9*)
- Both are before the throne of God in heaven at the end of the tribulation
 - Both are sealed and saved
 - The 144,000 Sealed Servants (*Revelation 14: 3*) Jewish
 - The Tribulation Saints (*Revelation 7: 9*) Gentile
- Because chapter 7 continues with John seeing a great multitude saved during the great tribulation – the implication is that this is a result of the ministry of the 144,000 sealed servants
- It may be, since chapter 7 is a parenthesis, that this ministry has been going on since the beginning of the ‘70th week’ and continues right the way through the 7 year period
- The ministry of these 144,000 Jewish evangelists fulfils Yeshua’s prophecy about the spread of the gospel (*Matthew 24: 14*)
- The sealing of the 144,000 seems clearly to have a protective nature – the mark on their forehead contains the Father’s name (*Revelation 14: 1*) and they are present with the Lamb on Mount Zion (presumably at the end of the 70th week, having been preserved through the tribulation)
 - The mark on their foreheads contrasts with the mark of the beast which condemns its bearers to destruction (*Revelation 14: 9-11*)

Why Jewish Evangelists?

- From a human viewpoint there are many advantages
 - The church will have been raptured, so those remaining will be largely ignorant of the Lord, His ways and His word
 - Jewish people, particularly religious orthodox, are steeped in the Tanakh – and understanding of the whole counsel of scripture, including Yeshua Hamashiach, will come very readily to such people
 - It takes five or six years to train missionaries today
- The Jewish people are currently dispersed throughout the whole world, and it may be that not all have returned by the start of the ‘70th week’
- The Tribulation Saints are from all nations of the earth – if these Jewish evangelists are also from the ‘four winds’ – it makes the spread of the gospel simpler to achieve

Fulfilment of Prophetic Scripture

How do we see in this chapter the Fulfilment of Prophecy concerning Salvation?

- From a Jewish Viewpoint
 - The Lord has determined to redeem Israel *Ezekiel 37: 21-23; Hosea 2: 23*
 - God’s prophetic call on the Jewish people (to be the vehicle of world redemption) is irrevocable...and they will also receive God’s mercy as Paul writes – *Romans 11 28-32*
 - The salvation of the Jews will bring great blessing on the whole earth – see *Romans 11: 15*
- From a Gentile Viewpoint
 - The gospel being preached to all nations is fulfilled *Matthew 24: 14*
 - Note that the saved in *Revelation 7: 9-17* are from all nations

- The Lord is not willing that any should perish (*2 Peter 3: 9*) – but the Day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night (*2 Peter 3: 10-12*) – but those who repent and believe will be saved (*2 Peter 3: 13*)
- For this reason Yeshua came (*John 3: 16-17*)

Ch 14 Vs 1-5 The Sealed Servants – Standing with the Lamb

We continue on into another parenthetical chapter - chapters 10 to 14 are parenthetical chapters which follow the sixth trumpet.

These parenthetical chapters give, like chapter 7 (the parenthetical chapter between the opening of the sixth and seventh seals), an overview of events during the tribulation (the seven years).

Chapter 14 is the final of these parenthetical chapters and is a prelude to the outpouring of the seven bowls of God's wrath. It is, like the other parenthetical chapters, giving an overview of this tribulation period – but in this one the very end of the tribulation period is in view.

Ch 14 V 1 The Lamb and the 144,000 Sealed Servants

Where did we last see 'the Lamb' and where is he now?

- In Chapter 5 – 'a lamb stood' – in the midst of the throne, in the midst of the four living creatures and in the midst of the 24 elders (*Revelation 5 : 6*)
 - The Lamb then was in the Throne Room of Heaven
- Now John sees 'a Lamb standing on Mount Zion'
 - The Lamb is in Jerusalem
 - This could be the heavenly Mount Zion
 - It could be that this is heaven but in another dimension though also geographically on Mt Zion (per Chuck Missler)
 - However it could also be that we are here seeing the final days of the tribulation when the Lord (the Lamb) has returned to the earth
- Later in this passage we see references which imply we are seeing the heavenly Jerusalem
 - The Sealed Servants singing before the throne (*verse 3*)
 - The Sealed Servants without fault before the throne (*verse 5*)

What do we know of Mount Zion?

- Mount Zion is the seat of the King (*Psalms 2: 6*)
 - It is a 'holy hill' to the Lord
- There is a Mount Zion on the earth and a heavenly Mount Zion
 - Earthly Mount Zion was captured by David from the Jebusites (*2 Samuel 5*)
 - Heavenly Mount Zion is described as a place of assembly of saints in the heavenly New Jerusalem (*Hebrews 12: 22-24*)
- Scholars have differing views as to which Mount Zion this chapter refers

- Zion is mentioned in over 30 Psalms – for instance:
 - *Psalms 48: 1-3* Mount Zion, the joy of the whole earth
 - *Psalms 50: 1-3* Out of Zion...God will shine forth
 - *Psalms 53: 6* Salvation of Israel...out of Zion
 - *Psalms 69: 34-36* God will save Zion
 - *Psalms 76: 1-2* His dwelling place in Zion
 - *Psalms 78: 67-69* Mount Zion, which He loved
 - *Psalms 87: 1-3* The Lord loves the gates of Zion
 - *Psalms 99: 1-2* The Lord is great in Zion
 - *Psalms 102: 12-17* The Lord shall build up Zion
 - *Psalms 110: 1-2* The rod of Your strength, out of Zion
 - *Psalms 125: 1-5* Mount Zion cannot be moved
 - *Psalms 128: 5-6* The Lord bless you out of Zion
 - *Psalms 129: 5-8* Let those who hate Zion be put to shame
 - *Psalms 132: 11-18* The Lord has chosen Zion
 - *Psalms 137: 1* The captives wept when they remembered Zion
 - *Psalms 146: 10* The Lord who will reign forever, is the God of Zion
 - *Psalms 149: 2* The children of Zion will rejoice in their king

Clearly Zion is very special to and beloved of the Lord - other Biblical writers confirm this...

- Isaiah reveals how Zion is a focus of the Lord in the end times
 - *Isaiah 14: 32* The Lord has founded Zion
 - *Isaiah 24: 21-23* The Lord of Hosts will reign on Mount Zion
 - *Isaiah 31: 4-5* The Lord of Hosts will...fight for Mount Zion
 - *Isaiah 52: 1-2* The Lord calls for Zion to Awake
 - *Isaiah 52: 7-10* The Lord calls for watchmen to bring good news (gospel) to Zion
 - *Isaiah 60* There will be Restoration in Zion
 - *Isaiah 60: 14* Zion will be called 'The City of the Lord'
 - *Isaiah 62* There will be Salvation in Zion
 - *Isaiah 62: 11-12* Those in Zion be a Holy People, the Redeemed of the Lord – and Zion shall be called 'A City Not Forsaken'
- Zechariah speaks of Zion in the End Times
 - *Zechariah 8: 2* The Lord is zealous for her (jealous, ardent, passionate)
 - *Zechariah 8: 3* The Lord will return to Zion, and dwell there (in the midst of Jerusalem) – it will be called the City of Truth, the Mountain of the Lord of hosts, the Holy Mountain.'
 - *Zechariah 12: 2-3* Jerusalem (Zion) will be a 'cup of trembling' and a 'burdensome stone' in the end times (today!) to the nations

Who is with the Lamb on Mount Zion?

- The 144,000
 - The sealed servants' from *Revelation 7: 1-8*
 - The same number – none have been lost – they were sealed on their foreheads
 - None lost though they have come through the tribulation
 - None lost – as in Yeshua's prayer (*John 17: 12*)
 - None lost – the seal is a guarantee of salvation and security (spiritually)

- The seal for the 144,000 is revealed to be the Name of the Lamb's Father written on their foreheads
 - Saints today are sealed in Yeshua – and the Holy Spirit within is the pledge or deposit of eternal life (see *2 Corinthians 1: 21-22; Ephesians 1: 13-14*)
- What is true for the 144,000 is true for us
 - We are sealed with the Holy Spirit, the guarantee of our inheritance and our eternal destiny – see *2 Corinthians 1: 21-22; Ephesians 1: 13-14*

Ch 14 V 2 The Voices and Sounds from Heaven

What does John Hear coming from Heaven?

- A Voice from Heaven – heard by John
 - Like the voice of many waters – see Revelation 1: 15 – it is Yeshua
 - Like the voice of loud thunder – see John 12: 29 – the voice of the Father
- The Sound of Harps
 - Literally 'a sound of harpists playing their harps'
 - This is emanating from heaven to earth – and is probably the worship of the redeemed church in heaven
 - The redeemed church in heaven (24 Elders), have harps (*Revelation 5: 8*)
 - Later, we see that the Tribulation Saints also have harps (*Revelation 15: 2*)
 - Harps are the instrument of Praise to God – *Psalms 33: 2; 43: 4; 71: 22; etc*

Ch 14 V 3 The Song of the 144,000

What is Unique about the song of the 144,000?

- It is a new song – one never heard before on earth or in heaven
- It is sung 'before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders'
 - We now see a glimpse of what the 144,000 do in heaven's throne room
 - The scene is in Heaven before the throne
 - This is a song before the whole company of heaven
- It is a Unique song – only the 144,000 could sing this song
 - Unique – possibly because of their unique experiences in the tribulation
 - They are rejoicing over the accomplishment of God's entire redemptive work before Christ's return
- Saints are encouraged to sing a new song – *Psalms 40: 3; 96: 1; 98: 1; 107: 1-2; 144: 9; and 149: 1*
 - New songs are sung by the redeemed
 - Each situation in life is a unique opportunity to experience the grace and mercy of God in our lives – and to give Him praise out of that unique experience
 - New songs are an expression of praise based upon our unique experiences of salvation and redemption

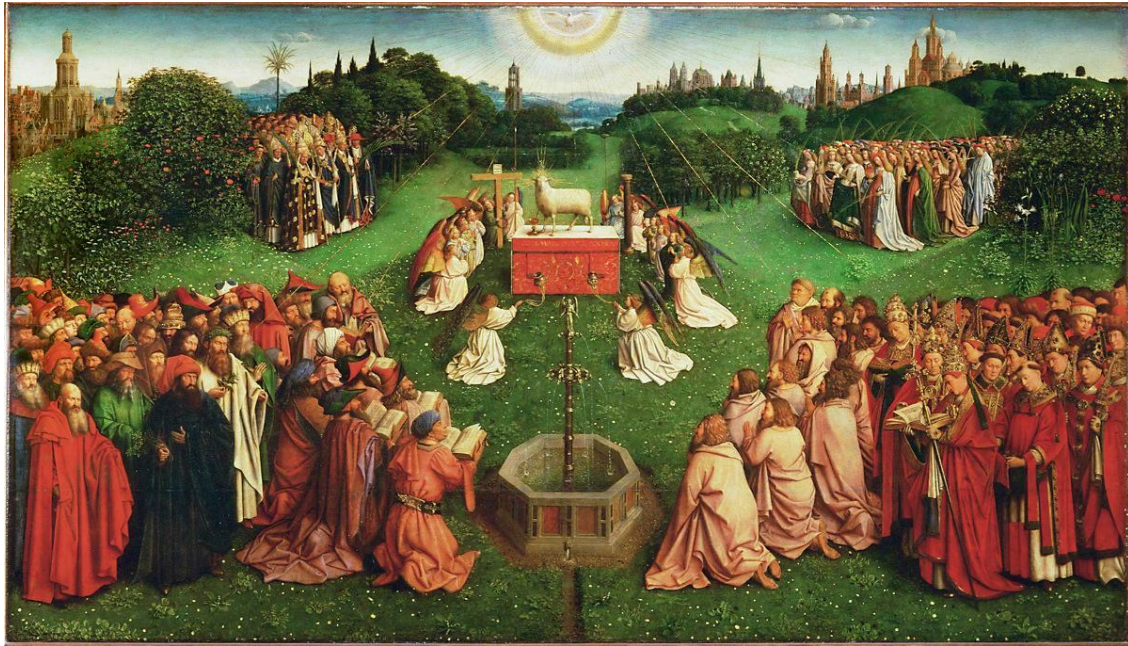
What is John told about the background and character of the 144,000?

- They are Virgins – not defiled with women
 - Defiled (Greek: *molunō*) meaning soiled (as in 1 Corinthians 8: 7)
 - This is a peculiar use of the Greek word – it most probably means that they kept themselves pure by not having sexual relations with women
 - In the time of Tribulation in which the 144,000 were living immorality would have been rife under the influence of the unholy ‘beasts’
 - Is this literal?
 - Jeremiah forbidden to marry *Jeremiah 16: 1-4*
 - Yeshua’s warning re the Tribulation *Matthew 24: 19*
 - Is it figurative?
 - Idolatry = spiritual fornication *Ezekiel 16*
 - The church is the ‘chaste virgin to Christ’ *2 Corinthians 11: 2*
Ephesians 5: 26-27
 - Contrast with Jezebel *Revelation 2: 20*
- They follow the Lamb wherever He goes
 - The Disciples’ call *Matthew 4: 19*
 - A Costly call *Matthew 8: 19-22, 16: 24*
 - The Shepherd’s voice *John 10: 4-5, 27*

For further thoughts on the ministry of the 144,000 – see comments by David Jeremiah: <https://davidjeremiah.blog/the-144000-in-the-book-of-revelation/>

- They were ‘Redeemed from among Men’
 - The 144,000 are not angelic but human
- Firstfruits to God and the Lamb
 - Firstfruits of the tribulation harvest
 - Firstfruits of the redemption of Israel
 - Firstfruits in Scripture
 - The offering to God of the first of the harvest *Exodus 23: 19*
 - A Feast of the Lord – Firstfruits *Leviticus 23: 9-14*
 - Yeshua is the Firstfruit *Romans 11: 16; 1 Corinthians 15: 20-23*
 - The church is like a Firstfruit *James 1: 18*
- No guile in their mouth – they speak only truth
 - Like Yeshua *John 1: 14, 47; 8: 40; Revelation 3: 7*
 - Like the Holy Spirit *John 14: 16-17; 15: 26*
 - Like Disciples are meant to be *1 John 3: 18-19*
 - Like Israel will be *Zephaniah 3: 13*
- Without fault (blemish) before the throne of God
 - Not sinless, but sanctified – see *Ephesians 1: 4; 5: 26-27; Colossians 1: 21-22*
 - Christ’s bride is without blemish – see *Ephesians 5: 27*
 - Saints are clothed with the righteousness of the Lamb – see *Isaiah 61: 10; Revelation 3: 5, 6: 11*
 - They are ‘Before the Throne of God’

- At one with the host of heaven
- At one with the 24 Elders (the redeemed church)
- The character of the 144,000 is distinct from the culture of ‘earth-dwellers’ – and this is a model for us in these ‘end-times’
 - They were not taken in by the defilements of the world
 - They were not taken in by ‘the lie’ – the deception in these end-times as prophesied by Paul – see *2 Thessalonians 2: 3-4, 8-12*
 - ‘The lie’ in *2 Thessalonians 2: 11* is the age-old lie of Satan... “you will be like God” (*Genesis 3: 5*)



“The Adoration of the Lamb” - based on Revelation 14v1
 Altar piece in the church of St. Baron at Ghent - by John and Hubert Van Eyck