

## Sealed, Sheltered & Shepherded

### Revelation 7:1-8

Chapter seven answers the question posed in Revelation 6:17, “and who can stand?” The answer has two parts; Jews who stand (7:1-8) and Gentiles who have stood (7:9-17).

#### Four Questions:

Why are these two groups separated here and in other places?

Are the numbers here literal or figurative?

Is there a difference between “tribulation” and the “great tribulation”?

Is the Church in this chapter or have they been 'raptured' out of the world?

Israel Sealed – Revelation 7:1-8 – This section begins with four angels and stand at the four corners of the earth who are restrained (7:3) as they hold back the wind (7:1) from its destruction. Why are they restrained? The answer comes in verse four, there are 144,000 who needed to be sealed from the sons of Israel (7:4) and then we learn that there is an even number from each of twelve tribes. These are protected from the trauma of the winds that apparently are staged to destroy the earth and its inhabitants.

The meaning of “sealed” - “marked, certified” This kind of sealing makes the one sealed God's personal possession. (2 Timothy 2:19)

The Tribal List?

**What I Learn:** God chose Abraham and his seed and he chose the 12 tribes as his own. (Jeremiah 29)

**What I Learn:** Jacob's family was challenging. They were a contentious lot all of their days. Nevertheless, God loved them with an everlasting love and he made promises to their ancestors that he intends to keep and that meant 'sealing them', “certified, marked, identified, delivered” for their safe arrival in heaven.

**Conclusion** - The opening scene of Revelation 7 is one of anticipation. The four angels anticipate the wrath of God upon the earth, waiting for God's instructions (1-3), and the 144,000 are anticipated as future followers of Jesus Christ (4-8). (Psalm 139)

Paul asks, “Has God rejected his people” in Romans 11:1 and responds, “By no means!” (Jeremiah 31:35-40) The fact that God will seal his people (7:1-8) should tell us that God has not rejected his people and one day they will be an earthly part of a great throng of heavenly worshippers. The throng in heaven has been freed from the coming judgments but the Jews in verses 1-8 will be protected on the earth, sealed by God himself.