

THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

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Mission Statement

This study of the Book of Revelation gives special attention to the testimony it provides concerning our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev 19:10; cp. 1:2), leading us to worship and serve Him in everything.

- I. What you have seen (Rev 1).
- II. What is now (Rev 2–3)—the seven churches of Asia Minor.
- III. What will take place after these things (Rev 4–22).
 - A. The Seven Seals (4:1–8:1)
 1. John’s Position (4:1–2)
 2. John’s Vision (4:3–8:1)
 - a. “behold, a THRONE” (4:3–11; see v. 2)
 - b. “I saw . . . A BOOK” (5:1–14)—actually a SCROLL
 - c. The SEALS Opened (6:1–8:1)
 - (7) The INTERLUDE (7:1–17)

One could consider this interlude as part of the seventh seal, but in each series of seven judgments (seals, trumpets, and bowls) there is a pause containing additional visions between the sixth and the seventh.
This interlude answers the question, “who is able to stand?” (6:17).
 - The Seal (7:1–3)
 - ✓ Four angels used in this event (7:1; cf. 8:2). Angels are mentioned 67 times in the Book of Revelation. Angels have different levels of authority.
 - ✓ “Seal” = a visible mark (cf. Ezekiel 9:4). Contrast with the invisible seal of Ephesians 4:30.
 - ✓ “Of the living God” (Revelation 7:2)—as opposed to idols and idol worship.
 - ✓ Protective purpose—also, possession (the basis for security or protection) and service (the result). Temporary protection of earth, sea, and trees.
 - The Sealed (7:4–8)
 - ✓ “The bond-servants of our God” (7:3) act as instruments for fulfilling Matthew 24:14.
 - ✓ These are not the Church, but Israel. Not all Israel will be saved (Romans 9:6), nor are these all who will be saved. These are merely the “first fruits” (Revelation 14:4).
 - ✓ A select group of martyrs (cp. 6:11).

Note on the 144,000

Problems in the list of tribes in Revelation 7:

- (1) Inclusion of Levi. Since no land is involved in this list of the tribes, Levi can be included.
- (2) Inclusion of Joseph instead of Ephraim. The list may exclude Ephraim for idolatry (Hosea 4:17; cf. Deuteronomy 29:18–21). Joseph represents both Ephraim and Manasseh (cf. Genesis 49:22–26).
- (3) Exclusion of Dan. The early Church fathers Irenaeus and Hippolytus identified Dan as the man of sin. The genealogy in 1 Chronicles 2:3–9:44 also ignores Dan. As with Ephraim, Dan’s exclusion might be due to his idolatry (Judges 18:30; 1 Kings 12:28–29).

However, God’s grace abounds when God restores the inheritance for both Dan and Ephraim during the Millennial Kingdom (Ezekiel 48:1, 32).

- The Great Multitude (7:9–17)—evangelized from all nations.
Answers the question, “Will anyone be saved after the Rapture?”
 - ✓ Before the throne and the Lamb (7:9)—in a glorified state?
 - ✓ Clothed in white (cf. 6:9–11).
 - ✓ Palm branches: occur only one other time (John 12:13).
 - ✓ They direct their worship toward the Lamb and God on the throne (7:10; cp. 5:12–14).
 - ✓ ““These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation”” (7:14).
 - ✓ Robes made white “in the blood of the Lamb” (7:14).
 - ✓ Their position might indicate some special service in the Millennial Temple (7:15–17; cp. 21:22—no temple in eternal state):
 - Before the throne of God.
 - In His Temple.
 - With the Lamb-Shepherd.
 - To springs of the water of life.
 - ✓ “God will wipe every tear from their eyes” (7:17; cp. 21:4).

- (8) The Seventh Seal—**Silence in Heaven** (8:1)
The next group of judgments telescopes out of this seal.

Questions for Discussion

- a. How does Romans 11:25–27 help explain Revelation 7?
- b. Besides God’s wrath and righteousness, what else characterizes every major divine judgment?

Implications Regarding Jesus Christ

- ▶ Jesus is from the tribe of Judah (first tribe listed in Revelation 7).
- ▶ Jesus draws multitudes to Himself.
- ▶ Jesus is the source of salvation.
- ▶ Jesus shed His blood so that sinners might be robed in white.
- ▶ Jesus is the Shepherd of His servants (cp. Psalm 23).
- ▶ Jesus guides His own to springs of the water of life.