

We decided we would talk about what was meant by the 144,000 of Revelation 7. Now before we plunge into that passage, I want you to backtrack with me and see something of what happens in heaven. Come with me to Revelation 5, and I want to set it up by reading from verse 2. Verse 1 had said,

*And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?” And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.*

*So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals” (Revelation 5:1-5 NKJV).*

So he heard from one of the twenty-four elders around the throne. He heard what they said: “Do not weep. The Lion of the tribe of Judah has prevailed and is able to take the scroll and to open the seals.” At first, he heard from that elder, and this is what he heard. He heard “a Lion is able, the Lion of the tribe of Judah.”

*And I looked... (Revelation 5:6a)*

Then, he saw. So in heaven you first hear, and then you see. The importance of that is what you see is not what you hear, but they are the same thing. You must keep that principle in mind when we come to look at the 144,000 because you will see the same device: that he hears, and then he sees. Now what he hears is one thing; what he sees, the manifestation of it, is completely different, but it is the same thing because it is the symbol of the thing that you hear about. When you see the reality, it is what is described by the symbol, but the reality is always greater. But the thing about the symbol is it sets certain parameters, and it connects to many other things in the Scriptures going forward. That is why things are not what they seem. You do not live by the five senses in heaven,

you live by that which is revealed. So look, he said, “I heard the Lion of the tribe of Judah has prevailed...”

*And I looked [so he saw] and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders... (Revelation 5:6a, comments added in brackets)*

There is the throne, the four living creatures around the throne, the elders around the four living creatures. In the midst of them,

*...stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth (Revelation 5:6b).*

So the seven horns and the seven eyes are the seven Spirits of God. This illustrates the principle of how things are representational. But before I get to that: “I hear the Lion of the tribe of Judah is worthy; I see the Lamb.” The Lion and the Lamb are the same. Now no one will dispute that. No one who understands the Scriptures will dispute the Lion and the Lamb are the same. We do not really actually need an explanation as to why, if you say the Lion, you mean the Lamb; although, there are explanations.

In the same way, things are symbolic. The Lamb has seven horns and seven eyes, and these seven horns and seven eyes are the seven Spirits of God. Well, how is that so? Because, again, it is symbolic. When he talks about a Lamb having horns, seven of them—the power of any beast is projected through its horns. A horned beast projects its power through the horn. And eyes are the vision, the way the entity that has eyes sees. So, the power and the vision of the Lamb define what the Spirit of God has come to do in the earth in seven manifestations. What He sees, He does, and He does what He sees.

Now, enough of that has been said. Let’s go to chapter 7, and again pick up where we left off. We had gotten to where, in the last reading [Current Affairs #73], we read through verse 9. Just to refresh your memory, and I will not do the whole reading again, but the four angels were keeping back the four winds. They were told by a fifth angel who came up, not to harm the earth, or the

sea, or the trees until the number of those who had been sealed—until that work of sealing had been done And he said, “And I heard the number of those who were sealed” (cf. Revelation 7:1-4a). He did not see them; he heard. Just like he heard, “the Lion of the tribe of Judah has overcome;” he looks, and he sees the Lamb, and the Lion and the Lamb are the same. Now he hears the number of those who have been sealed, and it is one hundred and forty and four thousand. The great symbolism of that ought to be very obvious:  $12 \times 12 \times 1,000$ —and  $12 \times 12 = 144$ . Twelve is the number of government, so twelve times twelve is a representation of a kingdom concept. And times one thousand—the word “thousand,” *mil* in Latin (or *chilioi*<sup>1</sup> in Greek), used in the Scripture is a term that reflects the highest number to which the ancients could count, and then everything was a multiple of a thousand, like “a thousand times a thousand, and ten thousand times ten thousand.”<sup>2</sup> So, the concept is that of a large multitude of people, governmentally arranged.

They are referenced by the twelve tribes of Israel, beginning with the tribe of Judah. Well, why would you begin with the tribe of Judah? Judah is the fourth son of Jacob. Reuben is the first; Judah is the fourth. Why would you start with Judah? Because this is a picture, not of ancient Israel, but of the House of God that is under the rule of the One whom Judah symbolizes. Now who would that be? That is, of course, the Lion of the tribe of Judah. So all of this is about, not only the disclosure of the Lion who is the Lamb—and again, we could talk about how the way the Lamb overcomes is the same way we are supposed to overcome. The Lion is the overcomer, but the manner of the overcoming of the Lion is in the sacrifice and the attitude of the Lamb in offering Himself as a sacrifice. Which is why we are told, “Present your bodies living sacrifices.”<sup>3</sup> That is why we are the *sundoulos*,<sup>4</sup> the fellow servants or the fellow laborers, along with Christ. We overcome in Him, on account of how He has overcome, when we are patterned after Him. First

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All Scripture quotations are from the NKJV Bible, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>1</sup> See *chilioi*, Strong’s Greek 5507 - <https://biblehub.com/str/greek/5507.htm>

<sup>2</sup> See Revelation 5:11: “Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.”

<sup>3</sup> See Romans 12:1: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.”

<sup>4</sup> See *sundoulos*, Strong’s Greek 4889 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/4889.htm>

and foremost, we are in Him. And then our methodology and our way of life is like Him. Then we are the *sundoulos*, the fellow servants of the Lamb. This is the principle that is at work here.

*And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:*

*of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed;*

*of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed;*

*of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed;*

*of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed;*

*of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed;*

*of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed;*

*of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed;*

*of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed;*

*of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed;*

*of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed;*

*of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed;*

*of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed (Revelation 7:4-8).*

I said to you, at the end of the last broadcast, the key lies in referring to the tribe of Joseph, as opposed to the reference to Ephraim. You will notice, Ephraim is not mentioned in the list of these. And Joseph, by the way, is not mentioned in the tribes of Israel as recorded in Numbers, the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter, where the tribes of Israel are being brought out of Egyptian captivity. Let's go back to the Book of Numbers, and I referenced chapter 2. If you read from verse 1 through verse 25, you will see certain things in that reading that I want to call your attention to. This is how Israel was arranged to exit Egypt.

Before I get to that, let me finish the piece on, I heard, and then I saw. As we said before, verse 4 of Revelation 7, "I heard the number of those who were sealed..." He heard, so then you expect him to see. And after the reading of the twelve tribes—and like I said, Joseph was the key to deciphering this—verse 9 says,

*After these things I looked, and behold, [So he heard, and then when he looked, what he beheld was this:] a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes...(Revelation 7:9a, comments added in brackets).*

By the way, that would have been from the fifth seal, where they were given a white robe. The word for “robe” there is the word *stolé*,<sup>5</sup> except that it does not mean a wrap around the shoulders that a woman might wear, but instead it means a full-length garment, such as would be worn by royalty—except that this was not purple; this was white. We said that that is because the Lamb Himself, like those who are the bride of the Lamb, is dressed in white.

*...clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying:*

*“Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom,  
Thanksgiving and honor and power and might,  
Be to our God forever and ever.  
Amen” (Revelation 9b-12).*

As he is speaking here, you will notice this: angels stood around the throne and around the elders. So outside, the widest circle, were the angels. Inside that circle were elders. Inside that circle are the four living creatures, and in the center of the throne is the Lamb. This is the reverse vision from early on, in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> chapters of the Book of Revelation. It is from the outside looking in, so John’s scenes change. Then, like I said, I will come back, and we will address the question of, who are those arrayed in the white robes?

But before that I want to tie together, very tightly, these two things: the 144,000 that he heard as the number of those who were sealed; when he looked, what he saw was this innumerable company

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<sup>5</sup> See *stolé* Strong’s Greek 4749 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/4749.htm>

drawn from all the peoples of the earth. And they are the same thing. Just like the Lion is announced, and when you see, you see the Lamb. You hear the Lion; you see the Lamb. You hear the 144,000; you see the innumerable multitude. And they, like the Lion and Lamb are the same, so the 144,000 and the countless multitude are the same. The piece that, of course, will wrap it all up is the one that I said I will talk about going forward.

But I wanted to take the time now to show you the connection that interprets it in that fashion, as opposed to the folly of the Jehovah's Witnesses and other groups that say, "Hmm. There are only 144,00 people in heaven, and they come from the twelve tribes—twelve thousand from each tribe. So, in effect, heaven is reserved for only twelve thousand Jews from each of the twelve tribes, totaling 144,000." Well, that is rubbish. Obviously, the twelve thousand from each of the twelve tribes is an intentional focus upon twelve times twelve. Twelve is the number of government. He is describing a Kingdom of priests and a holy nation. We will get right to that in the last piece of the reading.

But let me show you a connection to these things that will stun you. From the Book of Numbers, chapter 2, which is where we were going, from verse 1 through verse 25, Israel is being arranged to be brought up out of Egypt. Egypt represents captivity, like the world represents that which oppresses the people of God, and particularly, this kingdom comprised of seven heads and ten horns, that we saw before, whose ultimate intent is to oppress the saints for time, times, and half a time. In a previous message we talked about how it is the horn that speaks, from one of the seven heads of the beast, who makes war against the saints. We understood that to be a cultural war, a propaganda war, so to speak, where the popularity of what was being spoken by the beast and this blasphemous horn, or the mouth that speaks blasphemously, was at direct warfare with the gospel of Jesus Christ, the gospel of the Kingdom, and the attempt of God to draw people out of the kingdom of darkness to bring them into the Kingdom of the Son of God. In the end of the age, the hottest conflict will be the conflict of ideas, the conflict of identities even, as between those who belong to Christ and are of the Kingdom of Heaven, and that which belongs to the systems of the world and how they are entrapped in those systems.

Anyway, Israel was being formed up to be led out of Egyptian captivity in this manner. Now, Numbers defines how they would be formed up. They are formed up in the following way. I have given you the reference, so I will tell you what the reference says. This being, of course, from the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Numbers.

- They were to be formed, each man, each person, according to the family they belonged to.
- The families were arranged according to households. So, there would be multiple fathers that would come from a common father; each one would have a family, and that household would be assembled.
- Then, those households would be arranged under a clan, because the clans are multiple households.
- And then the clans would be arranged according to the tribes.

Tribes were comprised of clans, households, families. Every person belonged in a family, which belonged in a household, which belonged in a clan, which belonged in a tribe. That was the first order of their arrangement: arranged by their families.

Then, there were divisions between the tribes. There were divisions of three tribes each, so at four divisions, a total of twelve tribes. So, all of the tribes in their arrangements would be grouped together.

- The first group was positioned to the east. And the first group of three, the furthest east, was Judah, Issachar, and Zebulon. In fact, when they were numbered (and this is, of course, in the Book of Numbers), they were numbered together. So, it was said that those who followed Judah—which was inclusive of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulon—that their fighting men equaled a certain number. Those three moved together as a unit, but they moved under Judah, furthest to the east (cf. Numbers 2:3-9).
- A similar arrangement was made to the south, and they were grouped together under Reuben. That grouping was Simeon and Gad, grouped with Reuben. It was the same arrangement; they were numbered together (cf. Numbers 2:10-16).
- Then Ephraim, not Joseph, was focused on the west. With Ephraim were Manasseh, his brother, and Benjamin (cf. Numbers 2:18-24). You will recall that Ephraim and Manasseh were the two sons of Joseph. Ephraim himself was the one upon whom Jacob, Joseph's father, placed his right hand of blessing, even though he was the second of the two sons.

This offended Joseph, but Jacob said to Joseph, basically, “I have done what I have done. This is the order.” So Ephraim is the true representative of Joseph; Ephraim receives the birthright that Jacob prophesied, in Genesis 49, over Joseph.

- Finally, there is Dan, who is in the north, who is grouped with Asher and Naphtali, and the same arrangement (cf. Numbers 2:25-31).

Now, here is the interesting thing.

- The banner of Judah,<sup>6</sup> whose name means “he shall be praised,” the standard of Judah was the standard of a lion.
- Reuben,<sup>7</sup> from *raah* and *ben*, means “see, a son,” and he was the firstborn. His standard was the standard of a man.

Now you have been studying the four living creatures with me, what are we missing? We are missing the ox and the eagle. All of Israel is being arranged to move out of captivity in the form and under the standard of the four living creatures. You cannot make this up. Then, (of course, Reuben is the face of a man),

- Ephraim,<sup>8</sup> he is the “double portion/the double fruit,” and his is the standard of the ox. He represents the tribe of Joseph, the persistent one.
- Then, Dan<sup>9</sup> is the final one, and he is positioned in the north. He is the “judge,” his name is that of a judge, and he has the standard of the eagle.

God arranges Israel to depart from the captivity of Egypt under the standards that depict the four living creatures. Israel is a type and shadow; that is what I am saying. The number of those who are sealed is 144,000 (of each of these twelve tribes); that is a symbol. It refers to Israel as a symbol of the four living creatures, who constitute this great multitude, too many to be numbered.

When we go back to the final reading, then, this is what it says.

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<sup>6</sup> See *Yehudah*, Strong’s Hebrew 3063 - <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/3063.htm>

<sup>7</sup> See *Reuben*, Strong’s Hebrew 7205 - <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/7205.htm>

<sup>8</sup> See *Ephrayim*, Strong’s Hebrew 669 - <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/669.htm>

<sup>9</sup> See *Dan*, Strong’s Hebrew 1835 - <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/1835.htm>



*Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?”*

*And I said to him, “Sir, you know.”*

*So he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (Revelation 7:13-14).*

They were waiting for the full number of their brethren to come in, and when they were finally all brought in and numbered,

*“Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them. They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes” (Revelation 7:15-17).*

The 144,000 are a representative number, just like Ephraim was the representation of Joseph. There was not a tribe of Joseph that was led out of Egypt, but Joseph, the double portion, the one given the greater fruiting, was represented in antiquity by Ephraim. When he is presented again, he is presented as himself, which is one of the twelve sons who actually has his own inheritance. It is the reality versus the type and shadow, the reality versus the representation. So, the 12,000 x 12,000, that is the Kingdom of God, because it is a reference to its government, the government of the Kingdom of Heaven. Them being brought out and honored in this way—the 12 x 12 x 1,000—is exactly what is represented by this multitude that cannot be numbered of every tribe, tongue, language, and nation. God seals them ahead of the beginnings of the pouring out of the wrath of God upon the whole earth.

The message here is, if you are among those who are born of the Spirit, you are sealed with the name of the Father on your forehead, then you have nothing to worry about in the times that are

coming. In fact, this is the time that separates you; this is the time in which you are honored in the whole earth and in heaven itself.

We will continue these studies in the Book of Revelation. I am amazed at how God is pushing back the darkness and the obscurity, and bringing forth to us, in this season, the hope that has been reserved from time immemorial for the sons of God.

May all grace abound to you. I am Sam Soleyn, and we will see you again soon. Bye-bye.