

## REMNANT OF MERCY - Revelation 7

In chapter seven we find a *merciful pause* between the sixth and seventh seal. We also find a similar pause between the sixth and seventh trumpet judgments (chapters 10, 11), and the sixth and seventh vials or (bowl) judgements (16:13-16). This pause is in keeping with the *merciful* character of our God. He pauses for mankind to repent, for mercy to triumph over judgment! (James 2:13b) “*Mercy triumphs over judgment.*” *The overall message in our text concerns God’s faithfulness; if the Lord will preserve a remnant during the great tribulation, how much more is He able to preserve us today!* I’ve divided chapter seven into three sections: *The Restrained, The Remnant, and The Rejoicing.*

The Restrained - (v.1-3) There are five angels; four are standing at the *four corners* of the earth (possibly representing the four points of a compass, *north, south, east, and west*), they are ordered to *hold back the four winds of the earth, or halt the judgment process.* The fifth angel comes bearing the “seal of the living God.” What is this seal? The seal represents a mark of *divine possession, protection, and preservation on the foreheads of God’s servants.* Revelation 14:1b tell us what’s written on the forehead of these servants of God; it is the very Name of God.

The seal of Eastern kings was stamped in a signet ring and worn by the one in place of authority; it was used to identify personal property. Paul tells us in Ephesians 1:13, *as believers we are sealed by the Holy Spirit, we are God’s “personal property” in Christ!* The angels are commanded to pause, to hold off on unleashing God’s wrath, until God’s seal has been set upon His remnant.

The Remnant - (v.4-9) These *represent* God’s promise to save Israel: (Romans 11:1-5) *I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of*

Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel, saying, "LORD, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life"? But what does the divine response say to him? "I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

The "election by grace," speaks of salvation through *faith* in Christ! The remnant *here* is clearly a Jewish remnant. They are not 144,000 Jehovah's Witnesses. But *they* are chosen from the 12 tribes of Israel to go out and evangelize the world! *This does not mean these are the only Jews saved during the tribulation period, but rather these have been selected for His specific purpose.* Jesus, speaking of *end times*: (Matthew 24:14) *And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.* By "*the end*" Jesus could have been referring to the *end of the great tribulation*.

The tribe of Dan (from the *Genesis* 49 list of tribes) is omitted from the list, due to their *relentless* pursuit of idolatry (Leviticus 24:11; Judges 18; 1 Kings 12:28-30). They are *replaced* by the tribe of Manasseh, one of Joseph's sons. Idolatry, the worship of the antiChrist, will be an *accepted* worldwide practice during the tribulation period. Lesson: we cannot *practice (as a lifestyle) wickedness (idolatry) and expect to make the list!* (1 John 1:6-7) *If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.*

**The Rejoicing** - (v.9-17) (v.9-12) John sees a “great multitude” (a number which cannot be numbered) *standing*, before the throne of God, clothed in white (*the righteousness of Christ*), with *palm branches*, an *expression of great joy!* What a glorious *portrait* of true worship - worship **that** crosses all *racial, geographical, linguistic, and cultural* lines! **With one mind and heart, in adoration of the Lamb!** (Galatians 3:28-29) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. The great multitude rejoicing here is not the raptured church. **Read:** (v.13-17) (v.15) The *temple* mentioned here is the temple which will *exist* during the millennium reign of Christ, on earth. There are two reasons why. *When the new earth and heaven appear (Revelation 21:1, 2) and the new Jerusalem descends from heaven (1) Day and night will not exist. (Revelation 22:5). (2) The temple will not exist. (Revelation 21:22).*

**APPLICATION:** In (v.16, 17) we see a *stark* contrast between the world under the *antiChrist*, and *Jesus Christ!* **First** (v.16a), Hunger and thirst will cease. Christ will end *worldwide hunger*, brought on by wars, and famine during the *great tribulation*. He will *also* restore the waters of the earth, *stricken* by the plague of God's wrath (**Revelation 16:4**) (*the rivers and springs of water are turned to blood*). Yet, His ultimate mission is to satisfy the unsatisfied soul of mankind! (**John 6:35**) “**I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.**”

**Secondly, Torment will cease.** (v.16b) When Christ returns, the *sun* will no longer *strike* mankind, nor any heat (v.16b). This is a reference to the fourth bowl of God's wrath. (Revelation 16:8,9) Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory. *During the great tribulation, there will be a complete breakdown of the earth's protective Ozone layer.* Spiritually speaking, Jesus' ultimate mission is to end mankind's torment. (1 John 4:18-19) **There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us.**

**Thirdly, Tears will cease.** (v.17) Our tears will be transformed into "living fountains of water!" Where pain and "former things" once *haunted*, healing will take its place; broken hearts will be mended. But we need not wait until that time. (Isaiah 61:1b) **He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound.** **Brokenhearted - Leb:** (lay-v) center of anything; heart and mind. **Shabar** (sha-vair) : **break in pieces, breakdown, torn or crushed.** **Christ can heal the broken pieces of your heart today!** The tears shed by these saints, and the tears we shed today, (Revelation 21:4a) **"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."** The Lamb will shepherd us! David said, **"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."**

**CONCLUSION:** God has a remnant in every generation; not a remnant of people who never fail, but a *remnant* by virtue of the fact they **hope in His mercy!** (Psalm 147:11) **The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him, In those who hope in His mercy.**