

Revelation 6:17 – “Who is able to stand”? This is a rhetorical and theological question

For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand? Revelation 6:17 NKJV

Now we turn to the believers in the Tribulation. While the previous chapter talked about the martyrs of the Tribulation

God will protect two categories of people during the Tribulation: the people of Israel and those from all nations

Chapter seven falls into two parts:

One which deals with Israel v. 1-8

One which deals with Gentiles v. 9-17

This scene reassures us that God never forgets His own; He protects, seals, and secures His people even in the darkest of times

Revelation 7:1-4 is **not about fear**, but about confidence: God knows who belongs to Him

After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree
Revelation 7:1 NKJV

God pauses judgment to secure His faithful people who are in Christ Jesus

God restrains the winds; this is a constant reminder that nothing in our lives happens outside of God's sovereign control

Just as He restrained the winds, He can restrain the storms in our lives until His perfect time

Our task is not to fear what might come, **but to trust** the One who holds the winds in His hand

“**Four angels**” Here they restrain judgment, but are associated with executing God's judgment in **Revelation 9:14-15**

“**Four corners of the earth**” are symbolic of completeness or indicate the global scope

The words “**four corners**” are an idiom for four quadrants: North, South, East, and West

The Bible never taught a flat-earth theory

“**Four winds**” This is a common Old Testament image for destructive forces of judgment **Against Elam I will bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven Jeremiah 49:36 NKJV** and

Daniel spoke, saying, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea Daniel 7:2 NKJV

"wind should not blow" suggests **divine restraint**. The judgment is delayed **until God's purposes are completed**

The four-wind judgment is approaching, **not yet permitted** by God

Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea Revelation 7:2 NKJV

- ♥ The angel in **Revelation 7:2** rises from the east carrying the seal of the living God. **Before judgment falls, God ensures His people are protected**

This shows us that **God always works ahead of us**, for He is omniscient

"Another angel... from the east" The east often signifies the direction of God's glory and blessing and judgment, Christ's return in **Matthew 24:27 NKJV**

And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory Ezekiel 43:2 NKJV

"having the seal of the living God" The word "seal" means **making a wax imprint by a signet ring**

Scripture does not name this angel, so we cannot be certain

Some suggest he could be Christ Himself, since He bears the authority to seal; however, the text simply calls him "another angel"

Most commentators see him as a mighty angelic messenger acting on God's behalf

"To whom it was granted" **angels only act within His divine authority**

Saying, 'Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads' Revelation 7:3 NKJV

Revelation 7:3 being "sealed" is about **identity, security, and hope in belonging to the living God**, even when the world shakes

- ♥ **Just as He marked His people then**, He has sealed us today with the Holy Spirit **In Him you also trusted**, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise Ephesians 1:13 NKJV

Hearing the word of truth – The gospel message comes first

Believing in Christ – Personal faith in Jesus as Savior

Sealed with the Spirit – At the moment of belief, the Spirit comes to dwell within, marking the believer permanently

A **seal** was an official mark pressed into wax or clay, used to show **ownership, authenticity, and protection**

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 1 Corinthians 6:19 NKJV

For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. ? 1 Corinthians 6:20 NKJV

Road construction in the Northwoods

No matter what we face, **God has already gone before us**, preparing protection, directing

This reminds us that **God's people are never overlooked**, He knows, He marks, and He protects His own

Believers today are sealed with the Holy Spirit, God's stamp of eternal citizenship in heaven

"Do not harm" This is a divine command that pauses judgment. **Mercy delays wrath** for the sake of the "Servants of our God"

"Servants of our God" These are those set apart for Him, **a title of honor**

"On their foreheads" This is a visible symbol of possession

Unlike the hidden inward seal of the Spirit **Ephesians 1:13**, this is outwardly displayed for protection in judgment

and the Lord said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it" Ezekiel 9:4-6 NKJV The mark spared the faithful from judgment

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 Revelation 7:4 NKJV

"I heard the number" This emphasizes and accentuates divine precision

"144,000" Symbolic of completeness 12 x 12 x 1,000

The phrase “**from every tribe**” clearly marks these people as **Israelites**

These Israelites are the converts of the Tribulation (probably the first)

These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from *among* men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb Revelation 14:4 NKJV

They come to God at the commencement of the Tribulation

I believe this represents the **fullness of God’s covenant people**, though the specific reference to Israel **God highlights His own faithfulness to His promises**

“**Tribes of the children of Israel**” This is a direct connection to God’s covenant with Israel

I say this for many reasons: **The Abrahamic Covenant** – God’s Unconditional Promise, **Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 15:5-18; Genesis 17:7-8**

The Mosaic Covenant – God’s Law and Israel’s Responsibility, **Exodus 19:5-6; Deuteronomy 28**

The Davidic Covenant – God’s Kingly Promise, **2 Samuel 7:12-16; Psalm 89:3-4**

The New Covenant – God’s Promise of Redemption, **Jeremiah 31:31-34; Luke 22:20; Hebrews 8:6-13**

God has not cast away His people Israel; **His covenant promises stand**

Gentile believers are grafted into the blessings, but God’s covenant with Israel remains sure

As God keeps His promises to Israel, He will keep His promises to you

Although the direct interpretation of this passage primarily deals with God’s sovereign care for Israel, it also reveals that He cares for the church

♥ The Holy Spirit seals the Christian

In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise...” Ephesians 1:13 NKJV

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption Ephesians 4:30 NKJV

The Spirit is saddened because His role is to make us holy, guide us in truth, and glorify Christ through us

But the fact that we *can* grieve Him also shows His love; He desires deep fellowship with us

♥ What It Means to Grieve the Holy Spirit

To grieve means to cause sorrow or distress. Since the Holy Spirit is a Person, not an impersonal force, **He feels the weight of our choices**

We grieve Him when our lives contradict His holy nature and guidance

Ways We Grieve the Spirit **Ephesians 4:25-32**

By falsehood – Lying or being dishonest **25**

By unresolved anger – Letting bitterness fester **26-27**

By corrupt speech – Using words that tear down instead of building up **29**

By harboring bitterness, wrath, and malice. Maybe even allowing unkindness and unforgiveness to rule our hearts **31**

Resisting His conviction **Acts 7:51**

Quenching His work **1 Thessalonians 5:19**

Disobeying His leading **Galatians 5:16-17**

When we knowingly sin or cling to attitudes and behaviors that oppose God's Word

The answer to it all is the Mighty Cross of Jesus Christ

The power of the Cross

At the cross, Jesus bore the full weight of sin and judgment **Isaiah 53:5-6**

What looked like defeat became the greatest victory, the place where death was conquered and life secured **1 Corinthians 15:55-57**

The cross is both the symbol of suffering and the instrument of salvation

The purpose of the Cross

Reconciliation – Through the cross we are brought near to God **Colossians 1:20**

Redemption – The blood of Christ paid the ransom for our sins **Ephesians 1:7**

New Life – The cross leads to resurrection power in those who believe **Romans 6:4**

The personal call of the Cross

Jesus said, If **anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me Luke 9:23 NKJV**

The cross is not just what Christ carried; it's also the call for His followers: surrender, sacrifice, and serve...