



THE CALM BETWEEN THE STORMS

—REVELATION 7—

**AFTER THIS I SAW FOUR ANGELS STANDING AT THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE
EARTH, HOLDING BACK THE FOUR WINDS OF THE EARTH, THAT NO WIND MIGHT
BLOW ON EARTH OR SEA OR AGAINST ANY TREE.**

(REVELATION 7:1 ESV)

1. SEALS: OUR GOD TO WHOM SALVATION BELONGS SEALS HIS PEOPLE ATTESTING TO HIS OWNERSHIP, AUTHORITY AND PROTECTION, 7:1-8.

- (Revelation 7:1–8 ESV) After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, that no wind might blow on earth or sea or against any tree. 2 Then I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, 3 saying, **“Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.”** 4 And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel: 5 12,000 from the tribe of Judah were sealed, 12,000 from the tribe of Reuben, 12,000 from the tribe of Gad, 6 12,000 from the tribe of Asher, 12,000 from the tribe of Naphtali, 12,000 from the tribe of Manasseh, 7 12,000 from the tribe of Simeon, 12,000 from the tribe of Levi, 12,000 from the tribe of Issachar, 8 12,000 from the tribe of Zebulun, 12,000 from the tribe of Joseph, 12,000 from the tribe of Benjamin were sealed.

This text begins answering the question in 6:17 ...

WHO CAN STAND?

- (Revelation 6:17 ESV) For the great day of their wrath has come, **and who can stand?**

A. What does it mean—Who can stand?

Very simply it means who will be able to stand before God’s judgment? We will see this from the following verses.

God will stand for the redeemed—the righteous, **but God will stand against** all others.

i. The wicked will not stand.

- (Psalm 1:5 ESV) Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.
- (Proverbs 12:7 ESV) The wicked are overthrown and are no more, but the house of the righteous will stand.

ii. Those who stand with the wicked will not stand [since they are the wicked].

- (Psalm 1:1–2 ESV) Blessed is the man who **walks not** in the counsel of the wicked, **nor stands in** the way of sinners, **nor sits in** the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

iii. Those who neither fear the LORD nor serve God will not stand.

- (Malachi 3:16–4:2 ESV) Then those who feared the LORD spoke with one another. The LORD paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of **those who feared the LORD and esteemed his name.** 17 “They shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him. 18 **Then once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him.** 1 For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. 2 **But for you who fear my name,** the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall.

iv. The righteous will stand.

- (Proverbs 10:25 ESV) When the tempest passes, the wicked is no more, but **the righteous is established forever.**
- (Proverbs 12:3 ESV) No one is established by wickedness, but **the root of the righteous will never be moved.**
- (Psalm 37:29 ESV) **The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell upon it forever.**
- (Psalm 112:6 ESV) **For the righteous will never be moved; he will be remembered forever.**

B. What does standing before God have to do with being sealed by God?

God seals his people as part of his process in carrying out his promise to us that we will be able to stand before him in judgment. He will see to it that he completes his work and brings us to our inheritance in him.

- i. **God seals all his people.**

- (Ephesians 1:13–14 ESV) In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.
- ii. Believers in Jesus Christ in the church age have also been sealed and enjoy amazing privilege as God’s possession—all by the mercy of God.
 - (1 Peter 2:9–10 ESV) But you are **a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession**, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; **once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.**
 - (Titus 2:13–14 ESV) Waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us **to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession** who are zealous for good works.

iii. **Our text this morning demonstrates God’s continued love and care for Israel as he gives them a special place of honor.**

C. When God seals his people he guarantees that we will be protected *from his judgment.*

He may or may not protect us from the judgment of this world or from “natural disasters” brought on by his judgment. In the tribulation period, as it is now, God’s people may be killed in the devastation that rips the planet through earthquakes, meteor showers, hurricanes, etc.

FOR EXAMPLE, God may be judging our world through the coronavirus. We, as believers are sealed and protected from eternal harm through the Holy Spirit, but this does not mean that we are exempt from contracting the disease and dying, or that we would be exempt from losing our job or business during the economic upheaval.

Our LORD will protect us from everything we need protected from. He will protect us from anything that could prevent us from enduring in his chosen plan and purpose for our lives.

EXAMPLE: The two witnesses. They were protected until they finished their testimony.

- (Revelation 11:3–5 ESV) And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.” 4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. 5 And if anyone would harm them, fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes. **If anyone would harm them, this is how he is doomed to be killed.**
 - (Revelation 11:7 ESV) **And when they have finished their testimony**, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit **will make war on them and conquer them and kill them.**
- D. There are two things commonly taught about the 144,000 that—*although possibly true*—do not seem to have the strong scriptural support that some would have us to believe.**
- That the sealing of the 144,000 means that they will be supernaturally protected from any physical harm during the tribulation.
 - That the 144,000 are super-evangelists and are responsible for the great multitude spoken of in the following verses.

2. SAVES: OUR GOD TO WHOM SALVATION BELONGS SAVES HIS PEOPLE BY THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB, 7:9-14.

- (Revelation 7:9–14 ESV) After this I looked, and behold, **a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, **STANDING before the throne and before the Lamb****, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” 11 And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.” 13 Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?” 14 I said to him, “Sir, you know.” And he said to me, “These are

**STANDING
BEFORE THE
THRONE AND
BEFORE THE
LAMB**

the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

A. The great multitude of people saved during the tribulation will be from all over the planet and will be beyond numbering.

B. This will be a fulfillment of the promise to bless the nations through Abraham.

- (Genesis 12:3 ESV) I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, **and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.**
- (Psalm 67:1–3 ESV) May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, Selah 2 **that your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations.** 3 Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you!
- (Isaiah 52:10 ESV) The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, **and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.**
- (Matthew 24:7–14 ESV) For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. 8 All these are but the beginning of the birth pains. 9 **“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name’s sake.** 10 And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. 11 And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. 12 And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. 13 But the one who endures to the end will be saved. 14 **And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.**

C. They will be **STANDING** before the throne of God because they have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.

- (Proverbs 12:7 ESV) The wicked are overthrown and are no more, **but the house of the righteous will stand.**

- (1 Peter 1:18–19 ESV) Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 19 **but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.**
- (Revelation 12:11 ESV) **And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony,** for they loved not their lives even unto death.
- (Ephesians 2:13 ESV) But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off **have been brought near by the blood of Christ.**
- (Revelation 1:5 ESV) And from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us **and has freed us from our sins by his blood.**

3. **SHEPHERDS: OUR GOD TO WHOM SALVATION BELONGS SHEPHERDS HIS PEOPLE, 7:15-17.**

- (Revelation 7:15–17 ESV) 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 shelter them with his presence. 16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. 17 For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.
- A. Once we are before the throne of God we are fully and forever protected by God’s presence and by the Lamb’s shepherding from any and every harm.
- B. The LORD is our Shepherd now, but before the throne we will fully realize the comprehensive, glorious care of his shepherding.
- C. Before the throne—**now** he will wipe away every tear forever.