

The 144,000 of Every Tribe

How It All Ends

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Bible Text: Revelation 7:1-8; Genesis 49:1-17

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Genesis 49 and we see in verse 1, “And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days.” Did you notice what was of interest to Jacob there? He wanted you to know what was going to happen to his 12 sons, when? The last days.

Now, please look at verse 16, “Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.” When is that supposed to happen according to verse 1? Last days. So, we have Dan being difficult in the last days. Let me just put something here in parenthesis and I’ll explain it in a minute, but many Old Testament scholars think that the antichrist will actually come from the tribe of Dan; the beast of Revelation will actually come from the tribe of Dan. Dan in the last days is to rule his people and that is found in Genesis 49. I’ll put the reference out here so we can follow along. So, there is a hint. That means we can see a form of it, but we’re not exactly sure until, usually, it’s fulfilled. Remember, the main function of prophesy is not to tell you what will happen but most of the time it’s to tell you what’s happening. Let me say that again: the function of prophesy is often not to tell you what will happen but to tell you what is happening.

Ezekiel 6:11, “Thus saith the Lord GOD; Smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot, and say, Alas for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! for they shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence. Alas for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel for they,” who is they? House of Israel, “shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence.” Let’s remind ourselves here: the white horse is antichrist, then you’ve got the black horse, what’s that? Famine. Red horse is what? Death by sword, lots of wars. Then you have the pale horse which is plague or death or pestilence, wild beasts, do you remember that? That’s Revelation 6 and we’ll get back to that. Isn’t it interesting that you have seals 2, 3 and 4 mentioned here and who is the recipient of seals 2, 3, and 4? The House of Israel.

Verse 12, “He that is far off shall die of the pestilence; and he that is near shall fall by the sword; and he that remaineth and is besieged shall die by the famine: thus will I accomplish my fury upon them. Then shall ye know that I am the LORD, when their slain men shall be among their idols round about their altars, upon every high hill, in all the tops of the mountains, and under every green tree, and under every thick oak, the place where they did offer sweet savour to all their idols.” Who is he talking to again? The House of Israel. And where did they live? This is simpler than I’m making it sound. You might think it’s a trick but it’s not. Israel.

Verse 14, "So will I stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land desolate," the land, the land of what? Israel. "More desolate than the wilderness toward Diblath," everyone's been there, "in all their habitations: and they shall know that I am the LORD. Moreover," you're going to need to see this, "the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Also, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD unto the land of Israel; An end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land." What land? Israel. So, an end has come upon the four corners of the land. Interesting. Look at verse 7, "The morning is come unto thee, O thou that dwellest in the land: the time is come, the day of trouble is near, and not the sounding again of the mountains."

Okay, so, let us rehearse: In Ezekiel chapter 6 we find that at least, the best we can tell, seals 2-4 occur and I'm going to put a comma here. Look at chapter 7:2 of Ezekiel, "upon the four corners of the land of Israel." Does everyone see that? You're going to need to know that, "four corners of land of Israel." Isn't it good of God to give us exactly what he sees happening and he's going to elaborate on it in Revelation 6 and 7. Let me put the reference out here and that is Ezekiel 6:11 and following, that's what that ff means. I have no idea where we get that from but that is a librarian's something.

Now, look at chapter 9 of Ezekiel. God is so good. We don't have to really guess at what his Word means. We don't have to guess. We can become reasonably assured of what something is talking about. Not fully, that would be transparent but reasonably translucent. Look at chapter 9:1, "He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand." Now, the first thing I'd be wondering is: what city are we talking about? Well, why don't you look back at verse 16 of the preceding chapter, "he brought me into the inner court of the Lord's house and behold at the door of the temple of the Lord." What city is he in? Jerusalem. So, what city is chapter 9:1 talking about? Jerusalem.

Look at verse 2, "And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brasen altar. And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark." Do you all see that? Do you think we're going to need that today? "And begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house. And he said unto them, Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain: go ye forth. And they went forth, and slew in the city." All except those who had the mark. Did you see that? All except those who had the mark. In what city? Jerusalem. Those marked in Jerusalem are spared and we see that from Ezekiel 9:1. They are marked for their

righteousness. Where do you see that again? They are sickened by the abominations taking place in the city.

Now look at chapter 47 of Ezekiel, verse 13. “Thus saith the Lord GOD; This shall be the border, whereby ye shall inherit the land according to the twelve tribes of Israel: Joseph shall have two portions.” Okay, you’re going to need to know that. “And ye shall inherit it, one as well as another: concerning the which I lifted up mine hand to give it unto your fathers: and this land shall fall unto you for inheritance.” So we’re looking forward to a day, class, my fellow Bereans, we’re looking forward to a day when the Israelites by tribe will have an inheritance. Did that happen after Ezekiel 47 and up until this point yet? Has that happened? No, it really hasn’t happened. No. Even in the time of Christ, the northern ten tribes were considered what? They were considered lost. You couldn’t distinguish them amongst their tribes. So, here’s the statement we’re going to make here: Joseph will have two shares in the inheritance and that is inheritance in the land of Israel. This is pretty important. You’re going to see that all of this neat stuff makes studying Revelation just a little bit easier.

Now, let’s move to the New Testament. Look at the book of Matthew 19. I’m going to read these without much comment but I want you to pay really close attention because when we get to it in our study in Revelation 7, you’re going to need to remember this. Matthew 19:27, “Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Do you see that? There’s coming a day when the Apostles, at least, were promised that they would judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

Now, look at James 1 and then we’ll wind up in Revelation. I’m trying to get you to see that it is not an accurate statement to say that the twelve tribes were extinguished in the first century. It’s not accurate to say that ten of them were lost completely in the Assyria siege of 722 BC.

So, in chapter 5 and 6 of Revelation we’ve been discussing the seven sealed book. You need to listen to previous lessons if you’re lost already because this is a deed to planet earth and the Lamb, the only one who is worthy to open the book because he died and purchased creation with his own blood, is willing to open the seals. I want to remind you of what we saw two weeks ago and that is that this fourth seal was found probably, if you’ll notice on the left side, in Jerusalem. So, notice, please, 2-4, I’m going to put a question mark here. Is it possible that maybe it’s translucent in that this did in some strange way take place in the Old Testament and Revelation is not this at all? It’s possible but I don’t think it’s probable. I don’t think it’s probable that we’re going to have some sort of symbolic fulfillment in Ezekiel’s day and a literal fulfillment in John’s day. It’s possible but I don’t think it’s probable.

But it seems like seals 2-4 happen in the land of Israel. You say, “Well, I just don’t see that.” Remember that in the New Testament primarily there is one Greek word that can

be used for earth or land, primarily one. And so, when it says “earth” it could very easily be “land.” So, when you see in the book of Revelation 5 when it talks about “over the whole earth,” when you compare it with the Old Testament and when you realize that the usage in the original languages could be either “land” or “earth” then we probably should be slow about getting dogmatic about any of this until it is happening.

I’m leaning in a direction, personally, the Old Testament leads me to believe that much of Revelation will be localized in a particular part of the world. Now, if that’s too much, we can discuss it. We can talk about it as we come to things. I do want to say for those of you who have been with us since September, that Revelation 3:10 promises an hour of temptation that shall come upon the whole earth. So, there is a specific end time scenario where the whole planet will be rocked and I think Revelation speaks to that. But I also don’t want to close the door on the fact that it might have some things that are localized to Israel.

Remember that it is split up into the beginning of sorrows and the great tribulation. Jesus did that for us in Matthew 24. That’s seven years. Remember, we heard from Matthew 24 that Revelation 6 and the sixth seal happens after the tribulation of those days. See, the sixth seal happening here.

Jesus comes back a second time and it is seen several times in the book of Revelation. He shows them in chapter 11, am I correct? He showed it in chapter 16, yes? And we know it definitely happens in chapter 19. So, my contention is that the seals show a perspective of this unveiling of Christ, the trumpets come back later and show us a different perspective of the Coming of Christ and the vials later on come back and show us a different perspective and isn’t it interesting that the seals get done, for the most part, in chapter 6 when we see the wrath of the Lamb, earthquakes, the sun being dark and the moon being turned into blood. The trumpets, when is the last trumpet? Chapter 11 when we see the next time that the Second Coming occurs. When do the vials get done? Chapter 16 when we see the Second Coming. What I’m trying to show you is that the seals, the trumpets and the vials all end the same way.

But we shouldn’t be surprised that the writer of the Bible does that. It happened that way in the book of Genesis. In Genesis 1 we have days 1-6 happening. What happens in chapter 2? He comes back and shows us day six again when he creates man in chapter 2:7. Chapter 1:26 he says, “God made man in his image,” and then he comes back in chapter 2, “all the heavens were finished.” Chapter 2:7, “God made man and breathed into him the breath of life and he became a living soul.” Wait a minute, I thought that already happened? Yes, he’s showing it to you again from a different view. So, I think you’re going to find that many of the seals are localized and I’ll show it to you again. I think we saw it from the reference in Ezekiel and I think we’re going to see it again from Revelation.

I think it is a safe thing to do, I’m always going to veer towards safety. I think it’s a safe thing for me to say that John goes back to Ezekiel and writes about it. He goes back to Ezekiel and writes about it.

So, the fourth seal we see takes place probably in Jerusalem. We saw the four horseman in Zechariah. Remember that? It's not a sin for you to write Zechariah 6 in your Bible next to Revelation. There is nothing sacrilegious about that. You might notice, please, that they're identified as four spirits or four winds that are sent into all the earth. Do you see that? Do you remember that? The four horseman are seen as four winds. Let me remind you what we see in chapter 7:1 in Revelation, "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners." Four corners. Interesting. Everyone see that? "Standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four," what's that? "Four winds," four spirits "of the earth." Now, you can if you want to look for a new interpretation but this guy is not doing that. I'm going to look at Zechariah and Ezekiel and I'm going to say, "Nope, probably John was already referring to an existing prophecy." And he's probably talking here that you have an angel, you have four angels holding the first four horses, the first spirits, the ones that are mentioned in Zechariah 6. Let me say that again: if the four horses are four spirits or four winds, contextually my best guess, my translucent guess is that you have four angels in chapter 7:1 holding the four winds that are already spoken of in the previous chapter which are the four horses.

My point was Zechariah does a good job of identifying what these four horses are. They are spirits. We shouldn't sensationalize them. They are spirits going out into all the earth. We're going to have a spirit of an antichrist. John told us it was already happening in his time. We have the spirit of famine, the spirit of sword, the spirit of pestilence and wild beasts. Fifth seal, Christians are going to pay the price for their faith. The sixth seal was talked about last week. So, please notice that we have a pretty localized thing.

You might notice the sixth seal. Well, look at Luke 23. "Jesus turning to them said, Daughters of Jerusalem," remember he's on his way to the cross, "weep not for me but weep for yourselves and for your children then shall they," who is they? The children of who? The children of the daughters of Jerusalem. There we are localizing it again. I hope you're at least learning that, that the six seals are probably taking place in a localized area. Zechariah talks about the end, the Day of the Lord, when the whole world will be singing in his glory, the whole world will be holiness unto God. Genesis says that man will dominate the earth and we haven't. We had the last Adam come and remove the curse so that he could rule the whole earth.

All this is a perfect lead-in to verse 2. Would you please go to the first slide that has Revelation 7:2-4 on it. Judea is the southern half of Israel because the abomination of desolation takes place in Jerusalem. So, much of what takes place in the end days, we already know takes place in Jerusalem.

Verse 2-4, "And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God," remember we read about him right here, "and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve

thousand. Of the tribe of Gad,” and so forth, Aser, Nephthalim, Manasses, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, verse 8, Zabulon, Joseph and Benjamin. So, twelve. Of course, twelve is a number frequently seen in the book of Revelation. Remember the 24 elders? It’s two times twelve, right? So, $12 \times 1,000$ which is a way of completing or substantiating a completion of a number often in Scripture. So, twelve is both squared and then multiplied by a thousand which is two ways of saying emphasis.

Let me just point out a couple of things real quick. First of all, please notice Judah is first instead of Reuben like in all the other genealogies mentioned in the Bible. Also notice that Joseph is given two shares. Look here, Ezekiel 47. Now, where do I see that? Well, first Joseph is mentioned in verse 8 and his son Manassah is mentioned in verse 6. Other than that, you have brothers of Joseph, right? So, Joseph gets two shares. Dan is not mentioned. The first time in a genealogy that Dan is not mentioned. Why is he not mentioned? Because he is playing another role, probably, in the book of Revelation. Interestingly enough though, he is mentioned as having a share in the life to come. So, Dan does get restored but he is not mentioned in this genealogy where 12,000 are seen as converted.