

Rev 7 144K

Series Intro

Previous 65 books...Not a secret...One revelation.....TIMELINE

Revelation 7 always reminds me of the Brad Boyette Swimming Badge

History of the Jewish People and God

For reasons known only to God, He decided to bless Abraham's descendents and have a special relationship with them. His descendents were Isaac, Jacob. Jacob's sons formed what would become known as the 12 tribes of Israel.

God not only had a special relationship with the Jewish people, but He also had a unilateral covenant with them. Let's go back and look at what God promised...

Genesis 12:1–3 (ESV) — 1 Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 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.”

Genesis 13:14–17 (ESV) — 14 The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, “Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, 15 for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever. 16 I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be

counted. 17 Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you.”

Genesis 15:13–21 (ESV) — 13 Then the Lord said to Abram, “Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. 14 But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. 15 As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. 16 And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.” 17 When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. 18 On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, 19 the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, 20 the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, 21 the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites.”

This is known as the Abrahamic Covenant. It is a unilateral non-conditional promise from God to Abraham and his descendants. God has promised it and God will make it happen. No matter what the Jewish people do.....no matter what the condition of their hearts....whether they follow God or not....He has made this promise. It is unilateral and unconditional.

And the repetitive story of the Jewish people is that God blesses them....they reject Him....He sends judgment....they repent....commit to following Him again....they reject Him....often by intermarrying and chasing other gods....He

sends prophets to warn them....they repent....commit to following Him again....and this repeats over and over throughout the Old Testament.

But each time...God saves a Remnant...a subset... a group that He uses to start over. When others chase after other gods....He has saved a remnant whose hearts are truly His. It is through this process that God keeps His promise the Abraham and brings about another covenant that He makes with King David.

1 Chronicles 17:11–14 (ESV) — 11 When your days are fulfilled to walk with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. 12 He shall build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever. 13 I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from him who was before you, 14 but I will confirm him in my house and in my kingdom forever, and his throne shall be established forever.' "

Through David would come one who will rule forever....the promised Messiah.....Jesus.

So God made these covenants that are unilateral and unconditional to both Abraham....David....and to us.

But even though God made promises to the Jewish people, their sins must be punished and they suffer the consequences of chasing after other gods.

When they entered the promised land, God told them to destroy everyone who was there and to not intermingle and certainly not to marry. Because God knew they would be lured into chasing false gods. Unfortunately, they did not obey God.

They looked at the other nations and saw that they all had a King. So rather than accept God as their King they demanded God give them one. They chose Saul and it did not work out well. He looked like a King but his heart was far from God.

So God replaced Him with His choice....David...a man after God's own heart and He ruled as a King and foreshadowed the peace and prosperity of a Kingdom to come when the Messiah arrives.

Unfortunately David's son Solomon started off strong but faltered and turned from God. He married a foreigner and chased false gods.

From that point on...the Kingdom was divided. They essentially split north and south. The Northern Kingdom consisted of 10 tribes and was called Israel. The Southern Kingdom consisted of two tribes, but essentially was the tribe of Judah, and they made up the Southern Kingdom called Judah.

So during the period of the Kings...each of these two nations lived separately. The Northern Kingdom not only embraced local gods, but stopped coming to the temple in Jerusalem and instead set up their own temple in an area we know as Samaria. They interbred with the people there and thus were seen by the Southern Kingdom as half-breeds who had ruined the Jewish line.

The disobedience of the Northern Kingdom was punished by God when He allowed the Assyrians to invade them and conquer them in 722 BC. The Assyrians dispersed the 10 tribes of Israel throughout their Kingdom as was their custom. So from that point forward, the 10 tribes of Israel were considered lost....at least by us....but God knows who and where they are.

While those in the South, the Tribe of Judah hated the Samaritans, they turned away from God as well. The consequence of that sin was that God allowed the Babylonians to conquer them in 605-586 BC. The Babylonians took the best and the brightest of the Tribe of Judah into captivity in Babylonian. This is where we get the story of Shadrach, Meschach and Abendigo....Daniel...and eventually Nehemiah. During this time the Prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel lived and spoke for God.

Eventually God would allow the tribe of Judah to return to Jerusalem and rebuild it under the leadership of Nehemiah. This is the event that started the 70 Week Clock of prophecy that we spoke of last week. The order to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple.

It is through the Judah tribe that we get the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant and 500 years later, the arrival of Jesus the Messiah.

So all the people that we know today who are Jewish, are descendents of the tribe of Judah. The descendents of the other tribes are not known to us.

The 70 Week Prophecy that we spoke of last week stated that there would be 69 "7's between the edict to rebuild the temple (Nehemiah in Babylon) until the arrival of the Messiah in the Temple in Jerusalem. And at Passover 483 years later...to the day...Jesus presents Himself to the temple as the Lamb of God at Passover.

Unfortunately the Jewish people rejected their Messiah and crucified Him.

Acts 13:26–31 (ESV) — 26 “Brothers, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to us has been

sent the message of this salvation. 27 For those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers, because they did not recognize him nor understand the utterances of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled them by condemning him. 28 And though they found in him no guilt worthy of death, they asked Pilate to have him executed. 29 And when they had carried out all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. 30 But God raised him from the dead, 31 and for many days he appeared to those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses to the people.

Acts 13:44–47 (ESV) — 44 The next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. 45 But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him. 46 And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, “It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. 47 For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, “ ‘I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.’ ”

So, the Jewish people, the Southern Tribe of Judah, rejected Jesus as the Messiah and turned Him over to be crucified. And in the moment that they rejected Jesus.....the prophetic clock....the 70 weeks.....at the end of the 69th week.....God pressed the pause button.

Remember that the 70 week Prophecy in Daniel was about the Jewish people and the city of Jerusalem.

Daniel 9:24 (ESV) — 24 “Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in

everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet,
and to anoint a most holy place.

Notice that the decree is about YOUR people and YOUR holy city. This is a prophecy about restoring the Jewish people to God. It is a prophecy to fulfill not surprisingly 7 things.

At the end of the 70th week....all the sins of the Jewish nation....are forgiven, their relationship with God is restored and the most Holy place is reestablished. You will be my people and I will be your God.

But the last week of that prophecy is delayed....the last 7 years. It is delayed because of the rejection of the Jewish people of their Messiah. God pushed the pause button and entered us into the Gentile era also known as the church age.

That is the era we are living in right now. For an unspecified time, God has paused the 70 week prophecy after the 69th week....while He goes and brings the Gentiles into His Kingdom and family.

The Church age will end with the rapture of the church. Once Jesus raptures His church, most of whom are Gentiles, He will then turn all of His attention back to the Jewish remnant that will turn to Jesus and fulfill the last week of the 70 week prophecy.

Once the Antichrist signs a peace agreement with Israel, the 70th week starts and exactly seven years later, Jesus will return to defeat Satan at Armageddon.

The 70th week.....the last 7 years....we know as the Tribulation. The last 3.5 years of those 7, we know as the Great Tribulation.

In the end, Jesus will have restored all of the Gentiles and all of the Jewish people who trusted Him as their Savior.

That Tribulation period starts with the opening of the 7 seal Judgments by Jesus. We looked at the first 6 last week....With that background....we are ready to understand Revelation Chapter 7.

Remember the 6th seal was a great global earthquake and the sky turned dark...the stars seemed to fall from the sky...the moon turned blood red....the sun darkened...every mountain and island was moved.....

Remember that the Kings of the earth hid in caves and prayed that the rocks would save them from the wrath of God

And then....in the middle of total chaos.....

Revelation 7:1 (ESV) — 1 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.

And Eerie calm. A dead silence.

Revelation 7:2–4 (ESV) — 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:

We have seen God's protective seal before....

Ezekiel 9:3–4 (ESV) — 3 Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub on which it rested to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed in linen, who had the

writing case at his waist. 4 And the Lord said to him, "Pass through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it."

God is about to pass judgment in Jerusalem and he tells Ezekiel about sealing those of God on their foreheads.

When God seals someone.....He is making a unilateral promise.....a promise just like the covenant that He gave Abraham and David. When God seals someone He places His stamp on them and promises that one day in the future, they will be redeemed. The seal of God is unconditional and unilateral.

Jesus was sealed by the Father

John 6:27 (ESV) — 27 Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal."

So now...before the trumpet judgments....God seals another group of people....Jewish people.....those who will represent the remnant who believe in Jesus as their Messiah. People from all 12 tribes....

What this Scripture means, is that while we don't know what happened to the 10 Northern Tribes of Israel when the Assyrians dispersed them....God knows exactly who and where they are.

In fact, many in this room may well be descendents of one of the 10 Northern Tribes of Israel. We just don't know. They moved North into Europe and likely migrated to the New World.

Then we have a list....12K from each tribe of Israel....totally 144K.
Who are these 144,000 people?

Jehovah's Witnesses mistakenly believe it is them. Which is interesting when you think about it. If only 144K are getting in and you want to be one of them....why would you go ring doorbells and try to recruit others who might take your place?

the Jehovah's Witnesses once said their entire group was, until they surpassed 144,000 in number. Now they say that the 144,000 are only a select group of Witnesses who go to heaven.

Most Bible scholars either regard the 144,000 as the church or as converted Jews, who are still identified as Israelites in some manner.

Some facts about the 144,000 from Revelation 7 and Revelation 14 give us insight regarding their identity.

They are called the children of Israel (Revelation 7:4). 1) Their tribal affiliation is specific (Revelation 7:4–8). 2) They seem to be protected and triumphant through the period of God's wrath, meeting with Jesus at Mount Zion at His return (Revelation 14:1). 3) They are celibate (Revelation 14:4). 4) They are the beginning of a greater harvest (Revelation 14:4). 5) They are marked by integrity and faithfulness (Revelation 14:5).

Some believe that there is a literal 144K Jewish people who will be sealed in the end times to become Leaders or teachers to the Jewish nation during the tribulation.

Some believe that the number 12 here is used to indicated completion. Remember 3, 7 and 12 are biblical numbers of

completion. There are 12 tribes....12 apostles (replace Judas to equal 12)....etc. Some say that these are just the total number of those from each tribe that will be saved and the 12K is a figurative number representing completion. The complete number of people from each tribe to be saved.

In Exodus 4 God says that Israel....the Jewish People are His firstborn son....that is not a title...it is a position. Explain firstborn

Then later, look at what Paul says....to the Romans...

Romans 11:25–32 (ESV) — 25 Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”; 27 “and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins.” 28 As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. 29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. 30 For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, 31 so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy. 32 For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.

God's covenant and His promise is that in the 70th 7...He would come for the nation of Israel and keep His promise to restore them. Whether He seals an exact number of 144k or all of the Jewish people from all of the tribes....a complete

number...I don't know...But everyone who calls on His name will be saved.

It is best to see the 144,000 as specifically chosen Jewish people who come to faith in Jesus, protectively sealed throughout the tribulation as a sign. They are the beginning harvest of the salvation of Israel (Romans 11:1, Romans 11:26, Matthew 23:37–39).

Revelation 7:9–12 (ESV) — 9 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.”

The diversity here is evidence that the Great Commission will be fulfilled before the end, even as Jesus promised

Matthew 24:14 (ESV) — 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.

Because John knew they came from different nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, we know that there will be differences among people in heaven, just as there is on earth. We will not all be the same. We will be individuals.

Palm branches were emblems of victory. It shows this great multitude celebrates a great victory.

Having an emblem of righteousness (white robes), they worship God for salvation. They recognize that God is the source of salvation, and no one else. Salvation isn't something we earn, it is something God gives. Sometimes believers on earth take their salvation almost for granted. This isn't true of this great multitude in heaven.

As the great multitude worships God, the others in heaven are compelled to join their voices in praise. All created beings around the throne join in.

Revelation 7:13–14 (ESV) — 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 the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Those saved in the great tribulation are saved just like everybody else, by the blood of the Lamb. Even if they are martyred, their martyrdom does not save them. Only the work of Jesus can cleanse and save.

Notice how many there are!

The presence of so many tribulation saints is a powerful statement of God's grace and mercy. Even in this time of judgment and wrath on the earth, many are saved. Because the great multitude are mentioned right after the 144,000, many think they are—at least in part—due to the work of those 144,000 servants of God. Perhaps the 144,000 are evangelists who help reap this huge harvest for the kingdom during the great tribulation.

Revelation 7:15–17 (ESV) — 15 “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.”

Think about the sounds of heaven.....noisy...praising...

Think about how eerie this would be. Praising, singing, worshiping.....angels, 24 elders on the throne....countless 10's of 10,000 angels praising god.....multitude of martyrs too numerous to count...praising God and crying out Salvation belongs to the Lamb!!!

And then....in heaven...just like was happening on earth....

Revelation 8:1–5 (ESV) — 1 When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

It is as if all of creation.....both in Heaven and on Earth...held their collective breaths for what is about to come.

More likely, this silence in heaven demonstrates a sober, awestruck silence at the judgments to come, now that the seals are off and the scroll can be opened.

Revelation 8:2–6 (ESV) — 2 Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. 3 And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer, and he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne, 4 and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel. 5 Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and

threw it on the earth, and there were peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake. 6 Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to blow them.

In the Old Testament, trumpets sounded the alarm for war and threw the enemy into a panic, or they called an assembly of God's people. These seven trumpets will sound as God's battle-alarm during the great tribulation.

Incense is symbolic of the prayers of the people rising to God. One job of the Priest in the temple of God was to symbolically offer the prayers of the people as incense at the Alter of Incense in the morning and evening of every day.

Prayer and incense are often associated in the Bible. The idea is that just as incense is precious, pleasant, and drifts to heaven, so do our prayers. So here, before anything happens at the opening of the seventh seal, the prayers of God's people come before the Lord God.

Now we see all the prayers of all the people of all the earth being offered as incense at the real altar at the real throne of God in Heaven.

This is like a huge meteor being hurled to earth....causing another catastrophic earthquake.

As God's people pray for the resolution of all things, their prayers were touched by the fire from the altar in heaven, and then "thrown" back down to earth. All things will not be resolved on this earth until judgment comes, and when the prayers of God's people "come back" to earth, they bring the groundswell of judgment (noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake).

So In Revelation 7 we see God sealing those who trust Him. He places His name...His seal on their foreheads....to protect them from the judgment to come....

This reminds us of the Israelites who were sealed with the blood of the Lamb and protected from the Judgment that would pass over them.

Think about it...These 144K, whichever population of Jewish people they are....are protected by God. Sealed. Untouchable. Imagine what that must feel like.....to know that you are sealed and protected from a judgment that you know is coming....to realize that it will not affect you....because God Himself has sealed you and set you apart for Him.....Can you imagine how incredible that assurance would be? Think about how differently you could live knowing that you have been sealed by God. What would there be to worry about?

You don't have to imagine it....because you are.

When we accepted Jesus as our Savior....we were sealed with a promise of redemption to come on the Day of Judgment. We were sealed with the Holy Spirit

We are sealed with the Holy Spirit as a down payment of our eventual total redemption.

We can walk through this earth with a seal that is far greater than Brad Boyette ever thought of.

Right now God's Seal is on our hearts....

2 Corinthians 1:21–22 (ESV) — 21 And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, 22 and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

Ephesians 1:12–14 (ESV) — 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. 13 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.

2 Timothy 2:19 (ESV) — 19 But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."

Ephesians 4:29–30 (ESV) — 29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

One of the ways that we celebrate the truth that we have been sealed by God is through communion. Communion is reserved for those who have accepted Jesus as their Savior and have received the seal of the Holy Spirit.

Every time we take **communion** we remember whose we are.

Luke 22:14–20 (ESV) — 14 And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. 15 And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. 16 For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." 17 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves. 18 For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." 19 And he took bread, and when he had given

thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." 20 And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

Jesus has been waiting since the beginning of time and before to celebrate with those He will save. He could not wait to suffer and bring us into fellowship with God. To restore the broken relationship by breaking His body and sharing His blood....as our Lamb....covering us..with His promise....His seal...His blood....and then sealing that promise...with the Holy Spirit.

As you take communion today....thank God that you are already sealed....already protected from the punishment of your sins....already victorious over death....redeemed through Christ....

Let's Pray