

## God and His Forgiveness Children

Thursday, July 7 at 7 + Sunday, July 10 at 8:00 & 10:45

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost / Third Sunday after Trinity – 2011

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ, Then, in **chapter 8**, we will see the NT era from another point of view.

1. **God's Chosen Ones are Sealed:** <sup>1</sup> After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that no wind would blow on the earth or on the sea or on any tree. <sup>2</sup> And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun [*from the east*], having the seal of the living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, <sup>3</sup> saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants [*slaves*] of our God on their foreheads."
  - a. Sealed – to indicate *ownership* OR *do not harm* OR *both*. Cattle are branded to show ownership, but we are sealed *because God dearly loves us!*
  - b. Foreheads – God's ownership of us is intended to show; Philippians 2:14-15; 1 Peter 2:9.
  - c. An OT example of marking foreheads – <sup>NAU</sup> Ezekiel 9:1 "Draw near, O executioners of the city..." <sup>3</sup> And He called to the man 'with the writing case. <sup>4</sup> "Go through the midst of the city...and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations which are being committed in its midst." <sup>5</sup> But to the others He said... "Go through the city after him and... <sup>6</sup> Utterly slay old men, young

men, maidens, little children, and women, but do not touch any man on whom is the mark...”

2. **The Symbolical Number of the Sealed:** <sup>4</sup> And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel: <sup>5</sup> from the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand were sealed, from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand, <sup>6</sup> from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand, from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand, from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand, <sup>7</sup> from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand, from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand, from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand, <sup>8</sup> from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand, from the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand were sealed.
- a.  $12 \times 12,000 = 144,000 = 12 \times 12 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10$  – The OT church x the NT church x the number for completeness = 144,000, the number which SYMBOLIZES the complete number God will save from the OT era and the NT era.
- b. The true Israel – It includes all Christians of all time, SOME with *the blood of Abraham* ([Romans 9:6](#)) and ALL with *the faith of Abraham!*
3. **The Church in Heaven is Gathered in Worship:** <sup>9</sup> After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count [*thus the 144,000 is not literal*], from every nation and *all* tribes and peoples and tongues [*from the four corners of the earth*], standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes [*God's gift of righteousness*], and palm branches were in their hands; <sup>10</sup> and they cry out with a loud voice,

saying, “Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.” <sup>11</sup> 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, <sup>12</sup> saying, “Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might [7 words of perfect praise], *be* to our God forever and ever. Amen.” [compare chapter 4 with vv. 10-12]

- a. Palm branches – They indicate victory! <sup>ESV</sup> **1 John 5:4** “...everyone who has been born of God [has received Jesus] overcomes the world.” (John 1:12-13; 3:1-7)
- b. “Salvation to our God...” – He gets ALL the credit! Why? When we were dead in our sins, He took action to make us alive in Christ (Ephesians 2:1-5)! The angels agree by saying “Amen.” Now, as Christians, it is fitting to live for ♦the Father who sent His Son and ♦the Son who lived and died for us!

4. **The Church has God’s Eternal Blessings:** <sup>13</sup> Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?” <sup>14</sup> I said to him, “My lord, you know.” [In other words: *“You will have to answer that question for me”* (Becker, 128).] And he said to me, “These are the ones who come [lit. – “are coming”] out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. [Isaiah 1:18]
- a. Great tribulation – It’s not to come; instead, we live in the midst of it. Dr. Becker wrote: “John sees [the Christians] ‘coming out’ ...as a continuous...process. Every time one of the 144,000...dies, he ‘comes out of’ the great tribulation...” (124).

- b. **15** For this reason [because of Jesus' blood] [what follows are ten blessings of those who die in Jesus],
- i. The blessings continue without interruption:
    1. they are before the throne of God; and
    2. they serve Him day and night in His temple; and
    3. He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them.
  - ii. The curses from the fall into sin are over:
    4. **16** They will hunger no longer,
    5. nor thirst anymore;
    6. nor will the sun beat down on them,
    7. nor any heat;
  - iii. Think about Psalm 23:
    8. **17** for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and
    9. will guide them to springs of the water of life; and
    10. God will wipe every tear from their eyes.”

**Conclusion:** Now, IN JESUS, let us know we are so blessed, *both now and forevermore!* And all God's people said: *Amen!*

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*Live God's Word; then share it with family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers!*

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Rd., Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230