



The Seventh Seal

AND after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. ² And 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 given to hurt the earth and the sea, ³ Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. (Rev 7:1-3)

You may recall in previous lessons that Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD by the legions of Rome under Titus. But, according to Dr. Adam Clarke, the Christian population had already escaped to Pella. A large part of these early revelatory prophecies have a dual application to events shortly taking place, and continuing in the span of time until today.

We see in today's text that Four Angels of God are standing at the ready to execute a judgment upon the earth. It appears that they will do so by means of the natural elements – in this case the four winds of the earth (those whose force comes from all directions of the four corners of the earth). These winds are winds of destruction much like, perhaps, those winds which have destroyed the infra-structure of Puerto Rico of recent days, but more forceful than even those.

Winds have been a particular means of executing the Judgment of God upon wayward nations. This fact is reinforced throughout the Bible, but I offer only three references at the bar of proof: **1)** *"As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away: like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun. 9 Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath. 10 The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked. 11 So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth."* Psalms 58:8-11 (KJV); **2)** *"27 When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. 28 Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: 29 For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: 30 They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. 31 Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their OWN WAY, and be filled with their own devices. 32 For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. 33 But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil."* Prov 1:27-33 (KJV); and, **3)** *"25 As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an everlasting foundation."* (Prov 10:25)

Sometimes, I am made to wonder that the American people are blind to the increasing hand of judgment upon our once fair land. God sends warnings of increasing intensity, but we fail to heed those warnings. One day, the warnings will cease and then only desolation and destruction can remain. He has, in one hour, caused the pride of our high towers to fall. (World Trade Center, see Zeph1:16); and He has sent the whirlwind against our coastal cities, many of which entertained rampant sin such as prostitution and gambling. *"16 Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel."* Isaiah 41:16 (KJV) I can hear the ridicule of some proud Oxford theologian, in nasalized contempt, belittling my conclusions for applying the judgment God made against the enemies of His people in the Old Testament to peoples of the New Testament age, but I am assured that God has not changed in His character from then to now. He is no respecter of persons.

These Four powerful Angels are about to bring about a severe action in Judgment; but something is staying their hand. What is it? *"And 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 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."* There is a FIFTH Angel ascending from the East – the source of the *"DaySpring from on High"* Luke 1:78. This Angel represents the Chancellor of God the Father with an intercession for the righteous.

We see further evidence of the distortion of truth contained in new Bible versions such as the NIV and ESV in the rendering of this text. . What is that distortion? Notice that the 5th Angel bears the seal of the Living God. What is the purpose of that seal? It is to distinguish the righteous from the wicked in the execution of final judgment. Compare the manner in which the NIV and ESV render the placement of the seal:

NIV: 3 "Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal ON THE FOREHEADS of the servants of our God." Rev 7:3 (NIV)

ESV: 3 *"Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God ON THEIR FOREHEADS."* Rev 7:3 (ESV)

Now observe, again, the wording of the Received Text (KJV):

KJV: 3 *"Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God IN THEIR FOREHEADS"* (Rev 7:3) You may wonder why I make such a big issue of the one little word, either 'ON', or 'IN'? There is a tremendous difference! If a gunner lays the barrel of a heavy artillery piece just three miles off the aiming point, the movement would be almost imperceptible at gunsight; however, 3,000 meters downrange, the artillery round will completely miss the intended target. The same is true in this case.

When I was a young boy, I was intrigued by the imagery of Revelation. I worried that someday, some ruthless dictator would hold me down and brand his mark on my forehead, and I would thereby miss the Eternal bliss of Heaven. But such a brand would not be my mark, but another's which he imposed on me. Even today, it is not uncommon to hear ministers and laity refer to that mark of the Beast ON the forehead. The Seal of God is similarly referred to, erroneously I believe, as being ON the forehead. What spiritual impact could a superficial mark or seal possibly have? That mark or seal must be one which represents the inner soul – not the outward appearance of a person. Needless to say, the King James Version gets it just right and the other modern versions deceive their readers. The Mark of the Beast is not going to be a UPC code superimposed on the forehead any more than the Seal of God will be a symbol superimposed. The Seal is 'IN' the forehead. What does that mean? It means that the frontal lobe of the brain is the seat of judgment and decision for the human mind. It is the part of our brain that decides moral issues, and to whom we pay allegiance or defiance. It is that Seal IN our forehead and IN our heart that identifies us as belonging to God or to the devil. God needs no outward mark to know His own Elect. He is a reader of the intents of the heart (or mind).

Do we intend to obey the Commandments of God insofar as we are able, or do we rebel against His Commandment of Love and forgiveness?

Let's review other parts of this Book where the Mark or Seal are mentioned: *"1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written IN THEIR FOREHEADS."* (Rev 14:1) Yes, you guessed it: the NIV and ESV both read 'ON' their foreheads. The same is true of the next: *16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or IN THEIR FOREHEADS: 17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.* (Rev 13:16-17)

It is the Holy Spirit that seals the Elect in the Forehead. It is not an outward mark or seal which is superimposed ON our forehead that either identifies us as friend or foe of our God.

I have heard lukewarm Christians aver, "Oh, it doesn't matter which Bible version we use as long as we love Jesus." Wrong! We cannot truly know Jesus unless we have His pure and undefiled Word which describes Him. If I plan to drive to Syracuse, NY, I need a map of New York State – not Sicily where another Syracuse is historically located. If I am bound for Heaven, I need a map and compass that is correct to the nth degree. DO NOT BE DECEIVED!