

PREFACE

These notes are to serve as a blessing and help to those studying the word with Pastor Neil Spencer. Pastor Neil does not claim to fully agree with all the thoughts, beliefs, writings, or teachings of every named source/person in these notes. The Bible is the ultimate authority & ALL believers are to be Bereans (Acts 17.10-11).

INTRODUCTION

1. It's often been said that Revelation is a difficult book to understand, & I 100% agree... if you don't know that the book comes with it's own "*divine outline*" — clarity to what it's about...
 1. That's true with most things in life
 2. Without some sense of clarity to — what/who/how — you can easily get lost...
 3. For example, who here knows how to operate one of these?
 1. **(PP)** Super Veloce Flat 6 engine — north of \$10k
 2. **(PP)** Global Hawk, fly at an altitude of 55k ft & stay in flight 30 hrs.
 3. **(PP)** Baby & Puppy
 4. Not everything comes w/ instructions included, or a guide/outline... but Revelation does...
2. **(PP)** John is told, **1.19** *Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.*
 1. CH 1: *the things that John saw* — the reality of the **PERSON** of **JESUS** — Resurrected/in Power
 2. CH 2-3: *the things that were* — at the time John was writing... the **PEOPLE** of **JESUS** — 7 Churches
 3. CH 4–22: *the things which will take place...*
 1. CH 4–5: HEAVEN... believe this to be picturesque of JESUS rapturing HIS church & clarity that the Father & the Son are seated in Authority & Power... and it's a GOOD thing!
 2. CH 6-19: HEAVEN/EARTH... we see Justice & Mercy
 1. God pouring out His wrath/judgment on a Christ-Rejecting world
 2. The OT— "*the day of the Lord*" or "*the time of Jacob's trouble*," (Jacob renamed Israel)
 3. Why the tribulation... why this judgment?
 1. **WAKE** Up a Nation — the nation of Israel
 2. **SHAKE** Up a Ppl — those who don't believe now, in their own world
 4. That's what we see for the season/series in front of us CH 6–19— **Jesus: Full of Mercy & Justice** — **waking** up the nation of Israel & **shaking** up a Christ-rejecting world.
3. Last week we saw that Ch 6 evidences — **JUSTICE** — wouldn't you agree? Here's what we saw:
 1. Judgment, the Antichrist, war, economic ruin, famine, & death brought about by 4 horsemen.
 2. Natural Disaster — an earthquake shakes the earth, affecting the sun, moon, sky, land, and sea.
 3. Many who turn to Jesus during this time are martyred.
 4. Things are so bad, look at what **(PP)** 6:15–17 — records for us, **15** *Then everyone—the kings of the earth, the rulers, the generals, the wealthy, the powerful, and every slave and free person—all hid themselves in*

the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. 16 And they cried to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. 17 For the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to survive?"

4. Now, CH 7 is a response to the question that CH 6 closes w/

1. v17 — *For the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand it?*

1. God, in His MERCY is not done w/ the ppl of ISRAEL

2. Nor, even after the rapture, those who are not — the Gentiles

3. In His mercy, in CH 7 we see Him **WAKING** up Israel & **SHAKING** up the Gentiles to salvation...

2. This chapter evidences the **MERCY** of God

5. Here's what we'll see this morning:

1. CH 7 is a pause/calm from judgment, & as an angel seals God's ppl — Israel — from judgment

2. There's a massive gathering in heaven (Jew/Gentile) worshipping God b/c of His Justice & Mercy

3. Let's jump in

REVELATION 7

1 Then I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds so they did not blow on the earth or the sea, or even on any tree. 2 And I saw another angel coming up from the east, carrying the seal of the living God. And he shouted to those four angels, who had been given power to harm land and sea, 3 "Wait! Don't harm the land or the sea or the trees until we have placed the seal of God on the foreheads of his servants.

1. Our area is no stranger to the power of water... but also wind... did you this in Destin this week? (**PP**)

1. Amazing what wind can do — both positively & negatively...

2. John writes that there are 4 angels at the 4 corners of the earth — this is not a proof text for the flat earth theorists — just everyday language to describe every area of the earth...

2. These angels are holding back what's called the "four winds"

1. Are these water spout winds? — to cause destruction — & these angels are holding them back as an owner of a large dog may try to hold back his dog from some—one/thing walking by?

2. Or are these winds like the breeze of GB that we can experience in the evening of warm summer's day?

1. You see, by holding back the wind, so much destruction would naturally befall the earth

2. For one, air pollution would hang over every city & would not blow away.

3. Also, evaporated water from the oceans would simply rise into the atmosphere & remain there....

4. Producing worldwide drought with no rain...

3. We don't know... but what we do know is that

1. CH 7 is a pause, between the 6th/7th seals

2. In this pause, God uses His angels as representatives of His will...
 3. We see that there is order & authority amongst the ranks of God's angels
 4. As an angel carries God's seal, he calls the other 4 to pause, so God's seal can be placed upon His ppl.
3. What's the seal about?
1. In Scripture, a seal indicates ownership & protection.
 1. Today, God's people are sealed by the Holy Spirit
 2. **(PP) Eph. 1.13** *In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were **sealed** w/ the Holy Spirit of promise, **14** who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.*
 3. The Holy Spirit in our lives is the seal & the guarantee that we belong to God
 4. And that seal leads to fruitfulness & change in our lives by His Spirit.
 5. God's seal is God's hand of protection & ownership upon them...
 2. This is truly an act of God's MERCY
 1. God isn't obligated to save or protect us NOW or those who come to know Him then, but He does!
 2. God is a **MERCIFUL** God... God is a **HOLY** God... God is a God of **MERCY & JUSTICE**.
 3. And so during this time God seals a special group of ppl...
 3. This seal contrasts what's known as the "mark of the beast" in Rev. 13:17.
 4. Whose being sealed & Why? ...
- 4** *And I heard how many were marked with the seal of God—144,000 were sealed from all the tribes of Israel:*
1. There is a definitive number — 144k
 2. There is a definitive group—144k from ALL the tribes of Israel — 12 Tribes at 12k a piece.
 3. So if you ever hear someone from somewhere say that they're a part of the 144k, ask them to show you their seal, & a tribe... a tribe? ... look at what John records for us...
- 5** *from Judah 12,000, from Reuben 12,000, from Gad 12,000* **6** *from Asher 12,000, from Naphtali 12,000, from Manasseh 12,000,* **7** *from Simeon 12,000, from Levi 12,000, from Issachar 12,000,* **8** *from Zebulun 12,000, from Joseph 12,000, from Benjamin 12,000.*
1. 12k from each tribe for 144k marked with a seal. A few questions to consider here....
 1. Why are these tribes from Israel a priority here?
 1. You & I recognize that the Bible is for us, but not necessarily all about us.
 2. Zech 12 + Rom 11 tell us there will be a future repentance in which Israel will turn back to God.
 3. These 144k Jews seem to be a sort of "first fruits" of that redeemed Israel.

2. Okay... I see that... why are listed in this way?
 1. It's different from other ways in Scripture that the 12 tribes are described.
 2. It's there something here? ... some kind of Biblical code or something?
 3. The Tribes of Dan & Ephraim are not mentioned... & the Tribes of Joseph (which is not really ever spoken of in this way) & Levi seem to take their place — Why?
 1. Some Bible commentators/scholars say that in the OT books of Hosea & 1 Kings that Dan/Ephraim were guilty of idolatry, thus disqualifying them from this seal of God.
 2. Some believe the False Prophet mentioned in CH 5 will come from the tribe of Dan.
 4. Honestly, we don't really know... but, there's something to that fact... right there...
 1. We don't know...
 2. As we approach the book of Revelation... as we approach a walk with God...
 3. Let's remember/recognize that with God — we are on a NEED to KNOW basis
 1. Often He gives us what we NEED in HIS eyes... not our own...
 2. Our lives are lives of FAITH
 4. **(PP)** 2 Cor 5.7 *For we walk by faith, not by sight.*
 5. Paramount to remember in this study & our life's journey with the Lord
 1. In Revelation — we see that:
 1. Jesus LOVES His Church (CH 1-5)
 2. Jesus Is Full of Mercy & Justice (CH 6-19)
 3. Jesus Wins in the End (CH 20-22)
 4. That's what we know! The details belong to God...
 2. In our life's journey with the Lord:
 1. God is GOOD
 2. God has given us His Son, His Word, His Spirit, His Church, His Mission
 3. That's what we know! The details belong to God...
 3. May our lives be centered/wrapped around the truth we do know, not what we don't.
 6. Why are they listed this way??? ... just to mess with us... :)
 1. God doesn't always fit w/in the boxes of our lives that we want or are comfortable with
 2. Instead of seeking to **FIT** Him into box... let's **FOLLOW** Him w/ our lives.
 3. A God who never supersedes our will or desires is no God at all...
3. Why this seal?
 1. Judgment will continue to intensify during the Tribulation.
 2. These 144K Jews are “sealed,”

1. Meaning they have divine protection from God.
2. Protection from divine judgment & protection from the wrath of the Antichrist.
3. CH 7 & 14 indicate that mission of these 144k is to evangelize during the tribulation.
 1. And as they do, they'll be protected from all the judgment around them
 2. Able to carry on with the mission God has specifically for them b/c their sealed by Him.
4. Just as with our last question... why are the names listed uniquely — it reminds us that HE is God, we are not... and that there are just some things that we don't know... and we won't... we're on a need to know basis with God.
5. So too, there is application for us with the 144k being sealed for the work of God.
 1. **(PP)** *In every age, God has had His faithful remnant. Elijah thought he was alone, but God had 7,000 who were yet faithful to Him (1 Kings 19:18). The sealing described in Revelation 7 certainly has its background in Ezekiel 9:1–7, where the faithful were sealed before God's judgment fell. So, while these 144,000 Jews are an elect people in the last days with a special task from God, they also symbolize God's faithful elect in every age of history.*
 2. **(PP)** *The Scripture is full of examples of how God is able to keep those who belong to Him safe in times of judgment, including Noah, Lot, Rahab, and the Israelites at the time of Egypt's ten plagues. In the same way, God will protect these servants during the tribulation period, even as His judgment continues to fall.*
 3. What's the application here for us?
6. This should lead us to **live w/ CONFIDENCE** & we should **live CIRCUMSPECTLY**
 1. Live **CONFIDENTLY** — Confident that God is our HEAVENLY FATHER... He's sealed us
 1. Believers we're sealed — Eph 1.13 *you were **sealed** w/ the Holy Spirit of promise*
 2. Listen the words of Jesus **7** *“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. **8** For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. **9** Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? **10** Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? **11** If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!*
 3. Walk in **CONFIDENTLY** in the **LOVE & CARE** of your HEAVENLY FATHER who has sealed you... and...
 2. Live **CIRCUMSPECTLY**
 1. **CONFIDENT** Christians aren't arrogant Christians, but those who walk circumspectly.

2. "Walking Circumspectly" means "to watch or look carefully at how you live, to be vigilant and mindful of your behavior, to be on the lookout."

1. (PP) Eph 5.15-17 "See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is"

2. (PP) 1 Peter 5.8-9 "Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour **9** Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith."

3. Just b/c we're sealed ... it doesn't mean that we live stupid.

4. But b/c we're sealed...we live **CONFIDENT** in our Father & **CIRCUMSPECT** in lives.

2. These sealed 144k, I believe are living **CONFIDENTLY & CIRCUMSPECTLY**...

1. We see, in the 2nd half of this chapter what I believe ... is the fruit of their evangelistic ministry...

2. It's a scene in heaven.

9 After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands.

10 And they were shouting with a great roar, "Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne and from the Lamb!" **11** And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living beings. And they fell before the throne with their faces to the ground and worshiped God. **12** They sang, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and strength belong to our God forever and ever! Amen."

1. There is this magnificent scene in heaven — a massive sea of people from every corner of the earth, every ppl group, and in every language **STANDING** before **JESUS**

1. Clothed in white ... palm branches in their hands — purity, victory, wholeness, celebration

2. The angels are there... the elders.... the 4 living beasts... worshipping God...

3. What are they saying? ... they're not saying anything... they're **SHOUTING & SINGING**

2. Shouting — "Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne and from the Lamb!"

3. Singing — "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and strength belong to our God forever and ever! Amen."

4. You'd think as the new guy in heaven John might ask, what is this? Who are these ppl? Look what happens...

13 Then one of the twenty-four elders asked me, "Who are these who are clothed in white? Where did they come from?" **14** And I said to him, "Sir, you are the one who knows." Then he said to me, "These are the ones who died in the great tribulation. They have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb and made them white."

1. John gets asked by one of the 24 elders who these ppl are...

1. John... IDK... you tell me...

2. These are Christian martyrs of the great tribulation.

2. **(PP)** *Once God has sealed his 144,000, the whole world will hear his message. Multitudes will believe and be saved. The Antichrist and his False Prophet will be furious and try to stop the revival by forcing new believers to turn away from the faith. They will deny people food and medicine. Executions will be frequent and numerous. The number of martyrs will be more than any man can count.*

3. So in v15 — this elder in heaven explains...

15 *“That is why they stand in front of God’s throne and serve him day and night in his Temple. And he who sits on the throne will give them shelter. 16 They will never again be hungry or thirsty; they will never be scorched by the heat of the sun. 17 For the Lamb on the throne will be their Shepherd. He will lead them to springs of life-giving water. And God will wipe every tear from their eyes.”*

1. These martyrs who faced unbelievable thirst, starvation, & persecution are now SHEPHERDED by JESUS.

2. Revelation 6.17 ends with this question... *For the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand it?*

3. Here’s what CH7 shows us... those who are able to stand this judgement from God are those who are:

1. Those who are SEALED by God — the 144k — God’s ownership & protection

2. Those who are SHEPHERDED by Jesus... will stand with Him in the end

1. They’re free from the pain/challenge of living in a fallen world

2. They’re free from the sorrow/persecution from a Christ-rejecting world

CONCLUSION + APPLICATION

1. This is all w/in our divine outline of Revelation — **1.19** *Write **the things which will take place after this.***

2. CH 6-19: from the perspective of ... HEAVEN/EARTH... we see Justice & Mercy

1. God pouring out His wrath/judgment on a Christ-Rejecting world — the Tribulation time.

2. Why the tribulation... why this judgment?

1. **WAKE** Up a Nation — the nation of Israel — so that they can be **SEALED**

2. **SHAKE** Up a Ppl — those who don’t believe now — so that they can be **SHEPHERDED**

3. There’s insight for what’s to come & there’s application for us today — whether you’re following Jesus or not...

1. Followers of Jesus — You are SEALED & you are being SHEPHERDED — JN 10.11 *“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep.*

2. Don’t know Him — God wants you, He wants you to know Him... to be sealed & shepherded by Him...

3. It’s as easy as the A, B, C’s — **A**dmit, **B**elieve, **C**onfess, **D**eclare/**D**ie/**D**isciple, **E**xperience, **F**orgiveness & **F**aithfulness, **G**race & **G**oodness of God.