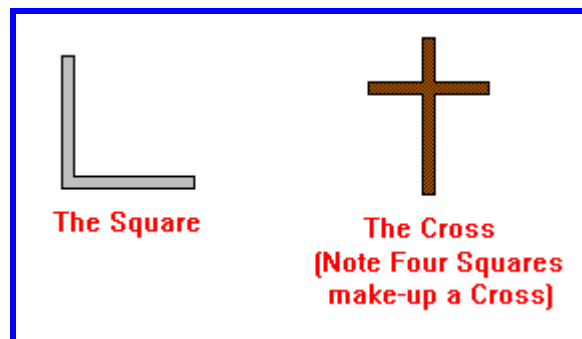


Chapter 7

John continues to see the events occurring in the sixth dispensation. He sees the spread of the Gospel on the earth and the staying of the Lords' hand for the destruction of the wicked. He sees temple work being performed as never before, and witnesses many partaking of the great sealing power. He sees the greatest missionary force ever witnessed.

Verse 1: John sees four angels sent fourth from the four corners of the earth. Angels are the servants of the Lord, so rather he sees four servants of God. The four corners of the earth symbolize the complete earth. The four corners of the earth have also symbolized the four elements; Air, Earth, Water, Fire. Whether these angels had control over the complete earth or just the earth's elements probably doesn't make much difference. The Doctrine and Covenant section 77, verse 8 says, "*the four angles were sent forth from God. They were given power over the four parts of the earth, to save life or to destroy*". John says that the angels were holding the 4 winds. The wind can be used to symbolize destruction or power (Mosiah 7:31). It makes sense that they would hold the four winds if God has given them power to save life or to destroy. The number four is used several times in the verse and has a symbolic meaning in itself. The number four is closely related to the square and the cross. Both of these symbols represent complete perfection.



The Doctrine and Covenants Section 77, verse 8 continues by saying, "*the angels have the everlasting gospel to spread throughout the earth. They have the power to shut up heaven, seal up unto life, or cast down regions of darkness*". It would appear that these angels have the power to break down the barriers of nations to spread the gospel, to seal the proceedings in the temple, and to cast aside the attempts of the adversary to hinder God's work.

Verse 2: John sees another angel, symbolically meaning a servant or messenger from God. The angel descends from the east. This would also mean that he was coming from God. The sun rises in the East, and so shall the Son of God return from the East. Both reference the fact that the east is designated as the symbolic reference for Gods' dwelling. The angel was said to have the seal of the living God. Ancient Kings used wax pressed on paper by the insignia on their rings to indicate official decree and authority. This was called the Royal, or King's seal (Daniel 6:17). The angel having the seal of the Living God would indicate that he was under God's direction, and that he had an official decree. The angel is said to have cried with a loud voice. The voice is used to symbolize words or warning while the word loud would symbolize their importance. The angel, being sent of God on official business was sent to proclaim a very important message.

Verse 3: The angel from the east commands that the powers of destruction shall be stayed from the earth for a period of time. It should be stayed until, *"We have sealed the servants of the living God in their foreheads"* (Doctrine and Covenants 77:9). The Prophet Joseph Smith said, *"Four destroying angels holding power over the four quarters of the earth until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads, which signifies sealing blessings upon their heads, thereby making their calling and election sure. When a seal is put upon the father and mother, it secures their posterity, so that they cannot be lost, but will be saved by virtue of the covenants of their father and mother"* (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, page 321). When speaking of the sealing in the forehead, the Lord is referring to the covenant made in the Holy temple of God. It is there that we covenant with God, and he with us, binding or sealing both parties. The choice of John's words are interesting. The reason he choose to refer to the sealing power of the temple as being sealed in the forehead has to do with the culture of the time. It was common for the ancient cultures to mark insignias in their foreheads that would symbolize their God. For example, the followers of Zeus marked lightning bolts on their foreheads. This showed their allegiance to their God. Though the living God does not ask that we literally mark inscriptions in our forehead, he does ask that we devote our allegiance to him. The ancient society would understand the sealing in the forehead as a symbol of devotion. The Doctrine and Covenants Section 77, verse 9 speaks of Elias as the angel from the East being sent to gather Israel and restoring all things. We know that Elias is a title often used for very important messengers of God. The restoration did not occur through just one Elias, but through several who came to bestow the keys of authority and power (Teachings of the Prophet

Joseph Smith, page 335). A brief overview of the verse would say, that the powers of heaven were restored to the earth, that the sealing of God's people might occur before the day of wrath.

Verse 4:

It appears that a choice 144,000 were given a special calling. John says that he heard the number of those sealed being as 144,000, with 12,000 being called from each of the tribes of the children of Israel. The Doctrine and Covenants helps us understand exactly who these 144,000 will be.

1. Sealed High Priest
2. Ordained to the Holy Order of God to Administer the Everlasting Gospel (Missionaries)
3. Ordained from every Nation, Kindred, and People by the angel given power over the Nations of the Earth to bring many into the church.

This 144,000 is to be the greatest missionary force ever assembled. Joseph Fielding Smith said, "*This certainly is a great honor to be one of the 144 thousand who are specially called by the power of 'the angels to whom is given power over the nations of the earth' to bring souls unto Christ. John the Apostle, had the great desire to bring souls to Christ. The Three Nephites likewise sought this great honor and it was granted them. It is one of the noblest desires that a man can have. It will be a wonderful blessing to those who are called in this great group (Church History and Modern Revelation, Volume 2, pages 71-72)*".

Verses 5-8:

John recounts the make-up of the 144,000. They are as follows;

<i>Tribe</i>	<i>#</i>
Juda	12,000
Reuben	12,000
Gad	12,000
Aser	12,000
Nepthalim	12,000
Manasse	12,000
Simeon	12,000
Levi	12,000
Issachar	12,000
Zabulon	12,000
Joseph	12,000
Benjamin	12,000

Verse 9: John sees an incomprehensible mass of people standing before the throne of God and the Lamb. The Lamb of course is symbolic of the Savior. The people were said to be clothed in white robes. This represents complete perfection. They are said to have palms in their hands. Palm trees, more specifically fig palms, live to be about 300 years old. They grow to 65 feet high and the supple trunk is not broken by the wind. Because of this, they are used to symbolized the Tree of Life, victory, peace, and royalty. The evergreen fronds of the Palm are used to symbolize eternal life and the resurrection. The triumphal entry of Christ was appalling to the non-believing Jews of the time because the believers cast palm fronds at his feet. A symbol that was unmistakably saying that he was King of the Jews.

Verses 10-12: The masses cried in a loud voice and praised God and the Savior.

Verse 13: One of the twenty-four (24) elders, spoken of in chapter four of the book of Revelation, asks John if he knew who the people in the white robes were and where they came from.

Verse 14: John asks the Elder to answer his own question. The Elder answers that the people clothed in white robes are those that came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Is it any wonder that they praise God? The savior has atoned for their sins, making them pure. The robe symbolizes the persons' completeness. A soiled or dirty robe indicates a persons' imperfection and sin. A white robe on the other hand symbolizes a persons complete perfection. The blood of the Lamb makes reference to the fact that the Savior (the Lamb) atoned for our sin by the spilling of his own blood. Since the Savior paid for our sins with his blood, we can repent and become pure. That explains the symbolism behind washing robes white with the blood of the Lamb.

Verse 15: John sees the masses serve the Lord day and night in his temple. The Lord himself dwelt among them. The temple spoken of might not be a physical building. The temple is often a symbol for the presence or residence of God.

Verse 16: The masses are no longer affected by the pains and trials of mortality. We can easily see that the life with the Savior will be much better than this one. No suffering, no trials, and no discomfort, if we but come unto Christ.

Verse 17: The Lamb (the Savior) is said to be in their midst. He shall feed them from living fountains of water. Fountains represent cleansing and purification. Water is a symbol of renewal, both bodily, emotional,

and spiritual cleansing. To be fed represents acquiring that which one needs to live. In the life hereafter the requirements to live appear to be perfection and renewal. Since there is no way that we can obtain that ourselves, it is nice to know that the Father has made it possible for the Lamb to give us that "food". The chapter ends by saying that God wiped the tears from their eyes. This refers to the first part of John's vision, when the masses cried because there was no one worthy to open the book of life and save mankind. God provided a Savior, and thus wiped the tears from their eyes (*Revelation 5:4*).

In this chapter, we see the spread of the Gospel and we see preparation for the day of wrath and indignation on the people of the earth. I am sure that the Lord wanted to assure John that not all would be lost. The Lord knew that the contents of the next few chapters might be disturbing to John. In verses nine (9) to seventeen (17) of this chapter the Lord shows John the huge mass of people that have been saved through the Savior. So large was the mass that it could not be numbered. It is comforting to know that no matter what wrath comes upon the earth, we need only fear if we have not turned to the Savior and made our robes white.