

# SEAL, SEALING AND SEALED



Seventh-day Adventists have placed significance upon the sealing message of Revelation 7. That message is linked to many important eschatological events. Evidence would suggest that only those at the very end who are sealed will be given the gift of eternal life.

That seal is so important, once made, it becomes a shield against the assaults of Satan.

“I saw Satan would work more powerfully now than ever he has before. He knows that his time is short and that the sealing of the saints will place them beyond his power; he will now work in every way that he can and will try his every insinuation to get the saints off from their

guard and get them asleep on the present truth or doubting it, so as to prevent their being sealed with the seal of the living God.—Ms 7, 1850, pp. 2, 3. (‘A Vision God Gave Me at Brother Harris,’ August 24, 1850.)”<sup>[1]</sup>

“As the people of God afflict their souls before Him, pleading for purity of heart, the command is given, ‘Take away the filthy garments’ from them, and the encouraging words are spoken, ‘Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.’ The spotless robe of Christ’s righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, yet faithful children of God. The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, nevermore to be defiled by the corruptions of the world. Their names are retained in the Lamb’s book of life, enrolled among the faithful of all ages. They have resisted the wiles of the deceiver; they have not been turned from their loyalty by the dragon’s roar. Now they are eternally secure from the tempter’s devices.”<sup>[2]</sup>

That seal is the greatest gift that heaven can bestow: Here on this earth, before the close of probation, that seal validates several redemptive issues.

1. It places God’s people beyond the power of Satan.
2. It comes as the saints are afflicting their souls before Him, pleading for purity.
3. Their names are forever retained in the Lamb’s book of life.
4. It validates they resisted the temptations of the deceiver successfully [past tense].

## What the Seal Costs

The fourth item noted above presents a significant achievement by the saints. Before the sealing, they resisted sin completely. Revelation 14:4 says, “They are virgins.” This suggests that they understood the purity of truth and became part of it. Their commitment to Jesus was complete and without compromise.

“In their mouth was found no guile: for they are *without fault* before the throne of God.” Revelation 14:5.

“We may talk of the blessings of the Holy Spirit, but unless we prepare ourselves for its reception, of what avail are our works? Are we striving with all our power to attain to the stature of men and women in Christ? Are we seeking for his fullness, ever pressing toward the mark set before us,—*the perfection of his character? When the Lord’s people reach this mark, they will be sealed in their foreheads.* Filled with the Spirit, they will be complete in Christ, and the recording angel will declare, ‘It is finished.’”[3]

They have learned that sin is the barrier to heaven’s blessing and eternal life (“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” Psalms 66:18). To resist sin is regarded as life’s greatest challenge, but they know it is pivotal to their future reward. The promise is given and claimed:

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, *to give you an expected end.* Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find *me*, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.” Jeremiah 29:11-13.

This stunning issue is denied and often avoided by Christians. The concept that the protective seal comes only after the character is perfect seems foreign to those who accept the completed work of Christ on the cross. The obedience challenge penetrates deeper:

“Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. *It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall* upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost.”[4]

This quotation takes the character issue a step further. When the defects in our character are dealt with, *when* the soul temple is cleansed of every defilement, *then* the latter rain will fall on us. In looking at the sequence which is developed, this is what emerges (Table 1 below):

Table I							
Saints afflict souls 5T475	Perfectly resisting sin 5T475	Characters perfect in Him [His spotless robe covers them] 5T475	Latter rain 5T24	Sealing RH 5/10/ 1902	Beyond Satan’s power 8MR220	First fruits from among men Rev. 14:4	Name in Lamb’s Book of Life 5T475

The church symbolized by the sealed 144,000 is Philadelphia of Revelation 3. As Jesus dictates to John what to write, He notes “thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied by name.” In a little measure, the Holy Spirit was already working with them, and they responded – fully. Then a promise was made:

“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.” Revelation 3:10.

God would endow them with special strength – forever – including from “the hour of temptation” that represents the time of tribulation. How is that accomplished? By the sealing.

“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him* my new name.” Revelation 3:11. That’s the seal.

Why is this all so important?

“Behold, I come [present tense] quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” Revelation 3:11.

The victory is theirs – they own a crown – hold fast, don’t let the wonderful tie with heaven and eternity slip.

“The time has come when we must expect the Lord to do great things for us. Our efforts must not flag or weaken. We are to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord. *Before the work is closed up and the sealing of God’s people is finished, we shall receive the outpouring of the Spirit of God.* Angels from heaven will be in our midst. The present is a fitting-up time for heaven when we must walk in full obedience to all the commands of God.—Letter 30, 1907.”<sup>[5]</sup>

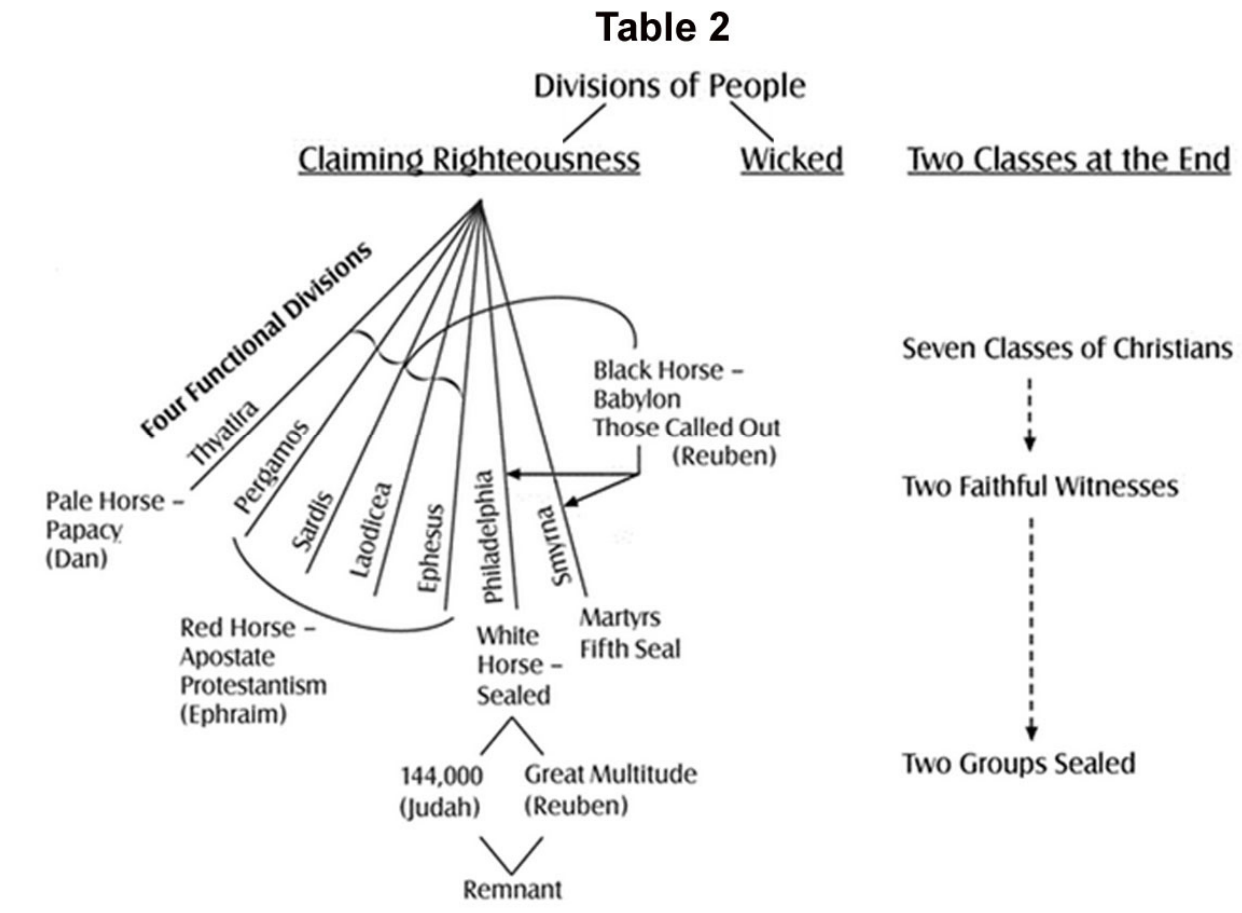
Luke, the probable author of Acts, affirms this sequence “And we are his witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, which God hath given to them that obey him.” Acts 5:32 . The special outpouring of His Spirit follows a commitment to obey.

## **Not Everyone is Sealed**

To fully understand what the seal represents, we need to look at several ways God refers to His people or people who call themselves His.

1. In the Old Testament we are told at the time of the end (*es ques*) “Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; *but* the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand” (Daniel 12:10). Here we find, at the end, there will be two classes – pure and white and the wicked .
2. In Revelation 2 and 3 we find messages addressed to seven churches – all claiming to be God’s people. In Revelation 11 the two witnesses are two candlesticks, symbolic of the churches. But the number is down to two – Philadelphia and Smyrna . Five of the seven have disappeared from God’s list.
3. In Revelation 7 we find two groups also whom God claims and saves – the 144,000 and the great multitude.

4. In Revelation 6 the four horses represent four groups of people at the end who claim to be Christians but react very differently. The white horse represents those who receive the latter rain and go out with the gospel cry. The red horse is those who profess Christ but persecute those who don't believe like they do. The black horse encompasses Babylon but is standing still. They are God's people waiting for the "calling out" experience of Revelation 18. The pale horse are those "Christians" who pronounce and prepare to kill others for their faith under the fifth seal that is soon to begin (Table 2).



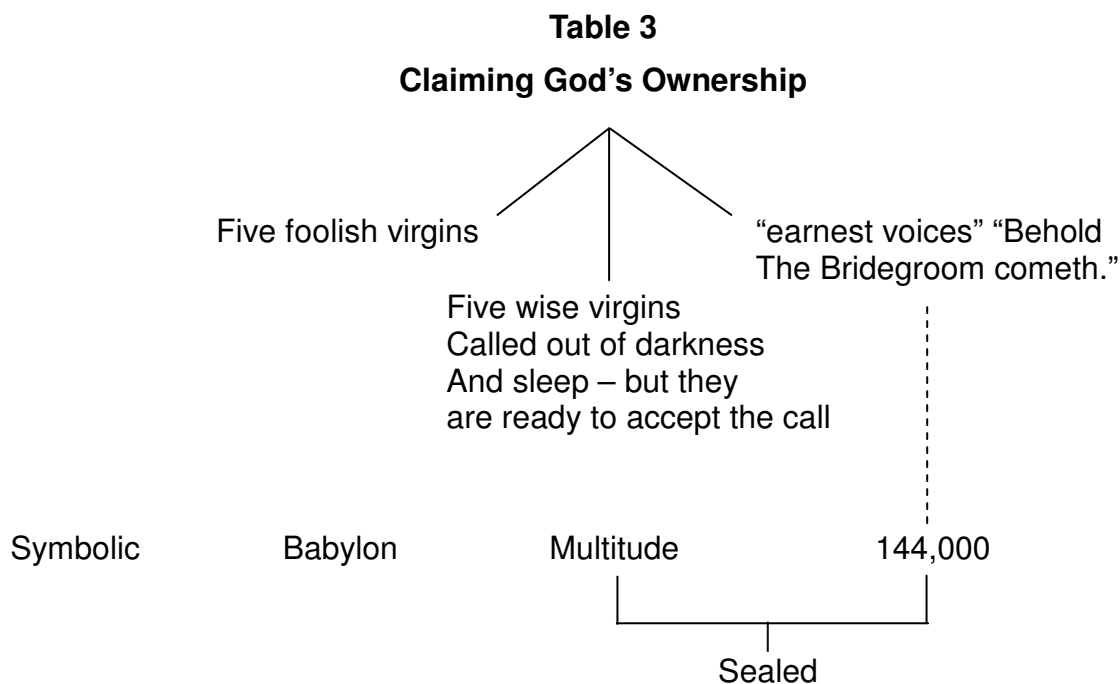
Merging these together we can make several remarkable discoveries. Those who will be sealed and made ready for translation are those:

1. Who are purified and made white
2. Who are described in Philadelphia
3. Are part of the white and black horse seals

### **144,000 are Specially Called to Call**

In the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-10) we see the experience of the church that

shall live just before His second coming.[6] They all were watching for the coming of the Lord. They all had the purity of faith and understanding. That is why they were called virgins. They all carried lamps – God’s word. All ten were dressed in white outwardly, symbolizing righteousness. They all slept. “Both parties were taken unawares.”[7] He came as a thief to all ten (Table 3).



Who announces His coming? A special group set aside for the task. They were not sleeping. They were so awake they announced the “coming” of the bridegroom.

Are there metaphors in Scripture that enlighten this concept? Israel was promised the prophet Elijah as the announcer of the Messiah’s coming.

“BEHOLD, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he *is* like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap: And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.” Malachi 3:1-3.

“FOR, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do *this*, saith the Lord of hosts. Remember ye the law of

Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, *with* the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.” Malachi 4:1-6.

God’s messenger will:

1. Prepare the way before Me
2. Be called Elijah the prophet because:
3. The Lord whom you ( Israel as a whole) seek will suddenly come

God’s people will:

Remember the Law of Moses at that time.

How will Elijah prepare the way of the Lord? How will he convey a sense of urgency that Jesus will come quickly?

The northern kingdom was in apostasy. King Ahab had married Jezebel, the daughter of a high priest of Baal. Israel was led into terrible idolatry, even though they considered themselves still the chosen of God, God sent Elijah to warn Israel , through Ahab, that a 3-1/2 year drought would come over the nation because of its rebellion.

At the end of the drought Elijah was sent back to Ahab (who was seeking his life).

“And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, [Art] thou he that troubleth Israel ? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel ; but thou, and thy father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim. Now therefore send, [and] gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel’s table. So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel , and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.” I Kings 18:17 -20.

Here is the message that God had for the people of Israel – the Elijah Message:

“And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the LORD *be* God, follow him: but if Baal, *then* follow him. And the people answered him not a word.” I Kings 18:21 .

“Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou [art] the LORD God, and [that] thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. **And when all the people saw *it*, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he *is* the God; the LORD, he *is* the God.** And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there. And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat

and drink; for [there is] a sound of abundance of rain. So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, [There is] nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare [thy chariot], and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel. I Kings 18:37 -46.

“Elijah” was to become symbolic of the time Jesus would be born a king. Who was the forerunner of the Messiah announcing His first coming?

“But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; **to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.**” Luke 1:13-17.

At the time of the transfiguration Elijah and Moses were seen. Moses representing those who would see death and be saved and Elijah those translated without seeing death. But the imagery went deeper. Moses represented the Law of Moses. **Elijah represented the cry to prepare the way of the Lord – just as Malachi had predicted.**

“While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard [it], they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead. And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.” Matthew 17:5-13. **“Prepare ye the way of the Lord.”**

Who are the ones, right at the end, who calls out, “The bridegroom is coming?;” “Come out of her, my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues?” Who is that “Elijah?” The evidence weighs heavily that it is the 144,000 – the sealed.

Do we have any clue that the 144,000 represent the modern day Elijah voice? Study the following text:

“And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.” Revelation 18:1-5.

The four winds of destruction were to be withheld till the saints (144,000) were sealed as it is initially presented in Revelation 7:1-4. Once all the sealing is completed, they are let loose. The full blast of destruction is eventually seen in the seven bowls or seven last plagues. Angels represent in Revelation 14 and 18 God’s messengers right at the end of time. Here in chapter 18 is a fourth angel, a fourth group of His messengers who have great authority and through them the earth is illuminated with His glory. “Glory” in prophecy means God’s character. They illuminate the earth with His character.

This message or call is a preparation message. It is almost time to meet God.

“In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord. Just such a work as that which John did, is to be carried on in these last days. The Lord is giving messages to His people, through the instruments He has chosen, and He would have all heed the admonitions and warnings He sends. The message preceding the public ministry of Christ was, Repent, publicans and sinners; repent, Pharisees and Sadducees; ‘for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Our message is not to be one of peace and safety. As a people who believe in Christ’s soon appearing, we have a definite message to bear,—‘Prepare to meet thy God.’”[8]

“Those who are to prepare the way for the second coming of Christ are represented by faithful Elijah, as John came in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for his first advent. The great subject of reform is to be agitated, and the public mind is to be stirred. Temperance in all things is to be connected with the message, to turn the people of God from their idolatry, their gluttony, their extravagance in dress and other things.”[9]

In the Elijah prophecy first outlined in Malachi, God instructed His people to not forget the Law of Moses – the Ten Commandments. Those commandments are a transcript of God’s character. If the 144,000 are to be pure and like virgins, and they represent fully God’s character, every one of those precepts will be fully represented and taught. And, that is what the sealing is all about. In Scripture a name represented character. When God’s name is stamped or sealed on the foreheads of the 144,000, it reveals what they are now like. They are like God in character!

“In the closing work of God in the earth, the standard of His law will be again exalted. False religion may prevail, iniquity may abound, the love of many may wax cold, the cross of Calvary may be lost sight of, and darkness, like the pall of death, may spread over the world; the whole



force of the popular current may be turned against the truth; plot after plot may be formed to overthrow the people of God; but in the hour of greatest peril the God of Elijah will raise up human instrumentalities to bear a message that will not be silenced. In the populous cities of the land, and in the places where men have gone to the greatest lengths in speaking against the Most High, the voice of stern rebuke will be heard. Boldly will men of God's appointment denounce the union of the church with the world. Earnestly will they call upon men and women to turn from the observance of a man-made institution to the observance of the true Sabbath."<sup>[10]</sup>

"As John the Baptist . . . called their attention to the Ten Commandments, so we are to give, with no uncertain sound, the message: 'Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come.' With the earnestness that characterized Elijah the prophet and John the Baptist, we are to strive to prepare the way for Christ's second advent."<sup>[11]</sup>

### **The "Name" of God – The Seal**

The name of "Jesus" means "God who saves;" "Emanuel" means "God with us;" "Lord" suggests "God with power and authority." The saints are sealed with His name. Revelation 14:1. Everything that God stands for is implanted in their minds, their hearts. This fulfills the promise of the Old and New Covenant. This completes what God has been corporately waiting thousands of years for – it happens with the sealing of the 144,000, the *first fruits* (Revelation 14:4) of His end-time kingdom church.

"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts [sealing]: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Hebrews 8:10.

In ancient Israel a phylactery was worn on the forehead and hand as a sign or seal of their devotion to Yahweh (Deuteronomy 6:8; 11:18 ). The bonding with and loyalty to God drew upon forehead symbology (cf. Exodus 13:9).

"You shall also make a plate of pure gold and shall engrave on it, like the engravings of a seal, 'Holy to the LORD. And you shall fasten it on a blue cord, and it shall be on the turban; it shall be at the front of the turban. And it shall be on Aaron's forehead, and Aaron shall take away the iniquity of the holy things which the sons of Israel consecrate, with regard to all their holy gifts; and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.'" Exodus 28:36-38.

This seal of God embodied His name and character. This spiritual bonding imagery is an antitypical fulfillment of the symbolic type that we engage in when loyal to God's commandments. In the decalogue, which is an outline of His character, He has placed His name. In keeping the Sabbath, one acknowledges His authority, brings honor to His name and recognizes the broad principles of His kingdom. Keeping the seventh day holy honors His holiness. The Sabbath becomes a symbolic seal of His claims on us as Creator and our allegiance to Him.

"The fourth commandment is the only one of all the ten in which are found both the name and

the title of the Lawgiver. It is the only one that shows by whose authority the law is given. Thus it contains the seal of God, affixed to His law as evidence of its authenticity and binding force.”[12]

“The sign, or seal, of God is revealed in the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, the Lord’s memoria of creation.”[13]

Here we see a crucial end-time message:

1. The seal is God’s name.
2. The name represents His character.
3. His name is in the Decalogue.
4. His name and title are centered in the Sabbath:
  - a. Acting as its (Decalogue) seal
  - b. It becomes a sign as to who are His.
5. The law is so important that God seals it in our minds – hearts.

No wonder “The Sabbath question is to be the issue in the final conflict in which all the world will act a part.”[14] There is where the two lines are drawn. There is where the imagery of Daniel 12:10 of two classes will emerge at the end. This helps not only to define further the 144,000 but what their message is all about. “. . . show them that it is of vital consequence whether they bear the mark of God’s kingdom or the mark of the kingdom of rebellion.”[15]

“Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn.” Isaiah 8:15, 20.

“Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates: That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth. For if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him;” Deuteronomy 11:18-22.

What is binding the testimony and sealing the law in the hearts of the saints? We will discover a special truth in this shortly.

There is one other very profound lesson we can draw from the Biblical record. Israel was instructed to observe a spring festival honoring the sprinkling of the blood of a Lamb on the doorpost – the Passover. Exodus 12:6-7, 11-13.

“And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike

it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I [am] the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy [you], when I smite the land of Egypt." Exodus 12:6-7; 11-13.

"And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the LORD's law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the LORD brought thee out of Egypt . And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt." Exodus 13:9, 16.

The Passover was to be a sign on the hand and forehead of God's deliverance. The passover is a sign or testimony of the power of the blood of Jesus to deliver. The Sabbath is a sign of obedience to the Sovereign Creator. Exodus 13:9, 16. And those two things bring up wonderful exegetic ties in Revelation.

The whole book of Revelation is the Testimony of Jesus. Revelation 1:2. It is a story of the final events of deliverance of the saints from sin. It makes clear that the *two signs* given to ancient Israel will be cherished and promoted by the saints, the remnant and the 144,000. Revelation 12:17 and 14:12. God's people will have the testimony of the delivering blood of Jesus by having a character (the sealing) just like His (this is found in the Revelation called the Testimony of Jesus). The saints will also keep the commandments, honoring the seal of His authority.

The mark of the beast of Revelation 13, must represent a false testimony of what the blood does (eucharist and confession) and promote a false Sabbath (Sunday). Woe to those who fail to see the vital prophetic links in the sealing message which irrevocably binds mankind's hearts.

## **Continued Importance of a Name**

God chose to set aside this very special group of people to exemplify his character. He revealed certain characteristics about them as has been noted. They fully understood the meaning of His redemption and restoring blood; they were obedient to the law; they were pure, perfect; and they were numbered at 144,000. This number was further divided in two ways: One, by 12 divisions of 12,000 people; two, the 12 divisions were from each of the 12 tribes of Israel . Dan and Ephraim were not in this list. Their wickedness put God's redemptive grace beyond reach.

Why a reference back to ancient Israel? Twelve is God's *kingdom* number. This runs through both the Old and New Testaments. Anciently, there were twelve tribes of Israel . The early Christian church began on the twelve apostles. Spiritual Israel , which started in A.D. 34

(though the new covenant was initiated at the cross in A.D. 31) is made up of 12 “tribes” as Revelation calls them. This is an eschatological restoration of the tribes. The numerology will carry through into the kingdom as the 12 apostles will have their names inscribed on the 12 foundations of the New Jerusalem. The 12 tribes will be engraved on the 12 gates of the city, and even the circumference of the city is 12,000 furlongs.

Beyond the symbology of 12, 12,000 and 144,000 lies a very important concept. The *names* of each tribe are listed. One of the most remarkable insights of hope lies in a study of those names.

Before Jacob passed away, around 1689 B.C. (Usher), he called his twelve sons to his side to define the future for each one of them. The King James version uses the words to tell what will befall them “in the last days.” The Hebrew word for this is *achariyth* (akh-ar-eeth’) [319], suggesting in their future, but it has other connotations for *posterity* and the very *end of time*. This same metaphorical use is also found in Daniel 8-12.

Picking up on this metaphorical issue, Gabriel draws John’s attention back to Genesis 49 where Jacob prophesied.

In an analysis of the sons there were good and bad predictions. The deep issues that inspire hope lie in the negative observations (Table 4).

**Table 4**

Reuben	Unstable as water, won't excel	Failure
Simeon	Instrument of cruelty, murderer, angry	Cruel, angry revengeful
Levi	Instrument of cruelty, murderer, angry	Cruel, angry revengeful
Judah	Eyes red with wine	Alcoholic(?) aggression
Zebulon	--	--
Issachar	Became servant	Dependent, submissive
Dan	Adder – a snake, harms others No salvation	Calloused, harming others
Gad	Defeated temporarily	Defeated by those stronger
Asher	Wealthy – life of ease	Wealthy
Naphtali	Promises great things, never carries them out	Great talker, can do it all, but never follows through
Joseph*	--	--
Benjamin	Aggressive for things of this	--
Ephraim	world -- *The two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manassa were later tribes, with Ephraim, Dan, disappearing in the Revelation 7 list.	--

---

Such lists have been embellished in the 12 signs of the Zodiac and in the nine personalities of the Enneagram popularized in the first half of the twentieth century. We have been admonished:

“Let us strive with all the power that God has given us to be among the hundred and forty-four thousand.”<sup>[16]</sup>

That is a universal invitation Within context of this 12-part division we can conclude that no matter who we are, what our background or what we have done, the cleansing blood of Jesus is strong enough to wash away all wrong.

“O Precious, loving, long-suffering, long-forbearing Jesus, how my soul adores Thee! That a poor, unworthy, sin-polluted soul can stand before the Holy God, complete in the righteousness of our Substitute and Surety! Wonder, O Heavens, and be astonished, O earth, that fallen man is the object of His infinite love and delight. He rejoices over them with celestial songs, and man defiled with sin, having become cleansed through the righteousness of Christ, is presented to the Father free from every spot and stain of sin, ‘not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing’ (Eph. 5:27 ). ‘Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God

that justifieth' (Rom. 8:33 )."[17]

This wonderful process finally becomes evident in the body of Christ. The first to achieve this are called the 144,000. They symbolize the forwardguard of God's last day church. They are the ones that act as a catalyst to evangelize the world.

"It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church."[18]

That is the incredible message of the "twelve" tribes. From every conceivable background God calls and gives power to overcome. This is one of the stronger arguments that at the end it will be seen that no excuse for sin exists. Everyone will have had a chance to become His. Through His Spirit everyone will have been given the opportunity to be saved. Everyone has the chance of being sealed, receiving the name of God on their forehead forever.

Franklin S. Fowler Jr., M.D.  
Prophecy Research Initiative © 2002–present  
*EndTime Issues...*, August 2002

**References** (emphases added unless otherwise noted):

- [1] Manuscript Releases, vol. 8, p. 220.
- [2] *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 475.
- [3] *The Review and Herald*, 6/20/1902 .
- [4] *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 214.
- [5] *Selected Messages*, bk 1, p. 111.
- [6] *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 406.
- [7] *Ibid.*, p. 412.
- [8] *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1184.
- [9] *Testimony to the Church*, pp. 85-86.
- [10] *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 186-187.
- [11] *Maranatha*, p. 22.
- [12] *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 307.
- [13] *Ibid.*, 8, p. 117.
- [14] *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 352.
- [15] *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 352.
- [16] *The Review and Herald*, 3/9/1905 .
- [17] *The Upward Look*, p. 377.
- [18] *The Desire of Ages*, p. 671.