

**WHAT DO THE TERMS “FOUR WINDS”, “SEA”, “WAVES OF THE SEA” AND “TREES”, SYMBOLIZE?**

(Excerpt from my book, “The Book of Revelation Decoded”, pages 231-241)

In Revelation 7:1-3, we read:

*“<sup>1</sup>After these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, so that no wind will blow on the earth, neither on the sea, nor on any tree. <sup>2</sup>And I saw another angel coming up from the rising of the sun, having a seal of the living God. And he cried with a great voice to the four angels to whom (authority) was given to harm the earth and the sea, <sup>3</sup>saying, Do not harm the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, until we seal the slaves of our God on their foreheads.” (AT)*

**Explanation of verses 1-3**

The above verses inform us that a very important action must take place **before** God’s judgments fall upon the wicked and Godless mankind: **The “sealing” of the servants of our God on their foreheads** (verse 3) **so that the “winds” will not harm them!** Let us have a closer look in the above verses:

**What do “the four corners of the earth” refer to?**

They refer to all four geographic directions of the planet earth (topical), that is, East, West, North and South. This expression means that **the action of the four angels will affect all the people of the planet!** (The “four corners” are also mentioned in Revelation 20:8 and Ezekiel 7:2.)

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**What do “*the four winds*” refer to?**

They refer to four sets of spiritual forces, in other words, to the angelic armies or hosts which will bring God’s judgments upon those **who are not “sealed”!**

**How can we tell that these are not the natural, the literal winds of the earth?**

Because the literal winds of the earth **do not have the intelligence** to decipher between those who are not sealed and those who are **in order not to harm them!** Only intelligent beings have this capability!

**What kinds of angelic beings are “*the four angels*” who hold “*the four winds*”?**

They are **four archangels** (leaders of angels) who “*hold*” in their hands, in other words, who **have authority over** the spiritual forces which will carry out God’s judgments. The fact that the expression “*hold*” refers to “**power**” or “**authority**”, is supported by Revelation 1:16 and Hebrews 1:3. Let us read these verses:

Revelation 1:16

*“and having in His right hand seven stars; and a sharp, two-edged sword proceeding out of His mouth, and His face shining as the sun in its power.”*

Hebrews 1:3

*“who being the shining splendor of His glory, and the express image of His essence, and upholding all things by the Word of His power, having made purification of our sins through Himself, He sat down on the right of the Majesty on high,”*

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Another place where we read about “*four angels*” who have been “*bound*” or **appointed** to carry out God’s judgments, is Revelation 9:14 and 15. There, it says,

*“<sup>14</sup>saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, Release the four angels, those having been bound at the great river Euphrates. <sup>15</sup>And the four angels were released, those having been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, that they should kill the third part of men.”*

**Does the Bible give us an example of an archangel who led his angels to carry out God’s judgments?**

Yes, of course! In Revelation chapter 12, we read about the archangel Michael who led his angels to make war against the dragon and his angels (Revelation 12:7)!

**What does the command, “*Do not harm the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, until we seal the slaves of our God on their foreheads*”, really mean?**

In order to understand the above command, we must know what the symbolic terms “*earth*”, “*sea*” and “*trees*” mean. Let us study these terms:

**The “*earth*”**

In the explanation of Revelation 1:5<sup>c</sup>, I fully explained that the symbolic term “*earth*” refers to “**all those who claim to know and believe the True God of the Bible; the Judeo-Christian community**”.

**The “*sea*”**

**What does the term “*sea*” symbolize?**

The prophet Isaiah wrote:

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***“But the wicked are like the driven sea, which cannot be quiet, and its waves cast up mire and dirt.” (Isaiah 57:20)***

From the above verse, we realize that **the “sea” is a symbol of the “world”, of the wicked and of the unbelieving in Jesus mankind!** Revelation 21:1 tells us that one day this symbolic “sea” will cease to exist. Let us read this verse:

***“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and the sea no longer is.”***

Now that we know the symbolism of the “*four winds*” and of the “*sea*”, we can understand Daniel 7:2. There, it says,

***“Daniel spoke and said, In my vision by night I was looking. And, behold, the four winds of the heavens were stirring up the Great Sea.”***

Other verses which support our conclusion that the “*sea*” pictures **the unbelieving** (in Jesus) **world**, are:

Matthew 4:18,19

***“<sup>18</sup>And walking beside the Sea of Galilee, Jesus saw two brothers, Simon being called Peter and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers. <sup>19</sup>And He says to them, Come after Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”***

Matthew 13:47

***“Again, the kingdom of Heaven is compared to a drag net thrown into the sea ...”***

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Decoding the symbols “*sea*” and “*earth*”, helps us understand the following three verses:

Revelation 10:2

***“And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth”.***

Revelation 13:1

***“And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea ....”***

Revelation 13:11

***“And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like unto a lamb”.***

Although the “*sea*” is a symbol of the unbelieving (in Jesus) mankind which someday will cease to exist (Revelation 21:1), **God’s mercy and long suffering is extended to them today!** God sends His preachers to preach His true gospel to them so they can hear that Jesus is the “**LORD**”, in other words, that He is the YHWH of Romans 10:13 whose Name they must call upon in order to be saved (Romans 10:9,13-15). If they will accept this message, the gospel of our salvation, and if they will ask Jesus to save them, He will!

To go one step further with our understanding on the symbolic term “*sea*”, let us read Jude 1:12,13:

***“<sup>12</sup>These are sunken rocks in your love feasts, feasting together with you, feeding themselves without fear, waterless clouds being carried about by winds, fruitless autumn trees, having died twice, having been plucked up by the***

*roots; <sup>13</sup>wild waves of the sea foaming up their shames, wandering stars for whom blackness of darkness has been kept to the age.”*

In the above verses, we meet the symbolic term, “*waves of the sea*”.

**What does a “wave” of the “sea” symbolize?**

Since the “*sea*” is a picture of the wicked and unbelieving in Jesus mankind, it is only logical to conclude that each “*wave of the sea*” is a symbol of a **wicked and unbelieving** (in Jesus) **individual**. This realization helps us better understand Luke 21:25. There it says,

*“And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;”*

Now that we have come to realize what the term “*sea*” symbolizes, it is much easier for us to understand the words of Revelation 7:2,3. Let us read these verses again:

*“And I saw another angel ... 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 sea, Saying, Hurt not ... the sea ... till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.”*

**The “trees”**

In Revelation 7:3, we meet another symbolic term: The “*trees*”. The command given to the four angels was,

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***“Do not harm the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, until we seal the slaves of our God on their foreheads.”***

**What do the “trees” symbolize?**

In Isaiah 61:3, we read:

***“To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.”***

From the above verse, we realize that the symbolic term “trees” refers to **people** (whether they are believers in Jesus or not) as do the symbolic terms “sheep” and “goats” of Matthew 25:32, the “wheat” and the “weeds” of Matthew 13:24-30, the “fish” of Matthew 13:47-49 and “the grass of the earth” and “every green thing” of Revelation 9:4 where it says,

***“And it was said to them that they should not harm the grass of the earth, nor every green thing, nor every tree, except only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.”***

The above conclusion is supported by the following verses:

Daniel 4:20-22

***“The tree which you saw ... It is you, O king”.***

Matthew 3:10

***“And even now the axe is put to the root of the trees; every tree then which does not give good fruit is cut down, and put into the fire.”***

Jude 1:12

***“These men are ... wasted trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots”.***

Contrary to the above ***“wasted trees without fruit”***, in Jeremiah 17:7,8, we read about those who are ***“trees”*** which **yield fruit**. Let us read these words:

***“<sup>7</sup>Blessed is the man who trusts in Jehovah, and Jehovah is his refuge. <sup>8</sup>For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters. It sends out its roots by the stream, and it will not fear when the heat comes; but its foliage will be green; and it is not anxious in the year of drought, nor will it cease from yielding fruit.”***

Knowing the meaning of the symbolic terms ***“trees”***, ***“sea”*** and ***“earth”***, helps us understand scriptures like Psalms 96: 9-12. There, we read:

***“O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth. Say among the heathen that the LORD reigneth: ... Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: ....”*** (KJV)



From all the above, we realize that the Lord God wishes to give a chance to the symbolic **“earth”**, to the symbolic **“sea”** and to all the **“trees”** (every individual), in order for them to hear the gospel which contains the Person and the work of the Savior, and to believe in it in order to be **“sealed”**! Praise His Name for His patience and grace!

The **“sealing”** on the foreheads of those who become believers in the True Jesus of the Bible, who is the YHWH Isaiah saw in the temple (compare Isaiah chapter 6 and John 12:37-41), before the execution of God’s judgements upon the symbolic **“earth”**, the **“sea”**, the **“trees”**, the **“grass of the earth”** and **“every green thing”** (please read the explanation of Revelation 9:4), reminds us of a similar **“sealing”** which is recorded in Ezekiel chapter 9. Let us read this chapter:

***<sup>1</sup>And He cried in my ears with a loud voice, saying, Let the overseers of the city draw near, even each with his destroying weapon in his hand. <sup>2</sup>And, behold, six men were coming from the way of the Upper Gate, which faces north. And each had his shattering weapon in his hand. And one man among them was clothed in linen, and an ink horn of a scribe at his loins. And they went in and stood beside the bronze altar. <sup>3</sup>And the glory of the God of Israel had gone on, from on the cherub where it was on it, to the threshold of the house. And He called to the man clothed in linen with the ink horn of a scribe at his loins. <sup>4</sup>And Jehovah said to him, Pass through in the midst of the city, in the midst of Jerusalem, and mark a mark on the foreheads of the men who are groaning and are mourning over all the abominations that are done in her midst. <sup>5</sup>And He said to those in my hearing, Pass over in***

*the city after him and strike. Do not let your eye spare, and do not have pity. <sup>6</sup>Slay the aged men, the young man, and the virgin, even children, and women, all to destruction. But to every man who has the mark on him, do not come near. And begin from My sanctuary. And they began with the aged men who were before the house. <sup>7</sup>And He said to them, Defile the house and fill the courts with the dying. Go forth! And they went out and killed in the city. <sup>8</sup>And it happened as they struck, and I remained, even I. Then I fell on my face and I cried out and said, Ah, Lord Jehovah! Will You destroy all the remnant of Israel in Your pouring out of Your fury on Jerusalem? <sup>9</sup>And He said to me, The iniquity of the house of Israel and of Judah is very great, and the land is filled with blood, and the city is full of perversity. For they say, Jehovah has forsaken the land; and, Jehovah does not see. <sup>10</sup>And even I, My eye does not spare, and I will not have pity. I will put their way on their head. <sup>11</sup>And, behold, the man clothed with linen, with the ink horn at his loins, reported the matter, saying, I have done as You commanded me.”*

**What is the “seal” that those who believe in the True Christ receive?**

In Ephesians 4:30, it says,

*“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”*

Therefore, **the “seal” of God is the Holy Spirit who indwells the born-again believers** (John 14:17). Those who do not have the “seal” of God on their foreheads (Revelation 9:4), are not born-again --- they are not saved!

**What must they do to be saved and to be “sealed”?**

Although we have dealt with this subject before, it can never be overemphasized since the salvation of men is at stake! In order to be saved and consequently “sealed”, they must fulfill God’s requirements for salvation as they are outlined in Romans 10:9,10,13 and 14. From these verses we realize that when they hear the gospel (which contains the Person and the work of the Savior), they must:

**Believe and confess with their own mouth that Jesus is the “Lord”, i.e., the YHWH of Romans 10:13 to whom they must pray to be saved and that Jesus was raised bodily from the dead (verse 9; Act 2:27).**

The above faith and free-willed confession of this faith (not the mechanical, “Repeat after me” confession), **will bring them to the point of praying to Jesus and asking Him to save them** (verse 13). At that very moment, He will save them “*by grace*” (Ephesians 2:8) and, consequently, **at that very moment, they will be “sealed” with His Holy Spirit!** Therefore, believing that Jesus is God by nature and that He rose **bodily** from the dead **precedes salvation**; in other words, **this faith is a prerequisite to being “sealed” with the Holy Spirit.** The apostle Paul agrees with our conclusion because, in Ephesians 1:13, he wrote:

*“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise” (KJV)*

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Those who are “*sealed*” make up the “*body*” of the Lord Jesus Christ which is “*the Church*”. This statement is supported by the words of Paul in Colossians 1:24. There, he wrote:

*“Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:”*