

REVELATION MADE RELEVANT!

Friday Night Bible Study with Fr. Ward





† Cities of the seven churches
— Major travel route



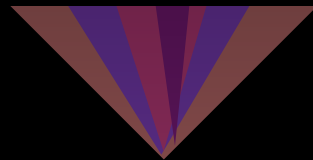
Introduction

Revelation: An Outline

- **Prologue (1:1–3)**
- 1. *Seven Messages to Seven Churches (1:4–3:22)*
- 2. *Seven Seals (4:1–8:5)*
- 3. *Seven Trumpets (8:2–11:19)*
- 4. *Seven Symbolic Histories (12:1–14:20)*
- 5. *Seven Bowls (15:1–16:21)*
- 6. *Seven Messages of Judgment (17:1–19:10)*
- 7. *Seven Visions (19:11–22:5)*
- **Epilogue (22:6–21)**

WORSHIP

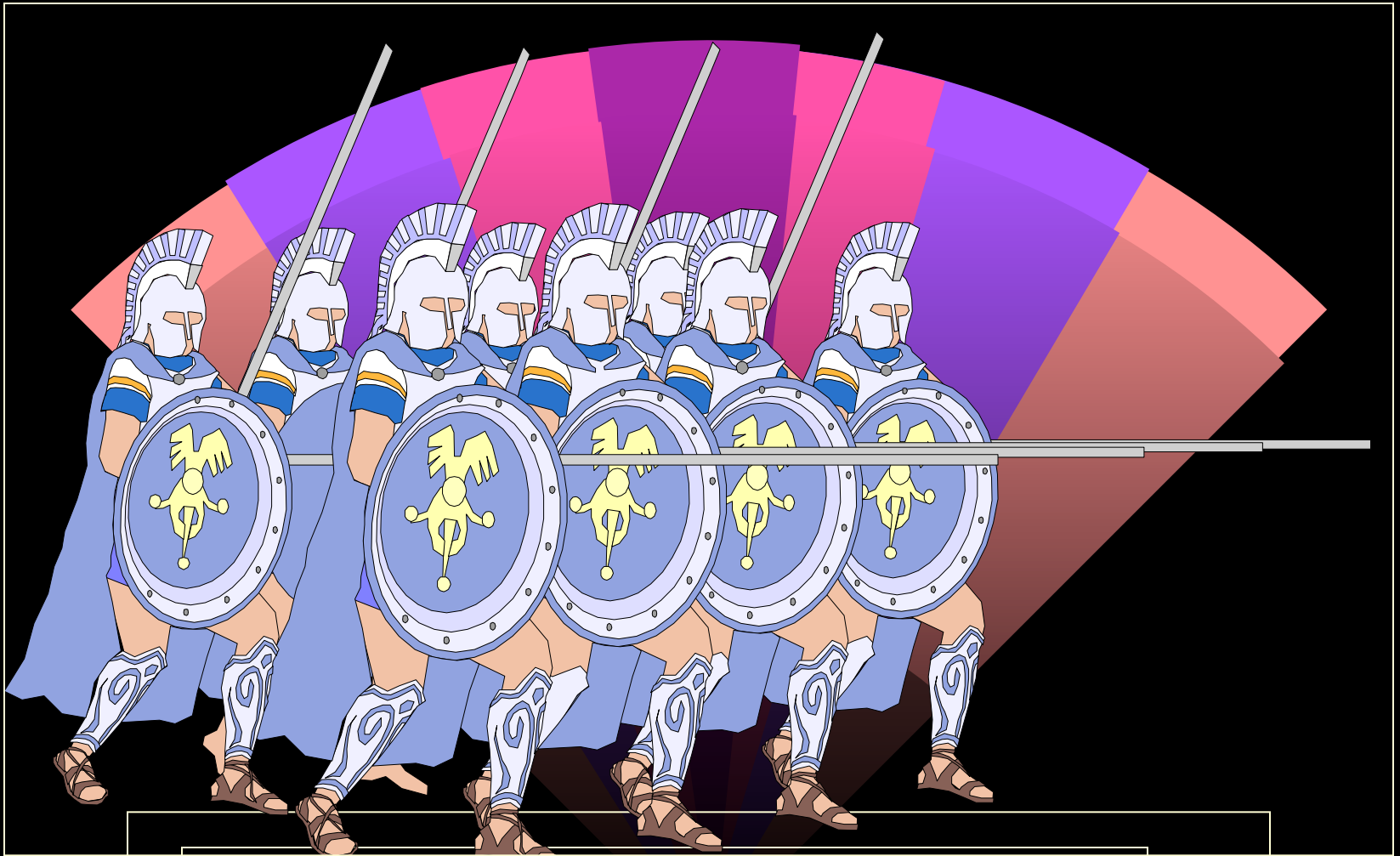
Revelation 4 & 5





Revelation 6

WRATH: The Seals of Judgment



Revelation 7

God's End-Time Army (?)

Who are the “144,000”?

- **Jehovah's Witnesses! No--psych!**
 - **If they take the *number* literally, they need to be consistent**
 - **they should be male Jewish virgins**





- **But when J.W.'s started they were partly right: **this is the number of the “saved”**:**
 - **7:3: “a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God”**
 - **the “servants of God” in Revelation are all believers (1:1; 2:20; 6:11; 19:10; 22:3, 6, 9)**
 - **I won't ask how many of *you* are male Jewish virgins**

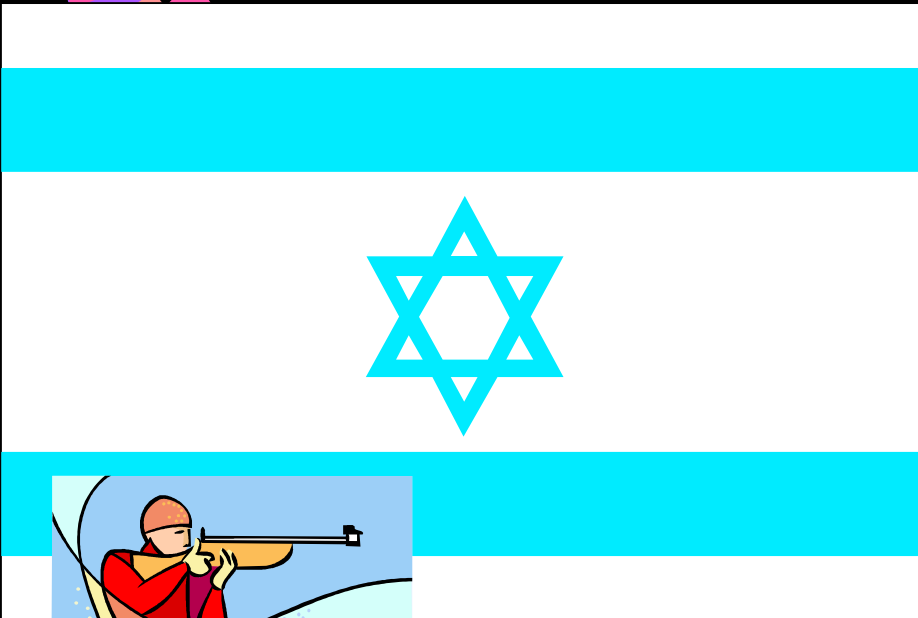
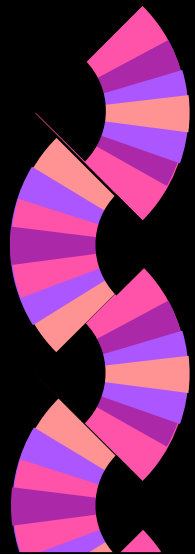


Rev 14:1: 144,000 standing on Mount Zion

- New Jerusalemites—those who will dwell in the New Jerusalem
- 14:4: chaste—male version of pure New Jerusalem adorned for her husband

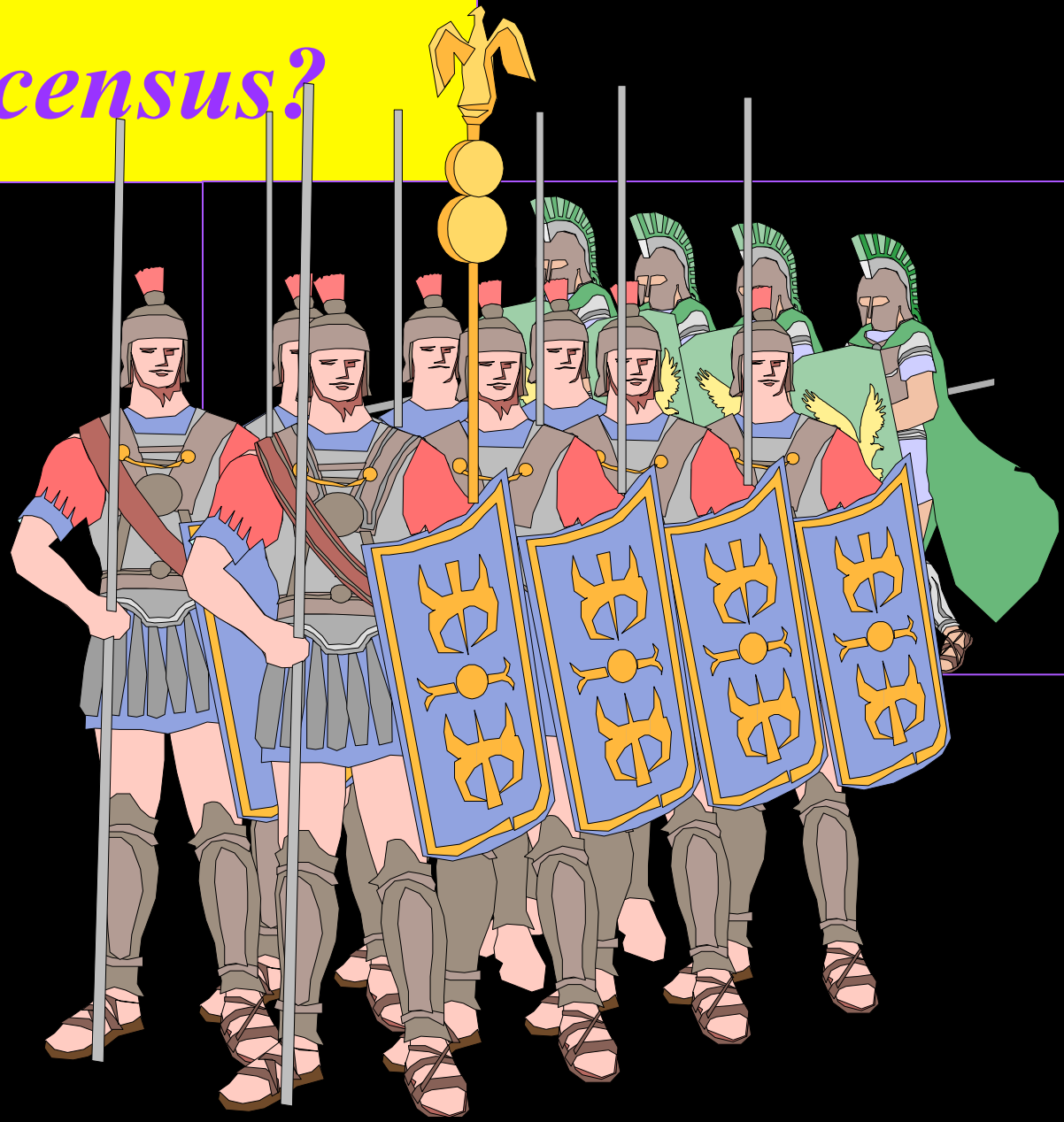


The end-time army of God's elect?



- ▶ **Some Jewish people expected a great *end-time* army that would go slaughter the Gentiles for God**
- ▶ **Why Jewish *male virgins*?**
 - Israelite armies were male
 - in holy war, warriors abstained from intercourse before battle
 - The only other time that John hears a number, it's the number of troops (Rev 9:16)
- ▶ **Are you looking forward to slaughtering the Gentiles?**

A military census?



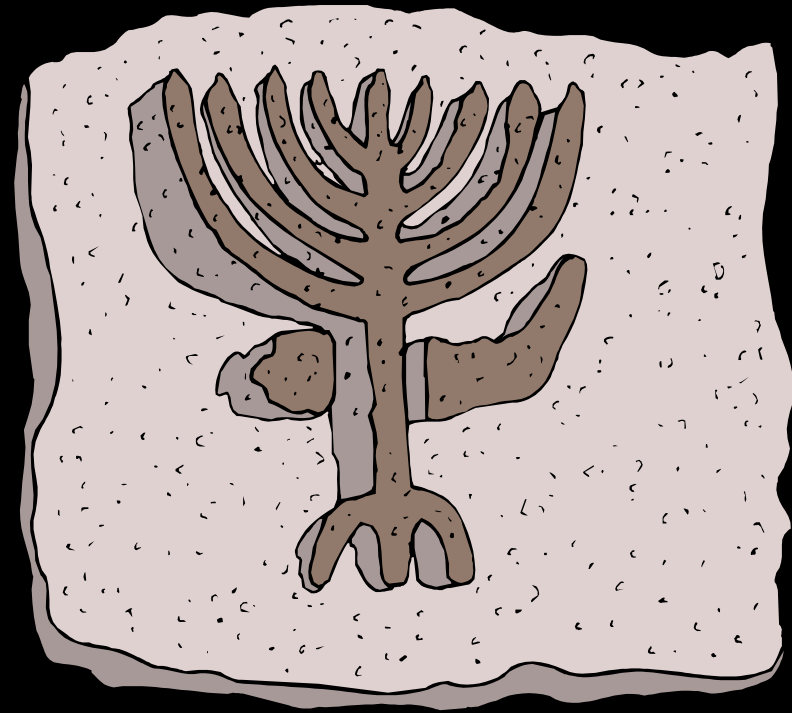


Military census

- 1. Males (14:4)
- 2. Celibate (in holy war) (purity, devotion to the LORD)
- 3. Equal # from each tribe (Num 31:4-6; 1 Chr 27:1-15)
- 4. Battalions of 1000 fairly standard (1 Macc 3:55)
- 5. End-time holy war (1QM)

But Revelation may reapply this traditional Jewish end-time image--as a symbol.

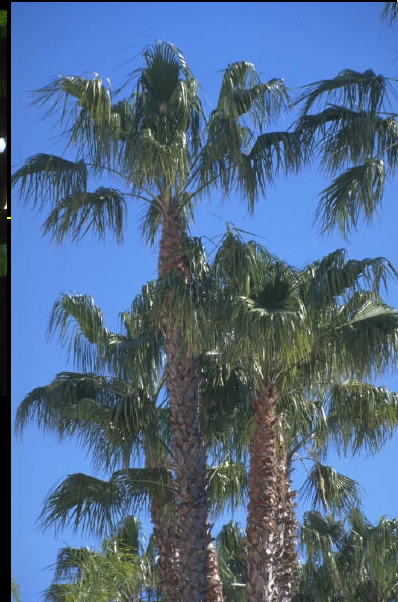
- ▶ **1. Elsewhere in Revelation believers are spiritually Jewish**
 - the messianic communities are viewed as lampstands (1:20)--a Jewish symbol for Jewish people
 - Believers in Yeshua are viewed as true Jews (2:9; 3:9)
- ▶ **2. This fits the pervasive symbolism of Revelation**
- ▶ **3. Dan & Ephraim are left out (but cf. Ezek 48:1)**





4. Like Joseph's and Pharaoh's dreams, the following vision (7:9-17) may literally interpret this one:

- this is an innumerable multitude (not just 144,000) out of all peoples (not just Israel)
- this army waves not weapons but palms--hailing the true victor, Yeshua



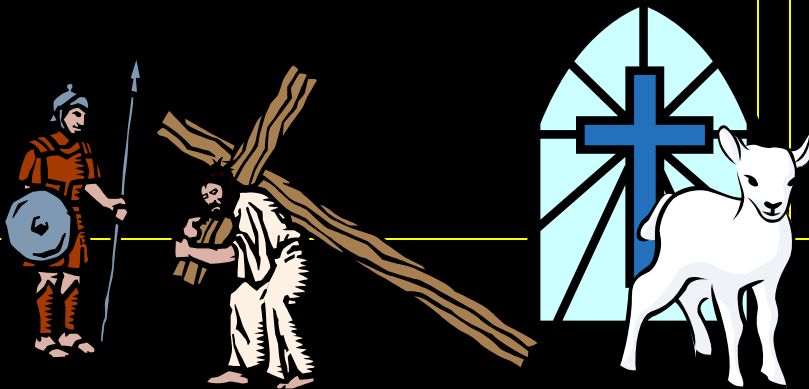
This parallels the reapplication of the image in 5:5-6:

- John *hears* of a conquering **lion** (5:5)
- when he turns, he *sees* a **lamb** (5:6)

Jesus thus conquers through **martyrdom**

- John *hears* of an end-time **army** (7:1-8)
- He *sees* an army of **martyrs** (7:9-17)

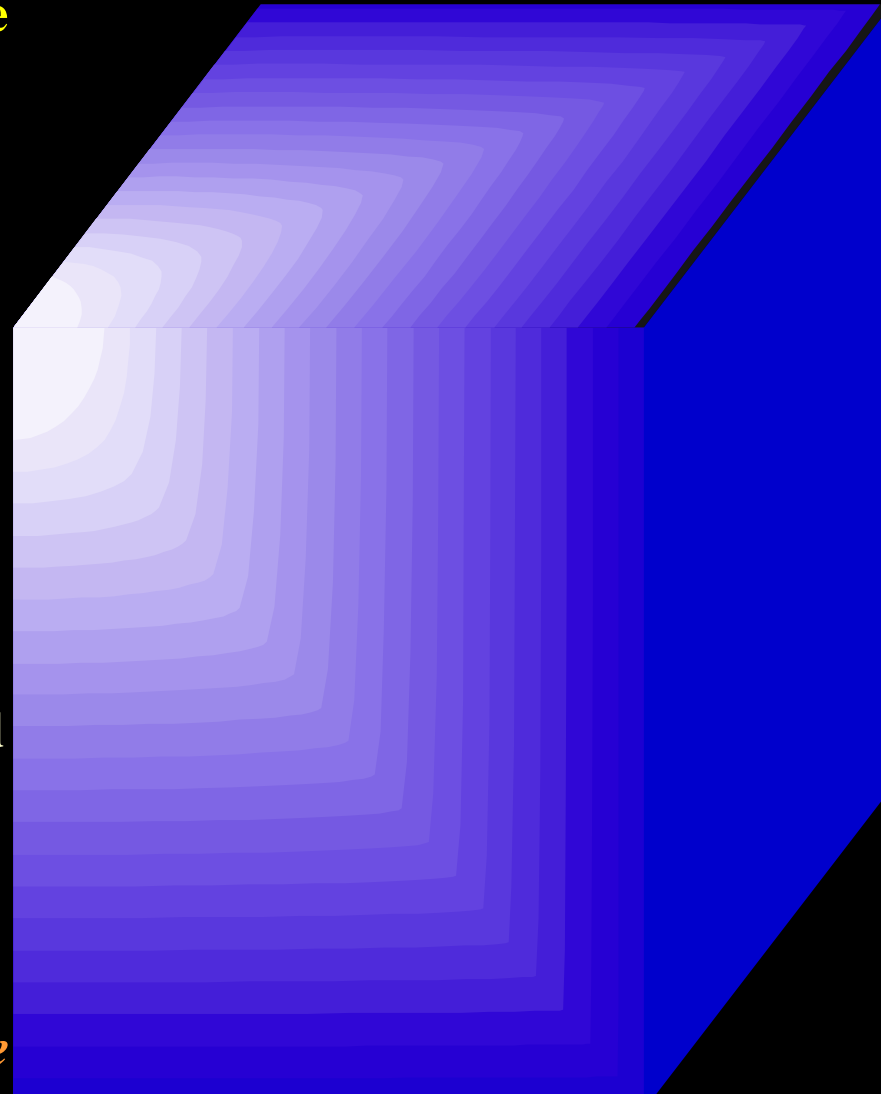
Jesus' followers thus conquer through **martyrdom** (6:9-11)





This number symbolizes the people of God

- **12 squared x 10 cubed: God's people arranged according to military ranks (thousands)**
- **More clearly: Yohanan explicitly reuses these symbolic numbers**
- **21:16: New Jerusalem like a square (Israel's army camps)**
- **12,000 stadia long, wide, and high: *1500 miles***
- **wall: only 144 cubits (disproportional if literal)**
- **the point: *the city of God for the people of God, New Jerusalem for those spiritually Jewish***





Sealing of righteous

- Proposed backgrounds
 - Branding soldiers (some): end-time army
 - branding animals, slaves: God's "servants"
 - head and hand: phylacteries; vs. Rev 13:16-17
 - seal attests ownership (Is 55:5)
- Righteous branded for salvation: Ezek 9:1-7



Who is in 7:9-17?

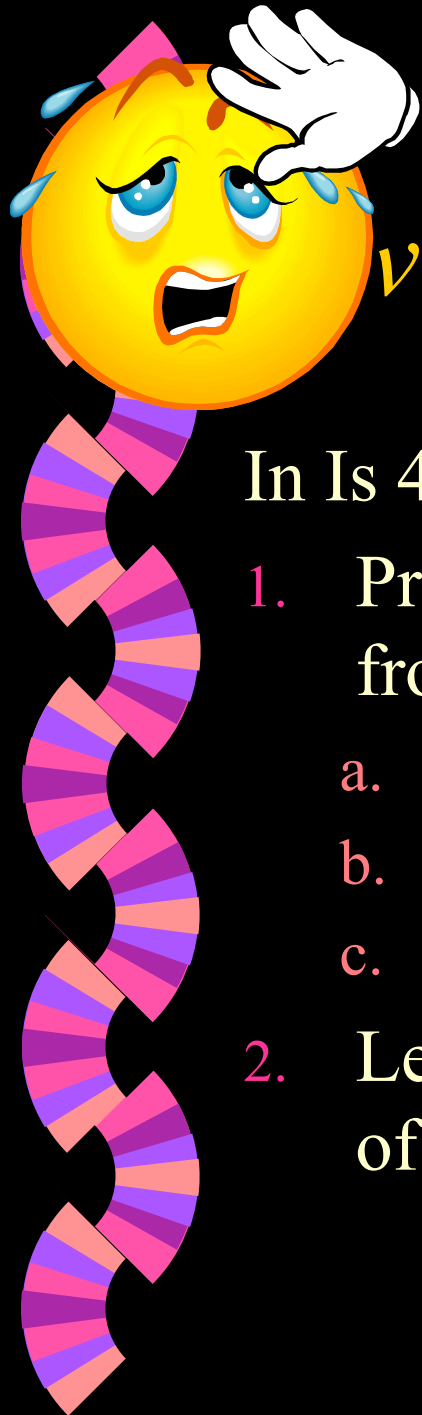
- ▶ Innumerable multitude in 7:9:
 - Echoes promise of Abraham's descendants (Gen 13:16)?
- ▶ The great tribulation in 7:14
 - May echo Dan 12:1, echoed in 1 Macc 9:27
 - Both involve God's people Israel



NT parallels OT

- They will neither hunger nor thirst, nor will the desert heat nor sun beat upon them. He who has compassion on them will guide them and lead them beside springs of water--Isa 49:10

Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd. He will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes--Rev 7:16-17



Rev 7:16 evokes Is 49:10

In Is 49:10, God will

1. Protect His people from
 - a. Hunger
 - b. Thirst
 - c. The sun
2. Lead them to springs of water

In Rev 7:16, Yeshua will

1. Protect His people from
 - a. Hunger
 - b. Thirst
 - c. The sun
2. Lead them to springs of water

Rev 7:17 evokes Is 25:8

In Is 25:8

- ◆ God will wipe away
His people's tears

In Rev 7:17

- ◆ Jesus will wipe away
His people's tears

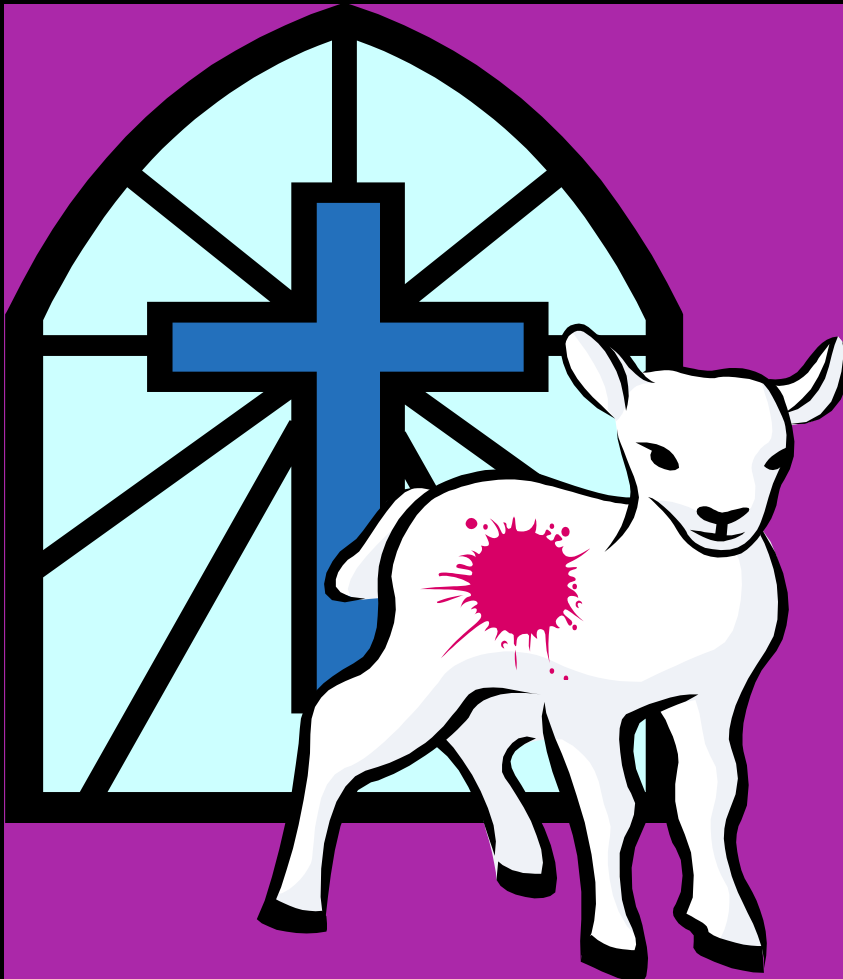


Two differences in Revelation



- 1. Jesus is identified with YHWH
- 2. The promise for Israel's restoration now welcomes all believers from all peoples who follow the lamb.

*Lambs were weakest members of
a flock (Is 40:11)*



But Jesus is our
shepherd
precisely
because he is
the
slaughtered
lamb.