work of destruction, until the sealing has  
taken place. For what imaginable reason  
could such a prohibition be uttered, unless  
those who were to be sealed were to he  
marked out for some purpose connected  
with that work? And for what purpose  
could they be thus marked out, if not. for  
exemption? The objection brought against  
this view by Düsterdieck, that so far from  
being exempt from trials, the saints in  
glory have come out of great tribulation,  
is grounded on the mistake of not distinguishing between the trials of the people  
of God and the judgments on the unbelieving world. In the latter, the saints  
have no part, as neither had the children  
of Israel in the plagues of Egypt. And  
indeed the very symbolism here used, in  
which the elect are pointed out under the  
names of the 12 tribes, serves to remind  
us of this ancient exemption. At the same  
time, exemption from the coming plagues  
is not the only object of the sealing. It  
serves a positive as well as a negative purpose, It appropriates to God those upon  
whom it has passed. For the seal contains  
His own Name, see ch. iii. 12, xiv. 1. And  
thus they are not only gathered out of the  
world, but declared to be ready to be gathered into the city of God. And thus  
the way is prepared for the next vision in  
the episode.

**9—17.]** THE GREAT MULTITUDE oF  
THE REDEEMED IN HEAVEN. The opening of the sixth seal introduced the coming  
of the Lord. The first vision of the episode  
revealed the gathering together of the  
elect from the four winds. But before  
the seventh and *last* seal can be opened,  
and the book of God’s purposes be unrolled, not only must all things on this  
earth be accomplished, but the whole multitude of the redeemed must be gathered  
in to the joy of their Lord. Then, and  
not till then, shall we know even as we  
are known, and read the mystery of God’s  
ways without hindrance. Accordingly, in  
is sublime vision we are admitted to a  
sight of the finished state of glory, in which the seventh seal shall be opened. **After these things** (see above on ver. 1. The  
term indicates separation from that which  
went before, and introduces a second and  
distinct vision in the episode) **I beheld,  
and lo a great multitude, which no one  
could** (not that the attempt was actually  
made, but that if made it was sure to fail)  
**number, out of every nation** (see ch. v. 9),