

# Revelation 7 - Who Are The 144,000?

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Grab your Bibles and open them up to Revelation chapter 7. Revelation chapter 7. I don't know how many of you guys read this chapter ahead of time in preparation for our study tonight, but we're going to ask the question and answer it tonight, who are the 144,000? Because there's been a lot of cult groups over the years that said, oh, that's us. Well, that's us. Oh yeah, that's us. We're the 144,000. And they were all wrong.

We're going to talk about who they really are tonight. Last week we actually started, in our study, we began the period of time that the book of Revelation speaks of that is called the Great Tribulation. It started in the chapter we dealt with last week. And some of you might be wondering, why is it that God would even want to have a time called the Great Tribulation? I mean, why? Isn't there enough tribulation in the world that we live in? Why come up with a Great Tribulation? Well, there are several reasons that we see actually throughout this book, but one of them is, believe it or not, to wake up sinners, to wake up unbelievers and to bring them to a place of opening their hearts to the Lord.

And interestingly enough, it's funny I get all kinds of different reactions from people when I tell them this, but I say the time of the Great Tribulation is not just a time of wrath. It's a time of in-gathering. And that messes with some people's heads. I actually had somebody write last week and take issue. Well, we're going to see tonight where some of the in-gathering takes place.

Another reason why the Lord will bring about a time that he calls the Great Tribulation is also to wake up Israel. Because God has a plan for Israel. He's not done with Israel. And I don't know how many of you have ever heard a teaching that says the church took over for Israel, or the church became the prophetic fulfillment, I guess, of Israel. And all the promises and all the blessings that were given to Israel are now the church's. That's not true.

The church did not take over for Israel. The church is the church, and Israel is Israel. And God has been pausing the timer on Israel ever since the church age began, and he will pick it up again once the bride of Christ, the church, is removed. God has a plan for Israel and the Great Tribulation is going to be a time of great awakening for the people of Israel as they prepare to meet their Messiah.

And the book of Zechariah tells us that when He comes, they're going to realize He already had come and He is the one that they crucified. The Great Tribulation is also for the purpose of God expressing his wrath upon the wicked and unrepentant among mankind. And the Great Tribulation is also to finalize the Kingdom of God. The establishing of the Kingdom of God, in its final sort of phase.

You'll recall last week we were able to tune in with John as he has this vision of a scroll that was sealed with seven seals and as Jesus, the Lamb of God, began to break open those seals. Each time that he did it ushered in a different judgment of the Lord. You'll remember that the opening of the first four seals ushered in the four horsemen of the apocalypse, what we call them, that each brought their own challenging situation upon the face of the earth. The fifth seal you'll remember brought an interlude of sorts where John saw the souls of those who had been martyred for their faith.

And the sixth seal you'll recall brought a great earthquake upon the earth. The sun became black, the moon became like blood. The stars we're told fell from the sky. And it was after these things that we now pick it up in chapter 7. We're not actually going to see the breaking open of the seventh seal until the next chapter, chapter 8.

So, this chapter that we're going to be looking at tonight is also kind of an interlude. It is taking place or occurring, if you will, between the breaking open of the sixth and the seventh seals. And we're going to read through the chapter. And it goes like this:

*<sup>1</sup> After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, that no wind might blow on earth or sea or against any tree. <sup>2</sup> Then I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, <sup>3</sup> saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads." <sup>4</sup> And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:*

*<sup>5</sup> 12,000 from the tribe of Judah were sealed,  
12,000 from the tribe of Reuben,  
12,000 from the tribe of Gad,*

*<sup>6</sup> 12,000 from the tribe of Asher,  
12,000 from the tribe of Naphtali,  
12,000 from the tribe of Manasseh,*

*<sup>7</sup> 12,000 from the tribe of Simeon,*

*12,000 from the tribe of Levi,  
12,000 from the tribe of Issachar,  
<sup>8</sup> 12,000 from the tribe of Zebulun,  
12,000 from the tribe of Joseph,  
12,000 from the tribe of Benjamin were sealed.*

*<sup>9</sup> After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, <sup>10</sup> and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" <sup>11</sup> And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, <sup>12</sup> saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."*

*<sup>13</sup> Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" <sup>14</sup> I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

*<sup>15</sup> "Therefore they are before the throne of God,  
and serve him day and night in his temple;  
and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence.*

*<sup>16</sup> They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore;  
the sun shall not strike them,  
nor any scorching heat.*

*<sup>17</sup> For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd,  
and he will guide them to springs of living water,  
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." (ESV)*

Wow! Let's pray, shall we. Father, as we get into these verses as we get into this chapter tonight, we just pray for your Holy Spirit to speak to every heart. We pray that you would give us hearts to receive, eyes to see, ears to hear. We pray for insight and understanding. We pray for you to lead us in all these things. And we ask it in the name of Jesus. Amen.

It's interesting to me, this chapter begins with this amazing sight that John writes about, and he says in verse 1 that he was made aware of these four angels. Standing at the four corners of the Earth. That's an interesting sort of a term. It means standing on all points north, south, east, and west.

And he says that they were holding back the winds of the earth. Now the winds, as that picture is used in the Bible, is often used to describe a destructive force. And we believe that is exactly what's going on here because in the very next verse we hear this other angel, who John says ascends from the rising of the sun, he's carrying something, the seal of the living God. And he calls to these angels who are holding back this wind. And he tells them to continue to hold it back so as not to harm the earth, the sea, the trees or anything until such time as he says, we have sealed the servants of God on their foreheads.

So, we want to take a look at this and we want to see what's going on here in this section of scripture. You'll notice that this angel that John sees coming from the sun is in possession of something and it says that he is holding a seal and it's the seal of the living God. Now we don't use seals today, but they were a very common thing back in that culture. Seals, remember this, were used to show ownership or not just to show ownership, to prove ownership. If you were a ruler of some kind, even if you were a property owner, you might have a document that gives information about some piece of land that you own. And that document would have a seal on it, which would be the proof, if you will, of your ownership of that land.

And so here, this angel has a seal. We know that seals were used to prove ownership, but this is the seal of the living God. So, what does that tell you? It says that they're coming to seal people with the seal of the living God, which means that they're going to show ownership. In other words, we're essentially speaking here of people who are going to be saved during the Great Tribulation and will receive the seal of God, that seal of ownership, right?

Do you know that you also have that seal of ownership? The Bible says that we've been sealed with the Holy Spirit and that's you and me. That's here, that's right now. So, we've received this seal. Now this is talking about what is going to happen during the Great Tribulation. And so, notice that the angel tells them again how long to hold back that destructive wind. He says, until we've sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads. Now that's an interesting idea. The sealing of people on their forehead, isn't it? Now, especially interesting in light of the fact that in chapter 13 we're going to read about the second beast or the antichrist who is going to force a seal or a mark upon the people of the earth at that time without which they won't be able to buy or sell. But the enemy, the antichrist is going to force that mark upon people. God never does that. But we'll talk more about that later.

But for now, we read in, in verse 4, John says, I heard the number of those that were sealed, and it was 144,000. And then he adds this important point: “*sealed*

*from every tribe of the sons of Israel*”. And then we read in verses 5-8 that John tells us that there were 12,000 who were sealed from each of the tribes. And the tribes that he listed there are Judah, Ruben, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Manassa, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin, and obviously we recognize all these names. They are the sons of Jacob. And Jacob at one point in his life, was renamed Israel by God. So, when we talk about the Sons of Israel, we're talking about the sons of Jacob.

Now here's some interesting things about this list of the sons of Jacob. Some are missing. And that is sort of interesting. So, to understand all of this about these missing names, we need to go back and do a little bit of a history lesson. So, bear with me, if you will, as I kind of digress just a little bit and let me start by putting up on the screen a complete list of the Sons of Israel or the sons of Jacob as they're given to us in the book of Genesis. Here they are, and these are in their birth order.

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#### The Twelve Sons of Israel

- |            |            |
|------------|------------|
| • Reuben   | • Gad      |
| • Simeon   | • Asher    |
| • Levi     | • Issachar |
| • Judah    | • Zebulun  |
| • Dan      | • Joseph   |
| • Naphtali | • Benjamin |

So, these are, this is the list of what we would refer to as the 12 Sons of Israel, or the 12 Sons of Jacob. All right.

Now, when people talk about the 12 tribes of Israel, we change things up a little bit and the reason we change that up a little bit is because when we think of tribes, we think of tribal allotments. When we talk about tribal allotments, we're talking about the allotment of land that each tribe was given when they came into the land under Joshua. Because you'll remember that each of the tribes of Israel, save one, received an allotment or was given some land. But when we talk about the 12 tribes of Israel and their allotments, then the names change again. Let me show you why. So, let's change the heading here to the 12 tribal allotments. All right? And so, you can see this is the same list of names that we saw before.

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### The Twelve Tribal Allotments

- Reuben
- Simeon
- Levi
- Judah
- Dan
- Naphtali
- Gad
- Asher
- Issachar
- Zebulun
- Joseph
- Benjamin

When we talk about the tribal allotments, we have to remember that Levi's name falls off, so let's put an X through Levi, right? The reason Levi is not mentioned, when we talk about the tribal allotments is because Levi is the tribe from which all of the priests came, and they weren't given land. They had their homes within the tribal allotments of the other tribes. The reason is the Levites were the priests of Israel and their allotment was the Lord himself. And that's what God told them. He said, your portion is me. So, I'm not giving you any land.

(Slide)

### The Twelve Tribal Allotments

- Reuben
- Simeon
- ~~Levi~~
- Judah
- Dan
- Naphtali
- Gad
- Asher
- Issachar
- Zebulun
- ~~Joseph~~
- Benjamin

So now we're down to 11 names when we talk about the tribal allotments of Israel. Okay, well next you're going to notice that Joseph's name also falls off the list when we talk about the tribal allotments. So, we X out the name of Joseph. Now we're down to 10.

So, how do we have the 12 tribes of Israel? Well, the reason we get 12 tribes is because Joseph had two sons in Egypt, he had more than that, but he had two sons named Manasseh and Ephraim. Actually, the names are usually given Ephraim and Manasseh even though Ephraim was born second, he was put first. They each received a tribal allotment. Do you remember why? Because Joseph got a double portion. All right, so now that we've got Joseph's name off, we're

going to kind of put him back on through the names of his sons, Ephraim, and Manasseh. So now you'll notice we're back up to 12 tribes.

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### The Twelve Tribal Allotments

- |                   |                     |            |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------|
| • Reuben          | • Gad               |            |
| • Simeon          | • Asher             |            |
| • <del>Levi</del> | • Issachar          |            |
| • Judah           | • Zebulun           |            |
| • Dan             | • <del>Joseph</del> | • Ephraim  |
| • Naphtali        | • Benjamin          | • Manasseh |

Right. Even without Levi, we take Joseph out, but we kind of put him back in, in the sense that two of his sons now each get a tribal allotment within Israel. All right. Now I want you to take a good long look at what you're seeing up on the screen there, because those are the 12 tribal allotments, okay?

But when you compare that with the tribes that are mentioned, Of the 144,000, you'll notice that there are some differences. For one thing, you'll notice that Levi is back in. Did you notice that Levi is mentioned? You'll notice that Ephraim, one of the sons of Joseph is missing, but not really because Joseph's name is back in.

So, Ephraim is kind of included through his father, Joseph. Manasseh is also there. That's a little weird. But then Dan, the tribe of Dan is missing altogether. Right? So what we have here in this 144,000 is we have Manasseh who is kind of standing in now for Dan. Dan is gone. Okay, let's close in prayer. (laughter)

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### The 144,000

- |                   |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| • Reuben          | • Gad      |
| • Simeon          | • Asher    |
| • Levi            | • Issachar |
| • Judah           | • Zebulun  |
| • <b>Manasseh</b> | • Joseph   |
| • Naphtali        | • Benjamin |

Now, see, this is interesting. The reason I'm bringing this up is because you're going to read sometime in your life, if you haven't already, people have noticed over the years that the tribe of Dan is missing in the 144,000. And because they noticed it was missing, they've come up with all kinds of wild speculations as to why it's missing.

“Oh, the tribe of Dan got obliterated. It's gone. You know what that must mean? That must mean the antichrist comes from the tribe of Dan.” Have you ever heard of that? I have. It's a popular theory, but it's pure speculation. And the way we know that it's pure speculation is just about the time somebody comes along and says, “Yeah, tribe of Dan wasn't in the 144,000. He's gone. So obviously the antichrist comes from the tribe of Dan. He's smoke.” Yeah.

Then we started reading through the book of Ezekiel, I'm not going to make you turn there, and we start reading how, at the very end of that book, (Ezekial 48:30-35) God gives the prophet Ezekiel a vision of the millennial kingdom and he starts naming the tribes of Israel. And Dan is mentioned, he's back. So just about the time we started thinking we got these things all figured out, then Ezekial.

So why is the tribe of Dan missing in the 144,000? Here's my expert opinion. I have no idea. Absolutely none. I have no idea, and nobody else does either. So, there you go. All you're going to find is speculation on that particular point. But what we do know about the 144,000 are these 3 things; First, they're called servants of God, okay? That's what the angel says. He says, hold back the winds until we seal the servants of our God. Secondly, we know that the seal of the Lord was placed on them, which is that sign of ownership. That suggests that some at some time, probably early in the time of the Great Tribulation, these people come to faith in Jesus. And the third thing we know about the 144,000 is they are Jews.

Oh, it's incredible. I mean, John went to such trouble to explain that to us here in the book of Revelation. He says, “*from every tribe of the sons of the sons of Israel.*” And then he names these tribes saying how many from each tribe were sealed. And yet when you read commentators today and other things, oh, it's just mind boggling. You might ask yourself the question, well how? How can that be mind boggling? I mean, how can somebody come up with anything other than just saying the 144,000 are Jewish people during the Great Tribulation who are going to be saved. How can anyone come with any other conclusion?

All you have to do is spiritualize the word. That's all you have to do. You have to say, “Well, I know it says that they're sons of Israel, but that's a term that



doesn't always literally mean true DNA Sons of Israel. And when it says they're from the tribes, that's talking about the different characteristics of those tribes. And it's not literal." Oh, I tell you, some people are so weird about that kind of stuff. I'm surprised their brains don't fall out because they're just constantly spiritualizing the Book of Revelation.

It is what it says. These are Jews. But more importantly is what we continue to find out about these 144,000 sealed individuals. As we read on, we learn what they accomplish. Look with me in verse 9 and following *"<sup>9</sup>After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude."* So, this is not 144,000. This is way beyond that. He says, *"that no one could number"*. And he says, these are not just Jews these are *"from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages"*. What are they doing? *"They're standing before the throne and before the Lamb clothed in white robes"*. Take note of that. He continues, *"palm branches in their hands, <sup>10</sup> and crying out with a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!'"*

Who are these people? Well, John's going to be asked that same question, but we can see some things, right? Just from reading the passage. In fact, I had you take note of the fact that they're wearing white robes, and we know that tells us that the people we're seeing here have placed their faith in Jesus Christ. These are born again believers because we saw earlier in the letters to the churches, in the early part of the Book of Revelation, Jesus said, for those who overcome, will be given a white robe. We know that this is a sign of those who are saved. It speaks of the righteousness of Christ by which they have been robed.

So, we know that we're talking about believers, and we know that the angels and the other creatures in heaven are praising God because of these people. Look what it says in verse 11. It says, *"<sup>11</sup> And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures"*. What do they do?

It says, *"they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God <sup>12</sup> saying, 'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.'"* Somebody needs to, has anybody ever made a song out of that? They should. If they haven't, they should. That's a great lyric. So, there's all this worship going on. We know that the angels in heaven rejoice when a sinner comes to Christ. So here we see heaven rejoicing with all these individuals who are before the throne of God. Now, I want you to pay attention to the conversation that follows between one of the elders and John.

It's in verse 13 and following. <sup>13</sup> *Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?"*

Now this is interesting because I don't believe God does anything or has anything done by accident. So, he has one of these elders speak to the Apostle John, who is the longest lived of the original apostles. And in this vision, as he sees all these believers in white robes, the elder comes to John and says, who are they, John? Who are they? And from where have they come? And please don't miss John's response. It is crucial. He said to the elder, verse 14, "Sir, you know." By the way, it's a very polite way of saying I don't know. If John would've known, he would've said so.

I wish I'd have known this when I was in school. I would've answered every question to the teacher, "You know." And probably had to sit in the corner afterwards or go to my dad's office because my dad was the principal or the superintendent. So, he says, "Sir, you know." In other words, I don't know. Now this is crazy. John can't identify these people.

*"And he said to me, 'These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb'."* Now, I want you to notice a very important phrase. *"These are they who have come out of the Great Tribulation"*, right? So many people look at this passage in Revelation and they assume that this is just, this is the church, this is the body of Christ that is, in white robes praising God before the throne. Well, where are all the people that weren't in the Great Tribulation that died before that time? Where's everybody else? Where's all the saints of old? Where's, everybody else? No, these are just specifically a single group of people. These are they who have come out of the Great Tribulation.

And it is my personal conclusion that this multitude are all those who will come to Christ during the Great Tribulation and will be in fact martyred because of putting their faith in Jesus Christ. Because we know, and we'll see this later, that the enemy, the antichrist will be given power over the saints during that time of the Great Tribulation.

Furthermore, it is my personal conviction that this multitude of redeemed people is a direct result of the ministry of the 144,000. I believe that these people who come to Christ in the Great Tribulation are in fact there because, and I'll tell you right now, I understand that I could be wrong about this, but it is my conclusion based on the fact that just after we read about the 144,000 and the sealing of these individuals, the very next thing we read is *"after this, I looked and behold a great multitude"*.

The New American Standard Bible and the new King James, say literally “*after these things, I looked and behold*” In other words, this happened right after, or if you will, the language seems to suggest a cause and effect, meaning that the multitude is a result of the evangelistic work of the 144,000. If I'm correct, that means that we are seeing here during the time of the Great Tribulation an absolutely amazing expression of the love and mercy of God to bring about such a powerful in-gathering, even during a time that we know as a time of the outpouring of God's wrath.

Especially because you'll remember at the end of chapter 6, do you remember we read these words? Check this out on the screen. This is the last thing we read in the last chapter.

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Revelation 6:17 (ESV)

*“...the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”*

And that's the characterization of what the Great Tribulation is largely about. It's a time of wrath. And yet during that time, God is going to pour out His Spirit in such a way as to bring people to faith in Jesus Christ during the Great Tribulation. Who are these? John? I don't know. You know. *“These are they who are coming out of the Great Tribulation. They've washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.”*

These are people who've been saved. I base my conclusion also on the fact that John was unable to identify these people. It just seems to me that he wouldn't have had any trouble identifying the bride of Christ, but he didn't know who these people were.

There's a fairly well-known passage from the Old Testament in the book of Joel, which I won't make you look at here tonight or turn to, but Peter quotes it you'll remember on the day of Pentecost. You'll remember that the believers were together on Pentecost and the Spirit descended upon them in power.

And there was this incredible sound that came about as the Spirit fell upon the believers and it gathered a crowd of people. They heard the believers praising God and speaking of the wonders of God, these people who gathered around, in their own native languages. Pentecost had brought pilgrims to Jerusalem from all the lands around Israel. So, they came to worship and for the Feast of

Pentecost. But they heard the believers speaking in their own dialects, in their own languages, and they were amazed by that. And they said, what's going on here? Well, some people said, well, they're just drunk. They're really not saying anything important. They're just blabbering and so on. Well, you'll remember that Peter, along with the others, stood up and addressed the crowd. He began to talk to them and in the midst of that talk he quoted from the Old Testament book of Joel. And I want to show it to you on the screen from Acts chapter 2. This is Peter's speech, or at least some of it.

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*Acts 2:15-21 (ESV)*

*...these people are not drunk, as you suppose Peter says, since it's only the third hour of the day (that's about 9 o'clock in the morning). But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: (And then he begins to quote Joel 2:28-32a)*

*“And in the last days it shall be God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men, shall dream dreams; even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit and they shall prophesy.”*

But this isn't the end. Look what he goes on to say:

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*Acts 2:15-21 (ESV)*

*And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the day of the Lord comes the great and magnificent day, and that shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’*

Now, Peter quoted that whole section from Joel when he spoke on Pentecost, but I want you to notice something about what he quoted. Only some of it was fulfilled. Sure, the coming of the Spirit. Yeah, exactly. The Spirit fell, God gave his Spirit in a powerful way on the day of Pentecost to the church, to the point that people saw it, they heard it, they gathered around, and we know that a lot of people were saved that very day. We're still looking here on the screen at this

last portion of what he quoted from Joel. Look what else the Lord said related to what was going to happen when all these things occurred. He said He was going to show wonders in the heavens. And he began to describe some of those wonders. *“Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the day of the Lord comes.”* And he calls it the *“great and magnificent day”*. Guys, that wasn't the day of Pentecost. And the things that he's describing there or quoting from Joel did not happen fully on the day of Pentecost. So what Peter is quoting is a partial fulfillment that took place on the day of Pentecost when the Spirit fell, but there was no blood or billows of smoke and so on.

When are those things supposed to happen? When's all that other stuff supposed to happen? Do you remember last week we read about what happened when Jesus, the Lamb of God opened, the sixth seal? Let me put it on the screen from Revelation chapter 6.

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*Revelation 6:12 (ESV)*

*When he opened the sixth seal, I looked and behold there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood,*

We were talking last week that what we started, what began with the opening of the seals, was the Great Tribulation. So, what is Joel prophesying largely about? Well, yes, there was a prophecy of the falling of the Spirit at Pentecost, but he was also talking about the outpouring of His Spirit during the Great Tribulation. Right where he's talking about the falling of the Spirit, when Joel is talking about how God's going to send his Spirit upon the people of the time during that same passage, he says, and there's also going to be all these other crazy things going on.

There's going to be all these cataclysmic judgments. The sun is going to turn dark and the moon's going to turn to blood red and all these other cataclysmic things going on, right? So, this is what we see here. The prophecy of Joel will be finally and completely fulfilled when the 144,000 Jews are sealed by God and His Spirit is poured out on all the individuals that they evangelize. When those people come as a last in-gathering before the wrath of God falls finally upon the earth. The same people John saw who came out of the Great Tribulation.

The chapter ends by just essentially describing these tribulation saints. I want you to look at these words:

*Revelation 7:15-17 (ESV)*

<sup>15</sup> *“Therefore they are before the throne of God,  
and serve him day and night in his temple;  
and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence.  
<sup>16</sup> They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore;  
the sun shall not strike them,  
nor any scorching heat.  
<sup>17</sup> For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd,  
and he will guide them to springs of living water,  
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”*

Isn't that beautiful? Isn't that just beautiful what the Lord says to these people? Now I'll grant you these people that they're describing here are not the bride of Christ that gets whisked away before the Great Tribulation begins. But these people are saints. They are the redeemed of the Lord. And you know what else? We find out at the end of the Book of Revelation, and we'll deal with this when we get there. We're going to find out that these very same people who were saved out of the Great Tribulation are going to rule and reign with Christ just like the body of Christ. So, they're not going to be second class citizens in the kingdom of God. I don't believe there are second class citizens in the kingdom of God.

So, there's this beautiful description that is given of these wonderful tribulation saints who come to faith in Jesus Christ during that time, and more than likely, will lay down their lives physically for their faith during the time of the Great Tribulation. So that's where we're going to stop there, and we're going to get into Revelation chapter 8 next time. So, I hope that this was an encouraging study for you.

So, let's pray. Heavenly Father, we do thank you for the ministry of the Holy Spirit for helping us to understand your word and even though there's things here in the Book of Revelation that we don't fully understand. We know, Lord God, that you're going to make all things clear one day.

And we await that day with anticipation and excitement. And we long Lord God for the coming of our Savior, our bride groom to catch away, His bride to take us to be with Him. We long for that. We thank you and praise you for who you are. We thank you for your Holy Spirit who gives life, for the peace that passes

understanding. We thank you Lord, for the love that you've poured out into our lives. I want to pray tonight, Lord, for all who are here and who are watching online. I ask Father God, that you would be with each and every person, and particularly Lord, those who are going through challenging and difficult times. We have our own times of tribulation in this life, and I pray for those Lord who are looking for answers, who are longing for a greater hope and who are desiring to see the purpose and the plans of the Lord fulfilled in their lives.

And I pray my Father, God, that you would do just that. I pray that you would pour out your spirit. I pray that you'd pour out hope into their hearts. I pray that you would transform their lives through the power of your Spirit. We look to you to accomplish these things and we thank you in advance. In Jesus' name, we pray and all God's people said together, Amen. God bless.