

## The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Message #6 Revelation 7 – The Saints of the Tribulation

When we studied the book of Daniel we learned that the time of the Tribulation period would be seven years. We also learned that the seven year period would be divided into two equal halves. An event called “[the abomination of desolation](#)” would mark the middle. We also looked at Jesus teaching on prophecy from the Mount of Olives during the last week of His earthly ministry. In that message He outlined the Tribulation. [\(Outline Map of the Tribulation\)](#). We said that the first six Seal Judgments seem to parallel what Jesus called “[the beginning of sorrows](#)”, [Matthew 24:8](#). This term means birth pangs increasing in frequency and intensity. We saw that the Seal Judgments of chapter 6 describe the opening events of the Tribulation.

[\(Refer to overview handout\)](#)

Revelation is not necessarily in chronological order. The judgments seem to advance the narrative. Chapter 7 is a parenthetical section that introduces two groups of people who will be saved during the Tribulation. Chapter 7 answers the question at the end of Chapter 6, “[Who is able to stand?](#)”

### The Jewish Believers on Earth (1-8)

#### 1. [The Vision of the Angels](#)

*Their Ministry Is Seen Throughout the Book*

- **A dramatic pause (1)**

John sees four mighty angels standing at the four corners of the earth. [Henry Morris](#), “[Accurate, modern geodetic measurements in recent years have proven that the earth actually does have four corners. These are protuberances standing out from the basic ‘geoid’, that is, the basic spherical shape of the earth.](#)” Their mission is to hold back the powerful forces that drive earth’s atmosphere. The energy from the sun and earth’s rotation are like a mighty engine that makes life possible on earth. [Morris](#), “[Yet the angels—only four of them—had turned off this gigantic engine](#)”.

The word “[holding](#)” means holding back, they are struggling and building to break free.

#### **[The Four Winds Is Associated with Judgment in Scripture](#)**

[Daniel 7:2](#), “[Daniel spoke, saying, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea."](#)”

- **A dramatic mission (2-3)**

“[Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God.](#)”

From John’s perspective on the Isle of Patmos this angel would be coming from the land of Israel. A seal designated ownership and protection. The angel instructed the four angels to continue to hold back God’s judgment until his mission was accomplished, “[till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.](#)”

[Walvoord](#), “[It is implied that these who are thus sealed have been saved in the time of trouble pictured in the book of Revelation and by this means are being set apart as a special divine remnant to be a testimony to God’s grace and mercy during the is time of judgment.](#)”

The Antichrist will be marking his followers and God will be sealing His. In the Old Testament God marked Israel with the blood at the Passover. He marked Rahab with the scarlet cord. In eternity all believers will be marked with God’s name. [Revelation 22:4](#), “[They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.](#)”

#### **[God Will Display His Grace In the Midst of Judgment](#)**

## 2. The Identity of the Sealed Servants (4-8)

### *Jewish Men Saved In the Tribulation*

Revelation 14:1-4, "Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.....who were redeemed from the earth. These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins."

- **The number and the names should be interpreted literally**

There are about 19 different ways of listing the tribes in the Old Testament. Here Dan is omitted as it was the weakest tribe and the most idolatrous. Dan is listed in the millennial distribution of the land in [Ezekiel 48:2](#). Levi, the priestly tribe, is listed. Ephraim rebelled against Judah and is replaced by Joseph.

### **They Appear to Be Missionaries Sent out to Preach the Gospel to Fulfill Christ's Prophecy**

Matthew 24:14, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come."

- **These men mark the beginning of Israel's national salvation**

Revelation 14:4, "These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb."

The salvation of these men begins the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.

Zechariah 12:10, "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn."

Zechariah 13:8-9, "And it shall come to pass in all the land,"

Says the Lord, "That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, bBut one-third shall be left in it: I will bring the one-third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested.

They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; and each one will say, 'The Lord is my God.'"

Romans 11:25-27, "For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins."

### **The Captivity Purged Israel of Idolatry, the Tribulation Will Purge Israel of Unbelief**

## **The Jewish and Gentile Believers in Heaven (9-17)**

### 1. Their Description (9-12)

#### *Similar to the 24 Elders but Distinct*

In contrast to the numbered Jewish believers John sees these people as innumerable. No wonder he exclaims "behold" again.

- **People from every nation on earth**

“...of all nations (*ethnos* ethnic group), *tribes* (*phule* family group), *peoples* (*laos* people group), *tongue* (*glossa* language group)...”. The “from” (*ek*) means only some from every one of these groups is represented. Every nation would include Israel. Apparently some saved Jews will be martyred also. Old Testament prophecy connects Israel’s salvation with the salvation of the nations.

Psalm 98:3, “He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.”

Isaiah 49:6, “Indeed He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, that You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.'”

Isaiah 60:1-3, “Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the Lord will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.”

These people are clothed in white robes and holding palm branches, which are symbols of peace and rejoicing. They are seen standing before the throne of God in Heaven. They apparently join in the worship of the angels, the 24 elders, and the living creatures (11-12). The Tribulation will see the greatest harvest of souls that have ever taken place both of Jews and Gentiles.

### **God Is All About Salvation**

Psalm 68:20, “Our God is the God of salvation; and to God the Lord belong escapes from death.”

## 2. Their Identification (13-14)

### *A Particular Group from a Particular Time*

#### • **Believers martyred during the Tribulation**

(14) “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation”

They are most likely part of the same group seen in 6:9-11 who have been killed by the antichrist and his henchmen.

Revelation 13:15, “He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.”

Now instead of praying for God’s justice they are rejoicing over His salvation, “Salvation belongs to our God” (10).

(14) “They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb” Defiled garments picture sin. Cleansing with blood is a familiar Old Testament picture seen in the sacrificial system. Many others will believe the antichrist and be lost.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12, “The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

### **Note that Worship Is the Activity of Heaven**

## 3. Their Destiny (15-17)

### *To Dwell in the Presence of God*

#### • **To serve God continually**

“...and serve Him day and night in His temple”

The word “serve” is the word for priestly service. They are performing a spiritual service of worship.

The temple may be synonymous with the heavenly throne. During the millennium there will be a Temple in Jerusalem. In the eternal state in the New Jerusalem there will be no temple because God’s presence will be everywhere.

Revelation 21:22, “But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.”

### **Heaven Is not a Place of Idleness and Apathy**

- **To be shepherded by God eternally**

“They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Scorching heat is part of the judgments of the Tribulation. These believers suffered on earth and now are being comforted in heaven.

The image of God as the Shepherd to His people is one of the most beloved pictures of God.

Psalm 23:1, “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.”

Isaiah 40:11, “He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those who are with young.”

John 10:11, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.”

1 Peter 2:25, “For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”

### **Heaven Is a Place of Joy and Happiness**