

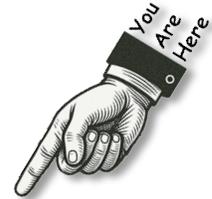
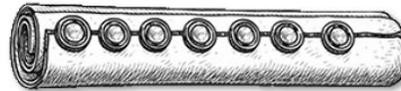


“The 144,000”

Lesson 8: Revelation Chapter 7

Where We Are in the Timeline

The 7-Sealed Scroll



White Horse



Red Horse



Black Horse



Pale Horse



Martyrs



Cosmic Upheaval



PAUSE

Silence & 7 Trumpets

The Question from Chapter 6: “Who Shall Be Able to Stand?”

Before we begin Revelation chapter 7, we need to briefly look back at how chapter 6 ended. The final verses of the sixth seal describe a world in absolute terror. The great powers of nature are shaken. The sky appears to recede like a scroll. Mountains and islands are moved out of their places. The rulers of the earth, the wealthy, the powerful, and the ordinary people alike all react the same way—they hide themselves in caves and in the rocks of the mountains.

They cry out for the mountains to fall on them and hide them from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. The chapter ends with a sobering declaration:

“For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

That final question becomes the doorway into chapter 7. At certain points, the Holy Spirit pauses the action and gives us additional information about what God is doing during the events we are watching unfold. Revelation chapter 7 is one of those pauses.



The judgments of the seals have already begun to devastate the earth. War, famine, death, martyrdom, and global upheaval have shaken civilization. Yet before the seventh seal is opened, the scene shifts. God allows John to see something happening behind the scenes—something that answers the question that ended chapter 6.

The question was: **Who shall be able to stand?**

Chapter 7 provides the answer, pointing to two groups of people who are shown to survive spiritually during this terrible period of judgment:

- First, there are **144,000 servants of God from the twelve tribes of Israel** who are specially sealed and protected for a unique mission during the Tribulation.
- Second, John sees **“Saved Servants”** from out of the Tribulation. These are people who have come to faith during the Tribulation and have been redeemed through the blood of the Lamb.

This chapter reminds us that, at least during the first half of the Tribulation, besides God’s wrath, He allows people to come to Himself. The darkest hour in human history will also still produce a harvest of souls.



Think of the flow of Revelation like a massive storm that has begun sweeping across the earth. Chapter 6 describes the storm as it intensifies. But just before the next wave of destruction hits, the narrative pauses, and the curtain is pulled back. God shows us something important that is happening before the storm continues. He is preparing His servants. He is marking those who belong to Him. And He is showing that even when the world is collapsing in judgment, there will still be people who recognize what is going on and will turn to Him and stand before His throne.

Chapter 7



Rev. 7:1] *And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.*



This scene introduces **four powerful angels** positioned at what Scripture calls the “*four corners of the earth.*” The phrase does not describe a literal square earth but rather the **four directions of the compass**—north, south, east, and west. The point being made is that these angels have authority over the entire world.

They are holding back what the text calls **the four winds of the earth**. In Scripture, winds are often used as symbols of destructive forces or divine judgment. These winds represent forces poised to bring further devastation to the earth. What is remarkable in this scene is that these angels are not yet releasing judgment, yet they are **restraining it**. This imagery communicates that **God is temporarily holding back the next wave of judgment**. Even the forces of nature are under divine command. John then sees another angel enter the scene.





Rev. 7:2] *And I saw another angel ascending from the east, 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 earth and the sea,*



Rev. 7:3] *Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.*

This fifth angel appears **from the east**, carrying what the passage calls **the seal of the living God**. In the ancient world, a seal represented authority, ownership, and protection. Kings used seals to mark official decrees or to identify property that belonged to them. The angel raises his voice and calls out to the four angels who are holding the winds.



Notice something important in the wording of the passage: these four angels have already been **given the authority to harm the earth and the sea**. These are the powerful angels who will blow the first four trumpets in Chapter 8, which pour out God's wrath on the earth.

But before those judgments are unleashed, a command is given:

"Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."

The destruction must wait. Before the next phase of judgment begins, God intends to **mark His servants with His seal**. These individuals will be identified publicly as belonging to Him. This sealing serves several purposes.

- 01** **First**, it establishes **ownership**. These servants belong to God and are set apart for His purposes.
- 02** **Second**, it provides **protection**. As the Tribulation unfolds, the judgments that fall upon the earth will not destroy those whom God has sealed.
- 03** **Third**, it identifies them for a **specific mission**. As the chapter will soon reveal, these sealed servants are the 144,000 from the tribes of Israel who will carry out an extraordinary ministry during the Tribulation.

Even during a time when the earth is experiencing unprecedented judgment, the events unfold under **complete divine control**. Nothing happens until God gives permission. The storm may be gathering strength, but God is still directing every movement of the wind.



Imagine a massive storm about to sweep across the world. The winds are building, and destruction is ready to begin. But before the storm is allowed to break loose, God stops everything for a moment. He sends His messengers out first. Only after that work is finished will the winds be released.



Rev. 7:4] *And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.*

This verse introduces one of the most discussed groups in the entire Book of Revelation: **the 144,000**.

John does not say that he estimated the number, nor that it appeared symbolic or approximate. Instead, he specifically says that **he heard the number**. The number is given precisely: **144,000 individuals**.

Immediately after this verse, the passage will list the tribes one by one, showing that **12,000 come from each of the twelve tribes of Israel**.



This careful enumeration strongly suggests that the number is meant to be taken **literally** rather than symbolically. If the number were intended to be symbolic, there would be little reason to list each tribe individually with the same exact number assigned to each.

The text simply states that these sealed servants come **“of all the tribes of the children of Israel.”** In other words, they are not a generic spiritual group, nor are they a symbolic reference to believers in general. They are described as **ethnic Israelites**, drawn from the nation's historic tribes.

Throughout history, various groups have claimed to represent the 144,000 mentioned here. But the passage itself provides very clear identifying markers. These individuals are:

- ✓ Israelites
- ✓ Identified by tribe
- ✓ Numbered specifically
- ✓ Set apart for a particular purpose during the Tribulation



Nothing in the text suggests that the number should be interpreted allegorically or that the group represents the church. In fact, the context of Revelation consistently distinguishes between **Israel and the church**, and that distinction continues here.

Another important point to notice is **when this sealing takes place**. The 144,000 are sealed **during the Tribulation**, not before it. This is different from the promise given to the church earlier in Revelation. No group today can claim to be part of this group!

In Revelation 3:10, the church at Philadelphia was told that believers would be **kept from the hour of testing** that would come upon the whole world. The 144,000, however, are not kept out of the Tribulation—they are **sealed within it**.

 **Rev. 7:5]** *Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.*

 **Rev. 7:6]** *Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.*

 **Rev. 7:7]** *Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.*



Rev. 7:8] *Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.*

The **Holy Spirit lists the exact number from each tribe** to make something very clear: these are **real people from real tribes of Israel**. Each tribe contributes the same number, totaling **144,000 individuals**. This is not meant to be a symbolic or imaginary number—it is a **specific group that God has chosen and set apart**.

In the Old Testament, the order of the tribes could sometimes change depending on the purpose of the list. For example, **Judah is listed first in 1 Chr. 5:1–2**. When you look at the possible tribal names, there are **fourteen names that could be used**, because the tribe of **Joseph is often represented by his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim**, which gives what some call a “baker’s dozen” of options for making a list of twelve.



In **Revelation 7**, however, **two tribes are missing** from the list: **Dan and Ephraim**. We’ll look at why in a minute.

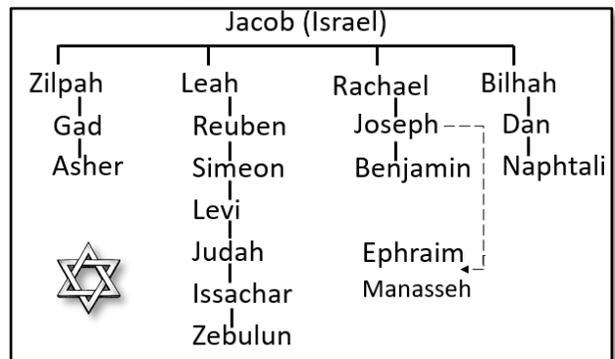
The tribe of **Levi**, which usually did **not receive land like the other tribes**, is included here. In the Old Testament, the Lord explained that **Levi’s inheritance was different**. Instead of land, they were supported by the offerings and sacrifices of Israel, as described in *Deut. 18:1–2* and *Josh. 13:14*.



Abraham married **Sarah**, and they had a son named **Isaac**. Isaac married **Rebekah**, and they had a son named **Jacob**. Jacob later married **Leah** and **Rachel**.

From Leah, Rachel, and their two handmaidens, Jacob had **twelve sons: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin**.

Joseph later had **two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh**, and **Jacob adopted them as his own**. Because of this, the family list sometimes has an extra name—almost like a “baker’s dozen.”



In the Bible, the **twelve tribes of Israel are listed 29 different times**. Most of the time, the list still keeps **twelve tribes**, even if one tribe is left out.

- Sometimes **Levi is not included** because the tribes were being listed in **military order**, and the tribe of **Levi did not serve in the army** since they were the priests.
- At other times, if a tribe is left out, the tribe of **Joseph is divided into his two sons—Ephraim and Manasseh**—so the total still comes to **twelve tribes**.

But when **all the tribes are counted normally**, they are listed simply as the **tribe of Joseph**.



Think of the tribes of Israel like a family with twelve branches. Sometimes one branch is counted together, and other times it is divided into two smaller branches. But no matter how the branches are arranged, the total always comes back to twelve. That is why you may see slightly different lists of tribes throughout the Bible. The names can shift depending on the context, but the overall structure remains consistent.

Division of the Land

Joshua led a **7-year campaign** to take the land back from the people occupying it, and the campaign was **successful**. But the generations that came after Joshua **did not follow his example very well**, which is described in the **book of Judges**.

After Joshua's victories, the **twelve tribes divided the land by casting lots**, just as **God had commanded**.

The tribe of **Dan** could not defeat the **Philistines in the south**, so they **moved north and settled there instead**.

The **Levites**, who served as priests, **did not receive one large territory**. Instead, they were **spread throughout Israel in 48 cities** among the other tribes.



The Kingdom Divided

After **Solomon died**, the nation of Israel **split in a civil war**.

Around **930 B.C.**, **Jeroboam** became king of the **Northern Kingdom**, ruling from **Samaria** (1 Kgs. 11:43–12:33).

Jeroboam did not want the people traveling south to **Jerusalem to worship at the temple**, because he feared they might turn back to the king in the south. So he **led the Northern Kingdom into idolatry**. Because of this, the **Levites—and others who wanted to stay faithful to the Lord—moved south to the kingdom of Rehoboam** (2 Chr. 11:14-17).

Even before the **Assyrian captivity**, many people from the northern tribes had already **chosen to identify with the house of David (Judah) in the south** (1 Kgs. 12:16–20; 2 Chr. 11:16-17).

Later, even more people **rejected the Northern Kingdom and joined the Southern Kingdom**, choosing to remain loyal to **the house of David and to worship the Lord** (2 Chr. 9:4; 30:1,10,11,25,26; 34:5-7,22; 35:17,18).



When **Jeroboam set up a false religion with golden calf worship at Bethel and Dan**, many people in the north were shocked and troubled. They knew that God had chosen only one place for worship—the **Temple on Mt. Moriah** (Deut. 12:5-7; 16:2-6; Isa. 18:7). Because of this, many **moved south to Judah**, where the true temple was. Others who preferred the **idolatry stayed in the north with Jeroboam**.

Later, during the reign of **King Asa in Judah**, another large group from **the northern tribes came south** (2 Chr. 15:9). Over time, there was a lot of mixing among the tribes. Years after Assyria deported many people from the north, **King Hezekiah of Judah** invited all Israel to come to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover (2 Chr. 30:5-21). About **eighty years later**, **King Josiah** also called the people to worship the Lord. At that time, an offering for the temple was collected from **“Manasseh and Ephraim and all the remnant of Israel”** (2 Chr. 34:9). This shows that **people from the northern tribes were still present among the nation**.



Over time, people from **all twelve tribes settled in the southern kingdom**. God even speaks of **all Israel being there**, saying: “Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to **all Israel in Judah and Benjamin...**” (2 Chr. 11:3). Sometimes the Bible uses the phrase **“Judah”** as a general name for the **Southern Kingdom**, even though people from other tribes were living there too (2 Kgs. 17:18; cf. 1 Kgs. 11:13,32). So when the Bible talks about tribes, it is important to remember the difference between **the original land areas given to the tribes** and **the actual people from those tribes**, who often lived in different places over time.

The Northern Kingdom Falls

In **724 B.C.**, the Assyrian king **Shalmaneser V** surrounded **Samaria**, the capital of the Northern Kingdom. The siege lasted **three years**. **King Hoshea of Israel** attempted to rebel and even sought help from Egypt, but the attempt failed. **Samaria finally fell in 722 B.C.** (2 Kgs. 18:2).

Soon after, **Sargon II** took power in Assyria. The Assyrians **destroyed parts of the city, looted it, and took 27,290 people captive**. They also brought in **people from other nations to live in the land**. By mixing different populations, Assyria tried to **prevent future rebellions**. The mixed population that resulted became known as the **Samaritans** (John 4:20f), and **Jews and Samaritans remained hostile to each other even in Jesus’ time**.

However, **most of the people in the northern kingdom were not deported**. Assyrian records say only **27,290 people were taken**, while the population may have been **400,000–500,000**. This means **less than one-twentieth were removed**, mostly leaders from around **Samaria**. Even so, the **Northern Kingdom as a political nation came to an end**.



The Babylonians Take Over

In **722 B.C.**, when the **Northern Kingdom was taken captive by Assyria**, people from **all twelve tribes were already living in the Southern Kingdom**. The Assyrians carried many people away as **slaves**, who were valuable, so it is unlikely they simply **wandered off to distant places like Europe**.

Later, the **Babylonians defeated Assyria**. In **586 B.C.**, Babylon also **captured the Southern Kingdom** and took many people into captivity. At that time, **members of all twelve tribes were involved**.

This captivity was different because **God had promised that Judah would return** under His covenant with David. The Northern Kingdom had no such promise.

When Babylon conquered Assyria, the descendants of the northern captives were likely mixed again with the captives from Judah. Isaiah even speaks to them as the **“House of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel”** (*Isa. 48:1; cf. vv. 12–14*).

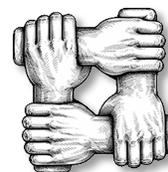
Commingled Terminology

God saw the people as **one nation**, even when many lived in Judah and Benjamin. The Bible calls them **“all Israel in Judah and Benjamin”** (*2 Chr. 11:3*). After the **Babylonian captivity**, the terms “Jew” and “Israelite” were often used interchangeably.

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| O.T. | } | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ezra calls the people “Jews” 8 times and “Israel” 40 times and speaks of “all Israel” (<i>Ezra 2:70; 3:11; 8:35; 10:25</i>). • Nehemiah uses “Jews” 11 times and “Israel” 22 times, saying all Israel was back in the land (<i>Neh. 12:47</i>). • Malachi refers to them as the whole nation (<i>Mal. 1:1</i>). |
| N.T. | } | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus came for “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (<i>Mt. 10:5–6; 15:24</i>). • The New Testament mentions “Israel” 75 times and “Jew” 174 times (<i>Acts 21:39; 22:3; Rom. 11:1; 2 Cor. 11:22; Phil. 3:5</i>), and also speaks of “the twelve tribes” (<i>Acts 26:7; Jas. 1:1</i>). • Anna knew she was from the tribe of Asher (<i>Lk. 2:36</i>). • Paul said he was from the tribe of Benjamin, calling himself both a Jew and an Israelite (<i>Rom. 11:1</i>). |

Peter also used these names interchangeably when he preached:

- ✓ **“Ye men of Judea”** (*Acts 2:14*)
- ✓ **“Ye men of Israel”** (*Acts 2:22*)
- ✓ **“All the house of Israel”** (*Acts 2:36*).



Regathered as One

In the **vision of the dry bones**, God shows that Judah (**“the Jews”**) and Israel (**“the ten tribes”**) **will be reunited as one nation** (*Ezek. 37:16–17, 21–22*). This regathering has already begun and continues today.

However, the Bible also teaches that **not every physical descendant automatically receives the promises** (*Rom. 9:4–7*).

Many stories about the **“Ten Lost Tribes”** have led to strange theories. Some even claim that the **modern State of Israel is not really Israel**. These ideas often become **anti-Semitic** and deny what God says He will do in His plan.

The Sealing of the 144,000: Why Wasn’t Dan or Ephraim Listed?

Dan: Back in **Gen. 49**, when Jacob prophesied about the tribes, he described Dan as a **serpent**. Because of this, the tribe first used a **serpent as its symbol**. Later, they changed it to an **eagle with a serpent**, and eventually, the **serpent part disappeared**, leaving only the eagle.



Later, **Moses said, “Dan is a lion’s whelp: he shall leap from Bashan”** (*Deut. 33:22*). In plain terms, Moses’ prophecy suggests:



- Dan would be **aggressive and unpredictable**
- The tribe would **move northward**
- They would **strike suddenly like a lion**

And historically, **that is exactly what the tribe of Dan eventually did in Judges 18.**

In **Judg. 5:17**, Deborah criticized Dan for staying **with their ships instead of helping Israel in battle**. This suggests that Dan had already begun **separating from the rest of Israel**, and some traditions say they became **seafaring people around the Mediterranean**.

The tribe of Dan also has a **history of leading Israel into idolatry**. Idolatry entered Israel through the tribe of Dan (*Lev. 24:10–16; Judg. 18:1,2,30–31*). Later, Dan helped lead the nation into false worship under **Jeroboam** (*1 Kgs. 12:28–30*) and again about a hundred years later (*2 Kgs. 10:29*).

Because of this history, the prophets spoke harshly about Dan, calling it a **source of trouble and judgment** (*Jer. 4:14; 8:16; Amos 8:14*). Moses even warned that **idolaters could have their names blotted out** (*Deut. 29:18–21*). So, when you read the long tribal genealogies in **1 Chr. 1–8**, the tribe of **Dan is missing**, and in **Rev. 7**, they are also **not included among the tribes sealed during the Tribulation**.

Despite the many problems of the tribe of Dan, God did not completely remove them from Israel.

In the future **Millennial Kingdom**, the tribe of Dan will also receive land again (*Ezek. 48:1*). However, it appears that the tribe of Dan is not protected during the Tribulation, as inferred from *Rev. 7*

Even so, **some people from the tribe of Dan will survive**, because a **remnant remains**, and they will **inherit land in the future kingdom**.

Ephraim: Ephraim is not named directly in the list. Instead, **he appears indirectly**. Joseph

had two sons: Manasseh and Ephraim. So when the Bible lists Joseph and Manasseh, Ephraim is implied. You can think of it like this:

$$\text{Joseph} = \text{Manasseh} + \text{Ephraim}$$

So if **Joseph is named but Manasseh is already listed**, the remaining part points to **Ephraim**. Ephraim also had a **bad reputation for idolatry**, especially during the time of **Jeroboam**, which is why the prophet said: **“Ephraim is joined to idols”** (*Hos. 4:17*).

Back to the 144,000: This next section now refers to the fruit of the 144,000, which are basically protected evangelists from the 12 tribes. Their efforts will result in a harvest of souls (*Isaiah 49:10-12; 60:1-3*)

| Counting the Twelve Tribes | | |
|----------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Genesis 29-30 | Numbers 1 | Revelation 7 |
| Reuben | Reuben | Reuben |
| Simeon | Simeon | Simeon |
| Levi | | Levi |
| Judah | Judah | Judah |
| Dan | Dan | |
| Naphtali | Naphtali | Naphtali |
| Gad | Gad | Gad |
| Asher | Asher | Asher |
| Isaachar | Isaachar | Isaachar |
| Zebulun | Zebulun | Zebulun |
| Joseph | | Joseph |
| | Ephraim | |
| | Manasseh | Manasseh |
| Benjamin | Benjamin | Benjamin |



Rev. 7:9, 10] *After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*

This large crowd in heaven in Rev. 7 is **not taken out of the Tribulation (raptured)** like the church in **Rev. 3:10**. Instead, they **live during the Tribulation** and respond to the call of the 144,000 **during the Tribulation and die as martyrs or believers during that period**.

Some Bible teachers believe that during this time, **many people turn to God due to the population of the earth, the shock of the previous rapture, and the message of the 144,000**. The prophets described a future time when God would draw large numbers of people to Himself from all over the world (Isa. 49:10–12 and Isa. 60:1–3). **Joel 2:28–32** (later quoted in **Acts 2:16–21**) also connects to these events during the **Great Tribulation**.



Rev. 7:11] *And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,*



Rev. 7:12, 13] *Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*



Rev. 7:13] *And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?*



Rev. 7:14] *And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came **out of** great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

The elder asks, **“Who are these people in white robes, and where did they come from?”** John honestly says **he does not know**. The elder already knows the answer—he is simply **helping John notice how important this group is**.



The elder then explains that **these people are believers who emerged from the Great Tribulation**. Again, many scholars believe they were saved through the witness of the 144,000 servants of God, the rapture, and the judgments starting to fall.

Imagine **144,000 Jewish evangelists**, well-versed in Scripture and empowered by the **Holy Spirit**, spreading God's message across the world during this time. Their work results in **a huge number of people turning to God**, which is the great crowd John sees.

Some early Roman Catholic interpreters tried to claim the elder was **the Apostle Peter** or even certain popes, such as Pope Silvester, but there is **no biblical basis for that idea whatsoever**.

Most scholars think this elder is **one of the twenty-four elders around God's throne**, who many believe **symbolically represent the church in heaven**.



Think of the Tribulation as a time when many people finally realize the truth about God. Despite intense persecution and hardship, they chose to follow Christ. Many, if not most, of them pay a very high price for that decision. When their earthly lives end, they appear in heaven before God’s throne. The white robes they wear show that their sins have been washed away through the sacrifice of Jesus. This is the group John is seeing—a massive number of believers who came to faith during the darkest period of human history.



Rev. 7:15] *Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.*



Rev. 7:16] *They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.*



Rev. 7:17] *For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*

During the Tribulation, those who came to faith in Christ endured severe hardship. They would have experienced persecution or martyrdom for their faith. Yet in the presence of God, every sorrow is removed. The suffering of the Tribulation gives way to eternal comfort.

| Contrast Tribulation Saints vs Elders | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Tribulation Saints | 24 Elders |
| Not wearing crowns | Wearing Crowns |
| Holding palms in their hands | Harps, no palms |
| Saved “OUT OF” the Tribulation | “KEPT OUT” of the tribulation (Rev. 3:10) |
| These stand before Thrones | Sit on thrones |
| These serve Him day and night | Reign as kings and priests (1 Cor. 6:2-3; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6) |
| Not recognized by John | |

It is helpful to briefly revisit the special role of the **144,000**, which will appear again later in the Book of Revelation.



Rev. 14:1, 2] *And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:*



Rev. 14:3] *And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.*



Rev. 14:4,5] *These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.*



Two Different Groups: One simple way to picture this is to imagine two groups arriving at the same celebration, each having taken a different journey. One group arrived earlier and has already taken their seats at the table. They wear crowns and share in the authority of the King. The other group arrives later, having come through a very difficult journey. They are welcomed, comforted, and honored for their faithfulness. Both groups belong to the King, but their paths to that moment were different.

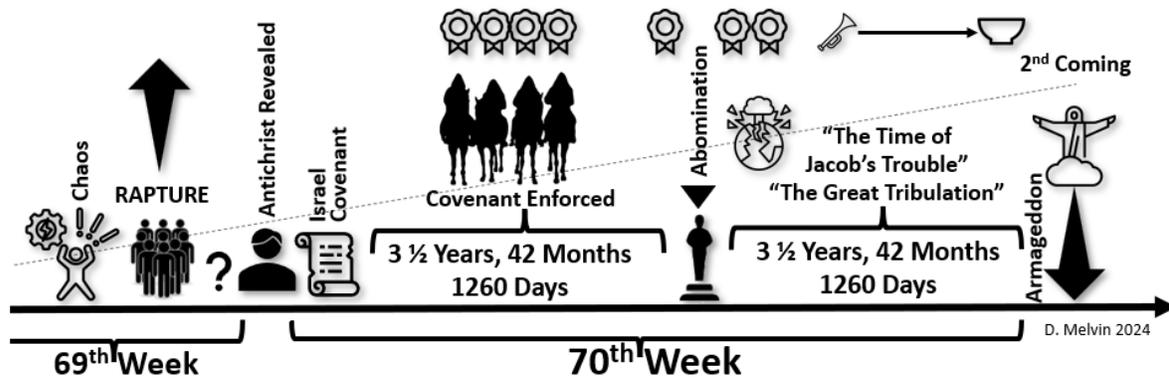
Final Reflections and Application

Revelation chapter 7 gives us a brief pause in the unfolding judgments of the Tribulation. No one knows the precise timing of the judgments, yet I view these events, the 144,000, and the saved multitude as occurring in the first half of the tribulation, right prior to the midpoint and the start of the **Great Tribulation**, where the severe judgments intensify further. A brunt of the rest of the judgments falls upon the “**earth dwellers**” (those who have rejected God and have no hope of redemption), the **Antichrist**, the **entire Beast System and its followers**, and **Israel**. During the brief interlude here in Chapter 6, God allows John to see two important things:

1. First, God is **sealing and protecting His servants**. The 144,000 from the tribes of Israel are marked with the seal of God and set apart for a special role during the Tribulation.
2. Second, John sees the result of God’s continued work in the world—a vast multitude of redeemed people from every nation standing before the throne of God.

Even during the first portion of the most severe period of judgment the world has ever experienced, **God is still calling people to Himself**.

This chapter reminds us that God’s plan always includes both **justice and mercy**. Judgment falls upon a rebellious world, but redemption remains available to those who turn to the Lamb.



Next Lesson: Read Revelation Chapters 8 & 9. If you have time, read Joshua 5:13 through 6:27 (the battle of Jericho).

Lessons and materials available at: <https://www.trustinginGrace.com>