



On Wednesday night, we began in the time period we call the Great Tribulation. I want to remind you again of why we will even have a Great Tribulation. One reason is judgment. Another reason is so that many will be saved. A third reason is so that Israel will come to know Him. Many errant teachers (mainly reformist theologians) preach that Israel was replaced by

the Church. This is a lie and it denies the covenants and promises of God. This will be very evident in this passage we're about to read this morning, but also in the passages we read in Zechariah. We started studying the seals back in Chapter five. Last week we looked at the first four seals which were the four horsemen of the apocalypse. We studied the fifth on Wednesday night. It dealt with those who had been slain who were under the altar, and the sixth seal was a vision of all of the natural calamities that will come against the earth (earthquakes, darkened skies, shifting tectonic plates, etc).

The Sealed of Israel

*7 After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. ² Then 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 granted to harm the earth and the sea, ³ saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed **the servants of our God** on their foreheads." ⁴ And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:*

*⁵ of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed;
of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were ^(a)sealed;
of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed;
⁶ of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed;
of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed;
of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed;
⁷ of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed;
of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed;
of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed;
⁸ of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed;*

*of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed;
of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed. (Revelation 7:1-8, NKJV).*

Lord, we pray that we will truly understand what you are trying to say to us in these few verses. This has been so distorted by groups that desire to make this verse all about them. Turn our hearts and our minds to what YOU want to tell us in these few verses. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

This event appears to happen early in the Tribulation period as the text says *"Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads."* The Lord is saying that these events we just read about will be restrained until 144,000 people have been sealed as God's own. I did a Google search of the 144,000 and there were 1,610,000 results of the search. So many people are out there trying to explain who they think these 144,000 are. Many groups have tried to claim that they are the 144,000. These are not 144,000 Jehovah's Witnesses. This is not saying that only 144,000 believers go to heaven. This is God giving us a clear picture of the redemption of His people, the Jews. God is a promise keeper, and GOD NEVER FORGETS HIS OWN. I should hear a loud resounding "Amen" on this one. This is all about Him and not about us. Before we look at the tribes specifically, I want to address some misconceptions and falsehoods concerning the Jewish people.

For several centuries, an idea has been promoted that the Church somehow replaced Israel. Let me emphatically say that this is not true and it is not Biblical. God made an "everlasting covenant" with the seed of Abraham. *⁷ And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. (Genesis 17:7, NKJV).*

When God says "everlasting," He means "forever." Forever doesn't mean "for a while," and it doesn't mean "until I change my mind." So number one, God is not done with the Jews. Number two, Paul tells us that "all of Israel will be saved." We don't understand exactly how all of that will come to pass, but Zechariah 8-14 and Revelation 7-19 reference Israel in the end-times.

The key verse describing the salvation of a future remnant of Israel is found in Zechariah 12:10 which reads *"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 12:10, NKJV).

Zechariah tells us that these faithful ones will be saved from the east and the west, and the Lord will bring them back to Jerusalem (see Zechariah 8:7-8). Understand that God is not done with the Jews. The passage today makes this very clear. What is described is the salvation of a remnant of 144,000 Jews with 12,000 coming from each of the Tribes of Israel..



Mosaic of the 12 Tribes of Israel in the Jewish Quarter in Old Jerusalem.

The angel of God is seen holding a seal, which shows authority and ownership. The Lord is marking 12,000 members from each of the twelve tribes of Israel as His very own. These are Jews who will come to believe in Him as Messiah during the first part of the Tribulation. The original sons are listed below on the left. The ones on the right are named according to their

allotments of land when they entered the Promised Land with Joshua.

Original Twelve Tribes of Jacob

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

Amended Tribes of Israel (land allocation)

Reuben	Gad
Simeon	Asher
*Levi	Issachar
Judah	Zebulun
Dan	**Joseph = Ephraim & Manasseh
Naphtali	Benjamin

***priests without land**

**** sons of Joseph adopted by Jacob**

Those highlighted on the right include Levi (because they became the priests of the land who were given no land, but the Lord Himself as their inheritance in Deuteronomy 18:1-2). Scripture also tells us that Joseph did not get a single inheritance, but a double portion (Genesis 48:5), and it was divided between his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh.

The 144,000

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

Now, notice that the 144,000 in this passage does not include the Tribe of Dan. Why doesn't it? What has happened? Some say it is because the Anti-Christ will come from Dan. Perhaps it is because Dan grievously and repeatedly sinned setting up worship of a golden calf in the territory they took without God's instruction or blessing. It could be that after the capture of the ten tribes of the north by the Assyrians, Dan melded

into the Assyrians and ceased to even exist as a tribe by the time this book of the Bible was written. I've even heard people say that the DeDannan people in ancient Ireland were somehow the lost tribe of Dan. The Mormons claim that they are physical descendants of the Tribes of Israel. Neither of these two theories has any scientific support with the DNA testing that is readily available today. The bottom line is that we aren't really sure why Dan isn't included in these 144,000.

Here's what we do know about the 144,000: (1) they are servants of God, (2) the seal of the Lord is placed on them (they are saved unto Him), and (3) they are Jews! That's what we know and the rest is conjecture. Some have the belief, and I including myself in this belief, think these "servants of God" will be a group of 144,000 Jewish evangelists that will populate the earth proclaiming the gospel.

The fact of the matter is that we can't really be sure why Dan is not included, but there is another message inside of the message. The Bible tells us that not only will 12,000 out of these tribes be saved, but elsewhere in scripture we know that Dan itself will be redeemed and is never forgotten by God. We are told this in Ezekiel 48:1-2 when the tribes will be regathered and Dan will have a place in the Millennial reign of Jesus. GOD DOESN'T FORGET HIS OWN.

The Bible is very clear both in the writings of Paul and in the writings of the prophets Ezekiel and Zechariah that GOD IS NOT DONE WITH HIS PEOPLE. The idea that God has rejected His people in favor of the Church is called "replacement theology." It has led to much wicked and hateful persecution of the Jewish people.

Verse 9 and going forward in our text tells us what those 144,000 do.

A Multitude from the Great Tribulation

⁹After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, (Revelation 7:9, NKJV).

These are believers. They are clothed in white robes. Perhaps they are the fruit of the ministry of these 144,000 super evangelists.

And look what they're all doing. They are all involved in worship.

¹⁰and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" ¹¹All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the

four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² saying:

*"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom,
Thanksgiving and honor and power and might,
Be to our God forever and ever.
Amen." (Revelation 7:10-12, NKJV).*

One of the elders asks John who they are and where they've come from.

¹³ Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" ¹⁴ And I said to him, "Sir, you know." (Revelation 7:13-14a, NKJV).

John didn't know so he said to the Angel, "Sir you know."

So, he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Revelation 7:14b-c, NKJV).

These are those who "came out" of the great tribulation. These are the believers who specifically came out of the tribulation. I believe this is all those who will come to Christ during the Tribulation. This is probably those who will come out of the Tribulation as believers because of the ministry of the 144,000 that we've just read about. This makes sense because this whole description follows the citing of the 144,000 being sealed.

Tim Lahaye presents this in his series "Left Behind." We've all seen some of these Jewish Evangelists at present and they are amazingly powerful in their testimony. I'm thinking of people like Jonathan Cahn, and our own guest speaker, Rabbi Daniel Schnaider, who came to minister to the Grove in our earliest days together as a Church body.

¹⁵ 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 dwell among them. ¹⁶ They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; ¹⁷ 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." (Revelation 7:15-17, NKJV).

Those that are in white robes are believers. They are falling on their faces and are engaged in worship.

Let's turn quickly to Peter's sermon in Acts 2.

¹⁴ But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. ¹⁵ For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. ¹⁶ But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. ¹⁸ And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy. ¹⁹ I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath; blood and fire and vapor of smoke. ²⁰ The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. ²¹ And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.' (Acts 2:14-21, NKJV).

This is not talking about Gentiles in our age. Many churches quote this to support the idea that this is talking about them and their relationship with the Holy Spirit. It is not. It is Joel describing to Jews what the end will be like in Israel. He is speaking of an era when Israel will come back to whom and what they were always meant to be. It describes the very events we read about in Revelation chapter 6.

The wonderful message today is that **GOD DOESN'T FORGET HIS OWN. GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES. NEVER FORGET THAT JESUS WAS AND IS A JEW. HE IS IN FACT THE LION OF JUDAH.** Jews are called "Jews" because of the tribe of Judah. His title proclaims that **HE IS THE STRENGTH, POWER, AND GLORY OF ISRAEL.** His redemption is to all the tribes of Israel, even unto Dan.

Let us give Him praise, honor, and glory.

Let us pray.

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at uniongrove362@gmail.com or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Neese- Webster, Texas.) All financial gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible as a 501 (c) (3) Corporation.