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Series: For the Time is Near
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Salvation is Here!
Revelation 7

We are in Revelation Chapter 7, as we continue our Christmas series through *scary* Revelation. [Laughter] It's **not** scary and it's not so difficult or complicated when you break it down, and begin to understand exactly what the Spirit says to the seven churches and how the Lord is speaking and directing John to exactly what he, and we, need to understand. God would not give us something that is beyond us. In fact, He gave us a Helper and a Teacher so that we can come to understand what He desires for us to understand. So that's wonderful!

[Prayer] *Father, we are truly grateful for Your presence here. You tell us where two or more are gathered in Your name, You are there in the midst. You promised the disciples that as You ascended and left earth, that You would send the Helper, Who is the Holy Spirit, to convict the world of sin, but also to give us understanding of Your word and to seal us as possessions of Yours, as children of the Most High, being joint heirs with Jesus Christ of all of Your riches. We are thankful for Your Spirit, and I ask that You would pour Your Spirit out upon us, and give us understanding of Your word, and with that understanding that we would have application to bless and glorify You. May You give us strength this morning, and joy no matter what the circumstances are that we find ourselves in today. May we look to You, the Author and Perfector of our faith. May we learn to serve You with contentment, understanding, and grace, keeping our eyes fixed on You. We praise You and want to commit this time into Your hands. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.*

So the title of this morning's message is *Salvation is Here!* We're going to start out by taking a look at Jesus' disciples, and we're going to look at some Pharisees, some Scribes; some religious leaders of biblical New Testament times because we want to set up a backdrop to Revelation Chapter 7. We will see the Jews, the 144,000 and who they are exactly, what they're doing, and what they're called to do. We're also going to see the Gentiles, who are innumerable.

But we're going to start out with this: *service*. There was this discussion, as is the discussion on earth, it may not be verbally or something that is audible all the time, but it is: "*Who's the greatest?*" You may have been challenged this week with that very conversation within your own heart. "*Who's the greatest?*" is something that comes up in our minds and hearts as we struggle to be better than someone else in some way, shape, or form. The disciples had that discussion openly and Jesus knew it.

He addressed His disciples in Luke 9:46-48: ⁴⁶ ***An argument arose among them as to which of them was the greatest.***⁴⁷ [They were talking about this in the background, but in Jesus' presence.] ***But Jesus, knowing the reasoning of their hearts, took a child and put him by his side***⁴⁸ ***and said to them, "Whoever receives this child***

in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. For he who is least among you all is the one who is great."

If you remember, the disciples were trying to keep the little children away from Jesus and He said, "No, no, no. Let them come to Me, for to such belong the kingdom of heaven." If you have the faith of a child, not in immature ways, but we're talking about just having no question whatsoever, no doubt at all. Children are the most unassuming people on planet earth. They just come to Jesus with complete faith. They come to a father and a mother in complete faith. Not doubting, just having complete trust. He says, "Make yourselves like one of these children, the least of all, and you will be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Addressing the scribes and the Pharisees, the religious leaders of the time, in Matthew 23:11-12 Jesus said: ¹¹
"The greatest among you shall be your servant. ¹² Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted." He says, "Don't think too much of yourselves. Just because you know much doesn't mean you are worth much when it comes to fulfilling My will. My will is to fulfill My commandments, which is to love others with a selfless love, even sacrificing yourself. Are you willing to do that?"

He again addresses His disciples in Luke 22:24-27: ²⁴ ***"A dispute also arose among them [So this was an argument], as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. ²⁵ And he said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. ²⁶ But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. ²⁷ For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves."*** Jesus is saying this: "Look to Me. I'm claiming to be God because I am God, but I am among you as the One who serves. Let me throw a wrench into your whole way of thinking. Look to Me. I'm serving you. Who's the greatest? He who humbles himself, and I will exact that person."

As long as life has existed, there has been this yearning among people to be great, to be known, to matter. I've spoken of this before. To leave a legacy...is it truly for you, or is it truly for the glory of God? To be noticed and really, ultimately, to being better. But it all has to do with the heart, with the intent. People are competing among each other and God is simply left out of the equation. He's not the reason for people doing the best they can.

Yet, Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10:31: ³¹ ***"So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."*** In fact, he said at one point, "I have more to boast than all of you put together and let me tell you a few of the things, just in general...but all of that is trash! It's not worth much outside of having a relationship with Jesus Christ, and knowing Him, or boasting about His grace, absolutely nothing!"

Colossians 3:23, the Apostle Paul writing to them says: ²³ ***"Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men..."*** If we're not worried about people around us, if we're truly focused on serving and glorifying the Lord, we're going to do the best job that we can. We will have integrity and honesty. I tell you that people will notice you but it's not to glorify you, or to get you a promotion, or for any other reason, it's simply to glorify the Lord. Let me tell you that He is faithful. Talk about provision; talk about giving you what you need. ***"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."*** [Matthew 6:33] That's what we are to do!

So whether it is on earth or in heaven, the best place to be is the place that is worshiping Him, serving Him. We'll see that actually in both places.

This morning we take a look at two groups of people: the Jews who are sealed on earth and given a specific work to do; and the saved Gentiles who are in heaven, given to worship and service in heaven.

This is important as this is set in the time of the Great Tribulation, the time in the future that has not taken place. And to understand it is to know and believe and to worship God.

As we go through the word of God it's supposed to draw us closer to Him; not further away, but closer. That's why on Sunday mornings, Wednesday evenings, or anytime we come together and break open the word of God, read and then meditate on it, and study and break it down, it should be a time of fulfillment because it should certainly serve as the bread of life feeding God's children. It should bring joy, understanding, and clarity.

To know that Revelation Chapter Seven is set in the future in the time of the Great Tribulation, is also to understand the importance of telling others about the Savior. We're going to see the 144,000 and what they are set out to do, what orders they are given. It's amazing because we need to look at that and understand that is important to God, to do the work of an evangelist.

Maybe you're not called or gifted to be an evangelist. But we all certainly *are* called, each and every one of us, as Christians to do the work of an evangelist; to tell others about Jesus Christ and His saving grace. Even using Christmas as a platform to tell people about Jesus and the hope that is found in Him alone.

Ray was right on when he said, "Hey, Christians! Let's take full advantage of Christmas." Let's help them understand, this is why we celebrate. You know on Christmas Day it would be great to open up the word of God and actually read the story of Christmas! To who? To anyone who would listen to you! Your family, friends, anyone that you are before. "Hey, did you know that in the Bible this is what it says? It's beautiful! This is what Christmas is all about!" Read to them and help them to understand. Any strangers that are open, help them to become friends as you tell them, "Merry Christmas!", even when others will say "Happy Holidays"

I was in Target the other day and encountered a bold brother in the Lord. I was done paying and was leaving and was shocked, because he said, "God bless you", and I was like, "What?...God bless you, too!" I don't know what the look on my face was, but it was kind of shocking because you don't hear that anymore. When someone says, "Happy Holidays", I'll reply, "Merry Christmas!" It's all about Christ.

The 144,000 – The Sealed on Earth (vv. 1-8)

Let's take a look at these verses here in Chapter 7. We're going to start out with the 144,000, the sealed on earth in verses 1-8, then we'll go into the remainder of the chapter.

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. ² 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, ³ saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads." ⁴ And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:

***⁵ 12,000 from the tribe of Judah were sealed,
12,000 from the tribe of Reuben,
12,000 from the tribe of Gad,***

⁶ *12,000 from the tribe of Asher,
12,000 from the tribe of Naphtali,
12,000 from the tribe of Manasseh,
⁷ 12,000 from the tribe of Simeon,
12,000 from the tribe of Levi,
12,000 from the tribe of Issachar,
⁸ 12,000 from the tribe of Zebulun,
12,000 from the tribe of Joseph,
12,000 from the tribe of Benjamin were sealed.*

We have God, five angels, and 144,000 from the tribes that were listed there. Let's start out with "***the four corners of the earth...***". Basically, it was a term that was used to describe the entire earth. The four angels were sent to the four corners of the earth meaning that they had authority over those areas, the entire world. They were given certain specific instructions. They were to hold back the elements of the whole earth. If you can imagine, it is at this time that there is not so much as a breeze blowing over the ocean and over the earth.

Now, that's pretty amazing having been on the ocean myself and understanding that there are great storms that arise. The only time that I saw a stillness was in the Indian Ocean, and it was like a lake. It was absolutely amazing! As I saw no white caps, just smooth as can be, like a lake early in the morning when there has been nothing out there.

The whole ocean, the bodies of water all over the world will be that still. There will be no leaves that are moving, nothing. It will be completely still. If you think about how in certain parts of the world when everything is at a standstill, there's no breeze whatsoever and the sun is continuing to burn brightly, and how it quickly becomes miserable. So I don't know and he doesn't explain, he doesn't describe anything like that, he just says to the four angels in the four corners of the earth to make sure that there is not a breeze blowing on any part of the world.

But it's not so much that they're holding back breezes and swift winds, but rather that they're holding back a destructive force of God's judgment that is coming by way of natural elements that we have come to know in our own time. We know about these elements; we know about the winds, we know what they can do. In fact, we know that the effects of winds that are sustained at high levels can have devastating effects on our world as we know it. Can you imagine Katrina times ten, times a hundred? That's exactly what they're holding back.

And then there was another angel having command and having seals for 144,000 in the tribes that were listed. He had the authority to tell the other four angels to hold everything back and then his job was to seal the actual people, the 144,000. The Bible tells us it will be on their foreheads. How that will look, I do not know, and you do not know exactly how that will appear. But we do know that they are sealed.

Seals were familiar in the ancient world. They were used by king or property owners to show ownership, or authenticity. Much like a branding cattle today, or it used to be in the West. Branding actually occurs in many areas of the world. You have this iron and you put it in fire, and then you brand your cattle. That seal says that

cow or that bull belongs to a certain person and they take ownership. Today cattle are actually tagged on their ear so they use other forms of identification.

This angel was tasked with this one thing: to seal the 144,000. Some things to understand about these 144,000 is that they are not representative as the church as a whole. Some say we can interpret it as the perfection of the church. No, no, no! This is not replacement theology. We don't teach that here, okay? The church has not taken the place of the nation of Israel, nor of the people of God. We are actually grafted in; we are adopted children into the family of God. The church will be raptured and is seen in this chapter in heaven.

These are also not Jehovah's Witnesses, for they are a false religion that are leading people to hell. They believe that Jesus is not the Son of God, but rather Michael the Archangel, and they preach another gospel. So they shouldn't even be considered and what they teach shouldn't even be listened to. It's a false religion and we should completely steer away from that teaching. After all there's more than 144,000 Jehovah's Witnesses up to this point. So who is to enter and who is to not? Only they can answer that question, but they answer it without any real good knowledge of the word of God.

We can also debate as to why Joseph is included in this list, as is his son, Manasseh, but not his other son, Ephraim. We have these questions and I'm sure if you study the Bible long enough, you'll ask why it is that Dan is also left out, but he's noted in Ezekiel Chapter 48 during the millennial reign. Why? We can spend a lot of time speculating, trying to figure out why it is that God had this specific list detailed in this specific area as opposed to other areas in the Bible. But let's leave those things to the Lord. It's not that it's an error, it's not imperfect; it's perfect just the way it is. As to why He did it, you can ask Him one day.

When you go before Him then you can take the time to ask, "Why did you do this and why did you do that?" I believe that we will know just as we are known because the Bible tells me that to be so. So we may think we'll have a question for Paul, or we'll have a question for Adam, but I don't believe we'll have *any* questions whatsoever. I think we'll just fall down and worship the Lord eternally and serve Him. Why? Because we'll know those things.

What is important is that we see that these 144,000 are unleashed on the earth. To do what? They are to serve as witnesses. That is their task, their whole job! I like what Greg Laurie says, "It's like unleashing 144,000 Apostle Pauls on the earth." 144,000 that are proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ without holding back anything! It's just amazing! These are preachers of righteousness and there will be opportunity for people to come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ during the Great Tribulation. That's wonderful!

And on top of that, there's a record of an angel who's proclaiming the gospel. We find that in Revelation Chapter 14:6-7:

⁶ Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. ⁷ And he said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water."

Can you imagine the heavens opening up and an angel doing that today? A lot of people would just pass out, faint! "Wow! What is that?!" This is pointing to a merciful God who's giving the people every opportunity to come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, even then.

Matthew 24:14 says: ***And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*** And that's what Jesus had spoken.

Perhaps this preaching will surpass any revival that we've ever experienced on earth because what we'll see in a moment, is a multitude of people in heaven who are countless; even like grains of sands on the seashore; innumerable. It's amazing! This is a time of great tribulation.

It's out of the groans of unimaginable circumstances that a person sometimes begins to consider the possibility of God. I don't know how you came to know Jesus personally, to surrender to Him, but I know a lot of people that have to be in this place to where they are on their backs completely. We're so stubborn, aren't we? We will deny Him to the very end, and then at some point when we're on our backs is when we consider Him. I see that all the time. We begin to consider the possibility of God since trusting in others, or even in ourselves, hasn't amounted to much, let alone salvation.

God unleashes 144,000 and they're sealed. No matter what the Anti-Christ, no matter what the Enemy tries to do, they will be untouchable. 144,000 preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. That is beautiful!

So that's what happening on earth; there's much serving to see the saved in heaven. He chooses you and I as instruments to bring about salvation. That baffles me! We are sinners in need of a Savior and He's sending us as saved sinners to go proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to a dying world and see them saved! Why? Because you're going to give them the hope. If they see how it is that He's changed your life, and how possible it is; if they see that joy within you, that hope that can't be crushed, then certainly there's a God!

The Saved – The Serving in Heaven (vv.9-17)

Let's continue on and read verses 9-12:

⁹ 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, ¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"¹¹ 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, ¹² saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

So we see this great multitude worshiping God in His presence, before the throne. Here we see 144,000 on earth serving God, proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. We also see in heaven, the multitudes praising and worshiping God, but in a moment we'll see how it is that they're *servicing* God.

We need to note, though, that God defines them here as *nations, tribes, peoples, and languages*. They're all standing before the throne and Lamb of God. So these are individuals. There's the multitudes, but He's describing them as individuals.

Salvation is Here!

He knows when you were going to be born, when you will take your last breath, the numbers of hairs that you have on your head...or don't have. He knows everything about you. So He loves you individually, and yet you are corporately, at some point as are these, all together, worshiping the Lord before the throne.

They're not described as a "bunch of people", or just simply as "countless", but as *nations, languages, peoples*. And although they are unique, they are also united in location, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They are in God's presence.

C.H. Spurgeon said, *"This is a peculiar subject of their joy: that God has a throne, that He sits upon it, and that He ruleth over all things, and all things do His bidding. The central thought of heaven then, is divine sovereignty."*

So think about translating that thought, that consuming and overwhelming thought, and translating that to planet earth; to our lives individually, personally, intimately. The sovereignty of God should overwhelm us. Just the thought that He's never out of control, He never leaves us, He never forsakes us. Everything that He says is true and will come to pass. All of these things speak about a sovereign God. If heaven certainly focuses on a sovereign God on His throne then we should too. That should be before us all the time.

Also, all of them are clothed in white robes. It has a couple of meanings:

1. It's a righteous covering of Jesus as His shed blood serves as a robe of righteousness before the Father, washed clean and forgiven from sin; atoning for our sins in full.
2. It serves as a priestly covering with service unto the Lord; a covering for a holy, eternal service.

We also see palm branches. So heaven has palm trees! Those of us who live in California will be familiar with palm trees. Do you understand what palm trees and palm branches symbolize? It symbolizes victory. Victory! So everytime you look at a palm tree think about the Lord, as they laid that before Him on His entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. It's a great victory that the multitudes are praising the Lamb for and as they could only know through Him. They were praising God and they were celebrating! They were looking to Him and they were using these palm branches to give Him praise.

Acts 4:12 says: ***And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*** So they're celebrating salvation! In fact, that's what they cried out, ***"Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"***

Can you imagine the moment when you're able to just praise Him with that in His presence? It won't be like a quiet little, *"Ok, I'm afraid to offend the person in front of me with my voice."* You'll be crying out, *"Thank You, God! Thank You for Your salvation! We praise You and to You alone belongs all glory, and all honor!"*

And it was when this was proclaimed that the angels who were around, the twenty-four elders, and the four living creatures ***"fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, "Amen!"*** (We are in complete agreement!) All the hosts of heaven! So we have earth, right? Those who were saved on earth are now in heaven in the presence of the Lord. They are praising God for salvation and all the hosts of heaven around them simply say, ***"Amen!"*** to begin *their* praise and worship to God. Oh, man, what a joy! What a day that will be!

And then we see in the next portion how there's also a response in heaven for God's grace; His salvation.

¹³ Then one of the elders addressed me [John], saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" ¹⁴ 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.

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 shelter them with his presence.

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

¹⁷ 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."

We know what the 144,000 are doing on earth, and now we see the multitudes in heaven. What are they doing? They're certainly not on a cloud plucking away at the strings of a harp. They're not doing anything but serving the Lord. They will never grow tired. They will never grow weary. These are the people who were saved through and in the midst the Tribulation period. Because most, if not all, are martyrs from that Great Tribulation. It is a great number, so much that it cannot be counted.

Isaiah 1:18 says:

"Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool."

What is important for John to know is important for us to know. We already know who they are, and we already know where they are, but we also need to understand what they are doing. They are fulfilling a priestly service unto the Lord.

I thought about how leadership on earth isn't perfect. If you watch any movies that have conspiracy theories where you never know who to trust, who's telling the truth and who's not. If you watch Mission Impossible, you'll be wondering the whole time where the twist is, who to trust. Earthly leadership can always be questioned: What are the motives? Are they pure? Are they impure? Are they self-serving? Are they not?

But let me tell you that in heaven, there's no doubt. The Shepherd will be before His people and He'll be ministering to them in such a tender and intimate way. Perfect! There's absolutely no doubt, whatsoever. As we serve Him, we'll be sheltered and shepherded, personally and intimately. There will be no hunger; no thirst; no sun; no scorching heat. He will be our light. That will be beautiful! The Shepherd will care for the multitudes perfectly, as we see here, wiping away every tear and guiding them to springs of living water.

Now the question is, has Jesus not been shepherding us up to this point? Yes, absolutely! But right now is like a sketch. It's like a shadow of what's to come. At some point, we will know perfectly just as we are known. We will know His presence, we will be before Him, we will serve Him just as we are here and so much more.

Salvation is Here!

I want to close with this. We started out talking about the intent of the heart and serving the Lord. We're always trying to one up each other in some way, shape, or form. But really the bottom line is, if you pray like Jesus said to: "*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*" We pray for *His* will to be done on earth as it's been ordained in heaven, not as we ordain here on earth--"*Hey, go ahead and bless these plans.*"

We're looking for His divine purpose to be fulfilled in our lives. If that's truly our goal, then we serve to glorify Him. We're no longer jockeying for position. We're certainly and purely desiring His glory and that is through serving Him with a pure heart toward Him and for Him, alone. Everything else will come into place. More importantly, His plans will fall into place.

It's at this point that we can see that we're speaking of, and pointing to a merciful God. Who in the midst of the Great Tribulation is sealing 144,000 and sending them out to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ in order to see a great number be saved before there is no more time and judgment is final.

Jesus is coming soon. If you don't see the world getting darker; if you don't understand what's going on around you...even within the church, there is this fuzziness, a weird kind of going parallel with the world and it really feels odd. We should be distinct. We are called to be peculiar people, completely different from the world. We should not be like the world. We should be unique. Unique in a good way.

We see God being merciful, even at this time. Hallelujah to Him! Praise Him for His mercy and His grace. We see God using earth to bring about an amazing rejoicing, and the multitudes in heaven are worshiping and serving the Lord in His presence. It's like heaven and earth are coming together and you see just the multitudes doing His work and serving Him in these final hours of The Day.

God knows YOU to be that valuable to Him! Think about how that He would do this even in the midst of the final hours before the The Day comes to a close, in the eleventh hour, if you will. And the question is, do you know this message personally? Do you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ? Have you truly received that proclamation of grace in your own life and is there evidence of that? As I explained earlier, can people look to you and say, "Obviously, you have been completely transformed by Jesus Christ. There is something different about you and I want that!" There should be this distinction. Here's you before...here's you after. There is and should be that distinction in your life. Do you know this message? Because salvation is here; Emmanuel, God with us! We're celebrating Christmas. But are you truly celebrating Him as a holiday, or as your Savior?

He's crying out to you, He wants you to know salvation in Jesus Christ. Jesus said: "***I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.***" [John 14:6] There's only one Door, and it's Jesus Christ. There is no other way; not by good works. That won't get you anywhere because even our righteousness is like dirty garments. They're polluted and even on our best days, we serve Him with polluted garments. So it can't be with that. We have to be clothed with God's righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ and His shed blood in order to know salvation.

Do you know that? I pray that you understand this. All you have to do is ask for forgiveness and He will forgive you. Through that forgiveness, you ask that He would help you to turn from those things which are offensive to Him and keep you away from Him. The fancy word for that is *repentance*. That's all it is.

In fact, as Jesus preached the gospel He called people to repentance. It's to turn away from your sin and toward Him, as He is pouring out His grace upon you through His Son, Jesus Christ. If God is bringing to your attention

Salvation is Here!

this morning that you are not His, I pray that this morning be the day of salvation for you. Ask Him for forgiveness. Ask Him to be your Lord and Savior. And as you turn away from those things which are offensive to Him, run toward Him, read the Bible, pray, fellowship. Learn to love that fellowship, and serve Him just as we see here in this chapter. I promise you that this will be the greatest Christmas you've ever celebrated. Let's pray.

[Prayer] Father, we are truly thankful for that grace that You show all the way to that final moment of judgment that is coming on the earth. We thank You that we see here an army of preachers that You will ordain on earth; 144,000, and that's just the Jewish people! We see an angel going through the heavens proclaiming the gospel. That is absolutely amazing, but that speaks of Your mercy, of Your grace, of Your glory! I pray, Lord, that this morning we would rejoice in our own salvation. I pray if there is anyone here who does not know salvation that You would do a work convicting them of their sin, which is nothing more than bringing them to an understanding of how offensive that is before You, a righteous God, and how those sins separate each unrepentant sinner from You for eternity. The final place for such a person is hell, and one day the Lake of Fire forever; a place that was reserved for Satan and the fallen angels, and yet each and every person who does not confess their sins before You and come to that place of having a relationship with You, will one day see it for eternity. Lord, rather than that, I pray that You would move in our hearts and that we would not be prideful. Knock down any walls that we have built up so that we would be humble before You, falling before You, and being relieved as we ask for Your forgiveness and receive Your grace through Your Son, Jesus Christ. I pray that that's all of us right here this morning. I ask that You would continue to guide us and direct us this week. May we worship and praise You not only with our lips, but also with our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.