

THE 144,000 AND THE GREAT MULTITUDE

Revelation chapter 7 mentions 144,000 people of the tribes of Israel who are sealed in their foreheads and a great multitude of people who come out of tribulation; then, in chapter 14, we see another 144,000 mentioned who have the name of the Lamb and the Father written on their foreheads.

Who are these two groups of 144,000 and this great multitude of people? Is the knowledge of who these prophetic people are of any importance to you and your loved ones. The answer is yes, it is important to you and your loved ones. That is, if you are living in the end times, because tucked away in this information are some little known and understood keys to physical and spiritual survival during the end times. Therefore, you might want to pay careful attention to the information about the prophetic 144,000 and the great multitude contained in this broadcast.

THE 144,000 OF CHAPTER SEVEN

The first group of 144,000 are mentioned in Revelation chapter 7 after the opening of the sixth seal of God's wrath upon the earth in chapter 6, which portrays the violent collapse of the old order of things and seems to follow the general order in which the earth was made fit for humanity's habitation.

Beginning in Revelation chapter 6 verse 12

"And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, even as a fig tree casts her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us

from the face of him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who will be able to stand?" (Rev.6: 12-17 KJV).

At this point in time, many of those who will have heard the gospel message proclaimed will come to the realization that what they have heard about the wrath of God being poured out upon those who refuse to repent is absolutely true and that their days are numbered. Therefore, in great terror, they will try to hide from the punishment that they know is coming.

Between the Sixth and Seventh Seals we see the following in chapter 7 verse 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, or on the sea, or on any tree" (Rev.7:1 KJV).

Here we see four angelic beings hold back the four winds. The English word 'winds' is translated from a Greek word, which does define winds as such, but also pertains to the four cardinal points from which the wind blow, but not necessarily the physical wind itself. It is very likely that the four winds are in fact the four spirit-beings in Zechariah 6:5 who are described as the winds of heaven.

After the four angelic beings hold back the four winds, another spirit-being will come from the east, which is traditionally the direction from where divine manifestations come (Isa.41:1-2; Ezk.43:2-3; Mal.4:1-2). This spirit-being will instruct the four powerful spirit-beings not to proceed with their destruction of the earth, the sea, and the unrepentant wicked of earth's population. Also notice that this spirit-being has the seal of the living God with him with which he and those who are with him are to seal the servants of God as noted in verse 3, which says:

"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. Saying, Hurt not

the earth, neither the sea, or the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads" (Rev.7:2-3 KJV).

Verse 4 says, "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" (Rev.7:4 KJV).

In verses 6-8 of chapter 7, there are 12,000 Israelites noted as being sealed from each tribe of Israel except for the tribe of Dan, which seems to be replaced by the half tribe of Manasseh. Either the tribe of Dan is included in one of the other tribes or it is left out of the 144,000 for reasons that only God knows.

Sealed for Their Protection

It is important to note that the sealing of these 144,000 individuals happens before the seventh seal is opened in chapter 8, which begins the seven trumpet plagues. The seventh seal is also known as the Day of the Lord (Rev.6:17) and the great tribulation.

It is clear that these people who have been sealed are found worthy to escape the horrors of the coming plagues that are to be poured out on the earth. Because the only one's who are clearly promised protection from this hour of trouble are those of the Philadelphia church noted in Revelation 3:7-13. Because of this, there seems to be only two possibilities to the identity of this group of 144,000:

They are either part of the Philadelphia group of God's elect who are sealed against his wrath because of their faithfulness to him and his ways, or they are the God's elect who have heeded the warnings given to the churches in Revelation chapters 2 and 3. And because they have repented of their wrong attitudes and behaviors, they are found worthy to escape God's wrath.

More than likely, these 144,000 are a combination of the seven church groupings noted in Revelation chapters 2 and 3 who are all descendants of the tribes Israel. How God reckons bloodlines is not

totally understood, but we do know that he knows who both physical and spiritual Israelites are. It is interesting to note that in Christ's own lineage there are Gentiles (Rahab of Jericho and Ruth of Moab), yet Christ's blood line is considered to be Israelitish of the tribe of Judah.

In Ezekiel chapters 8 and 9, the prophet was also given a vision in which he saw many of God's elect who inhabit Jerusalem sealed against God's wrath in the end of the age by one having an inkhorn with which to mark those to be spared from harm.:

Ezekiel chapter 8, verses 17 and 18

"Then he said to me, Have you seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? For they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose [part of pagan worship system]. Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them" (Ezk.8:17-18 KJV).

Here, we see that God's patience toward national Israel will come to an end and he will no longer sit quietly by while the houses of Israel and Judah and their civil and religious leaders commit their abominations and idolatry before him. He will punish them without mercy for their rebellion and wickedness.

Ezekiel chapter 9, beginning in verse one continues this prophecy:

"He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city [speaking of Jerusalem] to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand. And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lies toward the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brazen altar" (vs.1-2).

The avenging army of Jesus Christ is being gathered

to begin a great slaughter among humanity. Notice that, among these six men, there is another man who has a writer's inkhorn.

Continuing in verses 3 and 4

"And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; And the Lord said to him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof" (vs.3-4).

Because the Creator God of Israel came to earth in the person of Jesus, it seems logical that it is he who calls to the one having the inkhorn and instructs him to go to those in Jerusalem and mark the servants of God who are heart-broken because of the evil that they see. From the description of what the one with the inkhorn does, it is possible that those who are sealed are a part of the 144,000 spoken of in the Book of Revelation chapter 7.

Continuing in verses 6 and 7:

"Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house. And he said to them, Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain: go you forth. And they went forth, and killed in the city" (vs-6-7).

The other six who are standing by are told to follow the one with the inkhorn and begin the slaughter among the inhabitants of Jerusalem who have not been marked for survival by the one with the inkhorn.

Continuing in verse 8

"And it came to pass, while they were slaying them, and I was left, that I fell upon my face, and cried, and said, Ah Lord God! will you destroy all the residue of Israel in your pouring out of your fury

upon Jerusalem? Then said he to me, The lawlessness of the house of Israel and Judah is exceeding great, and the land is full of blood, and the city full of perverseness: for they say, The Lord has forsaken the earth, and the Lord sees not. And as for me also, my eye will not spare, neither will I have pity, but I will recompense their way upon their head" (vs.8-10).

The question that Ezekiel asked and the answer that he received tells us that although the inhabitants of Jerusalem are the primary focus of these angels of death, the rest of the house of Israel and Judah who are scattered among the nations are also killed by these angelic beings. It is also clear that this slaughter upon the house of Israel and Judah will not stop until all those who are to be killed are killed.

Continuing in verse 11

"And, behold, the man clothed with linen, which had the inkhorn by his side, reported the matter, saying, I have done as you have commanded me" (v11).

The time setting of both Revelation 7:1-8 and Ezekiel 9:1-11 is right before the Day of the Lord, which is the time period called The Great Tribulation in which God will pour out his wrath upon all humanity. From this point in time until Christ's return, the faithful servants of God will be separated from the rest of humanity and will be protected from the wrath of God. However, the elect who have not been faithful will suffer along with the rest of humanity as God's wrath is poured out upon the earth, the sea, and the wicked in order to complete the preparation of the earth for the invasion of Jesus Christ and his army of spirit-beings.

In Revelation chapter 7 we see that at least 144,000 of the elect of God from the tribes of Israel will be protected from the final wrath of God that will be poured out upon unrepentant humanity and some of the elect who have not repented of their sinful attitudes and behavior.

With the sealing of the 144,000 servants of God, it

is highly likely that the gospel age of salvation will end and the full fury of God's wrath will be poured out upon the earth and will not cease until Christ and his army of spirit-beings conquer the Beast and its governmental and religious system noted in the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation.

THE 144,000 OF CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The second group of 144,000 are mentioned in Revelation chapter 14.

Beginning in chapter 14 verse 1:

"Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads" (v1 NIV).

Notice that these 144,000 have both the name of the Lamb, who is Christ, and his Father who is the Sovereign God written on their foreheads. Because this 144,000 are standing with Christ, it indicates that these are the Sovereign Father's elect children who have participated in the first resurrection and have been given eternal and immortal life in the Family and Kingdom of God.

Continuing in verses 2 and 3:

"And I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of rushing waters and like a loud peal of thunder. The sound I heard was like that of harpists playing their harps. And they [speaking of the 144,000] sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth" (vs.2-3 NIV).

There is no mention of this 144,000 being descended from the tribes of Israel. What is noted is that they have been redeemed from the earth, which would seem to indicate that they are both Israelites and non-Israelites. It is possible that these 144,000 are all spiritual Israelites, because under the first covenant with national Israel, we know that Israelites and non-Israelites alike could remain undefiled from other religions by being faithful to God:

Continuing in verses 4 and 5

"These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for they kept themselves pure. These follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These have been purchased from among men and offered as first-fruits to God and the Lamb. No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless" (vs.4-5).

Notice that these people who take part in the first resurrection were not defiled with women (which are symbolic of false religions), rather, they are pure virgins (which means that they are spiritually pure and undefiled). Also note that these people were redeemed from among men, and the only way a person can be redeemed is through the blood of Christ.

Throughout history many have been called to participate in the first resurrection; however, the scriptures show that only a few out of this vast number of people are found worthy of eternal and immortal life. Among those who have been found worthy, there seem to be even fewer who have remained pure and undefiled from the influence of Satan's religions. They are indeed a very special group of people who have earned a very high reward and position in the Family and Kingdom of God.

In Revelation 14:1-5, we see 144,000 who, because of their faithfulness to God the Father and Jesus Christ, have obtained eternal and immortal life and will accompany Christ as he arrives at Mount Zion to establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

From the information that is given about the 144,000 that are mentioned in Revelation chapters 7 and 14, it is clear that these people are the Sovereign Father's elect children who have received special favor because of their faithfulness to him and his Son.

THE GREAT MULTITUDE

Besides the 144,000 noted in Revelation chapters 7 and 14 there is a great multitude mentioned in chapter 7. Notice what is said about these individuals beginning in verse 9

Revelation 7: 9-10, 13-17 Paraphrased

"After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no one could number, out of every nation, and tribes, and peoples, and languages, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, having been clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And they cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb" (vs.9-10).

After John sees the 144,000 sealed for their protection from the wrath of God, he sees a great multitude of people standing before the thrones of God the Father and Jesus Christ. This event clearly takes place after the return of Christ and the first resurrection. Therefore, it seems that these people are the elect of all ages who have participated in the first resurrection and have been given eternal and immortal life in the Family and Kingdom of God.

Continuing in verse 13

"And one of the elders answered, saying to me, These having been clothed in the white robes, who are they? And from where did they come? And I said to him, Sir, you know. And he said to me, These are those who have come out of the great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev.7:13-14).

Many have assumed that whenever the term 'great tribulation' appears that it automatically means 'The Great Tribulation' at the end of the age. However, this may or may not be the meaning of this term in chapter 7, because many have suffered great persecution and tribulation throughout the centuries for their belief in the true God and Jesus Christ. What is clear is that this great multitude who are drawn from among the nations of the earth have come through great trials and were found worthy to be granted salvation.

Continuing in verse 15:

"Because of this they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple. And he who sits on the throne will spread his tabernacle

over them. And they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. Because the Lamb which is in the throne will shepherd them, and will lead them to the fountains of living waters: and God will wipe away all tears from their eyes" (vs.15-17).

In Revelation chapter 7, we see a vast multitude of people from various national origins who have overcome great adversity and who will be comforted by God and serve him day and night in his temple.

The two groups of 144,000 and the great multitude noted in the Book of Revelation seem to be mentioned in order to clearly show that what each individual does and the attitudes and behaviors that one has during the time just before Christ's return will dramatically impact their safety. These same attitudes and behaviors will also determine, for some individuals, the rewards and positions that they will be given in the Family and Kingdom of God.

The references to the sealing of the God's people in the Books of Daniel and Revelation brings into question the time honored teaching of a secret coming of Christ to gather the saints in order to protect them from the great tribulation. Clearly, the great multitude comes out of the great tribulation noted in Revelation chapter 7.

What does all of this have to do with you and your loved one's? For one thing it should be recognized as a warning that the Sovereign God is extremely serious about his intention to punish those who will not come into conformity with his way of life and show him the respect and worship that he deserves.

Secondly, there is a way to escape from most, if not all of God's wrath that will be poured on the earth in the end times if one will do as he instructs in the Bible. Not only is there a way of escaping most if not all of the great tribulation, but there are awesome rewards offered to those who will heed these warnings messages and make the right decisions.

The Sovereign Father and his Son are persistent and extremely long-suffering in their desire to save humanity from eternal death. The apostle Peter said the following about this persistence and long-suffering:

"But beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2.Pet.3:8-9 KJV).

Because of their desire for all to repent and reap the benefits of a positive change in the human heart, God the Father and Jesus Christ are going to give humanity one last opportunity to accept their offer of eternal life and sonship in the Family and Kingdom of God. However, prior to this opportunity humanity will suffer the wrath of God. He will punish all of mankind for their rebellion, eliminate all evil, and remove any physical and spiritual opposition to his government.

When will the wrath of God come and what does God hope to accomplish by it?

The full wrath of God will only come after the Sovereign Father's good news message has been delivered in a powerful way as a warning and a witness to all nations, just before the return of Jesus Christ. When this happens, God's wrath will come upon all the scattered tribes of Israel, the Jews, and the rest of humanity. Because the vast majority of people and nations have shown that they do not want God's rule in their lives; Biblical prophecy shows that God is going to kill all but a very few of earth's inhabitants just prior to and during the return of Jesus Christ.

After the full fury of the wrath of God has been poured out and the earth lies in ruin and its population is drastically reduced, the Kingdom of God will be established as an all-powerful, world-ruling government. This government will solve all of humanity's problems in a fair and equitably manner with true justice and liberty for all. It will not be a government ruled by selfishly

motivated humans, but a government ruled by the righteous all-powerful family of God.

The Sovereign Father and his Son have not forgotten their master plan for humanity. It is after the completion of God's wrath and during the rule of Jesus Christ that all humans will come to fully understand and appreciate the awesome grandeur of the opportunity that they have been offered to become a son of God the Father and enter his Family and Kingdom.

It is this message of opportunity that has mostly been hidden from humanity since the demise and disappearance of the early church that will again be delivered just before God's wrath is poured out on the earth and its inhabitants and Christ returns to conquer and rule the earth.

In the millennia of eternity past, a plan unfolded that is more fascinating and engrossing than any science fiction story or real life saga that has ever been told. That plan involves every person who has lived, is now living, or is yet to be born.

With the creation of humans, the Sovereign God embarked upon the greatest and grandest of all his creations; he is creating beings just like himself; and his intent is to share with them, all he has created or will ever create throughout eternity.

Herein is a great truth of the Sovereign Father's good news message. The Father and Jesus Christ have always loved mankind, who are all sinners, and it is because of, and through their great love for mankind that we have hope for salvation:

In the gospel of John, we read:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:16-17 KJV). See Mk.16:16; Rom.5:6-10; 8:7-18; Jms.4:4; 1.Jn.4:9-10.

There is only one Sovereign God who is above all else that exists and he is the one who allowed the

Creator God to come to earth and sacrifice himself for humanity. When the decision was made concerning the method through which humanity would be able to have their violation of the law of God forgiven and receive redemption and salvation, there were only two immortal beings in existence—the Sovereign God and the Creator God.

The decision to allow the Creator God to divest himself of his immortality and become human not only placed the Creator's future existence in great jeopardy, it also had a tremendous impact upon the Sovereign God's future. If the Creator had failed in his mission, he would have died and ceased to exist forever, and the Sovereign God would have lost his closest friend and companion. The Father would have been the only immortal being in existence. He would have had no one like himself with whom to share eternity. The Sovereign's decision to allow the Creator to attempt to save humanity was a selfless act and shows a love of awesome proportions for humanity.

Human words or emotion cannot begin to adequately express the grace, mercy, compassion, and love that God the Father and Jesus Christ have for humanity. And words cannot adequately describe the price that the Father and his Son were willing to pay for our redemption and salvation.

Death was to be the cessation of our existence; never again would we experience the pleasures of life, smell the fragrance of a flower, feel the sun and wind on our face; never again would we see a beautiful sunset or hear the voice of a loved one. We were destined to return to the basic physical elements from which we are composed.

Before the Creator God came to earth as a man to deliver his Father's good news message, each and every individual that had ever existed, or would ever exist was under the curse of eternal death that was inherited from the first humans as a result of their poor judgment and rebellion against God.

The Creator God who became the Messiah said: "Look to me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa.45:22 KJV).

The message from the Sovereign God through the Messiah to mankind is about the fantastic future in store for anyone who will heed the instructions given in his good news message.

However, most of what people hear about the Sovereign God's message, is focused solely on Jesus Christ, and as a result, millions do not believe what Christ taught concerning how to obtain salvation. They only believe certain things about him and do not understand the message that he brought about salvation and the Kingdom of God.

Because most of the professing Christian Community have been greatly deceived, concerning the Sovereign God's good news message, they simply do not believe what Jesus Christ said or the early church taught concerning the process of salvation and therefore many are the victims of a false conversion that does not lead to eternal life.

To Become an Immortal

God the Father offers much more than eternal life to those he calls to salvation in this age. The angels have eternal life and are sustained by God's life-giving power, yet they can be destroyed if they disobey him. The life God offers to the elect during this gospel age of salvation is immortal life, which can never be destroyed.

The quality of life promised by the Father is comparable to that which he himself has. God is a spirit-being who inherently possesses the highest form of life: immortality on the divine plane of existence. Immortal life springs forth from itself and is not dependent on any other source to sustain it, because it is self-sustaining:

It is abundantly clear from studying the Bible that God the Father intends to share immortality with those he calls to repentance, baptism, and conversion prior to the first resurrection. It is the acquisition of immortality that allows a person to pass beyond this physical existence into the Family of God as a son of God.

If you want to know what the Bible actually says about immortal life and how to obtain it, get a copy

of my book "How to Become Immortal.

Although immortality represents the highest reward that is granted for faithfulness to God, there are many more. The reward for being righteous is not to float around heaven playing harp music for eternity. God the Father and Jesus Christ have something far more spectacular in store for those who are found worthy to take part in the first resurrection.

The following list contains some of these rewards:

- Becoming an immortal spirit-being
- Becoming a son of God
- Becoming a joint-heir with Christ
- Becoming a co-ruler with Christ
- Becoming a King and a Priest
- Inheriting the Kingdom of God
- Inheriting all things

These are only a few of the awesome rewards that are promised to those the Father calls to salvation through his message of the good news.

The magnitude of the opportunities and rewards that God the Father offers to those called to salvation through repentance, baptism, and conversion during this age are almost beyond the ability of human comprehension. What God offers can only be obtained by those who are willing to repent and become obedient to his way of life:

God the Father still hopes to increase his Family and Kingdom. The wrath of God upon this wicked and perverse generation is regrettable, but necessary in order for him to implement the next phase in his grand and awesome plan for the salvation of humanity.

Tucked away in the prophecies for the end of this age are a number of prophecies that very specifically pointed to a very small group of people. If you are one who understands this message, then the following is specifically meant for you to hear and heed. The apostle Peter said:

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of

God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as to a faithful Creator. Peter 4:17-19

I see that my time is up, if you want to know more about Bible prophecy or the other subjects that I have briefly touched on in this in this broadcast, Write to me at the at the address given in the following announcement. Until next time this is Bud Cocherell for Bible Research .org.

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