

The 144,000: Who can they be?

Only a few passages in the scriptures mention a group of people who are commonly called the 144,00. This is a group of people that will have a special ministry in the last days leading to the return of Christ.

Historical Abuse

Many cult groups, ism's and skisism's have used this elite group to announce themselves as this "chosen" elite group to further their own causes, groups and leaders. The abuse of this term has been so widely used for so long, that whenever the real appearance of these anointed ones come they will probably be met with much skepticism and unbelief.

There are many assumptions about these people that have become doctrine. I believe the Lord has shown me, there are different ways of looking at this that are so extreme, they may never be identified because of our wrong assumptions.

The only fair way to present this is to first explain what has become the accepted normal understanding of the 144,00 according to traditional interpretations and point both the strong points and the weak points to these traditional concepts.

Traditional View:

In a nutshell, the popular concept is that the 144,00 people are Jewish male virgins from the twelve tribes of Israel, who if this is the last days, live in Israel right now!. They have a special evangelistic mission to prepare the world for the coming of the Lord.

This is what is taught in most Bible colleges

today and what most Bible believing Christians have been taught and are expecting. But is this the truth? Is there any other way to understand what the Bible does say about this group?

What the scriptures say:

Let's see the few scriptures where this group is mentioned with some comments.

The "sealing" Rev 7:2-8

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,

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

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. (KJV)

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.

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.

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.

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. (KJV)

In this first text, is described a rather simple understanding that from the twelve tribes of Israel, each one has twelve thousand individuals selected and sealed by God. The sealing is described by "Vines notes on Dr. Strong's Concordance":

SEAL

(c) secrecy and security and the postponement of disclosure, <Rev. 10:4>... (d) ownership and security, together with destination, <Rev. 7:3,4, 5> (as with the noun in <v. 2>; see A); the same three indications are conveyed in <Eph. 1:13>, in the metaphor of the "sealing" of believers by the gift of the Holy Spirit, upon believing (i. e., at the time of their regeneration, (from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words) (Copyright (C) 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

From the above definition, we can see that this sealing process proclaims and promises three things.

1. The sealing proclaims ownership, they belong to God.
2. The sealing also includes a special protection from Satan, to enable them to perform their set apart duty.
3. This set apart duty is the destination and purpose of the sealing which is the third part of the sealing process. As New Testament prophets, they will not only be proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ but they will also explain the many specific details and current events which are leading to the second coming of Christ.

Secrecy as a protection

In this security or protection by God comes the idea of secrecy. Perhaps, (and I say this as something that can neither be proven or disproved based on language and contextual use) the protection comes about by these individuals in a clandestine manner. This secrecy is not that these people will act like paranoid spies, but rather they will boldly be proclaiming God's warnings and promises but not identified as anyone special or connected with any man made organization. This includes the idea that these people have been selected and sealed by the Holy Spirit in a very invisible manner.

They are directed by the Holy Spirit only and independent from man's doings and they minister where they are.

A Common Miss-conception

This is not the preconceived idea commonly accepted by the majority of Christianity today. The popular idea is that these 144,000 are a group of super Jewish teachers or an elite band of super Christians who suddenly appear on the scene after the rapture takes place. In actual truth, they are never going to be the product of a gathering by the many ism's and skism's or denominations of man made structure and institutions. Like salt and light they are scattered about doing their anointed duty without man's approval, recognition, detection and unfortunately appreciation.

Same ministry and path as the Prophets of Old

These individuals will suffer the same rejection the Prophets of old endured and died for, being stoned to death. They will join in the suffering of Christ who also was rejected and put to death.

Today we are too civilized to stone people with an undesirable or seemingly out of context message. Today the stoning of a prophet comes by ignoring and excluding them from the mainstream until they go away. This is a more kinder gentle way to rid ourselves of the kooks and undesirables who bear strange ideas and thoughts. In spite of this they will fulfill what God has selected them to accomplish. Today many of these labeled as strange or having ideas way outside of the box, just might be among the 144,000!

The sealing of the twelve tribes: What happened to the tribe of Dan?

Notice that the tribe of Dan is excluded, and the Levites are added. In the traditional understanding, the tribe of Dan is said to be excluded because it is assumed with some scriptural evidence to support such a claim that the Antichrist would come from this tribe. By this default then it is speculated that they lose their inheritance. I do agree that there is evidence that the Antichrist comes from this tribe but I believe this may not have negated this or any tribe from their inheritance and calling.

The Levites were never numbered with the twelve tribes in the Pre-Christ Old Testament times because they represented the spiritual leadership. In this understanding there have always been thirteen tribes. The priesthood was the special duty that came from the Levite tribe. This was why they were not numbered with the rest. It did not mean they were excluded but rather accepted on a much broader plain because of their anointed duty.

I pose this question, as Peter stated:

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:" 1 Pet 2:9

We as the church were to be a royal priesthood, a chosen generation and a nation which would be a safe haven for the church.

This new tribe nation founded by the Danites, became the tribe nation, now known as America! This nation once being a holy nation which means "set apart" was a nation set apart for God's purpose!

So, could this fact be why Dan is not mentioned or numbered with the rest of the tribes? Can it be that they are now the New Testament replacement for the Levitical priesthood? I believe this is more in keeping with a Biblical constancy of type and shadow from former Old Testament things that have been carried over to the New Testament times.

The seed of Jacob and the 144,000

As explained in the earlier section, understanding the seed of Jacob as the lost ten tribes of Israel and its distribution into all the world into all cultures and races, the twelve tribes are not all modern day Jews in Israel. This is one of the most important misunderstandings of this text. The whole point of this Dispersion as the Jews call it was to fulfill the prophecy that Israel would fill the whole earth. (Isa 27:6)

The next text of scripture describes specific attributes and characteristics of the 144,000

Rev 14: Further description of the 144,000 Rev 14:1-7

1 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.

2 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:

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.

4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb where ever he goes. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

5 And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

7 Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. (KJV)

The Breakdown:

The 1st verse overlaps the idea of the sealing as already mentioned.

The Lamb is obviously Jesus Christ.

The "fathers name written upon their foreheads" can mean the

intellectual embracing of God's Word and their obedience by His Holy Spirit is so impressed and convinced upon these individuals that they cannot and will not deviate from it as the source of everything. They will not succumb to the end time delusion or "religious doctrines" that are not supported by scripture or confirmed by His Spirit.

The idea of singing an new song has been deceptively used by cult groups as something new in revelation that allows for a "new Gospel" or the interpretation that creates some new encrypted message of change in the traditional gospel. This is a false belief that conflicts with the very foundations of the gospel. It remains the same simple message and unchangeable through all times. Some conventional commentaries state that this is the song of the "new covenant" of redemption in Christ Jesus. This interpretation is certainly more consistent with what the Bible would say about the gospel of Christ. Jesus is the same yesterday today and forever, (Heb 13:8) His story and Gospel (meaning good news) is the story of Christ fulfilling the Law living a sinless life, put to death, resurrected providing redemption for his own and returning for them in the "Day of the Lord". This remains the same story and message forever, and will not change or deviate in any manner.

144,000 declare more than the un-compromised Gospel of Christ There must be more than this broad view of the new covenant however, to create the need for a special ministry by these 144,000. While they are proclaiming the unchanging gospel of Jesus Christ they do have more to proclaim that sets them apart from past evangelists. It is in the context of being called to ministry in the "end times" tribulation period which requires something more to their message. The tribulation will be a very confusing time for both unbeliever and the Christian regardless if you think the rapture has happened or not. This confusion of surrounding events are what is understood by the 144,000 and explained along with the declaration of the Gospel. While we can expect these revelations relative to the current events of that time, the gospel message will be the same truth and story as from the very beginning.

What does virgins mean in this context?

Verse 4 about "virgins" is another one which has been misunderstood because most will accept a surface rendering which is very

misleading. A very old commentary by Matthew Henry from the 15th century states:

[1.] they are described by their chastity and purity: They are virgins. They had not defiled themselves either with corporal or spiritual adultery; they had kept themselves clean from the abominations of the antichristian generation

Even in this distant time past Matthew Henry allowed this contamination as being both spiritual as well as a physical one. In a more recent Commentary, Barn's Notes states:

"The sense, "... cannot be that all these 144,000 had lived an unmarried life; for how could the apostle Peter, and others who were married, have been excluded? But the reference must be to those who held themselves from all impurity--...-- which, in the view of the apostles, was closely connected with idolatry." Compare Bleek, Beitr. i. 185. Prof. Stuart supposes that the main reference here is to those who had kept themselves from idolatry, and who were thus pure.

The virginity in this context may not be speaking at all about the physical abstinence from any contact of a woman within the normal context of marriage. This was not even a Jewish concept. To be a Rabbi you had to be married. The mention of unlawful sex of adultery or fornication was such a basic prerequisite even to be a believer let alone a minister of special selection that it would not be worthy of mention. In context the only addition of virginity would be that of a spiritual contamination by false beliefs.

Who is the woman?

This is confirmed as we understand just who the woman is. In the Greek it means a woman in general but specifically a wife. There is a pathway of a woman mentioned in the Bible. To understand this may be an important identity to the contextual use of the woman here in this verse.

The Historical path of the woman: Israel, Rome, Europe, the final destination in America/Babylon with an escape back to Israel. This has been mentioned earlier and for continuity sake we will be brief about it.

In Daniel 7:4 One of four beast's as a possible end time nation is the Lion with eagles wings attached. They are broken off and nothing more is said about them. Symbolically the Lion could be England as I have mentioned in a prior section, America as the wings of the eagle, are broken off as the result of the American Revolution.

In Revelation 12:4-6 &14-17, we see the fleeing woman as the Church which began as the early Jewish believers who fled into Rome and with gentile conversions the church grows as it flees the wrath of the dragon who is Satan. In the process of this fleeing, the woman is given the wings of an eagle and taken to a refuge. This is the description of the believers who fled into and became the foundation of a Christian Nation America!

In Isaiah 55:5 we see the immigration policy of the United States that allows Jacobs seed (lost ten tribes of Israel) to be re-gathered together again. This is the gathering of the remnant of true believers who flow into the US as a refuge and a place to evangelize the rest of the entire world. (That is not to say there are not believers scattered around the world, rather many will be collected into one area as a refuge and foundation for a platform to evangelize the rest of the world.) In time we see that this remnant in America as the congregation or a New Testament Zion, (Psalm 74:2) the holy mountain of God between the seas. (Dan 11:45) Project paperclip and the Gehl organization fulfills this prophecy in Daniel and the bride becomes corrupt within.

America becomes Babylon; The Bride becomes a whore!

Jeremiah describes and prophecies against a future spiritual Babylon which can be none other than America. The seed of Jacob is in her and is told to come out from among her. Between Jeremiah 50 and 51 and Revelation 17

This woman who was given a golden chalice, (Jer 51:7) (symbolic as a Godly vessel to explain and make clear the Gospel of Jesus Christ but she becomes contaminated from within. Now it is filled with filth and abominations. The bride becomes a whore! She is seen riding upon the beast in Rev 17:1-7

The whore does not include the entire Church!

That is not to say that the entire Church is wrong. It does however, proclaim that many who claim to be a Christian church have departed so far away from what the original Gospel is, that they are not even proclaiming the truth. This is the falling away mentioned in 2Thessalonians 2:3

These liberal groups have compromised themselves with the false doctrines of the spirit of Antichrist and no longer represent the one true God. Similar to the Old Testament times when Israel had fallen into national idolatry there was always a faithful remnant.

Today within modern spiritual Babylon, this remnant consists of more than the 144,000. The but it does include many of them. I am not so vain to think that all of the 144,000 are Christian Americans. Many of them probably are but there are others scattered all over the world. Most have migrated to America but will be sent out, many of them as refugees fleeing Babylon to evangelize the world. Most will return with the remnant of Israel as described in Isaiah 10:20-22. Another point to consider is that the full count of these people may not have their ministry at one time. We have been in the last days since the ascension of Jesus almost 2,000 years ago. The 144,000 are being described from the eternal perspective and may even include reformers and martyrs from the past who have finished their part in their own lives but could still be in the numbering. This however is not a revelation just an assumption worth considering.

Gender specific, Are they all men?

There is also a common belief that this text of scripture in Revelation 14 speaks of only males as the 144,000. This is not so well defined as far too many assume. The contextual use of “they, these and them” in this context of scripture, when referring to the 144,000 is in the masculine gender tense.

It is because of this use some have assumed that it must refer to only male members of the human race. This is a wrong assumption claimed by observing the use of the same masculine tense in other texts of scripture. It is used in describing a woman in Matt 26:13 and mankind in general in Matt 45:16 and the infamous “whosoever” of many new testament descriptions referencing qualifications for salvation which of course includes both sexes. With such consistency in this kind of use it is outright wrong to assign a male only exclusivity to this group of people. The scripture stating that they were redeemed from among men, is also a word used consistently for mankind in general without any gender specific slant.

The 144,000 character references:

In the thirty years of ministry I have come across more than a few self proclaimed “prophets” boasting of special revelations and “deeper” understandings about the Bible which included a ministry to set the church straight. The personal characteristics of most of these individuals however were anything but the criteria mentioned in the scriptures. The most outstanding human flaw was the rebellion to authority. Other qualities or the lack there of, was a spiritual immaturity to the leading and ministry of the Holy Spirit. In this lack of understanding the person portrayed a lack of patience, and the demand to follow and believe their message. When we read the characteristics mentioned in the scriptures, quite a different profile is described.

Follow the Lamb

One characteristic of those who are redeemed-- they are followers of the Lamb of God. That is, they are his disciples; they imitate his example; they obey his instructions; they yield to his laws; they receive him as their counselor and their guide. They do not take short cuts or compromise their integrity and values of their faith.

Wherever he goes.

A characteristic of true Christians, is that they follow the Savior wherever he leads them. Be it into trouble, into danger, into difficult duty; be it in Christian or pagan lands; be it in pleasant paths, or in roads rough and difficult, they commit themselves wholly to his guidance, and submit themselves wholly to his will.

Redeemed of men

These are selected as an overall example and cross-section of mankind in general. The gender is not specific to just males as the Greek includes for “whosoever” will, as one word use for the same Greek word used here for men. They are redeemed not by their blood line connections, their knowledge or social position but rather because God choose them. They are not the total amount of redeemed but a selection from the redeemed. This redemption is exclusive only to believers “in Christ”, as a positional relationship based on faith alone.

First fruits unto God.

This is a term that may have a two fold meaning.

1. God's Point people

Jesus is described as the firstfruit of those that are asleep.

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." 1 Cor 15:20

The first fruits here is describing the first in line or a beginning point or spearhead for something far greater. This idea is confirmed by

"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." Col 1:18

It is in this understanding that the firstfruit when connected to the 144,000 are a spearhead and first of something bigger. In a sense they are God's point men or persons. In military combat, when you send out a patrol, you position a man ahead of the rest who is called the point man. They are the person who will draw enemy fire first to indicate to the rest where the enemy is. Although necessary, it is the most dangerous and vulnerable position to be in. This is one meaning and position of the 144,000 as God's point people.

2. The First fruit Offering to God:

The other meaning consistent to the Bible is that the First Fruit are the first of a grown crop at a usable age that is offered up to God as a sacrifice. This was part of the Levitical Laws and practices of the Jews in the Old Testament. The first fruit description for the 144,000 may include both ideas. They are set apart for special duties as a beginning point for others to follow. They are also set apart by their commitment and determination to do the will of God. This sealing of commitment also makes them a sacrificial offering unto God. In this sense their calling may lead them to martyrdom being the point people for God's revelations and preaching the Gospel. As these chosen become visible and are believed for what they have to proclaim, the enemy attacks them to the point of death. In this attack confirmation of the reality of these truths exposes the enemy for whom and what they are, Haters of God and His truths.

No Guile found in their mouths

No deceit, fraud, or hypocrisy is found in their manner of presenting the Gospel. They say what they mean and mean what they say. A sincerity and purity is projected from their own personal relationship with their commander, Jesus. They are truly what they professed to be, Children of God and ministers of the Gospel. Another important aspect is that they do not verbally defend or retaliate against those that rejected them. They have overcome disappointment, hurt and anger with compassion on their accusers knowing that fellow Christians are not the enemy, they are weaker family members whom they truly love. They will never say in seriousness, "I told you so.", For those outside of God's family, they view them as simply lost and ignorant of reality also loved as Christ had loved them before they came to the cross and foot of Jesus.

They are the ones who have the patience of the saints (Rev 13:10) and they set an example for the world to follow. They are passive in any physical defense on the temporal plane, They will not try to prevent things from happening. (Rev 22:11) In other words they will not be leaders of a resistance movement fighting the NWO to save the American way. However they will be aggressive and active as spiritual leaders. Their fighting is a spiritual battle using spiritual weapons against spiritual beings on a spiritual plain to change only one heart at a time toward Christ.

Without fault before the throne of God

This is the most powerful revelation a believer may ever experience. Humility and Boldness in Love. This kind of declaration does not mean that these individuals are sinless or have attained a sinless state through their own efforts.

It is a description of the relationship they have with their redeemer and God. They have the humility to know who they were and where they came from, and how they got where they are today through Jesus Christ. It is a mental humble attitude of willing to be willing to come before and obey Jesus with a broken and contrite spirit. This is what brought them into this place and nothing else from themselves. To be forgiven and led into a new way of thinking and doing everything His way. In spite of their humanness and short comings, they know their forgiveness, they know their position as sons of God and joint heirs with Christ. They are a prepared warrior of the Lord.

With a boldness to come into the very presence of their master with confidence created only by a right standing relationship bond-

ed by Love. They know their enemy and are filled with a righteous indignation to do battle and stand firm .

144,000 A Conclusion

If we are in the generation to experience the final events leading to the return of Christ, the 144,00 may already be called, inspired and being formed into the people they must be to meet the spiritual challenges ahead. They will not all be super Jews or super Christians gathered around some man made structure or organization. Like the twelve apostles that Jesus gathered around himself during his earthly mission, they will be a mixture of believers from every race, national identity, social and economic background possibly sprinkled around like salt and light. The only organization will be the leading of the Holy Spirit of God. Most, regardless of their backgrounds will all be very normal people with normal human shortcomings. They will however have the attitude to be willing to be willing to follow Jesus where ever he leads. They will have the undaunted tenacity to adhere to sound doctrine about the person of God while having an open heart and mind to see outside of the box, bravely leaving traditions of men and man made religious doctrines behind. They will integrate the timeless gospel of Christ into the shook up world around them. They will understand things not understood by the majority of believers or unbelievers. Like pillars they will provide stability to a confused and frightened people by explaining the rock of the Word of God. Today they are perhaps looked upon by most as those that obviously love the Lord but are "out there" with some unusual and different beliefs inconsistent to "time tested" doctrines about the End Times. If we are in these final times YOU might be one of them!

"But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.

But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God-- and righteousness and sanctification and redemption-- that, as it is written, "*He who glories, let him glory in the Lord.*" 1 Cor 1:27-31 (NKJ)

In conclusion, I have received e-mail asking if I thought I was possibly one of these people. Reluctantly I am not. I believe I have been told this by the Lord. But I do have a ministry to help prepare some of them for their ministry. Much of the information on my site has been things that for now may seem strange. To others these things are interesting but perhaps not vital to their own lives. That is because it is ahead of it's time. However, there may come a time when they will mean life or death for many. What better blessing could a teacher of the Word have than to know that their students will surpass the teacher. I can't think of anything better than that!