

WHO ARE THE ONE HUNDRED FORTY-FOUR THOUSAND?

Scripture verses are NKJV unless otherwise noted; words in brackets [] were added by Bible translators; words in parenthesis () and any underlining is my emphasis.

The most mysterious book of the Bible is the Book of Revelation. In this book are two statements about 144,000 persons. Many have puzzled over who are those to be called in that number. All puzzling questions of the Bible are answered within its pages, including this one.

Only two places in the bible refer to the number 144,000 as a unit. Both are found in the last book of the New Testament, the Book of Revelation. The first time 144,000 is mentioned is in **Revelation 7:1-8**. ¹*“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. ²Then 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, ³saying, ‘Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.’ ⁴And 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: ⁵of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand [were] sealed; of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand [were] sealed; of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand [were] sealed; ⁶of 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; ⁷of 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; ⁸of 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.”*

The second place 144,000 is mentioned is in **Revelation 14:1-4**. ¹*“Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred [and] forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. ²And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. ³They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred [and] forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. ⁴These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from [among] men, [being] firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.”*

TWO DIFFERENT GROUPS

There are some marked differences when looking at these two groups as presented in the Bible. The first group is composed of physical humans who are alive at the appearing of Christ in **Revelation 6:12-17**. We know they are human because they need protection from the disasters that the four angels are about to bring on the earth. **Revelation 8: 7-12** tells us that these are the first four of the of the seven trumpet angels who bring serious destruction to this earth. It should be noted that these four angels are heralding the disasters God will bring on this earth.

Remember, **Revelation 7:2-3** says 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.'

This should bring to mind a similar marking in the Book of **Ezekiel 9** which was a physical marking meant to prevent the physical death of those marked. **Ezekiel 9:4-5.** ⁴*"and the LORD said to him, 'Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it.'* ⁵*To the others He said in my hearing, 'Go after him through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare, nor have any pity'"*

It is clear that these four angels are stayed from the intended destruction of much of the earth, so that twelve thousand of each of the twelve tribes of Israel can be marked for protection from the havoc that the four angels are about to bring. Those who are to be marked are spoken of as one large group, and are thought of in that way. If that is true, they would naturally all come from one nation. The first thought would most likely be Israel. Yet the nation of Israel is mostly composed of Jews, who could only supply those for the twelve thousand of the tribe of Judah. Then who are the rest? Where do they come from?

THE 144,000 OF REVELATION 7

The problem for most is that they believe the Bible with reservations, accepting what they want and rejecting the rest, not believing Paul, who wrote in **II Timothy 3:16-17,** ¹⁶*"All Scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,* ¹⁷*that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."*

This paper is written with that admonition firmly in mind and can only refer to the Old Testament. The New Testament had not yet been written!

The 144,000 of Revelation 7 are specifically defined as belonging to twelve different nationalities—the offspring of the sons of Jacob. In **Genesis 48:15-19** and **Genesis 49:1-27** Jacob tells us what is in store for the offspring of his sons. He places a time stamp on when His prophecy will come to fruition by using the term "in the last days." This remarkable prophecy tells what Jacob's offspring will be doing in the future. The term "in the last days" needs to be understood by how it is used in other scriptures in the Bible where it is recorded fourteen times. By individually examining some of these scriptures a correct understanding of "in the last days" can be ascertained. The term is used a second time in **Numbers 24:14**. In **Numbers:15-24** Balak gives a prophecy of what is to take place in the latter days. In **Verse 17** he says *"... A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel, And batter the brow of Moab, And destroy all the sons of tumult."* This is not speaking of the ministry of Christ's first appearance, but His return as the conquering King of **Revelation 19** and **20**, which every true believer is looking forward to with great anticipation. The third statement regarding "in the last days" is in **Deuteronomy 4:30.** *"When you are in distress, and all of these things come upon you in the latter days, when you turn to the LORD your God and obey His voice"* This is speaking of an entire group repenting. Historically this has never happened. Some would apply what is written in Verses 26 and 27 to the time period of Verse

30, but **Verse 26** says that they will soon utterly perish from the land. **Verse 27**, ***“And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD will drive you.”*** The scattering takes place at the end of the reigns of the kings of Israel recorded **II Kings 17:5-7**. ⁵***“Now the king of Assyria went throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria and besieged it for three years. ⁶In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria and carried Israel away to Assyria, and placed them in Halah and by the Habor, the River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. ⁷For so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and they had feared other gods,”***

Deuteronomy 4:28-29 shows they will lose their identity in the Pagan world around them. Today they exist as nations, not knowing their true identity. In losing their identity they now think they are Gentiles and do not know they are the progeny of the sons of Jacob. By following the religion of the people around them they take up the worship of idols.

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES REVEALED

The books of Kings and Chronicles document the scattering of the ten tribes, which comprised the nation of Israel, with Judah being a separate nation as it is today. This is the last biblically recorded documentation of the history of these tribes where they are called out by individual names. They are next found in the New Testament in **Revelation 7:4-8** as quoted. The mystery of who these ten tribes are today has an answer which is found in two prophecies regarding Jacob’s progeny. Both prophecies were recorded by Moses, with the first found in **Genesis 48:15-20** and **Genesis 49:1-33**, which was given by Jacob to his twelve sons. It was not only a blessing but also a prophecy of what would befall his children in the latter days, at a time when they would have grown into individual nations.

The second answer is found in **Deuteronomy 33:1-29** when Moses gives his prophetic blessing to these tribes depicting them no longer as tribes but nations. Then in **Deuteronomy 31:29** Moses uses the same term, “in the latter days that evil will befall them.” This term is defined by the prophecy of **Deuteronomy 33:2-3** and sets the time of the whole prophecy that culminates at Christ’s return to this earth as Conquering King. ²***“And he said: ‘The LORD came from Sinai, And dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, And He came with ten thousands of saints; From His right hand [Came] a fiery law for them.’ ³Yes, He loves the people; All His saints are in Your hand; They sit down at Your feet; [Everyone] receives Your words.”***

The statements above set the time for the conclusion of the prophecy. The following descriptions of the tribes show what leads up to this concluding point with the returning of Christ as the conquering king.

By reading the chapters of **Genesis 48** and **Genesis 49** it becomes clear that Jacob is speaking of his son’s families that have grown into nations. It is true that in the historical record of the Bible these families are not found as individual nations, but as a combination of tribes under the banner name of Israel—one nation.

The tenor of these prophecies is that of nations. For the sake of brevity only what Jacob had to say about his son Joseph will be examined here. In the historical record of the Bible, these tribes are never found as individual nations, but the tenor of the prophecies is definitely that of nations.

KEY TO THEIR IDENTITY

Jacob tells us in **Genesis 48** that Joseph's two sons are taken as his own. **Genesis 48:19** *"But his father refused and said, 'I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations.'"*

The Bible does not document this happening, but does that mean this prophecy did not happen? First examine what is written in **Genesis 49:22-26**. ²²*"Joseph [is] a fruitful bough, A fruitful bough by a well; His branches run over the wall. ²³The archers have bitterly grieved him, Shot [at him] and hated him. ²⁴But his bow remained in strength, And the arms of his hands were made strong By the hands of the Mighty [God] of Jacob (From there [is] the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), ²⁵By the God of your father who will help you, And by the Almighty who will bless you [With] blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that lies beneath, Blessings of the breasts and of the womb. ²⁶The blessings of your father Have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers."*

The two nations of Ephraim and Manasseh are pictured here under their father's name. They are under relentless attack by the nations of this world, but by the blessing of God they survive and prosper.

What Jacob says is that there will be no nation to compare with the physical blessings that God will bestow on these two grandsons. Next turn to **Deuteronomy 33:13-17**. ¹³*"And of Joseph he said: 'Blessed of the LORD [is] his land, With the precious things of heaven, with the dew, And the deep lying beneath, ¹⁴With the precious fruits of the sun, With the precious produce of the months, ¹⁵With the best things of the ancient mountains, With the precious things of the everlasting hills, ¹⁶With the precious things of the earth and its fullness, And the favor of Him who dwelt in the bush. Let [the blessing] come 'on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of him [who was] separate from his brothers.' ¹⁷His glory [is like] a firstborn bull, And his horns [like] the horns of the wild ox; Together with them He shall push the peoples To the ends of the earth; They [are] the ten thousands of Ephraim, And they [are] the thousands of Manasseh."*

Here Moses makes it clear that these two nations are found extant in the latter days. As pointed out they lose their identity, but their prosperity and power singles them out as fulfilling their God-given destiny as prophesied by Jacob and Moses. There is no other conclusion but to realize that the nation of Great Britain fulfilled the prophecy of Ephraim, and the United States that of Manasseh.

Micah 5:7-15 tracks their rise to power and their coming fall from that power. ⁷*“Then the remnant of Jacob Shall be in the midst of many peoples, Like dew from the LORD, Like showers on the grass, That tarry for no man Nor wait for the sons of men. ⁸And the remnant of Jacob Shall be among the Gentiles, In the midst of many peoples, Like a lion among the beasts of the forest, Like a young lion among flocks of sheep, Who, if he passes through, Both treads down and tears in pieces, And none can deliver. ⁹Your hand shall be lifted against your adversaries, And all your enemies shall be cut off. ¹⁰‘And it shall be in that day,’ says the LORD, ‘That I will cut off your horses from your midst And destroy your chariots. ¹¹I will cut off the cities of your land And throw down all your strongholds. ¹²I will cut off sorceries from your hand, And you shall have no soothsayers. ¹³Your carved images I will also cut off, And your sacred pillars from your midst; You shall no more worship the work of your hands; ¹⁴I will pluck your wooden images from your midst; Thus I will destroy your cities. ¹⁵And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury On the nations that have not heard.”*

The purpose is to show that if these two—Ephraim and Manasseh—are in existence today as nations then the rest of the tribes of Israel are also still in existence. This is where the one hundred and forty-four thousand of **Revelation 7** come from. They will be the foundation of the physical nation of Israel in the millennium; a leading nation ruled by David as king, and the twelve apostles. In Revelation 7:3 the word “sealed” is used to show they received physical protection. Strong’s number 4972 is the word “sealed,” and is defined in “The Complete Word Study Dictionary New Testament” (used throughout this article,) as “(II) Generally, to set a seal or mark upon a thing as a token of its authenticity. Or approvedness; used of persons, with the accusative. (**Revelation 7:3**); passive. (**Revelation 7:4-8**).”

EXPLANATION OF REVELATION 14

Picturing what John describes in **Revelation 14** a choir is seen of 144,000 being directed by Christ standing on Mount Zion. They are performing before the Father’s throne, showing that the throne is next to the mountain, meaning that what is pictured is happening on this earth. **Revelation. 15:1-2** reveals that there is a sea of glass on which a second choir is performing for the Father. To better understand this picture it is necessary to recognize that this is the portable throne of God, originally described in **Ezekiel Chapter 1**.

This is not the only place in the Bible describing this vehicle. There is another remarkable description given in chapters 4 and 5 of Revelation by John, which mirrors what Ezekiel saw. Instead of the vehicle coming down to the earth, John is taken up to it and enters by a door into heaven. **Revelation 4:1** *“After these things I looked, and behold, a door [standing] open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard [was] like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, ‘Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.’”*

Where is the heaven that John enters through a door? The word “heaven” is Strong’s #3772 and is used as a universal word that could represent the atmosphere of the earth all the way up to the place where God resides. How the word is used determines the location. **Chapters 4-6** give us the understanding.

John is also told that he will be shown the things which will take place hereafter. This is what follows the seventh and last of God's churches; it is those called by God the Father in this present age. **Revelation 4:2-3** ²*"Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and [One] sat on the throne. ³And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and [there was] a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald."*

What did Ezekiel see? **Ezekiel 1:26-28** ²⁶*And above the firmament over their heads [was] the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne [was] a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it. ²⁷Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. ²⁸Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so [was] the appearance of the brightness all around it. This [was] the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. So when I saw [it], I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking.*

As we follow what John saw, we find that Ezekiel saw the same scenario. The following scriptures make this clear. **Revelation 4:5** *"And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God."* **Ezekiel 1:13** *"As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches going back and forth among the living creatures. The fire was bright, and out of the fire went lightning."* **Revelation 4:6** *"Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back."* **Ezekiel 1:22** *"The likeness of the firmament above the heads of the living creatures [was] like the color of an awesome crystal, stretched out over their heads."* **Ezekiel 1:4** (Last part) *"... and brightness [was] all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire."* **Verse 5** *"Also from within it [came] the likeness of four living creatures. And this [was] their appearance: they had the likeness of a man."*

Revelation 4:7-8 ⁷*"The first living creature [was] like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature [was] like a flying eagle. ⁸The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!'"*

Ezekiel 1:6 *"Each one had four faces and each one had four wings."* **Ezekiel 10:21** *"Each one had four faces and each one four wings, and the likeness of the hands of a man [was] under their wings."* **Ezekiel 1:18** *"As for their rims, they were so high they were awesome; and their rims [were] full of eyes, all around the four of them."* **Revelation 5:1** *"And I saw in the right [hand] of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals."* **Ezekiel 2:9-10** ⁹*"Now when I looked, there was a hand stretched out to me; and behold, a scroll of a book [was] in it. ¹⁰Then He spread it before me; and [there was] writing on the inside and on the outside, and written on it [were] lamentations and mourning and woe.*

CHRIST RECEIVES THE SCROLL

It is clear that what Ezekiel saw in Chapters 1 and 10 is what John saw in Revelation. 4 and 5. What the 5th chapter of Revelation describes is Christ receiving the plan from the Father for what is to follow; His death and resurrection until the time that the Father returns to this earth with the New Jerusalem, shown in Chapters 21 and 22 of Revelation. The Father gives Christ the responsibility for revealing and carrying out that plan. This is what the book of Revelation is about. **Revelation 5:9-10** ⁹*“And they sang a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,* ¹⁰*And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.’”*

The first eleven verses of Revelation 6 is a compact history of the suffering this world will go through up to the initial appearing of Christ. This date is known only by the Father. Christ chooses John to write His revelation of His Father’s plan, making Christ the One—through John’s writing—who reveals what will happen, and the outcome of those events. **John 5:30** *“I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.”*

Now it becomes clear that Christ is the One, through His word, who is doing precisely that. It is through the careful study of His words that we can understand how these events are to occur, and how, through our own actions, we become part of that plan.

In **Revelation 14:4** it is found that the 144,000 “were not defiled with women,” leaving the impression that they were all men. The term “women” used here is not speaking of the female gender, but about the false religious systems, such as the one being led by the antichrist, and is an all-inclusive term, covering all false religions from Genesis to Revelation. Another question may be about the statement, “Ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes.” Here it is not talking about following like a puppy would follow, but serving directly under Christ in His administration of the government of God during His thousand-year reign on this earth. (The Millennium.)

Christ tells His disciples in **Luke 22:29-30** ²⁹*“And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed [one] upon Me,* ³⁰*that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”*

In addition the apostles, along with all of those in the first resurrection are called the “firstfruits,” which is an agricultural term depicting the first fruit to ripen and are the most highly prized. So it is with God in this age. These are those who have come through the tribulations of this world, never losing their faith even though they may lose their lives because of their beliefs. These first fruits are spoken of in **I Corinthians 15:20-23** ²⁰*“But now Christ is risen from the dead, [and] has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.* ²¹*For since by man [came] death, by Man also [came] the resurrection of the dead.* ²²*For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.* ²³*But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those [who are] Christ's at His coming.”* **James 1:18** makes this plain. *“Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.”*

The 144,000 are defined as servants of God, #1401, *“Simply as worshippers of God.”* (**Revelation 2:20, 7:3, 19:5.**) Does this mean they are to be in the first resurrection of the Saints? It is known from **Revelation 12:14-16** that the woman represents a core group of faithful believers who are miraculously protected from an attack by Satan, whose object it was to kill them. ¹⁴***“But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. ¹⁵So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. ¹⁶But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.”*** Some think that these are raptured individuals—those taken to heaven. Note that it is the earth that opens up and swallows the flood. There are two ways of looking at this flood. Either it is a flood of water or the flood represents an army. Therefore this could only happen somewhere on this earth, not in the heavens. Also, the word nourished is #5142, meaning to facilitate (through appropriate care)—the development of that which is subject to growth. This proves they were still physical humans at this point. Reference **Matthew 6:26**. The historic parallel to this is Pharaoh’s army being swallowed in the Red Sea.

Understanding the length of time the woman is protected is as follows: one year for the word “time,” two years for the word “times,” and one half year for the “half time—the sum being three- and one-half years. The beginning of these three- and one-half years is unknown, but ends with the change of those who are in the place of safety into Spirit Beings at the return of Christ. These are the only ones who are alive at the return of Christ, when He comes to resurrect the dead in the faith, and to change those living in the place of safety into Spirit Beings. He is not going to resurrect them in their mortal bodies as many have been falsely led to believe. **I John 3:1-2** says otherwise. ¹***“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ²Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”***

Those resurrected and those changed will have spirit bodies like Christ as described in **Revelation 1:13-15**. Glorious bodies similar in makeup, but not exactly the same.

WHO IS GATHERED?

I Thessalonians 4:15-17 ¹⁵***“For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive [and] remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”*** Here is a direct reference to being in a place of safety. The word “air” is Strong’s #109, defined as “air, the celestial air surrounding the earth.”

In **II Thessalonians 2:1** Paul tells us that before they gather together at a certain location an important event happens. The point he is making is that this gathering is not an exclusive gathering of not only the Thessalonians, but would include all of God’s faithful, who are pictured by the

woman of **Revelation 12**. This is the same group spoken of in **Daniel 12:12**. (Read the article: “The Prophetic Days of Daniel 12” <https://bit.ly/3mlcJqD>). Then when does the resurrection occur? The time element in **Revelation 12** is not definite, but there is another scripture which does supply a definite number. That number is found in **Daniel 12:12**—one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days. Here Daniel explains that the one that comes to this point in time is greatly blessed, meaning that they will be in that group that will be changed from physical life to that of a spirit being at the return of Christ, and they will not go through the experience of death. Why? The answer is the only way they could know the passage of these days is if they were alive to count them.

THOSE WHO FACE SATAN

Revelation 12:17 further shows that Satan makes war with the second group of those called of God. He succeeds by either taking their physical life or they accept the mark of the beast which results in their losing, not only their physical life, but their eternal life. Read the article: “The Ten Virgins and Christ’s Return” <https://bit.ly/3mA8HCe> for a more complete understanding. It is important to read and understand what is to occur at this point in time from these prophecies because they are interconnected by the elements of time.

THOSE WHO FOLLOW THE LAMB

As stated in **Revelation 14:1-4** ¹*“Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred [and] forty-four thousand, having His Father’s name written on their foreheads. ²And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. ³They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred [and] forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. ⁴These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from [among] men, [being] firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.”* “These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes.” They are the direct administrators under Christ during His one thousand year reign, and carry out His orders of rulership in the coming Kingdom of God on this earth. **Matthew 19:27-28** states: ²⁷*“Then Peter answered and said to Him, ‘See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?’ ²⁸So Jesus said to them, ‘Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.’”* It is clear that each of the twelve apostles will rule over a tribe of Israel—Jacob’s progeny. But who will head the entire nation? David as their king will head the nation. **Jeremiah 30:9** *“But they shall serve the LORD their God, And David their king, Whom I will raise up for them.”*

Another scripture that reveals the choice of who will sit on Christ’s right hand and on His left hand is **Matthew 20:23**. *So He said to them, ‘You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father.’”* Obviously it is the Father who will decide the positions of rulership in the Kingdom. **John 15:1-2** it says that it is the Father who develops us.

He trims the grapevine branches so they will bear more fruit. He is intimately involved in our lives; correcting, encouraging, and blessing us as we move through this temporary physical life, giving us a right perspective on how to develop the true character of God.

Remember the transfiguration on the mountain spoken of in **Mark 9:1-7** where Jesus took Peter, James, and John and showed them in transfiguration of Elijah and Moses who he talked with. He pointed them to the men and women of the Old Testament, showing that they will be part of the 144,000 who follow Christ.

THOSE IN THE FIRST RESURRECTION

The first resurrection is not composed of just the 144,000 of **Revelation 14**, but also to that number must be added those of **Revelation 15:2**. ***“And I saw [something] like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark [and] over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God.”***

Those of **Revelation 15** include all true believers martyred in past inquisitions, and include the last two and one half years of the tribulation—**Revelation 6:11** ***“Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both [the number of] their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they [were], was completed.”***

Those who are sealed in **Revelation 7** for protection are neither of these two groups because the first group is already in a place of safety as mentioned in **Revelation 12:14-15**, having no need to be sealed for future protection. At this point they will have spent two- and one-half years there. A part of the last year remains before their change comes. This year is known as “the day of the Lord”—a one-year period that God uses to prepare this world and its people for the second coming of Christ.

The fate of the second group mentioned in **Revelation 12:17** who Satan attacks, has already been concluded as they constitute the ten virgins of **Matthew 25:1-13**. These are the ones who must go through the two- and one-half years of tribulation to prove their faith by not accepting the mark of the beast. The 144,000 of **Revelation 14** is composed of resurrected humans plus those who are alive and are changed into spirit beings at the last trumpet—the seventh. **I Thessalonians. 4:13-18**, and **I Corinthians. 15:50-54**.

Those who are resurrected are either in the second group of 144,000 pictured in **Revelation 14:1**, or the group of **Revelation 15:2** which says ***“And I saw [something] like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark [and] over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God.”*** These are two separate groups of beings, one on Mount Zion and the other on the sea of glass. By this description they are in the group of believers who go through the tribulation, giving up their lives by not taking the mark of the beast. The answer to the question of who are the 144,000 is that they are two separate groups. The first of **Revelation 7**, are the physical humans who form the foundation of the nation of Israel in the millennium. Remember what John describes in **Revelation 14**—a choir of 144,000 standing on Mount Zion being led by Christ and performing

before the Father's throne, placing the Father's throne next to the mountain. The second 144,000 of **Revelation 14** is that special group of resurrected saints—men and women who form Christ's cadre of rulers, those who will administer His government on this earth for one thousand years.

Don Roth 04-04-17

Strongly Recommend Reading:

1. *"Judah's Scepter and Joseph's Birthright"* by J.H. Allen. <https://bit.ly/3qoCnDv>
2. *"The US and British Commonwealth in Prophecy"* by H.W. Armstrong <https://bit.ly/33La7DI>
3. *The "Lost" Ten Tribes of Israel...Found!* by Steven Collins