
BIBLE TALK

This week the question is: **Who are the 144,000 of Revelation 7?**

Please listen carefully to the following passage of scripture:

Revelation 7:1-4

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.

² Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea,

³ saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads."

⁴ And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:

Here is the army of God. If you keep reading the chapter you will read a listing of twelve tribes of Israel. This is the church of the Lord. The church of the Lord is the new Israel – God's spiritual Israel which the old nation of Israel was foreshadowing.

Galatians 6:15-16

¹⁵ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.

¹⁶ And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon **the Israel of God**.

According to this "*the Israel of God*" are those who "*walk according to the rule*" that circumcision no longer matters. The rules of the Old Testament have been nullified (Heb 8:8-13) because a new nation has arisen – the new Israel of God – the church (1 Pet 2:5, 9).

The number "144,000" is a symbolic number. Where did this number come from?

In Num 31 Moses was instructed to wage war on the Midianites who had done harm to Israel. Listen to the instructions given to Moses:

Numbers 31:1-5

¹ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying:

² "Take vengeance on the Midianites for the children of Israel. Afterward you shall be gathered to your people."

³ So Moses spoke to the people, saying, "Arm some of yourselves for war, and let them go against the Midianites to take vengeance for the LORD on Midian."

⁴ **A thousand from each tribe of all the tribes of Israel** you shall send to the war."

⁵ So there were recruited from the divisions of Israel one thousand from each tribe, **twelve thousand** armed for war.

According to this passage, to fight the holy war against Midian 12,000 soldiers were recruited from all the tribes of Israel. When the Lord died, and resurrected, and built His church (the New Israel), there would be 12,000 x 12,000 soldiers of Christ to wage spiritual warfare throughout the gospel age.

Now, back up to Rev 6. You will read about a scroll with seven seals. As the Lord removes each seal there is a judgment rendered on the earth. When the sixth seal is removed the Judgment Day has arrived:

Revelation 6:12-14

¹² I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood.

¹³ And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind.

¹⁴ Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

This is describing the end of the world – the Judgment Day – when all men and women must stand before the Lord and give an account of their actions and choices.

Revelation 6:15-17

¹⁵ And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains,

¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!

¹⁷ For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

Look at the question asked in v17, "*The great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?*" What is the answer to this question? The answer comes in Rev 7:1-4. The 144,000 are able to stand on the Judgment Day. That is, only faithful members of the Lord's church will survive the terrible Day of Judgment.

The story of the 144,000 is the story of how God views His people. In the days of the Roman Empire the Lord's church was persecuted. Christians were being arrested. Their property was being confiscated. Some were being put to death in the coliseum by gladiators. Some were being thrown to the lions. The Empire hated the Lord and His people. But God views His people as a mighty army that, although it appears to be losing in the world, will be the only people left standing on the great and final day of world history.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Well ... thanks for considering our message this week. We invite you to visit our website www.WillOfTheLord.com. There you may download the notes and the audio file of the message you just listened to.

Call again next week when we consider a new subject on ***Bible Talk***.