

DISCOVERING THE BIBLE

LESSON 5 WHO ARE THE 144,000?

"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. 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 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. These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for they kept themselves pure. They follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They were purchased from among men and offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb. No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless."

Revelation 14:1-5

1. The 144,000 are in heaven
2. The Lamb has a significant role in this passage
3. These people have been redeemed, from the earth
4. All of them are pure people, they have not been defiled 'with women' and so are apparently all male. They all follow the Lamb wherever He goes. We should note that salvation is open to all – men and women — so 'defiled with women' is a figurative expression. The 144,000 are pure people of both sexes
5. Each one has two names, his name and the Father's name on their foreheads
6. Revelation 17:5 describes a harlot, who represents whatever is false - and is the source of all false things. In the context of the book of Revelation this has a political and religious focus, "This title was written on her forehead: Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of prostitutes and of the abominations of the earth."

"I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him."

2 Corinthians 11:2

1. Christians are referred to, symbolically, as virgins
2. The Church is destined to be presented before Jesus as his bride
3. This is God's work
4. Would you like to be a part of this group?

"Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel....After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands."

Revelation 7:4,9

1. The first reference to the 144,000 comprises people 'from all the tribes of Israel'
2. This group are the same we have met in Revelation 14, they are seen before the throne of God
3. This time they are noted in company with a second gathering of people, the great multitude
4. The great multitude wear white robes. In Revelation 3:18 people who are saved are clothed in white robes. People who were guests at a wedding had to wear special clothes and were counted as specially honoured for wearing these clothes
5. Would it matter to you if you were a part of the great multitude or the 144,000?

"He said in a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water. A second angel followed and said, "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great, which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries."

Revelation 14:7,8

1. The 144,000 and the great multitude appear together at the time when Babylon has fallen. Babylon is a symbol for a ruling power which opposes God just before the second coming of Jesus
2. The setting is one of worship, those who are with God will give Him glory

"He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name."

Revelation 13:16,17

1. He, in this case, is a beast, not a lamb, who causes people to wear a mark of allegiance to him
2. This beast begins it's work in our future, none of the above actions have taken place yet
3. Would people who follow this beast be interested in Christ and His people?

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