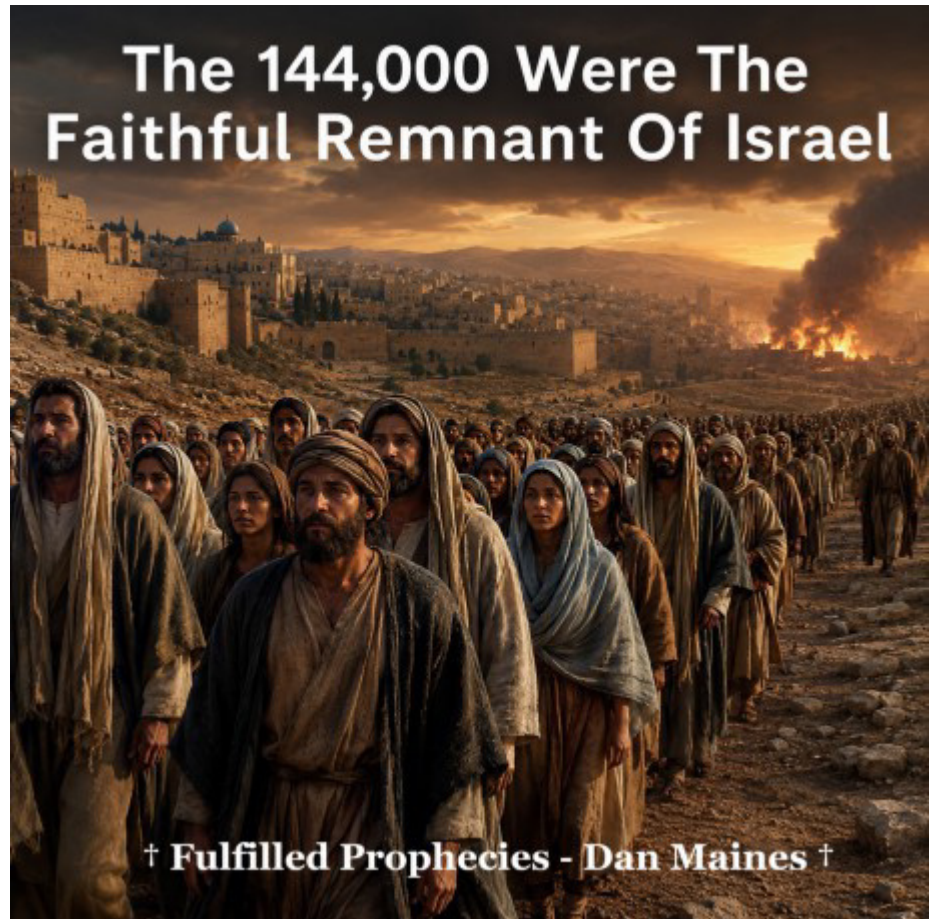


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**144,000 - The
144,000 Were The
Faithful Remnant
Of Israel**



By Dan Maines

The 144,000 Were The Faithful Remnant Of Israel

Introduction

† The 144,000 are often presented as a future group of Jewish evangelists during a coming tribulation. The Scriptures, however, identify them as the faithful remnant of Israel living during the last days of the Old Covenant. They were sealed before God's judgment fell upon Jerusalem and were the firstfruits of redeemed Israel as the New Covenant was being established.

Revelation 7:2-4

And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, holding the seal of the living God; and he called out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, "Do not harm the earth, or the sea, or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads."

And I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:

† The text plainly says the 144,000 were sealed out of the tribes of Israel. It does not identify them as Gentiles or as a future generation. (Revelation 7:4)

† They were sealed before judgment was poured out, just as Jesus warned His disciples to flee Jerusalem before its destruction. (Matthew 24:15-21; Luke 21:20-22)

† The seal identified them as God's covenant people who would be preserved through the transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant. (Ezekiel 9:4; Ephesians 1:13)

† The tribes are named because the judgment about to occur was a covenant judgment upon Israel, not upon the Gentile nations. (Deuteronomy 28; Matthew 23:35-38)

† The sealing occurred before the winds of judgment were released, demonstrating that God protects His own before covenant wrath is poured out. (Ezekiel 9:4-6)

† This sealing parallels the blood placed upon the homes at Passover. God's people were marked before judgment fell. (Exodus 12:7, 13)

† The number 144,000 is twelve times twelve times one thousand, symbolizing the fullness and completeness of God's covenant remnant rather than a literal census. (Revelation 21:12-17)

Revelation 14:1-5

Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him 144,000 who had His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of

loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps. And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one was able to learn the song except the 144,000 who had been purchased from the earth. These are the ones who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are celibate. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from mankind as first fruits to God and to the Lamb. And no lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless.

† They stand victoriously with the Lamb on Mount Zion, showing that Christ had gathered His faithful remnant. (Hebrews 12:22-24)

† They are called the firstfruits unto God, identifying them as the first redeemed remnant from Israel, not the only redeemed people of God. (James 1:18)

† Their purity represents covenant faithfulness to Christ, a picture frequently used throughout Scripture. (2 Corinthians 11:2)

† Mount Zion represents God's New Covenant kingdom, not an earthly political kingdom. (Hebrews 12:22-24)

† The Father's name upon their foreheads contrasts with the mark of the beast. One identifies those belonging to Christ, the other identifies those aligned with apostate Israel. (Revelation 13:16-17)

† The new song celebrates redemption accomplished through Christ and could only be sung by those who experienced that covenant transition. (Psalm 40:3; Revelation 5:9)

† Being called virgins is symbolic language describing spiritual purity and covenant faithfulness, just as the church is described as the pure bride of Christ. (2 Corinthians 11:2)

† Firstfruits always point to the beginning of a greater harvest. These believers were the first redeemed remnant of Israel before the gospel spread throughout the nations. (James 1:18)

Romans 11:5

In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present

time a remnant according to God's gracious choice.

† Paul said there was a remnant at that present time. The believing remnant already existed during the first century. (Romans 11:1-5)

† The 144,000 represent God's faithful remnant preserved while unbelieving Israel faced covenant judgment. (Romans 9:27-29)

† Paul wrote "at this present time," placing the remnant in his own lifetime, not thousands of years later.

† God has always preserved a faithful remnant even when the majority rejected Him. (Isaiah 10:20-22)

† The 144,000 beautifully picture that remnant preserved by grace during Israel's final covenant generation.

† The remnant demonstrates that God did not reject His promises to Israel, but fulfilled them through Christ and those who believed Him. (Romans 11:1)

Historical References

† Josephus records that the Roman siege devastated Jerusalem in AD 70, fulfilling Jesus' warnings concerning that generation.

† Josephus describes the horrors of the Roman siege exactly as Jesus foretold.

† Eusebius records that the Jerusalem church fled to Pella before the city fell, preserving Christ's faithful followers.

† The historical record harmonizes with Revelation's picture of God's servants being preserved before Jerusalem's destruction.

How It Applies To Us Today

† God always keeps His promises exactly as He declares.

† Christ faithfully preserved His covenant people during the last days of the Old Covenant.

† Our confidence is in the finished work of Christ, who fulfilled every covenant promise at the appointed time.

† We can trust every time statement Jesus gave because history confirms He fulfilled every one.

† God's promises are never delayed beyond His appointed time.

- † Christ has already established His everlasting kingdom, so believers live in the confidence of His completed work.
- † Our hope is not in waiting for the 144,000 to appear but in belonging to Christ today.
- † The faithfulness of the 144,000 reminds us that God always preserves a people for Himself.
- † The New Covenant is not awaiting completion. It is the covenant in which believers now live.
- † The fulfilled work of Christ gives us confidence instead of fear when reading Revelation.
- † The focus of Revelation is Christ's victory, not speculation about future prophetic events.

Q & A Appendix

Q: Who were the 144,000?

A: They were the faithful remnant of Israel sealed before the judgment upon Jerusalem. (Revelation 7:2-4; Romans 11:5)

Q: Were they future evangelists?

A: No. Scripture places them among the tribes of Israel during the events leading up to Jerusalem's destruction. (Revelation 7:4; Matthew 24:34)

Q: Why are they called firstfruits?

A: Firstfruits were the first portion of a harvest offered to God. The 144,000 were the first redeemed remnant from Israel under the New Covenant, pointing to the greater harvest that would include believers from every nation. (Revelation 14:4; James 1:18)

Q: Do Christians become second fruits and part of the 144,000 today?

A: No. The 144,000 were the firstfruits of redeemed Israel during the first-century transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant. Believers today are not added to that number. We are members of Christ's body and part of the great multitude from every nation that belongs to Him. (Revelation 14:4; Revelation 7:9-17; Ephesians 2:11-22)

Q: Is the number 144,000 literal?

A: The book of Revelation is filled with symbolic numbers. The

number 144,000, twelve times twelve times one thousand, represents the complete covenant remnant of faithful Israel whom God sealed before Jerusalem's judgment. (Revelation 7:4; Revelation 21:12-17)

Q: Is the great multitude the same as the 144,000?

A: No. The 144,000 are specifically identified as being from the tribes of Israel. The great multitude is described as coming from every nation, tribe, people, and tongue, showing the worldwide expansion of God's redeemed people through the gospel. (Revelation 7:4-9)

Q: Why are they called virgins?

A: Their virginity is symbolic of spiritual purity and covenant faithfulness to Christ. Throughout Scripture, God's faithful people are described as a pure bride devoted to Him. (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:25-27)

Q: Why were they sealed?

A: They were sealed to show God's ownership and protection before covenant judgment came upon Jerusalem. Their sealing parallels the marking of the faithful in Ezekiel before judgment fell on the city. (Revelation 7:2-3; Ezekiel 9:4-6)

Q: Doesn't Scripture teach that when we become Christians we join the 144,000? Aren't we in the same place as they are?

A: No. The 144,000 were a unique first-century remnant of Israel, sealed before the destruction of Jerusalem and identified as the firstfruits unto God and the Lamb. Their role was specific to the transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant. Believers today share the same salvation, the same Christ, and the same heavenly Mount Zion, but we do not become part of the 144,000. We belong to the great multitude from every nation that stands before the throne and the Lamb. (Revelation 7:4-9; Revelation 14:1-4; Hebrews 12:22-24; Ephesians 2:11-22)

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Revelation 7:2-4, Revelation 14:1-5, Romans 11:5

† Josephus, The Wars of the Jews; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

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