

The 144,000 Show Up Again

Revelation: How It All Ends

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Bible Text: Revelation 14:1-5

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We're in Hebrews 12 and I would like for you, please, to look at verse 18. As we're looking at Hebrews 12:18 we need to understand that the writer of Hebrews is trying to get the reader to see a difference between what they had in the Old Testament and what they have under Christ. Is everyone with me? Look at verse 18, "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest." Hearing what I just said about the Old Testament, what mountain is he talking about? Mount Sinai, that's right and you can find that all through the book of Exodus. So, the writer of Hebrews is saying, "Your religion has nothing to do with Mount Sinai."

Look at verse 19, what else around this Mount Sinai, "And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more." So, we know what our religion has nothing to do with so let's see what it does have to do with. Look at verse 22, "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." Help me identify Mount Zion/Mount Sion. Same deal, depends on whether you see it in the Old Testament or the New Testament. As a matter of fact, you might have a translation that says "Mount Zion." Does anyone in here have a translation that says Zion. So, I have a King James and it says Sion. It's the same deal. "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." So, just in case you think that Mount Sion in the Bible always speaks of the earthly Jerusalem, this writer says, "No. We're talking about the heavenly Jerusalem. Mount Sion is the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God."

Look what's there: "an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." So, all these things can be found in heaven on Mount Sion. Pretty cool, huh? An innumerable company of angels. Haven't we seen that in Revelation before? Thousand and thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand gathered around the throne? Okay, so the writer of Hebrews who I think is Luke, yes, that's debatable, and John in the book of Revelation agree.

(...) Well said. As a matter of fact, in the book of Hebrews 11, Abraham was “called out of Ur of the Chaldees to seek for a city whose builder and maker is God.” So, even Abraham knew that when he was looking for the Promised Land, he was really looking for a land that was just a foreshadow of a heavenly land where he would go and live with his Maker.

Look at Revelation 14. Now that we've figured out what Mount Sion is, let's look at Revelation 14 and we're going to read verses 1-7 and then get through most of it probably. We're doing well on time here even after that ridiculous monologue I gave. Make sure that you're updating me with your prayer requests so that we can get it out. So far, we've got about 125 of you that are on our email list and so that should mean that we have at least 100 people praying throughout the week for everything. Especially if you get it on your phone, you should be able to pull that thing out and just pray for everything every day. There are certain places that there's not anything to do but that. So, you should be able to handle that.

Look at verse 1, “And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand.” We've let the word of God interpret the word of God for us here, haven't we? Immediately now since we've read verse 1, you should know the setting. Where is it? Mount Sion which is? The heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God or as we generically refer to it, one word? Heaven. Good.

“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. 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: 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. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins.” Let's just understand right now that the word “defiled with women” there is only a reference to pre-marriage sexual relations. It's not talking about the marriage bed which Hebrews 13 says is undefiled. Remember that? So, we keep going back and forth in Revelation and Hebrews 12 and 13. Isn't that amazing? Now, I don't know anyone that thinks John wrote Hebrews. That makes it even more amazing, that we have the Holy Spirit writing these two books and commenting on the other. And I need to tell you, that based on the research I have done, Hebrews and Revelation are written about three decades apart from each other. I could be wrong, it could be two but I don't think it's much closer than 20 years apart that they were written.

Look at verse 4 again, we'll pick up where we left off. “They are virgins, These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.” We're going to talk about what that means. “And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God. 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 I can never get through that

phrase without thinking about Willie Wonka. Do you know what I'm talking about? The everlasting gospel? Yeah, it sounds like they're about to say everlasting gobstopper and it never says that. It never does. It never changes. I can never past that without thinking of Willie Wonka and I've read it hundreds of times.

"I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth." That's why you don't sight read. You're supposed to sound out everything if you can. "And to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, 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."

Folks, I tell you, I'm just thrilled about what we're going to see today and the reason is because we're going to see again that you would think Moses and John were sitting right next to each other writing but they weren't. We're talking about 1,500 years between the time Moses wrote Exodus and John wrote Revelation. If you have respect for the word of God as God's word, that will enthrall you. You'll be thrilled every time you learn something about God's word. But if it's just another book to you, you're like, "Whatever." But the truth is, there is going to be a time when you're going to need some counsel that never changes and then you won't be quite so passive about how important the word of God is.

So, here's a seven year period that has not happened yet. It is known as the tribulation period. Tell me how this is split up: 3 ½ years and 3 ½ years. Now, we've talked about, at length, this last 3 ½ years is somewhat split up and we'll look at a chart maybe if we get to it at the end, but 3 ½ years and 3 ½ years. Let's look back at chapter 13. Can you please tell me how we know that we're dealing with events that took place in the last 3 ½ years. Can anyone look at chapter 13 and tell me how we know that? Give me a verse number of chapter 13 of Revelation and help me understand how we know we're in this last half of the tribulation period that has not happened. We're over here somewhere, folks, on the timeline.

From Satan, and Satan is, according to chapter 12:10, he's kicked out at what point? Kicked out the heavenlies? At the 3 ½ year mark so he can't empower the beast personally like it says he does until he's pitched out and we're told he's pitched here in the midway point because he persecutes the woman in the wilderness for 3 ½ years. So, he's kicked out, he persecutes the Jewish nation for 3 ½ years and he empowers the beast to persecute the saints. Let me say that again, you might remember at the end of chapter 12, the dragon is persecuting the Jewish nation for 3 ½ years, he's frustrated because he can't somewhere in here and he turns his attention towards the remnant of the seed who worships Christ, those are Christians, right? You might remember, right on the heels of that vision of the dragon, you have chapter 13:1. John says, "And I stood on the sand of the sea and saw a beast," and so this is that antichrist figure that we're told comes after the working of the dragon in verse 4, "And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast." The dragon is kicked out here and he empowers the beast for 3 ½ years.

The other beast that we read about last week beginning in verse 11, is the false prophet. The false prophet has the same power that the beast does. What verse do we see that in? Verse 11, "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon." Look at verse 12, "And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast." Well, if the first beast got his power from, who? Satan, the dragon, the dragon is not available until half way through the tribulation period, then that means both the first and the second beast of Revelation 13 are described as their last 3 ½ years here.

So, the question should be asked in chapter 14:1 because you have a vision of a dragon: can you please look at what we see in chapter 13 and look at what we saw in the first five verses of chapter 14. Please look south into your own Bible and look there in chapter 14:1-5 and chapter 13: can you please show me how the author is contrasting one group against another? Do you have any ideas? What do you see as a characteristic of those who follow the dragon or the beast and a characteristic of those who are described in the first five verses of Revelation 14? What characteristic do you see of both groups that contrast? They both have a mark. That's exactly right. Chapter 13 closes with those who follow the beast having a particular mark. Then the author comes back in the next chapter and says, "Now, let me tell you about a different group that has a different mark." Do you see that? Does everyone see that?

It's important that you see the author's intent. If you're not careful, especially with the book of Proverbs, you're going to let those chapter and verse breaks, you're going to make those make you think that the Scriptures are just hodge-podge. Revelation is not even that way. It is not laid out in some sort of haphazard way. The author is going to very carefully show us contrasts. If you leave this class in 17 years when we get to chapter 22 and you're like, "I still don't see the same thing in the same order he does." Fine, cool. But if you came out of Revelation with a few things, you're going to make this bald guy real happy. 1. If you see that it is nothing but a rehash of the Exodus, you're going to make me very happy. If you see that the author has a map that he's going by, you're going to make me very happy. But if you come out of here saying, "Well, you know what? I looked at my iphone for 40 minutes every Sunday morning and I didn't get a thing," well, then, it serves you right. At least see the vein of the thinking here of the teacher, of the man who writes the Scripture. That's very important.

Now, let's decide here on the next slide, as we read that, is this the same group of the 144,000 that we saw in chapter 7? Pull out your visual aid there and I think you're going to see that there are five or six comparisons so that you can see that we are dealing with, probably, the same group. Is there room to disagree with me? Yup. There sure is. This is translucent, folks. Remember translucent says we have a good guess. And based on the information I'm given, is it possible we have two different groups of 144,000? Yes. But I don't think so. I think because of the comparison between the two groups.

Let's pick these out one at a time. You might notice that both groups of 144,000 have a seal on their foreheads. Do you see that? Look at chapter 7:3 on the left and look at the

gray shading with the white font on the right in chapter 14:1. See? Does everyone see that? Both groups are 144,000. That's highlighted in yellow. You might see that immediately after both visions, look at the green highlight, you have preaching that goes out to every kindred, every tribe, every tongue, every nation. Now, how does that contrast with the 144,000? Someone help me out. 144,000 are just Jews. If you want to know about the 144,000 in chapter 7, now is not the time for us to talk about that because we taught an entire lesson on it and I will send that link out with the email today with today's lesson but we already talked about, "Well, is it possible that this is just picturesque?" Sure, there are Baptists, Catholics, Lutherans, Episcopalians and non-denominations out there who will say that the 144,000 are just symbolic of Christians. You know what, though? You put yourself in some pretty shaky company. Let me tell you who else you have something in common with: Jehovah's Witnesses. They teach that the 144,000 are not male virgin Jews, they teach they are a special heavenly class that actually get to go to heaven. All the other Christ-followers have to be here on earth forever. So, that's the Jehovah's Witness cult so when you start saying, "It's not male virgin Jews, that's stupid," then you're putting yourself on slippery ground. You're getting close to cultism when, really, God doesn't mean anything he says anymore.

So, again, right after the first vision of the 144,000 in chapter 7:9 on the left side of the piece of paper, you see a group of people of multi-ethnicity and then on the right side of the page, chapter 14:6, you see a gospel preaching that happens from the sky which, by the way, the Paul and Jan, the TBN folks, they taught in their commentary that that was their satellite network.

Now, where does this take place? Before the throne. See it in both chapters, see that? And then what are they doing in both chapters? They're following the Lamb. Do you see that? The black that's highlighted in chapter 7:17. By the way, if you highlight in black, you should probably change the font to white. It's really important.

Then you might notice, please, that there is this identifier in both passages that deals with being led to fountains of waters. Does anyone see any other similarities between the 144,000 in either chapter?

Alright, notice the big contrast. What's the big contrast? Because we looked at Hebrews 12. But I'm going to say that chapter 7 has the 144,000 on earth and here's why: because chapter 7:1 you have a judgment that's about to take place on the earth. Do you see that? And you see an angel saying, "Don't do it yet. We have to seal the 144,000." Does everyone see that? So, we have an earth judgment of some kind that takes place – we put it on the chart here at the first 3 ½ years is where we put them. So, we have the trumpets about to start. Do you remember that? The seven trumpets? We hit that about 2-3 months ago? And you're going to remember that the seven trumpets start and the seven trumpets happen in about the last half of the tribulation period. Again, why do we think it's then? Those are lessons that have already happened and I'll send you the link.

But we've already put the trumpets over here in this last half so the 144,000 are sealed before the trumpets begin because chapters 8 and 9 are the trumpets and the trumpets

scorch the earth. Do you remember that? And so, the prayer or the cry of these 144,000 which you might remember from that lesson, we also have probably located in and around Jerusalem because of what we taught in that lesson from Ezekiel 9. Again, if it's worth knowing, it's worth listening to a 40 minute lesson about again. We're not going to reteach it.

So, you remember that they're on earth and why are they on earth? Because judgment is coming to earth and the angel says in verse 2, "Whoa, whoa, whoa. Hold it off until we get these 144,000 sealed." So, they're on earth or else there's no need to hold off the judgment until they're sealed.

So, in chapter 7, it takes place before the trumpets. The trumpets are in the last 3 ½ years so chapter 7 happens here in this half of the week of years and chapter 14 happens here. Why? Two reasons: 1. it's in a completely different location, heaven, chapter 14:1; 2. context. It would make no sense, really, for him to say, "Alright, let's talk about the dragon for the last 3 ½ years. Okay, let's talk about the beast for the last 3 ½ years. Okay, let's talk about the false prophet for the last 3 ½ years. Now, let's go back and talk about the first 3 ½ years again with the 144,000." No, that's not a good contextual flow at all.

So, my premise is that these are the 144,000 and that they are in heaven instead of on earth and that they are in the last half of the tribulation period. Now, how did they get there? That's a good question. So, let's move forward. First of all, you might remember, look at the slide. I wanted you to see that you have many times where 12 shows up in the book of Revelation. What are some of the other main numbers that show up in Revelation? Seven, yup, we've seen that many times. Another one? Twelve, that's up on the slide. Another one? Ten, yeah, ten horns, that's right, ten crowns on the horns and for the beast. Twenty-four is a multiple of twelve so I included that there with the 144,000 which is $12 \times 12 \times 10,000$. Six, yes, that's a number we see often in the book of Revelation. How about this one? There are this many beasts, there are this many corners to the earth. Four. Okay, so we're seeing these numbers show up again.

It takes some thought to determine just exactly what we're dealing with as it's symbolic of something or is it a literal thing. Well, in this case, he goes into such detail about these 144,000. First in chapter 7, telling us what tribe they come from. Then he tells us their gender and he tells us their status as married, unmarried. So, he goes into such detail here. It's hard for me to believe that these are symbolic of anything and that we really do have 144,000, 12,000 from each tribe, it says in chapter 7. So, don't be bullied away when people look at you like you're silly because you believe something is literal in the Scriptures.

Alright, then we have mention again of a voice from heaven. This happens like 20 times in the book of Revelation where John hears things from heaven. Let's try to remember where John is in chapter 4, 5, 6. Do you remember? Isle of Patmos, sure, but where is he? He's in heaven. So, let me remind you, he is already back on earth in chapter 9 because he says, "I beheld an angel descending from heaven," and he was the one that unlocked the bottomless pit and let all those demonic locusts out. Do you remember that? So, let's

remember: if we're going to make John symbolic of the rapture of all believers in chapter 4:1, we have a problem because that means that when he returns in chapter 9:1 you have the Second Coming of the saints. That's ridiculous because you're not even half way through the tribulation period at that point. So, you've got to be consistent. If he is symbolic of the church in chapter 4:1, then he's got to be symbolic of the church when he comes back in chapter 9 which is nowhere near a point of rapture. I just want to remind you of his perspective.

Corbin? So long as we understand that they might be there too. So long as we understand the Scripture says these are they that are coming out of great tribulation. So, it is particularly the group of people that have died for Christ in this era in chapter 7. That's the non-Jewish group in chapter 7. Now, we can say that, for example, if I died tomorrow before the tribulation begins, we can say I'll be there, that's true but I'm not a part of that group. That is a particular group that is coming out of great tribulation. Probably some of you have a version of the Bible that says "is coming" because that's the actual sense of the original language.

Look at verse 3 and let's look together there with this new song. "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." Alright, I want you to take a moment now and glance back at chapter 5:9 and tell me whether this is the same new song?

Look at verse 4, "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb." Alright, redeemed from among men. I want to show you, please, if I could, that this is – folks, we're at 28 now, 28 similarities. I think I'm at 28. Let me look ahead here and cheat. Yup, 28. 28 similarities between Exodus and Revelation. 28. It is obvious to me, for example, when we talk about the Exodus, these are they which have exodused out of great tribulation that Revelation is nothing but a retelling of the Exodus but the real Exodus. Remember we talked about Mount Sion? Mount Sion was a fulfillment of Mount Sinai? Remember that, folks? Well, it's that way all through Exodus and Revelation when you compare it. For example: what does it say about those who came out of Egypt? They were redeemed from there and so here we have the 144,000 are spoken of as another Exodus. It's, again, a second Exodus. You have those of multi-ethnicity in chapter 7 coming out of great tribulation and now you have another Exodus taking place somewhere in there and I'm not saying it's one big mass of people coming out like some sort of pre-rapture rapture, I am saying that you have, once they're assembled in heaven, this people of God that have been called out of the world.

Now, how do they get there? Does anyone have any idea how these 144,000 are now standing before the throne? Jim says they're talked about as they're spoken of as firstfruits which is a type of sacrifice. It sounds like they died for their faith. You know, it really gives almost an idea when we see that there is this parallel between the Exodus of Exodus and we see that they were sealed to protect them from the judgment that was poured out

on the earth. (Passover.) Sure it does, it sounds like the Passover. They're following the Lamb. That's a parallel we see in Exodus so we see that because of the Lamb, they're exodused, they're redeemed from the Egypt of the world.

It's clearly what John is doing here. He loves the book of Exodus because 28 times, he uses the book of Exodus language in the book of Revelation and we're going to see the fact that he uses Exodus language could mean that they are snatched up too. You say, "Oh, that's stupid." Really? It's happened twice already. That's Enoch and Elijah and it happened again with who? Jesus. And it happens again in this book in what chapter? Two witnesses? Chapter 11, right? So, I don't think it's out of the realm of possibility to say that these 144,000 were actually yanked up like the two witnesses but I don't know. I don't know.

But I would like to say, looking next at the next verse, please, that they're called the firstfruits. Now Jim mentioned this. So, let's talk about what that is. We have like five minutes left so I have to hurry. There were three times when a male Jew had to show up at the earthly city of Jerusalem. Do you remember that? Three times, three festivals when a male Jew had to show up at Jerusalem and offer a sacrifice. This tells us why there were so many people in the city when Christ died. He died on what day? Passover. That was one of the times every male Jew had to come to Jerusalem to offer sacrifice and then there was one in the Fall known as? Booths, also known as Tabernacles. So, the second time is between those. It is known as, what we call today, Pentecost but back in the day, it was known as firstfruits.

So, let's talk about how this is numbered real quick if I could. Are you ready? You have Passover, that was the day Christ died. The book of Leviticus says that you go to the first day of the week after Passover and you count 50 and that's when Pentecost takes place, firstfruits. And firstfruits, what they did is you would usually see the firstfruits and what would that mean to a farmer? The first crop, right? And he would come in and offer an offering to the Lord, the first sign of produce from God. Everyone with me? And then in the feast of Booths, they would bring another offering and it was also called the ingathering. So, you had the firstfruits which was a sign of that which was to come known as the ingathering. So, they would sacrifice a portion of the firstfruits in good faith that they would have much more to gather at the ingathering. What kind of sense does it make to say that the ingathering occurred before the firstfruits? There's not much room for a pre-trib ingathering. The firstfruits takes place in chapter 14 so why would the full harvest take place before firstfruits? The people in Egypt in Exodus were led out of Egypt and taken to a mountain, Mount Sinai. These 144,000 are yanked out of Egypt and led to Mount Zion, right? Are you all with me? They are called redeemed, the folks that are pulled out of Egypt are called redeemed and both are known as the firstfruits unto God. In other words, you find that the firstfruits was sacrifice offered by these Jews who were rescued out of Egypt and the firstfruits were a sign of good faith in God for rescuing them from Egypt and having lands of their own. You find both ideas. Folks, I've got to tell you, it's a lot of fun preparing class when you keep learning things.