

# **REVELATION 14 144,000 WITNESSES/ THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON PREDICTED**

## OUTLINE OF THE CHAPTER

**144,000 WITNESS (1-5)**

**THREE HEAVENLY ANGELS (6-11)**

**A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE SAINTS (12-13)**

**THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON PREDICTED (14-20)**

### **144,000 WITNESS (1-5)**

This seems to be a further description of the 144,000 witnesses we read about in Revelation 7.

#### *They Stood with the Lamb (1a)*

John looked and the 144,000 stood on Mount Zion with the Lamb

The Slain Lamb (5:6, 13:8)

The Worthy Lamb (5:8, 12-13)

The Exalted Lamb (5:9-10)

The Feared Lamb (6:1)

The Majestic Lamb (7:9-10)

The Shepherding Lamb (7:17)

The Victorious Lamb (17:14)

#### *They Stood on Mount Zion (1b)*

The word Zion means fortification, therefore Mount Zion was an elevated place of safety. It has been called the city of David (2 Sam. 5:7), it is also called the City of God (Ps. 2:6; 48:3-12; 132:13; Isa. 2:1-5; Jer. 31:6). It also referred to the city of Jerusalem (Isa. 40:9) and the Jewish people (Isa. 60:14).

#### *They Had a Name Written in their Foreheads (1c)*

They had the seal of God in their foreheads because they were protected through the Tribulation.

#### *They Were the Only Ones Who Could Learn the Harpers Song (2-3)*

Only the 144,000 could learn the song. The word “learn” *manthano* can mean “to receive instruction.” They were the only ones who could receive the instructions to learn the song. This was a song of redemption and since they were redeemed they had the ability to learn the song.

#### *They Had not Defiled Themselves with Women—They Were Virgins (4a)*

There are several views regarding the meaning of this passage:

- They were not able to lead normal married lives.

- They will remain sexually pure in an immoral culture.
- They will remain spiritually pure in an idolatrous culture.

*They Were Followers of the Lamb (4b)*

They will follow the Lamb through thick and thin, high and low.

*They Were Redeemed among Men—the First Fruits (4c)*

The first fruits were the best of the crops in the Old Testament. It could be that these individuals will be the best of those who come out of the Tribulation.

*There Was no Fault in Their Mouths as They Stood Faultless before God (5)*

The Anti-Christ will speak great lies; these witnesses will speak the truth and stand before God “blameless”. The same word is used for a sacrifice without blemish.

### **THREE HEAVENLY ANGELS (6-11)**

*The First Angel (6-7)*

John then receives a vision of an angel flying through Heaven with the everlasting Gospel. No doubt this is the message preached by the 144,000 Jewish evangelist to the inhabitants upon the earth. They beckoned mankind to “Fear God, and give glory to him.” The time of the end is coming to an end and all are called on to worship the God of Heaven, earth and sea.

*The Second Angel (8)*

This angel proclaims the doom of Babylon. See notes on Revelation 17 and 18 for the meaning of the fall of Babylon.

*The Third Angel (9-11)*

This angel pronounces doom upon anyone who worships the beast, his image and receives his mark. John then describes the brutal punishment that will come upon those individuals—they shall drink the wine of God’s wrath, be tormented with fire and brimstone and the smoke of their torment will arise continuously.

### **A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE SAINTS (12-13)**

In the midst of describing the judgment that will fall upon the worshippers of the beast, John records a message of reassurance for saints who have been patient and kept the Word of God and their faith in Jesus Christ. A voice from Heaven told John to write, “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth, Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.”

## THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON PREDICTED (14-20)

### *The First Executor of Judgment: His Description (14)*

He is sitting on a white cloud and wearing a golden “crown” (Greek *stephanon*) a wreath given to the victor in the Olympic games. He has a sharp sickle in his hand. The sickle was a curved blade used for harvesting grain and cutting grapes. It is sharp, that means it is an instrument for reaping the harvest which indicates Divine judgment.

### *The First Executor of Judgment: His Action (15-16)*

An angel calls out of the temple for Him to thrust in His sickle upon the earth. The harvest of the earth is “ripe” (Greek *exeranthe*), could possibly mean over-ripe, rotten or withered. The angel thrust in his sickle on the earth and begins to reap.

### *The Second Executor of Judgment: His Description (17)*

He came out of Heaven with a sharp sickle in his hand.

### *The Second Executor of Judgment: His Action (18-19)*

- An angel calls out of the altar for him to thrust in his sickle and gather the vine out of the earth. The grapes of this vine were ripe also but this is a different word for ripe than verse 15. The word used here is *ekmansan* and means “to be fully grown.”
- The angel thrust in his sickle and gathered the vine. He then threw the vine into the great winepress of the wrath of God. A winepress was a trough where grapes were placed, trampled on by foot and drained into a basin. God was going to trample the wicked in judgment. .

### *The Second Executor of Judgment: The Results His Action (20)*

The blood from this judgment would flow as deep as the horses’ bridles. Whether this statement is meant to be taken literally or not is not the issue. The point to emphasize is that there will be tremendous bloodshed. Blood would flow for the length of a “thousand and six-hundred furlongs” about 180 miles. The prophet Isaiah adds that the bodies of the slain will be left in the open to rot and the smell of dead flesh will fill the air (Isa. 34:2-3).

## WHO ARE THESE 144,000?

The same group that is mentioned in Chapter 7, only at a later time during the Tribulation. They are 12,000 representatives from the twelve tribes of Israel.

This is entire body of the Church because (1) they were redeemed “out of all the earth” (vs. 3); and (2) this is a number of completeness and represents the entire church.

A select group of individuals such as priests and monks. This theory is based on the fact that these individual have not had sexual relationships with women (4).

A group of undefiled saints who have not given into spiritual fornication or idolatry (vs. 4).

This is a representation of a group of individuals who have remained faithful during the Tribulation.

They are 144,000 Jehovah’s Witnesses.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK JEHOVAH’ WITNESSES

*from*

*“Reasoning from the Scriptures with Jehovah’s Witnesses”* by Ron Rhodes

Why do JWs take the 144,000 in Chapter 14 literally, and the 144,000 in Chapter 7 figuratively? What justification is there for switching method of interpretation—from literal to figurative—right in the middle of Revelation?

Ask them “Are there women in the “Anointed Class” of the 144,000 believers?” They will say “yes.” Ask them how do you reconcile that with Revelation 14:4 which clearly indicates that the 144,000 are all men who have not been defiled with women?

Did you know that the word “tribes” is never used in Scripture of anything but a literal ethnic group?

Did you know that the word “Israel” is almost always used in Scripture in reference to the physical descendant of Jacob?