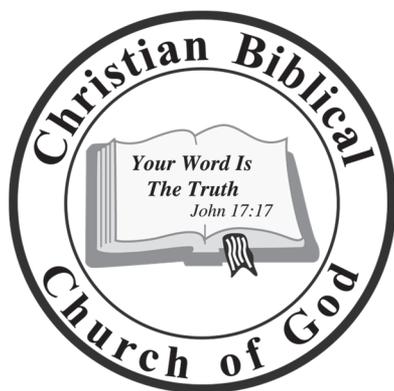


Who Are the 144,000?

Revelation 7 & 14



by
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Understanding the mysterious meaning of the 144,000 written in the book of Revelation, Chapter 7 and Chapter 14, by the apostle John has been an enigma for about two thousand years. Nearly all attempts to interpret the meaning of the 144,000 do not give us the true Scriptural understanding. Most misinterpretations of Revelation have been used by religious leaders to claim that only 144,000 will be saved from the time of Jesus Christ's ministry on earth, until He returns at His second coming.

The entire denomination of the Jehovah Witnesses was originally founded on the proposition that God was only saving the members of the Jehovah Witnesses church, whose total maximum membership would only be 144,000. It was further claimed that all other people in other Christian professing churches would not be saved. However, the severe flaw in this theory were revealed when their membership grew to be more than the 144,000. Currently, this denomination has over 976,000 members. Because of the members of the Jehovah Witnesses Church is 6.77 times greater than 144,000, they don't know who the "actual" 144,000 are! Furthermore, this creates another major spiritual problem because only those who know that they are part of the 144,000 are allowed to keep the Passover. Therefore, very few actually partake of the Passover, because no one wants to put him or herself forward as one of the 144,000. All of this has come about because of a misinterpretation of who the 144,000 are.

Likewise, there have been misinterpretations within the churches of God concerning the 144,000. Several years ago one popular minister of one of the churches of God stated in a sermon, that the sum total of the first fruits at the first resurrection would only be 144,000. He ridiculed those who believe that God would call more than 144,000, and derided those who said that if God could only call 144,000 and no more that would limit God.

The purpose of this booklet is show the above doctrinal statements about the 144,000 are the result of misapplying certain scriptures. As a result, this minister has come to the wrong conclusion. Moreover, these false theories do not make a differentiation between the 144,000 of Revelation 7 and the 144,000 of Revelation 14. In the same manner as all ministers who preach false doctrine, or private interpretations of Scripture, he adjusted the Scriptures to fit his private theory, instead of adjusting his theory to the facts of Scripture. Before we begin to answer the question, "Who Are the 144,000," we need to know how to properly

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understand the Word of God, so that we do not make the same mistakes as those who have preached their false, private interpretations.

HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE WORD OF GOD— FIVE VITAL KEYS

Prophecy is always intriguing because people want to know the unknown. It makes them feel special if they have special knowledge that other people do not have. Unfortunately, too many people, and self-serving teachers and ministers, get lifted up in carnal pride, if they feel that they have a special, exclusive, personal insight into the Scriptures that no one else has. Moreover, down through time the landscape of the history of professing Christianity, has been strewn with failed prophecies and gross misinterpretations of Scripture because the foundation of their understanding was based on their own carnal 144,000 Revelation 7 & 14 reasonings, rather than the foundation of the Word of God and Jesus Christ, who is the Word of God.

The true foundation we need in order to understand the word of God as contained in Scripture. Anyone who seeks to understand the word of God must have a believing, loving, and yielded attitude toward God. He or she must seek the will of God and not his or her own self-will, regardless of how important we think that our ideas are, or how strongly we feel. In order to avoid the trap of self-serving, carnal ideas about the word of God and prophecy, there are five major principles that are essential to a correct understanding of Scripture. These vital keys to understanding must always be kept in mind when we study the Word of God. This way we will not be led astray by our own ideas, or by the false ideas and theories of others.

The **first vital key** is this: “All Scripture *is* God-breathed and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work” (II Tim. 3:16).

Many who profess to study the Bible completely disregard this vital principle. Rather than seeking the truth of Scripture, they look for verses that appear to support their personal beliefs, but ignore those verses that clearly contradict their beliefs. This approach to study can never lead to understanding because it denies that every part of Scripture is inspired. Those who use this approach are exalting their own beliefs above the authority of Scripture. In doing so, they create idols in their minds and cut themselves off from God the true understanding of God’s word. When we study the Scriptures, we should always be careful to seek the true meaning of the words that were inspired by God. No study of the Scriptures should be designed to support the position of a doctrinal board, or to justify a time-honored church doctrine, or to

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“prove” a personal interpretation of the Scriptures. None of these motives are acceptable to God. And if these motives are involved, for whatever reason, do we think that God overlooks such deceptive use of His Word? If we think that we can fool God, we are only deceiving ourselves.

Let us not be guilty of such a presumptuous and self-righteous attitude toward the Word of God. Rather, let us humbly allow the inspired words of Scripture to correct us and instruct us in the true righteousness of Jesus Christ and the true understanding of God’s word.

The **second vital key** to Scriptural understanding is clearly taught in Isaiah 28: “Whom shall He teach knowledge? And whom shall He make to understand doctrine? *Those* who are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts [that is, fully grounded in the Word of God and not a spiritually immature Christian feeding only on the milk of the Word], for precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little” (Isa. 28:9-10).

The book of Isaiah tells us that in order to understand doctrine, we must study the Scriptures line upon line and precept upon precept. This is exactly how we should study every doctrinal question. The New Testament confirms this approach to understanding the Word of God and establishing sound doctrine! “Diligently *study* to show yourself approved unto God, a workman [in the Word of God] who does not *need to be* ashamed, rightly dividing [precept upon precept, and line upon line] the Word of the Truth” (II Tim. 2:15).

In order to come to the knowledge of the Truth, we must always follow the Biblically outlined method of study—“straightly cutting” or “rightly dividing” the Word of God. Any other type of study is useless and all in vain! As Paul instructed Timothy, “See that *they* remain mindful of these things, earnestly charging *them* in the sigh of the Lord not to argue over words that are not profitable in any way, *but which lead to the* subverting of those who hear” (II Tim. 2:14).

This is exactly what many ministers and scholars have done in their doctrinal teachings because they have not rightly divided the Word of God! Whole congregations have been subverted by strivings and disputings over the meaning of key words that are used in Scripture. Some teachers and ministers have even engaged in redefining words—attaching their own personal interpretations and rejecting the authoritative definitions that are found in Hebrew and Greek lexicons. Anyone who undertakes such practices is “using the law unlawfully,” as Paul said, and will end up teaching false, satanic doctrines that subvert the minds of their followers. Unfortunately, the landscape of religious history is filled with the bodies of people who have taught false doctrines, and the bodies of people who have embraced their teachings. Only by

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learning to rightly divide the Word of God will we be able to recognize and resist these false doctrines.

The **third vital key** to understanding the Scriptures is found in the second epistle of Peter, where we read, “Knowing this first [Greek *protos*—meaning the primary, or first and foremost thing], that no prophecy of Scripture originated as anyone’s own private interpretation; because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will, but the holy men of God spoke as they were moved by *the Holy Spirit*” (II Pet 1:20-27).

In today’s world, we find many pseudo-teachers who are twisting the Scriptures and deceitfully using their own personal interpretations in order to persuade others to believe their false doctrines. To support their teachings, they may quote numerous Scriptures. To their listeners, their teachings sound very authoritative, but the way that they apply the Scriptures exposes their craftiness. They are using the same subtle methods of deception that Satan the devil uses.

Yes, even Satan the devil quotes Scripture! When Jesus Christ was being tempted by the devil in person, Satan did not hesitate to quote the Scriptures. “If You are the Son of God, cast Yourself down; for it is written, ‘He shall give His angels charge concerning You, and in they shall bear You up in their hands, lest You strike Your foot against a stone’ ” (Matt. 4:6, Psa. 91:11-12).

Satan correctly quoted this Scripture, but misapplied it in a crafty effort to tempt Jesus to jump from the pinnacle of the temple. Jesus resisted Satan’s deception by rightly applying the Scriptures. He said, “Again, it is written, ‘You shall not tempt *the Lord your God*’ ” (Matt. 4:7).

What is the lesson for us in this account? It is this: Those who quote the Scriptures correctly, but twist and misapply the meaning, are following Satan—not serving God! This example is recorded in Scripture as a warning for us to be on guard. The fact that a minister or teacher may continually quote the Scriptures does not guarantee that he is teaching the truth. **SCRIPTURE THAT IS QUOTED ACCURATELY IS OFTEN MISAPPLIED TO TEACH FALSE DOCTRINE! HERESY IS THE MISAPPLICATION AND MISINTERPRETATION OF TRUTH.**

But true servants of God do not use such deceitful tactics. The apostle Paul wrote of his ministry, “For we have personally renounced the hidden things of dishonest gain, not walking in *cunning* craftiness [that is, having a hidden agenda], nor handling the Word of God deceitfully [falsely applying the Scriptures]; but by manifestation of the truth, we are commending ourselves to every man’s conscience before God” (II Cor. 4:2).

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Those who are truly serving God will not deceitfully use Scripture to promote their own ideas and personal interpretations. They will seek to understand and teach the true meaning of Scripture that God inspired by the power of His Holy Spirit.

The **fourth vital key** to understanding the true teachings of Scripture is found in Paul's instructions to the Thessalonian believers: "Prove all things. Hold fast to *that which is good*" (I Thess. 5:21).

The command to "prove all things" is a lifelong responsibility for every true believer. We, as individual Christians, must continually be testing every teaching that we read or hear by carefully studying the Scriptures. The Bereans were commended because they diligently searched the Scriptures: "Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica [the unbelieving Jews, who immediately rejected the apostle Paul's teaching that Christ was raised from the dead], for they [the Bereans] received the Word with all readiness of mind *and* examined the Scriptures daily *to see* if these things were so" (Acts 17:11).

The account in the book of Acts reveals that the Bereans were diligently studying the Scriptures to prove whether or not the things they had heard were true. They did not react with blind emotion and refuse to consider the teachings of Paul. Rather, they carefully examined the Scriptures and proved to themselves that Paul was, in fact, preaching the true message of God.

We, like the Bereans, must diligently search and examine the Scriptures in order to discern true doctrine from false doctrine. As we apply our minds to this effort, we will become skillful in using the Scriptures—no longer feeding on the "milk" of the Word but able to handle "strong meat." If we do not exercise our minds and learn to discern truth from error, we will not become spiritually mature Christians. "For everyone who is partaking of milk *is* unskillful in *the* word of righteousness because he is an infant. But solid food is for those who are fully grown, who through repeated practice have had their senses trained to discern between good and evil" (Heb. 5:13-14).

Too many Christians have remained spiritual infants because they have transferred their God-given responsibility to discern truth from error to a minister or church board. Their ministers have told them that they, the laity, are incapable of understanding the Scriptures and must submit to the doctrinal decisions of their church leaders, who alone can interpret the Scriptures. But it was never God's intention that we, as individual believers, place our trust in human leaders who claim sole authority to establish doctrine. Christians who have done so have left themselves open to grievous deception. They have forgotten the many warnings throughout the New Testament to be on guard against false teachers and false apostles who make a pretense of serving God.

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The apostle Paul warned, “Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this: that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will rise up speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves” (Acts 20:28-30).

Likewise, the apostle Peter strongly admonished the brethren. “But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you, who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies, personally denying *the* Lord who bought them, and bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many people will follow *as authoritative* their destructive ways; *and* because of them, the way of the truth will be blasphemed. Also, through insatiable greed they will with enticing messages exploit you for gain; for whom the judgment of old is in *full* force, and their destruction is *ever* watching” (II Pet. 2:1-3).

True to the warnings of Paul and Peter, many Christians in the New Testament churches were subverted and drawn away from the true doctrines of Scripture because they neglected to “prove all things” and did not test and try the teachings of these false apostles. But the church at Ephesus did not forget the warnings and admonitions of Paul and Peter, as well as the other true apostles. In the book of Revelation, Jesus Christ commended the Ephesian believers because they tried and tested those who falsely claimed to be apostles and proved them to be liars. “I know your works, and your labor, and your endurance, and that you cannot bear those who are evil; and *that* you did test those who proclaim *themselves* to be apostles, but are not, and did find them liars” (Rev. 2:2).

Since these false apostles professed to be ministers of Jesus Christ, we can be sure that they quoted the Scriptures. Their false doctrines must have sounded very authoritative and very convincing, because they succeeded in undermining the faith of many New Testament Christians. How was the church at Ephesus able to withstand this powerful deception? If the Ephesian brethren had not been exercising their senses to discern truth from error, they would not have recognized these men as false apostles. But because the brethren at Ephesus were skillful in using the Scriptures, they were able to discern that these men were not teaching the true doctrines of Jesus Christ.

Like the brethren at Ephesus, Christians today must constantly be on guard against false ministers whose Scriptural-sounding teachings are actually a perversion of the true doctrines of Scripture. It is our personal responsibility as Christians to test and try the teachings of every minister, teacher or scholar by careful examining the Scriptures. By

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following the Scriptural command to “prove all things,” we can learn to recognize and reject false doctrine, and we will be able to stand fast in the true doctrines of Jesus Christ.

The **fifth vital key** to remember when we study Scripture is that we must be led by the Holy Spirit. The Word of God is called the Word of Truth. Furthermore, it is the Spirit of Truth that teaches us all things. The Bible makes it clear that the Spirit of Truth works hand in hand with the Word of Truth to give us the understanding God wants us to have. Jesus said, “But *when* the Comforter *comes*, *even* the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in My name, that one shall teach you ALL THINGS, and shall bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you” (John 14:26). This is the promise Jesus gives to all who repent and are converted in their hearts and minds by the Holy Spirit.

It is not possible for the unconverted human mind, which is deceitful above all things (Jer. 17:9), to come to the knowledge of the Truth of God. In fact, the carnal mind is enmity (that is, hostile) toward God and is not willing to be subject to God’s laws (Rom. 8:7). The Word of Truth and the Spirit of Truth cannot work hand in hand with the carnal mind of deceit. Regardless of how brilliant or how great the intellect may be, God’s Truth is not understood through human wisdom and rationale. It is only through the Spirit of God that the Word of God can be understood.

Paul taught that it is not through human rationale or intellect that we are able to come to the knowledge of the Truth, but by and through the SPIRIT OF GOD. “But according as it is written, ‘*The eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.*’

“But God has revealed *them* to us by His spirit, FOR THE SPIRIT SEARCHES ALL THINGS—EVEN THE DEEP THINGS OF GOD. For who among men understands the things of man except *by* the spirit of man which *is* in him? In the same way also, the things of God no one understands except *by* the Spirit of God....Which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in *words* taught by *the Holy Spirit in order to* communicate spiritual things by spiritual *means*. But *the* natural man [the carnal mind without the Holy Spirit of God] does not receive the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand *them* BECAUSE THEY ARE SPIRITUALLY DISCERNED.” (I Cor. 2:9-14).

Without the Holy Spirit of God, no human being—no matter how intelligent—can understand His Word! And even individuals who have received the Holy Spirit from God are beset by obstacles that can keep them from coming to a full understanding of the truth. Too many Christians become caught up in the politics of religion, or the power

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structure of an ecclesiastical hierarchy, or the approved doctrines of their church, or they have submitted to humanly devised church authority, or they have blindly accepted the teachings of so-called Biblical scholars, and they are not able to open-mindedly study and completely understand the spiritual truth of God's Word.

Jesus Christ promised the Spirit of Truth will teach us all things (John 74:26); and will lead us into all the Truth (John 16:13). But the Holy Spirit cannot guide us into all truth unless we diligently study the Scriptures with an open mind, unhindered by the ideas and doctrines of men. Christians who look to the authority of men rather than to Scripture are easy prey for ministers and teachers who profess to serve God but are not obeying His commandments and are not teaching the Truth. The book of Proverbs tells us that the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord: "The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the holy *is* understanding" (Prov. 9:10).

If one truly fears God, he or she will obey Him, and God will impart understanding: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments..." (Psa. 111:10).

Furthermore, if you keep His commandments, you will love God: "For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome" (I John 5:3). And Jesus also said, "If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments" (John 14:15). When we put all the Scriptures together, God is showing us from His Word how we are to understand the Scriptures. (If you do not have the booklet *The Fourteen Rules for Bible Study*, please write for it.)

However, Jesus also made it clear to his disciples that few would understand the Word of God because they are unwilling to truly believe, obey and love God. For this reason, during His ministry, Jesus spoke to the multitudes in parables: "And His disciples came to Him, and asked, 'Why do You speak to them in parables?' And He answered *and* said to them, 'Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has *understanding*, to him more shall be given, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have *understanding*, even what he has shall be taken away from him. For this *reason* I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, "In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand; and *in* seeing you shall see, and in no way perceive; for the heart of this people has grown fat, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and should

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hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them” ’ ’ (Matt. 13:10-15). When a person is in this spiritually blinded condition, they cannot understand the word of God. Moreover those teachers and ministers who are also in the same condition of spiritual blindness preach many false doctrines and misinterpretations of Scripture.

Finally, before we begin to investigate the Scriptures concerning the 144,000 we need to also realize that many prophecies were not meant to be understood until the end time. Notice, what the angel told Daniel when he wanted to understand the prophecies which were given to him: “And he said, Go your way, Daniel, for the words *are* closed up and sealed until the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and refined. But the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand” (Dan. 12:9-10).

Jesus Christ confirmed this to His disciples: “But blessed *are* your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. For truly I say to you, many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see what you see, and have not seen; and to hear what you hear, and have not heard” (Matt. 13:16-17).

Therefore, if we believe God, love Him and Jesus Christ; and if we keep His commandments and rightly divide the word of God—putting the Scriptures together—line upon line, and precept upon precept, we can come to a true understanding of the 144,000.

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One popular Church of God minister stated in a taped sermon, that the sum total of the first fruits is 144,000. He ridiculed those who believe that number would limit God.

The purpose of this booklet is show the above premise misapplies certain scriptures and comes to the wrong conclusion through not understanding the difference between Revelation 7 and 14. Instead of adjusting a theory to the facts of the scripture; that teacher adjusted the scriptures to his theory creating confusion.

THIS BOOKLET COVERS THE FOLLOWING:

- Correcting a mistranslation of a Greek word in Rev. 7.
- Showing by scripture that the 144,000 in Revelation 14 does not represent the complete first fruits.
- Time line for the events in the book of Revelation.

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Prove All Things By Using the Bible

We must test theories to see if they are true or not. Scriptural truth always fits together perfectly with other scriptures. Otherwise a belief is not the truth of God.

John 3:16—*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that He may call 144,000.*

No, that is not what the scripture says.

John 3:16—*For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life.*

We can build from what we know to understand what we don't know. God is not calling everybody at this time.

John 6:44-45—*No one can come to Me, unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, "And they shall all be taught by God." Therefore, everyone who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes to Me.*

Every minister needs to understand that the brethren of God belong to God the Father and to nobody else. They do not belong to a corporation, they are not chattel or serfs, they are not to be merchandised. They are entrusted to teachers and scripture shows most disciples should learn to be teachers.

Hebrews 5:12—*For truly, by this time you ought to be teachers, but instead you need to have someone teach you again...*

Repentance Is a Choice

Remember Matthew and the parable of the sower and the seed.

Matthew 13:3-9—*Behold, the sower went out to sow. And as he was sowing, some of the seed fell by the way; and the birds came and devoured them. And some fell upon the rocky places, where they did not have much*

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soil; and immediately they sprang up because the soil was not deep enough; but after the sun rose, they were scorched; and because they did not have roots, they dried up. And some of the seed fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. And some fell upon the good ground, and yielded fruit—some a hundredfold, and some sixtyfold, and some thirtyfold. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.

Christ's explanation of this parable:

Matthew 13:18-23—*Therefore, hear the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the Word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, the wicked one comes and snatches away that which was sown in his heart. This is the one who was sown by the way. Now the one who was sown upon the rocky places is the one who hears the Word and immediately receives it with joy; but because he has no root in himself, he does not endure; for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, he is quickly offended. And the one who was sown among the thorns is the one who hears the Word, but the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful. But the one who was sown on good ground, this is the one who hears the Word and understands, who indeed brings forth fruit and produces—one a hundredfold, another sixtyfold and another thirtyfold.*

God has given us all free moral agency. No one knows the one thing that may cause someone by their own choice to repent.

Luke 15:1-10—*Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were drawing near to hear Him; and the Pharisees and the scribes criticized Him, saying, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them." Then He spoke this parable to them, saying, "Which man of you who has a hundred sheep, and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost, searching until he find it? And when he finds it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing; and after coming to his house, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have*

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found my sheep that was lost.’ I tell you that likewise, there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, more than over ninety-nine righteous ones who have no need of repentance. Or what woman who has ten coins, if she should lose one, does not light a lamp and sweep the house, and search diligently until she find it? And after she finds it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’ I tell you that in like manner, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

Mark 16:15—*And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the 144,000...*

No, that is not what the scripture says.

Mark 16:15-17—*And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation.” The one who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but the one who does not believe shall be condemned. And these signs shall follow....*

This verse ties in with John 3:16. Matthew 28 virtually parallels Mark.

Matthew 28:18-20—*And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore, go and make disciples in all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, even until the completion of the age.” Amen.*

Many are called but few are chosen, even though God does the calling—we have to choose to repent.

Acts 2:37 -38—*Now after hearing this, they were cut to the heart; and they said to Peter and the other apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Then Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you yourselves shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

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These people were referring to the inspired preaching of Peter on Pentecost. Have you ever been pricked in your heart and understood an evil you were doing and repented? That's what happened.

How Many Saints Have Been Added Through the Ages?

Begin with the people called in the Old Testament and add in the 3,000 baptized at Pentecost, subtract these from 144,000 and the remainder is approximately 140,000. When we search through history since the time of the new testament churches we don't find very many Sabbath keeping groups. But it was rarely ever politically acceptable to record Sabbath keepers. Perhaps a Catholic historian would have included them when discussing heretics. Future histories may blot out all knowledge of Sabbath keepers in our day. You may know of groups of Church of God brethren who have gone to keeping Sunday. We don't even know how many people there are today who keep the Sabbath. However, because we can't find historical records of very many who kept the Sabbath does not mean that God did not have very many. We just simply do not know.

The 144,000 of Revelation 14

This is the most well known scripture that refers to 144,000. If you have an interlinear please use it to study along.

Revelation 14:1-5—*And I looked, and I beheld the Lamb standing on Mount Sion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. Then I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters, and like the sound of a great thunder; and I heard the sound of lyre players playing with their lyres. And they were singing 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 hundred and forty-four thousand, (Now here it says "the" but it is referring specifically to this group) ...who were redeemed from the earth. These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins; they are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. They were purchased from among men, as the first fruits to God and to the Lamb; and no guile was found in their mouths: for they are blameless before the throne of God.*

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Now based on this scripture the supposition is made that from the time of Jesus until his return God is going to call and bring into the kingdom of God only 144,000. Is that true?

Please notice Revelation 14:1 and 3 in the interlinear—there is no definite article in verse 3 as there was in verse 1 “as first fruits” not ‘the first fruits. Notice the “as” is not there in the original, it’s marked in parenthesis which means it was added to clarify. The King James uses the word “being.” They should have italicized “being the” because there’s no definite article in the Greek in this place. So it should read “they were purchased from among men, as first fruits to God and the Lamb.”

The reference to Mount Zion ties this in with Hebrews 12 which discusses where the general assembly of the first born is going to be.

Hebrews 12:18, 22-23—*For you have not come to the mount that could be touched and that burned with fire, nor to gloominess, and fearful darkness, and the whirlwind...But you have come to Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels; to the joyous festival gathering; and to the church of the firstborn, registered in the book of life in heaven; and to God the Judge of all...*

The reference to being redeemed is very important. The interlinear translates the section—they were purchased from the earth.

Qualifications of the 144,000 of Revelations 14

Let’s go back and notice the specific details that qualify this one hundred and forty-four thousand.

- (1) **They have the name of the Father written in their foreheads.**

Then he talks about hearing the noise of waters, thunder and Playing of lyres.

- (2) **No one was able to learn the song except the 144,000.**

Remember this point when we cover the songs in Revelation 15.

- (3) **Who were redeemed from the earth.**

This is different from the children of Israel referred to in Revelation 7, we will be studying that passage later.

- (4) **These are the ones who were not defiled with women.**

What does it mean to not be defiled with women? It must

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refer to other churches! Remember Revelation 17 where Mother Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots is mentioned. One drank out of the cup of her fornication.

(5) For they are virgins.

We will see that this is very important. This group is a special category of those who are called. If you commit spiritual fornication are you still a virgin? No. You may be forgiven for that sin, but you are no longer a virgin. A virgin is a one-time state of being.

II Corinthians 11:2—*For I am jealous over you with the jealousy of God because I have espoused you to one husband, so that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds might be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*

(6) They are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

The word follow is a present tense participle which means following. Present tense at the time he saw the vision, but it can also mean they follow the Lamb wherever he goes.

(7) They were purchased [redeemed] from among men.

We need to tie this in with number 3, “who were redeemed from the earth.” This tells us two distinct things. First, they were from the earth, suggesting from among mankind. Secondly, they were from among men which confirms this is not referring to angels. Notice it does not say they were from among the children of Israel!

(8) First fruits to God and to the Lamb.

(9) No guile was found in their mouths.

So these are they who are truly overcoming. Having no guile means having no hidden agenda which refers to saying one thing and really wanting to accomplish something else. They are honest before God, not thinking or doing evil and not imputing evil motives.

(10) For they are blameless before the throne of God.

The Seven Churches of Revelation

After going over the 144,000 in Revelation 14, we will go back and study the churches of Revelation 2 and 3.

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These descriptions can refer to a prophetic, historic and attitudinal projection of the churches of God. I believe everything written was historically correct relating to the seven churches existing at the time this was written. I believe the descriptions have to do with seven attitudes which you find at any time in the Churches of God. I believe that at the end time these seven attitudes will become manifest in the Churches of God. That doesn't necessarily mean we can identify them. You need to know that the proclamation by a certain corporate church organization that it is a Philadelphia church does not make it so. It's how God views a church that identifies who they are.

Let's look at these "Churches of God," from this point of view and ask the question: which of the seven churches were virgins, which of the seven churches were undefiled?

(1) THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS:

Revelation 2:1-7—*To the angel of the Ephesian church, write; These things says He Who holds the seven stars in His right hand, Who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands. I know your works, and thy labor, and your endurance, and that you cannot bear those who are evil: and that you did test those who proclaim themselves to be apostles, but are not, and did find them liars; (The Greek word is 'pseudēs,' which means fake.)...And that you have borne much and have endured, and for My name's sake have labored and have not grown weary; Nevertheless, I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works; for if you do not, I will come to you quickly; and I will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent. But this you have; that you hate the works of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate. The one that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who overcomes I will give the right to eat of the tree of life that is in the midst of the paradise of God.*

If you lose your first love are you defiled? What is the first love? Usually it has been explained as the first zeal that one has right after they are baptized. That is not the first love, but it could be a form of first love. The Greek word is '*protos agape*' which means loving God, this is the greatest love. Jesus was asked which was the first

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‘*protos entole*’ commandment (or great commandment—‘*me gas*’ commandment).

Matthew 22:36-37—*Master, which commandment is the great commandment in the Law? And Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.*

That’s the first love. How does a person lose that? By getting so involved in activities and corporate goals that they can’t study, pray, or think of anything else. Very soon you’re socialized and dissipated.

(2) THE CHURCH AT SMYRNA:

Revelation 2:8-11—*And to the angel of the church of the Smyrneans write: These things says the First and the Last, Who was dead but is alive. I know your works and tribulation and poverty (but you are rich) and the blasphemy of those who declare themselves to be Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear any of the things that you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that you may be tried; and you shall have tribulation ten days. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death.*

Were they faithful? Yes. Were they defiled? No. They followed the Lamb wherever he went; they even followed him unto death. The brethren of Smyrna could very well be part of the 144,000 mentioned in Revelation 14. Remember this reference to the synagogue of Satan when we discuss the Philadelphia Church.

(3) THE CHURCH AT PERGAMOS:

Revelation 2:12-17—*And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write: These things says He Who has the sharp two-edged sword. I know your works and where you dwell, where the throne of Satan is; but you are holding fast My name, and did not denied My faith, even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.*

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But I have a few things against you because you have there those who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication. Moreover, you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate. Repent! For if you do not repent, I will come to you quickly, and will make war against them with the sword of My mouth. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who overcomes I will give the right to eat of the hidden manna; and I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written, which no one knows except the one who receives it.

They were no longer virgins because they committed fornication. They were very defiled. So these brethren of Pergamos could not be of that 144,000. They will be in the kingdom of God, but not as part of that special group. These scriptures show they had the doctrine of Nicolaitans, and it includes another dire consequence—Christ will personally fight against them if they don't repent.

(4) THE CHURCH AT THYATIRA:

Revelation 2:18-29—*And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These things says the Son of God, He Who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine brass. I know your works, and love, and service, and faith, and your endurance, and your works; and the last are more than the first. But I have a few things against you, because you allow the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants into committing fornication and eating things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent of her fornication, but she did not repent. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their works. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am He Who searches the reins and hearts; and I will give to each of you according to your works. But to you I say, and to the rest who are in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, and who have not known the depths of Satan, as*

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they speak; I will not cast upon you any other burden. But hold fast what you have until I come. And to the one who overcomes, and keeps My works unto the end, I will give authority over the nations; and he shall shepherd them with an iron rod, as vessels of pottery are broken in pieces; as I have also received from my Father; and I will give him the morning star. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

These were no longer virgins—they were defiled. The passage telling of killing her children with death may be referring to the unpardonable sin.

(5) THE CHURCH AT SARDIS.

Revelation 3:1-6—*And to the angel of the church in Sardis, write: These things says He Who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your works, and that you have a name that you are alive, but are dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain, which are about ready to die. For I have not found your works complete before God. Therefore, remember what you have received and heard, and hold on to this, and repent. Now then, if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you shall by no means know what hour I will come upon you. You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with Me in white because they are worthy. The one who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments; and I will not blot out his name from the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*

The church at Sardis is a corpse with a pulse. Remember the spirit gives life! You would have to say that this church was defiled, because they only had a few things remaining.

(6) THE CHURCH AT PHILADELPHIA:

Revelation 3:7-13—*And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia, write: These things says the Holy One,*

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the one Who is true, the one Who has the key of David, Who opens and no one shuts, and Who shuts and no one opens. I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no one has the power to shut it because you have a little strength, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name. Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who proclaim themselves to be Jews and are not, but do lie—behold, I will cause them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Because you have kept the word of My patience, I also will keep you from the time of temptation, which is about to come upon the whole world (the Greek word means the whole habitable world) to try those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I am coming quickly; hold fast that which you have so that no one may take away your crown. The one who overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall not go out any more; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which will come down out of heaven from My God; and I will write upon him My new name. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

The statement that they hadn't denied his name is very important!

Both of the churches confronted with the synagogue of Satan were commended for not sinning. One for following unto death and not sinning and the other for faithfully keeping the word of God. This comment could be telling us that the other churches were defiled by the doctrines of the synagogue of Satan. The synagogue of Satan probably went after all of the churches of God.

The hour of temptation refers to an upcoming worldwide event. This ties in directly with the 144,000 in Revelation 14.

The indication is that if someone takes your crown—you are defiled.

(7) THE CHURCH AT LAODICEA:

Revelation 3:14-22—*And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write: These things says the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginner of the creation of God. I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would that you be either cold or hot. So then,*

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because you are lukewarm, and are neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth. For you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'; and you do not understand that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. I counsel you to buy from Me gold purified by fire so that you may be rich; and white garment so that you may be clothed, and the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and to anoint your eyes with eye salve, so that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and. Chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me. To the one who overcomes will I give authority to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and sat down with My Father in His throne. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

They are lukewarm and are being vomited out of the mouth of God—he tells them to repent. They can repent but they are defiled.

Which Churches Qualify to Be Part of the 144,000 in Revelation 14?

Let's review the ten qualifications of the 144,000. Have the descriptions of the seven churches existed throughout the ages? Have there always been Philadelphians and Smyrmites? Yes, because there have always been those who followed Christ. Some with very little knowledge but they didn't defile themselves. There have always been brethren who lost their first love; went with the Nicolaitans; followed Jezebel; became lukewarm and some who were nearly spiritually dead.

Let's review the ten major qualifications of the 144,000 and compare them to the seven church of Revelation 2 and 3.

1. Having the name of the Father written in their foreheads.

This refers to receiving the Holy Spirit at baptism or being sealed with God's spirit and will be covered later in this booklet.

2. No one was able to learn the song except the 144,000.

3. Who have been redeemed from the earth.

The phrase, "redeemed (or purchased) from the earth," indicates that it was over a long period of time.

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4. These are they which were not defiled with women.

Only two churches were not defiled with women or false religion.

5. For virgins they are.

6. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes.

They followed him in spite of any circumstances, in spite of the synagogue of Satan -even unto death.

7. These are they which are purchased from among men.

This refers to being purchased from all of mankind.

8. First fruits to God and the lamb.

They are in a special category because of the following: they have the name of the Father written in their foreheads; they have a relationship with lamb and the Father; and they're going to follow Christ wherever he goes.

9. And in their mouth was not found guile.

10. For they are blameless before the throne of God.

Setting the Stage for the Six Seals

We need to identify a time setting. Revelation 6 discusses six of the seven seals. Please read along in your interlinear.

The six seals have not all been opened since the time of Christ. I believe the reason the first four were described using horses is because they will be suddenly occurring events which will be like the swiftness of a race horse. I also believe that the accounts in Revelation 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 were scheduled to occur between the time of John and the opening of the seals.

Revelation 4:1-6, 8, 11—After these things I looked, and behold, a door opened in heaven; and the first voice that I heard was as if a trumpet were speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you the things that must take place after these things." And immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one was sitting on the throne. And He Who was sitting was in appearance like a jasper stone and a sardius stone; and a rainbow was around the throne, like an emerald in its appearance. And around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments; and they had on their heads golden crowns. And proceeding from the throne were light-

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nings and thunders and voices; and seven lamps of fire, which are the seven Spirits of God. Burning before the throne. And before the throne was a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne and over the throne were four living creatures, full of eyes before and behind...(Scripture lists the four living creatures) and day and night they cease not saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was, and Who is, and Who is to come....Worthy are You, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power because you did create all things, and for Your will they were created and exist."

Now I believe that this passage is referring to a time-flow sequence that sets the stage for the opening of the six seals. These special events will take place when all the churches of Revelation 2 and 3 have come to the full.

Referring to the "rainbow round," a rainbow is actually a full circle, on the earth we only see half of it. Sometimes when there is a lot of mist at night and the moon is full you can see a round rainbow.

The 24 thrones around the throne, refer to lesser thrones.

Verse 11 reminds us that it is because of God's pleasure we are being created in the image of God.

Revelation 5:1-14—*And in the right hand of Him Who sits on the throne I saw a book, written within and on the back, which had been sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the book and to loose its seals?" But no one in heaven, or on the earth, or under the earth was able to open the book, or to look inside it. And I was weeping greatly because no one was found worthy to open and to read the book, or to look into it. Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion Who is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome to open the book, and to loose its seven seals." Then I saw, and behold, before the throne and the four living creatures, and before the elders, was standing a Lamb as having been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God that are sent into all the earth; and He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him Who sits on the throne. And when He took the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before*

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the Lamb, each having harps, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book, and to open its seals, because You were slain, and did redeem us to God by Your own blood, out of every tribe and language and people and nation, and did make us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth." And I saw and I heard the voices of many angels around the throne, and the voices of the living creatures and the elders, and thousands of thousand, saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb Who was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing." And every creature that is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and those that are on the sea, and all the things in them, I heard saying, To Him Who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing, and honor, and glory, and sovereignty into the ages of eternity." And the four living creatures said, "Amen." And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshipped Him Who lives into the ages of eternity.

A horn equals a kingdom in Daniel, and I believe these horns refer to the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3. The beasts and elders had golden vials full of the prayers of the saints, this tells us our prayers are important.

Opening the Seven Seals

Matthew 24 helps us understand the first four seals.

Matthew 24:4-8—*Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Be on guard, so that no one deceive you. For many shall come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ'; and they shall deceive many. And you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you do not let these things disturb you: For it is necessary that all these things take place, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in different places. Now all these things are the beginning of sorrows.*

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I. THE FIRST SEAL

Revelation 6:1-2—*And I looked when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures say, like the sound of thunder, “Come and see.” And I looked, and behold, there was a white horse: and the one who was sitting on it had a bow, and a crown was given to him; and he out conquering, and to conquer.*

I do believe the white horse of the first seal refers to false religion and not to Christ in Revelation 19. Christ won't be on the earth at the opening of the first seal. Because he is the one who opens the first seal.

II THE SECOND SEAL

Revelation 6:3-4—*And when He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, “Come and see.” And another horse went out that was red; and power was given to the one sitting on it to take peace from the earth, and to cause them to kill one another; and a great sword was given to him.*

The second seal or *red horse* pictures war, to take peace from the earth. I believe this is the beginning of the Great Tribulation. And I believe this ties in with Revelation 13.

Revelation 13:3-7—*And I saw one of his heads, as if it were slain to death, but his deadly wound was healed; and the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon, who gave his authority to the beast. And they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast? Who has the power to make war against him?” And a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies was given to him; and authority was given to him to continue for forty-two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. And he was given power to make war against the saints, and to overcome them; and he was given authority over every tribe and language and nation.*

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III THE THIRD SEAL

Revelation 6:5-6—*And when He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come and see.” And I looked, and behold, there was a black horse; and the one sitting on it had a balance in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures say, “A measure of wheat for a silver coin, and three measures of barley for a silver coin; and see that you do not damage the oil and the wine.”*

When famine strikes it will happen very quickly, because, in today’s world people don’t keep a store of food. Very few know how to grow a garden or how to cook from scratch. So when famine comes it’s going to come upon us like a swift horse. How many of us could survive more than 30 days without shopping? Most people shop every week at the market, and many shop almost every day for something. If you could not go to the store for a whole month could you survive on what you have at home? Even if you are prepared, remember Josephus predicted that those who know you have food will kill you to get what you have.

IV THE FOURTH SEAL

Revelation 6:8—*And I looked, and behold, there was a pale horse; and the name of the one sitting on it was Death, and the grave followed him; and authority was given to them over one fourth of the earth, to kill with the sword and with famine and with death, and by the beasts of the earth.*

The fourth seal will bring death, it will kill a fourth part of all [the earth] beasts. **(Fred, this said beast in the transcript but doesn’t this scripture mean people?)**

V THE FIFTH SEAL

Revelation 6:9-11—*And when He had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony that they held: And they cried out with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, do You not judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the*

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earth?” And white robes were given to each of them; and they were told that they should rest for a short time yet, until it be fulfilled that both their fellow servants and their brethren also would be killed, just as they had been.

Notice the fifth seal is not horse. This scripture refers to anyone martyred down through the ages, including Smyrna. White robes mean they were granted salvation.

Satan Persecutes the Church

Revelation 12:13-17—*And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who had brought forth the man child. And two wings of a great eagle were given to the woman, so that she might fly to her place in the wilderness, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast water out of his mouth as a river, so that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed up the river that the dragon had cast out of his mouth. Then the dragon was furious with the woman, and went to make war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

Part of the woman’s seed is taken to a place of protection in Revelation 12. They will be in a place of safety for a time, times and half a time, many believe the interpretation to be three and a half years. Satan went to make war against the remnant of her seed which kept the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

The Greek word used for remnant in Revelation 12 does not mean a smaller number of people. In the English language the word remnant means a smaller number or a leftover. One example would be a remnant from a bolt of cloth. This word in the Greek means “the others” and is plural. The word does not indicate either a large amount or a small amount.

The beast power is given authority to kill all the saints in Revelation 13.

Revelation 13:4-14—*And they worshiped the dragon, who gave his authority to the beast. And they worshiped*

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the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who has the power to make war against him?" And a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies was given to him; and authority was given to him to continue for forty-two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. And he was given power to make war against the saints, and to overcome them; and he was given authority over every tribe and language and nation. And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If anyone has an ear, let him hear. If anyone gathers into captivity, he shall go into captivity. If anyone kills with the sword, he must be killed with the sword. Here is the endurance and the faith of the saints. And I saw another beast rising out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, but spoke like a dragon; and he exercised all the authority of the first beast before him, and he causes the earth and those who dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he performs great wonders, so that he even causes fire to come down to the earth from heaven in the sight of men, And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by means of the wonders that were given to him to perform in the sight of the beast, saying to those who dwell on the earth that they should make an image for the beast, which had the wound by the sword, yet was alive.

The remnant will be killed through Satan's persecution. These need to be all considered a part of those who will be in the 144,000 of Revelation 14. We still haven't discussed the 144,000 in Revelation 7.

Now after the martyrdom in Revelation 13 occurs, the only ones who are of Christ and have the Spirit of God are those who are in a place of protection. All the rest are martyrs as a witness for God according to the scriptures. Matthew 16:18, Christ said "*I will build My church, and the gates of the grave shall not prevail against it.*" The world doesn't know anything about the people in the place of safety, God has a plan for them.

VI THE SIXTH SEAL

Revelation 6:12-17—*And when He opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as the hair of sackcloth, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its untimely figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the heaven departed like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the powerful men, and every bondman, and every free man hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains; and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, “Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him Who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb because the great day of His wrath has come, and who has the power to stand.”*

Now we’re discussing the direct intervention of God! What a spectacular event! When it’s time for Christ to do this, the whole world is going to know. Christ is not going to return like a thief in the night, like so many people are expecting.

Other Prophecies of this Time

Isaiah 40:4—*Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low.*

Isaiah 2 and 13, along with Haggai 2, shows that God prophesied He will do this; and there are many other places that prophesy about this time.

Haggai prophesied regarding the sixth seal.

Haggai 2:6-7—*For thus says the Lord of hosts, “Once again—it is yet a little while—I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land. And I will shake all the nations; and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory,” says the Lord of hosts.*

This is referring to when the heavens roll back as a scroll (we just read about this in Revelation 6:14) and they see the Son of Man, or Christ.

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Isaiah 34:4—*And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll; and all their host shall fall down, as a leaf falls off from the vine, and as the falling fig from the fig tree.*

The seventh seal isn't discussed until Revelation 8.

Sealing the servants of God

Revelation 7:1-3—*And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that the wind might not blow on the earth, or on the sea, or on any tree. Then I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to damage the earth and the sea, saying, "Do not damage the earth, or the sea, or the trees until we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.*

Have you ever contemplated where four corners are located on a round sphere? I've speculated that they might be the North Pole, the South Pole, the Bermuda Islands and their equivalent in the Southeast Pacific.

Now, who is being sealed in this passage? What does this sealing mean?

What Does "Being Sealed" Mean?

Ephesians 1:12-14—*That we might be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in the Christ; in Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.*

So when you repent, are baptized, receive the laying on of hands and you receive the Holy Spirit of God, you are sealed in your mind. The spirit of God unites with your spirit and you are sealed. Those of us who have the Holy Spirit of God have been sealed.

All of those who were converted through the ages and lived

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their lives as converted people, were sealed at the time they were baptized. Once they died and were put in the grave they began waiting for the resurrection.

II Corinthians 1:21-24—*Now He Who establishes us with you in Christ, and Who has anointed us... (so this is also called an anointing), is God; Who has also sealed us and has given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. But I call upon God to bear witness of my intentions, that in order to spare you I did not yet come to Corinth. Not that we exercise lordship over your faith, but because we are working with you to increase your joy. For you stand by faith.*

These two scriptures give the scriptural definition that a person is sealed upon receiving the spirit of God.

The 144,000 of Revelation 7

The 144,000 in Revelation 7, is dealing with people who aren't converted. There won't be many organized ministries around at that time. Due to the terrible straits and catastrophe around people, they will be calling out to God and repenting! God will give them his Holy Spirit. God shows that he's going to give it unilaterally. This is God's particular harvest.

Revelation 7:3-4—*Saying, "Do not damage the earth, or the sea, or the trees until we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." And I heard the number of those who were sealed: one hundred forty-four thousand, sealed out of the tribes of the children of Israel.*

This is important, these 144,000 are the children of the tribes of Israel. Let's read this from the interlinear:

Revelation 7:4—*And I heard the number of those who were sealed:...out of every tribe of the children of Israel.*

Prophecies say that Israel will repent while they are in captivity. God spoke regarding his everlasting love toward physical Israel in Jeremiah.

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Jeremiah 31:1-4—*“At the same time,” says the LORD, “I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people.” Thus says the LORD, “The people who were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I will go to give him rest.” The LORD has appeared to me from afar, saying, “Yea, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you. Again I will build you, and you shall be built, O virgin of Israel. You shall again put on your drums, and shall go forth in the dances of those who rejoice.*

Hosea shows that this 144,000 are from the literal twelve tribes of Israel. Hosea is speaking of Israel when they are in captivity and affliction,

Hosea 5:15—*I will go; I will return to My place until they confess their guilt and seek My face; in their affliction they will seek me earnestly.*

Hosea 6:1-2—*Come, and let us return to the LORD, for He has torn, and He will heal us; He has smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us; in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight.*

Now if we calculate that a day is a year in prophecy, after two years of the tribulation, He will revive them. So we go forward in time past two years into the tribulation, “in the third day.” This must be when Revelation 7 starts. If people are given the Holy Spirit from God and an angel protects them, they are saved from death! I believe that God will deal with the children of Israel just before the return of Jesus Christ.

Bible Breakdown of this 144,000

Revelation 7:5-8—*From the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Reuben, twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Gad, twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Asher, twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Naphtali, twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Simeon, twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of*

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Levi, twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Issachar, twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Zebulon, twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Joseph, twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand were sealed.

I don't know why Dan is not listed, God doesn't tell us.

In Zechariah God gives a promise concerning saving Judah first. God also discusses how the other tribes will mourn for the one they have pierced (Christ), these passages indicate they have been called.

Zechariah 12:3-13— *“...And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people. All who burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the nations of the earth be gathered together against it. In that day,” says the LORD, “I will strike every horse with terror, and his rider with madness. And I will open My eyes upon the house of Judah, and will strike every horse of the people with blindness. And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, ‘The people of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the LORD of hosts their God.’ In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire among the sheaves. And they shall devour all the people all round, on the right hand and on the left hand. And Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her place, even in Jerusalem. The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the people of Jerusalem may not be magnified above Judah. In that day the LORD shall defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And it shall be, he who is feeble among them at that day shall be like David; and the house of David shall be like God, like the angel of the LORD before them. And it shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the people of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications. And they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns for his only son, and shall be in bitterness over Him, as the bitterness over the*

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firstborn. In that day shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadad Rimmon in the valley of Megiddo. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; All the families who remain, every family apart and their wives apart.”

None of the saints are a part of the 144,000 sealed in Revelation 7. However, they could have qualified to be a part of the 144,000 of Revelation 14, but not of Revelation 7, they are only made up of the tribes of Israel.

Correcting a Mistranslation

Now let's return to Revelation 7, and read from the interlinear:

Revelation 7:5—*Out (ek) of the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand sealed.*

Look at the first Greek word in verse 5, it is “ek,” which means “out of,” “out from,” or “out from among.”

The popular teacher in order to make his theory fit, claimed that “ek” should have been translated “in accordance with” or “according to” —therefore not meaning out of the physical tribes of Israel but only in accordance with. Now that is a completely wrong application of the Greek. “Ek” does not mean “in accordance with.” Make sure that you don't make your study fit your theory but rather let your study prove or disprove your theory.

Arndt and Gingrich translates “ek” consistently as “out from.” *Wigrams Concordance* of the New Testament doesn't show a single occurrence in all of the New Testament where “ek” was ever translated “in accordance with.”

There are five places in the New Testament which *Arndt and Gingrich* list that it could be translated “in accordance with.” Let's look at them in the *King James Version*—we will see that the *King James* does not translate “ek” as “in accordance with.” Nowhere is it translated “in accordance with.”

Matthew 12:37—*For by (ek) thy works you shall be justified And by your words thou shalt be condemned.*

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“Ek” in this place is translated “by” not “in accordance with,” in this case meaning from your own words.

Luke 19:22—*And he saith unto him, Out of (ek) of thine own mouth will I judge thee, [thou] wicked servant....*

Revelation 20:12—*And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is [the book] of life; and the dead were judged out (ek) of those things which were written in the books.*

Romans 9:11—*(For [the children] being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand (not ek) not of works, but of him that calleth;)*

II Corinthians 8:11, 13-14—*Now therefore perform the doing [of it]; that as [there was] a readiness to will, so [there may be] a performance also out (ek) of that which ye have. “ For [I mean] not that other men be eased and ye be burdened; But by an equality, [that] now at this time your abundance [may be a supply] for your want: that there may be (ek) equality:*

By looking at these other uses of (ek) we can know that every place “ek” is translated ‘out of’ in Revelation 7 that God meant out of that physical tribe of Israel, which means they are a part of this 144,000.

Who Is the Great Multitude?

Revelation 7:9-14—*After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude, (ochlos polus) which no one was able to number, out of (ek) every nation and tribe and people and language, was standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and holding palms in their hands; and they were calling out with a loud voice to Him Who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, saying, ‘The salvation of our God has come.’ Then all the angels stood around the throne, and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying,*

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‘Amen. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and strength be to our God into the ages of eternity. Amen.’ And one of the elders answered and said to me, ‘These who are clothed with white robes, who are they, and where did they come from?’ Then I said to him, ‘Sir, you know.’ And he said to me, They are the ones who have come out of the great tribulation (megaloi); and they have washed their robes, and have made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb.

Back to the popular Church of God teacher, he also taught that the words, “great multitude (*ochlos polus*)” can mean a much smaller number. In other words saying that if you didn’t fill in the 144,000 with the 12 tribes of Israel that God would make up the rest of the 144,000 out of the great multitude.

However, the Bible further explains the great multitude by adding, “*which no man could number.*” Remember that 144,000 can be numbered; in the earlier verses in Revelation 7, God will number the 144,000 of the house of Israel.

There is another place in the Bible that refers to an innumerable multitude.

Genesis 15:5—*And He (God) brought him (Abraham) outside and said, “Look now toward the heavens and number the stars—if you are able to count them.” And He said to him, “So shall your seed be.”*

Notice that this multitude who stood before the throne of God came from all nations, tribes, people and languages. They were clothed with white robes, which refers to the righteousness of the saints. Using this scripture in Genesis to better understand the phrase, “great multitude, which no man can number,” in Revelation 7:9, it obviously can refer to far more than 144,000.

Back to the 144,000 of Revelation 14

Remember what we have learned about the 144,000 of Revelation 14. This can’t refer to the children of Israel, or to the great innumerable multitude, neither of them met the 10 qualifications. The scriptures don’t say they were: virgins, undefiled, or that they had the name of God written in their forehead. Both groups were sealed, but the group referred to in Revelation 7 was the last minute harvest, “They are

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the ones who have come out of the great tribulation” These were like the workers at the 11 hour, remember the parable of market place?

Matthew 20:1-16—*For the kingdom of heaven shall be compared to a man, a master of a house, who went out early in the morning to hire workmen for his vineyard. And after agreeing with the workmen on a silver coin for the day's wage, he sent them into his vineyard. And when he went out about the third hour, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, 'Go also into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' And they went. Again, after going out about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did likewise. And about the eleventh hour, he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all the day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'Go also into my vineyard, and whatever is right you shall receive.' And when evening came, the lord of the vineyard said to his steward, 'Call the workmen and pay them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first.' And when those who were hired about the eleventh hour came, they each received a silver coin. But when the first ones came, they thought that they would receive more; but each of them also received a silver coin. And after receiving it, they complained against the master of the house, saying, 'These who came last have worked one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who have carried the burden and the heat of the day.' But he answered and said to them, 'Friend, I am not doing you wrong. Did you not agree with me on a silver coin for the day? Take what is yours and go, for I also desire to give to the last ones exactly as I gave to you. And is it not lawful for me to do what I will with that which is my own? Is your eye evil because I am good?' So the last shall be first, and the first shall be last: for many are called, but few are chosen.*

Can God call more than 144,000 if it's his desire? God gave us free moral agency so that we can choose if we will repent and receive salvation. It's not God's will that any perish.

Who Are the 144,000?

The Wrath or Vengeance of God

*Let's go to **Revelation 15:1**—Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and awesome: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is filled up.*

Why does the wrath of God (or the vengeance of God) wait until this time? Because, God promised that all the saints would see the execution of his vengeance.

Psalm 149:1-7—*O praise the LORD! Sing to the Lord a new song, and His praise in the congregation of saints. Let Israel rejoice in his Maker; let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let them praise His name in the dance; let them sing praises to Him with the drum and lyre, For the LORD takes pleasure in His people; He crowns the meek with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand to execute vengeance upon the nations and punishments upon the people, to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with iron bands; to carry out upon them the judgment written—this honor have all His saints. O Praise the LORD!*

Notice, that two distinct groups are referred to: Israel and the children of Zion. Israel refers to those Israelites who will come out of captivity. Revelation 14:1 shows that Mount Zion is where the general assembly of the church of the first-born and Christ will be, so this refers to the church. Both groups will have been given salvation.

Revelation 14:1—*And I looked, and I beheld the Lamb standing on Mount Sion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.*

Revelation 19 also shows that the saints will return to the earth and fight with Christ.

Revelation 19:14—*And the armies in heaven were following Him on white horses; and they were clothed in fine linen, white and pure*

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The saints are to be co-heirs with Christ.

Romans 8:17—*Now if we are children, we are also heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him.*

So not only are the saints going to participate but they will see the vengeance of God poured out in the seven last plagues.

The Sea of Glass

Revelation 15:2—*And I saw a sea of glass mingled with fire...*

Exodus 24 shows a transparent pavement under the feet of God.

Exodus 24:9-10—*And Moses went up, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: And they saw the God of Israel. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the heavens in clearness.*

Both of these scriptures show that when God reveals Himself He stands on a special platform, of either a clear pavement or sea of glass. Read more about the throne of God in Revelation 4. The sea of glass in Revelation 4 is referring to a sea of glass in the third heaven where the throne of God is and not here on earth.

Revelation 15:2-4—*And I saw a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having the lyres of God. And they were singing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, “Great and awesome are Your works, Lord God Almighty; righteous and true are Your ways, King of the saints. Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You only are holy: for all nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been revealed.*

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This refers to resurrected saints who have obtained victory over the beast. Now there has always been idolatry, or an image of the beast; Satan's system has always been here ever since the Garden of Eden. These songs are different from the song of the 144,000 in Revelation 14, because only they knew that song.

Marriage of the Lamb

Christ will deliver the kingdom to God the Father at the end. But God the Father will be involved in an event prior to that—the marriage of the Lamb. He will probably be involved in the marriage ceremony. Will the saints (the bride) see the Father? Spirit beings will be able to see the glory of God. God the Father is not going to come down to the earth and bring New Jerusalem until after the millennium is over, until all the wicked are burned up in the lake of fire. Then the new heaven and new earth are created and New Jerusalem will come down out of heaven to earth.

Revelation 19:9—*And he said to me, "Write: Blessed are these who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God."*

I Corinthians 15:24—*Then [cometh] the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.*

Resurrection Day—Every Man in his own order

I Corinthians 15:20-23—*But now Christ has been raised from the dead; He has become the first-fruit of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruit; then those who are Christ's at His coming*

Which group will be the first to be resurrected. Remember we just read that Christ is the first fruits and afterwards they that are His after His coming but every man in his own order. The last shall be first. Who are the first two to be resurrected? The two witnesses who were the very last killed.

Matthew 20:16—*So the last shall be first, and the first shall be last: for many are called, but few are chosen.*

The following is pure speculation. Could it be that the resurrection day could be 48 hours long? How long is a Sabbath day from God's point of view? From any person's point of view it's from sunset to sunset, no matter where they are on the earth. Considering the whole world, the Sabbath lasts 48 hours from beginning to end.

These scriptures give some understanding as to the order of the resurrection. Because some are going to be first, some will be second, and some third, and on down the line.

These Categories Will Be Included in the Resurrection:

- The 144,000 of Revelation 14.
- The 144,000 of Revelation 7 and the innumerable multitude.
- All of the saints of the Churches of God including the seven churches.
- Those in the Old Testament who qualified.

So brethren, there is a special calling, for those in one of the seven churches. If you're defiled you need to repent, and be given salvation. There is a special calling for those who are going to be in the 144,000 of Revelation 14 and if all of those ten things apply to you, you can be one of them. There is also a special calling for 144,000 of the children of Israel in Revelation 7, and there is a special calling for the great innumerable multitude.

Through studying the scriptures we have seen that God has more than 144,000 who will be in the first resurrection.

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