

Lesson 8  
Sunday Morning Bible Class “The End Times”  
Taught by Minister Cecil Cross

The Revelation of Jesus Christ to John

Revelation Chapter 7 & 14

1. We are not told what exactly their service is, but the 144,000 are sealed for a specific and unique purpose. However, the general idea of being sealed is not limited to them.

a. Jesus was sealed; God the Father has set His seal on Him. (John 6:27)

b. We are sealed with the Holy Spirit as a down payment of our eventual total redemption. Paul wrote: God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)

c. This sealing of the Holy Spirit belongs to every believer when they are saved: having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. (Ephesians 1:13)

d. The sealing of the Holy Spirit is meant to be both a comfort and a challenge to us. We are comforted in that it assures us that we belong to Him. We are challenged by it to depart from all evil and identify ourselves with the One we belong to: Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: “The Lord knows those who are His,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (2 Timothy 2:19) And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (Ephesians 4:30)

2. Some facts about the 144,000 from Revelation 7 and Revelation 14 give us insight regarding their identity.

a. They are called the children of Israel (Revelation 7:4).

b. Their tribal affiliation is specific (Revelation 7:4-8).

c. They seem to be protected and triumphant through the period of God’s wrath, meeting with Jesus at Mount Zion at His return (Revelation 14:1).

d. They are celibate (Revelation 14:4).

e. They are the beginning of a greater harvest (Revelation 14:4).

f. They are marked by integrity and faithfulness (Revelation 14:5).

3. Taken together, these facts make it difficult to say that the 144,000 are a symbolic picture of the church.

a. Israel is a term never specifically applied to the church in the New Testament, and never by any Christian until a.d. 160

b. Their tribal affiliation is emphatic and known to God. Even if God only knows it, there is absolutely no reason to regard their tribal affiliation as symbolic, not literal.

c. It is difficult to imagine the entire church surviving through the tribulation without martyrdom and remaining celibate through the period, something that was never required for the church as a whole (1 Corinthians 7:1-6).

d. If the 144,000 are a symbol of the entire church, what greater harvest are they the beginning of?

4. It is best to see the 144,000 as specifically chosen Jewish people who come to faith in Jesus, protectively sealed throughout the tribulation as a sign.

a. They are the beginning harvest of the salvation of Israel (Romans 11:1, Romans 11:26, Matthew 23:37-39).

b. "They are not a part of the Church proper; for their repentance comes too late for that. They are a super addition to the Church – a supplementary body – near and precious to Christ, but made up after the proper Church has finished its course."  
(Seiss & Guzik)