

Who Are The “144,000”?

Are they the Church? In vision, the apostle John saw a huge crowd of 144,000 who were “sealed of our God in their foreheads.” In decades past, various smaller church organizations have made the error of attempting to “discover themselves” in the Bible! It is heady wine indeed for religious leaders to convince their followers THEY, that particular religious group, are actually NAMED in the Bible! How exciting it is for some to believe they can turn to the holy scriptures, and actually SEE THEMSELVES identified as being in the midst of GREAT EVENTS! But, notwithstanding this desire for a spiritual “identity,” who really ARE the mysterious 144,000 of Revelation seven? What does your Bible say?

By Garner Ted Armstrong

About one-third of your Bible is *prophecy*. Bible prophecy is history written in *advance*. It is an *outline* of God’s plan He is working out here below. Jesus Christ was the greatest *prophet* who ever lived.

Jesus’ most important prophecies are found in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, where three of the four gospel writers relate various details of Jesus’ famous “Olivet prophecy.”

For the purposes of understanding the answer to the question “Who are the 144,000”? it is well to be *very* familiar with Jesus’ Olivet prophecy, particularly in Matthew’s account.

For decades, many Bible scholars have known that Jesus’ Olivet prophecy is the vital **KEY** to understanding the overall framework of the book of Revelation! Many other Bible scholars have known that the book of Daniel and the book of Revelation are virtually inseparable; that the one helps to interpret the other.

Remember, the Bible *interprets the Bible*—the scriptures are of no “private interpretation.”

We are warned, continually, not to attempt to put **OUR** human reasoning, points of view, arguments or contentions *into* the scriptures!

The book of Revelation carries its own stern warning, saying “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

“And if any man shall take away from the words of the

book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Revelation 22:18, 19).

This is a solemn **WARNING** placed by the apostle John at the end of the series of great *visions* which he saw!

In determining who **ARE** the 144,000, we must completely *reject* any human reasoning, vanity or egotistical desire to be “named” in the Bible; any clever arguments, slogans, catch-phrases, peculiar “teachings” of cults or various organizations of men must be *abandoned*.

It is the *Bible only* which we shall consider!

But first, read with your own eyes the biblical account of the 144,000.

“And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

“And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

“Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

“And I heard the number of them which were sealed; and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

“Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.

“Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.

“Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.

“Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

“After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

“And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

“And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

“Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever, Amen.

“And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

“And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (Revelation 7:1-14).

I have printed here, for your convenience, *every word* of Revelation 7, verses 1 through verse 14. Notice, first, the *time setting* of this prophecy!

WHEN Are the 144,000 Sealed?

Notice John writes “And AFTER these things [*what things?*] I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth...”

“These things” which John saw BEFORE the vision of the 144,000 certainly includes the statements made immediately prior in Revelation 6!

Doctor Bullinger’s *Companion Bible* has an interesting appendix concerning Revelation 6. In it, he, together with many other Bible scholars, recognized that Jesus Christ of Nazareth gave a step-by-step interpretation of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse (the first four seals) and the fifth and sixth seals of the book of Revelation, one after the other, in the sixth chapter!

On page 1892, as a comment on Revelation 6, Bullinger explains:

The Seals

- 1st. The false messiah (Rev. 6:1-2; Mat. 24:4-5).
- 2nd. Wars (Rev. 6:3-4; Mat. 24:6-7).
- 3rd. Famines (Rev. 6:5-6; Mat. 24:7).
- 4th. Pestilences (Rev. 6:7-8; Mat. 24:7)
- 5th. Martyrdoms (Rev. 6:9-11; Mat. 24:8-28)
- 6th. Signs in heaven of Advent (Rev. 6:12-17; Mat. 24:29-30)

For more than 28 years, I have known that this understand-

ing of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse is *absolutely correct!*

By reading each verse set forth above, carefully comparing each one of Christ’s statements to His disciples with each of the verses in Revelation 6, you will see there is *no other understanding* of the *sequence of events* in Revelation 6!

Now, to a GREAT KEY concerning the TIMING of these events!

First, read Matthew 24:29, “Immediately AFTER the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.” Now, turn to and read Joel 2:31, “The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, BEFORE the great and terrible day of the Lord come.” Basically, the book of Revelation is divided into THIRDS.

First, after the introductory letters to the churches, and together with other introductory or *inset* chapters (such as chapter 4, chapter 12, etc.) the book of Revelation depicts, (1) *the Great Tribulation*; (2) *the heavenly signs*, and, (3) *the DAY OF THE LORD!*

Jesus was describing to His disciples (Matthew 24:1-30) the GREAT TRIBULATION!

Notice, “For then shall be GREAT TRIBULATION, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no,

nor shall be again.”

“And those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened” (Matthew 24:21, 22).

Now turn to and read Jeremiah 30, verses 7, 8 and 9!

“Alas! for that day is *great*, so that *none* is like it: it is even the time of *Jacob’s trouble*; but he shall be saved out of it.

“For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him:

“But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I shall raise up unto them.”

Here, you have TWO times, *each of which* are spoken of as being utterly *unique!* The “Great Tribulation” of Matthew 24 and the “time of Jacob’s trouble” of Jeremiah 30:7, are both said to be “unlike any other”! Now, notice Daniel 12:1, “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, *such as never was* since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

“And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”

Here, Daniel says this great “time of trouble” will be a time “*such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time!*” You are reading of the biblically-*prophesied* GREAT TRIBULATION in *each* of these three passages. Each

for the *night cometh* when no man *can work!*”

This war in the Middle East, resulting in the opening round of another WORLD WAR, coupled together with the final emergence of the great FALSE PROPHET, comprises the opening of the first seal (false christs and false prophets), followed swiftly by the opening of the *second seal* (global WAR), resulting in the droughts, famines and pestilences described in the third and fourth seals, and, immediately thereafter, upon the declaration of TOTAL SUPREMACY of ONE MAN over ALL WORLD RELIGIONS, will come a bloodletting such as the world has *never witnessed; probably hundreds of thousands if not millions* of all opposing religions, including Islam, Judaism, and what are viewed as “rebellious” segments of “Christianity” will be PUT TO DEATH!

Once this great false prophet has taken to himself his arrogant, illicit POWER, backed up by the *military might* of the BEAST, the *fifth seal* (martyrdom), or the “religious phase” of the great tribulation will occur!

As Jesus said, they will “scourge you in their synagogues,” and “some of you they will put to death!”

Some of God’s people will be supernaturally protected! OTHERS will be MARTYRED for their faith!

“Three and One-Half Years”

We know that there are several contemporaneous periods which consist of three and one-half years revealed in Bible prophecy.

Carefully comparing Revelation 12:6; 12:14 and Revelation 13:5, you can see that the “time, times and half a time” during which the “dragon” (Satan) persecutes the church is exactly the same period of time as “a thousand two hundred and three score days,” (Revelation 12:6), and “forty and two months” (Revelation 13:5).

On the one hand, you see the *remnant* of God’s true church being supernaturally PROTECTED in “her place” (Revelation 12:14) under the symbolic protection of Almighty God depicted by “two wings of a great eagle!” (verse 14).

On the other hand, you see that “the dragon was wroth with the woman and went to *make war* with the REMNANT of her seed, which KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ...and it was given unto him to make war with the saints AND TO OVERCOME THEM...” (Revelation 12:17; 13:7). SOME of God’s faithful servants will be called upon to give a last testimony, and will be *martyred*. Others, perhaps those who are *not able* to withstand such persecution (God promises He will not lay any burden upon His people which they cannot bear) will be *protected*.

But the point is, under this terrible religious persecution and the *martyrdom* of some, God’s CHURCH will have *ceased functioning!*

The *tribulation*, heavenly signs and day of the Lord apparently occupy three and one-half years, or slightly longer.

Now, notice a *parallel* three and one-half year period! Turn to Revelation the eleventh chapter. Read of the ministry of the *two witnesses* who will “...prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth...” (Revela-

tion 11:3).

Like an end-time repetition of Moses and Aaron going repeatedly before Pharaoh and commanding, “LET MY PEOPLE GO” these two witnesses will no doubt appear frequently before the BEAST and the FALSE PROPHET, right in *Jerusalem*, and be demanding the *same thing*; demanding that these leaders HALT their vicious extermination of millions of Muslims, Asians of other religions, professing Christians, Jews, and truly converted members of God’s church! They will have, as did Moses and Aaron (except in *far greater power*, for Moses’ and Aaron’s power was limited to the land of *Egypt only*) “*power to shut heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will*” (Revelation 11:6).

Where is the church during this time? What is it doing? Some scattered, fragmented remnants of the true Church of God are here and there, scattered all over the world, under God’s spiritual protection depicted by “two wings of a great eagle” (Revelation 12:14; Exodus 19:4).

Notice! God supernaturally *protected* ancient Israel while they were yet in *Egypt!* He did not spirit them away on eagle’s wings; there were no aircraft to carry them anywhere, they could not even mount fast horses and run away. No, they remained in *Goshen*, right in the land of *Egypt* during the outpouring of ALL of the plagues which broke the economic back of *Egypt!*

But God *made a difference* between the Israelites and the Egyptians; the Israelites sacrificed that first *Passover*, and by the symbolic spreading of the blood of the lamb on the lintels and doorposts of their homes, they avoided the visit of the death angel which slew the firstborn in every Egyptian home. God’s protection is symbolically called “eagle’s wings.”

The symbolism of this is *obvious!* Study Psalm 91! (If you have not read my exhaustive article on the subject of a “place of safety,” write for a back copy of *The International News.*)

Christians have the blood of the lamb sprinkled on their *hearts*, speaking metaphorically. Almighty God is able to protect them ANYWHERE, just as He was able to protect the ancient Israelites while they were IN EGYPT; as He was able to protect Daniel IN the lion’s den, and as He was able to protect Jeremiah, Elijah, and others in various occasions through history.

Some of God’s true children will be MARTYRED! Make no mistake! God will not call upon the *weak* for such a fate!

Who are the *chief* among these future martyrs? Read it! “And when they [the *two witnesses!*] shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit [the abyss] shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

“And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

“And they of the peoples and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies [satellite television?] three

is speaking of the same time!

In each case, you will notice that immediately *after* this great, troublous time to come primarily upon God's people *Israel*, the second coming of Christ occurs, and the *resurrection*! Daniel summarizes the *two* great resurrections which are actually one thousand years apart (Revelation 20:5), and Jeremiah refers to *King David* being resurrected to become Israel's king in the millennium!

Now refer back to our scriptures in Matthew 24:29 and Joel 2:31!

Notice the inescapable time setting!

WHEN do the heavenly signs occur? Joel tells us they occur BEFORE the great and terrible day of the Lord. Jesus Christ tells us they occur AFTER the tribulation!

With that carefully in mind, turn again to the scriptures printed at the beginning of this article, or, in your own Bible, to Revelation the seventh chapter.

Now, WHEN are the 144,000 *sealed* by the Spirit of God? WHEN are they given God's protection, and depicted as individuals who have *repented* and who are to receive salvation?

John says, "And AFTER THESE THINGS" he sees the four angels (a symbol of God's *plagues* about to fall *during the day of the Lord*) and God HALTS all human activity *by the heavenly signs*, so that no plagues are to fall "UNTIL we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads...the number of them...an hundred and forty and four thousand!" (Revelation 7:3, 4).

The *fifth seal* (Revelation 6:9) is the *religious martyrdom phase* of THE GREAT TRIBULATION!

Notice it is AFTER this horrifying event has *already commenced* that God HALTS all human activity until he *seals* the one hundred and forty-four thousand!

Of course!

Did not Jesus Christ say except God would CUT SHORT those days, *no flesh would be saved alive?* (Matthew 24:21, 22).

The very PURPOSE for the heavenly signs (Revelation 6:12-17) is to HALT any further warfare; any further nuclear blasts or attacks, any further spiritual *martyrdom*, UNTIL God is able to preserve and protect this group of one hundred and forty-four thousand, and *another great group*, too numerous to *count!* (Revelation 7:9).

WHEN?

AFTER the Great Tribulation (Joel 2:31, Matthew 24:29), and as a *direct result* of the heavenly signs!

Where is the Church?

But what of the true *church* of God? The *church*, God's "assembly" of "called-out ones" for the purpose of accomplishing His *work* have been given the *great commission* from Jesus Christ to WARN the *whole world* of the coming GREAT TRIBULATION!

For a greater understanding of the role of the church, write immediately for your free copy of my booklet, *Where is the True Church?*

The church is commissioned to preach the GOSPEL—the *good news* of the imminent second-coming of Christ, together with the *bad news* of the ominous *Great Tribulation!*

As such, the message of the church is both a witness and a *warning!*

Primarily, it is a warning of the impending GREAT TRIBULATION!

For decades, God's church has understood the *time setting* of the great events seen in vision in Revelation.

Briefly, they are as follows:

The *church* is busily engaged in preaching the witness and the warning of the tribulation and God's intervention culminating in the *second coming of Christ* to a heedless, God-rejecting world.

A "king of the south" is to emerge who will "push at" a "king of the north" (a *United States of Europe*, comprised of ten nations in central Europe) in some political-economic fashion, which triggers an outbreak of *war* in the Middle East! (Read Daniel 11:40 to the end of the chapter.)

Just prior to this, or about the same time, the *literal fulfillment* of the first seal of Revelation 6 (refer back to Bullinger's chart) takes place! It is also, quite likely, the *literal fulfillment* of II Thessalonians, the second chapter, which tells us that the great FALSE PROPHET of Bible prophecy will set himself up in the "temple of God," claiming to be VERY GOD!

For many decades, God's church has believed this means the POPE at Rome will actually move his position of authority to *Jerusalem!*

First, then, you have the efforts of an heretofore unidentified "king of the south" (is he Kadafi, Khomeini, the king of Saudi Arabia, or a leader of another nation?) who triggers the wrath of the emerging United States of Europe, causing a lightning-like armed attack into the Middle East on the part of a European "multi-national force."

As a part of this scenario, it becomes obvious *Jerusalem*, the city of *most importance* to the three great "monotheistic religions" of the world; (Christianity, Islam and Judaism), could be *destroyed*. Probably, since the current Pope has already been calling for a *corpus separatum* (an open city, or international city) for Jerusalem, he will lend his good offices to the preservation of the "holy places" of that *most important city!*

Otherwise, it might well be *destroyed* in the war to strike the Middle East, as described in Daniel 11:40, ff.

This is the match which will ignite WORLD WAR III.

At this time, the *organized* preaching of the gospel of the kingdom of God by the *church* is over!

God says, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord Eternal, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Eternal.

"And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Eternal, and shall not find it" (Amos 8:11-12).

Jesus said, "I must work the works of Him that sent me—

days and an half and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

“And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelled on the earth.

“And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them” (Revelation 11:7-11).

Yes, these powerful prophets who are greatly HONORED to occupy the final, end-time responsibility of preaching the FINAL LAST WITNESS face to face before the beast and false prophet will be *martyred*!

It is perhaps at exactly the moment of their *resurrection* (probably NOT at the instant of Christ’s second coming, but slightly *before*, for they are described as receiving “the spirit of life from God” and being resurrected to *physical life*, and not necessarily taking part *at that time* in the first resurrection) that the great HEAVENLY SIGNS occur, *halting* all human activity, *stopping* the terrible war that has now spread around the globe, and halting the vicious *martyrdom* of saints which is under way.

It is NOW, long *after* all of the organized work of the *church* is over; at the *end* of the testimony of the two witnesses; as a *direct result of the great heavenly signs* that the 144,000 are *sealed*!

Now, turn to the beginning of this article and read the entire passage concerning the 144,000 once again.

WHO are they? The Bible tells you, *plainly*! They are exactly twelve thousand human beings (probably male *and* female!) from *each* of the twelve tribes of Israel save Dan! Joseph, true to the prophecy, is given a *double portion*! Manasseh is mentioned, and “Joseph” (verse 8) is mentioned. Joseph consisted of *both* Ephraim and Manasseh, so “Joseph” would mean *Ephraim*, while *Manasseh* (probably the United States of America) is identified specifically.

Notice that *they*, together with the vast, innumerable multitude of ALL NATIONS (which may include *other Israelites, not specifically numbered among the 144,000*) are said to have “*come out of the GREAT TRIBULATION!*” (Revelation 7:14).

Very likely, these huge multitudes of people are those who are NOT heeding the witness and warning message of God’s church now!

Most likely, while the seeds of thought have been deeply imbedded within their subconscious, they have, true to Jesus’ prophecy that it would be just “like the days of Noah” in the time prior to His coming, been going about their daily concerns and pursuits, oblivious to the *real significance* of the times in which they live!

It takes the SHOCK of NUCLEAR WAR; of the vicious bloodletting of the most heinous *martyrdom of saints* in ALL HISTORY, coupled together with great signs from GOD HIMSELF to SHOCK these lethargic ones out of their stupor, and cause them to fall to their knees, begging God for

REPENTANCE and *forgiveness* from their sins, resulting in their being “sealed” with God’s Holy Spirit, and *protected* from the further plagues yet to fall, and the consequences of the day of the Lord!

Are They The Church?

Now, in rehearsing the *time sequence* of events, you can see how *ludicrous* it truly is for some to claim that the 144,000 are the *church*!

In one sense, technically, at the very *instant* they are given God’s Holy Spirit, they then BECOME members of God’s true church! *However*, it is quite obvious they represent a *later harvest of the earth* as a part of the *fruit born* from God’s work, and are NOT the body of the *church* that was actively preaching the gospel as a witness and a warning just prior to the beginning of the ministry of the two witnesses!

Those who make the claim that the 144,000 are the *church* do so in violation to the scriptures!

In the first place, think how *ludicrous* it would be for any church which claims the *entire church* is in a secret PLACE OF SAFETY in the *Jordanian desert* ALL DURING THE GREAT TRIBULATION, and yet to turn around and claim the 144,000 *is the church*!

If one assumes he understands the national identity of each of the tribes (some believe, for example, that Benjamin is Norway, Dan is both Ireland and Denmark, Issachar is Finland, France is Reuben, and so on) then one must be able to *prove* that, out of the 144,000 adult, mature *baptized members* (no, *children are not mentioned* as being “sealed in their foreheads”) there are present 12,000 Dutch, 12,000 Finns, 12,000 Norwegians, 12,000 Swedes, 12,000 British, 12,000 French, 12,000 Americans, and, note this, *THIRTY-SIX THOUSAND JEWS*!

Why thirty-six thousand? Neither Simeon nor Levi had any inheritance in the land! There has been *no attempt to identify any particular tribal areas or modern nations pertaining to Simeon and Levi, even by those who espouse the doctrine of PETRA as a place of safety!*

It has been known for years that most of those to whom we refer as “Jews” are in fact, from the tribe of *Levi*! Names such as Cohen, Kahn, Kuhn, (“Cohen” in Hebrew means “priest”); names such as Leibowitz, Spellman, Pearlman, Goldman, Weinstein, etc., etc., together with Levy, Levi, Levine, Levitt, and other derivations are probably *Levite*, if not from *Simeon*, or in some cases from *Judah*.

Any church which makes the claim IT, that church represents the 144,000 had better be able to number among its baptized, adult members thirty-six thousand from the “house of Judah”!

Also, any church which claims to be the 144,000 is arrogantly *excluding* its entire international membership, and all its minorities!

Obviously, they would be saying to *their own members* “If you are black YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER OF THIS CHURCH! They would be saying the same thing to Filipinos, Laotians, Indians, Indonesians, Fijians and Hawaiians, Germans, Poles, Czechs, Ukrainians, Russians, Africans—ALL

GENTILES!

Remember, the 144,000 are PHYSICAL ISRAELITES! Any church which is *global* in nature; which has a *worldwide* membership including members of *many races* would appear absolutely RIDICULOUS to claim they are the 144,000! And, while God may give them His protection—are *children* and unbaptized, unconverted relatives *members of God's spiritual church*? Nonsense!

No, any church which numbers among its members Mexicans, Portuguese, Spanish, Arabs, Greeks, Italians—*members of any gentile race*—CANNOT be the 144,000, for the 144,000 are physical Israelites!

No, it is *obvious*, both from its setting in the chronological sequence of events, *from the context*, and from a careful study of the place and role of the church *during the tribulation* that the 144,000 CANNOT BE the church!

Finally, then, who are the 144,000?

Why, they are exactly what the Bible SAYS THEY ARE! They are twelve thousand adult, mature, thinking human beings from each one of the specific tribes of *Israel* mentioned! They have been *shocked* into repentance and into calling out to God for His forgiveness and protection by the events of the tribulation and the heavenly signs! They, together with the great innumerable multitude, will represent a GREAT HARVEST of human beings which are, in a direct sense, the final “fall-out” from the great WORK being done by God's church today!

These 144,000, together with the great countless multitude seen by John in vision, will be like dazed, wounded and frightened *refugees*. Each will have his own personal, private story to tell. Each individual, with his loved ones and family, will no doubt have experienced some of the most mind—boggling *horrors* imaginable!

They will have lived through the terrible GREAT TRIBULATION! The Great Tribulation will prove to be the catalyst,

coupled with the heavenly signs, which *brings about* their conversion!

WHY does God choose exactly twelve thousand from each tribe?

Perhaps there is information to be gleaned from the fact that Almighty God began His true church with *twelve equal apostles*. The holy city has *twelve gates*. (Which one is the “chief” gate?) There are twelve tribes. David is depicted as the coming KING over all of the tribes of Israel, and Jesus promised His disciples (apostles), including Matthias who replaced Judas Iscariot, that they would “sit on twelve thrones” with Him, *judging* the tribes of Israel!

Twelve is God's perfect governmental number; it is also a number which connotes “*organized beginnings*”!

No doubt, these twelve thousand from each of the tribes will be that group of individuals *under* each one of the twelve apostles responsible for helping to set up the *government of God* on this earth, in the very beginning of the millennium!

Even as Jesus said, “The last shall be FIRST,” believe it or not, there are many of those, your kinsmen and brethren, perhaps family and relatives in this world *right now*, who are not heeding the warning message; not interested, not concerned, *not converted*!

But it is some of THEM who will come to the shocking awareness of the existence of their God; who will come to that point of revulsion and abhorrence of their own personal sins and deep *repentance* at the *last moment* of this age who will truly be the FIRST in God's sight, while, shamefully, there will be a number of “tired old Christians” who have grown *weary* of well doing, who may just *miss out* on salvation because they did not remain faithful; were *not* truly *watching* and *praying*; were not involved in doing the WORK of Almighty God “while it is yet day!”

And that is the TRUTH from your Bible about the 144,000!