

The 144,000 (Revelation 7)

Revelation 7:4 tells us that 144,000 Jews will evangelize by preaching the Gospel during the Tribulation period, and bring tremendous numbers to salvation. Twelve thousand will come from each of the twelve tribes of Israel, and all of them will be unmarried male virgins. At first this seems to be a very strange aspect of what is predicted for the post-Rapture world. One has to wonder as to how this is to come about, and why.

If we are living in the end portion of the end times, as I and many others believe that we are, might there already be some evidence of their coming into existence, or how this is likely to happen? After all, the Jews are back in their land, as a nation, something considered to be impossible until it happened in May 14, 1948, even though this event occurred just as was predicted by Daniel over 2500 years ago! Hundreds of Jews from the priestly tribe of Levi are being trained to serve in what is prophesized to be the end time's third temple, and all of the various utensils and vessels required for temple worship have already been made. Also there is growing evidence that the required temple location is such that it could be constructed now and not conflict with the Mosque that occupies a part of the site on the temple mount. We have also read that a jar of the sacred anointing oil, essential for compliance with the prescribed temple worship has been miraculously found after having been buried perhaps for 2000 years. The trees from which this oil was derived no longer exist, so it is indeed a miracle. That God set it aside for this purpose, is to many, compelling evidence of His plan for the completion of this 3rd temple. We understand also that the search for the unblemished red heifer is continuing, and it may have been found. This too is necessary because its ashes are essential as an element associated with cleansing waters.

Given all of this serious and costly effort going on regarding the end times third temple, might we also expect to find some evidence regarding what God is doing in preparation for the providing the 144,000? Unless God intends to simply miraculously create them, He has to, at some point "grow" such an assembly of Jewish men and ready them for this

mission. If we are indeed nearing the end of these end times, as all evidence seems to indicate, then perhaps some clue as to how He will do it may already be in evidence. I believe such evidence is at hand! Isn't that exciting!!! Today's Israel, is about 80% secular, consisting of Jewish people who barely, if at all, recognize or adhere to Old Testament laws and beliefs. Most of the other 20% appear to be Jews who adhere in various ways and degrees to the Old Testament beliefs and rituals

What is so exciting is that there is a category of Jews who appear to be Ultra-Orthodox. They are called "Horedi" (Azo) which in Hebrew means, "one who trembles in awe of God." They presently number about 1.3 million in the world with 800,000 of them residing in Israel. They dress in black suits and always wear a black hat. Apparently in Israel, they vote as a single unit and therefore have considerable political power. It is said that it is nearly impossible to get a ruling majority without their vote. The price for their vote has been to provide them with several "perks." For instance, they get a stipend from the government if they don't work and are exempt from the military. It's estimated that over half of them do not work, and so many live below the poverty level. They spend their entire lives studying the Old Testament, ancient Jewish commentaries, and other Jewish texts. They are very rigorous in their attempt at trying to keeping the 10 Commandments as well as all 613 Jewish laws. How serious and meticulous they are in these matters is typified by the fact that prior to Shabbat, they tear off toilet paper from the roll and leave a pile next to the toilet because the act of tearing the paper is considered work.

In spite of the fact that "Horedi" wives shave their heads so as not be attractive to their husbands, their rate of propagation is three times that of the general population. This doesn't go well with the general population because they also get all the benefits of the hospitals and schools, but pay no taxes to support them, if they don't work.

The young men and women do not date in the conventional sense of the word. They meet in public places, and may talk often for long periods, but never approach any romantic expression such as a touch or a kiss. Apparently, their decisions to marry are

arrived through what these long conversations reveal about one another. It is also understood that many of their marriages are pre-arranged by their parents.

Now it gets interesting, and to the point. Presently there are about 150,000 unmarried and therefore virgin Horedi between the ages of 18 and 35. Could this be the pool from which the 144,000 might be drawn? Can you see the incredible genius of God as He sets up the various elements of this incredible end time plan? Haven't we who have studied Revelation wondered how God could suddenly distribute 144,000 virgin Jewish men to evangelize the post rapture world? Do they today know their respective tribes? Apparently they do. God will make His selection from what seems to be a large and growing pool of eligible men. But you say they are not believers which they must be in order to do what will be expected of them. Notice that their full time vocation is studying the Bible. They probably each know the Old Testament more completely than anyone else. Remember, the Pharisees were the most biblically learned and dedicated students of the Bible when Jesus was here in the flesh. It is likely that quite a few of them such as Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus came to the faith in those early years.

While it may seem to be a nearly impossible task today, to bring large numbers of Jews to believe in Jesus, it is happening. The evidence for Jesus is all there for knowing the truth about Him, because it presented quite explicitly in the Old Testament. It only remains to put it all together. The compelling power and accuracy of the prophecies fulfilled about and by Jesus. Then there is the realization that the promise of two Messiahs is really the coming twice of one Messiah, waiting to be released into their minds and hearts. How tough a job will that be for God to put this in their hearts when He is ready to recruit them into service? Here we might apply an analogy to be taken from Genesis 1:26, 27 where God made man in His own likeness, and then created man in His image. In making man, God's first effort was the construction of the body and all of its physical earth-derived components. Then He created him by providing the Spiritually derived soul / spirit, and imparting eternal life in him. When we are saved, we speak of being "born again." In effect, we become newly created creatures. That created image of God that was in the first man, was effectually destroyed by sin. It is recreated through the belief and faith in

the blood of Christ. These Haredi men have all been prequalified in extensive biblical knowledge and chastity as having been made in God's likeness, and need only that creative spark of rebirth of faith in Jesus to become among the 144,000.

Notice that presently while there are 800,000 in Israel, another 500,000 of the 1.3 million live in other parts of the world. Their higher than average reproductive rate indicates that this pool of candidates is growing and will surely be adequate for God's purposes whenever and wherever He chooses to deploy the 144,000. Scripture indicates that this deployment will occur at the beginning of the 70th week of Daniel (Daniel 9:27). This will be after the Rapture, but not likely too many days or months later. I believe that the current "crop" of Haredic, or their many descendants, provide the pool from which God will choose the 144,000.

These people, the Haredi, have been around for a long time, and I remember seeing some of them at the "wailing wall" in Jerusalem. However, until now I had no idea that these are to be this essential part of His plan. How wonderfully God has orchestrated His eternal program, and how incredible it is to behold for those "with eyes to see and ears to hear". He told us several times in Scripture that He would reveal these things, such as in Amos 3:7 where He speaks through Amos that, "*Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but revealeth his secret unto his servants and prophets.*" If we are born-again, we are His servants, and so it is uniquely given us to know these things, if we are willing to search them out in single-minded faith and obedience.

With all of this evidence extensive progress taking place regarding prerequisites for His second-coming so clear and specific revealed how can any of us believe anything other than that the Rapture will be quite soon. Of course, no one knows when the Rapture will come, or what signs if any which will foretell it. However, we do know that it precedes the second coming of Jesus to the earth, and we know many of other things that must precede this second coming. What have been mentioned above are some of those things, and they are things that never existed prior to the current generation. With that in mind,

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we should conduct our lives as if the Rapture will occur at any moment, for indeed the evidence strongly suggests that it is near at hand.