

# THE 144,000 JEWISH EVANGELS

## PART II

### A FIRST-FRUIT OF THE NATION DURING THE TRIBULATION

By Arlen L. Chirwood

“And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads.

And I heard a voice from heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts [‘four living creatures’], and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits [‘a first-fruit’] unto God and to the Lamb.

And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” (Rev. 14:1-7).

The individuals who will proclaim the gospel of the kingdom to the ends of the earth during the Tribulation, spoken of by Christ in Matt. 24:14 and Mark 13:10, are revealed in the Book of Revelation to be 144,000 Jews, 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel (Rev. 7:1-8; 14:1-5). And, in order to provide additional information, these Jewish evangelists are presented after another fashion in chapters eleven and twelve of this book — as “a man child” at the time Israel brings the 144,000 forth (gives birth [12:2, 4, 5]), and as “the remnant of her [Israel’s] seed” following the nation bringing the 144,000 forth (11:13; 12:17).

(Ref. Part I for more information on the *man-child* and the *remnant* in Rev. chs. 11, 12, along with how these are descriptive references to the 144,000 in chs. 7, 14.)

Thus, information in each of these four chapters (chs. 7, 11, 12, 14) presents different things about the 144,000.

### Leading into Chapter Fourteen

*Chapter seven* presents the sealing of the 144,000 (vv. 1-8), along with the results of their ministry — “a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations...” (vv. 9-17).

*Chapter eleven* drops back behind chapter seven in time and presents the apparent means by which the 144,000 will hear the message and be saved — through the ministry of the two witnesses (vv. 3, 13).

*Chapter twelve* continues from chapter eleven, providing additional information about the 144,000. This chapter presents their being brought forth as the man-child after all 144,000 have been saved, the timing surrounding their being saved (progressively during the first half of the Tribulation, with the complete number [all 144,000] brought forth, saved, by the middle of the Tribulation), and that which will occur once the 144,000 have been brought forth (vv. 1-17).

(Note that the 144,000 couldn’t be saved near the end of the dispensation in which God deals with the Church, prior to the Tribulation. If saved during the present dispensation, they would be part of the *one new man* “in Christ” and would be removed at the time of the rapture, preceding the Tribulation. Thus, they will have to be saved following the removal of Christians from the earth.)

*Chapter fourteen* then presents additional commentary concerning the 144,000 for that previously revealed in chapters seven, eleven, and twelve (vv. 1-7).

When information in all four of these chapters is studied together, allowing Scripture to interpret itself, a developing word picture can be seen concerning the place which these Jewish evangelists will occupy in events throughout the entire seven years of the Tribulation.

As previously seen, the 144,000, referred to in chapter twelve as “a man child” and “the remnant” (vv. 5, 17), are presented in this chapter as being brought forth in a progressive manner throughout the first three and one-half years of the Tribulation. The matter is presented as the development and subsequent birth of a child, with “Israel” seen as *the mother* and “the 144,000” seen as *the child* (vv. 2, 4, 5).

The gestation period for child-birth in the human realm is nine months, but for the man-child it will be three and one-half years. Development of the child in the mother’s womb (Israel’s womb), as it were, will progressively occur over a three and one-half-year period as individuals are saved and added to the number throughout this time. Then, near the middle of the Tribulation when the number is complete, Israel will give birth to *the man-child, the 144,000* (Rev. 12:2, 4, 5; cf. Matt. 24:8; Mark 13:8).

The 144,000 are referred in Rev. 11:13 as “the remnant” in connection with events occurring immediately following the death, resurrection, and ascension of the two witnesses (vv. 7-13). And this “remnant” is seen again in the next chapter (12:17), identifying *the man-child* seen earlier in the chapter (v. 5).

(The word “remnant” in both Rev. 11:13 and 12:17 is a translation of the Greek word *loipos*, which means “remaining ones.” The word *loipos* could not refer to the Jewish people in the land as a whole. The nation will exist in *unbelief* at this time, and those remaining, the remnant, though afraid like the rest of the Jewish people, will give “glory to the God of heaven.” And giving “glory to the God of heaven” would be completely out of place for all of the unbelieving Jewish people still in the land.

The only Jewish people in the land at this time, to whom this could possibly be referring, would be those seen in Rev. 12:17 — “the remnant of her seed [Israel’s seed], which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” And this “remnant” in Rev. 12:17, referred to as *Israel’s seed*, is the identification which the chapter provides

for *Israel's seed* back in v. 5, the “man child” [easily identified as the 144,000 in chs. 7, 14, for they will be the ones having *the testimony of Jesus Christ* and will be the only ones on earth at this time who could fit the description of *the man-child, the remnant*, in ch. 12].)

Following the order of events occurring in the middle of the Tribulation, the Beast (who will, at this time, be the world ruler, the crowned seventh head) will slay the two witnesses (11:7). The two witnesses' bodies will then lie unburied in the streets of Jerusalem for three and one-half days, while the world rejoices.

And this rejoicing may very well include many of the unbelieving Jewish people in the land, *those guilty of the blood of the prophets, along with others sent unto them, including God's Son* (Matt. 21:33-39; 23:37; Luke 13:33, 34).

Then, after three and one-half days, a day for each year of their ministry, the two witnesses will be raised from the dead and ascend to heaven.

And it will evidently be at the time of and in connection with the death and/or resurrection of these two witnesses that the Beast breaks his covenant with the Jewish people and enters into the Temple, declaring himself to be God (Dan. 11:31; Matt. 24:15; II Thess. 2:3, 4). At this time he will show his true colors, turn against the Jewish people, and seek to destroy them from off the face of the earth.

The first part of Rev. 11:13 (describing events occurring immediately following the ascension of the two witnesses), in the light of related Scripture, apparently has to do with the destruction of Jerusalem and the scattering of the Jewish people (events which occur at this time). Then attention is called to “the remnant” — individuals who are afraid but still place first things first and give “glory to the God of heaven.”

Things will happen so fast at this time that the Jewish people in Jerusalem and Judaea are told to run for their lives, without even taking time to enter into their homes to take necessities with them. A segment of the Jewish people will escape to a specially prepared place in the wilderness or in the mountainous terrain, apparently in Moab (Isa. 16:4). And the remainder will either be slain, sold as slaves to the Gentiles, or driven out among the nations of the earth (Joel 3:6, 7; Matt. 24:16-21; Luke 21:20-24; Rev. 12:6, 14).

Jerusalem and the Temple will be destroyed at this time, with the nation of Israel in the Middle East, as the world knows it today, ceasing to exist (*cf.* Dan. 9:26; Luke 21:22-24; Rev. 11:2). And the Jewish people will not again have a national identity in this respect until Christ returns, removes the Jewish people from the nations, and reestablishes them back in the land Himself (Ezek. 37:21-28; 39:25-29; Matt. 24:30, 31).

The present nation of Israel in the Middle East — destined to be uprooted, with the Jews comprising this nation being driven back out among the Gentile nations — *includes only a part of world Jewry. This nation was brought into existence through man's efforts in a Zionist movement, and it is a restoration of the Jewish people in unbelief, not belief.*

But when Christ returns, the restoration of the Jewish people back to the land will occur *through Divine activity. Christ will send His angels out to regather all of the Jews from the nations of the earth* (Matt. 24:31), *and He will then restore them to the land in belief.*

The latter, not the former, is that prophesied in Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets concerning Israel's national restoration.

(For additional information concerning the preceding, refer to the author's two pamphlets titled, “Time of Israel's Restoration.”)

### **The 144,000, Removed from and Returned to the Earth**

Revelation chapter fourteen provides the necessary information to explain things surrounding the removal of the man-child from the earth in Rev. 12:5. The man-child, the 144,000, is seen in Rev. 14:1 in Christ's presence on Mt. Zion in heaven. And further down in the chapter the 144,000 are said to have been “redeemed from the earth” (v. 3), and “redeemed from among men” (v. 4). Then they are referred to as “the firstfruits [*lit.*, ‘a first-fruit’ (seen as a corporate group)] unto God and to the Lamb” (v. 4b).

The 144,000 will comprise *a first-fruit of the nation*. During the last half of the Tribulation they, as a first-fruit of the nation, sent back to the earth (*ref.* Part III of this series), will fulfill one of God's purposes for calling the nation into existence. They will be God's witnesses to the ends of the earth during this time (I Kings 8:54-61; Isa. 43:8, 9).

Then, following the Tribulation, God will deal

with *the main harvest — the nation as a whole, the nation which brought forth the 144,000*. Following the Tribulation, the entire nation will be brought forth (saved through the personal appearance of their Messiah to them). The entire nation will be brought forth “in one day” (Isa. 66:8). And, as a first-fruit of the nation will have carried God's message worldwide to the Gentile nations during the last half of the Tribulation, the entire Jewish nation will carry God's message worldwide to the Gentile nations during the Millennium.

(Israel will bring forth *a first-fruit of the nation, the 144,000*. But how will the entire nation be brought forth?)

In Isa. 66:7, 8 Israel is seen *in travail* relative to her own bringing forth. And Israel being brought forth is in connection with “the land [the land of Israel]” also being brought forth [v. 8, NASB]. Then, this concept of “the land” being brought forth at this time is seen in a larger sense in Rom. 8:19-22 as *the entire material creation groaning and travailing together in pain, awaiting deliverance*.

In Isaiah, the deliverance of Israel and her land is seen in connection with *the nation bringing herself forth*:

“As soon as Zion travailed [contextually, a reference to the nation], she also brought forth her sons” [Isa. 66:8b, NASB].

And the reference to “sons” being brought forth is also seen in the *travailing and deliverance* in Romans chapter eight. The time when the creation will be *delivered from the present groaning and travailing together in pain* is the time of “the manifestation of the sons of God” [v. 19]. This chapter in Romans deals more specifically with the adoption of Christians as firstborn sons and their being manifested as such. Israel though has already been adopted and is presently God's firstborn son [*cf.* Ex. 4:22, 23], though an unbelieving son. And Israel must be brought forth as well [actually first and foremost].

The creation will be delivered from its present groaning and travailing in pain only when the complete contingent of the Sons of God [Christ, Israel, and the Church following the adoption] have been manifested for all to see.)

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