



Chosen: to Finish the Task

144,000 Study



Lesson One:



**144,000
and the
Great Multitude**

Coming for His Bride



John, the revelator, noted in beautiful imagery:

“Lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads [they have become citizens of God’s kingdom (cf. Rev. 3:12)]. “And they sung as it were a new song before the throne.... These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men ... the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.... they are “without fault before the throne of God.” (Rev. 14:1, 3-5)



The 144,000 not only become part of God's eternal family, we shall later see that they will be translated without seeing death, just like Enoch and Elijah!



They prepared their hearts, joined God's end-time forces, globally witnessed for Jesus Christ and patiently waited! How to be among this 144,000 group will be our challenging study!

For most of the Christian world, *waiting* for Christ's Second Advent has become a 2000-year disappointment! Enthusiasm is waning!

Skeptics have proliferated and claims a growing number of "believers." (II Peter 3:3-4) Peter called them "scoffers" and warned that they really harbored sin. To them, Christ will come as a thief! (II Peter 3:10) They will discover that the "*time of His visitation*" will arrive without being ready! Unknowingly to them, that "wait" is in prophecy!



The Bible calls that “wait” the “*Tarrying Time*.” A “clock” is temporarily on *hold*. But it has an end! Here are two examples:

“The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.” (Hab. 2:3)

“... receive the promise... For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will then not tarry.” (Heb. 10:36-37)

Timing prophecies tell us when that “wait” is about to end! They are also filled with warning events, signaling to God’s people, “It is time to be fully prepared!”



That is the urgent message and warning to those who will be part of the 144,000. Those signals have started!



“The end is near. This is [what] Jesus would have us keep ever before us – the shortness of time.” (*Last Day Events*, p. 42)

To those patient, waiting saints, the apostle Peter advised:

“Seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”

(II Pet. 3:14) That’s “preparation advice!”

There will be a “remnant” of people, the 144,000, who distinctly know that:

“Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” (II Cor. 6:2)

That’s “don’t procrastinate” advice!

At this solemn hour, God is asking:

“Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” (Isa. 6:8)

He is looking for individuals who accept the purification experience that Isaiah had that led him to accept heaven’s invitation:

“And he laid the coals upon my mouth, and said, ... thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Then said I, Here am I; send me.”
(Isa. 8:7-8)



There will be tens of thousands willing to accept that call – willing to go through any “process” to purify their souls and be ready.

And – that brings us to a very important question: “What does the Bible really say about those people who will fulfill God’s last mandate?”



They must be very special!

- They are called “saints” (*hagion*), they’re holy people. (Rev. 14:12)
- They are called “witnesses” (*martysin*); they represent truth/heaven. (Rev. 11:3)

The Bible describes those “saints” in many ways. In prophecy, God’s people are often depicted as beginning as “two groups.” That “prophetic two” finally becomes “one” at the very end of time – together, they are called “Christ’s bride!” That’s an incredible story with which we want to begin this series.

The template for this “two becoming one,” originally came from the Garden of Eden.



Adam and Eve – a pair –
became “one.” (Gen. 2:23-24)



At the end of time, Christ (the bridegroom)
and His church (the bride) become “one.”



Then follows the
*“marriage supper of
the Lamb.”* (Rev. 19:9)

In apocalyptic prophecy, that “two” is also illustrated first as a smaller, then a larger group. They then become “one,” e.g.:



God called Moses: “Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.” (Ex. 3:10)

Moses didn’t want that responsibility: “*Who am I?*” he asked God. (Ex. 3:11)

Moses had many excuses, right there in the presence of God. The Bible says He actually got angry with Moses. (Ex. 4:14) He was resisting heaven's call to lead his people out of bondage. Moses finally did agree!

God then gave Moses wonderful promises that we can also claim!



“Certainly I will be with thee; ... Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.” (Ex 3:12; 4:12)

Would you like God to be your teacher?

“The divine command given to Moses found him self-distrustful, slow of speech, and timid. He was overwhelmed with a sense of his incapacity to be a mouthpiece for God to Israel. But having once accepted the work, he entered upon it with his whole heart, putting all his trust in the Lord. The greatness of his mission called into exercise the best powers of his mind. God blessed his ready obedience, and he became eloquent, hopeful, self-possessed, and well fitted for the greatest work ever given to man.”

(Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 255)

This is an example of what God does to strengthen the character of those who trust Him fully and give themselves unreservedly to His commands.”

“A man will gain power and efficiency as he accepts the responsibilities that God places upon him, and with his whole soul seeks to qualify himself to bear them aright. However humble his position or limited his ability, that man will attain true greatness who, trusting to divine strength,



seeks to perform his work with fidelity. Had Moses relied upon his own strength and wisdom, and eagerly accepted the great charge, he would have evinced his entire unfitness for such a work. The fact that a man feels his weakness is at least some evidence that he realizes the magnitude of the work appointed him, and that he will make God his counselor and his strength.”

(Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 255)

Amazing!!!

God permitted Aaron, Moses' elder brother, to initially be his spokesman, because he had become inefficient in the Egyptian language.

Here, now, is this Pattern of Two:

1. Messengers (small group – two men) **Moses and Aaron**. Then:

2. The called (great multitude – 2-3 million) – **the Hebrew people with their followers**.



Once the Israelites, as a single body, entered Canaan, they were to be a small group to reach the world – a large group.



Again, in sequence:

The Pattern of Two

1. Messenger (2–3 million people) –
The Israelites
2. The called (great multitude –
Peoples of the world)

All to be God's People.

“Through the Jewish nation it was God’s purpose to impart rich blessings to all peoples. Through Israel the way was to be prepared for the diffusion of His light to the whole world. The nations of the world, through following corrupt practices, had lost the knowledge of God. Yet in His mercy God did not blot them out of existence. He purposed to give them opportunity for becoming acquainted with Him through His church. He designed that the principles revealed through His people should be the means of restoring the moral image of God in man.”

(Christ Object Lessons, p. 286)



In 539 B.C. the prophet Daniel began reviewing the book of Jeremiah. (Dan. 9:1) He knew that the 70-year Babylonian captivity of the Jews was about to end.

(prophecy of Jer. 25:11; 29:10)

- The first captives had been taken in 605 B.C. (Daniel had been in that group.)
- Solomon's Temple was destroyed in the final, third attack in 586 B.C.

The release of those captives, by Jeremiah's prophecy, must then occur in 536 B.C.

In a wonderful fulfillment,
King Cyrus, leader of the
Medo-Persian Empire,
issued a decree for the
captives to be set free!



Year? 536 B.C.! Prophecy fulfilled!

*“Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The
LORD God of heaven hath given me all
the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath
charged me to build him an house at
Jerusalem, which is in Judah.”*



“Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.” (Ezra 1:2-3)

Sincerely, Cyrus the king of Persia.

Cyrus made a *royal decree* for prophecy to “come true”! He also gave a mass of wealth and supplies to accompany God’s people back to Jerusalem and to bring worship and honor to their God! (Ezra 5:13, 17; 6:3)

“Upon Zerubbabel (known also as Sheshbazzar), a descendant of King David, Cyrus placed the responsibility of acting as governor of the company returning to Judea; and with him was associated Joshua the high priest.”



(Prophets and Kings, pp. 259-260)

Note: The ten northern tribes had been taken captive and disappeared nearly 200 years before! Judah and Benjamin were all that remained in this returning group!

It was a “beginning again” for God’s people, just like it had previously been when leaving Egypt:



The Pattern of Two:

1. Messenger (small group – two men) – Zerubbabel and Joshua
2. The called (great multitude) (~ 50,000). Those Hebrew people who wanted to return (sadly, many stayed behind), became the nucleus for rebuilding their/God’s nation.

Those Jewish returnees were put on probation!
God gave, through Daniel, a 490-year window of
time to “prove” their loyalties! (Dan. 9:24-27)

But – they failed again!
Mercy then ended.



Jesus gave a “final curse”
to those people, shortly before the Cross!

*“Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God
shall be taken from you, and given to a nation
bringing forth the fruits thereof.... Behold, your
house is left unto you desolate.”* (Matt. 21:43; 23:38)

He would now have to begin again! Knowing fully about their failure, Jesus, early in His ministry, chose twelve disciples.



Just before He ascended to His Father, He commissioned them: *“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”*

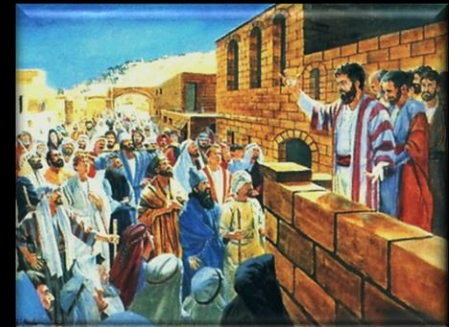


“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Matt. 28:19-20)

Once again!

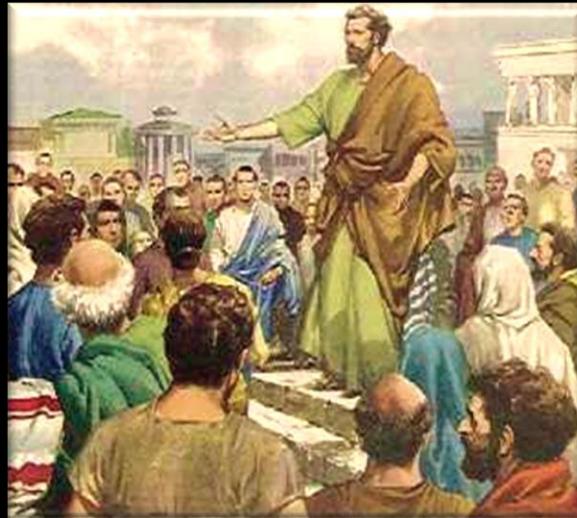
Pattern of Two:

1. Messengers (12 individuals) –
Now called the 12 Apostles
2. The called (great multitude) –
Converts from all “nations” –
from the uttermost parts of the earth.



What was their success?

“The gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof, I Paul, am made a minister.” (Col. 1:23)



“The Spirit came upon the waiting, praying disciples with a fullness that reached every heart. The Infinite One revealed Himself in power to His church. It was as if for ages this influence had been held in restraint, and now Heaven rejoiced in being able to pour out upon the church the riches of the Spirit's grace.... The sword of the Spirit, newly edged with power and bathed in the lightning's of heaven, cut its way through unbelief. Thousands were converted in a day.”

(Acts of the Apostles, p. 38)

The Pattern of Two, one representing a smaller “group” and the other a “larger” group, continues right up through the end of time.

This points out an important principle:

Though there will be the “*sheep*” and the “*goats*” (Matt. 25:32-33), the “*unjust*” and the “*righteous*” (Rev. 22:11) and the “*wheat*” and the “*tares*” (Matt. 13:30), that is not our apocalyptic focus in this study! This unique “pattern of two” refers to “two distinct groups of righteous people” who will be saved at the end of time as “one”!

What now follows is a review of God's amazing array of end-time prophecies depicting those two groups of saints!

Here are the divisions that will be portrayed:

144,000

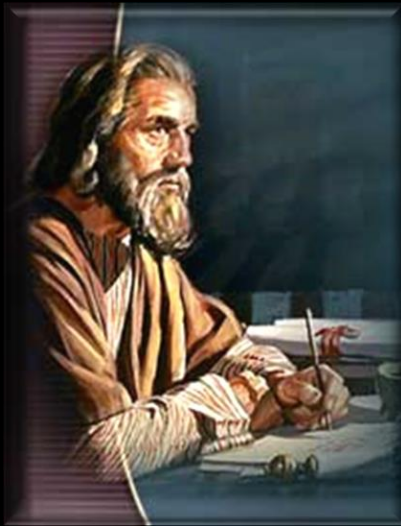
Formed first,
before the final
work begins

Great Multitude

Byproduct of the
144,000's witness
after the final work
has begun

The prophecies that are associated with the Second Coming of Jesus, *showing this dual imagery*, begin with Daniel.

In 540 B.C., Belshazzar was in his third year (of thirteen years) as co-regent of Babylon.



Daniel was apparently retired from being the prime minister of the Empire. It was then that God gave to him a very important end-time vision, recorded in Daniel 8:

This seer suddenly noticed that he was in the palace of Shushan, by the tiny Ulai River.

(Dan. 8:1-2)



Shushan had been approximately 260 miles east of Babylon. BUT – it was destroyed in 639 B.C. by the Assyrian king Assurbanipal.



Shushan and this palace were “not there” when Daniel got this vision!!! That helps us to understand that this message is going to be filled with special symbolism and types!

Though not part of this study series, Gabriel would later tell Daniel that this vision, called in Hebrew the *ha·hazon*, was for the “*time of the end*” at an “*appointed time.*”

(Daniel 8:17, 19) Later still, Daniel would even be told “how” and “when” it would unfold!

Daniel 8 and 10’s Symbols to understand

(brief resume):

Shushan – city of deliverance (Esther)

East – deliverance (breaking of new “day”)

Ulai River – people (Rev. 17:15) – small group

Tigris River – people (Dan. 10) – large group

Symbols continued:



Ram – Christ

“Rough” he-goat (introduced later) – Satan

Horns – peoples/nations/political groups
giving power to the animal they
are on (Dan. 7:24, Rev. 17:12)

Number of horns – distinct powers

Size of the horns – relative size of those
powers

This is also the Bible’s first direct prophecy
of the final conflict between Christ and Satan.

Our focus will be on the horns and the ivers.

“Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last.” (Dan. 8:3)

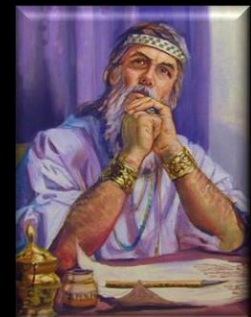
Notice: Two horns (two groups giving power to the Ram); two horn sizes (one group small, the other large); the growth sequence – the smaller one came on the scene first.

What two “groups” give special “power” and support to Christ at the “*time of the end*”? (referencing Dan. 8:17 and 19 of this vision)?

“Till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.... I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand.” (Rev. 7:3-4)



No sooner did John finish describing the 144,000, when he saw another group in vision!



“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.”



“What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? ... These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” (Rev. 7:9, 13-14)

Two “*horns*” give power to the “ram of God” in an end-time setting. Again, we see two groups:

Pattern of Two:

1. Messenger (small group – smaller horn) – 144,000 who will witness for Christ to the world (this horn comes up first)
2. The called (great multitude – too large to number – large horn) (comes up second) – Those that are translated, seen by John around the heavenly throne.

How do we know that the 144,000 came first?!

In the seven sequenced Seals (Rev. 4- 8:1), the first Seal is a “white horse,” representing the 144,000. It goes out “*conquering and to conquer.*”



The “*great multitude*” is illustrated by the “*black horse*” (Seal three) waiting for the call to “*come out*” out of darkness.



The 144,000 are seen as a holy, corporate body, initiating earth’s last work, before all other key “groups” come on the scene!

Fascinating is that unfolding story of Daniel's Ram (Jesus) and rough he-goat (Satan). The devil's rancor and malice against Christ crescendoed.

His last expression of hatred came through a *"little horn"* whose power *"became great."* (Dan. 8:9-10) It wars against God's *"holy people"* and opposes the *"Prince of princes."* (Dan. 8:24-25) It is the antichrist!!



Intriguingly, that "little horn" has a "host" (Dan. 8:12). It also is part of that Pattern of Two!

Already alluded to are the “rivers” that have “people” significance! We must delve deeper into those waters! As an orientation, is this familiar verse:

“The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” (Rev. 17:15)

When the word “seas” is used prophetically, it has an evil turmoil connotation. (Isa. 57:20-21)

Most expositors associate the “waters” in a river to Revelation 17:15 above.

A significant “*river*” throughout the Bible is the Euphrates. Captivating is the record that a river from the country of Eden penetrated and watered the Garden (Gen. 2:10) where Adam and Eve had their home.

As it left that Garden, it split into four branches – one was the Euphrates; another the Hiddekel (today called the Tigris). God chose to use these two *names* as illustrations in prophecy for wicked and righteous people, respectively!





The Euphrates River flowed through the “*great city*” of Babylon. That name became symbolic for apostasy and deception in prophecy!

“*Babylon*” was even the name given to the “harlot,” described in Revelation 17:5. She is a metaphor for a specific end-time apostate church, centered in the “*city of the seven hills*” – Rome! There, she *deceives* the world and then *persecutes* God’s people!

The people represented by the Euphrates River are wicked. They “support” Babylon, that “evil lady.”

That “life-giving” “water support” ends during the great tribulation, when they realize what that false Babylon church actually represents – and – did to them:

“And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up.” (Rev. 16:12)



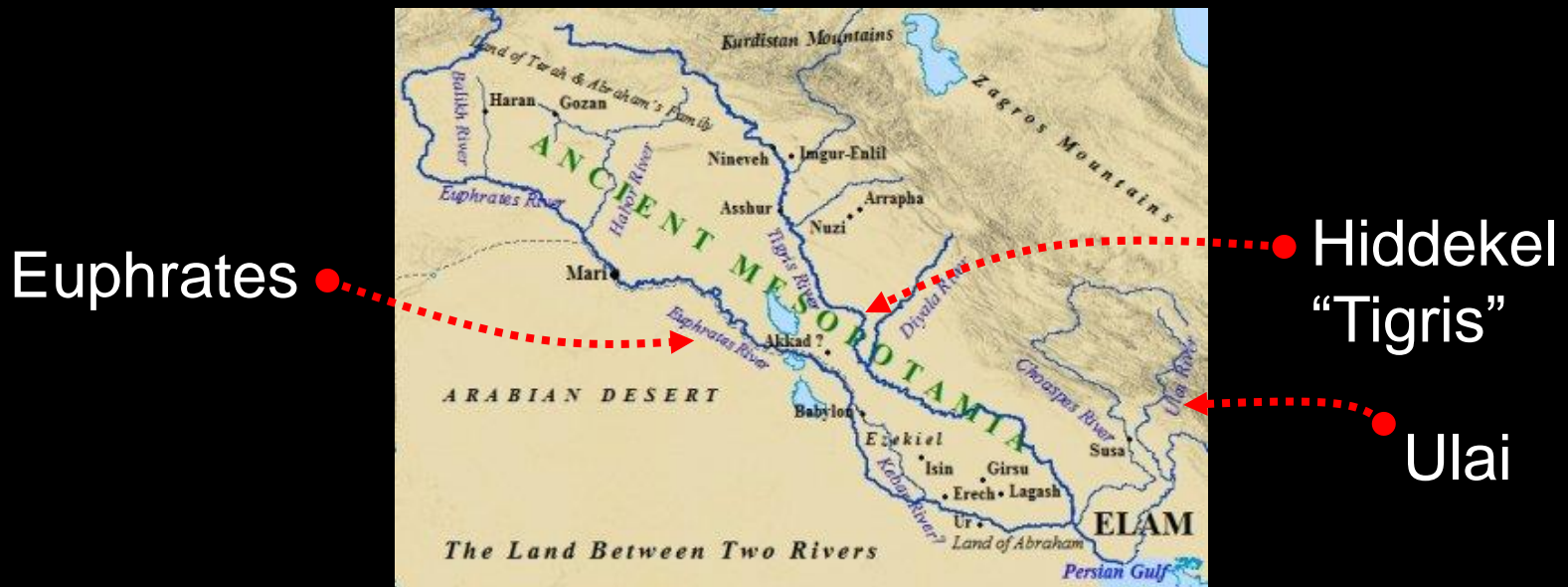
The two rivers mentioned by name in Daniel are the Hiddekel and Ulai.

“And I saw in a vision; ... that I was at Shushan in the palace, which is in the province of Elam; ... and I was by the river of Ulai.” (Dan. 8:2)

Later Daniel noted:

“I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel; Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man [Jesus] clothed in linen.” (Dan. 10:4-5)

These two rivers are east of Babylon and the Euphrates River. “East” in prophecy represents deliverance or restoration.



The “peoples” represented by the Ulai and Hiddekel rivers, belong to God. They are restored into His eternal favor!

A small group, seen as the Ulai River, is far to the east, by the great city of Shushan, where deliverance originated in Esther's time. That little waterway symbolizes the 144,000.

A large group, between the Ulai and the Euphrates, represents the great multitude at the end of time – the Heddikel/Tigris!

Ulai River

144,000

First vision

(Daniel 8)

Jesus personally
present
("certain saint")

Hiddekel/Tigris River

Great multitude

Second vision

(Daniel 10)

Jesus personally
present (man
"clothed in linen")

Once again, a Pattern of Two:

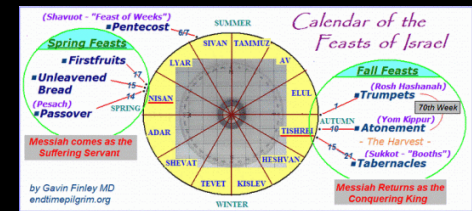
1. Messenger (small number – Ulai) – 144,000 – to be witnesses to the world
2. The called (large number – Hiddekel) – Great Multitude around God's throne

We are skimming through key highlights of these prophecies.

Prophecy Research Initiative has in depth *Power Point* studies on Daniel and Revelation where the details of each verse are discussed.

There are other wonderful illustrations that God provided to show this “template” of His people directed at the very end of time.

One beautiful portrayal comes through the ancient feasts or celebrations the Jewish people honored during a sacred seven-month period.



The whole plan of redemption was pictured through Passover, Unleavened Bread, Feast of Weeks, Trumpets, Atonement and Tabernacles.

Passover honored the night when the “*angel of wrath,*” passed over their homes. That occurred because the “*blood of a Lamb*” had been sprinkled on the doorposts and lintels of their houses.

That blood typified the blood of Jesus that would later be spilled to cleanse the hearts and minds of all God’s faithful.

That night the Hebrew nation was born, and they were delivered from bondage – right on time!!!



“Like the stars in the vast circuit of their appointed path, God’s purposes know no haste and no delay.... God had revealed to Abraham the bondage of Israel in Egypt, and had declared that the time of their sojourning should be four hundred years. “*Afterward,*” He said, “*shall they come out with great substance*” (Gen. 15:14). Against that word, all the power of Pharaoh’s proud empire battled in vain. On “the self-same day” appointed in the divine promise, “*it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.*” (Ex. 12:41).”
(*The Desire of Ages*, p. 32)

Because of that “cleansing blood deliverance,” the Israelites were later to celebrate seven days of The Feast of Unleavened bread – after they arrived in Canaan. Leavening represented sin. It was to be removed from their homes for the duration of that time.

That honored what the cleansing blood of Jesus would do! Significant was what occurred on the second day! That was the time of the year (late March or early April) when the barley harvest was coming on.



That crop was not to be harvested until a sheaf of barley was presented to the Lord. That was to be the “*firstfruits*” to Him!

This grain represented the 144,000, the first “crop,” the firstfruits of God’s people who would not have the leaven of sin, cleansed by the blood of the Lamb. “*These are they which follow the Lamb.... These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.*” (Rev. 14:4)

The story doesn't stop there. During the next fifty days, God's people honored a time of deep preparation, readying the next grain harvest. Then the Harvest of Weeks, lasting seven days began.

Before that "wheat crop" was gleaned, another "firstfruits" was to be presented to God. This time a small amount of wheat was harvested, enough to make two loaves of bread.

These two loaves were “waved” also before the Lord in an elaborate ceremony. They symbolized the Jewish and the Gentile people God claimed as His.

They represented the great multitude that would become part of God’s holy family. The typology of the “*harvest*” reveals that at the end of time, the barley (144,000) and the wheat (great multitude) would be ready for Christ’s final harvesting at His coming.

(Rev. 14:14-20)



“And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.”

“And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

(Rev. 14:15-16)



Again – that special Pattern of Two:

1. The first group – the barley harvest –
The 144,000, single wave sheaf
2. The last group –the wheat harvest –
Great Multitude, double wave sheaf

Though this “model” example of “two” groups, as we previously observed, comes from Revelation 7’s 144,000 and the “great multitude,” deeper insights come even further from Revelation 10!

“And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud.” (Rev. 10:1)



That begins a unique “interlude,” figuratively revealing divine assistance to God’s final workers! Jesus and His angels “come down,” first to help understand end-time prophecy, then to provide unbridled efficiency to complete the gospel work! *One is a “former rain” experience, the other the “latter rain,” depicted as receiving the “oil” of the Holy Spirit.*

The Revelation 10 “angel” (Jesus) is depicted in Revelation 7 as already being on the earth. He “ascends” with another special mission:

“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... Hurt not (earth, sea and trees) till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.... the number of them which were sealed ... an hundred and forty and four thousand.” (Rev. 7:2-4)



While Christ is here with His angels, He:

1. Holds back the four angels of destruction
2. Helps His witnesses understand prophecy
3. Provides power and help to finish the work
4. Seals the saints – fixing their eternal destiny!



All this imagery comes from these two amazing chapters – Revelation 10 then 7! First is seen the smaller witnessing group, identified as the 144,000, then:

“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”

“These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

(Rev. 7:9, 14)

The “large group!”

This template, Pattern of Two, must remain part of our focus in the study of the 144,000:

1. Messenger (sealed saints) – 144,000 – witnessing to the world
2. The called (product of their witnessing) – Great multitude – standing before the very throne of God – the center of the universe!





God is now looking for that smaller group of “messengers.” In fact, He is calling with a loud voice. Will you say “Yes” and be among the 144,000?

The End

Next Lesson:

The High Calling of the 144,000

