

OBSERVATION STUDY SERIES

# REVELATION

THE 144,000  
IN HEAVEN

14:1-5

# **REVELATION OBSERVATION STUDY SERIES**

## **Revelation 14:1-5**

### **The 144,000 in Heaven**

With five more scenes before we finish this interlude, we are about to encounter a familiar group...

***Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.*** Revelation 14:1

The Lamb is standing on Mount Zion, the real Mount Zion in heaven, and the 144,000 are with Him. Remember, the Lamb is in the throne room breaking the seals of the scroll unleashing God's judgments against the earth. The word for "standing" is *histemi* and does not mean standing as in contrast to sitting. Rather, it has the idea of being fixed or established. In other words, Jesus is standing firm in His abiding domain.

Where were the 144,000 when we last saw them? They were on earth waiting, as bond-servants of God, to be sealed on their foreheads before the seventh trumpet sounded (Revelation 7:1-8) and they were still on earth during the fifth trumpet, which is also called the first woe, when the locusts from the bottomless pit were let loose against men.

Where are they now, right before the seventh trumpet (which is the same as the seven bowls of wrath)? Our text tells us they are now with the Lamb in heaven on Mount Zion. We are not told how they get to heaven or when, not yet, anyway.

How can we tell this is the heavenly rather than the earthly Mount Zion? For one thing, we know that the Lamb will not come to earth again until He comes at the end of the seventh bowl. (For another, if we peek ahead at verses 2 and 3, we can see that the 144,000 are singing a new song before the throne, not on earth, but in heaven).

We also learn a little more about the seal which was put on their foreheads while they were on earth—it is the written Name of the Lamb and the written Name of His Father.

***And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps. And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth.*** Revelation 14:2-3

The Greek word for “voice” is *phone* and means sound, noise, or voice. John hears a sound or noise from heaven which is somehow like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. He also described the voice as being like the sound of harpists playing on their harps.

This, my friends, is one glorious choir! A chorus of 144,000 voices sings a new song that no one is able to “learn” except these very special bond-servants of God. The Greek word for “learn” is *manthano* and means to learn or understand by practice or experience. The Greek word for “new” is *kainos* and means qualitatively fresh, as opposed to recent. Their song is somehow preeminent to prior strains.

This is a choir with tryouts and only the 144,000 qualify. They have learned, through personal experience in a way no others could, the magnitude and meaning of this new superior song. John listens to their command performance before the throne (God and the Lamb), and the four living creatures, and the elders whom we saw in the throne room scenes in Revelation 4 and 5.

On the heels of telling us no one could learn the song except the 144,000, they are identified as the ones who have been purchased from the earth. We must assume the ability to learn the song is connected to their redemption.

I am reminded of Revelation 5:9 where it was the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders (who are the audience rather than the choir in Revelation 14:3) who were singing a new song to the Lamb right after He took the seven-sealed scroll. Think with me for a moment... I’d like you to notice why the Lamb was considered worthy—because He was slain, and purchased for God with His blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. Then consider what the Lamb was going to do with the scroll—He intended to unleash God’s judgments against the rest of mankind (those who had not been redeemed).

Now take those two thoughts and line them up with what is happening in Revelation 14. Who is singing the new song? The 144,000 are those who have been purchased from the earth. And what is about to take place? The curtain is about to open on the stage of eternity and reveal its final act—the terrible bowl judgments found in that very same seven-sealed scroll are about to be unleashed on those who have not been redeemed. Do you see the parallel?

One more thought before we go. Do you remember the pattern found throughout the book of Revelation of songs before judgment? Well, here it is again!

***These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb. And no lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless.*** Revelation 14:4-5

After learning the 144,000 were purchased from the earth, we find out about the unique qualifications of these Jewish men. They have not been defiled with women—they have kept themselves chaste. As God’s bond-servants, who are wholly set apart unto Him, they follow the Lamb wherever He goes. Not only have they been purchased from the earth, they are identified as the first fruits to God. First fruits are a promise of a harvest to come—many more will have been redeemed and gathered from the earth before it’s all said and done. In direct contrast to the deception of the anti-christ and the false prophet, no lie will be found in their mouth. These men are blameless.

I pray that you are one who will (if you haven’t already) submit to the truth of the gospel—repent and believe in Jesus Christ so that you are part of the redeemed. I pray that you will not defile yourself with the world and its ways. I pray that each of you will be people who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. I pray that you will be part of the great harvest of believers at the end of the age. I pray that you will believe and speak His truth in everything you say and do, that you will not be a person of deception in any way. May you be found blameless before Him one day...

*Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. Jude 1:24–25*