





DEYOUNG AND THE 144,000

<https://blogs.thegospelcoalition.org/kevindeyoung/2012/01/17/who-are-the-144000-in-revelation/>



First, in chapter 13 we read that Satan seals all of his followers, so it makes sense that God would seal all of his people, not just the Jewish ones.



Second, the image of sealing comes from Ezekiel 9 where the seal on the forehead marks out two groups of people: idolaters and non-idolaters. It would seem that the sealing of the 144,000 makes a similar distinction based on who worships God not who among the Jewish remnant worships God.

Third, the 144,000 are called the servants of our God ([Rev. 7:3](#)). There is no reason to make the 144,000 any more restricted than that. If you are a servant of the living God, you are one of the 144,000 mentioned here. In Revelation, the phrase “servants of God” always refers to all of God’s redeemed people, not just an ethnic Jewish remnant (see 1:1; 2:20; 19:2; 19:5; 22:3).

Fourth, the 144,000 mentioned later in chapter 14 are those who have been “redeemed from the earth” and those who were “purchased from among men.” This is generic everybody kind of language. The 144,000 is a symbolic number of redeemed drawn from all peoples, not simply the Jews. Besides, if the number is not symbolic then what do we do with [Revelation 14:4](#) which describes the 144,000 as those “who have not defiled themselves with women”? Are we to think that the 144,000 refers to a chosen group of celibate Jewish men? It makes more sense to realize that 144,000 is a symbolic number that is described as celibate men to highlight the group’s moral purity and set-apartness for spiritual battle.

Fifth, the last reason for thinking that the 144,000 is the entire community of the redeemed is because of the highly stylized list of tribes in verses 5-8. The number itself is stylized. It's not to be taken literally. It's $12 \times 12 \times 1000$ —12 being the number of completion for God's people (representing the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 apostles of the Lamb) and 1000 being a generic number suggesting a great multitude. So 144,000 is a way of saying all of God's people under the old and new covenant.