

# The Great Crowd of Partakers



- The ‘Doctrine of the 144,000 Kings and Priests’ has been instrumental in deciding whether one can participate in the Memorial Supper.
- The Governing Body of Jehovah’s Witnesses teaches that in all of Christian history, only 144,000 followers of Christ are allowed to partake of the Memorial Supper because they alone are in the ‘covenant for a kingdom’ and will thus enter the heavens to serve as kings and priests over the earth.
- And it is assumed that most of that number have already lived and died so that only a small remnant remain on earth today.
- The Doctrine of the 144,000 is founded on an interpretation of certain verses in the Bible book of Revelation.
- But what if the Doctrine of the 144,000 has been misunderstood? What if the 144,000 referred to in the book of Revelation are not the ones in the ‘covenant for the kingdom’ and are not designated to be kings and priests? For if the number of those in the covenant is not known or is not limited, then everyone who loves the Christ and wants to ‘follow him wherever he goes’ must participate!
- The first mention of the 144,000 appears in the 7th chapter of Revelation where the Apostle John hears an accounting of that particular group:
 

“And I heard the number of those who were sealed, 144,000, sealed out of every tribe of the sons of Israel.” – Revelation 7:4-8
- Then the Apostle John sees a vision of a second group:
 

“After these things I saw, and, look! a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, dressed in white robes; and there were palm branches in their hands.” – Revelation 7:9



- Neither these verses, nor the surrounding verses identify either group as kings or priests. The only other instance in the book of Revelation where the 144,000 are mentioned is in the 14th chapter:
 

“And I saw, and, look! the Lamb standing upon the Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand having his name and the name of his Father written on their foreheads. . . And they are singing as if a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one was able to master that song but the hundred and forty-four thousand, who have been bought from the earth.” – Revelation 14:1, 3

John is told that a multi-national great crowd are the ones who would be kings and priests! How did those who developed the Doctrine of the 144,000 fail to see that the kings and priests are not the 144,000, but are really a ‘great multi-national crowd?’ **It reveals that the teaching that only a limited number of mankind would qualify as kings and priests is a misinterpretation – an error.**

- The group of 144,000 are standing with ‘the Lamb’ and are referred to as master singers, but not as kings and priests. And what about the second group, the multi-national great crowd? Do they have a designated assignment? The answer is found in the 5th chapter:
 

“And when he took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp and golden bowls that were full of incense, and the [incense] means the prayers of the holy ones. And they sing a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll and open its seals, because you were slaughtered and with your blood you bought persons for God out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and you made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God, and they are to rule as kings over the earth.’” – Revelation 5:8-10
- John the Revelator tells us that those who would serve as kings and priests are innumerable! No man is able to count the number of those who would serve as kings and priests. That now effects our view of who can and should participate in the Memorial Supper? And doesn’t it now effect our view of who can enter the Kingdom of the Heavens?
- We know that at one time, this group were earthlings who found their way to heaven and who apparently have gained a specific knowledge, or understanding, or learned a certain skill that no one else has.
- So, it appears that there are other roles or assignments that those from earth will have in heaven other than being kings and priests. We will have to wait for a further revelation or for the fulfillment to gain a better understanding of this group of 144,000.
- There is no need for scrupulously studying prophecy in order to know how we are to conduct ourselves, how we are to worship and how we are to carry out our ministry. His plain and open teachings are sufficient.
 

“You are searching the Scriptures, because you think that by means of them you will have everlasting life; and these are the very ones that bear witness about me. And yet you do not want to come to me that you may have life.” – John 5:39-40
- There is no teaching of Jesus or the Christian Bible writers that supports such interference.
- In fact, there is a direct and specific condemnation by Jesus himself of anyone who would attempt to keep people out of the Kingdom of the Heavens: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you shut up the kingdom of the heavens before men; for you yourselves do not go in, neither do you permit those on their way in to go in.” – Matthew 23:13



- The removal of the Doctrine of the 144,000 allows all who are “seeking the Kingdom and his righteousness” - Matthew 6:33 - to actively participate in the Memorial Supper.
- The vacuum created by a failed Doctrine must be replaced by an even better Doctrine – one that inspires hope and healing.
- The Doctrine that fits the bill is the Doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man – the true good news of the Kingdom!
- When Jesus began preaching and teaching, he made clear that everyone who exercises faith in him are sons of God - John 1:9-13
- Even as Paul wrote:
 

“You are all, in fact, sons of God through your faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor freeman, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one [person] in union with Christ Jesus. Moreover, if you belong to Christ, you are really Abraham’s seed, heirs with reference to a promise.” – Galatians 3:26-29



- This ‘authority to become God’s children’ was given before holy spirit was poured out.
  - The pouring out of holy spirit first occurred at Pentecost, after Jesus’ death – Acts 2:1-4
  - Likewise, the first Memorial Supper was conducted with Jesus’ apostles before they were anointed with holy spirit. Thus, we know that even prior anointing is not a requirement in order to participate in the Memorial Supper.
  - Sonship with God has been the Father’s purpose since the beginning of creation

For God to select a small number to enjoy everlasting life in the heavens with Him and the Christ, while the vast majority of mankind are relegated to the limited experiences of life on earth is showing partiality. Even those who adhere to the Doctrine of the 144,000 realize that the heavenly hope is the more glorious and superior reward. “God is not partial” – Acts 10:34-35

- When we understand the beautiful and magnanimous potential of heavenly life, what God-oriented person would not want to be a part of it? The only reason for rejecting the heavenly hope is ignorance of its reality.
- See ourselves as favored children and welcomed citizens of a friendly universe with eternal and incorruptible life in view. We are better able to understand Jesus words: “Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light.” - Matthew 11:28-30
- Choose to stand up for the Christ, stand up for the heavenly hope, and stand up for yourself as a faith son of the Father and a joint heir with the Christ - Romans 8:17