

The People of the Apocalypse
“The 144 Thousand Priests unto God”

As indicated by their appearance on Mt. Zion with the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb, in Revelation 14:1, this group of men provide the fulfillment of a number of Old Testament prophecies (Genesis 49:10; Psalm 110:3; Obadiah 21).

Their first and most significant role of fulfillment is tied to their origin as Hebrew “*servants of our God*” chosen from the twelve tribes of Israel named in Revelation 7:4-8. The list begins with the leader of the tribes, the most heralded son of Jacob, Judah, the one from which God in human flesh, the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ would descend (Hebrews 7:14).

Judah, the fourth born son of Leah, Jacob’s lawful wife, inherited the position of firstborn as his three older brothers forfeited their right due to their sinful conduct as evidenced by firstborn Reuben’s wicked sexual sin (Genesis 35:22) and Simeon and Levi, the second and third born, who brutally slaughtered all the men of Shechem. (Genesis 34)

This list of Jacob’s sons in Revelation 7:3-8 is similar in structure to the prophecy of Jacob in Genesis 49:1-28 as he first mentions the sons of Leah, then the sons of the two maids, Bilhah and Zilpah, with Rachel’s two sons listed last.

However, Dan, who is replaced by Manasseh, Joseph’s oldest son, is the only tribe not seen in the Revelation 7:3-8 list. Ephraim, whose name is absent, is silently represented because his seed are accounted for in the 12,000 sealed under his father Joseph’s name as Joseph had only two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, therefore, those sealed under Joseph’s name are also the descendants of Ephraim.

The 144 Thousand are singled out by their unique position as the only group called the: “*first fruits unto God and unto the Lamb*” (Revelation 14:4). This group of young men who have been chosen, prepared and physically sealed by God for His divine protection (Revelation 9:4), are the first to be saved, during the restored (Malachi 4:5,6; Matthew 17:11) “*holy covenant*” (Daniel 11:28-31) dispensation, the 70th Week Daniel, which is the last week of the seventy weeks that God has determined upon Daniel’s “*people*” the Jews (Daniel 9:24).

They are the first of that great company of Israelites who will later be saved when “*the Redeemer [the Lord Jesus Christ] comes to Zion*” (Isaiah 59:20) and “*all Israel shall be saved*” (Romans 11:26). These 144 Thousand are not just a random group of Israelites chosen to guarantee a remnant to inherit the physical promises given to the Jews under the Old Covenant. No, these men are selected, saved, sealed and serve the King of kings as they “*follow Him wherever He goes*” (Revelation 14:4) showing their full and complete surrender to His will!

As God’s end of the age “*holy nation*” (Exodus 19:5,6; Psalm 110:3; I Peter 2:9; Revelation 14:1-5), one of their duties will be to fulfill the conditional covenant made by God with the nation of Israel in Exodus 19:1-6 when He physically met with the people of Israel as a nation for the first time.

The statement made in Exodus 19:5,6 shows His intent for the nation and each individual Israelite:
‘Now, therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation.

This conditional covenant made at Mt. Sinai was ultimately broken and left unfulfilled by the disobedience, rebellion, and idolatry of the people of Israel (Exodus 32). However, the Lord Jesus Christ in His full and

complete obedience fulfilled the old covenant and His sacrificial death on the Cross paid the penalty for all sin and in reality paid the sin debt for all mankind (I John 2:2) and this unbroken covenant in fact was atoned for by His once for all sacrifice (Hebrews 10:10, 14).

But, the importance of this conditional covenant remains intact, and God's desire to have this great company of priests ministering to Him continues (Psalm 110:3; I Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:5; 5:10; 20:6) for as the Scripture affirms, there have been "*priests unto God*" ministering to Him and for Him throughout the ages in every dispensation.

For, He has given each and every new covenant believer the privilege and opportunity to enter into the holiest (Hebrews 10:19) and fulfill this covenant which was God's original intention and primary calling for each and every person in the nation of Israel just as it now is for each and every born-again believer!

Therefore, when the church saints are raptured removing God's priests from the earth and the Day of the Lord judgments begin, the 144 Thousand will remain to perform their most vital ministry. That this great company of 144 Thousand will be holy priests unto God during the day of the Lord is indicated by this prophetic description: "*Thy people [troops/warrior/priests] shall be willing in the day of Thy power [Day of the Lord] in the beauties of holiness [priestly vestments/garments], from the womb of the morning, Thou hast the dew [multitude] of Thy youth [young men].*" (Psalm 110:3)

Based on the position and character of the 144 Thousand as they enter into a unique time of service to God during the Day of the Lord, they will indeed fulfill this broken covenant as they will be serving during a time when this kingdom of priests will be protected during the Day of the Lord (Revelation 9:4) "*following the Lamb wherever He goes*" (Revelation 14:1-5), ministering to and for the Lord, thereby orchestrating the plan of God on earth through powerful praise and intercessory prayer during the most intense spiritual battle of the ages.

Psalm 110 is regarded as the crown jewel of the book of Psalms. This short but powerful revelation by King David provides the believer with marvelous insight concerning David's Lord, the Messiah, the King of kings, our Great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ.

While it is one of the most quoted Psalms in the New Testament, the important fact here is the One Who quoted it's truth as He dealt with the Pharisees concerning His identity as the Messiah, David's Lord and the Son of Jehovah God.

Yes, the Lord Jesus referred to this Psalm a number of times during His earthly ministry (Matthew 22:44, 26:64; Mark 12:64, 14:62; 16:19; Luke 20:42, 22:69), and it is also utilized over a dozen other times in the New Testament demonstrating it's vital importance in the overall scheme of God's unfolding revelation.

However, the focus in this brief look at Psalm 110 is prophetic, for the subject matter covered in this Psalm has yet to take place in the course of history. And, this Messianic Jewel of the Psalms, revealing past and present truth concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, also provides the believer with vital truth in understanding the end of the age and "The People of the Apocalypse" as indicated in the Revelation of Jesus Christ in concert with this Psalm.

The coronation of the King of kings, the Lord Jesus Christ is indicated in the opening verse of Psalm 110: "*The LORD said unto my Lord, sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thy enemies Thy footstool.*"

This clearly indicates Jehovah God making it His certain intent to give the Lord Jesus Christ eventual physical dominion over the entire earth (Psalm 2:6-9). This first verse also pinpoints the timing of the Psalm as the Lord Jesus Christ has just ascended to heaven (Acts 1:9-11) and is invited by His Father to sit at His right hand.

He sat down at the Father's right hand and was exalted (Acts 2:33) and subsequently sent "*the promise of the Father*", the Holy Spirit, to His people (Acts 2:1-4) which He promised (Luke 24:49; John 14:16, 17,26, 15:26, 16:7,13,14; Acts 1:4).

The second verse begins the progressive unfolding of the time of the end events which God the Father will bring to pass as He brings Christ's enemies into submission:

"The LORD shall send the rod [tribe] of Thy strength out of Zion, rule Thou in the midst of Thine enemies." (Psalm 110:2)

The phrase "*rod of Thy strength*" some apply to the church or possibly to the Holy Spirit for He was and is now the Person Who empowers and strengthens believers thereby glorifying and exalting the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Holy Instrument by which Jesus now rules as Lord!

The church and the Holy Spirit both came "*out of Zion*" which is the city of Jerusalem and loosely "fit" the requirements of the passage, however, bringing the Lord Jesus Christ's enemies into submission is not His primary purpose for the church.

The church's primary purpose is to be a "*witness*" unto Christ as indicated by the Lord in all five of His commissions: (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 15:16; Acts 1:8) which He gave His disciples and now apply to His body the church.

And, although it is through the Holy Spirit that God's work and will are now accomplished by the church, the focus of this Psalm is in the future day when Jehovah God brings into submission the enemies of His Son, not the present-day witnessing of the church of Jesus Christ.

God will ultimately bring the enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ into submission during His day, the eschatological Day of the Lord. This future end times event is clearly defined in Scripture as it is the most prophesied time in the Word of God!

The Hebrew word "matteh" translated "*rod*" in Psalm 110:2 is found in the Old Testament (251) times with (182) of those occurrences translated "*tribe*", (52) occurrences translated "*rod*" and (15) times it is translated "*staff*".

The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament supplies the following information concerning this word: "Although the term properly means "staff" or "rod," it is usually rendered (some 180 times) "tribe". The reference is usually to one of the twelve tribes by name. At first, apparently, each tribal ruler led his group with a staff. This suggest that the ruler's staff may have originally been a symbol of the tribe (cf. Num 17:2-10 [H 17-25] and eventually betokened leadership and authority (cf. Ps 110:2; Jer 48:17)." p.574 Vol.1

Also, the Hebrew word "shebet" a synonym of "matteh" is the word used to translate "rod" or "scepter" in all of the other Old Testament Messianic passages which speak of the Messiah's rod/scepter (Genesis 49:10; Numbers 24:17; Psalm 2:9, 45:6; Isaiah 11:4).

This is the word the Bible utilizes to define the ruling or smiting of the nations by the Messiah which will occur during the Day of the Lord The "shebet" passages above refer to the future rule and or the accompanying discipline of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, when He comes as "King of kings and Lord of Lords" (Revelation 19:15).

Therefore, the phrase "rod of Thy strength" is better translated "tribe of Thy strength" indicating the tribe of

Judah from which the Lord Jesus Christ descended (Hebrews 7:14). He will lead the tribe of Judah into the battle during the time of the end. To the tribe of Judah, “the lion’s whelp,” a prolonged dominion is promised [ISBE p.1738 Vol.3] through the Messiah and therefore is listed first in (Revelation 7:5) as the leader of the twelve tribes.

Judah will lead the assault upon “the Assyrian” [Antichrist] (Micah 5:5) not unlike the days during Antiochus Epiphanes [type of Antichrist] similar invasion of Israel in days past (168 B.C.) when Judas Maccabeus “The Hammer” of the tribe of Judah led his warriors to an incredible and most miraculous victory over Antiochus Epiphanes, the ruthless Roman king in that day (I Maccabees) !

The Lord Jesus Christ as “The Lion of the Tribe of Judah” (Revelation 5:5) will most definitely lead His special forces in that day as indicated in Micah’s “last days” (Micah 4:1) passage as recorded in Micah’s second message (Micah 3:1-5:15) of his book which message focuses on the Coming King, the Lord Jesus Christ:

“And this Man [The Lord Jesus Christ/Messiah] shall be the peace when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds and eight principal men.” (Micah 5:5)

“Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power, in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, Thou hast the dew of Thy youth”. (Psalm 110:3)

The next period of time immediately following the present age of grace is “*the day of Thy power*’ also known as the Day of the Lord, when Christ returns “*In power and great glory*” (Matthew 24:30). During the Day of the Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ will have “*with Him*” (Revelation 14:1, 17:14) a group of obedient followers (Revelation 14:4) known as these 144 Thousand servants of God.

Psalm 110:3 describes them, providing some distinct qualities and duties of this group of God’s servants who “*shall be willing in the day of Thy [Lord Jesus Christ] power*”.

The word “*people*” (Psalm 110:3) appears in the Old Testament over 1800 times and is variously translated. On occasion, as recorded in I Samuel 11 where it is found six times, it has the emphasis of “*troops*” specifically in (v.11) when “*Saul put the people [troops] in three companies*” which is recorded in the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament p.676 Vol.2 “There are also a number of passages where the word [people] means ‘troops’.

In keeping with the dominating militant theme of this Psalm the NIV gives this interpretation of (Psalm 110:3): “*Your troops shall be willing on your day of battle. Arrayed in holy majesty, from the womb of the dawn you will receive the dew of your youth*”

The NASV translates this same verse:

“Thy people will volunteer freely in the day of Thy power; In holy array, from the womb of the dawn, Thy youth are to Thee as the dew.”

The same willing obedience of the 144 Thousand is recorded in Revelation 14:4 where they “*follow the Lamb wherever He goes*”, having already surrendered themselves to His Lordship long before when they decided to follow Jesus, giving themselves as literal bond-servants of the King of kings! (Revelation 7:3)

Their personal holiness before God “*In the beauties of holiness*” (Psalm 110:3) also is confirmed in Revelation 14:4,5:

“These are they which were not defiled with women...And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God”.

Their physical purity and spiritual holiness affords them the ability to continually “*follow the Lamb*” giving them unbroken access to the throne of God where they fulfill their ministry priority as priests unto God. The last phrase of Psalm 110:3:

“*Thou hast the dew of Thy youth*” provides additional information concerning the 144 Thousand. The word “*dew*” most likely indicates their great number, and, as the dew provides refreshment and blessing to the earth, they, too, will give these same benefits to those to whom they minister.

“*And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarries not for man, nor waits for the sons of men.*” (Micah 5:7)

As priests unto God they will be a blessing direct from God not dependent on men. The word “*youth*” of Psalm 110:3 is only found in the Old Testament three times with the other two occurrences in Ecclesiastes 11:9,10:

“*Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity.*”

This word in Psalm 110:3 indicates a designated group of young men, who will be active during the time of the end, willing to follow the Lord which accurately describes the 144 Thousand. This approximates their age and agrees with the tenor of Revelation 14:4 where their virginity is recorded requiring a decision which must be made by these young men early in manhood. The age of twenty was specified in the book of Numbers when the first census was taken for those men who were able and old enough to go to war:

“*Take ye the sum of all the congregation of the sons of Israel, after their families, by the house of their fathers, with the number of their names every male by their polls: From twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel.*” (Numbers 1:2,3)

This indicates the age that will determine the lower limit for these young soldiers of Christ, for they will in fact see spiritual and physical combat as war against the saints occurs during the end of the age which is clearly indicated in Scripture. (Daniel 7:21; Revelation 12:17, 13:7, 17:14, 19:19)

There will also be two major assaults against Israel prior to Armageddon with the first beginning at the mid-point of the 70th Week of Daniel which centers upon Judea and the city of Jerusalem (Ezekiel 38:8-16; Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:15-21).

The second battle will take place in the “*valley of Jehosaphat*” (Joel 3:1-8; Zechariah 14:1,2) with these young men taking part as “*the remnant of Jacob*” when:

“*The Assyrian [Antichrist] shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces*”. (Micah 5:5-8).

Notable Bible commentator W. Graham Scroggie, D.D. speaks on (Psalm 110:3) in his commentary on the Psalms, p.87: “The beauties of holiness...” the reference is to holy attire, holy garments, priestly vestments. The soldiers are priests, the consecrated are warriors. These two sides of Christian calling and character are vitally related. Because we are “Priests unto God” we are to “Put on the whole armour of God” (Rev.1:6; Eph. 6:11) “Thou hast the dew of thy youth” Maclaren translates this as “From the womb of the dawn (comes) to Thee the dew of Thy youth (s)”; and he says, ‘the principal point of comparison of the army with the dew is probably it’s multitude.’

From:
Spurgeon’s Treasury of David

Ver. 3. —The subjects of the Priest King are willing soldiers. In accordance with the warlike tone of the whole Psalm, our text describes the subjects as an army. That military metaphor comes out more closely when we attach the true meaning of the words, "in the day of thy power." The word rendered, and rightly rendered, "power," has the same ambiguity which that word has in the English of the date of our translation, and for a century later, as you may find in Shakespeare and Milton, who both used it in the sense of "army". Singularly enough we do not employ "powers" in that meaning, but we do another word which means the same thing—and talk of "forces", meaning thereby "troops"... "The day of thy power" is not a mere synonym for "the time of thy might", but means specifically "the day of thine army", that is, "the day when thou dost muster thy forces and set them in array for the war". The King is going forth to conquest. But he goes not alone. Behind him come his faithful followers, all pressing on with willing hearts and high courage. —Alexander McLaren, 1871.

Ver. 3. —Thy people, etc. In homage, they shall be like a company of priests in sacred vestments, for they shall appear "in the beauties of holiness". In number, they shall be like the countless dewdrops "from the womb of the morning", sparkling in the rays of the rising sun, and reflecting his radiance. In glory they shall bear the likeness of Christ's resurrection in all its vernal freshness: "Thou hast the dew of thy youth". —Benjamin Wildon Cart.

Ver. 3. —In the beauties of holiness. In holy vestments as priests. They are at once warriors and priests; meet for the service of Him who was King and Priest. Neander (Mem. of Chr. Life, ch. 4) remarks on the connection between these two sides of the Christian character. God's soldiers can only maintain their war by priestly self-consecration. Conversely: God's priests can only preserve their purity by unintermitted conflict. —William Kay.

Ver. 3. —In the beauties of holiness. This expression is usually read as if it belonged either to the words immediately preceding, or to those immediately following. But in either case the connection is somewhat difficult and obscure. It seems better regarded as a distinct and separate clause, adding a fresh trait to the description of the army. And what that is we need not find any difficulty in ascertaining. "The beauties of holiness" is a frequent phrase for the sacerdotal garments, the holy festal attire of the priests of the Lord. So considered, how beautifully it comes in here. The conquering King whom the psalm hymns is a Priest for ever; and he is followed by an army of priests. The soldiers are gathered in the day of the muster, with high courage and willing devotion, ready to fling away their lives; but they are clad not in mail, but in priestly robes; like those who wait before the altar rather than like those who plunge into the fight, like those who compassed Jericho with the ark for their standard and the trumpets for all their weapons. We can scarcely fail to remember the words which echo these and interpret them. "The armies which were in heaven followed him on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean" —a strange armor against sword cut and spear thrust. —Alexander McLaren.

Ver. 3. —Thou hast the dew of thy youth. These words are often misunderstood, and taken to be a description of the fresh, youthful energy attributed by the Psalm to the Priest King of this nation of soldier priests. The misunderstanding, I suppose, has led to the common phrase, "the dew of one's youth". But the reference of the expression is to the army, not to its leader. "Youth" here is a collective noun, equivalent to "young men". The host of his soldier subjects is described as a band of young warriors, whom he leads, in their fresh strength and countless numbers and gleaming beauty like the dew of the morning... It is as a symbol of the refreshing which a weary world will receive from the conquests and presence of the King and his host, that they are likened to the glittering morning dew. Another prophetic Scripture gives us the same emblem when it speaks of Israel being "in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord". Such ought to be the effect of our presence. We are meant to gladden, to adorn, to refresh this parched, prosaic world, with a freshness brought from the chambers of the sunrise.—Alexander McLaren.

Matthew Henry writes-p.660 'That they should be a willing people, a people of willingness, alluding to servants that choose their service and are not coerced to it...to soldiers that are volunteers and not pressed men...That they should be so in the day of His power, in the day of Thy muster (so some) when Thou art enlisting soldiers thou shalt find a multitude of volunteers...Or when Thou art drawing them out to battle they shall be willing to 'Follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes' (Revelation 14:4).'

W. Graham Scroggie, William Kay, Alexander McLaren, and Matthew Henry all see these "people" here in Psalm 110:3 as soldiers of the Lord's army with most of these commentators also giving them the duty

of priests. Matthew Henry also indicates they are the 144 Thousand as he refers to their following *“the Lamb whithersoever He goes.”*(Revelation 14:4)

So, this future army of the King of kings will be completely submissive to the will of God during the Day of the Lord. These young soldiers of Christ will be involved in the intense spirit physical warfare at the end the age as priests unto God and they will be arrayed in holiness doing the Lord’s service *“before the throne of God”* (Revelation14:1,4)

These *“priests unto God”* are involved in this future holy warfare when the battle is at it’s most heightened level, when Satan *“knows that he has but a short time”* (Revelation 12:12). Scroggie, in his commentary on the Psalms, adds *“Messiah’s soldiers are declared to be priests (Psalm 110:3) before His own priesthood is announced.”* p.88

This impeccable group of young men, chosen from the twelve tribes of Israel, will play a key part in the unfolding of the time of the end as they are eventually sealed (Revelation 7:3-8) and given protection (Revelation 9:4) from the horrendous Day of the Lord judgment/wrath of God which will fall upon the earth dwellers.

In (Psalm 110:4) David continues to address the Lord Jesus Christ telling Him of His eternal priesthood which is pronounced by Jehovah:

“The LORD hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”

The LORD Jehovah, told Jesus of His future actions in (Psalm 110:2,3) before He declared the Lord Jesus Christ’s present High Priestly office in (Psalm 110:4), remembering that the Psalm (Psalm 110:2-4) is addressing the Lord Jesus after He ascended to heaven.

Jehovah in (Psalm 110:4) takes an oath and tells of Jesus’ present ministry to the Father and the saints as: *“He ever lives to make intercession for those who come unto God by Him.”* (Hebrews 7:25)

The Consecration of our Great High Priest King is accomplished in this the key verse of Psalm 110 being thoroughly explained in the book of Hebrews chapters 5-9. However, our focus here is on the 144 Thousand and in (v.5-7) they are directly addressed:

“The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath.”(Psalm 110:5)

Here, the people [troops/priests/144 Thousand] (Psalm 110:3) are given the promise of the Lord’s presence *“at thy right hand”* when He pours out His devastating wrath upon the earth dwellers during the Day of the Lord.

This agrees with Revelation 6:16,17: *“From the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of His wrath is come; and who is able to stand?”*

Although the Day of the Lord is described as the wrath of God (Isaiah 13:9; Zephaniah 1:15), in the first reference to wrath in the book of the Revelation it is also designated *“the wrath of the Lamb”*. The overriding tone of Psalm 110 is one of dominion, troops, warfare and human carnage which is brought on by the Lord’s judgment of earth through the outpouring of His eschatological Day of the Lord *“day of His wrath”* (Psalm 110:5) which couples accurately with the warfare and judgment thoroughly detailed in the Revelation of Jesus Christ (Revelation 8,9,15-19).

Notice, the word *“Lord”* [Adonai] (Psalm 110:5) continues to refer to the Lord Jesus Christ, as in (Psalm 110:1). This promise of the Lord’s presence with His people as indicated by His *“right hand”* is found in the Psalms twenty one times and refers to the power, authority and blessing of the Lord to His people in nineteen of

these occurrences.

And, so here, the promise of the blessed presence of the Lord Jesus Christ when “*this Man [Messiah] will be the peace*” (Micah 5:5) for those who will be “*with Him*” (Revelation 14:1, 17:14) during “*the day of His wrath*”.

Psalms 110:6 vividly portrays the Divine Judge’s wrath as it is poured out upon earth:

“He shall judge among the heathen, He shall fill the places with the dead bodies, He shall wound the heads [kings of the earth] over many countries”.

His Day of the Lord judgment includes the death of over one third of the world population (Revelation 9:15, 16:3) and the final event of the Day of the Lord, the battle of Armageddon, will execute deadly judgment upon the “*kings of the earth*” (Revelation 19:19-21).

The closing verse pictures the Lord Jesus Christ’s actions and attitude of complete victory after the Day of the Lord’s wrath is ended:

“He shall drink from the brook in the way, therefore shall He lift up the head.” (Psalm 110:7)

The Lord is physically refreshed and assumes the well deserved appearance and expression of His triumphant victory after His work of judgment is over, after the battle of Armageddon (Revelation 19:11-21) has ended.

This brief Psalm comes to a quiet close after covering the time from the Lord’s ascension to the Father’s right hand, moving over the present church age in order to focus completely on the great and dreadful Day of the Lord when God the Father will make the Lord Jesus Christ’s enemies His footstool.

While the emphasis is upon the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ and His eternal position of King/Great High Priest, much additional information is given concerning “*Thy people...Thy youth*”, those who will be His loyal subjects during those coming days at the time of the end:

1. They are willing servants (Psalm 110:3; Revelation 7:3, 14:4,5)
2. They minister during “The day of Thy power”/Day of the Lord (Psalm 110:3)
3. They are holy priest/warriors (Psalm 110:3; Revelation 14:4,5)
4. They will be refreshing “*as dew*” to Israel/God’s people (Psalm 110:3; Micah 5:7; Revelation 14:4,5)
5. They will be destructive “*as lions*” to Gentiles/earth dwellers (Psalm 110:3; Micah 5:8; Revelation 17:14)
6. They will be a great multitude “*as dew*” (Psalm 110:3; Revelation 7:3-8)
7. They will be young Hebrew men (Psalm 110:3; Revelation 7:3, 14:4)

These young men will play a key role during the days leading up to the time of their sealing which includes the time of the great tribulation. Daniel seven tells of the saints being “given into the hand” (Daniel 7:25) of the Antichrist as he makes “war with the saints” and “prevails against them” (Daniel 7:21) wearing out the saints (Daniel 7:25) for a period of three and one half years which is also indicated in Revelation 13:7.

This intense time of persecution will be unparalleled and the ministry of this great kingdom of priests, the 144 Thousand, during that time will be the Lord’s line of protection for the saints on earth in an hour when Satan’s wrath will be at its maximum strength. (Revelation 12:12)

This theory is based upon the 144 Thousand being Old Covenant believers having full knowledge of the New

Testament, “redeemed from the earth...and from among men” (Revelation 14:3,4) and therefore their first priority is to fulfill the primary purpose and calling of every New Testament believer and that is to be a priest unto God (I Peter 2:5,9; Revelation 1:5, 5:10, 20:6).

This is the primary focus of the believer’s service and is listed in conjunction with redemption on two occasions (Revelation 1:5, 5:10) indicating that the primary purpose for redemption itself is to create a great company of priests unto God, for ministry to Him and men on His behalf!

They also represent the nation of Israel and as the Lord begins to again deal with the nation of Israel during the 70th Week of Daniel when the restored (Matthew 17:11) Old Covenant, “*holy covenant*” (Daniel 11:28-32) economy will once again prevail just as it was in effect during the first 69 Weeks of this period of 70 Weeks that God determined upon His people and upon His holy city as recorded in Daniel 9:24.

This single theory based on Bible truth provides the answer to the questions: Why did not the 144 Thousand, and “the woman” [Faithful Israel] of Revelation 12, and the “two witnesses” of Revelation 11 get caught up together with the other saints when the Lord Jesus Christ came in the clouds?

One possibility: These were saved under the Old Covenant and were not sealed by the Holy Spirit as New Covenant believers but were physically sealed with the name of God and the Lamb in their foreheads. Therefore they will not have the “*earnest of their inheritance*” (Ephesians 1:13,14), the indwelling Holy Spirit, Who provides the transport into heaven at the resurrection!

Another possibility: The Lord has simply chosen to select certain of His earthly people, Israel, to remain to accomplish His purposes during His Day of the Lord wrath, when He will execute “*the time of Jacob’s trouble*” (Jeremiah 30:7) which is specifically designed to purge and purify those Jews (Zechariah 13:9) who will be saved when their Redeemer comes to Zion (Isaiah 59:20; Romans 11:25, 26) at the end of the 70th Week of Daniel (Revelation 11:15,14:1)!

For, “*the woman*” [Faithful Israel] of Revelation 12 will be fed and nourished in the wilderness during the last half of Daniel’s 70th Week, the “*two witnesses*” of Revelation 11:3-14 will minister during the last half of Daniel’s 70th Week and the 144 Thousand also will continue to serve during those same 3-1/2 years (Revelation 9:4, 14:1, 17:14).

Therefore, all of these faithful Jews will remain on earth after the resurrection of the dead in Christ and the rapture of the living saints (I Thessalonians 4:16,17)! This end of the age timeline is based on the chronological order of events (Matthew 24:3-31) the Lord Jesus Christ gave to “*Peter and James and John and Andrew*” (Mark 13:3) His inner circle of disciples.

This also answers the question concerning the saints who are given into the hand of the Antichrist (Daniel 7:25) for 3-1/2 years which is the last half of Daniel’s 70th Week. These Jews will be saved under the Old Covenant and may not be sealed with the Holy Spirit but will be purposely left behind to serve the Lord during the “*time of Jacob’s trouble*” which occurs during the seven trumpet judgments (Revelation 8:1-11:19) at the very beginning of the “*great and dreadful Day of the Lord*” (Malachi 4:5,6).

The 70th Week of Daniel will, just as the other dispensations, transition or merge into effect with the confirming of the covenant by the many of Israel and the Antichrist as the actual starting point, just as Pentecost of Acts 2 became the actual starting point of the dispensation of grace.

But, there was a merging of economies as John the Baptist preached and the Lord’s earthly ministry unfolded and then the Old Covenant continuing to operate after Pentecost in practice by the Jews while the New

Covenant was in fact effective and functioning at the day of Pentecost.

This merging of economies has been the Lord's pattern throughout the ages as the economy of Conscience, Human Government, Promise and Law also transitioned into effect with all of them continuing to run in the background still having effect in principle even now as the ages roll.

We also must keep in mind that when the majority of the New Testament was written at least five of the required elements were in place in order for the Lord to return. The Jews were in the land, as a people/nation, Jerusalem was occupied by the Jews, the temple was on Mount Zion, and the Old Covenant with the sacrificial system were operating.

These conditions definitely influenced the anticipation for the Lord's second coming by the early church, and therefore, caused an intense urgency in the believers to expect the Lord's coming post-haste. They correctly viewed the prophetic Scriptures and understood the possibility for the Lord to return in that day as the above prerequisites were in place.

But, when all five of these prerequisites were brought to their end in A.D. 70 by the Roman army's decimation of the Jews as a people, the complete destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem, Israel as a nation and the Old Covenant with its sacrificial system were also brought to their conclusion.

However, the apostle John's writings, the Gospel of John, I, II, III John and the Revelation of Jesus Christ were all written after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and the dispersion of the Jews.

These books of the Bible authored by John between A.D. 80-95 are accurately silent concerning an immediate "same day" (Luke 17:22-30) coming of the Lord for John knew that these pre-requisites were necessary in order for the 70th Week of Daniel to begin and the Lord to return.

However, at this present time [2007] three of these same five elements are now back in place, and therefore, we must ever be aware of exactly where we stand in this day as the merging of the Old Covenant has already begun for the Jews are a people, in the land, occupying the city of Jerusalem!

These long prophesied events are the first three prerequisites in order for the 70th Week of Daniel to begin and the Lord Jesus to return (Deuteronomy 30:3-5; Daniel 9:24). The following list shows those prerequisites mentioned above and includes a number of other events required for the "time of the end" to unfold:

1. The Jews will be a "people"/nation (Daniel 9:24)
2. The Jews will be in their promised "land" (Deuteronomy 30:5; Matthew 24:16)
3. The Jews will occupy the "holy city" of Jerusalem (Daniel 9:24)
4. The prophet Elijah will be sent to "restore all things" (Malachi 4:5,6; Matthew 17:11)
5. The "holy covenant" will be restored (Daniel 11:28-32)
6. "The temple of God" will be rebuilt (Daniel 11:31; II Thessalonians 2:1-4; Revelation 11:1,2)
7. The "holy place" included (Matthew 24:15)
8. The "regular/daily sacrifices" will be instituted (Daniel 8:11,12, 9:27, 11:31, 12:11)
9. The Jews will "worship" in the temple (Revelation 11:1.2)
10. "The Sabbath" will be kept (Matthew 24:20)
11. The sending of prophets to the people of God (Malachi 4:5,6; Matthew 17:11; Revelation 11:3-14)
12. "The twelve tribes of Israel" will be recognized (Revelation 7:4-8)

Also, the Lord's prophecy concerning the "beginning of sorrows" (Matthew 24:8) has begun to unfold as the

19th century witnessed the most massive influx of “*false Christs*” with the birth and rise of all the major false ‘Christian’ cults:

1. The Jehovah ‘false’ witnesses
2. The Mormons/Latter Day ‘false’ Saints
3. The Seventh Day Adventists
4. The Christian Science ‘false’ Church

Then, the last half of the 19th century along with the first half of the 20th saw USA’s Civil War, World War I, World War II and numerous other major conflicts which defines the period of “*wars and rumors of war*” (*Matthew 24:6*).

The last part of the 20th century, and now, the beginning of the 21st reveal that we are nearing the very end of the “*the beginning of sorrows*” as increasing “*famines and pestilences [AIDS, Ebola, Bird Flu] and earthquakes*” are evident and continue to rise in magnitude, intensity and number! (*Matthew 24:5-8*)

But, lest this may sound as though anticipation for the soon coming of the Lord is waning, it is a certain and indisputable fact that God is able to bring about the necessary conditions and events shortly, in His perfect timing, just as He wills.

Therefore, the expectation for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, during this very “*generation*” when “*all these things*” (*Matthew 24:33,34*) are surely coming to pass, will continue to be on high alert, until we see Him “*in the clouds!*” (*Daniel 7:13; Matthew 24:30; Acts 1:9-11; I Thessalonians 4:17; Revelation 1:7*)