

The People of the Apocalypse  
“The Passing of the Torch”  
[Part III]

In order to more clearly understand the circumstances and characteristics of the 144 Thousand, the Lord has given us prototypes in the persons of Daniel the prophet and his three companions who were brought under the authority of a ruthless king when they were taken to Babylon as captives of King Nebuchadnezzar in 606 B.C.

Nebuchadnezzar is a type of the Antichrist as similarities and parallels to the end times can be seen throughout the historical section (Daniel 1-6) of the book of Daniel. His making of an image and demanding that all of the peoples of the known world must fall down and worship it (Daniel 3) is one of the most striking parallels Nebuchadnezzar demonstrates.

This action by Nebuchadnezzar parallels the Antichrist’s prophesied end time demand for universal worship, when he also will rule the world and seek to force all to worship his image as recorded in Revelation 13:1-18.

Daniel and his three companions, according to Daniel chapter one where the word eunuch is used to describe the man who was over them “*the prince of the eunuchs*”, were made eunuchs in order to serve in the palace of the king where their duties included dealing with and being in the presence of the king’s wives/women.

Therefore, it was the prevailing custom for these men to be emasculated in order for them to effectively serve royalty, a custom which continued through New Testament times (Acts 8:27ff). The resulting effect on them is similar to the 144 Thousand who will be called out of every tribe as is indicated in Revelation 14:4 to serve the King of kings: “*These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins.*”

These men who will be protected by the Lord during the end times will also be similar to eunuchs although not physically emasculated, they will keep themselves physically pure giving their full devotion to the King of kings, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord taught a three-fold source of becoming a eunuch in Matthew 19:12:

*“For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother’s womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men; and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.”*

Therefore, according to the Lord’s teaching a man can become a eunuch:

1. Naturally
2. Man-made
3. Self-made

The 144 thousand are described as men who “*were not defiled with women*” indicating their physical purity belying their choice to fully “*follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes.*” (Revelation 14:4) This personal choice amply demonstrates their complete surrender of self in all things in order to give every area of their lives for the maximum service and glory of their Lord! This is also a fitting description of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. These young men may well have recognized early on the call of God on their lives.

The prophecy, which Isaiah pronounced to their great-great-grandfather Hezekiah, king of Judah, could have been known by them for they themselves were “*of the king’s seed*” (Daniel 1:3). Isaiah’s words spoken to Hezekiah over a century and a half earlier are clear and unmistakable:

*“Behold the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. And of thy sons (Daniel and his four companions) that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.” (II Kings 20:17,18)*

Therefore, these four young men of royalty, who likely had access to the Scriptures, may have known ahead of time some of what God was going to do with them as the king of Babylon closed in on the city of Jerusalem eventually taking them captive and enlisting them in his own service as recorded in the book of Daniel 1:1-7.

Their lives and impeccable service to God recorded in the book of Daniel certainly have infinite value for those who follow their pattern of service to their God. In all, there are at least eight similarities or parallels between Daniel and his three companions and the 144 Thousand Jews:

1. They are men of the sons of Israel (Revelation 7:3; Daniel 2:25)
2. They are called servants of God (Revelation 7:3; Daniel 3:26)
3. They refuse to be defiled (Revelation 14:4a; Daniel 1:8)
4. They choose to follow God (Revelation 14:4b; Daniel 3:16-18,28)
5. They refuse to worship an idolatrous image under the threat of death (Revelation 13; Daniel 3)
6. They are without fault (Revelation 14:5; Daniel 6:4)
7. They are seen with the Lord (Revelation 14:1, 17:14; Daniel 3:26, 6:22)
8. They are supernaturally protected by the Lord (Revelation 7:3, 9:4; Daniel 3:23-28, 7:21,22)

The Lord, being the unchangeable and faithful God that He is, will accomplish these same things in the lives of those He will choose to represent Him during the time of the end in order that He might prepare this great company of “*servants of our God*” (Revelation 7:3) who will faithfully serve Him during those tumultuous but exciting days ahead!

However, regardless of what theory is held concerning the timing of the events of the end times, one thing we can rely upon and that is the unchanging faithfulness of our God. He will most certainly call out and prepare that great company of 144 Thousand servants from the twelve tribes of Israel who will:

1. Be the firstfruits of the Jews to be redeemed during the 70<sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel (Revelation 14:5)
2. Serve the Lord during the great tribulation (Daniel 11:32-35, 12:3; Revelation 12:17b)
3. Serve the Lord during the Day of the Lord’s wrath (Revelation 9:4; 14:1-5, 17:14) by faithfully following the Lamb, the King of kings and Lord of lords!