

# THE 144 000 AND THE GREAT MULTITUDE

In **Revelation 7** after the destruction caused first six seals and before the seventh seal is opened which begins the period of time known as the Day of the Lord two mysterious groups are described. One group numbers 144 000 and the other group are described as “a great multitude which no man could number.”

Who are these groups of people? Various explanations have been put forward in mainstream Christianity and even in the Church of God there have been various ideas. Mr Armstrong himself only part explained who he thought they were and left some questions about them unexplained.

Are the 144 000 including 12 000 of the tribes of Israel physical or spiritual Israelites? Why is the tribe of Dan excluded and their 12 000 made up of extra from the tribe of Joseph? Why are the 144 000 noted separately from the great innumerable multitude if they are both righteous and both appear to be protected from the plagues of the Day of the Lord?

## **Who are the 144 000?**

Let's first read what the Book of Revelation has to say about the 144 000. In **Revelation 7** we read:

**Rev 7:1** And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth so that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

**Rev 7:2** And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

**Rev 7:3** saying, Do not hurt the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

**Rev 7:4** And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred *and* forty-four thousands, having been sealed out of every tribe of the sons of Israel.

**Rev 7:5** Out of the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand had been sealed. Out of the tribe of Reuben, twelve thousand had been sealed. Out of the tribe of Gad, twelve thousand had been sealed.

**Rev 7:6** Out of the tribe of Asher, twelve thousand had been sealed. Out of the tribe of Naphtali, twelve thousand had been sealed. Out of the tribe of Manasseh, twelve thousand had been sealed.

**Rev 7:7** Out of the tribe of Simeon, twelve thousand had been sealed. Out of the tribe of Levi, twelve thousand had been sealed. Out of the tribe of Issachar, twelve thousand had been sealed.

**Rev 7:8** Out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve thousand had been sealed. Out of the tribe of Joseph, twelve thousand had been sealed. Out of the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand had been sealed.

The only other place the 144 000 are mentioned in the Bible is in **Revelation 14** where we read:

**Rev 14:1** And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with him a hundred forty *and* four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

Rev 14:2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

Rev 14:3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred *and* forty *and* four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

Rev 14:4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, *being* **the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.**

Rev 14:5 And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

As a starting place for understanding who the 144 000 are let's read what Mr Armstrong wrote about them in his booklet "The Book of Revelation – Unveiled at Last!":

Who Are the 144,000? You have probably heard many interpretations. They are all in error. Men are unable to interpret this prophecy. The first thing to notice is that the TIME of the sealing of this 144,000 is yet in the future - it is after the Great Tribulation and the heavenly signs, and just before the plagues of God's Judgments! It has not happened yet!

Second, this prophecy is plain, and means just what it says - 144,000 of the 12 tribes of Israel - 12,000 of each tribe. Where are they today? Where are the lost ten tribes?...

And what is sealed in the foreheads? They are sealed by the Holy Spirit, in their foreheads. If you will turn to chapter 14:1, you will see that it is the Father's name that is written there. Jesus' very last prayer for His Church was that they would be kept in the FATHER'S name. Today we find the churches of this world under every possible manmade name; many named after men. But 12 times in the New Testament His own Church is the CHURCH OF GOD - yes, GOD'S Church.

Mr Armstrong believed the 144 000 were sealed with the Holy Spirit and were converted members of the Church of God which would indicate he thought they were spiritual Israelites yet at the same time the second paragraph quoted above indicates that he also felt they were Israelites from each of the physical tribes. Even he admitted his understanding of the 144 000 was incomplete.

In the years before Mr Armstrong's death the church numbered 150 000 and appeared to be close to the magical number of 144 000 yet since his death and the doctrinal apostasy the church has been decimated.

So are we looking at physical or spiritual Israelites with the 144 000. Are the 12 000 from each physical tribe? Technically not all the tribes number 12 000. The curious exception is the tribe of Dan. There are 12 000 from the tribe of Manasseh, one of the two sons of Joseph and then there is additional 12 000 who are also from the tribe of Joseph, remembering that Joseph had another son in Ephraim.

What we have to remember is that numbers are highly significant in the Bible and symbolism is attached to many important numbers. The 144 000 is composed of 12 x 12 000 so we have to look at the symbolism of the number 12.

The number 12 is symbolic as the number of organisational beginnings. There were 12 tribes of Israel and 12 apostles. The 144 000 are referred to as firstfruits of God in

**Revelation 14:4** so in this end-time context we are most likely looking at the organisational foundation for the Kingdom of God formed of Christ ruling with the firstfruits in the millennium.

The 144 000 are not physical Jews as the Jews descend from Judah, which is only one of the 12 tribes of Israel represented here. In his book "The 144 000" author Art Braidic makes an excellent case that the 144 000 are spiritual Israelites and not physical Israelites.

His first supporting proof of this is the fact that the order of tribes in **Revelation 7** is utterly unique in the Bible. They are not in birth order or any other order you find elsewhere for the physical tribes of Israel, either in past history or the millennial prophecies of Ezekiel where the physical tribes are given their millennial inheritance. Art writes:

Christ inspired John to record the order of the tribes in such a way as to make it clear that the 144,000 are not the twelve tribes of physical Israel. When those tribes are listed in the Bible it is by birth order or location. As Moses writes:

The sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun: The sons of Rachel; Joseph, and Benjamin: And the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid; Dan, and Naphtali: And the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid; Gad, and Asher: these *are* the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padan-aram (**Genesis 35:23-25**).

The list in Revelation does not follow their birth order or the tribes' positions as they assembled around the ensigns, as described in the book of Numbers, chapter two. Further, it does not reflect the list of Israel when she is placed back in her land after Christ's return. In that list Judah is numbered last, not first (**Ezekiel 48:1-8**).

The Revelation list does not follow the historic geographical order of the tribes either. Overlaying this list on a map, the roster moves from Judah, at Jerusalem, toward Manasseh in the north. Then it shifts to Simeon, who was located in the southern most area below Judah. Finally, the list goes back to Zebulun, who was located the farthest north. The fact that the tribes are not listed according to birth order, assembly by ensigns, or geographical location is another indicator that this is not physical Israel. This register is comprised of spiritual Israel—the Church of God (p.62-63).

His second supporting proof of this is in the names of the tribes. Art writes:

The Almighty God inspired the names of the tribes of Israel in such a way that they tell a wonderful story of every true christian's struggle and ultimate triumph. Notice how a paragraph placing the meaning of these names in their order might read:

I will praise the Lord (Judah) for He has looked on me (Reuben) and good fortune comes (Gad). Happy am I (Asher) because my wrestling (Naphtali) with God makes me forget (Manasseh) my trials. God hears me (Simeon) and has joined me (Levi) to Him. He has purchased me (Isaachar) and my Husband will dwell with me (Zebulon). God will add (Joseph) me to the Son of His right hand (Benjamin) (p.67).

Perhaps this explains why Joseph (add) and Manasseh are used as tribal names in Revelation 7 and not Ephraim (doubly fruitful) and Manasseh in order to get a better, more meaningful fit with the story you get from the meanings of the names.

Having said that does this explain why Dan (meaning judge) is excluded? It's possible but with the name judge this is something that the firstfruits will be doing in the World Tomorrow so there appears to be more to it.

David Pack in a sermon series on the 144 000 gave some interesting points to explain this mystery. He said that Dan has not got a great track record. Many of them left in ships to go their own way after the Exodus instead of into the Promised Land. Of those left of Dan who went to the Promised Land they didn't drive out the Canaanites from their inheritance and weren't content with their inheritance and did their own thing by seeking a new area to settle way in the north of Israel. They also led Israel into idolatry with the idols that were set up in Dan in the north.

**Genesis 48:19** says in the end time that Dan waits on salvation. In defence of the physical Israelite position a friend of mine felt that because Ireland (descended mostly from Dan) would be an ally with the beast power in the Great Tribulation it would be excluded from the 144 000 and have to wait for God's salvation. That said, I believe the lesson of not being a spiritual Danite is what is being driven home here.

The lesson that appears to be emphasised with the exclusion of Dan is that you can't go your own way like the tribe of Dan and expect to be a part of the firstfruits in the Kingdom of God.

There are 12 x 12 000 and the number 12 is significant in the Bible and generally thought of as the number of organisational beginnings so, in this end-time context, we may be talking about spiritual Israelites (church members) who's characteristics fit the temperament of each of the meanings of the tribes (even if not a descendant of that physical tribe). They may be the chosen ones for various governmental roles in the coming Kingdom of God.

It is quite unique that a record has been kept about the circumstances of each birth and the reasons behind the naming of each of the 12 sons. If we string together the meaning of the names of the 12 sons of Jacob in their order of birth the message reads:

Those who see the Son (Reuben), hear (Simeon) and obey Him and are joined with Him (Levi) will praise the Lord (Judah) who judges (Dan). For those who fight (Naphtali) and prevail, fortune (Gad) and happiness (Asher) is the reward of their hire (Isaachar) and He will dwell (Zebulon) with those whose reproach has been taken away and shall be added (Joseph) as sons along with the Son of His right hand (Benjamin).

We are told that the names of the tribes of Israel, whether spiritual or physical, will be on the gates of the New Jerusalem and will give such a message (**Revelation 21:12**). **Revelation 3:12** implies that God may give us a new name in the Kingdom. We may get a unique personal name and possibly even a new spiritual tribal name, not Mojo Mojo or some other tribal name off Survivor but perhaps one of the spiritual tribes of Israel that best fits our character.

Given the amount of mixing of the tribes it seems a far taller order for God to call 12 000 from each physical tribe of Israel into the church at the end and, if so, why do they get a special separate mention and what is their purpose? It appears more likely that the 12 000 of each tribe of Israel refer to spiritual Israelites and not physical Israelites.

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia has this to say about the sealing mentioned that occurs with the 144 000 in its article about sealing:

God by His Spirit indicates who are His, as the owner sets his seal on his property; and just as documents are sealed up until the proper time for opening them, so Christians are sealed up by the Holy Spirit "unto the day of redemption" (**Eph 1:13; 4:30; 2 Cor 1:22**). Ownership, security and authentication are implied in the words, "The firm foundation of God standeth, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his" (**2 Tim 2:19**). The seal of God on the foreheads of His servants (**Rev 7:2-4**) marks them off as His own, and guarantees their eternal security, whereas those that "have not the seal of God on their foreheads" (**Rev 9:4**) have no such guaranty.

Now does the sealing of the 144 000 all happen at the same time and are all the 144 000 alive at the time of the Day of the Lord?

Both Art Braidic and David Pack have put forth the belief that the sum total of true converted members up to the time of Christ's return would be 144 000 and that their number includes all christians from Abel to the end time. Let's have another look at the verses relating to the sealing. In **Revelation 7:2:4**:

And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

And I heard the number of them which were sealed: *and there were* sealed a hundred *and forty and* four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

The trumpet plagues are held back until the sealing takes place so the sealing appears to finish just before the trumpet plagues begin nearly a year before Christ's return. The beginning point of when the sealing takes place is not clearly defined so the sealing doesn't all have to take place at this time, only up until this time. The language implies the former not the latter possibility.

The case for the latter possibility put forth by Art Braidic and David Pack would appear to require that no-one receives the Holy Spirit in the Day of the Lord if the sealing ends at this time. That said, **Revelation 14:4** gives the strongest support for this possibility where it says the following about the 144 000 as they stand on Mount Zion after the resurrection with Jesus Christ:

These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, **being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.**

They are the firstfruits of God. The strong implication here is that they are ALL of the firstfruits. Let's look at the numbers in light of the number of brethren in the church today.

For the Jehovah Witnesses they long passed 144 000 of those who qualified for Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem (**Hebrews 12:22**) so they found themselves having to invent another reward for those converted after so they have the original 144 000 Jehovah Witness converts going to heaven during and after the millennium (forgetting that the heavenly Jerusalem comes to earth) and then have all those converted since them living forever on the earth.

For the Church of God the numbers work out differently. The Worldwide Church of God had 150,000 members at one stage but following the doctrinal apostasy there would probably be roughly between 15 000 and 30 000 who would be baptised and be truly converted. Add another 5 000 to 10 000 who have died in the faith since Mr Armstrong and we may well be several 10 000 short of the grand total of 144 000.

If we estimate 30 000 in this past century and about the same number in the first century that would only be around 60 000 plus those of other centuries. More will no doubt be converted between now and the Great Tribulation and then during the Great Tribulation thousands and thousands will turn to God but may not be able to find a true minister of God to baptise them.

Those few ministers who can baptise will most likely be in captivity with the rest of the Israelites and be under suspicion from the beast power's authority which will be strongly Catholic and persecute anything outside what they see as the only true religion. To bring the grand total up to 144 000 may even require that God make an exception and give some people the Holy Spirit before they are baptised with water which happened with Cornelius' household.

So if we look at those numbers it is quite reasonable that God could work it out that there will be exactly 144 000 in the first resurrection who are spiritual Israelites and have temperaments which match the meanings of the tribes of Israel even though they may not be physically descended from those tribes or even of any of the tribes in the case of the many physical Gentiles we have in the church.

Adding to that possibility Jude wrote:

Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with **ten thousands** of his saints (**Jude 1:14**).

He didn't say hundred of thousands, he said tens of thousands.

### **Who are the Great Innumerable Multitude?**

In addition to the 144 000 we see another group of people mentioned in **Revelation 7** where we read:

**Rev 7:9** After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

**Rev 7:10** And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

**Rev 7:11** And all the angels stood round about the throne, and *about* the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshiped God,

**Rev 7:12** Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, *be* unto our God forever and ever. Amen.

**Rev 7:13** And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

**Rev 7:14** And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

**Rev 7:15** Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

**Rev 7:16** They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

**Rev 7:17** For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Mr Armstrong writes the following about this great innumerable multitude in his booklet "The Book of Revelation – Unveiled at Last!":

But these 144,000 are not all! "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands ... And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (**Rev. 7:9, 13-14**).

Now how about this innumerable multitude? They have come through THE Great Tribulation. God will not send His frightful PLAGUES to punish the world, until He has first sent a great supernatural warning. God has warned the world through all His prophets -- through His Son Jesus Christ -- He is warning the world right now through this very work. But God is a God of mercy and compassion. He will yet warn this world once again -- by supernatural signs, in the sun, the moon, and the stars. God will leave men no excuse.

And after the Great Tribulation, when men are seized with stark terror at these supernatural heavenly signs, multiplied thousands will at last recognize that it is really GOD warning them! Yes, multiplied thousands who now hear this warning from God will not heed it now. They are deceived. They still believe and follow their various human leaders, or groups. Their minds are not fully opened to recognize this as God's last warning to this world!

They are not repenting or turning to God, now! Oh, how well I know that! But when they see these things actually occur which they heard from no others -- when they have seen how the world was deceived and misled about the Great Tribulation, and they have gone through it -- when they see these terrifying supernatural SIGNS in the heavens, then, at last, hundreds of thousands of them -- perhaps even some of you -- will at last recognize the TRUTH, and at last turn to God in complete submission, fully repenting, and coming through Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world! We of this ministry well know that our real reward in the harvest of precious lives will mostly come after our labors are finished!

Mr Armstrong felt that these were the millions who would repent in the Great Tribulation in addition to those in the church who would have repented before the start of the Great Tribulation.

Art Braided has a different take on who the great innumerable multitude are. In his book "The 144 000" he writes:

This incredible multitude is composed of those who will ultimately be saved in and through the second resurrection, and the corresponding great White Throne Judgement.

The vision of such a massive crowd stunned John. As the apostle stood speechless, an angel asked: **What are these** which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they? (**Revelation 7:13**).

The angel asks this question knowing that the 144,000 are the first resurrection. He would not ask the identity of this second group if they were part of the firstfruits mentioned earlier. His question was likely designed to jar John back to his senses after the shock of seeing so great a multitude, but the angel's query is further evidence that the 144,000 and great multitude are not in the same resurrection. The angel states:

These are they which came **out of great tribulation**, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (**Revelation 7:14**).

The angel tells John that these came out of great tribulation. As discussed in the previous chapter, this is not referring to *the* Great Tribulation that comes on the whole world at the end of the age. Instead, it refers to the enormous trials that come upon those who are **not** believers during this lifetime.

The multitude are those who have been resurrected after the millennium. This is when they have washed their robes in Christ's blood, accepted His sacrifice, and overcome their human nature. As such, they are now able to stand before God's throne, and shout, "Salvation!" The angel continues to explain more detail about the great multitude. He next states:

Therefore are they **before the throne of God**, and **serve Him day and night in His temple**: and He that sitteth on the throne shall **dwel among them**. (**Revelation 7:15**).

The Scriptures explain that the great multitude stand "before God's throne." It is important to note that they do not sit in His throne as do the 144,000 who rule with Christ. Instead, the Bible shows a vast multitude standing before God's throne at the time of the White Throne Judgement (**Revelation 20:11-12**).

The incredible numbers of people that will exist together at this time will be from every race, every time period, and every culture. There will be every possible language and dialect represented before God, awaiting His judgement. After they are judged, those found written in the Book of Life will rejoice, shouting that God has brought about their salvation.

If the Bible is the only source used to interpret the Scripture, then the account of the great multitude, and the verses depicting the judgement of the rest of the dead, are parallel verses. They portray the exact same people. The great multitude can only be those who come through the White Throne Judgement.

The Apostle John is also told that the great multitude "serve God in His temple." The word "serve" is "Latreuo" in the Greek. Its root is "latris," meaning one hired for menial labor. The use of this word indicates that this group ministers to God, in religious homage, doing service in the temple. This is a far cry from the position of those who attain the first resurrection.

Those in the first resurrection assist God by ruling with Christ. They will wear crowns, and serve God and the rest of mankind in leadership roles. The vast multitude is not part of this resurrection, and therefore, the Scriptures reveal that the future role of the great multitude is menial or commonplace.

Another difference between these two groups is evidenced by the fact that the great multitude serves **in** God's temple. Those who are in the first resurrection are described as **being** God's temple (**1 Corinthians 3:17; Ephesians 2:19-21**). The 144,000 are the temple, which is the New Jerusalem!



Is Art's interpretation of "these are they which came out of great tribulation" correct where he says that it means general tribulation and not THE Great Tribulation? This was the only point in his book on the 144 000 which I had a hard time believing.

The King James Version says "out of great tribulation" but other translations such as the Modern King James Version and others say "out of **the** great tribulation" which is more definitive in referring to the Great Tribulation at the end of the age. To determine which is correct we need to check the Greek and according to the Interlinear Scripture Analyzer the Greek word for "the" is indeed there right before great tribulation.

That said, this doesn't automatically rule out Art's interpretation as many periods of time can be referred to as great tribulation though only one period of time is referred to as the greatest period of trial and tribulation ever.

Art made a very interesting point when we were discussing this back and forth that Revelation 9 speaks of the 200 million army but when referring to this group of people it says that they were so many that no man could number them and this appears to indicate that this group is possibly much larger than the army of 200 million. This would be a strong indication that these are not just those who repent before Christ's coming but all who repent in the second great harvest of humanity, most of who will come up in the second resurrection.

The phrasing of verse 7 - "After this I beheld and lo a great multitude" lends itself to being a natural chapter break and the idea that this is an inset chapter is a very comfortable fit.

There is no question that the last 3 verses (**Revelation 7:15-17**) project forward to the time after the millennium and describe the same things described when the New Jerusalem descends to earth so these could be those who will be in the second resurrection.

I am more inclined to favour Art's position but what if "out of the great tribulation" does mean THE Great Tribulation? If that is how it is meant to be interpreted then who are the great innumerable multitude if the 144 000 refers to all those who will be in the first resurrection?

Those of the great innumerable multitude are washed with the blood of the Lamb and wear white robes so they are converted and appear to be protected from the Day of the Lord? If this is so, then why are they not a part of the 144 000 if the 144 000 are all those who will be in the first resurrection? If they are converted and protected from the Day of the Lord then why do they miss out on the first resurrection?

David Pack said something in a sermon series I listened to on the 144 000 that exposed an assumption that I had made about the great innumerable multitude. He stated that with the great innumerable multitude there is nothing to say that they are sealed like the 144 000. If the sealing is with the Holy Spirit then why would this huge multitude of people not have the Holy Spirit?

We touched on a possibility for this before. During the Great Tribulation thousands and possibly millions will turn to God but may not be able to find a true minister of God to baptise them. Those few ministers who can baptise will most likely be in captivity with the rest of the Israelites and be under suspicion from the beast power's authority which will be strongly Catholic and persecute anything outside what they see as the only true religion.

Art pointed out to me that it is inconsistent to say that the 144 000 are protected by the sealing of the Holy Spirit and at the same time say that the great multitude don't have the Holy Spirit but are protected.

This is not necessarily an inconsistency. Take the case of children of members who are with those members and are repentant but not baptised. God would protect them and while the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is one of the signs of those who are His there are others who may not have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit but have the Holy Spirit working with their minds (**John 14:17**) who God is also capable of protecting.

A great multitude at this time will have been forgiven by God and be converted in behaviour but not have been baptised in a similar situation to our prospective members and young unbaptised teenagers.

David Pack identifies the great innumerable multitude as the remnant of Israel that are converted in their captivity. There is clearly more to the great innumerable multitude than just Israelites as we are told that they are "of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues" (**Revelation 7:9**).

This group that turn to God at this time will be the first people that God pours His spirit freely upon in the millennium and after (**Joel 2:28**) and will be representative of all those who will be in the second great harvest of souls after the firstfruits.

As noted before there may even be a cutoff period at the beginning of the Day of the Lord for receipt of the Holy Spirit in this age when the 144 000 will be fully sealed. This is something that both Art Braidic and Dave Pack have to contend with when claiming that the 144 000 represents all who will be in the first resurrection.

In conclusion, the 144 000 appear to not be physical but spiritual Israel – the church of God referred to as the Israel of God in **Galatians 6:16**. They are the firstfruits according to **Revelation 14:4**. The 12 tribes noted are in a completely different order than anywhere else strongly implying we are talking about spiritual Israelites. The tribes listed in **Revelation 7** when substituted with their meanings tell the story of the victorious christian.

The 144 000 are all from Abel to Christ's return sealed with the Holy Spirit and who will be a part of God's world-ruling government in the millennium symbolised by the repetition of the number 12 which is a number symbolising governmental or organisational beginnings.

The great innumerable multitude could be those converted and forgiven during the Great Tribulation who are also protected but due to lack of opportunity to be baptised by God's true ministry do not have God's spirit. They would receive God's spirit at the beginning of the millennium and would be representative of all who will be converted in the second latter harvest of souls.

Alternatively, as the 144 000 represent those of the first great harvest of souls, the great innumerable multitude may not be just those people who repent during the Great Tribulation but may indeed be ALL of those who are a part of the second great harvest of souls with Revelation 7 being an inset chapter of the two great harvest of souls before and after Christ's second coming.