

144,000: First Fruits unto God

Presented by:
Alistair Huang

Revelation 14:1-5

- ⦿ Father's name in their foreheads
- ⦿ Sing a new song no one else can sing
- ⦿ Not defiled with women
- ⦿ They are virgins
- ⦿ Follow the Lamb
- ⦿ No guile, no fault
- ⦿ First fruits
- ⦿ Descriptions relate to Jesus

Jesus: The First Fruit

- ⊗ 1 Cor 15:20-23
- ⊗ Christ was the first fruits of them that slept. This very scene, the resurrection of Christ from the dead, was observed in type by the Jews at one of their sacred feasts. . . . They came up to the Temple when the first fruits had been gathered in, and held a feast of thanksgiving. The first fruits of the harvest crop were sacredly dedicated to the Lord. That crop was not to be appropriated for the benefit of man. The first ripe fruit was dedicated as a thank offering to God. He was acknowledged as the Lord of the harvest. When the first heads of grain ripened in the field, they were carefully gathered, and when the people went up to Jerusalem, they were presented to the Lord, waving the ripened sheaf before Him as a thank offering. After this ceremony the sickle could be put to the wheat, and it could be gathered into sheaves (MS 115, 1897). {6BC 1092.5}

First Fruits

- ⦿ Sacredly dedicated to the Lord.
- ⦿ Thank offering to the Lord, representative of the entire harvest.
- ⦿ Must be presented to God before the harvest can continue.

144,000: First Fruits

- ⊗ The 144,000 are sacredly dedicated to the Lord for a special purpose.
- ⊗ The 144,000 are representative of the rest of the harvest.
- ⊗ The harvest cannot continue until the first fruits are presented.

The Growth Process

- ⦿ Mark 4:26-29 – The process of ripening = The process of Christian growth
- ⦿ When the harvest is ripe, the reaping takes place.
- ⦿ The seed determines what crop is to be harvested.
- ⦿ John 12:24 – Christ is the Seed
- ⦿ Ripeness = Christlikeness = Sealing

144,000: First Fruits

- ⊗ The 144,000 sacredly dedicated to the Lord for a special purpose.
- ⊗ The 144,000 are representative of the rest of the harvest.
- ⊗ The harvest cannot continue until the first fruits are presented.
- ⊗ The quality of their faith is representative of what all the righteous dead would become if they had the same opportunities. (i.e. Luther and Miller.)

Two Harvests

- ⊗ Revelation 14:14-20
- ⊗ Ripe unto Salvation
- ⊗ Ripe unto Destruction
- ⊗ Actually two groups of first fruits in Revelation 14.
- ⊗ Joel 3:13 - The “other” first fruits.
- ⊗ The final evidence in the Great Controversy...the final product of God’s way versus Satan’s way.

The process is the same...

- ⊗ Character development is a process, as is illustrated by the growing of a plant: first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. This is the case both for a righteous character as well as for a wicked one. No one is ripe overnight either for good or for ill. It is a process, and that is why we need think carefully in which direction is our character growing? To be ripe unto God or ripe unto destruction?
- ⊗ Which type of first fruit do you want to be?

Christ's Longing

"When the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.
{COL 69.1}

It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, (2 Peter 3:12, margin). Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain.
{COL 69.2}

Summary

- ⦿ The Servants of God: Solely concerned about the Master's will and His glory. Obedient even unto death.
- ⦿ The Seal of God: Loyal committed to God beyond the point of no return.
- ⦿ The First Fruits: The full representation of what fallen man can become in Christ.
- ⦿ The central theme: What character are we forming? Will we give Jesus our all? It is a process that we are each going through.

Conclusion

Upon the crystal sea before the throne, that sea of glass as it were mingled with fire,--so resplendent is it with the glory of God,--are gathered the company that have "gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name." With the Lamb upon Mount Zion, "having the harps of God," they stand, the hundred and forty and four thousand that were redeemed from among men; and there is heard, as the sound of many waters, and as the sound of a great thunder, "the voice of harpers harping with their harps."

Conclusion

And they sing "a new song" before the throne, a song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand. It is the song of Moses and the Lamb--a song of deliverance. None but the hundred and forty-four thousand can learn that song; for it is the song of their experience--an experience such as no other company have ever had. "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." These, having been translated from the earth, from among the living, are counted as "the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb." Revelation 15:2, 3; 14:1-5.

Conclusion

"These are they which came out of great tribulation;" they have passed through the time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation; they have endured the anguish of the time of Jacob's trouble; they have stood without an intercessor through the final outpouring of God's judgments. But they have been delivered, for they have "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." "In their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault" before God. "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."

Conclusion

They have seen the earth wasted with famine and pestilence, the sun having power to scorch men with great heat, and they themselves have endured suffering, hunger, and thirst. But "they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. 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." Revelation 7:14-17. {GC 648.3}