

# The Harvest of Ingathering

**James' Epistle mentions an important aspect regarding the opportunity for salvation, that there IS to be More than One Day of Salvation and Harvest of Souls. What does this mean as it involves the Redemption of Unconverted Humanity?**

© Rich Traver, 81520-1411 4-22-12 [ 206 ] [www.goldensheaves.org](http://www.goldensheaves.org)

In James chapter 5, verse 7, we are reminded of the phenomenon of “*the early and latter rain*”. The Lord is compared to the farmer who is willing to patiently wait for the harvest that is the purpose for which He labors. What James was alluding to there is something that was generally known among God’s true worshippers even from ancient times, that situation of there being both an early and a late harvest. Two harvest periods -- a smaller harvest in early summer and a much greater harvest at the end of summer. Their awareness was further illustrated in the harvest festivals God gave them to observe after coming out of their Egyptian bondage.

These two harvests were known by two different names. The Holydays God gave to Israel reflected the annual grain harvests, and were known as the Feast of Firstfruits (Ex. 23:16; Lev. 23:10 & 17) and the later Feast of Ingathering. (Ex. 34:22 & 23:16)

We can know also that Jesus saw the world as a field for harvest from His own statements to that effect in Matthew 13:38 and Luke 10:2.

## Simply Harvest Celebrations?

But, were these only agricultural festivals, meant to celebrate the physical abundance they were given, or did the agricultural harvests correlate to what God ultimately is to do regarding the redemption of **all** of mankind? It’s when we comprehend the parallel meanings God illustrates within His Feasts in how they reflect physical Creation that we can understand how His Plan is more all inclusive than the average church-going public is aware of.

This study paper will focus on what we call the **fall** Holydays and the phenomenon of the great Harvest of Ingathering and the events that make such a situation possible.

In the companion article to this one, titled, “*The Harvest of Firstfruits*”, the matters of personal salvation were considered. Where the first harvest celebrations built upon historical events, the second is built around events that are prophetic. There’s an important reason for that. The spring “firstfruits” harvest deals with matters relevant to **personal** salvation, which is ongoing now, where the fall “ingathering” harvest considers the matters and events related to a future **world** salvation! Full salvation of the entire world from day one was not God’s Plan. In the “Christian Era”, **only those** whom the Father specifically called COULD come to conversion! (John 6:44; Rom. 9:16-23 & 11:7) That is profound. Once we realize there’s such a limitation, that a person can’t truly come to Christ except with the Father’s election, we can better appreciate the hope these later era days reveal as it regards the ‘calling’ of the rest of humanity.

## The Book of Life’s Enactment!

With Christ’s Second Coming, humanity will experience something unique in all of history. In a moment of time, there will be no converted human beings left, dead or alive, that remain in their physical state. All names that were in the Book of Life will have been raised as Immortal Spirit beings. The Book of Life at that point will have been emptied of names destined for Eternal Life as all those formerly in it will have been awarded it!

Where does that leave the rest of humanity? Where does that leave the rest of the dead, especially those who **never had** any real opportunity for salvation? The harvest of God’s Firstfruits will have already been gathered-in. Is that all there is? Listening to your typical evangelical ‘soul winner’, you’d think so! This is where ‘the rest of the story’ begins to provide important answers.

## Firstfruits to Assist the Lamb

*“And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads...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. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them:... and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, **and shall reign with him a thousand years.**” (Rev. 14:1, 4-5 & 20:4-6)*

The firstfruits are to rule on earth with Christ! In the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter of Revelation, verses 9-10, all the Saints praise Him in song, “...saying, *Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.*”

## Opportunity Opened

In distinct contradiction to the end-of-life reward scenario posed by traditional religions, the Saints **will not** spend eternity in idle repose up in Heaven, but will be in God's service, ruling with Him over a vastly transformed world order. Satanic influence will be removed from society (Rev. 20:1-3) and the 'books' (*biblos*) will be opened (Rev. 20:12), as will the Temple in Heaven. (Rev. 11:19) It's this realization that dramatically changes everything!

So, how does this effect another harvest?

This is where the fall Holydays come into play, as they reveal God's Plan for the redemption of the rest of humanity, those who were never called.

On the first day of the seventh month, there is an annual Holyday known by the name, the Feast of Trumpets.<sup>1</sup> On the tenth day there is another, currently a fast, known as, the Day of Atonement.<sup>2</sup> On the fifteenth day, there is another Holyday which begins a seven-day festival known as the Feast of Tabernacles.<sup>3</sup> As we can see in places such as Zechariah 14, Christ's Second Coming will require that all nations come up to observe the Feast of Tabernacles each year.(v.16-20) There's an important reason for this, as it pictures a new world condition, one which involves their 'day of salvation'. This **second** 'day of salvation' is the 1000 years that so many prophesies refer to as the Kingdom of God on earth.

## Yet One Final Holy Day!

But it's the last Holyday in God's Plan for humanity, which includes all who have ever lived, that's so essential to our comprehending how the great fall harvest of Ingathering is to be completed. Most of the world's religions, including modern Judaism, even Messianic Judaism, is not aware of how the events pictured in this day play out. This concluding Holyday, occurring immediately after the seven day Feast of Tabernacles, is known as the Last Great Day.

The entire spectrum of the fall harvest of Ingathering is illustrated by these four prophetically-oriented observances, all falling within the seventh month, over a span of about three weeks. We should not be, we need not be, ignorant of these insightful illustrations.

## The Living and the Dead

After the Great Tribulation period and the Day of

---

<sup>1</sup> This feast day celebrates the end of the series of seven Trumpets associated with the end-time events, particularly the seventh (the Last Trump) which announces the Second Coming and the first resurrection of Saints. (Rev. 11:15-19)

<sup>2</sup> A special occasion celebrating the unity of God and man, made possible by Christ's atoning sacrifice. Could this day also picture the union of Christ and His Bride? They together will 'call' all to their day of salvation. (Rev. 22:17 & John 7:37-38)

<sup>3</sup> A seven day period which celebrates the new world in which no limitation on the opportunity for salvation will exist. Christ and His Bride will justly govern all nations in peace and righteousness for 1000 years. (Rev. 20:6)

the Lord, there will still be a remnant of people who have survived through it all. These and their descendants will provide many **living** generations of physical humans who will repopulate the nations which Christ and His Bride will govern for 1000 years, (Isaiah 9:6) and will teach. (Jer. 31:34)

Also, in the vast ethnicities and generations never called, who were never provided opportunity for salvation, we have the vast numbers of **dead**, asleep in their graves. (Called 'the rest of the dead' in Revelation 20:5) What provision is made for them? This is where the Last Great Day factors into the latter harvest scene. They are to be resurrected after the 1000 years. The Last Great Day is that final generation after the millennium, during which those raised dead will be provided the same opportunity for salvation as the living generation had in the millennial age (the 1000 years).

### **Not Universal Salvation**

This is not to say that all will respond positively or will acceptably avail themselves of their opportunity. The same is true of those who live during the millennial age. We can see that from the response that Satan gets from the late millennial generation in Revelation 20, verses 1-3 and 7-10. There will always be the susceptible. The millennial and post-millennial ages will not bring 'universal salvation' but will provide the 'field of opportunity' to any and all who choose to avail themselves of it.

Now, if that world is to be the field, and is to be considered for harvest, certain things must first take place. First, Christ must assume full power and take to Himself all governing authority (Rev. 11:17). Satan must be removed from society (Rev. 20:1-3). All false religions must be banned (Rev. 14:6-10). Then, each individual will be able to pursue *faith, repentance* and *baptism* (the basic steps of conversion), free of deceptions, in order to receive the Holy Spirit. But then, each person must complete a lifetime in faithful compliance with all of God's Commandments (Rev. 22:14), unhindered by any corrupted society, a far better circumstance than what the firstfruits generation had to live in.

The 'process' of conversion will be the same then as it is now! These living in the millennial age will live out their lives and will go to their graves, just

as now, with full rights to immortality. (Rev. 14:13) They'll come up in their resurrection for sentencing to Eternal Life in the Family of God. These though, won't have the same family stature as the Bride, but will be 'children' of Christ and His Bride. They will be included in the greater second Harvest of Ingathering, but an important consideration must be implemented before that occurs.

### **The Rest of the DEAD!**

Not to be overlooked is the inclusion in the second harvest of vast numbers who died prior to the Second Coming, who never had a real opportunity for salvation, to finally have their chance. After the millennium, they will be raised back to a physical state to complete a full lifetime without Satanic influences, like those who lived in the millennial age had. This is **not** a 'second chance' per se, but is the first chance for multiple billions who died without ever having been rightly evangelized, or who might have died too young to be able to adequately comprehend what conversion is, or who were deliberately blinded, either by Satan (2 Cor. 4:4) (which God allowed) or by God Himself! (Rom. 11:25-32). When it isn't their fault that they were blinded, can a just God exclude them from any chance of salvation?

An interesting passage is found in Romans 11. In verse 32, Paul explains that God blinded certain people, "*That He might have mercy upon all*" of them! If their 'blindness' excludes them from an opportunity for salvation in their first lifetimes, how can that be regarded as 'merciful'? Well, it can be if we realize that their opportunity period, provided them in the second resurrection era (the post-millennial age), is in a spiritual environment free of the societal depravities and doctrinal perversions that plague this present evil world. God places certain ones aside who He knows could not make it in this evil world condition, but will open their minds, will open 'the books' and will open His Temple to them under far more amenable circumstances.

Particularly mentioned in Ezekiel 37, we see the two Houses of Israel raised to a physical existence, reunited nationally and having God's Spirit placed within them. (Ezek. 37:12-14)

Now, it ought to be explained that those who **did** have opportunity for salvation previously, and who spurned it, will not come up in the second resurrection after the 1000 years. They will remain asleep in their graves, awaiting the Final Judgment appropriate to their condemned situation.

Mentioned earlier, the meaning of the concluding Holyday, the Last Great Day fails to register with most of the churchgoing public. That day provides the period of opportunity for salvation to all who never had a real opportunity. It will comprise one full generation. It's known also by the name, "the Great White Throne Judgment" which is the indeterminate span of time between the second resurrection and the Final Sentencing at the very end.

### The Coming Final Harvest

But all of this is merely the 'field' from which the fullest possible 'yield' will come. The millennial age is not the entirety of the second harvest without the post-millennial 'second resurrection' era. These are the ages during which God will be re-producing additional vast numbers for His Family. (Jn. 1:12)

However, we should recall that many whose names are added into the Book of Life after the first resurrection will have gone to their graves, and will remain in that state ('*asleep*') until the Judgment Day arrives. These who attained salvation will be raised to join those alive at the end for final sentencing. The rest of the wicked dead will arise with them. No one will be sentenced while still dead! This will be the time of the Final Sentencing, as the Great White Throne era draws to a close.

### The Earth is RIPE!

But, the **second and final harvest** itself will come only when the harvest is fully ripe: When all who have ever lived have been provided an opportunity to decide whether or not to accept God's atonement for them and when further time wouldn't make any appreciable difference, the End will be declared. We read of that event in Revelation chapter 14. Beginning in verse 14: "*And I looked, and behold a **white cloud**, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the **Son of man**, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.* (a harvest tool)

[15] *And another angel came out of the temple,*

*crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for **the harvest of the earth is ripe.***

[16] *And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.*

This is the Great Final Harvest of humanity. And notice, the one doing the reaping of this 'grain' contingent is Christ. Continuing with scene two...

[17] *And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.*

[18] *And another angel came out from the altar, which had **power over fire**; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for **her grapes are fully ripe.***

[19] *And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the **great winepress of the wrath of God.***

[20] *And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs. (200 miles!)*

Associated with the second harvest of all these righteous peoples is another event, one not commemorated by any Holyday. Carrying out the Final Sentencing of **wicked** humanity will be accomplished shortly after the prior contingent of righteous individuals are harvested. As Jesus said in Matthew 25:31-46, He will at the end, gather all nations, by a general resurrection and will separate them, the righteous from the wicked. In this scene we see reaping angels (Matt. 13:39) gathering up that other contingent for Wrath. These are they who have **rejected** God's Salvation, and will be required to pay the penalty for their sins with their own blood. As it describes the situation, we see a massive outflow! These are then burned-up in the Lake of Fire, which produces a total extinction of life and consciousness. (both soul and body, Mt. 10:28)

So in this series of fall Holydays, we can see exactly how and when all the rest of humanity will have completed its being made ready for inclusion in the Family of God, **or not**. It is those lacking in understanding who reject what God has provided us as a means to understand these most important considerations. 