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Scripture Studies Review

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The 3-fold Harvest

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There is a harvest in the natural world around us, that we can see, and are familiar with. There is likewise a harvest in the spiritual realm that is not seen with the natural eyesight.

Each year, a farmer has a certain crop in mind, so he plants the appropriate seeds. Later, the seeds spring up, and a crop comes forth. The farmer then harvests the crop when it is ready. So it is in the spiritual realm.

> *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman (farmer)." (John 15:1)*

Yahuweh the Creator is the farmer, and with a certain crop in mind, He plants the appropriate seeds. Without going into much detail in this writing, let us simply say that the earth or garden is mankind, the seed is the incorruptible seed of the Living Word – the Seed of Righteousness poured down from the skies, as seen in Isaiah 45:8, and as we discussed in **Righteousness as the Light**.

The plants that spring up from the earth are trees of Righteousness, the planting of Yahuweh. The fruit or crop is the Fruit of Righteousness, the outward expression of the inward reality. After a time the crop becomes ready, and is harvested, and put into His barn.

So when does the harvest take place? There are many in past centuries that have gone to sleep, and are awaiting their resurrection. In this writing we will not deal with those that have already gone to sleep, but with those that remain alive at the time of the harvest.

> *"… the harvest is the end of the world…" (Matthew 13:39)*

The traditional view of the Harvest at the end of the age is that there is one harvest, and then comes the end. However, Scripture gives abundant witness to show that the one harvest mentioned in the above passage actually consists of three separate phases that differ in timing, as well as in the crop harvested.

These three phases of the harvest — first the Barley crop, next the wheat crop, and finally the crop of grapes and other items — are a prophetic picture of the harvest of souls at the end of the age. We have simply not understood that there are three separate phases of the one harvest.

The Feasts of Israel

Scripture reveals that the three major harvest Feasts (*moedim*) of Israel — Pesach, known as Passover; Shavuot, also called Pentecost; and Sukkot, called Tabernacles — are **shadows of things to come**. That is, they are prophetic, and tell us of many 'things to come.' One thing the Feasts reveal is that the Feasts themselves speak of the three separate phases of the one harvest, each occurring in its own order. As we examine the following passages, we get the understanding that there is more than one resurrection, and that the harvest occurs in several phases over a span of time.

The First Resurrection Feast

The Spring Feasts of Israel are within the season of Passover, and consist of three distinct Feasts: Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Early Firstfruits. It is this Early Firstfruit harvest that is mentioned in Scripture as the First Resurrection:

> *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

> *5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.*

> *6 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 20:4-6)*

The First Resurrection gets its name from being the first in order of occurrence. Also known as the Feast of Early Firstfruits ('yom ha Bikkurim'), this resurrection occurs at the end of the Passover season, and represents the first crop to ripen: the Barley. For this Feast, ripe Barley sheaves are to be waved before Yahuweh:

> *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it. (Leviticus 23:10-11)*

As the firstfruit crop of the Harvest, Barley speaks loudly throughout Scripture as prophetic of not only Yahushua, but of the Bride. In many of the prophetic pictures of the Bride, Barley is either present or is associated in some way. Many of the Bride examples, as well as Bride characteristics, include mention of the word Barley in some way.

Significant to this Feast also is that it is the season of Unleavened bread. Both Passover and Early Firstfruits speak of an unleavened life, one characteristic of the Bride.

For many in the Jewish world today, the significance of this feast is unknown. This significance of this day is that it gives testimony to the Resurrection of the Jewish Messiah. It was on this very day of Early Firstfruits that Yahushua was resurrected, confirming the Scriptures referring to Yahushua Messiah as the 'firstfruit' of the resurrection:

> *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. (1Corinthians 15:20)*

> *For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. (Romans 11:16)*

> *But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. (1Corinthians 15:23)*

Not only is Yahushua mentioned in Scripture as the resurrection firstfruit ('risen from the dead'), but others are also:

> *Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. (James 1:18)*

> *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 14:4)*

These Scriptures confirm that as part of the final harvest of men, there will be a 'firstfruit' harvest.

The Second Resurrection Feast

The second major Feast of Israel is called Shavuot, or the Feast of Latter Firstfruits. Having the Greek name Pentecost, it occurs exactly fifty days after the Feast of Early Firstfruits. This feast occurs as a *memorial* of the much larger wheat harvest, and includes waving of two loaves of leavened wheat bread before Yahuweh.

Indeed, Pentecost portrays the Second harvest of souls, those that were not yet ready to be harvested at the First Resurrection. Just as wheat bread is baked with leaven, these souls were still leavened at the time of the Firstfruit Harvest, and were not yet ready. Since they are *Leavened,* they are thus made to be baked in the 'oven' — to go through the furnace of affliction — in order to bring the crop to a state of readiness.

The following passages describe this large part of the Pentecost harvest:

> *"…the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." 10 Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. (Daniel 12:9b-10)*

> *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: 9)*

> *And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? 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 7:13-14)*

So we see in the above passages this wheat harvest will be a very great harvest, of those that had robes by virtue of their Faith in Messiah, but were not yet ready when the Bridegroom came for the Bride at the First Resurrection Harvest.

The Third Harvest Feast

The third stage of the harvest to be made is the grape harvest. This is the harvest that comes at a time after the wheat harvest. It will not be discussed at length here. We will make brief note of the grape harvest later as we discuss the Three Harvest phases of Revelation 14.

The 3-Fold Rapture

It is interesting to note that many men have already seen in Scripture some of the various pieces of the Harvest puzzle described above. Some have adopted use of the word 'Rapture' to denote the particular resurrection scenario they have seen and understood.

Some have seen a 'pre' tribulation rapture in Scripture; some have seen a 'mid' trib, and others have seen a 'post' trib rapture. Still others have devised a 'pre-wrath' view as more logical. Apart from using the non-Biblical term *rapture* in place of 'resurrection,' I would suggest there is some truth in each one of these ideas. Scripture speaks about each one, each in its own time. What men have not understood is that the entire harvest will not occur in only one phase, but in three.

So we must conclude from all of Scripture, that there will be no single 'Rapture' of the saints as widely understood today, but instead a 3-fold Resurrection — consisting of three separate phases of the One Harvest.

The Remnant Harvest of Romans

There are two well-known Scripture passages in Romans, that on first glance, appear to be contradictory:

> *"…a remnant shall be saved…." (Romans 9:27b)*

> *"…all Israel shall be saved…." (Romans 11:26a)*

Here we see the apostle Paul first tells us a *remnant* — a small part of the Harvest — shall be saved. Then he tells us 'all Israel' — the entire Harvest — will be saved. These verses are not written in order to prove a certain point of view. Both of these passages are true, and reveal to us that the Harvest occurs in phases, first a *remnant* or small part, and then the whole Harvest.

Now let's look at the final explanation Paul gives for the *remnant* Harvest phase:

> *For he will finish the work, and cut it short <4932> in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. (Romans 9:28)*

The Greek word <4932> cut short means to "cut in pieces." Here Paul tells us that He will finish the work, and literally 'cut or divide it into pieces by righteousness.' That is, each piece, or harvest phase, is determined by its 'righteousness' (See Righteousness Sown, Righteousness Harvested).

The Three-Phase Harvest of Revelation 14

The three-fold Harvest can be seen through many examples in Scripture. Perhaps one of the clearest pictures may be seen in Revelation Chapter 14:

> *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.*

> *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 14:3-4)*

In the above passages, and in those we saw above in Rev 20, it appears to be implied that both the **first and second Harvest phases** are portrayed as the 'firstfruits unto God.' The Greek word for *redeemed* <59> means "to buy or purchase," and is from a Greek base word meaning 'gather', which in turn is related to the Greek word *egeiro* <1453> meaning "to arise," which in the New Testament often refers to *resurrection*. It seems to be that the early and latter Firstfruits become as one Firstfruits, even though they occur at different times.

We now come to Rev. 14:14, where we next see the second Harvest phase portrayed:

> *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.*

> *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<2325>: for the time is come for thee to reap<2325> for the harvest<2326> 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<2325>. (Rev 14:14-16)*

In the passages above we see the word translated *reap* is the same word for *harvest,* but used as a verb. This is the **second Harvest phase**. This second phase of the Harvest speaks of those virgins in Matt 25:11, after missing the Bridegroom at the first Resurrection Harvest:

> *Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.*

> *12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. (Matthew 25:11-12)*

What do we know about their state of readiness? Notice the following:

> *"…I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity<458> [Lawlessness; Lit. "without Torah"]." (Matthew 7:23b)*

We see in Scripture that the Greek word for Harvest *(therismos)* appears 13 times in the new Testament. Since the number 13 speaks prophetically of *Love*, we understand that **the Harvest is simply a three-phase reaping of love — Yahushua's harvest of those who love Him**. Yahushua has already told us "if you love me, keep my commandments."

So again we see another characteristic of the Second phase of the Harvest — that it consists of those that were lacking love (of keeping 'My Commandments') at the time the Bridegroom came for the Bride. This lack of love is somehow related to the phrase, "I never knew you."

Indeed, many today call Yahushua Saviour, and Messiah. Yet they do not truly know who He really is — that it was *Messiah* who gave the Commandments to Moses. Yet they refuse to keep His Commandments. Many today do not know of the perpetual ('eternal') sign of the Everlasting Covenant — the sign of those that truly know Him (See Ex 31:13, 16; Eze 20:20). This sign seen in Exodus and Ezekiel is likewise a sign to the Bridegroom — of those that know Him, and love Him. This is the sign of those that keep his Commandments — and thereby love Him.

So we conclude that the Second phase of the Harvest in Revelation is made up of the great teeming multitudes, who claim to honour Messiah, and call Him 'Lord.' However, their love for Him is questionable, so they must go through a time of testing before they are harvested. These are those multitudes seen in Rev 7 and Rev 20, who passed the second Love-Test:

> *"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)*

> *"…the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands…" (Rev 20:4b)*

> *"…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 7:14b)*

These were, in timing, part of the Second Harvest phase, but appear to be named in Scripture as among the 'First Resurrection,' and are likewise named among the 'Firstfruits' of the Harvest!

Now we will notice now what must take place during the **Third Harvest phase**:

> *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. (Rev 14:17-20)*

For this third phase of the Harvest, the harvest-word used is *gather*. This third phase of the harvest speaks of those who had heard the Truth of the Gospel, but had not made it a part of their lives. Thus they were among the grape harvest.

Notice that for each of the three harvest phases, there was a detailed warning that had been given to all: the warnings in Chapters 1-14 of the Book of Revelation. These warnings described for them in great detail, the characteristics of each phase of the harvest. With foreknowledge and fore warning, each could choose to amend his ways accordingly. Yahuweh is not willing, that any should perish.

Conclusion

We have seen how Scripture gives abundant testimony of the Harvest as being three separate harvests of men, each group in its own order. First, the Early Firstfruit Barley Bride will be harvested; then after a time, the Latter Firstfruit-Pentecost-Christianity Wheat will be harvested; and lastly, the grapes. Each harvest phase brings further separation from within the harvest, and bears testimony of the true nature of each crop.

There are many more *Treasures* to be found in Scripture — Treasures that reveal the King, and His Kingdom. These Treasures of Scripture include many prophetic pictures that reveal the true nature of the Harvest, and the details of each Harvest phase.

May you, dear Reader, seek and find much more of the King's Treasure!

It is the glory of God to conceal a thing:
but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.
(Proverbs 25:2)

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*"If therefore thou shalt not **watch**, I will come on thee as a thief,*
*and **thou shalt not know** what hour I will come upon thee." (Rev 3:3)*

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