

Jesus: Our First Fruits from the Dead

Jesus fulfilled the Feast of Firstfruits when He was resurrected as the first fruits from the dead. His resurrection marked the beginning of the harvest of souls who have been set apart for God through Jesus.

Paul spoke of Jesus as the fulfillment of this feast with these words, "But now Christ [Messiah] is risen from the dead, and has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For in Adam all die, even so in Christ [Messiah] all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ [Messiah] the first fruits, afterward those who are Christ's [Messiah's] at His coming" (1 Cor. 15:20-23, NKJV, emphasis added).

Jesus was that human sheaf God set apart for the purpose of conquering death and providing eternal life for all who would acknowledge Him as Messiah, Lord and Savior. As such, He was the first to rise from the dead who would never die again.

It was during this feast celebration at the Temple that Jesus was resurrected. He was resurrected in the evening (sunset, not sunrise) at the exact time the first fruits offering was cut and waved before God. As the barley sheaf could not be touched until it was offered to God, so Jesus, the human sheaf, could not be touched until He offered Himself in the heavenly temple as the first fruits from the dead.

Jesus was going to ascend to the Father for the purpose of presenting Himself as the first fruits from the dead. He is our great High Priest who offered Himself in fulfillment of the Feast of First Fruits on the exact day the barley sheaves were being waved before the Lord.

The barley sheaf wave offering consisted of a number of individual barley stalks, which had been bundled together. Likewise, when Jesus offered Himself as the first fruits from the dead, many individual believers were raised with Him. Matthew explained, "and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many" (Matt. 27:52-53).

When the time came to harvest the crop, the farmer would go into his field and inspect the first fruits of the crop. If he accepted the first fruits, then the rest of the harvest would also be acceptable to him. Since our Heavenly Father has accepted Jesus as the first fruits from the dead, believers are also acceptable to God through Jesus. He will also raise us from the dead and give us new resurrected bodies fitted for eternity.

Paul expressed this truth to the Christians in Rome with these words: "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ [Messiah] from the death will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you" (Rom. 8:11).

Jesus, as the first fruits, is our representative. By presenting Himself, He consecrated the rest of us to the Father. As Paul so clearly and boldly said to the Christians in Ephesus, "He [God] has made us accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:6). Believers are the human stalks that have been bundled together with Christ [Messiah], therefore, "if the first fruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so also are the branches" (Rom. 11:16). {eo}

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