

THE APOSTLES AND THE HARVEST

The ministry of Jesus forever changed the world. He brought the kingdom of heaven to earth. In a few short years he scattered the seeds of the imperishable Gospel throughout the Middle East. His teaching had impregnated the minds of multitudes with eternal truth never heard before. That Word would produce an eventual effect somewhere sometime. The book of Acts is simply a sequel to the work begun by Jesus. Please notice the introduction to the book.

"The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach."

Acts 1:1

Jesus had informed his disciples/apostles that there was a harvest that was due to the efforts of others of which they, the apostles, would be the reapers.

"For in this the saying is true; 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors."

John 4:37,38

God uses the human instrument to sow the Word of God and to nurture its growth in the hearts of people, but only He can give the abundant increase. Paul was well aware of this.

"I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase." I Corinthians 3:6,7

The writer of the Book of Acts attributed the growth of the church to the Lord himself.

"And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved." Acts 2:47

Notice the phenomenal ingathering's recorded in the Book of Act as Jesus worked through His apostles.

Acts 2:41 3,000 were added to the church on the Day of Pentecost.

Acts 2:47 There was a daily addition of converts to the church.

Acts 4:4 A census of 5,000 male believers.

Acts 5:14 Multitudes of both men and women believed.

Acts 6:1 The number of the disciples was multiplying.

Acts 6:7 The number of disciples multiplied greatly with many priests who became obedient to the faith.

Acts 8:6 Multitudes in Samaria believed with one accord.

Acts 11:24 A great many people were added to the Lord at Antioch.

Acts 13:43-45 Many the whole city..the multitude.

Acts 14:1 Great multitude both of Jews and Greeks.

Acts 17:4 Great multitude of devout Greeks, and not a few leading women of Thessalonica.

Acts 17:12 Many Jews not a few Greeks. . . prominent women and men of Berea.

Acts 18:9,10 many people in the city of Corinth.

Acts 19:18,19 many at Ephesus.

Acts 21:20 Myriads (thousands) of believers in the city of Jerusalem.

This same Gospel has been preached for centuries around the earth by faithful servants of our Lord. Because of this obedience to the Great Commission, there is bound to be a great harvest. A great ingathering is taking place in various parts of the world today. There is a great need for those who will harvest.

"Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.

Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

Matthew 9:37,38

It is our privilege as it was the Apostles to, at various times and places, both sow and to reap. Let us not grow weary in our labors. Our work is not in vain. The Word of God will accomplish its designated purpose. Someday there will be a final gathering of all the saints of all the ages and from every race of people. What a gathering that is going to be! We will want to be there, and to have been instrumental in others being there also.

"After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" Revelation 7:9,10

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