

Firstfruits and the Final Harvest:

Why We Should Expect a Future, Worldwide Turning to the Messiah

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One of the assumptions shaping much of modern Christian theology is the idea that the most of the passages that describe the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of the Messiah are already here. Theologically, this is called amillennialism. This theological framework teaches that what the prophets envisioned has already been fulfilled, at least in essence, in the Church. The Kingdom has come. The nations have been gathered. The harvest is in. But there is a glaring problem with this claim, one that becomes impossible to ignore once we pay attention to the Bible's own categories. Scripture repeatedly describes the present believing community not as the *harvest*, but as the *firstfruits*.

And firstfruits, by definition, are never the end of the story.

What "Firstfruits" Meant in the Biblical World

In the biblical imagination, *firstfruits* is an agricultural term rooted deeply in Israel's worship and calendar. The firstfruits offering was the initial yield, the first visible sign that a much larger harvest was coming.

"You shall bring the firstfruits of your soil into the house of the LORD your God." (Exodus 23:19)

The firstfruits were not symbolic of the whole crop being complete. They were a pledge, a guarantee, and a foretaste. They sanctified the rest by testifying that more was on the way. Paul explicitly uses this framework when speaking about resurrection:

"But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who are asleep." (1 Corinthians 15:20)

No one argues that the resurrection is already finished simply because Jesus has been raised. His resurrection is the guarantee, but not the conclusion. The logic is straightforward: if firstfruits have appeared, the full harvest must follow. The same logic governs the redemption of humanity and the nations.



First Fruits

The Church as Firstfruits, Not the Final Harvest

James tells us plainly:

“In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of firstfruits among His creatures.” (James 1:18)

Likewise, Paul speaks of believers having *“the firstfruits of the Spirit”* while still groaning for redemption (Romans 8:23). Firstfruits language demands incompleteness. It tells us that what we are seeing now; real, glorious, and precious as it is, is only the beginning. If the Church is the firstfruits, then the harvest must still be future, larger, and more comprehensive than what we see today.

Any theology that claims otherwise must quietly redefine firstfruits into something it never meant: the whole crop disguised as a preview.

Universal Worship in the Prophets Is Not Metaphorical

From Genesis onward, God promises not merely the salvation of individuals, but the restoration of the nations.

“In you all the families of the earth will be blessed.” (Genesis 12:3)

The prophets relentlessly expand this promise—not in vague spiritual terms, but with concrete, global language:

“All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will worship before You.” (Psalm 22:27)

“Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth... To Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.”(Isaiah 45:22–23)

“All flesh will come to bow down before Me,” says the LORD. (Isaiah 66:23)

“And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and men of every language might serve Him.” (Daniel 7:14)

These passages do not describe a remnant scattered among hostile nations. They describe a world transformed, a future moment when worship of YHVH is no longer contested, marginal, or persecuted. It is universal.

If this language is already fulfilled, then words like *all*, *every*, *ends of the earth*, and *all flesh* no longer mean what they say. While the Scriptures do use hyperbole, amillennialist interpretations must ignore the intended sense of these words.

Why the Kingdom Described by the Prophets Does Not Match Present Reality

The prophets did not envision a world where Messiah reigns invisibly while the nations rage unchecked. They foresaw a time when rebellion is restrained, justice is enforced, and the knowledge of the Lord fills the earth.

“In you all the families of the earth will be blessed.” (Genesis 12:3)

“In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.” (Genesis 22:18)

“Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession.” (Psalm 2:8)

“May he also rule from sea to sea... Let all kings bow down before him, all nations serve him... And let men bless themselves by him; let all nations call him blessed.” (Psalm 72:8–11, 17)

“The earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.” (Isaiah 11:9)

“Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth... To Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.” (Isaiah 45:22–23)

“All the nations and tongues... all flesh will come to bow down before Me, says the LORD.” (Isaiah 66:18–23)

“They will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.” (Jeremiah 31:34)

“And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and men of every language might serve Him.” (Daniel 7:13–14)

“All dominions will serve and obey Him.” (Daniel 7:27)

“The LORD will be king over all the earth.” (Zechariah 14:9)

This is not the world we inhabit.

Wars continue. Idolatry thrives. The majority of humanity does not worship the God of Israel or His Messiah. Persecution of believers is increasing, not diminishing. Creation itself still groans. Paul's diagnosis remains accurate:

"The whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now."
(Romans 8:22)

Childbirth pains signal something coming—not something finished.

What Is Lost When These Promises Are Declared 'Already Fulfilled'

When theology collapses the future harvest into the present age, something precious is lost.

The poor lose hope, because justice is postponed indefinitely. The persecuted lose expectation, because vindication is spiritualized. The sick and the suffering are told, subtly or overtly, that this is as good as it gets. But Scripture does not offer a gospel of managed disappointment. It offers a gospel of resurrection, restoration, and reversal.

Declaring the promises fulfilled when the world remains broken forces believers to reinterpret suffering not as temporary, but normative. It transforms longing into embarrassment and hope into naivety. Biblical hope, by contrast, is anchored in a future intervention of God in history.

Firstfruits Demand a Final Harvest

The presence of firstfruits means God has begun—but not finished—His work. Jesus' resurrection demands a future resurrection. The outpouring of the Spirit demands a future renewal. The existence of a believing remnant demands a future turning of the nations. The Bible's story does not move from promise to metaphor, but from promise to fulfillment. The Kingdom is not an idea. It is not merely internal. It is not exhausted by the Church age. It's a very real global rule, with a real king. And it is coming.

And when it does, the harvest will be global, visible, and undeniable.

"For the kingdom is the LORD's and He rules over the nations." (Psalm 22:28)

Firstfruits are good news.

But the final harvest will be so much better!

Maranatha

