

Sam Baker - The Great Multitude

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Holy.

Holy.

Holy. Holy. Holy.

Now, dear brethren, it is to be our privilege to listen to a discourse by our dear pilgrim, Brother Samuel Baker. His subject is the great multitude. Brother Baker.

Dear friends, it's needless to say I'm very happy to be here and join you in this convention. I have a message, too, to bring you from the various classes throughout the country that I have visited in the past four months, many of them, in fact all of them, send to you their love and greetings. The topic I have chosen, the great multitude, is not intended for you to think that I am talking to you as the great multitude. You know, I have heard it said that the price of United States steel on the New York Stock Exchange is a kind of a barometer, a business barometer of the business pulse of the nation. Likewise, what the friends talk about in various places is a kind of a clue or barometer, I think, of perhaps their spiritual welfare.

And anyway, it gives us a clue sometimes as to what to talk about. On this trip, I have been asked more questions about the great multitude than on any previous trip. In fact, I've heard more about it than perhaps most of the time of my life, in the truth, and so I decided that it would be well to discuss this subject a little bit and perhaps try to clarify our minds as to what our position might be in respect to this subject.

We realize that there is such a multitude spoken of in the Bible, and I'm going to read the Scripture that brings it to our attention. In the seventh chapter of Revelation, we hear these. After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands. This is the scripture that has caused a great deal of discussion as we look at it.

We suggest that the one that is speaking here is seeing this multitude after having seen a different group of people in this picture, and the picture apparently, or the whole scene, the whole setting is in heaven. It's a heavenly scene.

The question, as we find later here, somebody asks, one asks, who are these? And whence did they come from? One of the elders answered, saying unto me, what are these? And which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they?

It is almost as though the one here looking is seeing something that has not been expected.

The 144,000 are expected because here they are enumerated as 12,000 from each of the 12 tribes of Israel. But after this, he says, I looked and Behold this great multitude, and the question, who are these? Whence came they? Is a suggestion to our minds that this group seems to be not in the picture up to this time.

The setting for this scene, as we suggest, is definitely in heaven. The call of the church is to be like her bride, like her head, to share his glory, nature and kingdom. The better we become acquainted

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with God our Father in heaven, the more we are lost in wonder, love and praise. This is life eternal. That we may know him as God will become better known to his human family in the ages to come.

Likewise, we may think of God's heavenly creation as learning more about their great Creator, and so we may think of our God, our great benefactor, as having many pleasant surprises to unfold to us in the eternal ages to come. We may think of God's spiritual created beings as having considerable knowledge of the divine plan as it relates to man and to the earth. They know that Jesus left the courts of heaven and his glory as the Logos. They found him in fashion as a man.

They ministered unto him when he was made flesh, and they saw him crucified and die on the cross, and they announced to the woman at the tomb, he is not here, he is risen. Yes, they saw Jesus raised later and to his ascension to glory and to the nature of God himself, seated at the right hand of the majesty on high. That these heavenly messengers, they have assigned duties we may learn from God's word.

We have various accounts of their mission to earth to convey messages to some of God's heavenly human family, and we have the assurance that some of them have been assigned to guard those who are heirs of salvation. The ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who are heirs of this great salvation. We may reasonably assume, however, that they do not know all of God's plan. They do not know all of God's secrets.

There are some things that even the angels desire to look into and have not hitherto been able to understand. When we read this question, what are these? Whence came they? That is referring to this multitude. We can think of this group as one of our Father's great secrets, an additional demonstration of his love and his boundless mercy.

The fact that more is not revealed in the Bible about these is very significant. They are not a called out class as are the saints. In fact, we might say there is no such multitude as yet until after the saints are all taken out in this scene. It was after this. One who was looking in this heavenly scene has spoken about seeing the 140 and 4000.

And then he sees the multitude, and so we suggest that these who are seen now in this picture are one time runners for the prize, and we are not to look in the churches, or among ourselves, or amongst any group of people at the present time and try to find this multitude. The only place that they are shown or been expressed as having been seen is in this picture before the throne in heaven, and so we do well not to try to find them at the present time amongst ourselves or amongst any group of religious people in the world.

We simply do not look for them. They will be found afterwards, and today they are looked upon or should be looked upon as runners for the prize. We note in this seventh chapter that it is following the account of the sealing of the 144,000 that these are seen after this I beheld and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds, and peoples and tongues. They stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms. In their hands, the church, the 144,000 are called out of all nations, kindreds and peoples and tongues, all called in the one hope of our calling.

The expressions called from nations, kindreds, peoples, and tongues is used in respect to both the great multitude and the hundred and forty four thousand. Therefore we say it is all one group. While we are yet in the flesh, we are all runners for the prize, and we're not to make a separation until the Lord has made the separation and called his saints home, and so we call to your attention a very

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important scripture. In 2 John verse 8, we are admonished to look to yourselves that ye lose not those things which ye have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward.

These that are before the throne have not received the full reward for which they enter the race. In Psalm 45:14 they are referred to as the virgins. Her companions that follow her, the bride, the Lamb's wife, have received the full reward. They are in the throne they are the called, the chosen and the Faithful of Revelation 17:14. That this multitude would be spiritual is indicated in God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 15:5.

Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them, and he said unto him, so shall thy seed be primarily spiritual in point of importance, but first natural in point of time. Abraham's earthly seed, that is, natural Israel, are not in this revelation scene. The vision or scene is in the presence of God. Well then we ask again the question, who are these, and whence came they?

That the Bible does not elaborate more in respect to these is very significant. All of Jesus admonitions to his disciples and to us are intended to help us run a successful race. We cannot hold back and serve the Lord. Jesus said, no man can serve two masters. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Again, Matthew 7:26. Jesus said, Every one that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not shall be likened unto a foolish man which built his house upon the sand. That is, his work will be destroyed, but he himself will be saved. This great multitude are likened unto foolish virgins. Likewise also all of the writings of the apostles to those called to be saints are admonitions to faithfulness in respect to our covenant of sacrifice.

Only if we be dead with him shall we reign with him. Nowhere, nowhere in the Scriptures is there a single admonition given that is intended to be an incentive to one to seek or strive for a position in this great multitude. Many warnings are given which are intended to assist the saints to obtain a full reward. The commendation well done is not said of the great multitude. Again, we like to quote John 2 John verse 8.

Look to yourselves that ye lose not those things which ye have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward. Paul, speaking to the church at Galatians 5:7, says, Ye did run well. Who hath did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him who hath called you. No, this persuasion is from the great adversary of God.

And we realize, as Peter is in 1 Peter 5:7, that he has warned us. Your adversary, the devil, seeketh whom he may devour. It is the enmity that God said would be between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. This enmity has come down to our day. This wily foe has relentlessly followed the seed of the woman from Eden even until now.

We are not ignorant of his devices. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. We need the whole armor of God provided in the Scriptures, and also we need God's providences in our lives. Ministering spirits also for those who shall be heirs of this great salvation.

Of this group it is not said of them or to them. Well done. What is said of them? These are they that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. The bride, the Lamb's wife, keeps herself on spot from the world she shall be without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

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All of this group, this multitude, had the same Invitation to run. They had the same advantages, the same providences, they had the same armor of God, they had the same encouragements, the same promises, the same hopes, and they had the same warnings. Why then are they before the throne and not in the throne? Let us look at some Bible characters that seem to fit the description of these. First, let us look at the Levites.

The tribe of Levi was chosen by the Lord to replace the firstborn of Israel after Israel had left Egypt. You remember the slaying of the lamb and the sprinkling of the blood before leaving Egypt. The firstborns in the homes where the blood was sprinkled was not destroyed by the destroying angel. When they came out into the wilderness and began to have their tabernacle arrangement set up with them, God exchanged the firstborn of all these families of Israel for the tribe of Levi, no doubt as a convenience, because intending to use these to minister unto him in things pertaining to the spiritual welfare of Israel, and so they were chosen to minister in the tabernacle when they come into their own land, and the land was divided amongst the various tribes, the tribe of Levi was given no inheritance in the land.

It was from the tribe of Levi that God chose one family, Aaron's family, to be the priest, priestly family, and from this family the priests were chosen. But all the tribe of Levi were ministering unto the Lord in the tabernacle arrangement.

The fact that they had no inheritance in the land, but that they were supported by the other tribes is a definite indication to our mind that this picture of the Levites establishes one important point, and that is that this multitude will be a spiritual class. They had no inheritance in the land. Another picture given here in Leviticus 16:7-10 is the scapegoat. Here we remember that two goats were brought for sacrifice, and the casting of lots indicates that God did not arbitrarily choose one and discriminate against the other.

In fact, the one goat could have perhaps pictured this one sacrifice, because you remember it was stated that two goats were brought for a sacrifice, one sacrifice represented by two goats. But inasmuch as you couldn't kill half a goat and you make this picture the Lord chose, the arrangement was made that there would be two goats so that the picture could be properly carried out, and when the bullock was slain and its blood taken in, and the Lord's goat slain and its blood taken in to the most holy, then the scapegoat was let go or sent into the wilderness. In this connection, in Strong's concordance, a word here Azazel, which is the root word from which we get this word scapegoat. One or two definitions of this word might help us to identify these.

One is that the word harden is used, and another is to be impudent or to strengthen self. We might say that the lesson here given is that some will not yield to sacrifice. They will harden their hearts. They will be self sufficient, they will be, as it were, impudent, go their own way, and so it is that this scapegoat does not yield itself to sacrifice and is sent into the wilderness.

Now this wilderness condition. 2 There's a suggestion here that the wilderness seems to picture a pasture, but not a good pasture, not a good feeding place. It is mostly, perhaps we might say, weeds, and so this multitude, those represented by the scapegoat, are not well nourished Christians. They have not been feeding at the Lord's table, but perhaps they've been browsing around by all winds of doctrine, blown about by every wind of doctrine.

And they're not really strong, stabilized Christians. They are underdeveloped, and I think we might say that they are pictured by our little sister, referred to in songs of song, Solomon 8:8 Then there is another picture, Psalm 45:14. The virgins, her companions that follow her. Virgins, yes, but

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foolish virgins who neglect the oil for their lamps.

They are associated with the bride, the espoused virgin. The church and their position will be in a similar capacity or role as servants before the throne. It is an honorable position. The provision, however, is entirely of God's grace. It is a magnificent demonstration of his boundless love and mercy.

Another Picture is Genesis 24:61 and Rebekah arose, and her damsels and they rode upon the camels. Rebekah, we know, is a type of the bride. As Isaac is a type of Christ, the promised seed. So his bride is pictured by Rebekah. The picture here is that Rebekah had companions, the damsels that went with her.

These are the same as the virgins, her companions pictured in Psalm 45:14. These pictures serve to show the two classes or companies, one a little flock, and the other a great company or multitude. There are other pictures too. We think of Esau, who for a mess of pottage sold his birthright. Paul in Hebrews 12:16.

He calls this a morsel of meat, and that is something appealing to the flesh, and it was because Esau was hungry that he came to his brother Jacob and asked for this mess of pottage that Jacob had provided, and Esau's hunger We realize was something to satisfy the flesh, and the fact that Paul would refer to this, speaking about Christians like as Esau stole his birthright for a morsel of meat. We say then that this is something that appeals to our flesh.

And the morsel of meat to each of us may be different. It matters not to the adversary what you stumble over. His bait or allurements are intended to cause you to lose your crown. Each one of us may have a different morsel of meat, but we want to be careful that this morsel of meat does not take the place of our birthright. Paul says Esau later sought the blessing with tears, but was rejected.

Likewise, the foolish virgins, when the door is shut, are represented as knocking on the door and saying, open unto us. There are some today who profess to be of the foolish virgin class who have allowed a man to close the door on them. But unlike this picture, they are not knocking on the door, but they have complacently accepted defeat. Nowhere in the Bible does any picture illustrate this attitude of the multitude of complacency. It is the Lord that openeth the door, and no man shutteth.

And shutteth and no man openeth. Revelation 3, 7. When the night cometh that no man can work, we may know the door is shut. There are many more pictures or illustrations of these, and their failure seems to be caused by fear. We can think of a picture of Obadiah, whom Elijah asked to take a message to Ahab.

You remember that little picture?

The Lord had caused a famine or a drought upon Israel for three and a half years, and Ahab blamed Elijah for this, and he was seeking to destroy Ahab, destroy Elijah, and Elijah had stayed hid for a time, and now this servant Obadiah meets Elijah.

And Elijah asks Obadiah to take a message to Ahab and tell him Elijah is out here and wants to meet him. But Ahab was fearful. Rather. Obadiah, he said, ahab wants to kill you, and if I go and tell him that you're out here and you do not hear when I come back or when Ahab comes, why, he'll kill me.

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He was fearful to take the message, but Elijah assured him that he would meet Ahab, and you remember, the result of that meeting was the test as to who was God. When the two sacrifices were offered and God accepted Elijah's sacrifice by fire, and then the 450 priests of Baal were destroyed. Then there is another picture. The 10 spies who brought a message of fear concerning the giants in the promised land, there were 12 spies sent over, and 10 brought back this fearful report.

The other two, Caleb and Joshua, the two anyway brought a good report. They said, it is true that there are giants in the land, but God being with us, we can overcome them. Then this multitude are seen as being all their lifetime subject to bondage through fear. Hebrews 2:15. Fear of a sacrificial death.

And also the fearful are shown as the one talent servant who hid his talent in the earth. You remember, this parable 2 shows that one delivered certain talents to his servants, and they were all servants, and he gave five and two talents into one talent, and the five talent man he gained other five talents.

The two talent man gained two talents. But this one talent man, he hid his talent in the earth through fear that his master might not treat him properly, and so he said, I hid thy talent in the earth, and here is your talent, and he was spoken of as a fearful and unfaithful servant, but he was a servant nevertheless. But he represents to this class of fearful ones that this class of Christians have existed and does now exist.

We have reasonable evidence in the Scriptures that the multitude seen before the throne is the same class of Christians who have been considered as fearful during their earthly pilgrimage. In view of these truths, what course of action should we take? What great lesson shall we learn that will assist us in obtaining a full reward? There are two points I think we ought to keep in mind. First, our Father in heaven, who has called you and begotten you to a new life, he wants you to obtain a full reward.

He never started us in this way to be of this fearful multitude, and second, your adversary, the devil, wants you to lose your crown and also your life. Which master are we striving to please? We cannot serve two masters, we can only serve one, and we must choose which master we will serve.

Remember, he who has called you is faithful, and he knows that we can make good. Otherwise, he never would have started us in this way. Now, according to your faith, be it unto you. Some have said to me recently, I can never make my calling and election sure I am not good enough. My dear brethren, it is not a case of how good you are.

Do we presume to say or think we might be good enough for a place before the throne? In this multitude do we infer that we are good enough for this position? I suggest, friends, that we may be doubting in this. We are doubting our Father's ability and his integrity to make us more than conquerors, to bring us off. If we doubt our ability or doubt our goodness in respect to being of the bride.

We are doubting the ability of God, who is working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. We're doubting God's ability to bring us off more than conquerors and to grant us the full reward.

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Why did God provide for us an advocate? The answer is because we were not good enough and are not good enough, and that is a trick of the adversary to cause us to suggest I am not good enough. It is a trick of the adversary. We cannot make good, not any of us, the 144,000, without the aid and help of the advocate.

Let us use our advocate. The one great difference I suggest between those that are in the throne and those that are before the throne, the more than overcomers and those that are just overcomers, is that the one class have used their advocate and the other class have neglected to use the advocate. The multitude have been careless and allowed the spots to accumulate on their robe, and the others have kept themselves unspotted, and therefore are they in the throne and not before the throne. Do we hear some say I am not good enough?

That is, accepting defeat without using the proffered aid and the available assistance. It is permitting the adversary to control your life through fear. Perfect love casteth out fear.

If we would use the advocate that God has arranged for us day by day in keeping the spots removed from our robe, then we would not be amongst this group who must go to the laundry, so to speak, and have their robes washed and then be before the throne, and eventually they have palms of victory, but not crowns of glory. So we suggest that we must not allow the adversary then to control our lives through fear. It is surprising to see some who did run well, as Paul suggests, allow themselves to be persuaded to give up hope and stop running for the crown. This persuasion cometh not from God.

It is a man made persuasion, and we have been forewarned that such an attempt to defeat our hopes would be made by the adversary through a man or men. In Colossians 2:18, Paul says, Let no man beguile you of your reward. I would like to read that from Weymouth's translation. I think it is a little more effective.

Let no one defraud you of your prize. Priding himself on his humility and on his worship of the angels, and taking his stand on visions he has seen and idly puffed up with his unspiritual thoughts. Someone has persuaded a great number that they can only have palm branches and no crowns and this one says, the apostle is proudly puffed up in his fleshly imagination. This persuasion cometh not from God. It is a man made persuasion.

And so we suggest that we look at this scripture critically. It is very important that no man beguile you of your reward. The word beguile in the Greek carries with it the thought of casting a spell over you, and Paul says, as the serpent beguiled Eve, cast a spell over her, so he will attempt the same thing at this end of the age, to cast a spell over some and cause them to stop running for this prize. Can you imagine the devil preaching humility?

And that's what he does. He is preaching humility. The one who himself said, I will ascend above the stars of God. I will be in the sides of the north. I will be like the Most High.

He counsels us to be humble, and so some say that it is not nice to run for this prize of the high calling, to aspire to this great reward. We should be satisfied with a lesser reward, they say. They quote Jesus words where, if you are bidden to a feast, you should not seek the higher place, but take the lower place. Be humble and do not try to take an upper seat.

Well, friends, nowhere in the Bible have you ever been invited to a lower place than that which the Lord has called you to. We are all called in the one hope of our calling, and the place you were

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called for is a place amongst the bride, the full reward, and therefore it would be showing disrespect to the one who has invited us if we should say, I will take a lesser place. Someone asked brother Russell about this way back a number of years ago, 1905, saying, is not this aspiring to be of the little flock too high?

Should we not rather hope to be of the great multitude who go through this tribulation? And Brother Russell said, it will be easier to get into the little flock than into the great company so far as experiences are concerned. The difference is not so much in the experiences as in the attitude toward these experiences our willingness or unwillingness to suffer. Jesus said, in my Father's house are many mansions, but I go to prepare a place for you, and that place was not for the multitude.

It was a place in the throne with his Son. With Jesus, again referring to Colossians 2:18, we note that the one who is trying to persuade us to give up the crown is spoken of as vainly puffed up in his fleshly mind, and we realize that this is of the adversary is one of the most pointed Warnings in Paul's writings to the Church. Finally, brethren, cast not away your confidence which hath great recompense or reward. Gird up the loins of your mind and run with patience the race which is set before you.

Looking unto Jesus, who is the author and the finisher of our faith. God is faithful who hath called you. Remember our High Priest will deal more tenderly with us. As we seek to keep our sacrifice bound to the altar, and also remember, the multitude will be turned over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh.

That the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. How shall we complete our sacrifice? Under the supervision of Jesus or under the supervision of Satan? Personally, friends, I think we would be better treated to cast our lot with our Lord Jesus, and run with patience this race that is set before us.

And not need to be turned over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, and so, friends, our lesson is. Do not think about this great multitude at the present time. But keep running for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. That is the only place you have been invited to, no place else.

And do not allow the adversary to beat your courage down. Or try to cause you to accept anything less than the full reward. Lord, I know the powers of evil are increasing every day. Trying to ensnare and hinder those who walk the narrow way. Never will I listen to them, Lord.

I fear their subtle power from their every snare. Protect me, help me, keep me. Every hour it is said the Pope wears a triple crown. Friends, there is a triple crown for you. There is a crown of righteousness, a crown of glory and a crown of life.

And this crown is reserved for those who will steadfastly run for this prize. Let no man take thy crown. Or let no man defraud you. Your reward. May the Lord bless you.

The parents of children who are in attendance at the juvenile and intermediate group classes Will please take note of the change. This change in the time of these meetings. This does not apply to the teenagers group who will meet as stated on the program toward the last page. The juvenile and the intermediate groups will meet in Recreation Rooms 4 and 1 respectively. On the ground floor of the dormitory at 10:30 instead of 11, as announced in the program.

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10:30 instead of 11. So please apprise your children of this so they will be on time for the meeting. Brother Baker requests that we sing the first and last. Brother Baker first and last verses of the vow song.

Where do we find that? Appendix C. I knew it was an appendix, but I never know where These appendixes are located. I have to to search them out. Appendix C.

The first and last stanzas. We will rise on the last and be dismissed in prayer by Brother Baker, followed by which there will be a 30 minute intermission. Then please be in your seats for the opening of the last session. For the morning, a symposium by some of our brethren on the Convention Committee and one other. Appendix C.

Thy holy name, mighty angels, bow before Thee. Should not mankind be the same? May Thy rule of love control me and Thy will in me be done Here the might before thee. In the name of Christ, my Son, let us rise, please.

I could never keep alone the fourth stanza, please. Stanza four.

Lord, I know the powers of you evil are increasing every day those who walk further away.

Never will I listen to them, Lord, I fear their subtle part from their grace there protect me, help me keep me every free hour for this all that I have taken I could never keep alone.

Where might think of Silv humble when I look to the eyes.

Our gracious and loving Heavenly Father, with humble hearts we bow before Thee. We acknowledge Thee, the One from whom all blessings flow. We know Thou art the giver of every good and perfect gift, and we we thank Thee, our Heavenly Father, for that great gift of Jesus to be our Redeemer. We pray our Heavenly Father, that Thou wilt continue to guide and direct our lives and so surround us by circumstances and providences that we may eventually hear Thy well done, good and faithful servant.

Enter Thou into the joys of Thy Lord. Keep us, our Heavenly Father, from all the snares of the adversary. That we may run a successful course and that we may receive the full reward for which we have started realizing that Thou art causing all things to work together for good. To those who are running for this prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, we ask now, Father, Thy blessing upon each heart bowed before Thee. Thou knowest the things that each one stands in need of.

Therefore, we pray, Father, suit a blessing to us according to our needs, and we ask with this that Thou wilt forgive us for anything. Thy pure eyes have seen amiss in our thoughts, our words or our actions. We ask these favors and we give Thee our humble thanks. In Jesus precious name.

Amen.

It.