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Query #68 September 2020
What is the purpose of the “fit man”?

Query:

While reading about the 144,000 recently I wondered why they are necessary if, as some teach among us, that they are no different from the great multitude?

Response:

The fact that there is variation in the teaching in the church regarding the 144,000 should make us anxious to find out what is the truth. And in this case the Spirit has organised the sanctuary services to help us a lot in this regard. If we look at the last days as described in them, we find that something significant takes place in the courtyard.

It is good for us to remember that the court represents the earth while the building represents (in this case) heaven.

Let's look at a portion of the last day events as pictured in the Old Testament.

Leviticus 16:

⁵ And he [the high priest, representing Christ] shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering . . .

⁷ And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation [in the courtyard (on earth)].

⁸ And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat. [God the Father chooses which is which, on the earth.]

⁹ And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD'S lot fell, and offer Him for a sin offering. ¹⁰ But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat [representing Satan], shall [later] be presented *alive* before the LORD, to make an atonement¹ with him, and *to let him go* for a scapegoat into the wilderness [God does not kill or destroy] . . .

²⁰ And when he [the high priest] has made an end of reconciling the Holy Place, and the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and the [incense] altar [aka the cleansing of the sanctuary, Daniel 8:14], he [the only other man moving on the day] shall bring the live goat [to the door of the Tabernacle]: ²¹ and Aaron

¹ The word “atonement” here means a full revealing of him – an at-one-with-him = equality. In the symbolism the LORD is showing us that all the redeemed now stand in the place once occupied by Lucifer and have chosen not to sin his sin. And they let him go, for his fate is self-chosen.

shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat [through the curtain], and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away *by the hand of a fit man* into the wilderness. [Who is this FIT man?]

²² And the [scape]goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities to a land not inhabited [the earth during the 1,000 years]: and he [the fit (or capable) man] shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

Let's look at that remarkable man.

While all the congregation is pictured as being immobile (dead in their graves), he, the fit man, is shown to be capable of leading the scapegoat up close to the presence of the high priest and then out of the camp to the remote place! All this WITHOUT the use of force! It is in this way that He has pictured the 144,000 for us, for he represents ALL the living Christians at the Second Coming.

But HOW will "he" (they) do it? For it is written:

{Review and Herald March 26, 1895, par. 5}

In matters concerning the kingdom of Christ no compulsion or forcing of conscience is permitted. *No blood is to be shed, no force of arms employed, no prison is to be opened for the incarceration of one who does not choose the kingdom of God and his righteousness.* [And this includes Satan and his angels.] Christ will accept only of the *voluntary*² service of the heart which has been sanctified through the truth . . .

Those who are lawful and obedient are the *only* ones who are empowered [enabled] by Christ to deal with the cases of the erring [including Satan and his followers.] {RH March 26, 1895, par. 5}

{Review and Herald August 18, 1896, par. 3}

Prophecy has plainly stated the nature of Christ's kingdom. *He planned a government which would use no force*; his subjects would know no oppression. The symbols of earthly governments are wild beasts, but in the kingdom of Christ, men are called upon to behold, not a ferocious beast, but the Lamb of God.

Not as a fierce tyrant did he come, but as the Son of man; not to conquer the nations by his iron power, but "to preach good tidings unto the meek;" "to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;" [Isaiah 61:1] "to comfort all that mourn." [verse 2.]

² Note this point with care. "Here am I, send me". Isaiah 6:8.

He came as the divine Restorer, bringing to oppressed and downtrodden humanity the rich and abundant grace of Heaven, that by the power of his righteousness, man, fallen and degraded though he was, might be a partaker of divinity [i.e. the divine characteristics.] {RH August 18, 1896, par. 3}

So how could a non-violent man do all that, to a goat of all creatures? Goats are known for their unwillingness to be led and the determined resistance to such behaviour.³

So how to catch and lead a goat should be paramount on our list of Christian requirements!!

How did Christ, our example, “catch” him? We are all aware of the great temptations the Son of God suffered after His baptism but let us see *how* that occurred.

Luke 4:

¹ And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and *was led by the Spirit* into the wilderness, ² *being forty days tempted* of the devil. And in those days He did eat nothing: and when they were ended, He afterward hungered.

{Desire of Ages 114.2}

And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.” *The words of Mark are still more significant.* He says, “Immediately the Spirit driveth Him into the wilderness. And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts.” [Mark 1:12-13]

“And in those days He did eat nothing.” [Luke 4:2.] {DA 114.1}

When Jesus was led into the wilderness to be tempted, He was led by the Spirit of God. *He did not invite temptation* [He had another reason for being there.] *He went to the wilderness to be alone, to contemplate His mission and work [to save others]. By fasting and prayer He was to brace Himself for the bloodstained path He must travel. But Satan knew that the Saviour had gone into the wilderness, and he thought this the best time to approach Him.* {DA 114.2}

Christ was “the bait” and the devil grabbed his opportunity. Without the use of any force, the Spirit ensured that Satan would follow and attack our LORD.

{Early Writings 155.2}

After the baptism of Jesus in Jordan, He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, *to be tempted of the devil.* *The Holy Spirit had prepared*

³ “Goats are very **intelligent** and curious animals. Their inquisitive nature is exemplified in their constant desire to explore and investigate anything unfamiliar which they come across.” [Wikipedia](#).

Him for that special scene of fierce temptations. Forty days He was tempted of Satan [in many ways], and in those days He ate nothing. Everything around Him was unpleasant, from which human nature would be led to shrink. He was with the wild beasts and the devil, in a desolate, lonely place. **The Son of God was pale and emaciated, through fasting and suffering.** ***But His course was marked out, and He must fulfill the work which He came to do.*** {EW 155.2}

{Vol 2 Spirit of Prophecy 61.2}

After this, Jesus withdrew into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil forty days. His long fast ended, the victory won, he returns to the banks of the Jordan, mingling again with the disciples of John, yet giving no outward evidence of his special work, ***and taking no measures to bring himself to notice.*** {2SP 61.2}

Have you seen how it works in the last days? There was no need for force, the scapegoat came willingly as he did with Christ at the hand of the “fit” man thinking that “he” (they) would be an easy target! He is not able to resist such an opportunity. (Remember, he is a “slave” to sin too.)

But the 144,000 are NOT 144,000! They are 12 thousand men, women and teenage children from the 12 tribes or character types in the last days. They are the weakest, and therefore the strongest, of all God’s people on earth.⁴ ***And they are all volunteers!*** We are talking of last day events here and they appear in all parts of the earth – not together – but mostly alone and as frightened as Jesus/Jacob was, and yet determined to uphold their God, and bring about the safety of their family as Jesus/Jacob was.⁵

We all know this experience is likened to “Jacob’s Trouble” so what makes it so different to the ordinary Christians – the “great multitude which no man could number”? Revelation 7:9.

{Great Controversy 615.2 to 616.2}

... This [Sunday] argument will appear conclusive; and a decree will ***finally*** be issued against those who hallow the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, denouncing them as deserving of the severest punishment and giving the people liberty, after a certain time, to put them to death. Romanism in the Old World and apostate Protestantism in the New will pursue a similar course toward those who honor all the divine precepts. {GC 615.2}

This has happened repeatedly in the past in various locations and therefore is not special.

The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress described by the prophet as the time of Jacob’s trouble [which is different.] “Thus saith the Lord: We have heard a voice of

⁴ It is when we are weak that we call on Christ the most.

⁵ Read what the ***fifth*** angel’s message is. Revelation 14:15.

trembling, of fear, and not of peace.... All faces are turned into paleness. Alas! for that day is great, **so that none is like it**: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." Jeremiah 30:5-7. {GC 616.1}

Jacob's night of anguish, when he wrestled in prayer for deliverance from the hand of Esau (Genesis 32:24-30), represents the experience of God's people in the time of trouble. Because of the deception practiced to secure his father's blessing, intended for Esau, Jacob had fled for his life, alarmed by his brother's deadly threats. After remaining for many years an exile, he had set out, at God's command [[being led by the Spirit](#)], to return with his wives and children, his flocks and herds, to his native country.

On reaching the borders of the land, **he was filled with terror** by the tidings of Esau's approach at the head of a band of warriors, doubtless bent upon revenge. **Jacob's company**, unarmed and defenseless, seemed about to fall helpless victims of violence and slaughter. And to the burden of anxiety and fear was added **the crushing weight of self-reproach**, for it was his own sin that had brought this danger.

His only hope was in the mercy of God; his only defense must be prayer ... {GC 616.2}

The "trouble" is AFTER the close of probation when there is no longer a Mediator standing between them and God, and we have been told "**that none is like it**" in Jeremiah 30.

{Early Writings 71.1-2}

I also saw that many do not realize **what they must be** in order to live in the sight of the Lord **without a high priest in the sanctuary** through the time of trouble. Those who receive the seal of the living God and are protected in the time of trouble must **reflect** the image of Jesus **fully**. {EW 71.1}

I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful and were looking to the time of "refreshing" and the "latter rain" to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation; therefore they **could not** receive the refreshing that **all must have to fit them** to live in the sight of a holy God. Those who refuse to be hewed by the prophets and fail to purify their souls in obeying the whole truth, and who are willing to believe that their condition is far better than it really is, will come up to the time of the falling of the plagues [[which is also the Time of Trouble](#)], and then see that they needed to be hewed and squared for the building.

But there will be no time then to do it *and no Mediator to plead their cause before the Father. Before this time* the awfully solemn declaration has gone forth, “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” [Revelation 22:11.]

I saw that none could share the “refreshing” unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. Let all remember that God is holy and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence. {EW 71.2}

It is this condition among God’s people which will cause Satan to want to get away into the wilderness, for they (the 144,000) will stand as his equals, not his slaves anymore. But they are “clean”, and he and his minions are not!

Conclusion:

To say that the 144,000 and the great multitude which cannot be numbered are descriptions of the same group is to show a lamentable lack of understanding the fundamental principle of the whole controversy. Redemption is NOT just based on the LORD’s great sacrifice (which is *invisible* to all His creatures except those who receive it, Revelation 2:17), but ALSO on His ability to be able to produce some representatives who will prove that, as ordinary redeemed Christians, they can do extraordinary things without Him!

It is for that demonstration (by volunteers) that He is waiting. “For the earnest expectation of the creature [all of creation] waits for the manifestation [revealing] of the sons of God”. Romans 8:19.

Who wants to add (or subtract!) from these thoughts? I won't argue as I have stated, but I will publish your Scriptures so that we may review all the words of God on the subject. Some of the comments on this page are adapted from books in my library. Recognition is not always given because they are not intended as authorities, but are used because they express my understanding clearly.

Next query. To be discussed from 1st October 2020

Query:

How can we observe the first of the month in the new world when Jesus outshines the sun and the moon?

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