

Systematic Eschatology

The Hermeneutics of Bible Prophecy Using the Mazzaroth, Festivals of Israel, and the Bible.

By Brad Hurst

Edited By

Daniel Kline

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Second Printing Edited By Monica Hurst

Contact Information: Brad Hurst 925-848-7188

schooldadwinchester@gmail.com

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1 Peter 3 KJV

¹⁰ *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*

¹¹ *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,* ¹² *Looking for and **hasting unto** the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?*

Hasting: **σπεύδω** to "speed" ("study"), that is, **urge** on (diligently or earnestly); by implication to **await** eagerly:—(make, with) haste unto

Unto: **εἰς** a prim. prep.; *to* or *into* (indicating the point reached or entered, of place, time, fig. purpose, result)

Preface

Why this series? I suppose that is a pertinent question. Why another book or series on bible prophecy, and even more importantly who cares? With so much written on bible prophecy over the past century alone, and with so many different variations within numerous systems, it would seem that writing another book or series of books would only add to the confusion. If prophecy is shrouded in relative mystery then what benefit is there to the study of it. If the conventional wisdom is right and we can only know the basics, i.e., Jesus will return one day, and not much more, are we not just speculating and potentially adding to the confusion? That and similar questions are asked nearly every time I have either taught on or engaged in, a discussion of bible prophecy. People will sit and listen, and do so enthusiastically, and when it is all said and done they will respond with either, “You cannot know for sure,” or “Who cares?”

Now, I must admit, there is a part of me that sympathizes with the above-mentioned mind-sets. After all, the majority of pastors and other local church leaders are of the same persuasions. If that is the common disposition of church leadership, such thinking can only be expected among the laity. Just think of how much of the Bible is rendered useless in the growth of the church with such thinking. To most, the nuances of prophecy are to be discussed among the higher ups at the seminary/Ph.D. level. The higher thoughts of bible prophecy must somehow be brought down to our level if we are to grasp anything if at all. As a result, the layman is left with only the interpretations of the above, and not with the reasoning behind such arguments. For the most part, when it comes to prophecy, most people, including most pastors and others in church leadership, base their beliefs on the authority of the person speaking. That authority is far too often educational authority. This is not to disparage those in positions of authority or those who are accomplished academically. In fact, I think most would agree that the final authority is the word of God, and it is the Bible that determines truth, and truth determines scholarship. The Bible scholar wants to know and wants others to know. This is why he does what he does.

The problem tends to be, that people exalt scholarship, over gifting. God has gifted men in a variety of areas for the teaching of the church. Scholarship/knowledge is just one of many. The primary task of instruction rests with the pastors and the teachers of local churches. Unfortunately, most are tailoring their teaching to the lowest common denominator and have a teaching philosophy of, “Keep it simple”. Therein lies the problem.

By trying to appeal to the broadest base, they end up with ignorant and untaught congregants who simply do not have their senses trained. In many cases, neither do those who are doing the teaching. See Hebrews 5:14. I once had a pastor tell me “*there is a place for theology, but it is not the pulpit*”. In the last 15 years, his church has gone through three splits. Too often, those who either desire to teach at a deeper level, or just want to know more, are either sat on or left to fend for themselves. Therein lies the purpose of this book.

It is not my desire to disparage or circumvent anyone in church leadership, but the situation is, what it is. My desire is to reach out to and instruct those who desire to know more. I sincerely believe that the more we know about what God has revealed in His word, the more we will be empowered to overcome sin and effectively serve Him, both now and in the kingdom to come.

God has not only provided His word, He has also provided the hermeneutic¹ for understanding it. The hermeneutic is simply stated in the Westminster Confession of Faith: **IX. The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself; and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it may be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.**²

In the above statement, we find many things that are useful, but chief among them is that the Bible alone gives us our hermeneutic. We want to focus on the hermeneutics of bible prophecy. As we proceed, we will be looking at a threefold hermeneutic: 1. The Mazzaroth, 2. The Spring and Fall Festivals of the Jews, along with their culture, and 3. The Bible, which is the final authority. If you want to know more about God’s redemptive program and the essential role that prophecy plays in such a program, then this series may be for you. I trust that you will be Berean enough to research every part and that your senses might be trained to rightly discern between truth and error as you grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Brad Hurst

¹ the branch of knowledge that deals with interpretation, especially of the Bible or literary texts. See Wikipedia.

² The Westminster Confession.

Introduction

What Constitutes Revelation?

Noah Webster, in the 1828 edition of his dictionary, defined revelation as *The act of disclosing or discovering to others what was before unknown to them; appropriately, the disclosure or communication of truth to men by God himself, or by his authorized agents, the prophets, and apostles. How that by revelation he made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in few words. Eph. 3 and 2Cor. 12.*

The Greek word for revelation is “*apokálypsis*”, meaning *things revealed*. It is the opposite of the word *apocrypha* which means: *things hidden*.³ The idea behind revelation is to take that which was formerly not clear and make it known. If you cannot know it, then by nature it is unclear, hidden, and thus *apocrypha*. Unfortunately, when it comes to bible prophecy (particularly the book of Revelation), people treat it as *apocrypha*. The reasons for such a disposition towards bible prophecy can be endless. Perhaps the most common is a perceived lack of clarity and/or confusion. How often do we hear people espouse a particular teaching and simply ignore any conflicts that may arise? Such conflicts are often referred to as paradoxes or are simply ignored. While most people can clearly see the conflict, those teaching are often so entrenched in a system that they fail to see the problem. Some can be quite hostile. They fail to realize that it is the nature of truth to be self-authenticating and as such can never be presented in conflict with itself. Theological conflict, when not dealt with, always produces sin. A friend and former instructor of mine, Dr. Dennis Englin of The Masters College, once told me, “*If you have conflict in your theology, you will have conflict in your thinking, and thus conflict in your living.*”

I recall a particular incident, where a man was teaching at a prophecy seminar. He said, that Paul believed that the rapture could happen at any moment. During the Q. and A., I asked, “*If Peter was still alive and Jesus prophesied that Peter would die,⁴ then as long as Peter was alive the rapture could not happen, could it?*” His response was baffling: “*Paul did not know if Peter was alive or not.*” I went on, “*Yes, but the Holy Spirit who inspired Paul did, and so surely the Spirit did not tell Paul something that he knew was not yet possible.*” I continued, “*Did Peter believe he might be raptured at any moment?*” The speaker yelled at me and then walked away. I asked the same

³ Comfort, *The Origin Of The Bible* 83.

⁴ John 21:18-19. KJV

type of question to another man who was promoting what is called the church ages of Revelation 2-3. According to him, each age is followed by the next, and the final age will be the Laodicean. He went on to teach that the rapture could happen at any moment after the time of the ascension in Acts 1. I asked, “*What about the church ages? Do they not have to take place first? Shouldn’t the rapture occur in the Laodicean age?*” His response was different. I was told that it was a paradox.

Well, you get my point. Neither response is helpful. Such responses tend to frustrate people, and most either get comfortable with the conflict or just give up. We must understand that prophecy is revelation. It is (*apokálypsis*) the unveiling of information that was either not known or has been obscured. From it, we should be able to make well-reasoned conclusions on the propositions that the Bible proposes.

Three Types Of Revelation

Having looked at what revelation, and its nature is, we need to look at the types of revelation that have been made available to us as believers. While it is true that all knowledge comes from God, and as such it constitutes revelation, we want to focus on the revelation that is given for the express purpose of teaching us about God’s plan of redemption. Such revelation comes to us via three separate vehicles: 1. Natural Revelation. 2. The Feasts of Israel, along with their culture. 3. The Scriptures. In fact, it is the scriptures themselves that teach us about all three. It is the intent of this book to look at all three and to try to determine if, and to what extent, the Bible uses them in the presentation of bible prophecy.

Soli Deo Gloria

Romans 1:20

For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.

Chapter 1

Natural Revelation

Of the three types of revelation, natural revelation, as it applies to the plan of redemption is the most misunderstood, overlooked, and perhaps even unknown type of revelation there is. None the less, it plays a vital role in understanding what God is teaching us in the other two types of revelation. For starters, let's look at what natural revelation is not.

It is not, man looking at the grandeur of creation, and concluding that there is some grand designer. Many a fine pastor and teacher have defined natural revelation as nothing more than, “a sense of awe,” seen in the creation. While it does do that, such a statement would leave us with a revelation that says nothing about the designer, other than He is there. Kind of like, someone who makes a phone call asking if so and so is there, being told yes, and then hung up on. Nothing could be further than the truth. Natural revelation is very specific in what it is revealing. Consider the following:

*For the **wrath of God is revealed from heaven** against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For **the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:**⁵*

From the above scripture, we can deduce the following: 1. God's wrath is revealed or made known, from heaven. 2. God has shown Himself to man and men know it. 3. The things that are made teach us about the things of God. But, what specifically are the things of God that are clearly seen? Well, we are told that it is His power and God Head, i.e., triune nature that are made known.

But there is more. Consider Paul's quote of Psalm 19:3-4 in Romans 10:5-7: *There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and*

⁵ Romans 1:20-24. KJV

their words to the end of the world.⁶ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.⁷

Note that in asking the question, “Has everyone heard the Gospel?” Paul quotes Psalm 19:3-4 for the answer. It is the Psalm that tells how the heavens tell of the glory of God. According to Paul, that Glory is none other than the Gospel message. In all, according to Paul, the wrath of God, the things of God and the Gospel of God are all clearly seen by the things that are made and those things are in the heavens and in particular it is the stars. But how does it work and what relevance does it have in regard to the other two forms of revelation? In order to get that information, let’s go all the way back to the beginning, to the book of Genesis.

Genesis 1: 14 *“Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be **for signs and for seasons and for days and years**; ¹⁵and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven **to give light** upon the earth: and it was so. ¹⁶And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.”*

In the above passage, we are told that God created the greater light, i.e., the Sun, for the day and the lesser light, the moon, for the night. In addition to this, we are told that the lights in the heavens were set for signs, seasons, days and years. Days and years are clear. The lights are there not only to provide light, they are to serve as calendars. It is very clear from the ancient world that man used the stars in the creation of very simple, yet accurate calendars. Consider the following:

The sophistication of the ancient astronomers.

This was revealed to the west when the world conqueror Alexander the Great captured Babylon. Not only her greatest soldiers but also her greatest philosophers, found in the conquered empire, much that might excite the admiration of Greece. Callisthenes obtained in Babylon a series of

⁶ Psalm 19:3-4 KJV

⁷ Romans 10:16-18. KJV

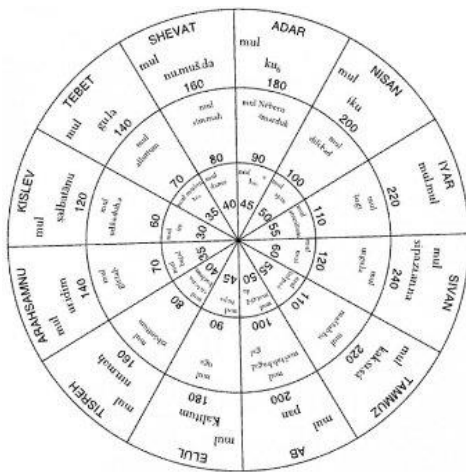
Chaldean astronomical observations ranging back through 1,903 years (that being 2226 B.C.). These he sent to Aristotle. Perhaps, since they were on burnt bricks, duplicates of them may be recovered by modern research in the clay libraries of the Assyrian kings. Ptolemy, the Egyptian astronomer, possessed a Babylonian record of eclipses, going back 747 years (1083 B.C.) before our era. Long-continued and close observations were necessary, before some of these astronomical results that have reached our times could have been ascertained. Thus the Babylonians had fixed the length of a tropical year within twenty-five seconds of the truth; their estimate of the sidereal year was barely two minutes in excess. They had detected the precession of the equinoxes. They knew the causes of eclipses, and, by the aid of their cycle called Saros, could predict them. Their estimate of the value of that cycle, which is more than 6,585 days, was within nineteen and a half minutes of the truth.

Such facts furnish incontrovertible proof of the patience and skill with which astronomy had been cultivated in Mesopotamia, and that, with very inadequate instrumental means, it had reached no inconsiderable perfection. These old observers had made a catalogue of the stars, had divided the zodiac into twelve signs; they had parted the day into twelve hours, the night into twelve. They had, as Aristotle says, for a long time devoted themselves to observations of star-occultation by the moon. They had correct views of the structure of the solar system, and knew the order of the emplacement of the planets. They constructed sundials, clepsydras, astrolabes, gnomons.

Not without interest do we still look on specimens of their method of printing. Upon a revolving roller they engraved, in cuneiform letters, their records, and, running this over plastic clay formed into blocks, produced ineffaceable proofs. From their tile-libraries we are still to reap a literary and historical harvest. They were not without some knowledge of optics. The convex lens found at Nimrud shows that they were not unacquainted with magnifying instruments. In arithmetic they had detected the value of position in the digits, though they missed the grand Indian invention of the cipher. What a spectacle for the conquering Greeks, who, up to this time,

had neither experimented nor observed! They had contented themselves with mere meditation and useless speculation.⁸

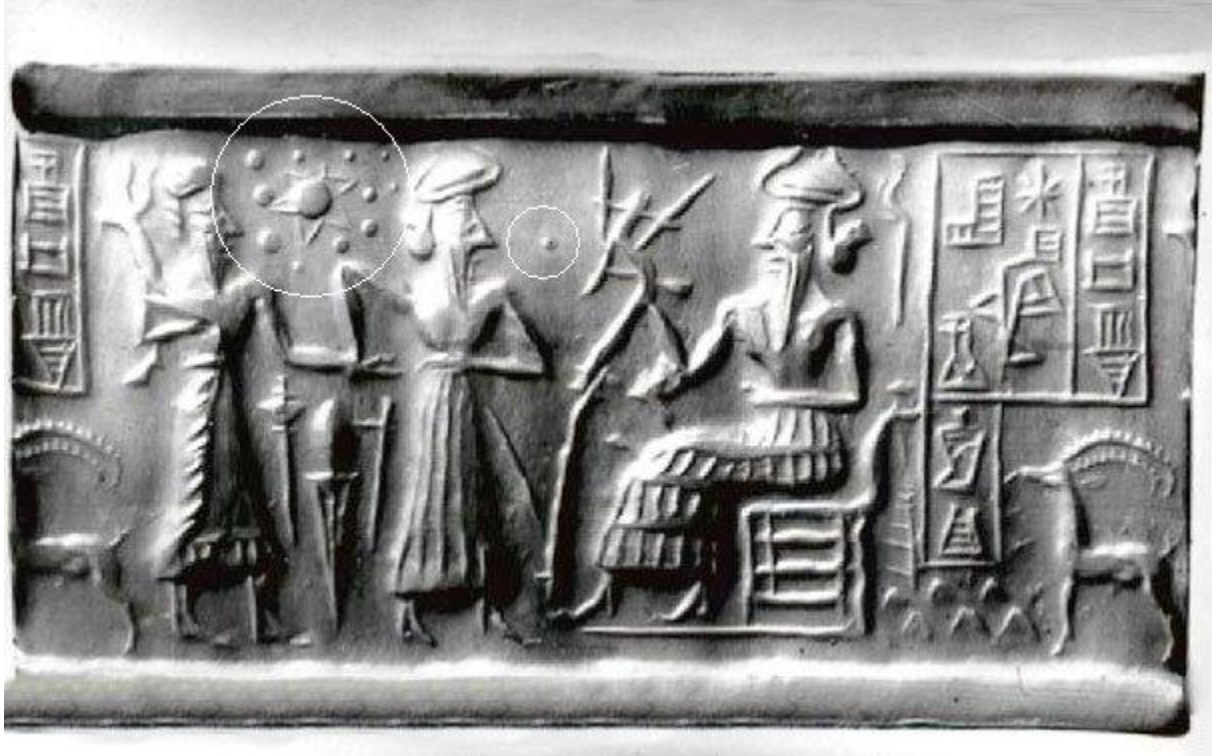
Consider this ancient Babylonian calendar with its 12 months.



The center of the calendar is the Sun.

Look at the stone seal on the next page. It is called seal 243. It is from Mesopotamia and dates to about 2300 B.C. Notice the calendar with a polar view of the sun and the planets going around it. This may be a method of dating the event recorded. All 9 planets, two dwarf planets, and shown.

⁸ The Standard History of the World 1927 Draper. Draper, p. 13; see also Israel Smith Clare, "The Standard History of the World", Vol. I, p. 140.



Just from the little we have provided, we can clearly see that the ancient world was able to watch and record the motion of the sun, the moon, and the stars, and thus create a simple yet highly accurate calendar system that was accurate to within a few minutes, many years out. This was man reading natural revelation as described in Genesis 1:14 and using it for one of its three intended purposes. Even our modern clocks with hands are based on this same calendar system.

But what of signs and seasons? This is where it gets interesting. Signs and seasons have a particular meaning that is related to an annual calendar. Let's first consider the word, *signs*. The word, *sign* in Hebrew is **Owth** : probably from "uwth' (in the sense of appearing); a signal (literally or figuratively), as a flag, beacon, monument, omen, prodigy, evidence, etc.: mark, miracle, (en-) sign, or token.⁹

The old English *ath* is akin to German *eid*, from the Indo-European “root” *oito* (an oath). An OATH is a ritualistic declaration or visual sign (as the rainbow) of ongoing faith. An ארת OWT or OWTH (*Genesis 9:13, Isaiah 37:30*) is the mark of a divine promise. Like a rainbow.¹⁰

⁹ Strong's Concordance Hebrew # 225-226.

¹⁰ Edenics.net

Based on the information above, *a sign is a marker or signal regarding a divine promise*. The stars, sun, and moon not only served as markers for days and years or light for day and night; they also serve as markers concerning the divine promise. This is an essential element in being able to determine the timing of events and or the nearness of an event. God uses the sun, moon, and stars as signs to let us know of an upcoming event or the fulfillment thereof, like the star of Bethlehem. These events are associated with what are called seasons and the message of the constellations. In other words, the nearness of the divine promise will be marked in the stars.

The Hebrew word for, *seasons* is, **Mowed**: moled {mo-ade'}; or (feminine) mowedah (2 Chronicles 8:13) {mo-aw-daw'}; from 'ya`ad'; properly, an appointment, i.e. a fixed time or season; specifically, a festival; conventionally a year; by implication, an assembly (as convened for a definite purpose); technically the congregation; by extension, the place of meeting; also a signal (as appointed beforehand):--appointed (sign, time), (place of, solemn) assembly, congregation, (set, solemn) feast, (appointed, due) season, solemn(-ity), synagogue, (set) time (appointed).¹¹

The word, *mowed* is associated with the Feasts of Israel.¹² These feasts are recorded in Leviticus 23. They are to be observed on particular days of the month. Every month started with the sighting of the new moon. *The moon was the marker by which one would start counting the days of a month*. The first day was known as Rosh Chodesh, i.e., chief or head of the month. The feasts were on the predetermined days of the 6th 10th 14th 15th 17th all the way thru the 22nd day of the sighting of the new moon. In the case of Pentecost 63 or so days after Passover. But one feast, (the feast of trumpets) started at the sighting of the new moon, which signaled the 1st of the month of Tishri. Thus, the moon was used for appointed seasons, or more literally, for the festivals of Israel.

But what about the Sun? How was it used as a sign? Let's have a look. On April 3rd/Nissan 15, 33 A.D. at 12:00 P.M.-3:00 P.M. Israel time, the sun went dark in the land of Israel. That darkness made the stars visible by day for three hours.

¹¹ Strong's Concordance Hebrew #3259.

¹² Good. Rosh Hashana and the Messianic Kingdom to Come Page 31 Hatikva Ministries 1989

The following constellation set would be visible in the sky while Christ was on the cross as one looked up and east from the Mount of Olives:

Aries (the ram), with its two stars Sheratan, (*the sign*) and Hamal, (*the ram*).¹³ (Aries is the sign of the Son of Man). Under the feet of the ram, is a dragon called, *Cetus* (Kaffeljdhma, Al Kaff al Jidhmah or Al-Kaff al-Jadhma' for *the hand cut short*).¹⁴ **Cetus** is reaching for the seven ladies, (the Pleiades). There are a woman and a fish chained to the dragon. Both Mercury, (the god of words and covenants), and Venus (the god of love)¹⁵ are passing through the chains, severing the bonds and setting free the woman and her fish (the multitudes). **Taurus** (The bull) has two horns; one called, *the wounded*, and the other called *the wrath*.¹⁶ The horn called, *wounded*, is striking the foot of the chariot driver, **Auriga**, who carries his lambs to safety.¹⁷ The other horn is positioned to strike the heel of one of the twins (**Gemini**). The heel has two stars: one is called, *Dirah* (beaten or abused), and the other is called, *Tejat* (heel or wound).¹⁸ It is the heel of the northern twin, called, **Castor** (the mortal) as opposed to his twin, **Pollux** (the immortal). Below the twins is, **Orion**. His chief star is called, *Messia*.¹⁹ It is binary, meaning two stars that revolve around one another. One is blue, like a wound and the other is white. Orion has beheaded a serpent and is tossing its body into a river of fire called, *Eridanus*. Orion is looking right at *Cetus*.

This entire scene was the constellation group that was seen when the sun went dark. That same day the moon rose in a red lunar eclipse. Thus, the sun became black, and the moon turned to blood. See images below along with Acts 2:16-21, which Peter quoted 50 days later on the 6th of Sivan 33 A.D., hence the sun and the moon were serving as signs/markers for the fulfilment of the divine promise.

¹³ Constellations of words Anne Wright 2008.

¹⁴ Ibid

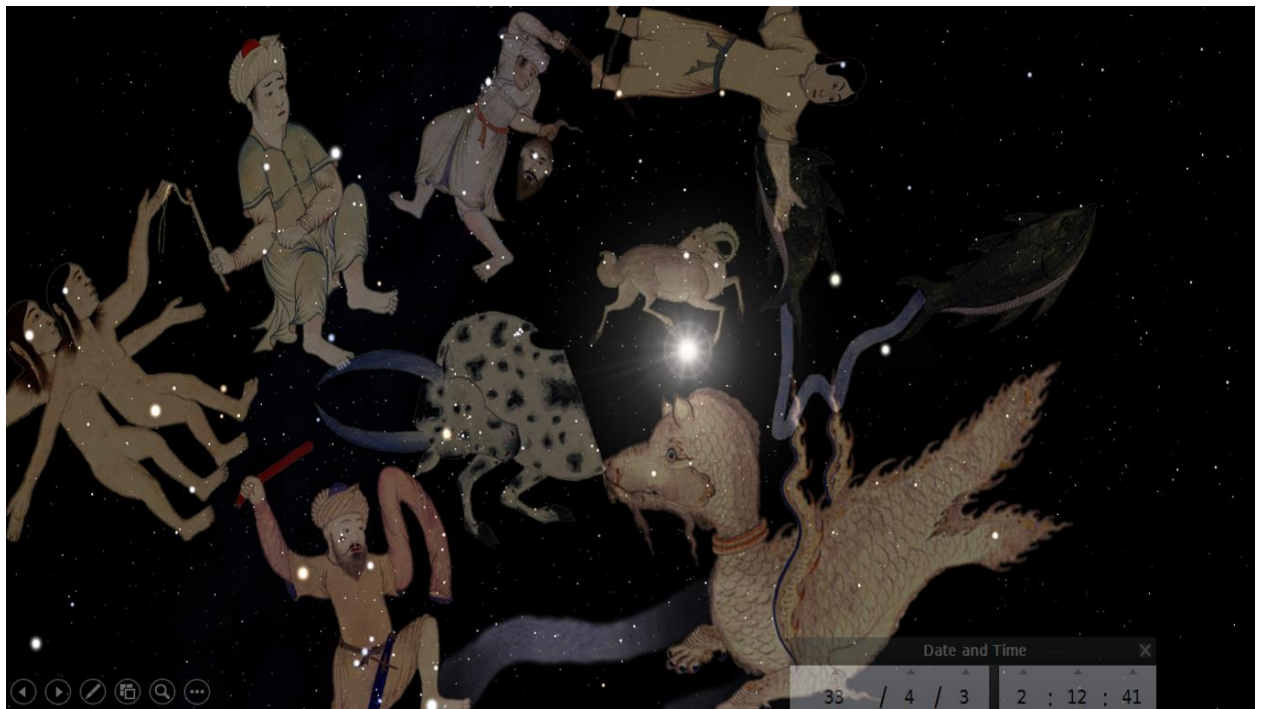
¹⁵ Understanding Planets in Ancient Mesopotamia. Pg 14 2001 Kasak and Beede. Folk Belief and Media Group

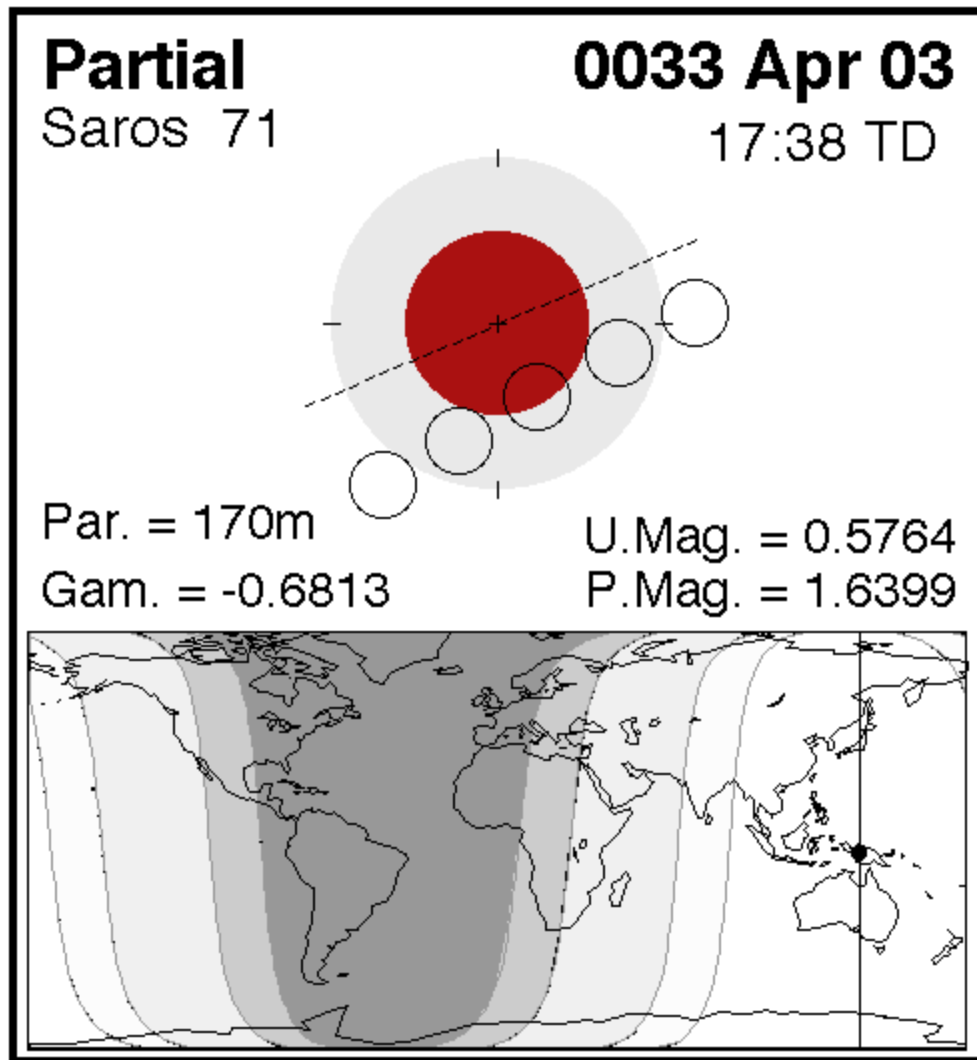
¹⁶ Constellations of words Anne Wright 2008.

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Ibid





Five Millennium Canon of Lunar Eclipses (Espenak & Meeus)
NASA TP-2009-214172

But wait, there is more. There are historical accounts of the nature of the darkness that clearly state that the stars were visible. While some of the accounts seem to have errors in them, what is common among many is the claim that the stars were visible. Dr. Gerardus D. Bouw, Ph.D. has documented historical accounts of the darkness and the visibility of the stars.

Here is some of what he has recorded:

The report of Pilate the Governor, concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, which was sent to Augustus Caesar, in Rome: *Now, when he was crucified, there was darkness over all the world, and the sun was obscured for half a day, and **the stars appeared**, but no luster was seen in them; and the moon lost its brightness as though tinged with blood; and the world of the departed was swallowed up; so that the very sanctuary of the temple, as they call it, did not appear to the Jews themselves as their fall, but they perceived a chasm in the earth and the rolling successive thunders.*

Translated and published in *The Lost Books of the Bible and the Forgotten Books of Eden*, 1926, published by Collins World. All references are from the thirty-fifth printing, 1977. "Letters of Herod and Pilate" runs from pages 269-281, with the report to Augustus beginning on page 273 and running to Tiberius on page 275.

The report of Pontius Pilate, Governor of Judea, which was sent to Tiberius Caesar, in Rome, reads as follows: *Now when he was crucified darkness came over all the world; the sun was altogether hidden, and the sky appeared dark while it was yet day, so that **the stars were seen**, though still they had their luster obscured, wherefore, I suppose your excellency is not unaware that in all the world they lighted their lamps from the sixth hour until evening. **And the moon, which was like blood, did not shine all night long**, although it was at the full, and the stars and Orion made lamentation over the Jews because of the transgression committed by them. Ibid Page 274.*

Philoanon and Origen draw from, Phlegon's *Olympiads* (written A.D. 138), an account of the darkness of the crucifixion. Phlegon was a Greek astronomer. Origen's quote is the best documented, and quite similar to Philoanon's: *That heathen author, in treating of the fourth year of the two hundred second Olympiad, which is supposed to be the year in which our Lord was crucified, tells us that the greatest eclipse of the sun which was ever known to happened then; for*

*the day was so turned into night that **the stars in the heavens were seen.***” See Philopon, *De Opif, Mundi*, II, 21 Origen, 210. *Contra Celsum*

Justin Martyr, also referred to, *The Acts of Pilate*, which was forged by the Jews to deny the deity of Jesus Christ. Despite that, they bore witness that darkness did indeed accompany the crucifixion.

About A.D. 52 the Samaritan historian, Thallus, wrote his *Histories*. Though no copies survive, we do have references to it from others, some verbatim. Thus Julius Africanus, writing about A.D. 220, refers to the *Histories* and says: *Thallus, in the third book of his Histories, explains away this darkness as an eclipse of the sun unreasonably of course, because a solar eclipse could not take place at the time of the full moon and, it was the season of the Paschal full moon that Christ died.*

The lost gospel according to Peter: *And it was noon, and darkness came over all Judea; and they were troubled and distressed, lest the sun had set while he was yet alive: it is written for them, that the sun set not on him that hath been put to death. The Lost Books of the Bible*, p. 283

In his *Apologeticus*, written around A.D. 197, Tertullian wrote: *...at that same moment, about noontide, the day was withdrawn; and they, who knew not that this was foretold concerning Christ, thought it was an eclipse. But this you have in your archives; you can read it there. Apologeticus, 21, 19-20 in The Loeb Classical Library, (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons Publishing Co., 1931)*

Writing about the year 315, in his *Chronicle*, Volume 2, the historian Eusebius, friend of Emperor Constantine, writes about the eighteenth year of Tiberius Caesar that:

Christ suffered this year, in which time we find in other commentaries of the heathen these words: “There was a defection of the sun: Bithynia was shaken with an earthquake, and many houses fell down in the city of Nicaea.”

As impressive as these images and information are, there is far more to natural revelation than originally thought. Rick Larson, in his presentation, *The Star of Bethlehem*, does a wonderful job

of using computer models to demonstrate that the planet Jupiter was the star of Bethlehem. Rather than go through his material, I refer you to his work entitled, *The Star of Bethlehem*.

Now, back to Psalm 19, and Romans 10. Remember how the very Gospel/Glory of God itself is in the heavens? Well, when one looks at the imagery of the constellations with the names of the stars and the planetary movements throughout the constellations, one can clearly see that the “*the wrath of God is revealed from heaven; and the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.*”

With the use of computer programs one can watch the planets move through the constellations and tell the gospel. In fact, the message is so clear that when I show people the computer models, they initially think I am manipulating the program. That is how impressive the information is. Using two computer programs, (Starry Night and Stellarium) I have watched and documented over 3000 examples of planetary movements with their clear depiction of the Gospel message. Hence, the Bible is very clear in Genesis 1, Psalm 19, Romans 10, Joel 2, and Acts 2, that God would use the sun, moon, and the stars in reference to the fulfillment of bible prophecy, and for the proclamation of the Gospel.

But who designed the constellations and how were they recorded? The Bible tells us that it was God who named the stars: *He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names.*²⁰

God also made and named the constellations, “*Which maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south*”²¹

The Bible calls the constellations, “The Mazzaroth” or, “the twelve”, whom God brings out in their season.

“*Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? Or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons? Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven?*”²²

²⁰ Psalm 147:4

²¹ Job 9:9

²² Job 38:31-33

Consider the following from The Westminster Bible Dictionary 1880:

¹**MAZZAROTH** (*mazaroth*) [*mazzaroth*]. A feature of the starry heavens (Job 38:32). The margin of the Authorized Version and the Revised Version of the Bible interprets it as the sign of the zodiac, equivalent to Hebrew *mazzaloth* (II Kings 23:5, RSV, "**constellations**"). The Hebrew word is of Babylonian origin. It goes back to Old Akkad, *manzattu*, which became *mazzaltu*, *mazzaltu* (*station, position of the planet in the zodiac*). In late Hebrew *mazzal*, Aramaic *mazzala* came to mean constellation of the zodiac, or planet. The interpretation of either zodiacal signs or planets is possible."

Mazzarah (He Resh Zayin Mem) M(ah)ZZ(aw)R(aw)H, *maz-zaw-raw*²³; apparently from the Heb. *nazar*, *naw-zar*²³, a primary root, *to hold aloof*, **here specifically to set apart (to sacred purposes)**, i.e. devote – consecrate, *separate*, thus used here in the sense of distinction (only in the plural), perhaps collectively as the **zodiac: Mazzaroth**.²³

Mazzalah (He Lamed Zayin Mem) M(ah)ZZ(aw)L(aw)H, *maz-zaw-law*²⁴; apparently from the Heb. *nazal*, *naw-zal*²⁴, a primary root, *to drip, or shed by trickling*: distill, drop, flood, (cause to) flow(-ing), gush out, melt, pour (down), running water, stream, thus in the sense of raining; **a constellation**, i.e. **Zodiacal sign** (perhaps as affecting the weather); -- **planet**.²⁴

Now for us, as believers, the biblical argument should be compelling enough. It is clear from the above that God made the sun and the moon, not only to serve as light by day and night, but also for signs and seasons, (i.e., festivals). He also made the starry host, named each one, and arranged them into groups known as constellations, which together form the Mazzaroth, to serve a sacred purpose. Using computer models, we can watch the planets move through the constellations as they tell the message of the gospel. Now this should be enough to end the discussion. However, one might ask whether there exists any other extra biblical evidence to correspond with the above? The answer is yes.

Long before the great flood, the early descendants of Adam were aware of God's work in the heavens. They created a science for the express purpose of being able to catalogue and preserve what God intended to communicate through what we call the first type of revelation; natural revelation, or the Mazzaroth. While they did not create or name the constellations, they were the ones who made the original observations and organized them into a written form so they could

²³ Strong's H 4216.

²⁴ Ibid H 4208

be used as calendars, and their message read. Let's have a look at some historical resources that can shed some light on this.

Josephus. 37-100 A.D. *Now this Seth, when he was brought up, and came to those years in which he could discern what was good, became a virtuous man; and as he was himself of an excellent character, so did he leave children behind him who imitated his virtues. All these proved to be of good dispositions. They also inhabited the same country without dissensions, and in a happy condition, without any misfortunes falling upon them, till they died. **They also were the inventors of that peculiar sort of wisdom which is concerned with the heavenly bodies, and their order.** And that their inventions might not be lost before they were sufficiently known, upon Adam's prediction that the world was to be destroyed at one time by the force of fire, and at another time by the violence and quantity of water, **they made two pillars**, the one of brick, the other of stone: they inscribed their discoveries on them both, that in case the pillar of brick should be destroyed by the flood, the pillar of stone might remain, and exhibit those discoveries to mankind; and also inform them that there was another pillar of brick erected by them. Now this remains in the land of Siriad to this day.* ²⁵

Manetho 270 B.C. *The Egyptian historian Manetho, in 270 B.C. told his readers the post-flood Mystery Priest- extracted his history from pillars certain pillars that his discovered in Egypt, whereupon the inscriptions were made by **Thoth**, or the first Mercury in the sacred letters in dialect and laid up in the private recesses of the Egyptian temples. These records, it is said, were made by those skilled in the ancient rites; who foreseeing the coming deluge who fearing lest the memories of their ceremonies be obliterated, built and contrived, dug with vast labor, in several places.* ²⁶

Note: Thoth is a cognizant name for Seth.

Ashurbanipal 687-625 B.C. Ashurbanipal affirmed this research as recorded in the library of Ashurbanipal Nineveh 668 BC – 627 BC which was recovered from archeological digs from khorsabab, i.e., Nineveh. Of the few that have been deciphered, on one there is an interesting statement made by Ashurbanipal himself, who wrote:

²⁵ Josephus 2:3b. 90 A.D.

²⁶ *Primitive Mythology the Masks of God page 46. Joseph Campbell 1959*

*I Ashurbanipal learned the wisdom of Nabu. The entire art of writing clay tablets the god of the scribes has bestowed upon me the gift of the knowledge of his art. I have been initiated into the secrets of writing. I can even read the intricate tablets of the Shumarian (preflood mesopotamia); I understand the enigmatic words in the stone carvings from the days before the flood.*²⁷

These appear to be the same obelisks mentioned in Josephus. We are told that when Ashurbanipal conquered Thebes of Egypt he took booty. The booty consisted of gold, silver, precious stones, clothes, horses, exotic animals, and obelisks weighing 2500 hundred talents or 187,000 pounds each.²⁸

Plato 428-348 B.C. These same writings were either known to, or seen by Plato in 360 B.C.²⁹

It was not just the pagan world that learned from natural revelation. Nor did they just use it only for calendars or festivals. There are accounts of at least one person who, being a great astronomer and mathematician, learned to read the Mazzaroth i.e. the twelve constellations. He deduced through the Mazzaroth that there was only one God and he was a God of righteousness who had a message for mankind. Consider this from Berosus of Babylon in 270 B.C.

*In the tenth generation after the Flood, there was among the Chaldeans a man righteous and great, and skillful in the celestial science.*³⁰

Then there is this from Josephus in 90 A.D. concerning the same.

For he was the first that ventured to publish this notion, That there was but one God, the Creator of the universe; and that, as to other [gods], if they contributed anything to the happiness of men, that each of them afforded it only according to his appointment, and not by their own power. This his opinion was derived from the irregular phenomena that were visible both at land and sea, as well as those that happen to the sun and moon, and all the heavenly bodies, thus: - "If [said he] these bodies had power of their own, they would certainly take care of their own

²⁷ <http://www.ancient.eu/Ashurbanipal>

²⁸ The Assyrian Invasions of Egypt 9673-663 B.C. and the Final Expulsion of the Kushites. Dan'el Khan.

²⁹ *Ancient Egypt and the Light of the world 1907* pg 266. Gerald Massey.

³⁰ Berosus Babylonica 270 b.c.

regular motions; but since they do not preserve such regularity, they make it plain, that in so far as they co-operate to our advantage. ³¹

When one reads the whole account one learns that both Berosus and Josephus are writing about Abraham.

Josephus continues: For whereas the Egyptians were formerly addicted to different customs, and despised one another's sacred and accustomed rites, and were very angry one with another on that account, Abram conferred with each of them, and, confuting the reasonings they made use of, every one for their own practices, demonstrated that such reasonings were vain and void of truth: whereupon he was admired by them in those conferences as a very wise man, and one of great sagacity, when he discoursed on any subject he undertook; and this not only in understanding it, but in persuading other men also to assent to him. He communicated to them arithmetic, and delivered to them the science of astronomy; for before Abram came into Egypt they were unacquainted with those parts of learning; for that science came from the Chaldeans into Egypt, and from thence to the Greeks also. ³²

So then, up to now, what is the sum of the matter? Genesis 1:14 tells us that God made the stars, sun, and moon to serve three purposes. The first, was to give light by day and night. The second, was to assist us in the establishment of a calendar. We have clearly demonstrated that the ancients were very capable in that regard. The third, was that God established the sun, moon and stars for signs and seasons, i.e., festivals. With regard to the signs, it should be very clear from the Bible passages, extra-biblical writings, and imagery given that the sun, moon, and stars serve an essential role in either announcing or confirming the fulfillment of a given prophecy

In addition, the Bible itself, in Psalm 19 and Romans 10, goes on to tell us that the constellations, along with the planetary movements would tell the message of the Gospel itself. So as far as light, calendars, signs, seasons/festivals, and the gospel, it seems fairly easy to see that the heavens are doing exactly what they were designed to do. They were essential in setting the foundation of bible prophecy and marking out the festivals of Israel and when the promises of the owths are to be fulfilled. Which brings us to our next type of revelation.

³¹ Josephus 7:1

³² Josephus 8:2.

Hebrews 10:24-25 KJV

²⁴ And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

²⁵ Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Chapter 2. The Feasts of Israel.

I do not know how many of us might remember, but back in the 1970s and 1980s, supermarket chains had these promotional games that were construed in a variety of ways. One such store had a Bingo-style game. To start, you were given a ticket that was like a Bingo ticket, whenever you shopped at the store you got a series of stamps with numbers. The more you spent, the more stamps you were given. Each time you got a new stamp you would stick it on the ticket. If you filled in the right spaces, you would win \$10,000. One day my mother was putting on her stamps when she just froze. “I can’t believe it,” she said, “I won! I won the \$10,000!” She was elated. My siblings and I came in to look, and sure enough, it appeared she had won. The excitement went on for a while until my brother smiled, “I must confess,” he said, “I moved some of your stamps around so that it looked like all you needed was a particular number.” He told her that the number was a common number in the stamps, one that you got every time you went shopping. He went on to say, “I knew it would be in the next batch, so I just waited and sure enough it came.” My mother laughed out loud. She had been outwitted by a 9-year-old. The intention of this story is to illustrate that when we have things in the wrong place we can unknowingly be fooled into thinking we have things right and create problems for ourselves.

The feasts of Israel are designed to serve two functions. First, they teach us about the plan of redemption serving as, “Miqra,” i.e., dry runs or rehearsals for the literal events that they foretell.³³ Second, they serve as a calendar for each event so we do not place the timing of foretold events in the wrong place prophetically. They are in essence a blueprint for humanity.³⁴ In all, there are seven main feasts that were observed by Israel. For us they serve as the picture on the jigsaw puzzle box. The following is a List of said festivals:

Leviticus 23

1. **Passover** - Celebrated, and occurred on Nisan 14 (on the full moon), Ex. 12:2-13:10; Lev. 23:5; Numb. 28:16. The Paschal Lamb was killed on the 15th Deut. 16:1-8.

³³Good. Rosh Hashanah and the Messianic Kingdom to Come. Page. 32 Hatikva Ministries 1989.

³⁴ Good. Rosh Hashanah and the Messianic Kingdom to Come. Page 17 Hatikva Ministries. 1989.

2. **The Feast of Unleavened Bread** – Celebrated and occurred on Nisan 15-21 (The day after the full moon), Lev. 23:6-8; Numb. 28:17.

3. **The Feast of Firstfruits/Wave Offering**-Celebrated the Sunday after Passover Ex 22:29, Lev. 23:10-11.

4. **The Feast of Pentecost** – Celebrated in the month of Sivan, fifty days after The Feast of First Fruits. It the count started the day after the first Sabbath following Passover Lev. 23:10-22; Deut.16:9-12.

Note: Both First Fruits/Wave Offering, and Pentecost, always fell on Sunday.

5. **The Feast of Trumpets** –Celebrated on Tishri 1. (The first day of the new/crescent moon), Numbers 29:1-6.

6. **The Day of Atonement**- Celebrated on Tishri 10. (Ten days after the new/crescent moon), Lev. 23:26-32.

7. **The Feast of Tabernacles**- Celebrated on Tishri 15. 15 days (on the full moon) after the new moon and lasting seven days, Lev. 23:34-44; Neh. 8:13-18.

In all of the above, the moon determined the appointed times of the feasts. Like the sun, moon, and stars, the feasts, would also play a role in God’s plan. First, they serve as indicators to when in the year the prophetic fulfillment of the feasts will take place. This should be a no-brainer. During the exodus, the events of the feasts occurred as follows: On Thursday night, the start of Nissan 14, the Passover meal was eaten. On Friday night, the start of Nissan15, the Feast of Unleavened Bread began. On Sunday, Nissan 17, the Feast of Firstfruits took place. Fifty days and seven Sabbaths later, on Sunday, Sivan the 6th, the Feast of Pentecost took place with the giving of the law. Note the paschal lamb of Nissan 15 would be introduced later. Deut 16:1-8.

Now consider the timing of the crucifixion and resurrection. On Thursday night, Nissan 14, 33 A.D. Jesus eats the Passover meal. On Friday, at the end of Nissan 14 and the start of Nissan 15, 33 A.D., Jesus dies at the 9th hour, i.e., 3 P.M. when the Paschal lamb is slain (See note below). On Friday, Nissan 15, the Feast of Unleavened Bread takes place. On Sunday, Nissan 17, Jesus rose from the dead and the Feast of Firstfruits took place. On Sunday, Sivan 5, 33 A.D. the Feast of Pentecost took place with the giving of the Holy Spirit. So I ask you, is there any justification

for thinking that the feasts themselves serve as markers for when in the year the fulfillment of the spring feasts will occur? The answer is, “yes”.³⁵

Note: According to Deuteronomy 16:1-8 The concept of the Paschal lamb was introduced. It would not be initiated until a permanent location was set. It was killed at the commencement of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It was sacrificed at the 9th hour, i.e., Nissan 5, at 3 p.m.

The next question to ask is, “Did the Bible give any advance notice as to what year the above fulfillments would occur?” Again, the answer is a resounding, “yes”. The seventy weeks of Daniel give us a clear statement regarding the year the events of the spring feasts would occur. In Daniel 9:25-26 we read:

*Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.*²⁶

So from the time of the command to rebuild Jerusalem to Messiah the prince will be a total of 69 weeks. There is no controversy over the meaning of weeks. It is 69 periods of seven years. That is 483 Jewish years of 360 days each. If we convert it to our calendar, it translates to 476 of our years. The decree to rebuild Jerusalem took place in Nisan 444 B.C. The first year is from 444 B.C. to 443 B.C. Now take -443 (negative because it is B.C.) and add 476 years. It brings you to March 28th, or Nissan 9, 33 A.D. It is the Sabbath day before Palm Sunday. The Messiah was to arrive.

So I ask again, did the Bible give us an indication of when the Spring Feasts would be fulfilled? The answer is, “yes”. As mentioned above, in the year 33 A.D. the Spring Feasts fell on the exact days of the week, and date of the year, as the first Passover of the exodus. Daniel gave us the year it would occur. So we had not only the dates by days of the week but also the year of

³⁵ See *Rosh HaShanah and the Messianic Age to Come* by Joseph Good Pages 23-37.

fulfillment told in advance. The Spring Feasts served as Miqra, i.e., dry runs/rehearsals for the real event.

Now, after considering the above, is it reasonable to assume that the same may be true about the Fall Feasts? Will they be fulfilled on their festal days, and do we have any indication of what year it might be? Are they also Miqra, i.e., dry runs/rehearsals for the real thing? If so, the problem we face is that the church has jettisoned the feasts altogether. There is widespread ignorance regarding the Feasts of Israel. The doctrine of replacement theology has infected every corner of the church to one degree or another. Consider this quote from John Chrysostom, 349-407 A.D., a contemporary of Augustine, regarding the church and the Jews: “(5) *what is this disease? The festivals of the pitiful and miserable Jews are soon to march upon us one after the other and in quick succession: **the feast of Trumpets, the feast of Tabernacles, the feasts.** There are many in our ranks who say they think as we do. Yet some of these are going to watch the festivals and others will join the Jews in keeping their feasts and observing their fasts. I wish to drive this perverse custom from the Church right now. My homilies against the Anomians can be put off to another time, and the postponement would cause no harm. But now that the **Jewish festivals are close by and at the very door**, if I should fail to cure those who are sick with the Judaizing disease. I am afraid that, because of their ill-suited association and deep ignorance, some Christians may partake in the Jews' transgressions; once they have done so, I fear my homilies on these transgressions will be in vain. For if they hear no word from me today, they will then join the Jews in their fasts; once they have committed this sin it will be useless for me to apply the remedy. (Chrysostom Homily 1 1:5).”*

What is very clear from the above passage is that the church laity was participating in the Fall Feasts. Could it be, that they were doing so in anticipation of the fulfillment of such feasts? In fact, church history is replete with those who understood the nature of the feasts. Consider the following:

Therefore we keep the day undeviatingly, neither adding nor taking away, for in Asia [Minor] great luminaries sleep, and they will rise on the day of the coming of the Lord, when he shall come with glory from heaven and seek out all the saints. Such were [the apostle] Phillip. . . There is also John who lay on the Lord's breast. . . . And there is also Polycarp at Smyrna, both

bishop and martyr, and Thraseas, both bishop and martyr, from Eumenaea. . . . [Also] Sagaris... . Papirius, . . . and Melito. . . . all of these kept the fourteenth day of the Passover according to the gospel, never swerving, but following according to the rule of the faith. (Polycrates, Letter to Victor, Bishop of Rome, quoted in Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History), "At that time no small controversy arose because all the dioceses of Asia thought it right, as though by more ancient tradition, to observe for the feast of the Saviour's passover the fourteenth day of the moon, on which the Jews had been commanded to kill the lamb." (Eusebius, Church History, Ch. XXIII.) 350 A.D.

The great question of dispute between the churches of Asia Minor and the rest of Christendom was whether the paschal communion should be celebrated on the fourteenth of Nisan [on the Biblical calendar], or on the Sunday of the resurrection festival, without regard to Jewish chronology [time-keeping]. The Christians of Asian Minor, appealing to the example of the apostles, John and Phillip, and to the uniform practice of the Church, celebrated the Christian Passover always on the fourteenth of Nisan, whatever day of the [pagan Julian] week that might be. . . . The Roman Church, on the other hand, followed by all the rest of Christendom, celebrated the death of Christ always on Friday, and his resurrection on the Sunday following the first full moon after the vernal equinox. (Christian Classics Ethereal Library, footnote #1687 to Eusebius, Church History, Ch. XXIII.) 263-339 A.D.

This controversy lasted almost two centuries until Constantine 272-337 A.D. intervened on behalf of the Roman bishops and outlawed the other group.³⁶ Even this year, the whole of the protestant churches will be observing Easter on 3/27/16. That is almost a full month before Sunday, April 24 or Nissan 17 the actual date of the resurrection. As mentioned earlier, replacement theology has infected the entire church to one degree or another. It has hampered us in our eschatology.

Just last year, in 2015, I suggested to two friends of mine that the key to the book of Revelation is the Fall Festivals. These friends are regular attendees of their church. One reformed and the

³⁶ R. L. Odom, Sunday in Roman Paganism, p. 188. 1944.

other not. They had no idea what I was talking about. I must admit that apart from my own studies, neither would I. The church as a whole has no clue regarding the Spring or Fall Feasts, and the role they play in the events they foretold and foretell. Not only do we disregard the role of the Mazzaroth, we also do the same with the feasts. As a result, we have been trying to understand the prophecies regarding the second coming without the key tools that are necessary to get it right. While we have not been totally blind, we have been sort of working in a dim light, and as a result, we have all kinds of confusion.

Things like pre, mid, or post tribulation or pre, post, preterist or other millennial issues all clear up once we have accurate information. Preterism, in particular, would disappear along with their 70 A.D. positions. Replacement theology, would be replaced with restoration theology, and key parts of covenant theology, would dissipate, and many of the conflicts in dispensationalism would self-correct.

However, it is not just the absence of knowledge presented in the Fall Festivals that is to blame. There is another simple, yet more pervasive problem afflicting the church as a whole. Despite revelation being the disclosing of things hidden; it is almost universally accepted that it is not possible to know with assurance the things of the second coming or their timing. To talk about prophecy with any level of confidence is viewed as arrogant. It is as though ignorance is the epitome of godliness in this area. One of the main factors contributing to this is a simple, yet wide-spread misunderstanding of two Bible passages. Matthew 24:36, "*But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven but my father only,*" and Mark 13:32, "*But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.*" These passages are paraded about like the center of the wheel for all Bible prophecy.

The reasoning is that not even Jesus knows; therefore, no man or angel can know when the events of Bible prophecy, e.g., the rapture/resurrection will occur. This, despite Amos 3:7, "*Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.*" One might ask, "If no man can know the day or the hour, then how could Paul say it would be at the last trump?" 1 Corinthians 15: 51-52. *Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,* ⁵² *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last*

trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Notice how Paul says he is going to shew/show you a mystery. Noah Webster 1828 defines “show” as:

To make or enable to see. To make or enable to perceive. To make to know; to cause to understand; to make known; to teach or inform.

*Strongs. Gk 3004 Shew légo (originally, "lay down to sleep," used later of "**laying an argument to rest**," i.e. bringing a message to closure) – properly, to say (speak), moving to a conclusion (bringing it to closure, "laying it to rest").*

Paul’s statement is very clear. I am going to explain and put to rest the mystery of the rapture/resurrection. He asserts that it will occur and it will be in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.

First off, 1 Corinthians was written in 52-53 A.D. and therefore, cannot be referring to any of the trumpets of Revelation, since Revelation would not be written for another 40 years. Even if you are a preterist, and date Revelation to late 62 A.D. it was still ten years later. It is highly improbable that “the last trump”, refers to anything in the gospels either, being that most date the Gospels at later than 50 A.D. In either case, Paul would not be able to put any issue to rest by referring to something not yet revealed. We are left with one possibility. Since Paul does not define it, the trump mentioned, had to be a trump that all were familiar with, and is derived from other biblical or related sources.

If what Paul said with regard to showing us a mystery, i.e., putting to rest, was all that we had for the argument it would be more than an enough to settle the issue. Paul knew when the resurrection/rapture would take place. The details are found in the words: In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. Some of these words have been mistakenly used as verbs describing the speed of occurrence. In most commentaries on I Cor.15:52, the words have been said to describe the speed by which the rapture/resurrection will occur. This goes to show the power a theological position can have over the very words being looked at. The words in, and at, are prepositions denoting position. See Strongs Number: G1722 *Orig: a primary preposition denoting (fixed) position (in place, time or state)*. According to Noah Webster’s 1828 Dictionary,

the word *denote* means: *to be a sign, signal, represent, mark or reveal*. Whatever the last trump is, during Paul's day it stood as a marker for **when** the resurrection/rapture would occur.

In our example, we are specifically talking about a position in time. The word, *moment*, in our verse, is used as an adjective which names something. See: Strongs Number: G823 Orig: *from l (as a negative particle) and the base of 5114; uncut, i.e. (by implication) indivisible (an "atom" of time):-- moment. G1 Use: Adjective*. Grammatically the words, *in a moment*, are calling attention to a particular place in time. The name of the moment is called: *the twinkling of the eye*. This is massively important, as it helps us to see how the term, *in a twinkling of an eye* is used. Again the same thing has happened with this term. It has been improperly used to describe the length or speed of time. However, just like the term before it, this term is supposed to be a place in time because of the preposition *in*. The *twinkling of an eye* denotes, i.e., marks out, something. This would make, *twinkling of an eye* an idiom for the adjective, *moment* before it. If it is an idiom, it must have been one associated with a known event that was also associated with the idiom. That event is called, *The Last Trump*. Whatever the *moment* is and whatever the *twinkling of an eye* is, both are associated with whatever, *The Last Trump* is and are markers for the advent of the rapture/resurrection.

There is very convincing historical evidence that the, *twinkling of an eye* was an idiom for an astronomical event. Such evidence is in a second century record of a dispute regarding exactly when day turns to night. One person, (Rabbi Jose) of Galilee, a very respected scholar on Judaism, was trying to bring back the purest form of O.T. observance of the law. Hadrian had nearly killed all of the Jews of the Roman Empire. After his death, the Jews were given a reprieve and were trying to get back on their feet. Rabbi Jose confirms that the idiom was for the transition of day to night. "*In order to fix the beginning and ending of the Sabbath-day and festivals, and to determine the precise hour for certain religious observances, it becomes necessary to know the exact times of the rising and the setting of the sun. According to the strict interpretation of the Mosaic Law, every day begins with sunrise and ends with sunset (Ibn Ezra, commentary on Ex. xviii. 14). This confirms the opinion of R. Jose that twilight is like the twinkling of the eye, that is to say, with sunset, day immediately changes to night (Shab. 35a) "...the Rabbis differ as to the duration of twilight. They all agree that dawn ends when the upper limb of the sun appears ("henez ha-ḥammah"), and that twilight begins when the same limb sinks*

below the horizon ("sheḳi'at ha-ḥammah"). A baraita says: "Twilight begins with sunset and lasts as long as there remains a glowing reflection in the east: when the lower part of the heavens becomes pale and the upper part is still aglow it is twilight; and when the upper part likewise becomes pale it is night. "...**twilight is indicated also by the appearance of stars: If only one star is seen, it is day; if two are visible, the time is doubtful; when three stars appear, it is night.** The stars observed are to be of a medium size, neither too large, as those seen by day, nor too small, as those seen late at night (ib.). It is conceded by all authorities that the appearance of the stars is a sign of night; and they cite Neh. iv. 15, 16 (A. V. 21, 22) to prove that the regular day's labor ceased therewith (Rabbenu Tam, in Tos. to Men. 20b, s.v. נפסל).³⁷

Note: The use of the Mazzaroth was essential. The rabbi had to be an expert in the constellations in order to know where to look for the first three stars of medium magnitude. As soon as the twinkle of the third star was seen, the day ended and the next day began. It appears that the, *twinkling of an eye* is a reference to dusk, and there is something called, *The Last Trump* associated with dusk. The same *Last Trump* is a marker for when the resurrection/rapture will occur. Paul knew this. We will come back to the issue of *The Last Trump* when we get to the Fall Festivals.

Knowledge of the constellations/Mazzaroth was essential in determining the veracity of the new moon witnesses. "**For the new moon was reckoned by actual personal observation, not by astronomical calculation, with which, however, as we know, many of the Rabbis must have been familiar, since we read of astronomical pictures, by which they were wont to test the veracity of witnesses.**"³⁸

Now, back to Matthew 24:36 and Mark 13:32. If we can't know the day and the hour, why did Jesus tell the pastor/angel of the church of Sardis in Revelation 3:2-3 that if he did not watch, Jesus would, "*come upon him like a thief and he would not know the hour of His coming*"? The above passages need to be reconciled with: Amos 3:7; 1 Corinthians 15:52 and Revelation 3:2-3.

³⁷ *Sun Rising and Setting of the: Joseph Jacobs and Judah David Einstien . Dawn and Twilight. Jewish Encyclopedia 1901*

³⁸ Edersheim *The Temple and It's Service* page 230. Hendrickson 1994

Jesus said regarding his discourse on the second coming in Mark 13:23: *But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.* That would by necessity, include the resurrection/rapture.

So, how do we reconcile the above passages without invoking paradox, and not destroy the passages? The answer is fairly simple and is to be found in one word, *but*. Dr. Sidney Collett was among the first to have written on this back in 1901 in his groundbreaking book, *The Scripture of Truth*. It was a response to the critics of his day and their willful unfaithfulness in translation. He specifically cites, Mark 13:32, and specifically calls out the word, *but* which follows the word, *Son*. In the English, the word, *but* shows up twice in both passages. “**But** of that day and hour,” the Greek word for, *but* is, (δέ/de). Just as in the English, it is a conjunction.

The second usage of *but*, (*but God*) is two words, (εἰ μή/ie me), “*if not*” or “*except that*”.³⁹ Both the Greek and English are using it as a modifier. The idea is that *if not, i.e., but for the father, no one not even the Son would know*. Collett asserts that Jesus is stating that he knows because he is God. Archbishop Trench, fifty years earlier in his work on philology, claimed the proper reading as, *neither the Son, if not the father*. James Strong presents it as such:

Strong's #1508: ei me (pronounced i may) from #1487 and #3361; if not:--but, except (that), if not, more than, save (only) that, saving, till.

When the King James translators translated it as, “but”, they did so properly, for *but*, is short for *butan*, meaning: *except; besides; unless*. See *Noah Webster 1828*. The word, *but* in the context is used as a preposition modifying the verb (know) and the noun (father). At one point, as I was examining this very issue, I took my research to the English department of the school where I was working at the time. I asked about both the Matthew and Mark passages, specifically asking about the second usage of the word, *but*. I was told that it was used as a modifier. “A modifier of what?” I asked. I was told that in both cases, it was modifying man not being able to know. I was told that, *but* was telling us the condition that is required to know, and that to know, one must go to the Father, and the Father only. In other words, apart from the Father, no man can know. It is not that man cannot know, it is that man can only know if he goes to the Father. The second use

³⁹ The Scripture of Truth page 91. 1901 Sydney Collet

of the word but negates the clause before it. It is important to note that when Jesus makes statements regarding the day and the hour and the conditions for knowing, he follows up with some clues that demonstrate that he did, in fact, know the day and the hour, for the father revealed it to him. We will get into this later when we get to the priesthood and the Temple.

The Fall Festivals: Leviticus 23:23-44 and Numbers 29

What are the Fall Feasts, and how do they assist us in Bible prophecy? First, they occur in the month of Tishri (Sept/Oct) and they are listed as follows:

The Feast of Trumpets -Tishri 1

The Day of Atonement - Tishri 10

The Feast of Tabernacles -Tishri 15-21

The Feast of Trumpets

Leviticus 23:23-25; Numbers 29:1-6; Tishri 1 (Rosh Chodesh Tishri) or Rosh Hashanah the Jewish New Year.

The Feast of Trumpets is the only feast that begins with the sighting of the new/waxing crescent moon, which commences the first day of the month of Tishri (Sept/Oct). The new moon would appear in or near the constellation of Virgo, known as, *The Maiden* or *The Travailing Woman*. The new moon was typically seen in early evening, just after sunset. When the new moon was sighted, a series of trumpet, i.e., shofar blasts were sounded. Now, keep in mind that every month was started by the sighting of the new moon, and every new moon was heralded by the sounding of trumpet blasts of silver trumpets, (See Numbers 10:1-10). However, for the month of Tishri, the trumpet blasts were both of silver and Ram's Horn trumpets (Shofars). These blasts were preceded by daily blasts of the silver trumpets during the month of preparation known as Elul.

During the month of Elul the silver trumpets were blown every day after the sighting of the new moon. These blasts were set as a warning that the pilgrim festival of tabernacles was approaching

and it was time to make one's self ready for repentance, reconciliation, and travel. During the days of the festivals the Lord told them to bring the first fruits of each harvest, and promised that he would protect the homes of the people while they were away. See Leviticus 23:14-17, Exodus 34:24. As the month of Tishri approached, those who had to travel far, had to make arrangements to care for their estates while gone. The caretakers would either be servants who for some reason could not travel, or gentiles. Some pilgrims could be gone for more than a month at a time.

When the new moon of Tishri was sighted, the trumpets, i.e., Shofars sounded three different types of blasts. The first series was of short blasts announcing the time of reward for those who sighted the new moon and reported it. These people were immediately taken into the temple area and given great rewards, and ate a meal with the high priest arraigned by the Sanhedrin.⁴⁰ Although this was the case for every month it was extra special for the month of Tishri. Those who had sighted the new moon were declared worthy. They knew the signs, were watching and were ceremonially clean. They took the time to prepare and watch.

The second series of blasts was long. It was called the awakening blast. This blast was believed to be the blast that would sound the resurrection. Jewish tradition taught that when Abraham made his three-day journey from Beersheba to Moriah, it was during Tishri 1-3. When he got within sight of Moriah he saw something that became later known to us as the day of Christ. Jesus made this very clear when he said that Abraham saw my day and was glad (See John 8:56). When Abraham looked afar off, he was not looking to a faraway distance. He was seeing the future. A particular moment. What he saw was his seed and in that seed he saw Isaac, along with both Jew and gentile standing in the resurrection. It was the day of Christ.

The third and final series of blasts was a treble blast signaling fear and judgement for those who were not ready and who risked being left behind. All three of the above-mentioned series of three blasts was called the Last Trump. According to 1 Corinthians 15:52, The Last Trump is the marker for the day and the hour of the resurrection/rapture. In other words, the resurrection/rapture will occur on Tishri 1; at the moment that the day turns to night, i.e. twinkling of an eye, when the new moon is seen in or around Virgo/The Maiden/The Traveling

⁴⁰ Glaser Fall feasts of Israel Page 14 1987 Also see Edersheim The Temple and It's Service page 126-27 Hendrickson 1994.

Woman and the Last Trump is sounded. Special revelation corrected the order of what the blasts would do. Accordingly the dead in Christ rise first.

Those who traveled to Jerusalem from the country had to arrive seven days prior to the feasts. They had to be ceremonially cleansed after the law, lest they touch anything rendering them unclean⁴¹ (See Num 19, Lev 15). You could not participate in a state of uncleanness. Once the trumpet was sounded, the gate of the city and temple was opened. the temple gate remained open for about 10 days. The city gate was remained open for 3 ½ days. Those who had been cleansed and made the journey to be at the city gate when it was opened, were immediately allowed in. At the same time beacons were lit across the land signaling the sighting of the new moon. ⁴² There was just over three days left to make it. After 3 ½ days no one was allowed entrance into Jerusalem. For those in the land traveling at twenty miles per day, it could take more than 3 days to get to Jerusalem, depending on where one lived. Prior to, and even after Tishri 1, there were large caravans of people headed to Jerusalem. When the caravan came, one had to be ready to go, particularly after the signals were seen.

If people were working in the field, grinding at the mill or sleeping when the caravan or signal came, it was time to leave. They were to be ready at a moment's notice. Those who were not prepared to leave at a moment's notice would be left behind. These people would have been able to watch the moon and could see the day approaching, but some were negligent in doing so. Just the caravans alone should have clued them in.

Those who delayed had just over three days to get to Jerusalem. This was made more difficult due to the fact that Tishri 1 was a high Sabbath. One could only travel so far on a Sabbath, and depending on when Tishri 1 fell, a person might also have to deal with the regular Sabbath, as well. One might have to be prepared to walk day and night, and be ready to do so when the signal came. This could make for a very difficult journey that many people simply could not physically accomplish. After three days, another trumpet, i.e. Shofar called the great trump, was sounded and the city gate was shut.

⁴¹ Edersheim The Temple and It's Service page 285 Hendrickson 1994. Edersheim. Life and Times of Jesus Messiah Page 7 Hendrickson 1995

⁴² Edersheim The Temple and It's Service 156-157. Hendrickson 1994.

After the Babylonian deportation, the above mentioned beacon signals went as far as Babylon so the Jews there could know when the new moon had been seen in Israel.⁴³ Due to the 29.5 day lunar cycle, weather conditions, and distance of Jews among the diaspora, sighting the new moon was often difficult to predict. In fact, because of said difficulty, the first two days of Tishri became known as one long day, or the hidden day known only to the Lord. The Feast of Trumpets became known as “The Feast of The Unknown Day and Unknown Hour”.

Note: the priesthood had to be in Jerusalem and ready to serve by the time the last trump sounded. Once in Jerusalem, any time of the year, they were to maintain a state of purity for they could be called into service and any moment.⁴⁴ Those who were not in time had just over three days to get there. Those who were either late or were unclean had to be cleansed before they could either enter the temple or render service. There were dire consequences for being late or unfit for service. Rendering service in a state of uncleanness could only be dealt with by death.

As mentioned, when the trumpets sounded, the east gate of the temple was opened, which allowed for all who desired, to look into the holy place of the temple itself. This gate remained open for ten days for all in the city to see into the temple.⁴⁵

From the time of the new moon until the next feast, the people would be engaged in the process of jockeying for position for the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles. The priests (all of which had to be in Jerusalem by or before Tishri 1), would be engaged in instructing the people in the law and the prophets, while also taking up their respective positions around the temple or throne of God. At this time, the Aaronic priesthood would assemble. They were divided into 24 sections around the temple with the elder of each section sitting at the head. These elders were the masters of the house of the Lord, or better known as the chief priests'. (See 1 Chronicles 24:1-19). The rest of the Levites were located behind the Aaronic priests in the court of the priests. The heads of Jewish families were gathered in the court of Israel. The women were gathered in the court of the women and the gentiles were gathered in the court of the gentiles, which by the way was the largest court of all.

⁴³ Ibid 156-57.

⁴⁴ Ibid pages 60-62

⁴⁵ Glaser Fall feasts of Israel Page 122. 1987

Jewish tradition as recorded in rabbinic writing of the pre and post-New Testament era taught two very distinct thoughts regarding the feasts. First, it was taught that there was an earthly realm and a heavenly realm. In other words, there was an earthly theater and a heavenly theater, with corresponding and simultaneous activity. This is very important to keep in mind when engaged in a study of Bible prophecy. Daniel 10 is a perfect example.

Second, it was taught that when the last trump sounded, a series of books were opened.⁴⁶ The first was the Book of Life. Those whose names were found recorded in the Book of Life would be spared any judgment, should judgment come in lieu of the upcoming atonement of Yom Kippur being rejected. These people repented prior to The Feast of Trumpets/Rosh Hashanah.⁴⁷ They had watched the signs and maintained a state of cleanness. They would be immediately taken into heaven on Tishri 1, i.e., *at The Last Trump*, should the resurrection occur, otherwise, they are marked for life for the next year. Very few would be included in this group. The next book was the Book of the Dead. These are those who rejected the gospel before the Feast of Trumpets. They are sealed for judgment. Finally, there is the Book of the Intermediate. This is a record of those who have not repented but have not rejected the gospel. It is the largest group of the three. They have ten days from the Feast of Trumpets/Rosh Hashanah until the Day of Atonement, i.e., Yom Kippur to repent and be ceremonially clean. Depending on their response, they are sealed against or for the above-mentioned possible judgment or are marked for life or death the next year.

Note: If Tishri 1 occurred on a Sabbath, that Sabbath was called the Sabbath of the return/repentance. If it did not occur on a Sabbath, the following Sabbath was called the Sabbath of the return/repentance. It was common Jewish thought that the resurrection would occur on the Sabbath.

The following are some of the idioms for the feast of trumpets.

1. *Teshuvah* (repentance) Micah 5:3

⁴⁶ Buksbazen The Feasts of Israel. Christian Literature Crusade.1954. Good. Rosh Hashana and the Messianic Kingdom to Come. Page 89-90. Hatikva Ministries 1989

⁴⁷ Ibid Good page 118. See also Edersheim, The Temple and It's Service page 236. Hendrickson 1994

2. *Rosh HaShanah* (Head of the Year, Birthday of the World)
3. *Yom Teruah* (the Day of the Awakening Blast, Feast of Trumpets)
4. *Yom HaDin* (the Day of Judgment)
5. *HaMelech* (the Coronation of the King/Messiah)
6. *Yom HaZikkaron* (the Day of Remembrance or Memorial)
7. The birth pangs of the Messiah, (*Chevlay shel Mashiach*).
8. The opening of the gates
9. *Kiddushin/Nesu'in* (the Wedding Ceremony)
10. The resurrection of the dead (Rapture, Natza1)
11. The last trump (*shofar*)
12. *Yom Hakeseh* (the Hidden Day)

The Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur.

Leviticus 16 and 23:24-32; 25:9; Numbers 29:7-11

The Day of Atonement took place on Tishri 10. This was an elaborately organized day with many participants. The priests were organized in a very specific manner. As mentioned in the previous section, the house of Arron was organized into 24 divisions. Each division was done by house. Each house had an elder (the head of that house) appointed as the chief. The elder sat at the head of the house and those of his house were behind him. The Aaronic priesthood was gathered around the temple and its purpose was to make Israel fit as a kingdom of priests serving mediators for the nations. The high priest was from the house of Aaron. The Levitical priesthood (of which the house of Aaron is) was gathered around the 24 elders and their houses in the inner court of the priests. They tended to the daily activities of the temple. The rest of the men from all of the tribes were gathered in the outer court. The women were gathered in the court of the women. The gentiles who attended were gathered in the court of the gentiles. Once all were gathered, the main event would start. The main figure of the event was the high priest.

The high priest would officiate only on this day. He was part of and selected by, the Sanhedrin. The other Chief Priests of the house of Aaron would officiate two weeks out of the year, according to their order (See Luke 1:8). As Yom Kippur approached, the high priest would go through a very detailed and elaborate cleansing process leading up to the time to make the

atonement. The high priest had only one task and that was the Day of Atonement. He spent an entire year in preparation for said atonement. Once he officiated the atonement, he would go back to the Sanhedrin until the following year. Most people would never see the high priest until the Day of Atonement. He rarely showed himself, and when he did, he was shown in all of his priestly glory. If he decided to show himself prior to the Day of Atonement, he typically displayed himself on either a Sabbath, High Sabbath, or the new moon day of a month, i.e., Rosh Chodesh.⁴⁸ That would mean that there were about 70 occasions a year by which one might see the high priest, but it was never a guarantee. The only sure occasion was the Day of Atonement, i.e., Yom Kippur.

On the day the high priest was to perform his task he would first have to offer a sacrifice for himself and his family. This sacrifice was done on the Mount of Olives, and the animal sacrificed was a red heifer. It should be noted that this becomes very important when we look at the events surrounding the triumphal entry on Palm Sunday. More on this later.

While on the Mount of Olives the high priest would issue a blessing on the heifer, slaughter the heifer, and catch its blood. The remains of the red heifer were then taken into the temple compound and burned in the sight of the priests, who were gathered around the temple and watching from the Mount of Olives. The ashes were then collected to be later scattered over the people. Once the ashes were collected, the high priest would ride a donkey as he traveled down a bridge that went straight from the Mount of Olives to the temple courtyard where he was presented to the people in his royal garb⁴⁹. As he proceeded along the path from the Mount of Olives to the temple, those who had gathered along the way would lay down their garments and palm branches as they recited all of Psalm 118, where we find the statement, in verse 25-26, “*We beseech Thee, O LORD, save now! (hosanna) We beseech Thee, O LORD, make us now to prosper! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord*”. The high priest was coming in the name of the Lord. The same passage was also recited during what was called the water festival, which we will look into shortly.

⁴⁸ Glaser The Fall Feasts of Israel. Page 95 Moody Press 1987.

⁴⁹ Edershim records such a bridge that lead from the east gate to the Mt of olives. The Temple and It's Service page 254, 282. Hendrickson 1994. The Temple and Bible Prophecy. Randal Price. Page 370. Harvest House Publishers. 1999/2000

Once in the courtyard, the high priest would take charge of the entire temple facility. As he proceeded he would be hidden by a curtain, behind which he went through a ceremonial washing. He would then don a typical white linen covering, which was girded with a golden girdle. At this point, he looked like all of the other priests. Once he had changed, the high priest was put into the care of a group of understudies whose sole purpose was to be sure the High Priest knew all of the ordinances regarding the task set before him.

The High Priest was given a very light meal, lest he sleep. He had to keep awake all night, so as to not stain his garments. Two of the understudies were assigned to assist him in this task. They did so by reading the most exciting passages of Bible prophecy from the prophets. If he grew weary, the high priest was required to recite such passages. If he grew weary still, he was required to explain the meaning of said passages while walking on the cold marble floor barefoot. It is very clear what this practice teaches us; that Bible prophecy keeps us from falling asleep.

The following morning the priest went through another series of ceremonial washings as the crowds gathered for the most holy day of the year. The priest said a prayer for himself and his family, after which the high priest entered into the Holy of Holies. Once in the temple, the high priest took coals from the fire and burned incense in the holy of holies. The smoke was so thick that it covered the mercy seat. The high priest remained in the temple for several minutes while the crowd outside waited in silence. No one was allowed into the temple until the high priest came out. If the sacrifice of the red heifer was accepted, then the priest would be driven out by the smoke of the incense. When the priest came out, the crowd rejoiced greatly for they now knew they had a priest who was acceptable to God on their behalf. Once the high priest came out, he took blood/ashes from the red heifer, went back into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled it on the mercy seat (or the slab in the post-exilic era). Keep in mind that, at this time, he was doing so for himself and his seed/family. It appears as if he did so with his back to the mercy seat (See Leviticus 16:14).

Note: the blood and carcass of the red heifer were burnt to ashes. When the blood was applied to the altar it was in ash form mixed with water. These ashes were preserved for decades and even centuries until the next red heifer appeared. Tradition teaches us that only 9 red heifers have been slain.

When the high priest came out a second time, he went over to where two goats had been set aside. On one goat, the sins of Israel's future was transferred by the laying on of hands. That goat was immediately slain, wherein the priest entered the Holy of Holies for the third and final time, applying the blood as before. When he came out he took the ash of the heifer and sprinkled it on the people and on the brazen altar in the courtyard. He also applied the blood of the slain goat to the same altar. Thus the people and the temple they came in contact with was cleansed.

The second goat was kept alive, but it too had the sins of Israel transferred to it in like manner. These were the sins of Israel's past. This goat was led out of the gate and out of the city, about 12 miles away (a Sabbath day's journey), wherein it was pushed off a cliff. If the goat did not return alive, the people were safe from judgement for yet another year. Before the High Priest or any others involved in the temple service could leave, they had to be ceremonially cleansed and leave their garments behind for they had been stained with blood and ashes. This clothing would be used for the wicks in the temple candles. Once touched by the ashes, the people were ceremonially clean and could function as a kingdom of priests. Israel was now in a position to mediate sacrifices of atonement for the nations, which brings us to the third feast: The Feast of Tabernacles.

Note: If the sacrifice of the high priest was rejected, the Day of Atonement was then to become *The Day of The Lord*. Prior to and during the Day of Atonement the people prayed that the land, the sea, the plants and the people be spared judgment. More on this in chapter 4.

The Feast of Tabernacles/Booths/Ingathering/Lights

Exodus 23:14-16; Deuteronomy 16:13-16; Leviticus 23:33-44; Numbers 29:12-38; 2nd Chronicles 8:12-13; Ezra 3:4; Nehemiah 8:17-18; John 7:2-3

The next and final of the Fall Festivals was the Feast of Tabernacles, also known as the Feast of Booths, Ingathering, and Lights. It essentially had not been observed from Joshua Son of Nun, thru the Exilic Period (See Nehemiah 8:17). Its original intent was to be a reminder of wandering in the wilderness. However, it would later take on a prophetic role. This feast was to take place in Jerusalem, but because of the immense population of Israel, it had to be incorporated by some of the other surrounding cities located in the mountains of Judah. The tabernacles/booths were to be made of wild myrtle or willow branches. It was supposed to have an opening in the roof so the

constellations could be seen at night.⁵⁰ The people were to bring all manner of fruit with them and suspend it high off the ground throughout the entire feast. The fruit was suspended to keep it from being spoiled, eaten, or otherwise destroyed during the time of the feast. Once the tabernacle was completed, they had to wait until the full moon, i.e., Tishri 15, to start the feast. The tabernacles were to be the primary place of residence for the next 7 days, Tishri 15-22.

For the next seven days, and with the issue of sin temporarily dealt with by Yom Kippur, Israel was now in a position to function as a kingdom of priests interceding for the nations. They were to pray for and mediate on behalf of the nations. The mediation was carried out in two ceremonies. The first ceremony was a sacrificial ceremony. It took place on each of the seven days. There were differing numbers of sacrifices for each of the seven days, with the total number of sacrifices offered to be 70. That is one sacrifice per each nation group mentioned in the table of nations in Genesis Chapter 10.⁵¹

The second ceremony was a ritual known as The Water Festival.⁵² This was a very festive event. Every morning a trumpet would sound. When the trumpet sounded the people would gather around the chief priest as he picked up a golden bowl/vial and made his way to the pool of Siloam (which means sent). As the people followed him, they were playing instruments, singing, rejoicing, and waving palm branches along the way. The priest would then draw water from the pool of Siloam with the bowl/vial and then make his way back to the temple with the same festive crowd following him. As mentioned before, there appears to be a tradition of reciting Psalm 118, along with laying down cloaks and palm branches along the pathway during this ceremony. Once back at the temple, the priest would then take wine and mix it with the water. The grapes for the wine were provided by the people for the temple service. The wine was to substitute as blood, for no unclean blood was permitted inside the city during this time, and never inside the temple. Any unclean blood had to be poured out on the earth outside of the city. The grapes were pressed into wine, with the temple wine press located in the temple. The priest then took the bowl with the wine/water mixture and poured it on the cornerstone of the altar of

⁵⁰ Glaser The Fall Feasts of Israel Page 188. 1987

⁵¹ Good. Rosh Hashana and the Messianic Kingdom to Come. Page 48. Hatikva Ministries 1989

⁵² Good. Rosh Hashana and the Messianic Kingdom to Come. Page 44-49. Hatikva Ministries 1989; Glaser. The Fall Feasts of Israel Page 174-182. Edershiem . The Temple Its' Ministry and Services. Page 220 Hendrickson Publications. 1994

sacrifice for all to see. As the bowl was being poured out with the trumpet sounding, the people and all of the priests would wave palm branches, which made the sound of wind. The water and the blood came out under the altar. This festival ritual was performed seven times over seven days. Every day for seven days the people recited Psalms 118 during the Water Festival. Thus mediation and atonement for the nations were made.

During the Feast of Tabernacles, a giant menorah was lit with the oil of the olives provided by the people and pressed in the temple olive press. The light from this menorah was seen from many miles away, both on land and sea. This light gave the Feast of Tabernacles the nickname of The Feast of Lights.

Once the Feast of Tabernacles was over, there would be a final day of reverence, followed by a great feast, which was solely for the people of Israel. This feast was on the eighth day, it was then that the fruit that was suspended would be taken down and eaten. The tabernacles were deconstructed and the people went back to their homes to begin life in the new year. It was a new beginning with the past and future sins mediated for another year. If needed a new high priest was selected, the nations had been mediated, the harvest reaped, and now it was time to go about their lives. However, in about seven days, the new moon would appear telling them that the time of their gathering for next year was approaching. They were to live a life commensurate with a redeemed people in order to guarantee being recorded in the book of life at the sounding of the last trump, lest the resurrection/rapture come and they be left behind or they be marked for death.

Traditions of the Fall Festivals:

On the night following The Day of Atonement/Yom Kippur, two traditions began. The first being that all of the young virgin women would take lamps and go out into the vineyards on the Mount of Olives. There they awaited potential grooms who would be looking for potential wives.⁵³ If a man and a woman took interest in one another, the parents would enter into a marriage contract that would be consummated the following year. This practice made the time of the fall festivals a primary time for either betrothal or marriage consummation. If it was a betrothal to be consummated the following year, both the bride and groom paid close attention to the approaching sign of the new moon each month as they saw the days of the fall feasts (the

⁵³ Glaser The Fall Feasts of Israel Page 107 1987 Moody Press

time of gathering) approaching. If it was a time for consummation, the fathers of both parties set a day that only they knew. Those who were to take part in the ceremonies had to go to the father of either the bride or the groom to know when they were to be ready.

When everything was set to go, the father of the bride was given the signal to place the bridal crown on the bride. This signal was sent by one of the two witnesses that accompanied the groom. Depending on the arrangement, one witness would go and fetch the bride for the groom and escort her to the groom; or both the groom and one witness would fetch the bride, while the other witness stayed behind to make sure all of the preparations at the father's house remained in place. As word spread that the bride had received her crown, the young maidens of the procession, along with others, would wait along the procession route. As the procession marched, the witness would shout, "Behold, the bridegroom!" The maidens and others carried lamps that were to be lit upon the announcement. There were usually ten such maidens⁵⁴. They followed the procession to the house of the groom's father. Those who had enough oil to last the journey were welcomed into the father's house, where they were given a wedding garment.⁵⁵ Those who did not have enough oil for the journey were left out. This description of the events is very telling, for during the Fall Festivals everyone was considered to be family. It was a great disgrace to be shut out. The members of the bridal procession and those who came with their lamps were called the children of the bride-chamber. Some have even gone so far as to claim (with good reason) that the wedding procession was viewed as the bride bringing forth her children. Those who had enough oil to last the journey did their due diligence so as to not only know the route, but also to watch for the signal from the groom's father, and to know how much oil it would take to make the journey. They did their due diligence ahead of time. It was their job to call others to the procession by the light of their lamps. From what is known, the timing of most weddings took place during Tabernacles at night. Which brings us to our second tradition for the night of the Yom Kippur/ The Day of Atonement.

The second tradition on the Night of Yom Kippur had to do with the construction of the dwelling place for the upcoming Feast of Tabernacles. The first nail of the booth/tabernacle was nailed into place.⁵⁶ The people were required to bring the first fruits of the harvest to the temple.

⁵⁴ Edershiem Sketches of Jewish social life Page 143. 10th printing 2012 Hedrickson Publishers.

⁵⁵ Wight Manners and Customs of Bible Lands. Pages 132, 134. Moody press 23rd edition 1977

⁵⁶ Ibid page 187

This would include grains, such as wheat and barley for grain offerings, olives for the olive press to make olive oil for the temple service, and grapes for the winepress for temple service.

The Jewish Thought Regarding the Prophetic Components of the Fall Festivals.

Not long ago, in 2015, I taught a Sunday school lesson on 1 John. Before preparing my lessons on the text, I decided to give the cultural setting in which the book was written. I was stunned by what was to be found. There was not a commentary to be had that could have shed more light on the book itself than knowing the culture of the people, place and time. In six weeks the class grew in size and, like myself, people said that for the first time one of the most difficult books known, was now easy to understand. This goes to underscore knowing the power of the cultural context of the Jews in the pre-New Testament/New Testament/ post-New Testament period. The same applies to the prophetic writings of the Jews. Without the cultural context, the light of our study is that much dimmer. To the Jews, both the Spring and 2

Fall Festivals had both a commemorative and prophetic component. Only one festival had a purely prophetic component. That was the Feast of Trumpets. The Jews also taught that there were two theaters of prophecy. The heavenly and the earthly. The literal events on earth occur simultaneously with literal events in heaven.⁵⁷ Our purpose here is to look at what they saw as the prophetic components of the Fall Festivals. Such information comes from the extra-biblical/cultural literature of the time. Volumes could be written on this, but we will be brief .

To the Jews, the Feast of Trumpets was prophetic in nature. While Jewish tradition places the sacrifice of Isaac as a commemorative component of the feast, it was generally seen as prophetic. Everything leading up to that day, starting from the new moon of the month of Kislev, was seen as warnings that the day was approaching. They believed that on Tishri 1, Satan stood by ready to accuse them in the heavenly courts.⁵⁸ If the resurrection occurred, the books of judgment would be opened. The Jews taught that if you were not watching and prepared to enter into Jerusalem when the trumpets sounded (or the beacons lit) you might be left out of the resurrection/rapture. You had a little more than three days to get to Jerusalem once the trumpet sounded to be guaranteed to see the temple. You had even less time if your travel fell on the

⁵⁷ Good. Rosh Hashanah and the Messianic Kingdom to Come. Pages 115-125. Hatikva Ministries 1989

⁵⁸ Glaser The Fall Feasts of Israel Page 120 Moody Press 1987. See also Edersheim The Temple and It's Service page 236-37 Hendrickson 1994

Sabbath. If you were not prepared at a moment's notice you could be left behind and thus travel alone which was very dangerous. Whether before or after the trumpet, no one waited for you as millions made their way to Jerusalem. If you did not make it before the last trump you risked being sealed into judgment. There are many more prophetic components for this festival, but what we have mentioned will have to do for now. Either you knew the signs and made yourself ready to enter in when the trumpet sounded, or you risked being left out. After 3 ½ days the great trumpet sounded and gates to the city were shut.

The Day of Atonement also had prophetic components. As long as the sacrifice for the high priest and his family was accepted, Israel would be atoned for and would be suitable to mediate for the nations. If the atonement for the high priest is rejected, then The Day of Atonement (according to rabbinic literature) becomes the Day of The Lord. The gates of judgment are opened. There are no less than 85 Titles for the Day of The Lord in the Bible, along with over 100 uses of Idioms of the same.⁵⁹

The Feast of Tabernacles though memorial in origins also had a prophetic component. As mentioned above, The Day of Atonement would make Israel fit as a mediator for the nations. If the atonement was rejected, the Day of Atonement would become The Day of The Lord, and the gates of judgment would open. Instead of intercession and mediation for the nations, The Water Festival of the bowls and trumpets become judgments. Instead of being The Feast of Lights, it is now a time of darkness. Instead of prayers for the earth, sea, trees and men, judgment is poured out. The tabernacles become shelters of protection against judgment. The fruit suspended high up in the tabernacles depicts the safety of those secured away in the heavens, against the impending judgment of those on earth. Those on earth are sealed against or for judgment. At the end of the 7th day, the gates of judgment are closed.⁶⁰ On the 8th day Tishri 23, a great feast would take place for only Israel as they looked forward to the Messianic age to come.

The Temple

⁵⁹ Joseph Good Rosh, Hashanah and the Messianic Kingdom to Come. Hatikva Ministries, 1989. Pages 175-188

⁶⁰ Glaser The Fall Feasts of Israel Page 198 Moody Press 1987.

No discussion on the nature of the festivals is complete without some knowledge of the temple, with its structure, service and those who worked there.

The Structure and Service

The temple was a complex structure with various rooms, chambers, and buildings serving various purposes. Not only was it designed for worship, it was also designed to house those who served in it. As mentioned, the house of Aaron was divided into 24 groups with each group having a head/elder of the family group. They were the masters (chief priests) of the temple. Each group served two weeks per year in the temple. See Luke 1:5-9. During their time of service, they lived in the temple complex. There were rooms that surrounded the temple. These rooms housed the priests. While there were many aspects to the daily service, I would like to focus on one in particular: the evening sacrifice.

The evening sacrifice was somewhat of an irregular sacrifice, in that it did not take place at a specified time. It could occur at evening, midnight, cockcrow, or morning. The elder/chief priest could come at any moment in the night, which required the attending priests who were living in the temple quarters to remain alert. There were dire consequences for not being watchful. This presented a unique set of circumstances, as they needed sleep in order to function in the temple during the day. When the daily sacrifice was over and the day began to set, the priests shut the doors of the temple. Access to all was denied, save for the captain of the temple guard or the elder/priest. Both could arrive at any time. The captain would come to inspect the guards to be sure they were awake. The Chief priest would come to make the sacrifice. In order to not be caught off guard, the other priests appointed men among them to be watchmen. One for each watch of the night. This way everyone got a chance to sleep. Those who were sleeping would remove their priestly garments, fold them, and then place them on a mat so as to keep them from being soiled. This enabled them to get dressed in an instant if need be. It was the job of the watchmen to stand watch and **wake the other priests** at the first sign of the elder/chief priest's arrival. When he was seen, the watchman would go to all the rooms and wake everyone up.

They had to be dressed and ready before the priest arrived at the door. Once at the door, the elder/chief priest would knock and ask to be let in. He had to be let in as soon as he knocked. He would then enter in and inspect all. If anyone was found either sleeping, undressed, or with filthy garments, they would have their clothing taken from them and be cast out naked, i.e.,

wearing only the inner garment, from the temple. Their clothing would be burned. Those who were awake and properly attired would be invited to dine with the priest. It was this custom that gave the elder/chief priest the nick-name of thief in the night. If you were not ready, he took your clothing.

When Jesus said that no man knows the day or the hour, and references the four watches of the night and coming like a thief, he is using the language of the Feast of Trumpets, the wedding customs, and the evening sacrifice. Just after Jesus states that no man knows the day or the hour, he gives us a clue. Jesus knew that the rapture/resurrection would happen at the time of the evening sacrifice.

Matthew 24:43-44 *But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready... .*

Mark 13:35 *Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning:36 Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.37 And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.*

Then there is this, from Revelation

3:3: *If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.*

3:20 *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

16:5 *Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.*

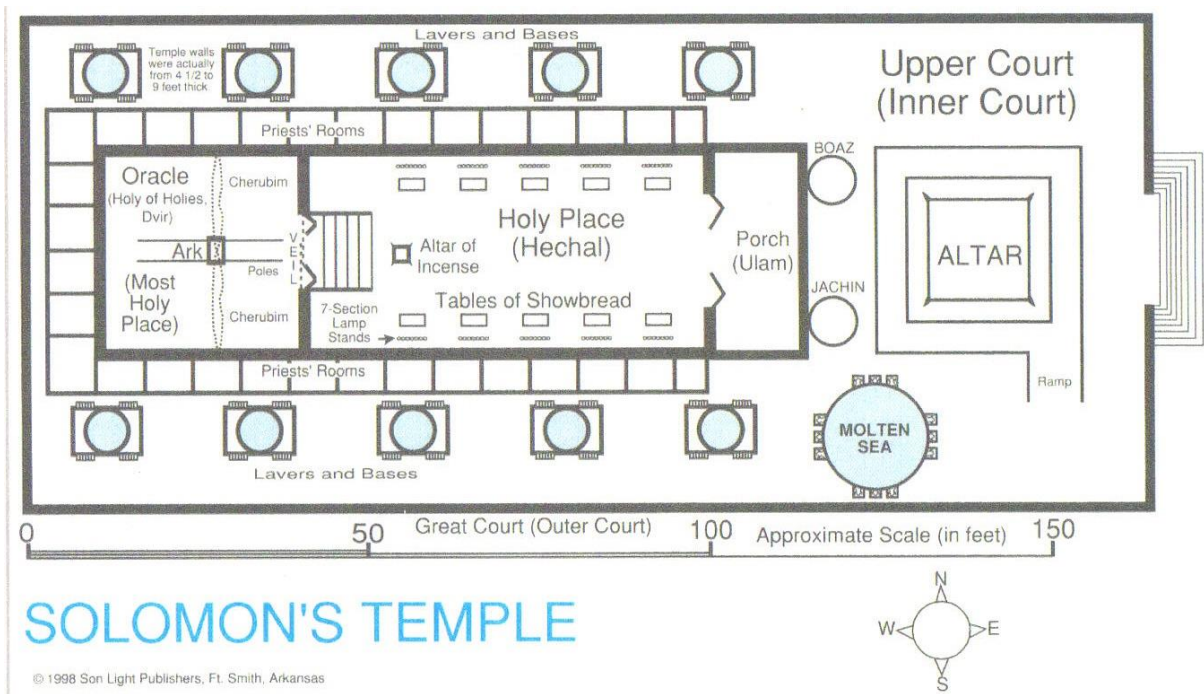
For most of my Christian life, I was taught and believed that these were warnings to unbelievers in the church. I was stunned when it became clear that they are clearly part of the priesthood of believers. They are in the house of God which means the atonement has been applied yet they have become ceremonially unclean.

When taken together, the passages in Matthew and Mark along with 1 Corinthians 15:52, give a much more clear understanding of the timing of the resurrection/rapture. It will occur on Tishri

1, at the time of the evening sacrifice at sunset, i.e., the twinkle of the eye, at the moment the new moon is seen and signaled by the last trump. On that day, the bride will be crowned and she shall bring forth her children. The high priest, i.e., Christ, will show himself to all, and those who have prepared themselves with enough oil, were watching and ready will be counted worthy to enter in and sup with him for they aew counted worthy.

In this chapter, we covered a lot of information. I have in no way provided an exhaustive account of either the festivals, customs, culture or temple service. Such would take more than what can be allotted here. My intention has been to utilize the most relevant information to give the best accounting for the purpose of assisting us in better understanding the prophetic material in the Bible. Hopefully, this will be helpful as we consider what the Bible reveals to us in God’s prophetic program.

Diagram of the temple.



In the above image we have the layout of Solomon’s temple with the furnishings found in I Chronicles 4:1-10:

Moreover, he made an altar of brass, twenty cubits the length thereof, and twenty cubits the breadth thereof, and ten cubits the height thereof. Also he made a molten sea of ten cubits from brim to brim, round in compass, and five cubits the height thereof; and a line of thirty cubits did compass it round about. And under it was the similitude of oxen, which did compass it round about: ten in a cubit, compassing the sea round about. Two rows of oxen were cast, when it was cast. It stood upon twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east: and the sea was set above upon them, and all their hinder parts were inward. And the thickness of it was an handbreadth, and the brim of it like the work of the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies; and it received and held three thousand baths. He made also ten lavers, and put five on the right hand, and five on the left, to wash in them: such things as they offered for the burnt offering they washed in them; but the sea was for the priests to wash in. And he made ten candlesticks of gold according to their form, and set them in the temple, five on the right hand, and five on the left. He made also ten tables, and placed them in the temple, five on the right side, and five on the left. And he made an hundred basons of gold. Furthermore he made the court of the priests, and the great court, and doors for the court, and overlaid the doors of them with brass. And he set the sea on the right side of the east end, over against the south.

It is very important to note there was a large pool of water called the Brazen Sea, i.e. the Molten Sea, of high polished brass that was for washing those in the priesthood that had become ceremonially unclean. No Priest, having been defiled, could render service unless he was washed in the Brazen Sea. Before they could be baptized in it, a sin offering had to be made for each priest. It is also important to note that there were ten wash basins called brazen lavers that were for washing the meat of the sacrifice. They were placed on carts that had among other things images of lions, oxen, and cherubs inscribed on them. They were used to cleanse the sacrificial meat.

The Brazen lavers. These are depicted with more detail in 1 Kings 7.

²⁷ *And he made ten bases of brass; four cubits was the length of one base, and four cubits the breadth thereof, and three cubits the height of it.*²⁸ *And the work of the bases was on this manner: they had borders, and the borders were between the ledges: And on the borders that were*

between the ledges were lions, oxen, and cherubims: and upon the ledges there was a base above: and beneath the lions and oxen were certain additions made of thin work.

These are seen in their heavenly reality in Ezekiel Chapters 1 and 10 along with Revelation 4-5.

There were also 10 golden candlesticks comprised of seven lamps apiece. They are depicted in their earthly reality in Revelation 1-3.

The Brazen Laver

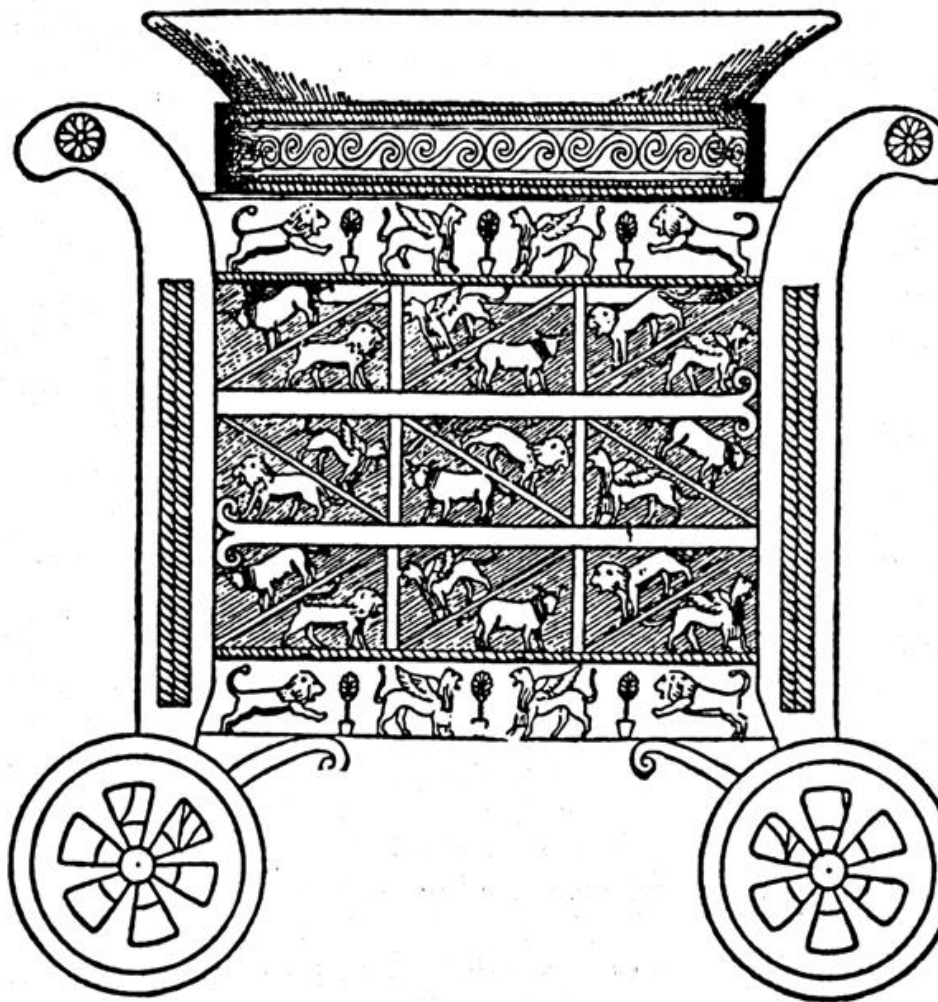


FIG. 33.—Brass laver from Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 7^{27ff}; 2 Chron. 4⁶). (Reconstruction.)

The Golden Candle Stick



From the Arch of Titus, Rome.
Golden Candlestick.

The Brazen Sea.



Isaiah 8:20

To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word,
it is because there is no light in them.

Chapter 3

The Bible

The Third and Final Authority in Revelation

In keeping with the reformed tradition of the church, the Westminster Confession of Faith states the following in regard to the Bible:

VIII. The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of its writing was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic; so as in all controversies of religion the Church is finally to appeal unto them. But because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God who have right unto, and interest in, the Scriptures, and are commanded, in the fear of God, to read and search them, therefore they are to be translated into the language of every people unto which they come, that the Word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship him in an acceptable manner, and, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, may have hope.

IX. The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself; and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it may be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.

X. The Supreme Judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture. End.

Apart from the Bible, we would know nothing of the other two types of revelation. Although the Bible calls attention to and even points us to both the feasts and the Mazzaroth, it is the Bible itself that gives us the ability to explain their meaning and importance. In the Bible, *we have a more sure word of prophecy* 2 Peter 1:19. Without it, we are at sea without an anchor, sail, or rudder lost in a world of ignorance. While it is not my intention to use this section as a discourse

on the sufficiency of scripture, I would like to state that if this is not your position on the *Bible*, then Bible prophecy is of no use to you. The Bible is very clear, in that it is the final authority in all manners of faith and practice:

Isaiah 8:2. *To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*

In it we have all things that pertain to life and godliness:

2 Peter 1:3. *According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.*

According to Psalm 19:7-8, it is perfect in *converting the soul, making wise the simple, rejoicing the soul, and enlightening the eyes.*

To stand in judgment over it is to condemn one's self :

James 4:11. *But if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge?*

While one may not agree with what the bible states regarding itself, everyone should agree with what the Bible claims for itself. It clearly claims to be the Word of God in all matters of faith and practice and calls us to a crossroads. Either accept it for its claims and submit to it, or you have no part in it.

Having stated the above, it would seem as though all those who affirm both an evangelical Christian faith and the sufficiency of scripture would be in agreement on all issues. And while that would be ideal, it is far from the reality. Good and smart Christian people differ on many things. infant baptism, believer's baptism, paedo vs creedal communion, Pre/Post/Mid-tribulation, amillennial, post-millennial, and preterism, essentially all stem from arguments over hermeneutics and authority. However, the root of the problem is deeper. Ultimately, it comes from the dissension and seeds of confusion sown by the enemy, as well as with the sin nature that still resides in the believer.

The above controversies, confusion, and discord have caused many a pastor, elder, deacon and laymen to not only jettison any deep theological issues, they essentially cast despair on prophecy altogether. Most do not even bother, and those who do, take a “ hold it loosely” approach, saying things like, you cannot really know. Some people can even get hostile. Several years ago one pastor, in particular, yelled at me stating, “Nobody knows, Brad, not even you”. Just recently, I received an email from a person stating something to this effect, “You are not a prophet and neither am I. Neither of us knows for sure and we should not be trying to tell the church or the world what the Bible says regarding prophecy.” All this despite Jesus’s warning to the contrary.

Mark 13:23. *But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.*

Matthew 24:25. *Behold, I have told you before.*

Luke 21:34. *And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. 35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.*

The context of Jesus’ warnings in the above passages is made with regard to deception involving prophetic events. He commands that we are to take heed, i.e., pay careful attention that no one deceives you. Yet most believers are prophetically ignorant.

Part of the problem is that most believers do not operate under a Biblical world-view, and therefore do not have a Biblical hermeneutic. The Biblical worldview teaches us that all truth and knowledge comes from God. Apart from the Bible and the Christian worldview, truth and knowledge are not possible. Both Cornelius Van Til (Defense of The Faith P&R Publishing 1972) and Dr. Greg L Bahnsen (Always Ready by Covenant Media Press 1996) do a fabulous job at explaining this. It does not mean that unbelievers cannot know and learn things. Rather, it means that they borrow from Christianity in order know and learn anything. They typically do not even know they are doing it. Unfortunately, most Christians get it backward and borrow from the world system in order to process Biblical information. Most do not even know they are doing it, and those who do become comfortable with the conflict that ensues. We must always

remember that it is the nature of truth to be self-authenticating. Truth cannot be presented in conflict with itself and still be considered valid. This is particularly true with Bible prophecy.

So why do people get comfortable with conflict? In most cases, it is because most people believe what they believe not because of the rationality of an argument, but rather they believe based on the authority or education of the person teaching. So and so, has a Masters or Ph.D. They cannot be all that wrong, is the thinking. I have personally experienced this. After teaching, it is not uncommon to have people ask, “What does so and so think, and who else teaches this”? There have been times when I have answered that question only to be met with doubt. On more than one occasion I have had people demand that I tell them someone that they know who teaches what was taught.

It is so common that it is virtually universal. It is not enough that you tell them what your sources are. They want to narrow it to people in their circle of influence. In reality, they are being unreasonable, for what they are employing what is called, *skepticism*, which Noah Webster defines as: “*The doctrines and opinions of the Pyrrhonists or skeptical philosophers; universal doubt; the scheme of philosophy which denies the certainty of any knowledge respecting the phenomena of nature.*”

When we get to our book on the antichrist we will see that such thinking is part of the doctrine of antichrist. While a certain level of doubt is good under certain circumstances, we need to keep in mind that when it comes to His people, God is in the business of revealing not hiding. He will hold us accountable for what he has revealed.

Let the prophets speak

Several years ago, a friend and mentor of mine, was an elder in the church I attended. He was viewed by most as a man of God with an incredible ability in the word. He was particularly gifted in prophecy. The people in the church clamored to have him teach, and yet the pastoral staff sidelined and sat on him. Rather than give him the opportunity, they decided to bring in some supposed teachers on Bible prophecy to correct him. At first, they were no-names. One guy that was brought in to counter him was later discovered to have had multiple affairs all over the country. The next guy was a zoologist from the Los Angeles Zoo butterfly exhibit. I remember

his message to this day. The sign of the end was the “depletion of butterflies in the world. For without butterflies, we cannot pollinate most species of plants. That would cause a famine and bring in the black horse of revelation 6”. All the congregation swooned at such alleged genius. Now imagine my friend sitting there listening to such buffoons.

As time went on, my friend continued to teach and was eventually brought up on charges of heresy. He had been teaching that there are more than 7 years between the rapture and the 2nd coming. He put forth about 10 ½ to 11 years and separated the tribulation and the 70th week. According to him, John Darby, Scofield and ultimately Dallas Theological Seminary, though helpful, had made some mistakes, and so, an adjustment was needed.

Now, before he was to be tried on the charges, the pastoral staff decided to bring in the big guns from Dallas to directly confront my friend and get the church back on track prophetically. None other than Dr. John Walvoord, President of Dallas Theological Seminary, was asked to come.

With the arrangements made and the dates set, something unexpected happened. Walvoord and my friend got in contact with one another and several phone calls and letters were made and written. At one point my friend went to Dallas, where he met with John Walvoord. Eventually, Dr. Dwight Pentecost got involved and advised Walvoord to adjust his eschatology accordingly. The dialogue went on for some time before Walvoord was to come speak, and a relationship developed as the three continued to stay in contact.

Finally, the date came and Walvoord was set to speak. After his initial greeting, Walvoord started off by telling the church the topic of his lecture. He called it “*The seven plus year period of time between the rapture and return.*” The whole church was stunned and the accusing pastor was dumbfounded. Walvoord went on to talk over three evenings and came back again two years later to speak on that, and other subjects. In one of his latest books (The Prophecy Knowledge Handbook 1990 Victor Books) on page 485, Dr. Walvoord incorporated a chart that reflects some of what he learned from my friend. What Dr. Walvoord, a man who possessed the gift of knowledge and teaching, had done was let the prophet speak. To him, all of the degrees in the world were no substitute for giftedness. 1 Corinthians 1:26-31.

The gift of prophecy.

The above account brings us to the subject of the gift of prophecy. The bible makes very clear statements regarding the gift of prophecy. Let's look at some.

1. Prophecy is defined as understanding mysteries and having knowledge along with dreaming dreams and seeing visions:

1 Corinthians 13:2. *And though I have the gift of prophecy, **and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge**; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.*

Daniel 5:12. *Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and **knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts**, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation.*

Joel 2:28. *And it shall come to pass **afterward**, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall **prophesy**, your old men shall **dream dreams**, your young men shall **see visions**. And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.*

Acts 2:17-18. *And it shall come to pass **in the last days**, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall **prophesy**, and your young men shall **see visions**, and your old men shall **dream dreams**: 18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; **and they shall prophesy**.*

2. Prophecy is a gift that is to be sought after:

1 Corinthians 14:1 *Pursue love and desire spiritual gifts, and above all that you may **prophesy**.*

3. Some people are better at prophecy than others:

Romans 1:6 *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us **prophecy** according to the proportion of faith;*

4. People with the gift of prophecy are to be encouraged to use it:

1 Thessalonians 5:20 *Despise not **prophesying**.*

Numbers 11:27-29. *And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do **prophecy** in the camp. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them. And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the LORD's people were **prophets**, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!*

5. Prophecy is a gift given for the perfecting of the church:

Ephesians 4: 11-12. *And he gave some, apostles; and some, **prophets**; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.*

6. Some prophecies are intended for immediate circumstances and others for later: Daniel chapters: 2,4,7,8,9-12.

7. Some prophecies specifically state that they will not be understood until the time of the end and were intended for those who would experience them:

Habakkuk 2:3. ***For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.***

Daniel 12: 9-10: *And he said, "Go thy way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed **till the time of the end**. Many shall be purified and made white and tried, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, **but the wise shall understand**.*

Acts 1:7 *It is not for you to know the times and seasons which the father has put in His own power.*

Now, if it is true that the gift of prophecy is for the equipping of the church, and if it is true that those who have the gift are able to explain great mysteries, and if it is true that some prophecies are intended for the people of the last days; then of necessity there would have to be prophets in the last days who can explain the prophecies according to their measure of faith. The reason is simple. Those living through prophetic events are going to need to know what is going on. Both Joel 2:28 and Acts 2:17-18 affirm that both men and women will prophesy. The whole purpose of equipping people with the gift of prophecy, particularly in the last days, is so that the prophecies intended for the last days can be spoken at the right time to the right people. God will be speaking to people in dreams and visions as he explains the word to them so that they can teach others. This will take place at the right time so that the prophecies of the last days can speak.

The Fate of Prophets

Based on the above passages, the job of a prophet is twofold. First, it is to serve as a messenger regarding God's plan for the ages. Second, it is to serve as one who can explain the mysteries of said plan as it is unfolding in front of those living it. It was very uncommon for the prophet who received the vision or dream to know what it meant. The prophets of the Old Testament struggled to understand what they prophesied. II Peter 1:10-12, tells us that what they prophesied, was for us. It was with regard to, the suffering of Christ and the glory to come. When Daniel saw some of

his dreams and visions, he did not understand them. It took the man/angel Gabriel to explain them. Even then, Daniel struggled to understand it, for the vision was for, "the appointed time of the end". It is through pastors, teachers, apostles, evangelists and prophets that the mysteries of the suffering and coming glory of Christ are taught and explained. What is interesting about the spirit of prophecy is that it can fall on the unbeliever. Men such as Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 2, Caiaphas in John 11:51 or, Balaam in Numbers 22:1-35 prophesied.

Prophets are not self-willed:

1 Corinthians 14:32. *And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.*

Those exercising the gift of prophecy do not make rash, stupid or conflicting statements. Nor do their statements conflict with other doctrines, or others exercising the gift. I have heard a number of claims and statements made in the name of prophecy that should have never been uttered. On one occasion, after giving a discourse on the great apostasy, the speaker went on to describe how he thought it could occur. He read a narrative on what would happen if demons posing as space aliens landed a space ship on the white house lawn and came in the name of peace. The speaker presented such a scenario as a real possibility. On another occasion, I heard a speaker state that the day after the rapture, temple worship will be instituted. This particular speaker believed that the rapture could happen at any moment even as he spoke. One person asked, “should not the temple be in place now if temple worship is to happen immediately following the rapture?” After a short pause, the speaker responded by saying, “God can pull the temple out of the ground if need be.” He clearly had not thought the problem through. Rather than repent of his folly, he just pulled something out of thin air.

Though perhaps the most common of these types of responses are statements regarding either the city of Rome or Russia and Gog. Dispensational and covenant thinking people alike fall into one error or the other. Let’s briefly look at each. First, there is Rome. The idea is based on an interpretation of Revelation 17:9-10 (NASB).

⁹ Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, ¹⁰ and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while.

The course of thinking goes like this. Rome is assumed to be Babylon. 1 Peter 5:13 is often cited as proof. Rome is a city that sits on seven hills/mountains. According to most, the seven mountains/hills of the above passage are the seven literal mountains/hills that Rome is built on, and the woman sits on Rome. But if we look at the passage, we are told that five of the mountains/hills are not present. At the time of the writing and according to the passage, there is only one mountain/hill. At some time in the future another mountain/hill is going to pop up, and even that will only remain for a short time. Somehow, Rome as a city survives the rising and falling of mountains/hills with-out being destroyed. For one like myself who lives in earthquake country, this is a hard pill to swallow.

Even a cursory look at the passage in both the NASB and the KJV will show that the seven mountains/hills are seven kings/kingdoms. This is overlooked by many who write on Bible prophecy. Entire eschatological systems have been built on the above false narrative. In addition, Revelation 17 tells us that when John saw (Mystery Babylon) he was in the wilderness. Both the English and the Greek are identical:

*Wilderness 1. A **desert**; a tract of land or region uncultivated and uninhabited by human beings, whether a forest or a wide barren plain. In the United States, it is applied only to a forest. **In Scripture, it is applied frequently to the deserts of Arabia.** The Israelites wandered in the wilderness forty years.* Noah Webster 1828.

Strong's gk 2048 ἔρημος – eromos: a **desert**, desolate, solitary, wilderness region that is for all intent and purposes uninhabitable.

Revelation is expanding on other passages in Isaiah and Jeremiah. One such Passage is Isaiah 21:9, "Fallen is Babylon." In this chapter alone, one can easily see the location that John had in mind. Verse 1, "The desert of the sea." But what sea? Let's go look for the answer. Look at verses 11 (Dumah), 13 (Arabia and Dedanim) specifically the west coast of Arabia, 14 (Tema) North Arabia, 16 (Kedar). Now consider I Chronicles 1:29-33. "*And these are their generations: the first-born of Ishmael, Nebaioth, then **Kedar**, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, Mishma, and **Dumah**, Massa, Hadad, and **Tema**, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael.*" The passage of Isaiah is very clear. The Arabian Peninsula is in mind and the sea referenced in verse 1 is the Red Sea. So when John was taken into the wilderness (desert), where he saw a great city, he was looking at an area along the Red Sea Coast of Arabia. Now, what city in Arabia is situated along the Red Sea that would serve as a center for a world religious system that rides on the territory of ancient Babylon, Persia, or Greece? Keep in mind that both Babylon of Mesopotamia and Rome are built on fertile, well-watered rich soil areas that supported hundreds of thousands of people, hardly a wilderness.

Now, let's look at Russia and Gog. Throughout the 70's and 80's, it was considered axiomatic that Russia would one day invade Israel. Entire books are dedicated to such a scenario. I even

went to seminars on it. Gog and Magog were Russia and Eastern Europe. The main passage used to support this idea was Ezekiel 38-39, from the NASB:

*38: 1 And the word of the LORD came to me saying,² “Son of man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog, **the prince of Rosh**, Meshach and Tubal, and prophesy against him³ and say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I am against you, O Gog, **prince of Rosh**, Meshach and Tubal.*

The argument goes like this: Rosh is a recognized form of Russia and Meshach is Moscow. Verses 38:15 and 39:2 are used as supporting verses for they mention the origin of Rosh as coming from the extreme North. However, there are a couple of problems. The first is that the word Rosh is a Hebrew word that means *first* or *chief*. Like Rosh Hashanah, the first day of the Jewish new year. For some reason, the NASB translators did not translate it. Note the same passage in the KJV:

*And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,² Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the **chief prince** of Meshach and Tubal, and prophesy against him,³ And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the **chief prince** of Meshach and Tubal:*

The word Rosh is missing. That is because it means *chief*, and is translated as such. Rosh and Russia have no etymological relationship. Russia is a Finnish word for the Swedes or the Vikings. Rosh is a Hebrew word for first/chief. The etymology is completely different. But there is more. Look at **Ezekiel 38:17**

.... Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them?

Where do we have any mention of Russia in any of the prophets before Ezekiel? There is none. Like the example of Rome and those given before it, men have tried to take Bible prophecies and make them apply to their setting. Church history is replete with examples of this. I have shown several people the problems with said thinking and have watched them have a moment of clarity. It rarely lasts, though. In fact, often it is the case that the next time I see them, they are right back where they started. They become comfortable with the conflict. When confronted with such

problems, those who embrace any one of the above examples will reach for what in apologetics is called a rescue device. A *rescue device* is a statement that cannot be proved or disproved but is necessary to support a proposition. Like the space aliens or the temple out of the ground, an appeal to the supernatural or a miracle is made. When there is no Biblical support, they need such statements to keep their system going. Such reasoning is seen as being faith oriented when, in reality, it is absurd and has no place in Christian thinking.

In the case of Russia, the rescue device is often an appeal to the original languages. This despite the fact the Hebrew speaks against those who would do so. How often do we hear people making an appeal to the Greek or Hebrew to support a particular understanding of a passage that cannot be supported by the English? This leaves the layman at the mercy of the teacher. While the Original languages are very helpful, most who appeal to them, do not even know the original languages. It is a play on the ignorance of the masses. In the case of Ezekiel, such an appeal instantly backfires when you learn what Rosh actually means. This rescue device is known as an appeal to authority.

The teachings mentioned above are what I call drunk statements. They come from both a sincere yet overwhelming desire to make Bible prophecy relevant for the contemporary events occurring at the time. But in reality, they create confusion and obfuscate the text. The Biblical examples of the gift of prophecy teach us that prophets are sober. They often times appear to be hesitant to share what they have been told and even fear that they will not be heard. They fear what they have seen or heard and are careful in what they say. In Daniel 4, we see that Daniel hesitated to give the message to the king. Often time's prophets kept the information to themselves and were very troubled by their thoughts, losing sleep, getting very sick and struggling to eat. They were often confused as to why God revealed to them what he did.

Now, with so much conflict and confusion, one would think that prophets would be well received and in some cases they are. But in most situations, they are not. Whenever we are given a history of the life of a particular prophet we almost always find them to be despised. Not necessarily by the people, but most often by the leadership. Moses was despised by Miriam, Joshua was envious of Eldad and Medad, and Isaiah was despised by all. Jeremiah was despised by the other so-called prophets. The king would ask him to prophesy and then respond with

contempt. Daniel was set up by others who were jealous of his spirit, which gained him favor among kings. The same could be said for other minor prophets.

Despising prophets are not just an Old-Testament issue. After giving a discourse on prophecy, Paul warns the Thessalonians to not despise prophesying (See 1 Thess 5:20). Given the context, it is reasonable to think that Paul is addressing those who might despise those who understand and explain the great mysteries of prophecy. When Paul uses the word *despise*, he uses a very powerful word. Its meaning is three-fold. Using Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary, let's look at some words that define the word *despise*.

Despise: *To contemn; to scorn; to disdain; to have the lowest opinion of.* Let's look at each of these words. The first word used is ***contemn***: *to neglect or disregard.* It is a will-full hearing and casting aside as unimportant. This is widespread in all churches and even considered godliness by many. However, 2 Peter 3:1-14 makes a clear nexus between clear prophetic knowledge, understanding and godly living. Apart from prophecy, we stunt our growth big time as believers.

The second word associated with despise is the word *scorn*. ***Scorn***: *to think of one's self as being better than others.* This is common among those coming out of seminary, and it is very prominent among the leadership of reformed churches today. The non-clergy will *scorn* others against their clergy or seminary grads. To them, graduating from the right school is tantamount to the truth. For such, scholarship equals truth.

Prophecy as a whole is neglected by entire denominations of reformed churches. I spent 8 years in a reformed church and heard only one sermon from a prophetic text. Even then the pastor presented it as inconclusive and unknowable. Others who teach on prophecy use a preterist hermeneutic. Such a hermeneutic seeks to impose Greek thinking into the Jewish writings. They neglect to recognize that the Old and most of the New Testament are Jewish documents, written to Jewish congregations, with a Jewish cultural mindset.

The third and final definition of despise is ***disdain***. It literally means, *to hold a low opinion of someone or an issue.* Those who *disdain* have no interest in the subject of prophecy and they would rather not address it, nor do they think very highly of those who do. To them, they would rather be rid of the issue as a whole or relegate it to some obscure out of the way place. This

happened to my previously mentioned friend after Walvoord came. Rather than repent, those who opposed him accused him of deceiving Walvoord.

Jesus experienced disdain in, Luke 7:36-50 when he was not given common courtesy as a guest in the house of a Pharisee. Those who disdain prophecy can cordially entertain it but would rather be rid of it. To them, it is something they have to deal with. However, they would rather move on. A number of years ago I was listening in on a discussion of prophecy. My church at the time was going through the subject. What struck me the most was to hear one person (an associate pastor) say, as he rolled his eyes, “Oh for goodness sake, how long are we going to go through this? I want to move on.” His disdain was there for all to see, though few recognized it.

Despite warnings against despising prophecy, there are several Bible passages that clearly indicate that the last days will be filled with those who will do just that. I want to look at three. Let’s start with one that we referenced at the start of this chapter:

1 Peter 2:3-4: *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last day's **scoffers**, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.*

A **scoffer** is one that mocks, derides or reproaches in the language of contempt; a scorner. See any familiar words? However, the word scoffer gives us two more words, *deride* and *reproach*. The word to **deride** means to: *laugh at or make fun/sport of*. One might try to make the case that those in the passage are unbelievers but the context tells us differently. They are people who believe in creation and the patriarchs. *Derision* with regard to Bible prophecy is very common among all denominations. Such derision makes any discourse on the topic nearly impossible. Not only do they deride, but they also **reproach**, i.e., *find fault with those who would prophesy*. They seek to censure them.

The next passage to look at is a bit more lengthy. Matthew 24: 44-51

⁴⁴ Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. ⁴⁵ Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? ⁴⁶ Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. ⁴⁷ Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. ⁴⁸ But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; ⁴⁹ And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; ⁵⁰ The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, ⁵¹ And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The context of the passage is Bible prophecy, and in particular, the second coming. The opening part is telling us that the Lord will come when some people (not all) are not looking for Him. The difference will be the servant (pastor, teacher or prophet) who will be teaching the right material for the times. It is the meat of due season. That servant who is giving the proper meat for the time and those whom he serves will know when to be watching. They will not be caught by surprise (See 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4). There will be people who will be teaching about Bible prophecy in the right season for the church. This implies that there are *seasons* for Biblical doctrines. For example, from **250 A.D. through 450 A.D. -The Trinity**, the doctrine of sin and the person of Christ were in season. Men like Augustine, Tertullian, Ambrose, and Athanasius were men who possessed the gifts of knowledge and teaching. They set in concrete some of the most basic doctrines of the church. Then from, **1300 A.D.-1700 A.D. -The Reformation**. It was a new season. Like those mentioned above, another group of men gifted with knowledge and teaching came along. Men like Wycliffe, Tyndale, Erasmus, Luther, and Calvin. The first of these were linguists who gave us not only our English Bible but the English language as well. Luther gave us, *the doctrine of justification by faith* and Calvin gave us, *the institutes of the Christian religion*. In both of the above examples, the doctrines were either developed and/or defined and thus were, *the meat of due season*. ***Bible prophecy will have both, its season and its men. That season is called, the last days and/or the latter rain and the men are called, prophets. It will impact the church like the doctrines before it have.***

It should be noted that men like Augustine, Luther, Calvin, and others named above attempted some discourse on Bible prophecy. However, what they attempted was heavily influenced by the

neo-Platonism of their day. Much of what they wrote on the subject was allegorized in order to fit either past or current events. They fell into the trap of trying to force a fulfillment for a variety of reasons. The main reason this was done, was to make the case that the church replaces Israel. Calvin, however, did see fit to break the mold as he clearly states :

“There is a covenant for Israel and a covenant for the church...The Gospel was designed for them....” Calvin went on to state, *“Israel are our equals in grace of the covenant and they are co-equals in the sacraments....”* ⁶¹

It is worthy of note to mention how he refers to Israel nationally, and us, as the church. He clearly saw two people groups of the kingdom.

Now, I want to be careful to say that just because there were specific seasons for certain doctrines, it does not mean that those doctrines were not discussed or even taught before and after their seasons:

“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.” ⁶²

Although God has appointed certain men to give his meat to his people at the season of certain doctrines, these same doctrines most certainly were taught but went through a defining process over many years. Eventually, they had their moment of establishment and impact at a specified time. The same is, and will be true of Bible prophecy. It was taught, but it has yet to see its season. When the season comes, there will be prophets who will come on the scene that will prophesy. They will have the: *Spirit of prophecy which is the testimony of Jesus Christ.* ⁶³

Now, back to Matthew. The second part of Matthew 24:44-51 mentions another servant, first seen in vs. 48. This servant is called, the wicked servant. He is negligent in his responsibility and has little-to-no regard for the second coming. To him, it is not possible to know, and so he spends little if any time on the subject. Those who he is supposed to serve are left in the dark. If any would desire to know they are quickly shut down or sat on. This servant is not content to

⁶¹ Calvins Institutes Pages 274-275 Hendrickson Publishers.

⁶² 2nd Timothy 4:2

⁶³ Revelation 19:10

impact just those under his care. He wants to go after the first servant and shut him down. To him, he is trouble. People under his care might start asking questions. To him, his calling is to sit on those who would desire to teach or learn. *Keep it simple, stupid*, is his mantra. His actions are swift and severe. He goes so far as to beat the other servant, and even feels more at home with the carnal or the unbeliever. It is this servant who is not looking for the Lord and is caught by surprise. He is quickly dealt with and assigned a place among the hypocrites (literally imposters) and is cast out. There will be many who suffer his fate. In fact, the pastor of the church of Sardis is warned that he might suffer such a fate if he does not straighten up.

*So remember what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.*⁶⁴

The third passage that I want to look at is Isaiah 66:5: *Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; **Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake**, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.*

The context of the chapter is the fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles. There are two groups of people. One group loves and fears God's word. They understand the prophecies surrounding the Fall Festivals and are vocal about them. These are those who, are abiding in Christ when he appears and, do not shrink away in shame, 1 John 2:28. They are those who love his appearing, II Timothy 4:8. They cannot stop talking about it, which is the opposite of the second group.

The second group is ignorant and hateful. Their hate according to *Strong's Hebrew 8130 saw-nay'*; a primitive root; to hate (personally) is personal. It is how they interact with the first group. They are fellow believers, but they despise prophesying. Their response to the first group is to put them out. They want to get rid of the prophets and those who listen to them. They do so thinking that they are doing both the Lord and the church a favor. They are the evil servants of Matthew 24:48-49. They will be dealt with through disciplinary measures befitting a believer.

⁶⁴ Revelation 3:3

However, the resurrection/rapture will occur and those who have been cast out will rejoice Isaiah 66:6-14. They will have been vindicated. They will assist in restoring those who cast them out. Those who cast out the righteous will find themselves in deep anguish. They will not be lost, but will go through a time of worldwide discipline, after which the nations come under judgment. The discipline is designed to make them fit for the kingdom and bring them into the priesthood. Isaiah 66:16-21.

In concluding this chapter, I would like to briefly summarize.

1. The Bible is the final authority on things of both faith and practice. Apart from it, we would not know of the other two types of revelation that play a significant part in developing our Biblical hermeneutic. The reason why people struggle with the Bible, and in particular with prophecy, is because they are not operating from a Christian world-view. Most people import non-Christian thinking into their theology and then process the Bible through such thinking. Thus, we have the conflicts that we do. Most people believe what they believe because of who, or how many believe it.

2. Most people are unprepared to do what Jesus said, which is to watch and pray, that we might be counted worthy to escape. People get comfortable with their doctrinal conflicts and resort to *rescue devices* in order to keep their system afloat. To most, Bible prophecy is nothing more than a concept to toy with. To others, it is a nuisance and impractical. They will listen, but would rather be off on to other things ASAP. They fail to see it as an essential doctrine in the maturity of the believer.

3. The gift of prophecy will play a major role in the last days as prophecy begins to unfold. As we come closer to the end, more prophets will pop up. They will eventually start to clear up the confusion as more and more begin to say the same things. This is already underway. Those who have the gift of prophecy are sober people who do not make stupid statements. When they employ their gift, they are able to explain great mysteries. As we get closer, prophets will prophesy through their own study of the word along with the dreams and visions that God will give them to aid in their study. There will be people who will listen, and they will be turned to righteousness. Those who prophesy will be vehemently opposed by many in church leadership,

and will even be put out of fellowship. Yet God will vindicate them and eventually bring those who persecuted them to a point of repentance. However, it will be through much suffering and anguish.

1 Peter 1:20

Knowing this first, that no prophecy
of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

KJV

Chapter 4

Two Books and Two Comings.

Back in 1979, I bought my first car. It was a bit of a race car, the style of which was somewhat popular with teens my age. It had a V6, with a lite body and would spin the tires going from first to second gear. Its top speed was 140 MPH. I knew how to drive the car but really did not know how to handle it. It was too fast for me at the time. Nonetheless, I pushed the limit and nearly paid the ultimate price. On one occasion I was in the company of two very attractive girls. It was raining hard and I decided to demonstrate my so-called skills. What ultimately happened was that the car flew through a hedge and came to rest in a front yard with all of us in it. Fortunately, the only thing damaged or injured was my pride and any hopes of a future date.

Over time, I learned to do some basic mechanical repairs, tune-ups, alternator and radiator changes, and even starters. On one occasion, while changing the starter, I did not disconnect the battery, nor did I disengage the clutch. I ended up accidentally starting the car while in gear with me under the car. I never moved so fast in my life, and the car ended up crashing into the car behind it.

As time went on, both my driving skills and mechanical abilities (including safety procedures) developed. After a while, the car needed a new timing belt. I decided to do a head and valve job at the same time. With the engine apart and pushrods, valve stems, rocker arms, gears, nuts, bolts, gaskets and what-not spread everywhere, it was a hard to know where to start. Even with a manual, it was a bit overwhelming. I took everything apart methodically, labeled each part and the order it came out . When I got stuck, I contacted a mechanic. After some trial and error, I finally got it right and kept the car another 7 years.

Today my mechanical (and safety) skills are much improved. I have had about 12 cars, trucks or motorcycles, and have worked on every one of them. My driving skills have also vastly improved. Having trained in emergency vehicle operations as a firefighter, ambulance driver and police officer, I have the ability to handle a variety of vehicles under difficult circumstances. However, none of the above skills are to be credited to my own ability. Both my father and grandfather were master mechanics, from whom I learned much. The other mechanics I contacted, and the men who wrote the manuals were experts in their trade. The men who taught

me how to be a professional driver were also experts in their craft. If not for any of the above, I would be a shell of myself in terms mechanics or vehicle operations.

More Than Masters

When one begins a study on Bible prophecy, one might find themselves a bit overwhelmed. It would seem as though there are many parts just lying around, and it might be hard to know where to begin. Kind of like a jig-saw puzzle without a picture on the box. If you do not know what it is supposed to look like, then the task becomes even more difficult. For us, the picture on the box are the festivals of Israel. Even so, these puzzles can still be difficult. But we are not without help. As mentioned above, not only do we have the revelation as given by God, we also have the help of gifted men and women. Mainly teachers and prophets whose job it is to bring clarity to a passage in question. One may see something that had previously been hidden, and another might make a connection yet to be made. They all play a part in building the big picture. As we get closer to the end, there will be more and more prophets to assist us in learning along the way.

However, we must keep in mind that the above men and woman will not be speaking infallibly. They will have their issues to work through, and in time will do so. Others will come after them and make the corrections adding to the discussion the insights that God has gifted them with. Eschatological systems that we accept as being *carte blanche* will be adjusted as God gives clarity. We must keep in mind that the interpretation of prophecy is not and never will be dependent on one person (See 1 Peter 1:20). There are going to be mistakes; however, over time God will gift certain people so that they may come along and make certain corrections.

Ironically, most people would agree that mistakes will be made and changes required until it comes to their system. None-the-less, eventually, everyone will be saying the same thing. For those who have been taught, there will be little if any ambiguity as we get closer to the events. However, it will not be a rear-view mirror perspective. We will not be looking at events as they pass saying, *“Wow, look there Marge, I think we just missed our off ramp.”* Rather, as each event approaches, the scriptures will call attention to it so we recognize it both prior to and when it happens. Those who have been taught will be able to prepare for what is to come next. If it were any other way, prophecy would be useless.

Never-the-less, there will also be false prophets. These will not be just the Joseph Smith type. They will be in the church. Of them, there are two types:

1. The first of the two, are *the sincere yet misinformed*. These are people who have a sincere interest in Bible prophecy but do not yet and may never have the gift of prophecy. They repeat assertions that they just assume to be true. Some even go on lecture circuits and write books. These people do not see the gift of prophecy the way the Bible describes it. They believe the gift of prophecy to be a thing of the past or just another expression of the speaking gifts. They approach the prophetic passages from a teaching/knowledge platform and simply do not get the concept of mysteries hidden *for the right time*. Great men of the past have made this mistake. Men like Augustine, and Luther, who were gifted teachers, essentially made a mess of Bible prophecy. They were gifted for the doctrine of their time. But, the time of prophecy was not yet to be had.

2. The second set of false prophets are *rank unbelievers*. They are in the church and are unnoticed, and for the most part remain that way (See Jude 4). In fact, they are celebrated. They are masterful orators and seem like they are skilled in reason. They are pleasant to be around and even winsome. They will say disparaging things about prophecy—things that may seem harmless. Things like, “You can not know for sure,” and, “Prophecy is an unimportant doctrine”, or “It's not practical”. Often times, good and faithful believers unwittingly repeat their jargon.

*“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction **And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.**” 1 Peter 2:1-2*

These people are in the church. They affect the church so that it looks alive but, in reality, kill it. They are so good that most people simply refuse to see them for who they are, even when it is pointed out to them.

I remember one such person way back when I was a new believer. He was the chairman of the Bible department where I went to college. He was well respected by both faculty and staff and he had a following of students spanning several years. One summer, I house-sat for him for about three weeks, during which I had the chance to see his private study. I was somewhat surprised by

some of the books he was reading and found myself grappling with questions as to why he would read such material. Subjects such as *Que* and known heretics like, *William Barclay* were in plenty supply. Even then I had been warned against such subjects and authors by others, and yet here he was reading this stuff. He often quoted from the above without disclaimers.

About a year later, I came across what I thought was a Greek to English reference guide. While going through it I noticed that in John 1:1 they scribed “*and the word was a god.*” I took it to the professor previously mentioned and asked him if this is what the Greek really said, and if so why does the English read “*the word was God?*” He said it is correct, the Greek says *a god* and the English *was God*. He went on to tell me that the English translators imputed their theological bias into the translation and that such activity among translators is common. I was shocked, but he was the expert, and so I began to do all of my studies out of what I thought was a reliable study tool. I did so for about 6 years.

After college, I began to notice that, one by one, each person who was part of his class began to have severe spiritual and even psychological issues. As time went on, I began to notice that many of his students became somewhat licentious in their faith and very liberal. Several walked away altogether, and most never came back. Many of his students who were once my friends became hostile and even mocked the idea of the Bible being propositional truth, particularly in the area of Bible prophecy.

At the time, I was not mature enough to know what was happening, but over time it became apparent. He was a false teacher, and he had taught many people to follow in his footsteps. Like an inexperienced mechanic; both he and his students always had extra parts lying around, which they dismissed as being not important. It is not until you are on life’s highway and need your car to work that those parts become essential. At around the age of 24 or so I learned that the reference source was a Greek interlinear put out by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. It said so right on the cover, but at the time, I did not know what it meant. Surely my professor did but neglected to tell me.

Thankfully, we are not left to our intuition or the devices of others. Not only are we told what to look for in false teachers, God has also given us two books, Hebrews and Revelation, in order to help us put the pieces together. Particularly the parts of Bible prophecy so that it runs properly when we need it to. If not for Hebrews and Revelation, it would be very difficult for us to

distinguish what Christ accomplished and will accomplish as high priest at both his first and second coming. Both books have as their theme the priesthood of Christ, and both books make particular emphasis on what the high priest has or will accomplish. Let's take some time to briefly examine parts of both.

Hebrews Christ the High Priest at His First Advent.

In Mark chapter 11 we see a most impressive event that needs a little background before proceeding. In preparation for the Passover, once the Passover lamb was selected, the chief priest (not the high priest) would take the lamb to the Mount of Olives, where he would announce a blessing on the Lamb. It is important to keep in mind that the high priest did not officiate during Passover. This lamb would then be taken into the temple area, where it was tied in place to be inspected for the next four days leading up to Passover. If it passed inspection, the lamb was then to be used as the Passover Lamb. We must keep in mind that it was not the Passover Lamb that typified the removal of sin. That was the picture of the scapegoat and goat of offering on the Day of Atonement six months later. The Passover lamb was the substitute for the wrath to be poured out.

Now, back to Mark 11. In this passage, we are about four days from the start of Passover. Everything is going according to plan, with one exception. The high priest (Jesus) is standing on the Mount of Olives (See Mark 11:1). He then rode a donkey across the bridge that went from the Mount of Olives and into the temple. As he proceeded, people began laying down their garments and palms along the way while reciting, Psalm 118, (See Mark 11:7-10). He was taking the role of the high priest on the day of atonement. The next day, he illustrated the temporary hardening of Israel by cursing the fig tree and (like a *high priest*) took control of the temple, vs. 12-22. For the next few days (like *the paschal lamb*) he was examined in the temple; 11:28, 12:13, 12:18, 12:28. By doing what he did and was about to do, Jesus was going to demonstrate that he would not only satisfy the wrath of God, but that he would also be *the scapegoat*, and *the goat of sin offering*, removing past and present sins. He would also serve as *the red heifer* making us acceptable to the father for the priesthood. He would do so as a high priest that need not offer a sacrifice for his own sin first. See the discussion on The Day of Atonement for the role of high priest and the offerings.

What we see in Mark and later explained in Hebrews is fantastic. The redemptive aspects of both the Spring and Fall Festivals came together in Christ.

Jesus is fulfilling his role as the:

1. Paschal lamb (1 Cor. 5:7) to suffer the wrath for our sin and satisfy God.
2. High priest (Hebrews 8:1-2, 9:7-8, 11-12, 23-24) to mediate on our behalf (See John 17:9-10) where Jesus prays for his own people given him by the father.
3. The red heifer and goats of offering (Hebrews 9:14-15) to make us acceptable as a priesthood by taking a way past and future sins.

Hebrews, along with the other passages makes it abundantly clear that the *redemptive* work foretold in the Fall Festival of Yom Kippur/The Day of Atonement, was combined with and fulfilled at the Spring Festival of Passover in Christ. When he completed his work, he brought forth and grafted in a new people into the priesthood who would serve as intercessors for the world (See Peter 2:9 and 1 Timothy 2:1-7). Israel was to be temporarily hardened until the grafting in of the gentiles was complete (See Isaiah 6:9-13 and Romans 11:25-26). All of the above is the net result of both an acceptable high priest and an acceptable sacrifice.

But what would happen if there was not an acceptable high priest and/or sacrifice? That is where the Fall Feasts and the book of Revelation come into play, which we will get to shortly. However, before we do, I would like to say something regarding the cutting off of Israel.

I will synagogue among them

Before we move on I want to address the issue of the cutting off of Israel. In Deuteronomy 30:1-10 we are told when both the blessing and the curse come upon Israel, God will scatter them among the nations wherein they will eventually repent and God will call them out of those nations and back into the land. There are some passages in the Bible that state that even though Israel is cut off and scattered, God will be going with them (See Jeremiah 46:28 Ezekiel 11:16-20). In the Ezekiel Passage, God promises that even though he has scattered them among the countries, he will still be a little sanctuary (synagogue) among them. One can make the case that this is a reference to the promise of there always being a remnant. According to Romans 11:1-5

there will always be Jewish believers. Since the advent of 70 A.D., these remnant Jews tend to be messianic and often carry with them the cultural traditions of their predecessors.

But this is not just true of the Jewish believer. It is also true of the Jewish unbeliever as well. They too have remarkably preserved their traditions in their feasts and literature. They are temporarily blind to their meaning but have preserved them nonetheless. Some day in the future, every Jew will not only be a Christian but will one day take part in the restoration of both the sacrificial system, along with its ceremonies and the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom. Israel itself will be the first completely Christian nation. In order to do this, God would and will have to exercise his power in such a way so as to be sure that both the people and their culture remain alive, even when brought to the point of near extinction.

God not only dwells among them in the remnant of believers, he also dwells among them through the preservation of their culture and literature. Part of His purpose in doing such is so that we can watch as they demonstrate their customs and practices as it relates to the festivals, which are heavily referred to in the prophetic literature. This particularly true of the Fall festivals which are particularly relevant with regard to the Olivet discourse and the book of Revelation.

Early in this book, I quoted from Chrysostom who was incredulous that the church laity would not only watch the Jewish Fall Festivals but would also participate in them. To Chrysostom, such participation was done in ignorance. It is ironic that this period of time was when replacement theology was being birthed and was in a fast developing stage. The clergy wanted the laity to stop associating with the Jews, and to allow the clergy to tell them what their hermeneutic was. To the clergy, Bible prophecy was merely allegory, with most of it already fulfilled and any promise concerning Israel was now for the church.

Rather than seeing the Bible as Jewish by nature, the clergy imported the Greek gnostic thinking of allegory and spiritualization into scriptural interpretation, and in essence were teaching people to process Biblical literature through the world system. Lord willing, when we get to our book on antichrist we will demonstrate that such a hermeneutic is called the doctrine of antichrist. Thus they Hellenized the text.

When we consider the cursing of Israel, we must remember that Israel was cut off and scattered for our sake. God has preserved them and their traditions as they live among the gentiles so that

the gentile believers who encounter them can have a living hermeneutic for understanding the Jewish nature of both the Old Testament and New Testament writings. However, it is unfortunate that the history of the church is filled with the persecution of the Jews. This has driven them away from the church, and as a result, the church is ignorant of why God had scattered and preserved them. Ironically, God has used this same persecution to keep many of the End Times prophecies hidden so that the same prophecies can speak at the right time.

In the last 165 years, things have begun to change. For most of the first four centuries of the church, the church was very dispensational. In fact, the closer to the apostolic age one gets, the more dispensational the church was. As previously mentioned, the early believers were close to the synagogue. They understood the prophecies in light of the scriptures and the festivals. But replacement theology was forced on the church, and although there were some who had dispensational leanings over the centuries, replacement theology would dominate the church for the next 1300 years.

It was not until John Darby (an ardent Calvinist) 1800-1882 came along that a shift back to dispensationalism occurred. Though Darby made many mistakes on a variety of issues, it was he who brought to the forefront the fact that the Messianic Kingdom and National Israel were linked. He taught that God would one day restore the Jews to their homeland and there set up His Messianic Kingdom.

It was Darby's teaching that put dispensationalists at the forefront of the Zionist movement, which began around 1890. Christians in Europe began to embrace dispensationalism and the **restoration theology** concerning the Jews. These same Christians became active in the Zionist movements of Europe and the United States. The result was that Christians and Jews began to mingle and the hostility began to break down. Believers began to see, for the first time in 1300 years, how God had preserved Himself in the literature and customs of the people. He had been dwelling among them. While I was taking a course from Tel Aviv University on the rise of the Modern State of Israel, I was surprised to hear professor (Eyal Naveh) state that the establishment of the state of Israel was the direct result of Jewish Zionists and Dispensational Christians working together. Those Christians who participated in getting this accomplished are known in Israel as the righteous Gentiles. They made great sacrifices during WWII to keep the Zionist project going, and were at the forefront. Thus the hostility between Christian and Jew

was erased and Christians could once again see the Jewish cultural and festival influences in the prophetic passages.

However, it was not just Darby that got the dispensational ball rolling. Another man by the name of Alfred Edersheim 1825-1889 wrote books that would later become the staple of many a seminary student. A Jewish convert to Christianity from Vienna, Edersheim later became a missionary to Europe's Jews, particularly in Romania. He was well educated in ancient Hebrew literature and was in a unique position to write on the subject. He wrote extensively on ancient Hebrew culture, the temple, festivals, and other N.T. era practices of the Jewish people, along with other subjects. Although he was a semi preterist in his positions, his literature played a major role in the development of dispensational thought. Passages that were thought to be allegories due to the lack of knowledge of the culture they were written in, now took on a very real and literal meaning. Anyone who reads Edersheim will come away with a deeper and clearer understanding of both the Old and New Testaments. Particularly when it comes to the prophetic passages. He is quoted heavily in this book.

One of the unfortunate things that occurred shortly after Darby was that most did not continue to develop some of the basic concepts of dispensationalism. Many just stayed with Darby and never moved on. But some did. One such person who did was Arthur E. Bloomfield 1895-1980. A Methodist Minister of Jewish descent, Bloomfield did what other dispensational thinkers of his time failed to do. He went beyond what Darby taught and structured prophecy after the Fall Festivals. Whether he did this as a result of Edersheim's work is unknown. In fact, if I remember correctly, Bloomfield never refers to the Fall Festivals. In one of his books, "How to recognize the Antichrist," Bloomfield states that he sought not to use outside sources. That being the case, makes his work more impressive. He presents the book of Revelation after the pattern of the Fall Festivals and appears to have done so with a thorough knowledge of them. It is highly probable that his Jewish upbringing heavily influenced his eschatology, and rightfully so.

In his development on the prophecies of the Jews and their return to the Land, Bloomfield brought forth something that had rarely, if ever, been grappled with. Working with Ezekiel 4 and Leviticus 26, Bloomfield demonstrated that Israel would be scattered among the nations for 2520 Jewish years. That would translate to 2483 of our years. It was a period which would begin drawing to a close in 1947-48. He taught this in the thirties and forties. In 1945, at a prophecy

seminar in Minnesota, five families who heard Bloomfield teach were moved to sell their homes, buy property, and start a missionary organization called Bethany House. They decided to pool their resources and made a factory where they could make goods and use the proceeds to live on, and then use the rest to send out 100 missionaries around the world. The company is known today as Bethany Housewares and is a leading company in the creation of cooking ware. In 1948, with just ten students, they started a missionary college to train their own missionaries. In 1956 they started a publishing company that has published thousands of books around the world. The Publishing Company is called Bethany House Publishers and The College is now an accredited university called Bethany Global University.

Note: The above examples of Zionism and the establishment of Israel, together with the establishment of the Bethany project, go to demonstrate the power and effect of Bible prophecy. It changes lives and nations.

While it is true that God did curse and cut off Israel, it is also true that God did so for our benefit. God's purpose in doing so was to scatter them among the nations and yet still dwell among them. He has dwelt among them in the remnant, literature, and culture so far as it relates to what is necessary for the student of the Bible. The greatest manifestation of this is seen in the literature and practices as it relates to the temple, the feasts, and the customs of the people. As the hostility began and continues to break down, it is becoming more and more clear, that the language of eschatology is primarily rooted in the practices related to the feasts, temple, and related customs of the people. No book makes this more apparent than the book of Revelation. Revelation itself is a discourse on the future fulfillment of the Fall Festivals. So let's have a brief look.

Revelation

The question that we need to ask ourselves at this point is, whether the Fall Festivals are dry runs/ rehearsals for the main event, and does the book of Revelation reflect not only the language but also the timing of said festivals? I would hope that by now, we can at least see some clear parallels. But the question of just how close the Fall Festivals and Revelation come can only be discerned by looking at them both side by side. Only then can we formulate a firm conclusion. At the risk of being somewhat repetitive, it is necessary that we do so in order to sew things together.

The Time of Preparation

This is the time that ran from the month of Kislev (the month after Tishri) to the month of Elul (the month before Tishri). Eleven months in total. It was the time when Jews were to examine themselves, make corrections and get themselves in line with the doctrines and practice befitting a believer as they saw the day (Tishri 1) approaching. The month of Elul was specifically designated for such a purpose. Now compare this to Revelation 2-3 and the letters to the seven churches. In the letters, the churches are told what their issues were, and what they needed to do get themselves corrected as the hour drew near.

Two Theaters: Heaven and Earth

Tishri 1-2 Feast of Trumpets Review

On Tishri 1 when the new moon was seen, the trumpet (last trump) was sounded and the door to the city and temple was opened. All who were prepared/clean were immediately taken in. The unclean had to go through a cleansing process before being allowed entry. The priesthood was required to be prepared and enter in on this day or before. Those who reported the sighting of the new moon were given a great reward and had a private dining with the high priest. People poured into the city by the thousands for the next 3 ½ days. All the priests were gathering into the temple where the 24 elders (and their families) of the house of Aaron were gathering around the temple. The other priests were gathering in the court of the priests, where the brazen sea and brazen lavers were situated. The brazen sea was made of high polished brass that was reflective like a mirror. It was called, *the sea* (1 Kings 7:23-26; and 2 Chronicles 4:2-5). In addition, there were ten smaller brazen lavers that rested on wheeled carts that had images of lions, oxen, cherubs and other engravings. The wash basin rested on top of a cart (1 Kings 7:27-39). Both were for ceremonial washings of the unclean. The large laver was for washing the priesthood, and the smaller was for washing the meat of the sacrifice. The tabernacle had only one such laver. Only the priesthood could be cleansed and that, only after a sacrifice for sin was made.

Now keep in mind that the earthly temple was a copy of the heavenly (See Hebrews 8:5). Over the next few days, the men of Israel gathered in the outer court, the women in their court and the gentiles in their court. Many thousands would gather as they prepared for the next feast. During this period of the feast and cleansing, which lasted about 3 ½ days, all who desired could look

into the temple, all the way into the holy place. Even after the city gates closed the temple remained open another 6 ½ days. As they prepared for the next event, the priests went about instructing the people in the law and the prophets.

Revelation 4-5 - Tishri 1: Heaven. The Door is opened 4:1. The Trumpet is sounded 4:2. The 24 Elders are assembled taking up their positions around the throne, 4:4. The *sea of glass* is in the court of the priests. They are before the throne of God. The 24 Elders and the 4 beasts (think brazen lavers) are identified as gentile believers, 5:8-9 KJV. The inner and outer courts are filled to capacity with many thousand, 5:11. Thus, Revelation 4-5 is Tishri 1 with the arrival of the priesthood and the people in the heavenly temple as the fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets has begun. Arguably, it appears as though those who have suddenly arrived, are grafted into the house of Aaron. They are masters of the house of the Lord, in charge of all His things. They are preparing to commence a large-scale cleansing of those priests who have become unclean, defiled or have stained their garments. The purpose of said cleansing is to make them fit to enter into the temple and its service.

Tishri 1-2 - Review

On Tishri 1, the new moon was seen in or around the constellation Virgo/The maiden /The Travailing Woman, in the evening, just after sunset. The woman is a bride who when she receives her wedding crown, is ready to bring forth her children/man-child, (which according to Rabbinic literature, appears to be a reference to those in her wedding procession).⁶⁵ Jewish Prophetic Literature taught that Tishri 1, was when Satan stood ready to accuse them as a people should the books of judgment be opened.

Revelation 12:1-11 -Tishri 1 : Earth The new moon appears at the feet of a woman who is clothed with the Sun. She has received her crown and is ready to bring forth her child/children (wedding procession). Isaiah 66:6-8 tells us that there is more than one child. It is a whole nation, for the earth, is being made to bring forth. The woman's child/children are caught up to God and his throne. Satan wages war as he tries to destroy the child of the maiden. He attempts to do so by accusing the brethren. However, Michael rises to guarantee safe passage for those whom the woman has brought forth (Dan.12:1). Thus, Revelation 12:1-11, is Tishri 1 with the sighting of

⁶⁵ *Manners and Customs of Bible lands page 130-134. Fred H wright. 1952 Moody press.*

the new moon, and the securing of the man-child/wedding procession to the throne of God. Thus the fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets has begun.

Note: Some might protest claiming 12:5 as proof that the man child is Christ. However, Rev.2:28-29 tells us that the promise given also applies to the church. Micah 5:1-5 clearly puts the advent of the travailing woman after the birth and crucifixion.

Conclusion: Using the two theater presupposition of the Fall Festivals; one heavenly and one earthly, both Revelation 4-5, and 12:1-11, are Tishri 1; the day of the resurrection/rapture.

3 ½ days of cleansing for the unclean

On Tishri 1 the trumpet was sounded and the beacons lit, letting people know the new moon had been sighted. It was time for the priesthood to assemble. These beacons were seen as far away as Babylon.⁶⁶ The Feast of Trumpets lasts 2 days because of the uncertainty of the new moon. The time for cleansing is part of the feast but last 3 ½ days. Entrance into the city lasted 3 ½ days. For those in the city, entrance to see the temple lasted 10 days. Those who were not watching the signs or did not make preparations to be at the gate when it opened would have 3 ½ days to get to Jerusalem in order to be part of the festivities for the next two festivals. Space was limited so only the prepared would make it. Depending on when the Sabbath occurred, as well as one's proximity to Jerusalem, it could be a very difficult journey of day and night with no guarantee of entry due to space limits. At the end of 3 ½ days, the great trump was sounded, the city gate was closed, and entry to into Jerusalem was denied. Those arriving on or after the start of Tishri 1 and all they brought, had to be cleansed in accord with the law prior to entering. No unclean thing could enter the city, during this time, and no chances were taken.

Revelation 6:1-17

3 ½ days of cleansing for the unclean: Heaven - Those who either were not prepared or were saved after the events of 4-5 are under heavy duress. They are being cleansed. They are fed with food from the heavenly temple. Those who die along the way are hidden under the altar (where wine/blood and the water mixed) indicating a massive revival in the church. Instead of interceding for the nations, they are calling for vengeance yet are preparing to function as priests.

⁶⁶ The Temple: It's Ministry and Services pages 156-157. Alfred Edersheim

In chapter seven we learn that this time-frame is a time of great tribulation. It is for the cleansing of the priesthood who had become unclean.

Revelation 12:12-13:17

3 ½ days of cleansing for the unclean: Earth. Zion continues to bring forth her children for a time, times and ½ a time. Her children are under great duress for the next 42 months. They cannot buy or sell food during this time. Their cleansing is through death, by which they are cleansed for the priesthood

Note: It is easy to see the time references of *time, times, 1/2 a time and 42 months as 3 ½ years*. This is the first place in the narrative that the Bible implies that the 3 ½ days starting on Tishri 1 serve as a foreshadow of 3 ½ years. It is a time of great tribulation.

Note: If Revelation 4-5 and 12:1-11 occur on Tishri 1 and 6:1-17 with 12:12-13:17 occur over a 3 ½ year period. Then 3 ½ years from Tishri 1 brings us to right around Passover, on Nissan 14.

Early on in this book we mentioned the sign of the Son of Man, and the presentation of the constellations with the darkened sun and the lunar eclipse all occurring on Passover, along with a great earthquake in 33 A.D. after which the O.T. saints were raised. Notice, that the same signs occur in 6:12 as the persecution of the saints come to an end 3 ½ years later around Passover. As we will see, shortly thereafter, the tribulation saints are raised. Thus the tribulation is over.

Note: the tribulation is not judgment. It is a disciplining/refining process for the church that has fallen into apostasy/sin. The Greek and English are identical :

Noah Webster 1828: TRIBULATION : [L. tribulo, to thrash, to beat.] Severe affliction; distresses of life; vexations. In Scripture, it often denotes the troubles and distresses which proceed from persecution. When tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, he is offended. Matt.13:21 In the world ye shall have tribulation. John 16:33

Strong's Greek 2346: θλίψις thlipsis, thlip'-sis; ; *pressure (literally or figuratively):—afflicted(-tion), anguish, burdened, persecution, tribulation, trouble.*

The word *tribulation*, is used 21 times in the N.T., 19 are used in reference to the church/people of God : Matt. 13:21; 24:21,29; Mk. 13:24, Jn. 16:33, Acts 14:22, Rom. 2:9, 5:3, 8:35, 12:12, IICorinthians 1:4, 7:4, Ephesians 3:13, 1Thessalonians 3:4, Revelation 1:9, 2:9-10, 22; 7:14.

Two are used in reference to other groups than the church: Romans 2:9, and II Thessalonians 1:6.

It is very important to note that in every place in the book of Revelation the word *tribulation* is used in the context of either persecuting or disciplining the church. In the last days, sin will be so prevalent in the church that it will go unnoticed. It will be worldwide and thus will require worldwide disciplinary measures for the purpose of correction and to make all fit for priestly service. Hence the great tribulation.

Conclusion: Using the two theater presupposition of the Fall Festivals; one heavenly, and one earthly, both Revelation 6:1-17, and 12:12-13:18 are the tribulation where those of the priesthood who were defiled are (cleansed) making them fit for service. There are also many who get saved at this time as well.

The time of sealing, raising and the final call to the undecided - Tishri 4-10 Review:

According to Jewish literature, after the Feast of Trumpets, there came a time of evaluation and sealing. They believed that if the resurrection occurred, three books for three groups of people would be opened on Tishri 1. Those found in the book of the righteous/life would be taken into heaven as soon as the trumpet sounded. People were told to pray that they might be counted worthy to be part of this group. They were to prepare all year. Very few would be included in this group.

This leaves two groups. The wicked and the intermediate. The wicked, are people who rejected the Messiah prior to the sounding of the trumpet and are set aside for judgment. They are in the book of the wicked. The intermediate group is the largest group of the three. They are those who did not out-right reject the Word. They sat on the fence. They are in the book of the intermediate. They are given until the Day of Atonement to repent. If they repent, they will be sealed against the judgment and recorded in the book of the righteous. If they do not repent, they are sealed into judgment and are numbered among the wicked, in the book of the wicked.⁶⁷

Revelation 7:1-17 - The time of sealing, raising and the final call to the undecided: Heaven Nissan 14 to Tishri 10, the tribulation is over, and 144,000 Jewish believers (and possibly others) are sealed against coming judgment. The saints who were under duress and killed over a 3 ½

⁶⁷. *Rosh Hashanah and the Messianic Kingdom to Come. Joseph Good Page 90 1989. The Fall Feasts of Israel. Glaser 1987 page 33*

year period of time are raised from the dead and secured in heaven. They are given priestly garments and palm branches to perform their priestly duties in anticipation of the upcoming fulfillment of The Feast of Tabernacles. These gentiles appear to be grafted into the tribe of the Levites but not the house of Aaron (See Is. 66:20-21).

Revelation 14-15:4 - The time of sealing, raising and the final call to the undecided: Earth Nissan 14 to Tishri 10 (14:1-5). The tribulation is over, and 144,000 Jewish believers (and possibly others) are sealed against the coming judgment. Rev.14:6-13, the last gospel call goes out along with warnings. Rev.14:14-20, two harvests are then taken. The first harvest is of those who died over the last 3 ½ years. The second harvest is of the wicked and the undecided who rejected the gospel call. Those of the second harvest are put into the wine press of wrath, which is tread outside the city, for their blood is unacceptable and must be poured outside the city on the earth. Rev.15:1-4, preparations are under way for the Feast of Tabernacles. Also, the tribulation saints are in the court of the priests on the sea of glass. They are singing the song of Moses which was sung on the Sabbath day in the temple. They do so because they have entered their Sabbath rest.

Note: At this time, gentile believers are coming from around the world to Mount Zion. They are being carried there by angles and other means (See Is. 66:20). Those who died in the last 3 ½ years are resurrected and taken to heaven (by angels) and those who survived are taken to Zion along with those intermediates who effectually heard the Gospel call. **Matthew 24:27-31**, Tells us what takes place at the sounding of the great trumpet. The great trumpet sounded the closing of the gates of the city that opened on **Tishri 1**. What is clear from other passages is that those saints who either survive the tribulation or are saved during the time of sealing are being hidden in tabernacles, in and around Mount Zion, built by and protected by, the Lord against the upcoming judgments. The pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day shall rest over them as a defense. (See Isaiah 4, Obadiah 1:17, and Joel 2:32) During the upcoming judgments, the Lord will be in the temple interceding on their behalf, which brings us to our next feast.

Using the two theater presupposition of the Fall Festivals; one heavenly, and one earthly, both Revelation 7 and 14-15:4 are the time of sealing, and the resurrection of the tribulation saints. The time of sealing: With the tribulation ending 3 ½ years after Tishri 1, that puts us at about Nissan 14, but the next festival to be fulfilled is six months away. The Day of Atonement: That

makes the time of sealing about 6 months long. It was foreshadowed by the approximately 6 days from the end of the Feast of Trumpets to the start of the Day of Atonement, Tishri 4-10.

The Day of Atonement- Tishri 10

The Day of Atonement was an elaborate affair, which we briefly addressed earlier in this book. However, for the purpose of moving forward with this section, we will pick up in the middle of the events just as they are mentioned in Revelation. Before the application of the blood of the red heifer, the high priest said a prayer for his family/house. The high priest would then enter the temple and burn the incense on the altar filling the Holy of Holies with smoke. The people waited for about thirty minutes outside in hushed silence as the high priest officiated in the temple. If the high priest was accepted he would be driven out by the smoke to shouts of joy from the people. They knew that they had an acceptable high priest. But if for some reason the sacrifice was not acceptable, the high priest would die and the Day of Atonement became The Day of the Lord.

To begin with, let's keep in mind that it has been six months, during which time the resurrection of those who came out of great tribulation took place. They were raised sometime after Nissan 14 approximately 3 ½ years after the sounding of the last trump on Tishri 1. Arrangements for the surviving saints took six months to complete. The surviving gentile believers and those who accepted the gospel call in the intermediate period are taken to Mount Zion, where tabernacles are constructed for them. These tabernacles will provide shelter for them against the coming judgments. 144,000 Jews will also be in Zion with their seal of protection. Now that all of God's people are secured away, both in heaven and earth, it is time for the next event. The Day of Atonement/The Day of the Lord. It is the time of judgment not intercession.

Revelation 8:1-6 The Day of Atonement- Tishri 10: Earth According to 7:1-3 four angels are holding back the four winds of the four corners of the earth. They are staying the upcoming judgments on the earth, trees, and sea (waters). Now to 8:1-6, The people of heaven are waiting in silence. It looks as though the high priest (Jesus) has entered the heavenly temple and it has been a half-hour and still no one comes out. An angel (Jesus) places the incense on the altar. It is the prayers of the saints. They are most likely the prayers of, Rev. 6:10. At this point, the high priest still has not come out. Something has caused the earthly sacrifice to be rejected. Seven

angels, with seven trumpets, are preparing to carry out the function of the priests in the upcoming water festival to follow. But something is wrong. Instead of intercession and mediation for the nations during the Water Festival of the Feast of Tabernacles, they are preparing to bring judgment.

Revelation 15:5-8 The Day of Atonement- Tishri 10: Earth The wine for the upcoming Water Festival was being pressed out. But instead of wine, it is blood. According to 14:10, the wine is without mixture as in the Water Festival of the Feast of Tabernacles. This means there is no water from the pool of Siloam (which means sent) added in. Also, there are no grapes, and so blood is used. It is unacceptable blood, and so the wine press has to be trodden outside of the city to be poured out on the ground. In chapter 15:5-8, seven angels dressed like priests (because they are priests) are given seven bowls; these bowls are filled with plagues. Instead of intercession and mediation for the nations and the pouring out of the wine/water mixture on the cornerstone of the altar, they are preparing to bring judgment. The high priest (Jesus) is in the temple with the smoke. He remains there for seven years until the seven plagues are completed, and until then, no one can enter in (See Leviticus 16:17).

Using the two theater presupposition of the Fall Festivals; one heavenly and one earthly, both Revelation 8:1-6 and 15:5-8 are Tishri 10 the Day of Atonement. But something is wrong with the sacrifice or high priest on earth. Hence the high priest in heaven does not come out. The Day of the Lord and Daniel's Seventieth week will soon commence. Israel has entered into a league with the antichrist and as such has corrupted the priesthood of Israel. Hence the atonement is rejected.

The Feast of Tabernacles- Tishri 15-22: Review

The feast of tabernacles was supposed to be a festive occasion. The water festival with the priests retrieving water from the pool of Siloam; pouring their bowls of water and wine on the cornerstone of the golden altar while the priests waved palm branches and trumpets sounding. The 70 sacrifices for the nations. The people dwelling in tabernacles in and around Zion. The fruit being secured up high, so as to not get destroyed during the days of the feast. The lamps of the great menorah being lit, giving the feast the name the Feast of Lights. The 8th day when the

great feast was held only for Israel. This feast was said to be a foreshadowing of what would be the messianic age. With the conditions of the Day of Atonement not being met, the feast of tabernacles takes on an entirely different atmosphere in its fulfillment.

Revelation 8:6- 11:19. The Feast of Tabernacles. Tishri 15-22. Heaven. Like the water festival, seven trumpets are sounded. However, these trumpets bring a series of judgments.

1. 8:7. The earth, 1/3rd of the trees and all of the grass is burned. For the areas affected, those in the fire service call this moonscape. It literally means that all the vegetation was destroyed.

2. 8:8. The Sea.

3. 8:10-11. The fresh water.

Note: trumpets 1,2,3 constitute the very things that the four winds of chapter 7:1-2 were being kept from harming while the 144,000 were being sealed. They are the things that the Jews prayed for God to bless leading up to the Day of Atonement. Now they are cursed

4. 8:12 the sun and heavenly bodies darkened bringing darkness. As opposed to the idiom for the Feast of Tabernacles, the Feast of Lights.

5. 9:1-12. Pain and darkness. Notice 9:4 that the vegetation of 8:7 has grown back. It takes a 2-3 years after moonscape before the growth cycle starts. 9:4 gives us a sense of time from the first trumpet. We are about three years after the first trumpet. 9:10 tells us that the 5th trumpet lasts 5 months.

6. 9:12-11:14. The golden Altar (the Altar of sacrifice in the courtyard opposite the sea brazen laver). 9:13- 21. The seven thunders. The Euphrates and the four angels. 1/3 of humanity dies. Chapter 10 the seven thunders. 11:1-14 Jerusalem, the temple, and the two witnesses. It is very clear from the text that the 6th trumpet lasts at least 3 ½ years. See 11:3

7. 11:15-19. The 2nd coming. Takes place over several days. See 10:17. At the conclusion of this trumpet, there is great rejoicing.

Note: Verses of 8:7 and 9:4 is a real pickle for dispensationalists. Most are not even aware of it. For those who see the problem with their 7-year paradigm of 3 ½ years of relative peace and 3 ½ years of tribulation, there is a glaring problem. They have all of the trumpet/bowl judgments in the last 3 ½ years. When confronted with the problem, they invoke a miracle to account for the problem. This is their rescue device. To them, God made the plants grow back faster than normal is their response. Yet the text says nothing of said miracle. Some will invoke yet a different rescue device and say that there is overlap. However, this is also a problem. 9:5-6 and 9:13-21 and all of Chapter 11 is a problem for those who put all of Chapter 8-16 in the last 3 ½ years. When the 5th trumpet sounds men are in torment. They want to die but cannot. When the 6th trumpet sounds 1/3 of humanity dies and the two witnesses are killing at will. The 5th and 6th cannot be occurring simultaneously with overlap. It is not possible. The only solution that has no conflict is one that has the events of 8:6-11:19 occurring over a seven year period.

The Feast of Tabernacles is a foreshadow of the trumpet judgments. It is the book of Revelation that gives us the divine information equating the days of the feast with years. The first trumpet judgment starts on **Tishri 15**. They continue over 7 years and end 7 years later on **Tishri 22**. Hence the fall feast of tabernacles is to be fulfilled at the end of the trumpet Judgments.

Revelation Chapter 16. The Feast of Tabernacles Tishri 15-22. Like the water festival, seven bowls are poured out. These bowls bring a series of judgments. Instead of water mixed with wine, blood is used. It is defiled blood that is pressed outside the city and is poured out on the earth.

Chapter 16 is much shorter in its descriptions. Its purpose is to add details not seen in the trumpet judgments. The pattern is the same, nonetheless.

1. Vs 2. Earth. Like the first trumpet, the judgment is on the earth. The added detail is that men will be afflicted with sores that produce a noisome (strong and offensive stench) that will be grievous (severe).

2. Vs 3. Sea.

3. Vs 5-7. The fresh water

4. Vs 8-9 The Sun. Added detail, men burned with heat but refuse to repent.

5. Vs 10-11. Pain and darkness. Men refuse to repent.

6. Vs 12-16. The Euphrates. The river is dried up. Preparation for Armageddon begins.

7. Vs 17-21. The second coming.

Note: In 16:17 after being in the temple for seven years the High Priest, (Christ) finally announces, IT IS DONE, just like the High Priest did when the sacrifice was accepted. Keep in mind that in 8:1 we start with the High Priest (Christ) already in the heavenly temple. The raptured and resurrected saints are waiting for him to exit. But he does not come out. An angel (Christ) offers up the incense on the altar. In the parallel vision of 15:5-8 the temple is filled with smoke. It is the smoke of the incense of 8:3-5. Just as on the Day of Atonement no man can enter until the High Priest comes out having made intercession for Himself and his family. However, in the case of 15:5-8 the high priest (Jesus) is making intercession for those who are His. He has no need to intercede for Himself. He intercedes for his house the entire seven years of the trumpet/bowl Judgments. Even though they are sealed and/or secured in tabernacles in and around Zion, he still intercedes on their behalf. Once the judgments are over, He states that " It Is Done". Then there is great rejoicing.

Using the two theater presupposition of the fall festivals; one heavenly and one earthly, both revelation 8:6- 11:19 and Chapter 16 are the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles. It is the Day of the Lord. It is the result of the Sacrifice on earth being rejected. It corresponds with Daniels seventieth week and lasts seven years.

The rest of revelation is fairly straightforward.

17-18. The details of the fall of mystery Babylon

19. Details of the 2nd coming.

20. The final Judgement and the start of the messianic kingdom.

21-22. The new Jerusalem and the eternal state. Notice that no impure (unclean) thing shall enter in.

Conclusion.

All theology is connected. A mystery in one area of study is often solved by information in another area of theological study. But nothing has had more of an impact on the study of bible prophecy than the festivals of Israel and the culture of the Jewish people. Once one becomes even remotely familiar with the fall festivals, it becomes abundantly clear that they serve as the hermeneutic for not only the book of Revelation but also for many prophecies of the Old Testament. The Jewish cultural language in the Olivet discourse as recorded in Matthew 24-25. Mark 13 and Luke 21 along with Luke 17:21-37 is key to understanding said passages. While it is possible to draw some biblical conclusions apart from said knowledge, it is nearly impossible to do so without conflict. As one pastor friend recently said, *“we have been using the wrong hermeneutic.”*

So what are we to do?

As I mentioned earlier, my father was a master mechanic. One Sunday several years ago he told me the story of a car he had worked on. A salesman at the dealership he worked for asked him to fix the steering on his European car. My father ordered the part and when it came in he went to work early the next day to get it done before work. After installing it, he quickly realized something was wrong. He turned the wheel to the left but the car went right. After a few minutes of contemplating the problem he looked at the package the part came in, and it stated European Model. The part he put in was a steering box for right side driving, and thus everything was backward. He decided to have some fun, and so before work he mentally taught himself how to steer it in a small area. One by one as each mechanic showed up to work he played dumb and asked if they could test the car and see what was wrong. Imagine the laughs they got. Throughout the day, they drove it around in the lot as they reconditioned themselves to drive the car. When the owner got in the same thing happened, but by now everyone else knew how to drive it, and so it looked as if it were the owner who was having the problem. Eventually, they

told the owner what had happened. Ironically, each person who drove the car had to sit and pause for a moment when they got into their own cars. They had learned wrong and had to undo their mental conditioning.

When I first learned even just some of what we have covered, I was instantly forced to make some changes. I could not continue as I had been. I had learned wrong and had to unlearn. First, I could no longer be a mid-tribulation rapture guy. A Pretribulation rapture was and is the only possible conclusion to be had. Second, it was clear that tribulation was for the church and it was only 3 ½ years. This was most difficult. Every dispensational system known had a seven-year tribulation. Just as difficult was the idea that it is not judgment. The tribulation is large scale discipline, set to correct those in the church who have defiled themselves. Third, Daniels 70th week and the tribulation are not the same events. Fourth, the trumpet and bowl judgments are the same events with added emphasis. They occur over seven years, ending with the 2nd coming. They correspond with Daniels 70th week. Fifth, Calvin was right. Christ died only for the elect. The ministry of the high priest interceding for his own proved that. That became abundantly clear when I saw that when the saints were secured away both in heaven and earth, Christ was interceding in the temple for those saints on earth while judgment was being poured out. At that point, there was no atonement for the nations, for the blood of their offering was poured out and rejected. Sixth, Christ, and Paul gave us clear indicators regarding both the day and the hour of his coming.

I know that people respond in different ways and for different reasons. Many of my closest friends simply disagree. I shared the story of Walvoord. He took some time on just one issue. Eventually, he made the adjustment. Another man made changed instantly. He was a man of two Masters and two Ph.D.'s, able to speak five languages and was able to read Greek, Hebrew, Latin, and Aramaic. Not to mention that he was also an amateur boxer and a Jazz pianist. I can still see him running towards me calling out my name. Then there are those that I have been working with for more than 25 years. They sit and listen and even acknowledge the rationality of your propositions, but the next time you see them it is like they never heard you.

The fact remains that most people are so vested in prophetic systems that no matter what you show them, they just keep going on like nothing ever happened. The preterist has to have

everything occurring at 70 A.D. for if that is not true, their entire theological system collapses. They literally have everything hanging on the dating of the book of Revelation.

For the dispensationalists, some are so vested in their rapture position of imminence that they get hostile when approached. The basic reason is that they use the rapture as a carrot to motivate people like a mule to move in the right direction. To them, if the people think that the rapture will occur at a specified time in the future, then people will sin up to the last minute, and then repent. **As though God is fooled by that.** In fact, the Bible specifically states that those who do so will be caught off guard and will be dealt with very harshly.

The amillennialist spiritualizes everything, making it necessary to go to the authorities for the meaning. To them, propositional truth is not possible. Then there is the “*can't know*” crowd. Their mantra is that it is not important or essential for Christian growth, and so one should not spend much time on the topic. In doing so, they reveal themselves to be only hearers of the word and not doers. They become judges of the word and deceive themselves. James 1:22-25. James 4:10-12.

The bottom line is that no matter what our position, we are to be Berean and always examining our faith. My challenge to all is to not take my word for it. Get the material in the bibliography and work your way through the material. Perhaps God will give you some insight that will help in clearing things up as we draw near to the time of the end.

God Bless.

Addendum A

In this book, we have looked at the three types of revelation that are revealed in the scriptures. The first is the Mazzaroth. That being the stars which would also include the Sun and the Moon, with all three being used for days and years for a calendar; along with signs (owths) of the promise and seasons (moeds) for the festivals. Next, we looked at the festivals and learned that they not only served as indicators as to when in the year certain prophetic events would occur, they also serve as rehearsals or dry runs for said events. Finally, we looked at the scriptures, where we not only learned about the first two types of revelation, we are also given incredible details of the prophetic events associated with the other two forms of revelation. There are two passages in scripture that until recently have been misapplied due to a lack of information regarding them. It is the advent of modern computers, with the assistance of astronomy programs, that have for the first time in centuries allowed us to see said passages with more clarity.

The first passage is Isaiah 66. The context of the entire chapter is the 2nd advent from beginning to the end. What catches our attention is the mention of the travailing woman in connection with the earth bringing forth in one day and a nation being born at once.

*⁷ Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. ⁸ Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? **Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.***

This passage makes it very clear that the event described is Zion bringing forth her children. Note the wedding language that was used to describe the procession of the wedding party. This is very consistent with the Jewish custom of the wedding procession as mentioned earlier in this book. However, this is not the first time that Isaiah talks about the travailing woman. In Isaiah 26:2 there is a call to *open the gates that the righteous may enter in*. In Verses 17-21 Isaiah mentions the resurrection and how Israel was like a travailing woman who failed to bring forth

any deliverance in the earth. Yet the Lord's dead shall rise and be hid in chambers in the time of indignation.

¹⁷ Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O LORD. ¹⁸ We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen. ¹⁹ Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. ²⁰ Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. ²¹ For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

Now, back to Chapter 66. It is the contrast of chapter 26. In chapter 66, we see the travailing woman (Zion) struggling to bring forth. She comes to the point of delivery and appears as if she won't. Yet God will cause her to bring forth. 66: ⁹ *Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God.*

Until the advent of modern technology, with its computers and software, it was nearly impossible for the modern world to know what this meant. Keep in mind that Virgo was the sign that the new moon appeared in during the feast of trumpets on **Tishri 1**. I believe that what is being described here is an astronomical (Think Mazzaroth, Signs, Feasts) manifestation in Virgo. Virgo is the constellation that the new moon was and is seen in when the month of Tishri started. It is very common for some of the planets to enter Virgo, get right up to the womb area, and then stop. They then retrograde backward out of the womb and then stop. They then regain their forward movement, reenter the womb again, and pass through the birth canal.

One such planet that does the above is Jupiter also known as , "supreme deity of the ancient Romans," from Latin *Iupeter, Iupiter, Iuppiter*, "Jove, god of the sky and chief of the gods," from PIE **dyeu-peter-* "**god-father**." Compare Greek *Zeus pater*, vocative of *Zeus pater* "Father Zeus;"

Sanskrit *Dyaus pitar* "**heavenly father**".⁶⁸ Jupiter performs its cycle in Virgo with some regularity, once or twice (more or less) over each 75-100 year period. Mars is more regular, and Saturn is less. Although it occurs at other times in the year, it is very common with Jupiter in fall, but not always in Tishri. The people who participated in the fall feasts and wanted to be in Jerusalem at the right time would be quite familiar with the above type of planetary movement. Certainly the Chief Priests/Rabbis tasked with making the official announcement for the start of either the new day or the new month would be very aware of this, as they looked for either the twinkling of the star for the new day (which started at sundown) or the new moon, which started the new month. They had to know where to look to be precise. A detailed knowledge of the Mazzaroth was essential in this task.

Now to our or second passage. Revelation 12:1-6.

12:1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: ² And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. ³ And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. ⁴ And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. ⁵ And she brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

Here we see the travailing woman who is clothed with the sun and the moon at her feet. She has received her crown of twelve stars. She is with child and ready to be delivered of a man child. As soon as she delivers, the child it is caught up to God and his throne. We already know from Isaiah that the travailing woman is Zion and her child is more than just a child, it is a nation. While Isaiah gives us the information as to what is taking place (the earth is bringing forth in one day) and it is going to occur sometime around when the woman appears to delay her bringing forth. It is Revelation that adds an incredible amount of detail which, combined with Isaiah,

⁶⁸ Online Etymology Dictionary.

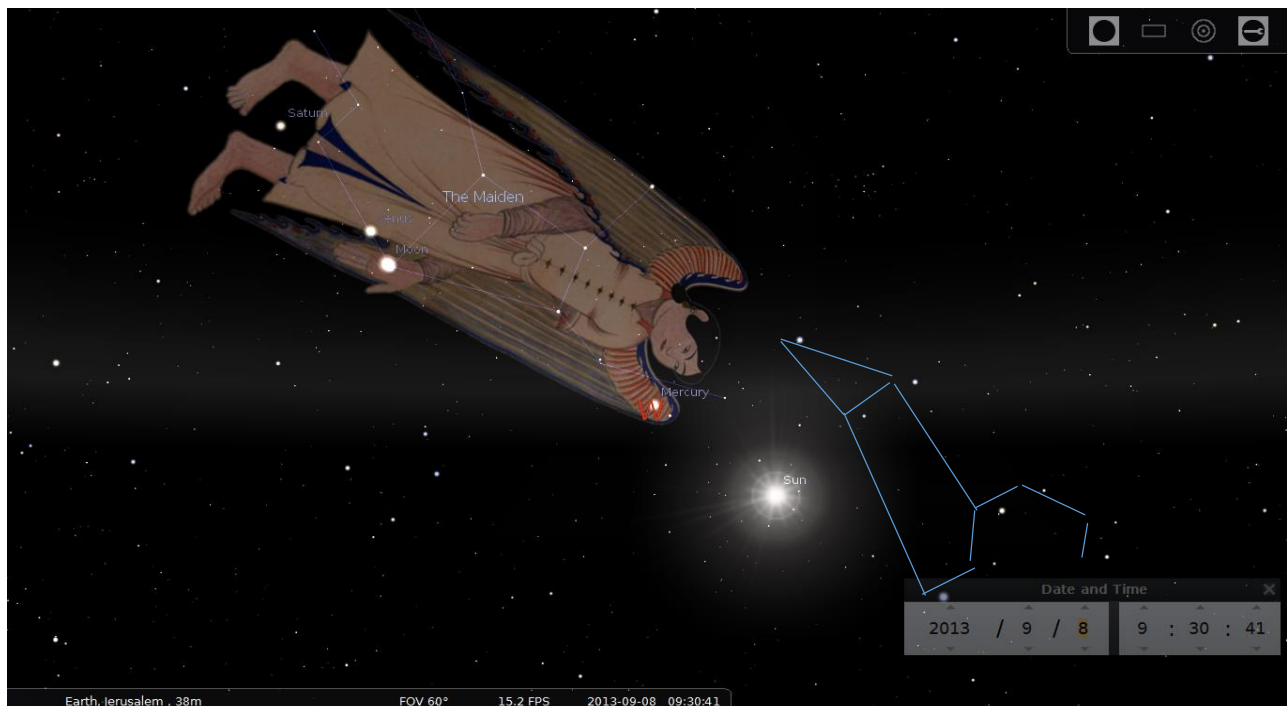
provides us with what appears to be a date. Just like Daniel gave us a date for the first advent, I believe revelation may be giving us a date for the 2nd advent. Consider the following.

On 11/15/2016 Jupiter will enter the belly of Virgo. It will proceed to the birth canal and on 1/26/2017 stop just short of being born. Over the next several months it will retrograde back and then stop. It will then move forward again when, on 9/11/2016, Jupiter will be brought forth passing through the birth canal. This appears to be what Isaiah meant when he said: *“Before she travailed she brought forth.”* Then on 9/21/2017 the moon will enter the belly of the woman and she will be travailing to be delivered. She will deliver in one day as the moon passes through the birth canal. What happens next is almost too terrifying and yet thrilling to think of.

On 9/23/2017 at about 7:30 PM in Israel, using the ancient method for determining the start of the new month, one of the most spectacular astronomical events ever seen will occur. Not only will Jupiter have gone through its above display with the moon following, something so rare will happen that it is something that happens only once every 4.5 Billion years. There is one chance in 2.3 million of it happening over the last 1900 years. By using computer programs I have been able to watch 2,000 years of the night sky and can confidently say that this has not happened since the writing of the book of Revelation, or maybe ever before. On the morning of 9/23/2017 in Israel, the woman (Virgo) will receive her crown of twelve stars. Depending on the weather, the entire world will see it. She will be clothed with the sun as it rests on her left shoulder. She will have just delivered her Man Child (the moon) on what is called the hidden day. As the night wanes and dawn approaches, Venus, Mars, and Mercury will fill in the missing stars in the crown. It looks **exactly** like an Egyptian headdress (the crown of Horus) worn by the Pharaohs. At the end of the day, the new moon will be at or under her feet, and appear just after sunset when three stars of medium magnitude will be seen. Jupiter (The Father Star) will be just below the birth canal. Antares (against the ram) will be in the southwest sky. Arcturus, (Chief Shepard) one of the most ancient stars named (**Babylonian: Papsukal Shepherd of the Heavenly Flock**) will be due west. It is the start of Saturday (Sabbath), it is also a high Sabbath of **Tishri 1 making it the Sabbath of return.** It is the close of the last day of the feast of trumpets, wherein the New Moon is seen and the last trump is to be sounded. As mentioned earlier, the High Priest sometimes showed himself on the Sabbath, High Sabbath or New Moon.

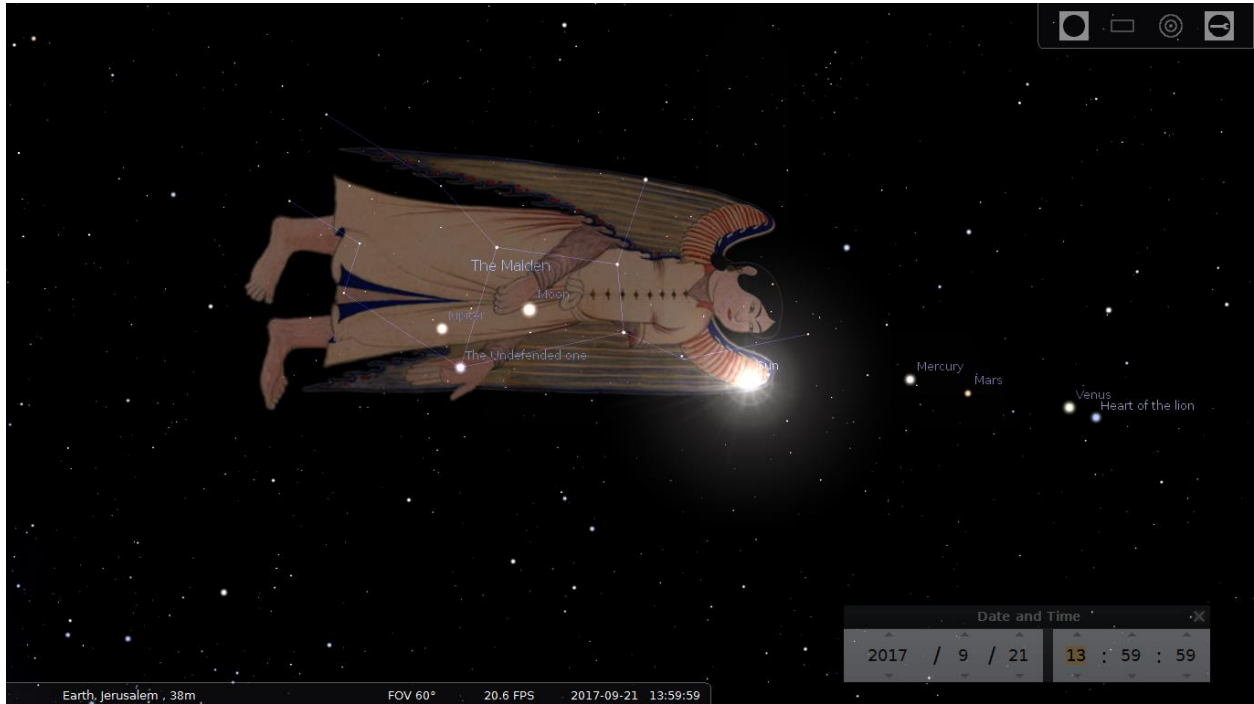
Consider this from Joseph Good “As believers are taken from the earth with the blowing of the shofar, they are in effect hidden from the wrath of God during the birth pains. The Talmudic name of Yom HaKeseh for the festival portrays this event. **The name means the Day of Concealment. It received this name from being the only festival that falls on the beginning of the month when the new moon may still be concealed** “... Likewise the moon is a picture of the believer... ⁶⁹

Using the ancient system for the new moon, the below image was Tishri 1, 9/8/2013. Notice that the moon is not at her feet, even though it is the new moon. It is out of place. Also, there are no planets, and so the crown is not complete. The lines of the incomplete crown are the constellation lines of Leo. From the time of John, some part of the equation has always been missing.

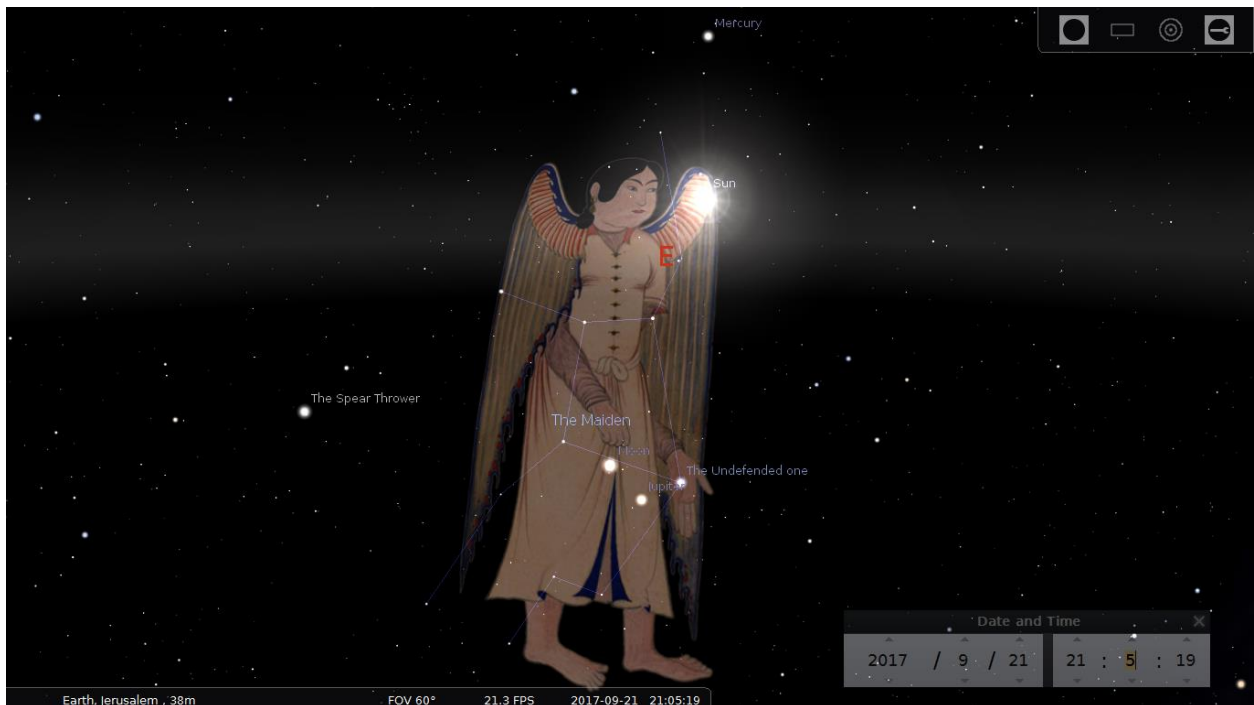


⁶⁹ Rosh Hashana and the Messianic Kingdom to Come. Page. 137-38 Hatikva Ministries 1989. See Also Malachi 4:2 Psalm 81:3 KJV

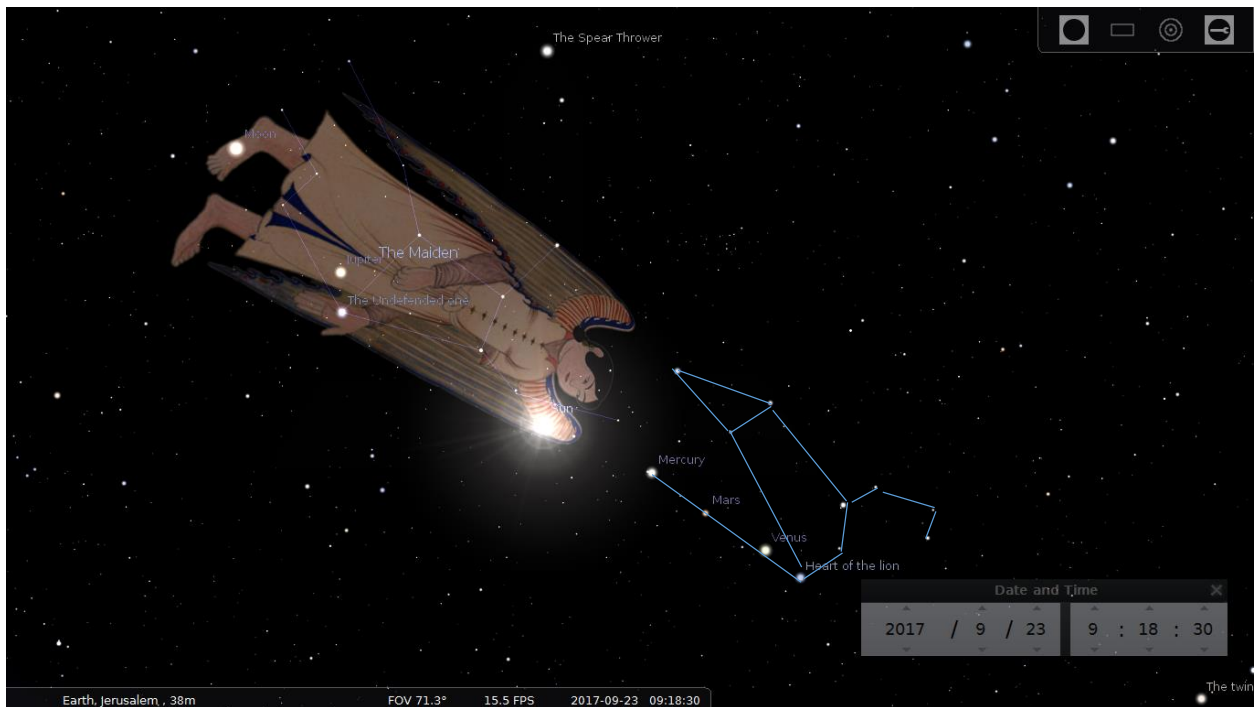
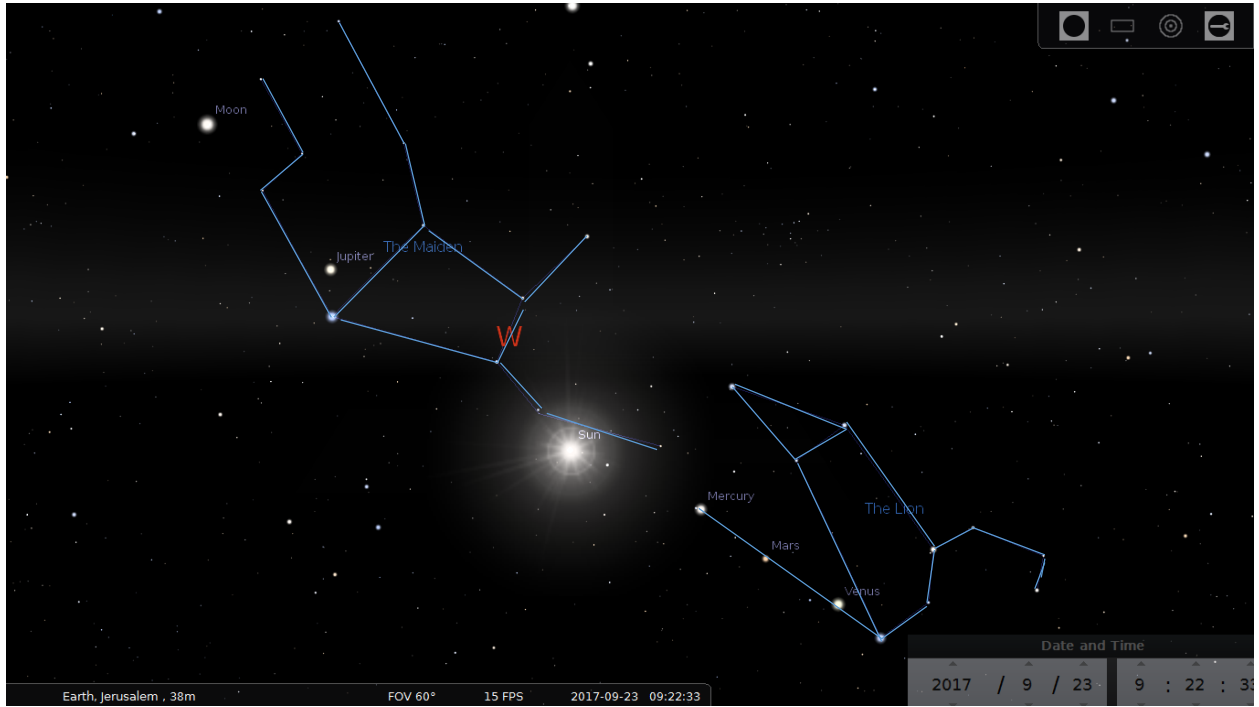
On 9/22/2017 at about 12:A.M. Jerusalem Time or 2 P.M. PST time, the woman is traveling to be delivered. It is Elul 29. Before she traveled she will have just brought forth Jupiter.



On 9/22/2017 at about 7:00 A.M. Jerusalem time or 9/21/2017 9:00 P.M. PST the woman brings forth.



On 9/23/2017 everything is in place. The woman receives her crown and the moon is at her feet. The chances of everything being in place in the below constellation on a Sabbath and on Tishri 1 are 1 in 1.6 trillion.



The new moon 9/23/2017 Tishri 1.

Moon

Type: moon
Magnitude: -8.62 (extincted to: -7.23)
Absolute Magnitude: 35.83
RA/DE (J2000): 14h41m36.0s/-11°08'02.2"
RA/DE (of date): 14h42m34s/-11°12'32"
Galactic longitude/latitude: -18°28'49.8"/+43°19'57.3"
Hour angle/DE: 4h52m52s/-11°12'32" (geometric)
Hour angle/DE: 4h52m30s/-11°08'42" (apparent)
Az/Alt: +251°25'43"/+7°48'20" (geometric)
Az/Alt: +251°25'43"/+7°54'58" (apparent)
Ecliptic Topocentric (of date): +221°42'46.5"/+4°20'41.7"
Obliquity (of date, for Earth): +23°26'13.2"
Distance: 0.00264803AU (396140 km)
Apparent diameter: +0°30'09.3"
Sidereal period: 27.32 days (0.075 a)
Sidereal day: 655h43m11.5s
Mean solar day: 708h44m2.8s
Phase Angle: +138°52'05"
Elongation: +41°01'57"
Phase: 0.12
Illuminated: 12.3%

Ocular #0: Ocular 0
Ocular FL: 40 mm
Ocular aFOV: 43°

Telescope #0: C1400
Magnification: 79.7x
FOV: 0.5391°

Lens: None
Multiplicity: N/A

Date and Time
2017 / 9 / 23 10 : 11 : 16

Earth, Jerusalem , 38m FOV 1.25° 6.71 FPS 2017-09-23 10:11:16

Egyptian Headdress side view.



The obvious question to ask is: will the rapture/resurrection of the righteous occur on 9/23/2017? While it seems reasonable, at this point **I do not know**. Revelation 12 does seem to be Tishri 1 and 2017 is the only time since the writing of Revelation that everything is in place. That is at least from the revelation of the Mazzaroth. Never the less, we should keep in mind the parable of the ten virgins. In that parable, we are told that there is a brief delay. It is long enough to cause some concern for those who were ready, and short enough so as to not allow for the unprepared to get ready. See Matthew 25:1-13.

On the one hand, we want to be sober. We need to be doing what we should always be doing; pursuing holiness without which no man will see the Lord. Hebrews 12:14. In no way should we be selling our homes and waiting on a mountain top. Every parable about the rapture has the believers engaged in the daily affairs of life while they maintain an informed and watchful disposition. Like the wise virgins, we need to do our due diligence and also call people to the wedding. That has been the purpose of this book.

Yet, on the other hand, neither do we want to be like the lazy steward who was afraid and hid what was given to him in the ground. Matthew 25:24-30. Times like this call for us to be extra sober and vigilant while walking circumspectly being as broad and narrow as the bible calls us to be. Ignorance is never the friend of the believer. Just how exact will the new moon feasts and the fall festivals parallel the real events? Will there be trumpet warnings, e.g., like the monthly soundings of the new moon feasts, telling us the day is approaching?

Will there be geopolitical things that might take place first? Will such events serve as forerunners of the rapture? Perhaps! One such event and perhaps chief among them may be the fall of the nation of Israel. Scripture states, they are to be deported from around the world into Egypt and Assyria, where they will be on verge of extinction as a people. According to Isaiah 27:13 the great trumpet will be blown and God will rescue those who are ready to perish. The question to be asked is what is the great trumpet? Is it the one blown at the end of the festivities of the feast of trumpets as celebrated on earth? Or is it the one that is the fulfillment of the festival wherein the tribulation is over and God sends his Angels out with a great Trump to gather his elect? See Matt 24:31. Lord willing, the restoration of Israel will be the subject of our next book.

Addendum B

A question that seems to remain outstanding is: If the people were required to attend only three festivals a year, i.e., Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles (Sukkot), why then was it important to be in Jerusalem by the close of the Feast of Trumpets? The answer is relatively simple when we understand that the Day of Atonement not only took care of the sins of Israel but also made them acceptable as a kingdom of priests interceding for the nations during The Feast of Trumpets.

Two of the most common forms of defilement was coming into contact with a dead body or interacting with a man or woman the had a discharge from the flesh. See Numbers 19 and Leviticus 15. All those who did so not only defiled themselves, they defiled all they touched. Both person, house, and thing. It is easy to see that one could have become defiled and not even know it. Such defilement, as we shall learn, is the very reason that all needed to be in Jerusalem by the end of The Feast of Trumpets.

The prescribed method for the cleaning of said defilement is found in Numbers 19 and Leviticus 15. There were varying degrees of defilement with the most severe requiring seven days of purification. As people traveled to Jerusalem it was possible for them to come into contact with a person or thing that was unclean. People would be traveling long distances, some of them from other lands. Even Gentiles from the nations would be coming. As they stayed at inns, houses and along the roadside, they could have easily been defiled and not know it. One defiled person could defile the entire sanctuary. See Numbers 19:20 and Leviticus 15:31

When people entered Jerusalem during the fall feasts, they had to be cleansed as a standard precaution. Some who were watching the sign of the approaching new moon for The Feast of Trumpets arrived early. They received their cleansing and were counted worthy to enter in when the trumpet of the new moon (last trump) announced the month of Tishri.

Those who were not watching were caught off guard when the trumpet sounded and the beacons were seen. They had exactly 3 ½ days to get to Jerusalem. For many, this proved to be difficult at best. But why 3 ½ days? Simple math gives us the answer. The Trumpet sounded on Tishri 1. This initiated The Feast of Trumpets. 3 ½ days later, on the morning of the 4th day, the city gates were closed. In ancient Israel, the days run from evening to evening. This was their schedule. Day 1, Day 2, Day 3, morning (dawn) of day 4. A person had to be cleansed by the dawn of Day 4 which is half a day. Hence 3 ½ days. This gave them the seven days, prescribed by Numbers 19, to finish the cleansing process. It had to be complete by the dawn of Day 10. The last possible time to start the process was dawn on Day 4. On the morning of the tenth day, the High priest would begin to officiate for Israel, thus covering their sin and making them acceptable as intercessors for the nations during Sukkot. There could be no unclean thing in the city or the temple.

The next question to ask may be: Once the officiating of the Day of Atonement was complete, could people then enter the city? The answer is no for the same reason. Those who came in prior to or within 3 ½ days after the start of the Feast of Trumpets, had brought everything they needed for Sukkot. The branches, the offering of first fruits, the fruit to hang up and all of their personal belongings came with them for the seven days of Sukkot. All of these items were cleansed either before or after they entered into the city. Anyone coming in after The Day of Atonement who, if defiled, could put the people in a state of uncleanness. Such defilement would incapacitate Israel as a priesthood of believers interceding for the nations. The Day of Atonement was on Tishri 10. Sukkot was on Tishri 15-21. There were only

five days between the two festivals. There was not enough time to take care of the uncleanness. Hence, if you did not get in by the morning of the 4th day of Tishri, you were not going to get in at all.

This is very consistent with the portrayal of events as revealed in the book of Revelation. The tribulation being 3 ½ years of cleansing for those saints who were not ready, i.e., in a state of uncleanness, when the trumpet sounded. The Day of Atonement becoming The Day of The Lord due to the sacrifice being rejected. Sukkot, with its water festival of Trumpets and Bowels becoming Judgments during the seven years of Daniels 70th week. As mentioned earlier in the book, it is clear to see that the festivals were, (miqra), i.e., rehearsals for the real event.

The Months of Israel. Adapted and Modified from The Temple and Its Services. Alfred Edersheim.

1: Nisan Spring Equinox, end of March or beginning of April. Day 1. New Moon.

Day 14. The preparation for the Passover.

Day 15. Paschal Sacrifice. First Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Waving of the first ripe Omer. This occurred the day after the first Sabbath following the 15th. That would make it always fall on a Sunday. It was the 17th in 33 A.D.

Day 21. Close of the Passover.

2: Iyar Day 1. New Moon.

Day 15. 'Second,' or 'little' Passover.

3: Sivan Day 1. New Moon. Day 6. Feast of Pentecost always on a Sunday. 7 weeks/Sabbaths/50 days after the waving of the Omer

4: Thamus Day 1. New Moon.

5: Ab Day 1. New Moon.

6: Elul Day 1. New Moon. The time of preparation for the fall festivals. Trumpets sounded daily

7: Tishri 1 New Moon in or near the constellation Maiden/Virgo. The Feast of Trumpets, Beginning of Civil Year Day 1 & 2. New Year's Feast. Day 3. Fast for the murder of Gedaliah. Day 10. Day of Atonement; Great Fast. Day 15. Feast of Tabernacles. Day 21. Close of the above. Day 22. Octave of the Feast of Tabernacles a great feast in anticipation of the Messianic Kingdom.

8: Marcheshvan or Cheshvan Day 1. New Moon.

9: Kislev Day 1. New Moon. Day 25. Feast of the Dedication of the Temple, or of Candles, lasting eight days, in remembrance of the Restoration of the Temple after the victory gained by Judas Maccabeus (BC 148) over the Syrians.

10: Tebeth Day 1. New Moon.

11: Shebat Day 1. New Moon.

12: Adar* Day 1. New Moon.

13: 2nd Adar added to the twelfth month as a leap month due to the lunar cycle.

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