

TYOLOGY OF THE MOEDIM

THE LEVITICAL FEASTS AS
PROPHETIC MACROCODES



MICHAEL FILIPEK

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Prophecy is ultimately one of the greatest apologetics that demonstrates that the Bible is an extraterrestrial message system authored by a Being whose origin is from outside of time itself. What do we mean by “extraterrestrial?” Simply that it originates from *somewhere* beyond earth and from *someone* beyond mankind. And because the Bible’s origin is demonstrably from outside of time (time being one of the four physical dimensions we as humans are confined within), we can also describe it as being an extra-dimensional message system. So, our initial suggestion is that the Bible is both extraterrestrial and extra-dimensional in origin.

This is true because of the Bible’s unbelievable amount of prophetic content. Unfortunately, many Christians are not well-versed in these areas and often neglect to use this evidence when facing the objections of the critics. But what do we mean when we say that Bible prophecy is an evidence for God and the supernatural origin of the Bible? And how do we establish what we can actually “know” about anything? Let’s begin by answering these important questions, which will help to establish our prophetic perspective.

The first thing we need to do is examine three epistemological

anchor points that form the basis of our belief in the supernatural origin of the Bible. But first, what is epistemology?

Epistemology: The theory of knowledge, its method, its scope, and its limits. Epistemology is the investigation of what distinguishes justified belief from opinion. It defines what we can actually **know**.¹

So, let's examine the three points that form the basis of our epistemology:

-The Basis Of Our Epistemology

1. The Bible is a highly **integrated message system**.
2. The Bible contains an astonishing amount of **prophecy**.
3. The Bible contains **intricately hidden subtleties encoded into the very text itself that clearly transcend the knowledge and intent of the human authors**.

Note: We can't fully describe each of the following three points here, but to better understand what we mean by each, please consult the companion study entitled "The Basis Of Our Epistemology".

During this study, we will mainly be investigating Biblical content having to do with Points #1 and 2 – involving **integration** and **prophecy**. These two points help support each other. Biblical prophecy proves integration, and Biblical integration involves prophecy. One of the primary ways you can validate the Bible's extraterrestrial origin is through its continual use of prophecy. Let's discuss this further.

As we mentioned, Biblical prophecy proves the integration of the Bible. Integration is a proof of extra-dimensional authorship because of the following reason – the Bible is one continuous story written over a period of almost one thousand five hundred years, by many human authors who mostly didn't know each other and weren't alive at the same time, and yet, we find that the themes and events in scrip-

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ture are woven together as one unified story. This points to a common Author who is behind it all, influencing and inspiring the human penmen who wrote down what they were inspired to say.

In other words, imagine your favorite novel or storybook...imagine you one day found out that the chapters were written by different people who mostly didn't know each other and weren't alive at the same time, over a period of one thousand five hundred years...yet, the storyline was flawless, or, to use our term, integrated. Obviously, this is impossible – especially when the earlier chapters predict how the later chapters would turn out with amazing precision – and its predictions align with the record of human history. This points to a common Author outside of time who was guiding and inspiring the human writers to compose this unified story. This is what we mean by integration.

Let's talk more about prophecy for a moment before continuing. What exactly do we mean by prophecy, and how exactly does this prove anything?

The Bible repeatedly demonstrates its uniqueness by making a habit of describing history before it happens. This is what we mean by prophecy. And if this statement is true, it would require then that the author knew what was going to happen ahead of time, which obviously the human writers couldn't. This characteristic of prophecy is a method of authentication that is unique to the true Author (God), because He exists outside of the dimension of time altogether and enjoys a one hundred percent success rate. In other words, we know the Bible cannot come from man – it must come from a Being outside of time itself. So, this characteristic of prophecy – unique only to God, who exists outside of the dimension of time altogether – is one of the ways He authenticates His message to us.

But one of the unique aspects of prophecy that will be primarily demonstrated in this study of the Levitical Feasts is in the area of prophetic typology. Because this is so central to our purposes here, before moving on, we need to take some time to sharpen our perceptions of what we mean by the term “typology.”

Prophecy is demonstrated in several forms. In its most commonly

recognized style, prophecy of course involves the foretelling of events that will occur in the future. However, not all prophecies are delivered to us the same way. The Bible is rich in prophetic content that is presented as prophetic types, shadows, or patterns that deliberately prefigure future fulfillment events (this is what we mean by prophetic typology).

It is important to recognize that the Hebrew perception of prophecy is that it not only involves prediction, but largely also the detailing of future events through anticipatory types, shadows, and patterns (Hebrews 8:5). What do we mean by a “type”? Put simply, when you go to build or establish something in the natural world (such as a building or a car), you typically first create a “prototype” to act as a model that anticipates the ultimate fulfillment of your planned construct. This word prototype is really what we mean by a “prophetic type.” A type is a copy, a pattern, or a model that anticipates a greater future reality that will act as the ultimate fulfillment (called the “anti-type”). In this way, God uses prophetic typology to teach and prepare us for His future plans.

A “macrocode” is a more modern term, used widely in computer programming, which relates to this concept of an anticipatory resemblance or model (i.e. a “type”). In computer programming, macrocodes are employed to express, and thus implement, the anticipatory or structural aspects of a program. Macrocodes typically anticipate how a series of forthcoming elements are to be laid out, or how they will relate to one another.

Often in a word processing application, macrocodes (often called “macros”) are used to anticipate a template for a letter, a fax, or a special report form. They convey a structural intent not necessarily evident without them. Macrocodes often are used to lay out a composite design, the fonts to be used, and/or special instructions to the printer, etc.

A macrocode is one of the most profound forms of communication. We witness this exact type of structural anticipation in the Bible. As we’ve just mentioned, it is often referred to as a “type” or a “figure”

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used to portray something in the future; a foreshadowing; an anticipation of the antitype.

This subject of typology will be referenced throughout this study as essentially everything we will be examining in the Levitical Feasts is a type of a greater ultimate fulfillment – many of which have already happened, allowing us to study and appreciate the Bible’s precision.

So, we will find that prophecy is not just an odd curiosity – it’s a demonstration that God is real, that He cares, and that He has chosen to reveal to us in advance what His plans are for the world, and for you and I personally. As we go through this study, keep in mind how the content we will examine demonstrates our epistemological anchor-points, mainly #1 and #2, involving integration and prophecy. So, with that backdrop in place, let’s now begin to explore the typology of the *moedim* – the Levitical Feasts Israel was given and commanded to observe in the Old Testament.

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1. Merriam-Webster, entry “Epistemology,” *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*. (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/epistemology> - Retrieved 11/11/18)

CHAPTER 2

OVERVIEW OF THE MOEDIM

The Torah (or first five books of the Old Testament) details eight feasts that the Israelites were commanded by God to celebrate during the Hebrew religious calendar year. God had instituted these feasts through the prophet Moses. The institution of these feasts by God provides incredible meaning and relevance to modern observers in light of the events of the New Testament, which occurred over a thousand years later. The typology of these feasts demonstrates a profound verification of the integration and prophetic nature of the Bible – evidence pointing to its authorship as being from outside time. In this study, we will thoroughly investigate the typological themes and details of each feast and understand how they strategically profiled future events.

The first three feasts are celebrated in the spring, in the Hebrew month of Nisan (our March/April):

- Feast of Passover (*Erev Pesach*)
- Feast of Unleavened Bread (*Hag ha-Matzah*)
- Feast of First Fruits (*Hag ha-Bikkurim*)

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(These are all connotatively referred to as “Passover,” or the “Passover season.”)

Fifty days after First Fruits, in late spring/early summer, is the lone feast celebrated in the month of Sivan (our May/June):

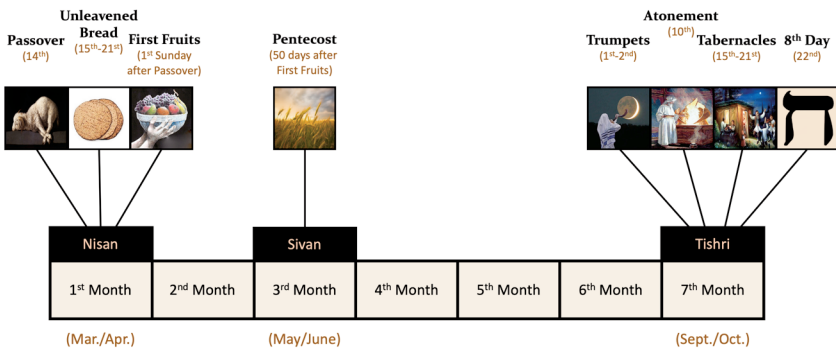
- Feast of Weeks (*Hag ha-Shavuot*, or Pentecost)

There are then three feasts in the fall, taking place in the month of Tishri (our September/October), plus a 1-day concluding feast many observers fail to recognize:

- Feast of Trumpets (*Yom Teruah*, also *Rosh ha-Shanah*)
- Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*)
- Feast of Tabernacles (*Hag ha-Sukkot*)
- The Eighth Day (*Shemini Atzeret*)

(These are referred to as the “High Holy Days of Autumn”).

The Hebrew Religious Calendar



These feasts each have different purposes. Some are commemorations of important events in Israel’s history, others are strictly tied to the agricultural harvests, and others exemplify themes of God’s character.

Some have multiple layers of meaning, incorporating two or even all three of these purposes. But most significantly, each of them is prophetic, looking ahead to a highly significant event in the plan of God. Some of these feasts even typify the gospel plan of salvation – the basis of the New Covenant described in the New Testament. In fact, these historical, agricultural, and theological purposes that the feasts celebrate are in many ways themselves, types of the future fulfillments. It may seem confusing to even keep straight how many layers of meaning are potentially inherent in each of these feasts. And like most objects of typology in the Bible, we probably will never even recognize their true depth until Jesus Christ opens up our understanding after this life is finished. But you will begin to get a feel for this as we go through each in detail.

An important thing to notice as we enter into this topic is that these eight feasts are not relevant only to Israel. The more correct notion in fact, is that outside of the lens of the New Covenant, or Christianity – in other words, outside of recognizing the First Coming of Jesus Christ – it is impossible to fully understand the true meanings and fulfillments of these feasts! The tragedy to recognize, is that due to their rejection of Jesus as their Messiah, the Jews have been celebrating the symbols and rituals of these holidays for thousands of years without understanding the fulfillments they pointed towards! God had established these feasts to teach His covenanted people about His future plans – and to prepare them to be the first to receive them. But instead, they became overcome with the symbols and missed the true intention of their purpose.

It is because of this that it becomes so important to have an understanding of the Levitical feasts. Your perception of the entire panorama of God's plans for humanity will explode with understanding by undergoing a study of these holidays. You will find that when correctly discerned, they provide a prophetic framework that helps to clarify God's plans for the history of mankind. It is fascinating to discover that the first four feasts primarily teach about the significant events related to the **First Coming** of the Messiah – events that were crucial to God's plan for the redemption of man. Likewise, you will discover that the last four feasts provide intriguing insights

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concerning important events that relate to the **Second Coming** of the Messiah.

Another point to be clear on, is that we are only advocating for the spiritual importance of **understanding** the feasts. Scripture does not bid Christians to “keep the feasts,” as we are not under the Old Covenant. The Old Covenant was given to national Israel, in the Promised Land, at that particular time, in order to provide a societal and religious system that prepared God’s people to be the first to receive the New Covenant. In other words, as the Apostle Paul said, the Old Covenant (Mosaic) Law was a temporary institution given to Israel for the purpose of being a “schoolmaster” or a teacher to prepare them for the fulfillment of the New Covenant arrival in Christ.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

-Galatians 3:24-26

So, the Old Covenant law was instituted to point forward to the Messiah and His introduction of the New Covenant. The Levitical Feasts, sabbaths, and new moon observances mandated in the Old Covenant were established to serve as shadows (or types/patterns) to teach Israel about the ultimate realities they represented, which at that time were still to come. Consider the words of Paul, concerning the ritual observances of the Old Covenant law.

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

-Colossians 2:16-17

Paul makes it clear that these ritual observances are not binding

upon New Testament Christians. But notice that in doing so, he also confirms the notion that this study advocates – that the feasts are prophetic types and shadows of future significant events on Jesus Christ’s calendar for humanity. This statement by Paul refers to the feasts as a “mere shadow” of things to come, but the substance – or fulfillment – is in Christ. So, while we recognize that keeping the feasts according to the Mosaic Law is not obligatory for the Christian believer, **understanding what they typify** is absolutely of immense value!

That being said, many Christians do enjoy celebrating or commemorating the Levitical feasts in their own way – not out of obligation, but in a similar way to how most Christians celebrate Christmas – as a voluntary celebration of remembrance. It is certainly profitable to do so, as every aspect points toward Jesus Christ, helping us understand His plan for humanity. Just keep in mind that **it is not a command**, and we should always be on guard against the tendency to place oneself under the letter of the Law instead of recognizing the liberty found in Christ.

If you currently *do* know Christ as your Savior, you will be thoroughly enriched and touched by the clarity these feasts detail. Understanding them will also help sharpen your perspective of eschatology (meaning the study of the end-times). If you *do not* know Christ as your Savior, you should take note of the prophetic nature of the symbols and rituals embedded in these feasts over a thousand years in advance of their fulfillments. This testifies of the prophetic integration of the Bible as a whole, and is a startling piece of evidence that suggests its origin from outside of time. Additionally, the fact that God so carefully and precisely established His plans for us so far in advance should cause you to recognize the level of love and affection that He has for you as an individual. All of this depth of beauty and meaning is ultimately all because the God of the universe loves us and wants to have relationship with us. What could be more fulfilling than to understand the details and hidden aspects of His incredible plan to save us?

Another important point regarding the feasts that many modern

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observers fail to recognize, is that God said they are *His* feasts, not Israel's.

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning **the feasts of the Lord**, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even **these are my feasts**.

-Leviticus 23:1-2

In other words, Israel was commanded to observe them, but they belonged to God. As we will see, this was God's prophetic calendar, and He was using it as a template to teach and prepare His covenant people of His future plans.

Next, it is important to recognize that when God established these feasts, the very Hebrew terms He used were suggestive of their future significance. Let's examine the English translations of these Hebrew terms, which contain loads of hidden meaning. Our foundational passage is Leviticus 23:4, in which the Lord uses two key Hebrew words to describe the true nature of these festivals to Israel.

These are the **feasts** of the Lord, even holy **convocations**, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.

-Leviticus 23:4

- **Feast** = Hebrew: *moed* (Strong's #H4150), which means "to keep an appointment." Plural: *moedim* – "appointed times."¹
- **Convocation** = Hebrew: *miqra* (Strong's #H4744), which means a "rehearsal."²

So, in order to gain a clearer perception of what this passage is really saying, let's insert the definitions of "feasts" as "appointed times" and "convocations" as "rehearsals":

“These are the (“**appointed times**”) of the Lord, even holy (“**rehearsals,**”) which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.”

So, these Levitical feast days could more literally be called typological dress-rehearsals for significant future divine appointments on God’s calendar for humankind. Israel was commanded to observe these feasts as dress-rehearsals to teach and prepare them for God’s coming appointed events. Another even better way to think of it is that God gave Israel – as the covenant nation - the unique privilege to have insight into His future appointed times through the institution and celebration of these feasts.

As mentioned earlier, it is unfortunate to recognize that the people of Israel, after performing these typological dress-rehearsals for centuries upon centuries, ultimately failed to recognize the fulfillments of what they were actually rehearsing for. After examining them in further depth, we will begin to understand exactly how these feasts were rehearsals of what could be called the eight most important events in God’s program for humanity! Let’s also recognize that Jesus pointed to His personal role in their fulfillment.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: **I am** not come to destroy, **but to fulfil**.

-Matthew 5:17

The volume of the book it is **written of me...**

-Hebrews 10:7

In other words, Jesus was saying that everything contained within the Old Testament was deliberately and strategically placed there (by Him), as a prophetic type, shadow or pattern – and that He would later fulfill them, most significantly, on these divinely appointed future dates.

So, it gives us pause to reexamine the entire Old Testament through the lens of Jesus Christ. In fact, nothing in the Old Testament can truly be understood without first understanding Christ. He was

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everything that the Old Testament law and prophets pointed toward. It has been said that **the New Testament is in the Old Testament concealed, and the Old Testament is in the New Testament revealed.** In other words, one is incomplete without the other – another point that demonstrates the reality of the Bible’s integration. This study is just one of many examples of how the Old Testament contains content and meaning that can only be fully understood when reading it in light of the New Testament fulfillments.

Let’s now begin to examine some of the most central prophetic pillars of the Old Testament – the eight Levitical festivals of God. We will examine each of these, starting with the spring feasts, which have been precisely fulfilled by the Lord Jesus Christ at His First Coming, and followed by the late spring/early summer feast of Pentecost – the feast Christians are typically most familiar with. We will then discuss the fall feasts, which present incredible prophetic significance for future “divine appointments” concerning Christ’s Second Coming – prophetic events that have yet to be fulfilled!

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1. James Strong, “Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible,” Updated and Expanded Ed., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2007, p. 1523.
 2. Ibid, p. 1533.

CHAPTER 3

THE FEAST OF PASSOVER (EREV PESACH)

The first of the festivals is Passover – or in Hebrew, *Pesach*. The celebration of Passover commemorates the historical story of the Exodus – the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage under the leadership of Moses (Exodus 12:1-14, 43-48; Leviticus 23:5).

The climax of the series of plagues that God sent upon the Egyptians was the death of the firstborns. The Spirit of the Lord was to pass through Egypt late that night and kill every firstborn in the land. The Israelites were instructed to mark the lintels and doorposts of the doors on their homes with the blood of a slaughtered lamb. Upon seeing this marking, the Spirit of the Lord would pass over and not harm the firstborns in these homes (hence the name Passover).

Interestingly, we can already witness the prophetic element of this instruction, in that it was the Israelites' obedience to apply the blood of the lamb that spared them from the terrifying judgment of death!

Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover.

And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the

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blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.

For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.

-Exodus 12:21-23

The Israelites were instructed to commemorate their deliverance from that day forward, and it still remains as one of the most significant observances in the national and religious lives of Jews today. The details of this observance are astonishing when examined closely, in that they profile with incredible precision, an ultimate Passover Lamb who would in the future, fulfill the Passover details on this very day.

As we begin to delve into this topic, it is important to first clarify several points in order to avoid confusion. Firstly, because the Jewish reckoning of days goes from sundown to sundown, rather than midnight to midnight (like our modern reckoning), there is potential for confusion regarding issues such as what day of the month certain events took place. So, for example, if we were speaking of a “Friday the 14th” at 9:00 PM by our modern reckoning, then according to the Hebrew reckoning, seeing as the sun had already set, they would already consider it Saturday the 15th. The 14th ended at sundown, and the 15th then began. So, we need to remember that Jewish days are from sundown to sundown.

Consider the following chart:

Modern vs. Jewish Reckoning of a Day																								
(e.g. Fri-Sat)																								
12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Midnight to Daybreak (a.m.)				Daybreak to Noon (a.m.)				Noon to Sundown (p.m.)				Sundown to Midnight (p.m.)				...								
Friday (Modern Calendar – Midnight to Midnight)												Sat.												
Friday (Jewish Calendar – Sundown to Sundown)												Saturday...												

Secondly, in order to avoid the potential for terminology ambiguities regarding Passover, we must first define the usages of our terms. First and foremost, we must define the word Passover itself. In this study, when specifically speaking of this first feast, we are referring to the preparatory day of Passover, which takes place on the 14th of Nisan, sometimes called *Erev Pesach* (the Eve of Passover). It is on this day that all of the preparatory activities are performed for the following seven day “Passover Feast,” on which the second and third Levitical feasts fall. This may seem confusing at first, but it will become clear as we progress.

Although we will discuss the timing of the Passover sacrifices later on, let’s first establish a few things in order to precisely pin down the exact day this took place. Keep in mind the Jewish reckoning of a day is from sundown to sundown. God’s timing for the Passover is extremely clear.

In the **fourteenth** day of the **first** month at even is the Lord’s passover.

-Leviticus 23:5

The Amplified Bible puts it this way:

The Lord’s Passover is on the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight.

-Leviticus 23:5 (AMP)

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In a footnote referring to the phrase “at twilight,” the *Amplified Bible* says this phrase literally means “between the evenings” in the original Hebrew.¹

The next question is then, “what does ‘between the evenings’ refer to?” Before answering that question, let’s also be familiar with God’s specific instruction on *when* the Passover lambs should be sacrificed.

Your lamb or young goat shall be [perfect] without blemish or bodily defect, a male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. **You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month**, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to slaughter it **at twilight**.

-Exodus 12:5-6 (AMP)

Again, we see the phrase “at twilight,” and again, it means “between the evenings.”²

So, we see that the day of Passover is the 14th day of the first month (Nisan), and the lambs are to be sacrificed on that day “between the evenings.” So then what period of time does this phrase “between the evenings” refer to? Consider the following quote from *Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon*.

The Pharisees ... and the Rabbinists considered the time when the sun began to descend to be called the first evening (Arabic “little evening”; when it begins to draw towards evening); and the second evening to be the real sunset.³

In other words, the first “evening” begins when the sun begins to go down in the sky (no time earlier than 12:00 high noon), and the second “evening” is sunset (no later than sundown).

So, there should be no confusion as to the identification of the day of the Eve of Passover. It fell on Nisan 14, and the Passover lambs were killed as the sun descended between noon and evening on that day. We will discuss the timing of the sacrifices with greater precision later on. But for now, let’s continue to examine the day of Passover.

On the 14th, the Israelites were to purge all leaven from their homes, and then inspect that it was in fact clean (a ritual called *Bedikat Chametz*). And as mentioned, they were also to kill and prepare the sacrificial Passover lamb on this day in preparation for the ritual Passover meal (called a *Seder*) that would take place beginning at sundown as the next day (the 15th) began. The 15th day of Nisan was the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and it began a 7-day period in which only unleavened bread (called *matzah*) could be eaten.

The events of the Lord “passing over” the homes marked with blood in Egypt took place on that night (the 15th). For this reason, the Jews call the 14th *Erev Pesach*, or the Eve of Passover. So, the actual Passover meal and the “passing over” took place on the night of the 15th. The preparation for the meal and the putting of blood on the doorways took place on the 14th. With that being said, in order to avoid confusion, we will try to consistently refer to the 14th as Passover (or the Eve of Passover) and the 15th as Unleavened Bread.

To add to the potential confusion, it is also important to recognize that in addition to the preparatory day of the 14th, “Passover” can also connotatively refer to the whole “Passover feast/season.” In other words, Passover can refer to the first three feasts as a whole, as they are all part of a continual Passover celebration lasting for a total of one plus seven days (the 1 preparatory day of *Erev Pesach*, the 14th, and then the seven days of Unleavened Bread, the 15th to the 21st).

We also encounter some of the same ambiguities with the term “unleavened bread.” While we know that specifically, it refers to the 15th of Nisan (the Feast/Day of Unleavened Bread), in scripture it also is used as a general term used to label the whole Passover season, in that from the first day on the 14th until the last day on the 21st, leaven was purged from the homes and only unleavened bread was to be eaten with meals. It is common for the Bible to refer to the entire Passover season as the feast or days of unleavened bread (Matthew 26:17; Mark 14:1; Luke 22:1; Acts 12:3; et al.). We need to remain sensitive to these usages in order to prevent confusion and avoid coming to the wrong conclusion by applying these terms strictly, in instances when they are actually being used in a general sense.

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So, to review, on the 14th of Nisan, all of the leaven would be purged from the homes, and the Passover lambs would be sacrificed and prepared. As the night falls on the 14th, the 15th begins and the ritual Passover meal (called a *Seder*) is eaten. Beginning with this Passover *Seder*, only unleavened bread would be eaten for the next seven days until the commencement of the festival on the 21st.

Now that we've given an overview of the layout of the Passover feast, and established some understanding regarding the Passover terminology, let's begin our examination of the rituals of this feast and how they acted as types of a then-future fulfillment.

The preparatory day of Passover (or *Erev Pesach* – the Eve of Passover, the 14th of Nisan) is the day we will focus on first. As we begin going through this first day of Passover, you will begin to recognize that Jesus Christ at His First Coming fulfilled the spring feast days in spectacular fashion. Probably none of these fulfillments are more dramatic than those associated with the preparatory day of the Feast of Passover.

Let's begin to examine this feast day in order to better recognize the typology embedded into its rituals.

The Spotless Passover Lambs

The Passover lamb was to be a “male without defect” (according to Exodus 12:5). We understand that the physical defects of a lamb were representative of the spiritual defect of sin, with which all of humanity is afflicted. It was for this reason that the Passover lamb had to be physically spotless, representing being unblemished by sin. This was an accurate anticipation of Jesus Christ – a typological aspect which the New Testament writers highlight.

But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a **lamb without blemish and without spot:**

-1 Peter 1:19

Jesus was sinless, and it is because Jesus was sinless that the sacri-

face of His life was able to atone for our sins. If Jesus was not sinless, He would be no sacrifice for sin. Adam and Eve's disobedience to God in the Garden of Eden ushered sin into this world (Genesis 3:6). With their sin came death, just as God had warned (Genesis 2:17). As a result, mankind is now born with a sin nature (Romans 5:12-19), and this sin nature is with us from the time we are conceived (Psalm 51:5). The Bible makes it clear, however, that Jesus Christ, though tempted in every way just as we are (Hebrews 4:15), never committed a sin (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 John 3:5). The apostle Peter stated it clearly.

He committed no sin and no deceit was found in His mouth:

-1 Peter 2:22 (NIV)

So, He was not tainted with the fallen and sinful human nature. Thus, Jesus perfectly fulfilled the typology of the Passover lamb as being without spot or defect.

The Passover Lambs Selected on the 10th of Nisan

In order to get the full picture of the typology of Passover, we must back up for a moment from the 14th of Nisan to the 10th of Nisan.

Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, **In the tenth day of this month** they shall **take to them every man a lamb**, according to the house of their fathers, **a lamb for an house**:

And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb.

Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats:

And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.

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-Exodus 12:3-6

We should recognize that according to the record of Exodus, this day of the 10th of Nisan is actually the first “appointed time” of God given to Israel – although it is not considered one of the seven feasts (but rather more of a preparatory day).

So, prior to the beginning of Passover, on this 10th day of Nisan, each Israelite household would go to choose an unblemished male lamb intended to be used as their Passover sacrifice. After selecting it, they would bring it to their homes for further inspection. It would be necessary to inspect and observe the lamb for the next several days in order to ensure that it had no imperfections. It would then be killed as a sacrifice on Passover. This was precisely fulfilled to the very day by Jesus during the week of His crucifixion. Let’s explore this.

At the same time that the Israelite families were selecting and inspecting their lambs for sacrifice on Nisan 10, Jesus as the “unblemished Lamb” (1 Peter 1:18-20) presented Himself to His Father’s house (the Temple in Jerusalem) for inspection. The timing is identical, and we can deduce this from the record of the Passion Week in the gospel accounts.

Then Jesus **six days before the passover** came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

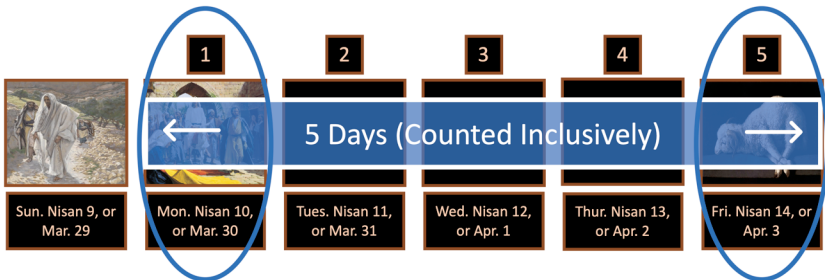
Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

-John 12:1, 12, 13, et al.

So, Jesus arrived in Bethany six days before the Passover, and on the next day (five days before the Passover), He entered Jerusalem. In Christianity, we celebrate this day as the “Triumphal Entry” of Jesus into Jerusalem – taking place five days before the Passover feast. It is

commonly recognized that the Jews reckoned any part of a day as a whole day (called inclusive reckoning).⁴

If Passover is the 14th, then five days prior (counting inclusively, as was the method of counting by the ancients) would be Nisan 10 (10, 11, 12, 13, 14 = five days inclusively).



On this day, Jesus approached Jerusalem riding on a donkey, fulfilling the prophecies of Zechariah 9:9, Daniel 9:25, and Psalm 118:24-26. The streets were lined with multitudes of Jewish pilgrims, as Passover was one of three of the feasts that required all males to be present in Jerusalem (Exodus 23:17; 34:23; Deuteronomy 16:16). We read the gospel accounts of these multitudes coming out to meet Jesus as He approached the city riding on the donkey. In their exuberance, they took branches of palm trees and began to shout, “*Baruch Haba b’Shem Adonai*,” which means, “blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.” This was a quotation of Psalm 118:26, which was the phrase that was reserved to hail the Messiah when He appeared.

However, waving palm branches on Passover is not a Hebraic custom. Why then were they doing this? The only time these branches are waved is on *Sukkot*, the seventh feast, which we will discuss later on. The fall holiday of *Sukkot* (or the Feast of Tabernacles) pictures the King Messiah reigning in the earthly Messianic Kingdom – “tabernacling” with man. The Jews were to take palm, willow, and myrtle branches (called the *lulav*) and they were to rejoice (Leviticus 23:40).⁵

John 12:3 records the palm branches being used. Matthew 21:8 records the tender branches of the willow being used. And Mark 11:8

records leafy branches like the myrtle being used. These three accounts taken together, paint the picture of the *lurvav* clusters being waved in prophetic recognition.

But if this was a tradition associated with *Sukkot*, then why were they doing this to Jesus right before Passover on the 10th of Nisan? Traditionally, the rabbis taught that whatever the time of year the Messiah was to appear, the Jews were to greet and hail Him by taking up the *lurvav* clusters and singing *hosannas* to Him as the Holy One of Israel.⁶

Thus, by them waving palm branches and singing this Messianic Psalm under the conditions in which Jesus was fulfilling Zechariah 9:9, they were convinced He was there to usher in the Messianic Kingdom. This is confirmed by the Pharisees' response, as they angrily told Jesus to rebuke them for their assumed blasphemy (Luke 19:39). Though the people were wrong concerning the timing of His establishment of His earthly kingdom, they were correct that the true Messiah had arrived – and His arrival was at the exact timing predicted in Daniel 9:25. Their mistake was expecting Him to at this time appear as a conquering king, which He will do at His Second Coming. But at His First Coming, He was there to play the part of the spotless Passover Lamb being selected on Nisan 10, to be later sacrificed.

The Inspection of the Passover Lambs

As was just mentioned, after being selected on Nisan 10, the custom was then for the Passover lamb to be inspected for five days (or four as we count) in order to prove its purity for sacrifice (Exodus 12:3-6). It would then be sacrificed on Passover.

In like manner, Jesus for the next five days (or four as we count), endured “inspection” by the chief priest, elders, and scribes on various issues (Matthew 21 and 22; Mark 11 and 12; Luke 20). The final day of this inspection ended with His illegal trials, in which the Jewish leaders could bring no legitimate accusation against Him (Mark 14:55-64). Even the paid false

witnesses couldn't get their stories to align against Him (Mark 14:56-59).

Following the illegal overnight trials, Jesus was then sent to Pilate, the personal representative of the Emperor of the world, who declared, "I find no fault in this man" (Luke 23:4). In all, Jesus was inspected and proclaimed to be spotless and blameless by no less than the following witnesses:

1. Judas Iscariot (Matthew 27:4)
2. King Herod (Luke 23:14-15)
3. Pilate (Luke 23:14)
4. Pilate's wife (Matthew 27:19)
5. the Sanhedrin (Mark 14:55-59)
6. the thief on the cross (Luke 23:41)

So, throughout His days of "inspection," Jesus was truly determined to be the spotless and perfect Passover Lamb.

Bedikat Chametz – The Purging of Leaven

Paul the Apostle describes Jesus as being our Passover sacrifice in 1 Corinthians 5:7. But he also inserts a comment regarding leaven that most modern readers would miss, without being familiar with the customs of *Erev Pesach*.

Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even **Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:**

-1 Corinthians 5:7

What did Paul mean by his command to "purge out the old leaven," and why did he say it within the context of Christ being our Passover, and being sacrificed for us?

The answer lies within the tradition of *Bedikat Chametz*. It was on this first preparatory day of Passover (*Erev Pesach*, the 14th of Nisan), that the search for and purging of leaven (symbolic of sin) from every

household would be completed – the ritual of *Bedikat Chametz* – a ritual still performed within Judaism today.⁷

The Jews would search through their houses and remove any leaven that was found. They would light a candle and search every crevice of their cabinets and closets where it was possible that leaven could have been left. If any leaven was found, they would use a feather and a wooden spoon to sweep it into a bag to be removed and burned outside the house in a communal bonfire.

In like manner, the gospels record that prior to Passover, Jesus entered His Father’s house, the Temple in Jerusalem, and cleansed it of all “leaven,” spiritually performing the ritual of *Bedikat Chametz*.

And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves,

And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.

-Matthew 21:12-13

So, we see that Jesus cleaned out the leaven – or sin – from His Father’s house in preparation of the Passover feast.

Furthermore, this custom has a useful self-application, as it gives us a picture of carefully examining the innermost parts of our heart to identify and remove any sin that may be there. Now you can understand Paul as he communicated the Hebraic customs of *Bedikat Chametz* that took place on this day of *Erev Pesach*, clearly identifying Jesus Christ as our “unleavened” Passover Lamb.

The Passover Sacrifice

The most well-known aspect of Passover is the sacrifice of the Passover lambs, which each family would perform on this day. At this point, we have already looked at most of the relevant Old Testament passages that describe the sacrifice of the Passover lamb on the 14th of Nisan. But how well can we identify the day Jesus

was crucified from the relevant New Testament records? It turns out, scripture is clear that Jesus did die on Passover, the 14th of Nisan – the exact same day that the Passover lambs were being sacrificed.

And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples,

Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

-Matthew 26:1-2

But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the **passover**: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

-John 18:39

Further, all four gospels agree that Jesus was crucified on a “preparation day” (Matthew 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:14, 31, 42). Since Sabbath is Saturday, and no work could be done (Exodus 16:23; 35:3), the day before (Friday) was known to the Jews as preparation day, or “the preparation.”

And now when the even was come, because **it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,**

-Mark 15:42

The plain reading of this passage clearly indicates that the preparation is a term for the day before the weekly Sabbath. Aside from scripture, this is a fact that is even recorded by the Jewish historian Josephus who lived close to the time of Christ.⁸

On this day, they cooked food in advance and made other necessary preparations. Scripture clearly identifies the day that Jesus died as being a preparation day (in other words, a Friday) and the next day (a Sabbath, or Saturday) as also being a “high day.” In other words, that year, the festival day of Unleavened Bread fell on the weekly Sabbath

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during Passover week, and the previous day (Friday, a “preparation day”) was the day Jesus was crucified.⁹

Since we know Unleavened Bread always falls on the 15th of Nisan, then that would make the Friday a 14th, an *Erev Pesach*, the day the Passover lambs are sacrificed. You will see all of this in the following passage.

The Jews therefore, because **it was the preparation**, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross **on the sabbath day, for that sabbath day was an high day**, besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

-John 19:31

As mentioned, we see in this passage the phrases “it was the preparation” and then “that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, for that sabbath day was an high day.” In other words, Jesus was crucified on a Friday (preparation day), and as we know, the next day was a Sabbath – and the Jews didn’t want dead bodies lying uncovered. But yet, this Sabbath was also a high Sabbath – another way of saying the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the day the Passover meal was eaten – fell on it, making it even more significant. The Jewish Christian scholar Alfred Edersheim writes:

The Sabbath about to open was a “high day” – it was both a Sabbath and the second Paschal Day (Nisan 15)...¹⁰

The following passage conveys the same information, only worded differently.

And **it was the preparation of the Passover**, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

-John 19:14

In this passage we read the phrase “it was the preparation of the Passover.” In other words, this means it was the Friday of Passover

week. We know from previous passages (as well as from simply reading the chronology the gospels record) that Unleavened Bread was on the Sabbath in that year. If Unleavened Bread is the 15th, then Passover (the 14th) is the day before – a Friday, the preparation.

Note: For a further exploration of the evidence that Jesus’s crucifixion fell on the Eve of Passover, the 14th of Nisan, the day the Jews killed their Passover lambs, please refer to the companion study entitled, “The Daniel 9:25 Prophecy – An Exact Timeline For The Arrival Of The Messiah” (see the chapter entitled, “The Dating Of The Ending Point”). In this chapter, we prove conclusively from the Biblical text itself, that Jesus could only have been crucified on a Friday, the Eve of Passover, the 14th of Nisan, the same day the Jews were killing their Passover lambs. Then, for a further exploration of this topic, please refer to the companion study entitled, “A Refutation Of Alternative Chronologies Of The Passion Week”.

Throughout Christian tradition, Jesus has always been associated with being the prophetic patterning of the Passover lamb, in that He acted as its ultimate fulfillment or antitype. The Apostle Paul is one of the early recorders of this understanding, as we see it clearly described in his epistles.

For even **Christ our passover is sacrificed** for us:

-1 Corinthians 5:7b

In this passage, Paul reiterates the association between Jesus’s death and the Passover sacrifices, cluing us in to the idea that this was well understood in early Christianity.

So, it is clear to us that Jesus Christ was sacrificed as the ultimate Passover Lamb on that exact day that He had initiated as a type of this event, so many years before. He arrived right on time to fulfill this prophetic, divine appointment to the very day.

The Timing of the Sacrifices

In the Law, the Jews were commanded to offer up a perpetual daily sacrifice (called the *Olat Tamid* – Exodus 29:38-42; Numbers 28:1-8). This was to take place every day, twice a day, in the morning (at 9:00 AM) and in the evening (at 3:00 PM). At these two times, an unblemished male lamb was to be sacrificed in the Temple, and offered along with a non-bloody sacrifice of flour and wine. This continued on the Passover, in addition to the Passover lamb that would also be sacrificed by each family on that day of Nisan 14. The Jewish historian Josephus records the timing of both the *Olat Tamid* sacrifices and the Passover sacrifices.

Regarding the *Olat Tamid*, Josephus says that the priests performed the morning and evening sacrifices “twice a day, in the morning at the 3rd hour (9:00 AM) and about the ninth hour (3:00 PM)...”¹¹ Concerning the timing of the slaying of the Passover lambs, Josephus states the following.

So these high priests, upon the coming of their feast which is called the Passover, when they slay their sacrifices, from the ninth hour [3:00 PM] to the eleventh [5:00 PM]...¹²

So, we see that the Passover lambs would be slain beginning at around 3:00 PM until around 5:00 PM.

Let’s recap. At around 9:00 AM, the daily sacrificial lamb for the morning sacrifice would be tied to one of the horns of the altar and given as a burnt offering. By around 3:00 PM, following the daily evening sacrifice, the slaying of the Passover lambs would begin.

These sacrifices were unbelievably fulfilled with exact precision by Jesus on Passover. In like manner, Jesus was hung on the cross at 9:00 AM.

And it was the **third hour** [9:00 AM], **and they crucified him.**

-Mark 15:24-26

Mark records that Jesus was nailed to the cross at around 9:00 AM. Meanwhile, Matthew records that he died at 3:00 PM.

“And about the **ninth hour** [3:00 PM] Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.”

-Matthew 27:46, 50

So, Matthew records that Jesus was on the cross until 3:00 PM when He took His last breath and died.

Note: The expressions “the third hour” and “the ninth hour” are based on the manner by which the Jews calculated daylight times. The Jews would start by counting from 6:00 AM (sunrise), therefore making 9:00 AM the “third hour” and 3:00 PM the “ninth hour.” Keep in mind, their day did not begin at sunrise, as we have already discussed, but rather this was the way they estimated the time of day (by counting the daylight hours from sunrise).

The crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, was fulfilled on the very day of Passover, fulfilling His divine appointment. But even more precisely, His death perfectly aligned with the *Olat Tamid* – the perpetual daily sacrifices. As Jesus – the true perpetual sacrifice - was being nailed to the cross, the morning sacrifice was being slain on the altar at the Temple (9:00 AM). As He breathed His last breath, the evening sacrifice was being slain and the Passover lambs were starting to be sacrificed (3:00 PM).

Jesus fulfilled the typology of the perpetual sacrifice, being slain once for all mankind forever. But He also fulfilled the typology of the atonement lamb of Passover – that by applying His blood shed on the cross, atonement is provided. Through His death, we can avoid the certain punishment of our death as result of our sins. Jesus long before had established the festival of Passover in the calendar of the

Israelites as a dress-rehearsal for them, knowing that on one future Passover, He would arrive just on time to fulfill His divine appointment – the appointment of His own sacrificial atoning death.

Crowned and Roasted on a Wooden Stick

As we will find in this example, as well as many to follow, not all of the Jewish customs related to each feast were explicitly commanded in the Bible. But as we will see, it seems clear that the Lord strategically instituted these customs into the culture of the ancient Hebrews in order to establish further typological instruction concerning their then-future fulfillments.

According to the Mishnah (the written Oral Law in Judaism), the Passover lamb was roasted on a wooden pomegranate stick.¹³ This wooden pomegranate stick would appear to be representative of the wooden cross upon which Jesus died.

Furthermore, ancient rabbinic sources indicate that the Passover lamb's entrails were tied around its head as it was cooked in order to ensure that everything would be roasted evenly without boiling.¹⁴

This practice highlights an interesting similarity between the lamb with its entrails around its head and Jesus's crown of thorns (Matthew 27:29; Mark 15:17; John 19:2). It is commonly acknowledged that the crown of thorns was meant to be a mockery of Jesus's kingship. This notion appears confirmed by the record of Jesus also being sarcastically clothed with a purple robe. But according to the gospel accounts, this robe was taken off Him prior to being placed on the cross. However, no mention is made of the crown of thorns being removed.

The lamb being helmeted in its entrails while roasted on a wooden stake conveys a vivid representation of the thorn-crowned Christ on the cross acting out the part of the ultimate Passover Lamb making the ultimate self-sacrifice.

No Broken Bones

According to Numbers 9:12, the Israelites were not to break any of the Passover lamb's bones.

They shall leave none of it unto the morning, **nor break any bone of it:** according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it.

-Numbers 9:12

This typological command was fulfilled as Jesus hung on the cross. The only way a person could breathe when hanging on a cross was to push up with his legs – an exercise that was very exhausting. The Romans would typically break the legs of crucifixion victims when they wanted to speed up the dying process, as asphyxiation would soon follow.

However, although they were commanded to break the victims' legs, the soldiers at the crucifixion exempted Jesus from the breaking of any of His bones (John 19:31-36). It turned out that Jesus was already dead, making it unnecessary to break His bones. It is astonishing that these soldiers unknowingly fulfilled this prophetic Passover type by not breaking Jesus's bones, but instead piercing Him in His side.

The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.

But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:

But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

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For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

-John 19:31-36

The last verse of that passage alludes to another specific prophecy of the Messiah from the Old Testament, found in the Psalms:

He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

-Psalm 34:20

So not only was this event prophetically anticipated through the typology of the Passover feast, but it was specifically prophesied over five hundred years earlier in the Psalms.

The Old Testament Sacrificial System as a Whole

When John the Baptist first introduced Jesus Christ publicly, twice he announced, “**Behold the Lamb of God** that taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29, 36). So, from the very beginning of John’s ministry, which served to prepare the way for the Messiah (Matthew 3:3; Mark 1:1-3; John 1:23; et al.), he clearly spoke of Jesus as being that sacrificial Lamb who was the ultimate fulfillment of what the Old Testament sacrificial system typified. The remarkably specific prophecy of the Messiah being slaughtered “as a lamb” was pre-recorded in the Old Testament, centuries beforehand.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a **lamb to the slaughter**, and as a **sheep** before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

-Isaiah 53:7

The slaughtered lamb, representing the future sacrifice of the Messiah, was embedded in Old Testament typology going all the way back to the ram caught in the bush (Genesis 22:1-19), the acceptable sacrificial offering of Abel (Genesis 4:1-5), and even back to the

animal killed in Eden to provide a covering for Adam and Eve's sin (Genesis 3:1-21).

This sacrificial system is then codified in the law given to Moses, which was to be the foundation for life in ancient Israel, highlighted by the sacrifices performed during the festivals. Leviticus 17:11 is the Old Testament's central statement about the significance of blood in the sacrificial system. God, speaking to Moses, declares:

For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

-Leviticus 17:11

A "sacrifice" is the offering up of something precious for a cause or a reason. Making atonement is satisfying someone or something for an offense committed. The Leviticus passage can then be understood to mean the following. God said:

I have given it to you (the creature's life, which is in its blood) to make atonement for yourselves (covering the offense you have committed against Me).

In other words, those who are covered by the blood sacrifice are set free from the consequences of sin. This shedding of blood is a substitutionary act. Therefore, the last clause of Leviticus 17:11 could be read either "the blood 'makes atonement' at the cost of the life" (that is, the animal's life) or "makes atonement in the place of the life" (that is, the sinner's life, with Jesus Christ being the One giving life through His shed blood).

Hebrews 9:11-18 confirms the symbolism of blood as life and applies Leviticus 17:11 to the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 12 states clearly that the Old Testament blood sacrifices were temporary and only atoned for sin partially and for a short time, hence the need to repeat the sacrifices perpetually. But the sacrifice of Christ as

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the ultimate substitutionary Lamb was once for all time, making future sacrifices unnecessary.

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but **by his own blood** he entered in **once** into the holy place, having obtained **eternal redemption for us**.

-Hebrews 9:12

When Jesus completed the work at Calvary, the price for our sins was paid forever. Not that Jesus wiped away any debt that **He** owed to the Father; rather, Jesus eliminated the debt owed by **mankind** - the debt of sin. Never again would the blood of bulls and goats temporarily cleanse men from their sin. Only by Jesus's blood, shed on the cross for the remission of sins, can we stand before God covered in the righteousness of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21).

So, we can see that the whole of the Old Testament – and specifically, the sacrificial themes – points toward the great sacrificial Lamb that was to come – Jesus Christ, and the giving of His own life on our behalf.

So, as we conclude our examination of Passover, we find amazing typological parallels with its fulfillment – especially in the sacrificial crucifixion of Jesus Christ – the ultimate spotless Lamb on this exact day. But even more, we saw that even in the seemingly insignificant details – the timing of certain events as well as the rituals of Passover – all ultimately leads us to the atoning work of the Messiah on that special day long ago.

The Messiah came and fulfilled the divine appointment (the *moed*) of Passover with amazing precision. And we can see how Passover was established as a convocation – or a rehearsal – for the Jews to practice what was intended to be a picture teaching and preparing them for this coming fulfillment. It is only through the knowledge of this Messiah – Jesus Christ – that one can even begin to understand the true depth of meaning embedded in these Levitical Feasts.

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CHAPTER 4

THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD (HAG HA-MATZAH)

The second of the feasts is the Feast of Unleavened Bread (*Hag ha-Matzah*), which began at sundown as the 14th of Nisan turned into the 15th of Nisan (Leviticus 23:6).

And on the **fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread** unto the Lord: **seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.**

-Leviticus 23:6

The Feast of Unleavened Bread always falls on the 15th of Nisan. The Israelites would abstain from eating bread made with leaven for the next seven days. This feast commemorated the night Israel left Egypt. Since the children of Israel left hastily overnight, they did not have time to wait for the bread to rise. For that reason, it was made on that very first Passover without leaven (yeast). This bread, called *matzah*, serves a prominent role in the Passover season.

As we have discussed, according to the Hebrew reckoning, days went from sundown to sundown. The Passover lamb was killed on the 14th (*Erev Pesach*) at around 3:00 PM and was then prepared and roasted. At sundown, the 14th turns into the 15th. The prepared

Passover lamb is then eaten in a ritual meal called the Seder. The Seder must be completed that night, with none of the lamb left remaining until morning.

<h2>Passover Order of Events</h2>	
Nisan 14 "Eve of Passover"	Nisan 15 "Unleavened Bread"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lambs killed (about 3 p.m.) • Lambs prepared and roasted (about 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sundown begins the 15th (about 6-7 p.m.) • Ritual Seder meal then commences
<p style="margin: 0;">↑</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Sundown (about 6-7 p.m.)</p>	

In Egypt, after finishing the first Passover meal, the Lord passed over during the night, slaying the firstborns of Egypt – the final plague. The blood of the Passover lamb was applied to the lintels and doorposts of the doors on every Israelite house. This blood of the lamb, (symbolic of the blood of Christ on the cross), saved the Israelites from this plague of death (just as the blood of Christ can save us from eternal spiritual death).

After this took place, Pharaoh quickly summoned Moses to allow the children of Israel to leave Egypt. The children of Israel left Egypt during the night on the 15th of Nisan. You may want to go through

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Exodus 12 on your own in order to familiarize yourself even more with this story.

Let's now examine the specific details of this feast, which acted as prophetic types of a then-future fulfillment.

Unleavened Bread – A Symbol of Sinless Perfection

In order to understand the true typology of this feast, you must recognize that in the Bible, leaven was often used as a symbol of sin. It is an appropriate metaphor, since leaven is the agent that causes bread to rise. In like manner, sin corrupts by “puffing up,” with the source of all sin being pride (Isaiah 14:12-14). This symbol (or type) of leaven is consistently used in the Old Testament (Exodus 12:15; 13:7; Leviticus 2:11; 6:17; 10:12) and in the New (Matthew 16:6; Luke 13:21; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8; Galatians 5:7-9) to represent sin. This concept of “unleavened bread” was a prophetic type of the Messiah’s sinless life, making Him the perfect sacrifice for our sins.

And Jesus said unto them, **I am the bread of life:** he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

-John 6:35

I am that bread of life.

-John 6:48

I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: **and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.**

-John 6:51

It is fascinating to realize that the Messiah was prophesied to be born in Bethlehem, and of course, we know Jesus was (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:1, 16; Luke 2:4-6; John 7:42). But what is even more amazing is that the meaning of the name Bethlehem in Hebrew means

“House of Bread” (*bayit* or *beth* – “house,” Strong’s #H1004, and *lehem* – “bread,” Strong’s #H3899).¹

Additionally, in the Old Testament, we encounter “manna,” the heavenly bread-like food that God sent down from heaven to feed the Israelites in the desert (Exodus 16). Manna is a type or shadow of Jesus Christ as the Bread of Life who came down out of heaven (John 6:32-33, 48-50). Notice several of the similarities between the manna and Christ:

- Both came down from heaven (Exodus 16:4; John 6:51)
- Both are free gifts from God (Exodus 6:15; Ephesians 2:8-9)
- Both were given to Israel (Exodus 6:15; Matthew 15:24)
- Both were given to the nation but had to be gathered or received individually (Exodus 16:16; Romans 1:16)
- Both were despised by the people (Numbers 21:5; John 1:11)
- Both had no saving power until they were ground and baked or beaten and crucified (Numbers 11:8; Isaiah 53:4-5)
- Both were preserved on the Sabbath (Exodus 16:19-26; Psalm 16:10)
- Both demonstrated the glory of the Lord (Exodus 16:10; John 1:14)
- Both were presented to God (Exodus 16:33; Hebrews 9:24)
- Both are now hidden (Joshua 5:12; Revelation 2:17)

We can see that it is clear from scripture that leaven was a symbol for sin, and Jesus called Himself the “Bread of Life” and the “Living Bread that came down from heaven.” But since He was sinless, He was even more specifically, the **unleavened** “Bread of Life” – the *matzah*. So, we can see how Jesus represents the main subject of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Buried in Time for Unleavened Bread

As we established during our exploration of Passover, Jesus was dead by 3:00 PM on the 14th of Nisan – which fell on a Friday in the year Jesus died. Following that, Joseph of Arimathaea petitioned Pilate to take the body of Jesus, prepare it for burial according to the customs of the Jews, and place it in a new tomb before Unleavened Bread began at sundown (John 19:38-42).

Sundown began the 15th of Nisan, the day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. If we said the 14th was a Friday, then the 15th was a Saturday Sabbath. But it was not just any Saturday Sabbath. Since as we just said, this first day of Unleavened Bread fell on this Saturday Sabbath, it was especially significant (John 19:31). Because the Jews had strict prohibitions on doing work and being ceremonially unclean on especially this High Sabbath day, Joseph of Arimathaea and those helping him bury Jesus had to ensure the work was done before the onset of the 15th.

So, Jesus – the fulfillment of the symbol of Unleavened Bread – was buried just in time for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, as the 14th turned into the 15th around sundown, at approximately 6-7:00 PM (Luke 23:54). But as His body lay in the grave on this Sabbath of Unleavened Bread, His body did not decay or see corruption (fulfilling the prophecy of Psalm 16:10), as He would be resurrected the next day (Acts 13:35), fulfilling the next feast as well.

For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

-Psalm 16:10

Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

-Acts 13:35

That Passover, the sinless, unleavened “Bread of Heaven” was revealed as that long-awaited sacrifice for sin, as He was buried just in

time for the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Thus, Jesus also kept His next divine appointment with incredible precision.

The Lambs Entirely Consumed – Nothing Remains in the Morning

According to Exodus 12:10, the Passover lamb was to be consumed entirely and the remains burned. Nothing was to remain of it the following morning.

And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning...

-Exodus 12:10a

As was just discussed, Jesus's burial was completed by the evening that began the 15th of Nisan. This neatly fulfilled the typology of the Passover lamb's remnants not being left out until the following morning.

Resting on the Sabbath of Unleavened Bread

We need to further discuss the Sabbath and its relevance to the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the year Jesus died. But first, we must understand some background on the Sabbath. Saturday is the Hebrew Sabbath (*Shabbat*), or the "seventh day." This is the day instituted to be the day of rest for the Israelites, and played a central role in the ancient Hebrew calendar of feast days.

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts.

Six days shall work be done: but **the seventh day is the sabbath of rest**, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.

-Leviticus 23:1-3

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So, we see here in Leviticus 23, that as it introduces the schedule of the feasts, it first begins with the understanding of the seventh day Sabbath rest, which would take place perpetually throughout the calendar cycle. God's usage of the seventh day as a day of rest goes all the way back to the account of the creation.

And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

-Genesis 2:2-3

God's desire from the beginning had always been fellowship and relationship with His image creation – man. The Hebrew word *shabbat* (Strong's #H7676) is related to the word *yashab* (Strong's #H3427), which means "to dwell and abide."²

God's purpose for the creation has always been to dwell and abide with us. From the beginning in the Garden, we see God attempting to engage mankind in relationship.

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

-Genesis 3:8-9

But since the fall of humanity into sin, mankind lost true rest in God. The goal of God's work of redemption was always to restore a true "Sabbath rest." So, He came, put on a robe of flesh, and stepped into His creation as the man, Christ – all God, all man – coming to restore and establish a new basis of relationship – the New Covenant.

He came to make this possible, through His own death, burial, and resurrection as the perfect sacrifice, atoning for the sins of all

mankind. Through His sacrificial death, Jesus brought fulfillment to the typology of the Old Covenant sacrificial system – as we mentioned earlier. But through His death, He also, in a way, fulfilled the typology of the Sabbath. The ritual of Sabbath rest is realized in Christ as the Messiah, and the Holy Spirit He would pour out on those who trust Him.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and **ye shall find rest unto your souls.**

-Matthew 11:28-29

He is the reality that Sabbath looked toward (Hebrews 4:1-11). As the Church, or the bride of Christ, He is our Sabbath peace (Romans 5:1).

This is why, out of the Ten Commandments, the Sabbath commandment is the only one *not* reiterated in the New Testament as a binding requirement upon the Church. Sabbath is a type of the Messiah; a foreshadowing of the true rest that comes only in Him (Colossians 2:16-17).

But what were the commands for the Israelites regarding Sabbath? It can be summarized into one simple word – rest. Avoiding work on the Sabbath was established by God as a requirement for the ancient Israelites. One was to separate the seventh day as a sanctified day of resting from earthly labors and it was to be spent focusing on God.

But what does all of this have to do with the Feast of Unleavened Bread? It's very simple – we already stated that Jesus fulfilled the Sabbath rest through His work of redemption, in which we can now “rest” in Him. But further yet, our main subject within this study is typology. We are addressing the question of “how did Jesus fulfill the typology of the feasts?”

The understanding to be gained is simply this: Jesus was crucified on a Friday (Nisan 14), was buried in time for the beginning of Saturday (the Jewish Sabbath – Nisan 15), and we will see in the next

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chapter that He rose the following day on Sunday – Nisan 16. So, in His death, Jesus fulfilled the Hebrew requirement of “resting” on the Sabbath!

He was buried and placed in the grave just in time for the evening onset of the Sabbath, which in that year coincided with the Feast of Unleavened Bread (the 15th of Nisan). During that night and the following day (all still the 15th), Jesus rested in the sleep of death in obedience to, and fulfillment of the 4th commandment (Exodus 20:8-11).

Burial on Unleavened Bread as the “Kernel of Wheat”

Let’s understand another aspect of Jesus’s burial on Unleavened Bread. This Feast typifies the sinless Messiah, as the Bread of Life being buried in order to then bring forth fruit along with Him in resurrection. With this in mind, you should be able to more clearly understand the words of Jesus in John 12:23-24, in anticipation of this very event.

And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a **corn of wheat** fall **into the ground and die**, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

-John 12:23-24

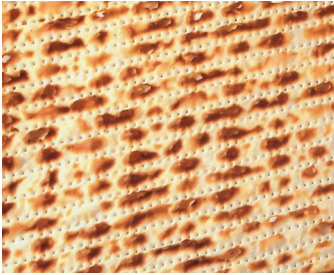
So, Jesus’s body was in the grave during this feast, like a kernel of wheat planted in the ground, waiting to burst forth in resurrection as the sprouted Bread of Life. Again, we see the typology of bread (wheat) used to make this point clear.

The Afikoman

During the Passover Seder eaten after sundown as the 15th begins, three loaves of *matzah* (unleavened bread) are placed on the table,

covered by a linen cloth. Many Jews understood this to represent the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, though its true significance is shrouded in mystery (which we will discuss shortly). Many Christian commentators have also suggested they may serve as a type of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three primary relationships God has used to deal with humanity in the redemption plan. Isaac, serving as a type or model of Christ, represented the *matzah* in the middle. This middle loaf (called the *afikoman*) would then be taken out and broken.³ It turns out that Jesus fulfilled this custom with remarkable precision. Let's examine how.

As mentioned earlier, Jesus described Himself repeatedly using the symbol of "bread." But let's specifically examine *matzah* more closely. When looking at a piece of *matzah*, you'll notice it has **pierced holes** and **black stripe marks**.



So, the *matzah*, being **without leaven** (sin), was **striped**, and was **pierced**. According to Old Testament prophecies regarding Jesus's future death, He was described as a sinless Messiah who would be **striped** - meaning lashed with a whip - (Isaiah 53:5) and **pierced** - speaking of the crucifixion nails and the spear's stab wound in His side - (Psalm 22:16; Zechariah 12:10). We understand from the New Testament narrative that this was done to atone for our sins, or transgressions and iniquities (Romans 4:25; 1 Peter 3:18; et al.).

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his **stripes** we are healed.

-Isaiah 53:5

For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they **pierced** my hands and my feet.

-Psalm 22:16

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And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have **pierced**, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

-Zechariah 12:10

Furthermore, Jesus, though none of His bones were broken, described His body in death as being “**broken**” for us. He said the following at the Last Supper, the night before His death, as He inaugurated the New Covenant with His disciples.

And when he had given thanks, **he brake it** [speaking of the matzah], and said, Take, eat: **this is my body, which is broken for you:** this do in remembrance of me.

-1 Corinthians 11:24

Again, remember what we said – the middle piece of *matzah* at the Seder – representing Isaac, a type of Christ, would be **broken**. And as we discussed, *matzah* has **pierced holes** and **black stripes** – an amazing picture of the work of Christ, the unleavened Messiah.

So, we find that Jesus, in anticipation of being the sinless Messiah who would be **broken, striped, and pierced** for mankind, instituted the Feast of Unleavened Bread as a type, over a thousand years beforehand. In addition, He also instituted the usage of *matzah*, a kind of unleavened bread that specifically pictured Him as the sinless Messiah, containing unique features and markings that represented the exact type of death He would one day endure.

The Hiding and Redemption of the Afikoman

After the middle piece of *matzah* was broken (the afikoman, typologically representing Isaac, a type of Christ), a piece of it would then be wrapped in a linen cloth and hidden somewhere in the house. After the meal, the children of the house would search for the wrapped and

hidden *matzah* until they found it. When it was found, it was returned to the father. Whoever found it would be given a gift from the father for the “redemption” of the *matzah*.^{4 5}

In like manner, Jesus the sinless unleavened Messiah, (prefigured as the middle piece of *matzah*), after being broken, striped, and pierced for us, was then wrapped in a linen burial cloth (John 19:40) and hidden away out of sight in a tomb (John 19:41-42). Through the manifestation of the Son, Jesus’s life and blood was shed (Hebrews 9:11-12) in order to redeem (or purchase) the salvation of the believers (1 Peter 1:18-20). Jesus then promised us eternal life, giving us the down payment of the gift of the Holy Ghost (Ephesians 1:14), also referred to as the “promise of the Father” (Luke 24:49), which would then later be fulfilled on the Feast of Pentecost (Acts 2). The typology here is stunning, and any Jew today will tell you they still practice this!

So, to review, we see how just like the afikoman, Jesus was also wrapped in a linen cloth for burial and was hidden out of sight in the tomb. Just as the afikoman was found by the children who were then given a gift from the father for its “redemption,” when we come humbly as “little children” and find Jesus, He gives us a gift from the Father – a gift of redemption called the baptism of the Holy Ghost!

And said, Verily I say unto you, **Except ye be converted, and become as little children**, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

-Matthew 18:3

Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received **of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost**, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

-Acts 2:33

It is incredible to recognize that the Holy Ghost was a **redeeming gift given by the Father** to those who find Jesus – exactly like the ritual of the *afikoman*. But it was possible only after He had been

striped, pierced, broken, wrapped in linen, and hidden away in the tomb – again, exactly like the *afikoman*!

Deeper Mysteries of the Afikoman

In order to understand the full depths of meaning that the *afikoman* may represent, let's take a deeper dive and try to uncover some of its hidden mysteries.

This *afikomen* ritual and even the name *afikomen* itself are shrouded in mystery. None of it is mentioned in scripture, and yet the Lord seems to have strategically embedded it into the culture of the ancient Hebrews. The term *afikoman* appears first in the Mishnah (the earliest collection of rabbinic Oral Law, codified around 200 AD). It is mentioned in tractate Pesahim 10:8, and elsewhere.⁶

Afikoman is actually a Greek word, though written in Hebrew letters. Jewish scholars and historians are unsure of how or why a Greek term entered the Passover tradition, and they are equally unsure of its true meaning. Some suggest that it comes from the word *epikomoi* (meaning “dessert”) or from *epi komon* (meaning “after-dinner entertainment”), or from *epikomion* (meaning a “festal song”).⁷

In his published lecture, entitled *He That Cometh* (1966), Professor David Daube, a Jewish Biblical and legal scholar at Oxford University argued that the word *afikoman* had nothing to do with “dessert,” but came from the Greek verb *afikomenos* which means “the Coming One” or “He who has come.” Daube said the Passover meal long had a messianic tone to it. He believed it symbolized the expected Messiah.⁸

Appropriately, this *matzah* was the last thing eaten at the meal. Daube believed that the unleavened bread that Jesus gave to His disciples at the Last Supper (pre)Passover meal was actually an *afikoman*. Thus, when Jesus lifted the unleavened bread and said, “Take, eat; this is my body,” (1 Corinthians 11:24) He was in effect saying: “This broken and hidden *matzah*, which has for our people symbolized the Messiah, is fulfilled in me. I myself am the *Afikoman* – the Coming One – whom you expect.”⁹

This messianic ritual and symbolism were eventually lost to Jewish

tradition. Daube (himself a Jew) suggests the linguistic origin of *afikoman* may have been deliberately distorted by the rabbis. Hence, later definitions of “dessert” and “after-dinner entertainment” were possibly put forth to cover it up. Another possibility is that the messianic symbolism of the ritual was suppressed by later rabbinic commentators because the Messiah was thought by the Jews to have not arrived at the time appointed in the Old Testament.¹⁰

In other words, because Jesus’s Jewish disciples perpetuated the old customs about the *afikoman* as being fulfilled in Christ as Messiah, official Judaism abandoned them. This was (and continues to be) a common rabbinic tactic for treating perceived heresy. Whatever gave credence to Jesus’s claims must either be reinterpreted or thrown out.

So, we can see here that there was likely much more meaning to the *afikoman* than is known or admitted to in modern Jewish tradition. Jesus, as the long-awaited Messiah – the One who had come – fulfilled the symbol of the *afikoman* by taking it, breaking it, and calling it His body which was broken for us.

The Cup of Wine

The Passover cup is one of the central symbols of this holiday and of the Seder meal. Yet, the original Passover story in Exodus makes no mention whatsoever of a cup. How the cup became a Passover symbol remains a mystery. Yet, we do know that by the time Jesus observed the Passover, drinking a cup during the meal was an official part of the ritual observance. The Mishnah instructs those celebrating the Seder to drink from the cup four times during the ritual (Pesachim 10:1). That tradition remains to this day.¹¹

During the Seder, a cup of wine is brought forth with this blessing: “Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.” The New Testament describes the drinking of cups of wine during the Last Supper (pre)Passover meal that Jesus conducted prior to His crucifixion. During this meal, Jesus said, “I am the true vine” (John 15:1). The book of Isaiah tells us that God had a vineyard and that vineyard was Israel (Isaiah 5:7).

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The choice vine planted in the vineyard was the Messiah (Isaiah 5:2).

During the Last Supper meal, Jesus called this cup of wine “the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you” (Luke 22:20). The Apostle Paul later called it, “the cup of blessing which we bless,” as well as “the cup of the Lord” (1 Corinthians 10:16, 21). In the Jewish tradition, the third of these four cups is called the “cup of redemption,” or the “cup of blessing.” So, there can be little doubt that this “third cup” is the cup Jesus emphasized at the Last Supper.¹²

The wine represented the redemptive blood of Jesus – emblematic of the New Covenant – as He told His disciples at their (pre)Passover Last Supper meal.

Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

-Luke 22:20

Both Jesus and Paul draw on something from Jewish tradition to provide insights not previously understood before that time. By calling the cup “the new covenant in my blood,” Jesus made a direct reference to the promise of Jeremiah 31. In this chapter, God declared that He would make a New Covenant because the previous covenant had been “broken” by Israel (Jeremiah 31:32). To violate a covenant agreement with God would seem to deserve His anger and punishment. But instead, God promised a new, better covenant of grace and salvation.

Jesus was declaring that this New Covenant would be poured from the cup of redemption in His blood. The cup of redemption stood for more than the Hebrews’ escape from Egypt; it stood for the plan and purpose of God for all time. The themes of wrath, judgment, redemption, and salvation are brought together in the mystery of one cup, as explained by Jesus at the Last Supper. But keep in mind that what was being done by Jesus was both commemorative and typological. It commemorated the Exodus story of the Passover, but yet pointed to what the original Exodus event actually foretold – the offering of a better Lamb and the new freedom connected with that ultimate sacri-

face. In other words, He was describing the events that would soon occur in His own life, which the Passover ritual always foreshadowed – His crucifixion.

But if Jesus and the disciples drank the third cup, then what about the fourth cup? The fourth cup at the Passover Seder is called “the cup of praise, or restoration.” It is thought that the Messiah will drink of this cup in the coming Kingdom of God. While Jesus was giving His disciples the essence of the New Covenant, He stated the following while they were drinking of this apparent third cup.

But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.

-Matthew 26:29

Is Jesus referring to drinking the fourth cup at some future time when His earthly Kingdom is established? It seems obvious that this is the case. Does scripture mention when this might be?

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the **marriage supper of the Lamb**. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

-Revelation 19:6-9

Will the fourth cup be shared with His Bride – the Church, at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb spoken of in scripture, at the beginning of Christ’s earthly Kingdom reign (Revelation 19:6-9)? It would seem so!

Let’s review. Jesus, knowing that night He would be betrayed and

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taken by the Jewish religious rulers, used this last meal to reveal new understandings of the symbolism of the bread and wine as they related to the New Covenant that He was initiating. As we saw earlier, Jesus compared the bread (unleavened, broken, striped, and pierced) to His body that would be given for us. The wine (specifically the third cup, the cup of redemption), He introduced as being representative of His blood, which would be spilled as He would be whipped, beaten, and crucified beginning the following morning.

The bread and wine together, as anticipatory types, are also seen in a number of Old Testament stories, such as the following example.

When Joseph was cast into prison, he encountered these same elements of bread and wine when confronted with the dreams of the bread baker and the wine steward (Genesis 40:1-23). It is interesting that “three days” are also part of the imagery in the Joseph account, just as Jesus was in the grave for three days. Also, in the Joseph story the bread baker was “broken” (through death), while the wine steward (who lived), led to Joseph being ultimately redeemed! Although Joseph was rejected by his brethren (like Jesus was by His brethren the Jews), he ended up being their savior and the one who would provide them with bread (like Jesus being the Savior of the world and Bread of Life).

So, to conclude our chapter on Unleavened Bread, we can see that God instituted this feast and filled its rituals with precise typological meaning – all pointing toward the future redemptive actions of the Messiah during His First Coming – on this very day. And again, we see that the intricate details of these divine appointments – instituted as rehearsals to lead the Jews to the acceptance of their Messiah – were precisely fulfilled by Christ.

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CHAPTER 5

THE FEAST OF FIRST FRUITS (HAG HA-BIKKURIM)

The next feast that takes place is the Feast of First Fruits (*Hag ha-Bikkurim*), otherwise called the “beginning of the harvest” (*Reishit Katzir*). The Feast of First Fruits (of the barley harvest) occurs on the first day of the week, or Sunday, following the 15th, or Unleavened Bread.

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall **reap the harvest** thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest **unto the priest:**

And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: **on the morrow after the sabbath** the priest shall wave it.

And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the Lord.

-Leviticus 23:9-12

God instituted a special feast during which the Israelites would acknowledge the fruitfulness of the Promised Land He gave them, and

dedicate to Him the first fruits of the harvest. This was to be done “on the morrow after the Sabbath” – or in other words, the Sunday after Passover and Unleavened Bread.

The Israelites were to bring the early crops of their spring barley harvest (the “first fruits”) to the Temple to be waived by the priest to the North, South, East and West as an offering to the Lord on their behalf. This wave offering (*Tenufat ha-Omer*) is referred to as the “waving of the *omer*.” The *omer*, meaning sheaf, is an old Biblical measure of volume of grain – in this case, barley. This wave offering to the Lord initiated the ritual called the Counting of the *Omer* (*Sefirat ha-Omer*), in which the Israelites would perform a forty-nine-day count-down, culminating on the Feast of *Shavuot* – or Pentecost – which was the fiftieth day.

And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete:

Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord.

-Leviticus 23:15-16

A male lamb was then sacrificed as a burnt offering (*olah*) to the Lord as well as an offering of unleavened barley bread mixed with oil and wine (*minchah*) (Leviticus 23:12-13). Only after these offerings were performed could the crops be used. So again, we see that a lamb, bread, and wine are offered – the same symbols we’ve seen throughout the days of Passover, and the same symbols Jesus used when He spoke of Himself as being the sacrifice to the Lord.

Let’s examine how Jesus Christ fulfilled this divine appointment of First Fruits and learn some of the details and hidden meanings embedded in the typology of this feast day.

Christ's Resurrection as the First Fruits

Jesus was crucified on Passover (the 14th of Nisan), buried in time for Unleavened Bread (the 15th of Nisan), and resurrected on First Fruits (which on that year, took place on the 16th of Nisan). At sunrise on this Sunday – the first day of the week – His tomb was found empty!

Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

-Mark 16:9

Paul confirms this understanding of Jesus Christ fulfilling First Fruits for us in 1 Corinthians.

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

-1 Corinthians 15:20

Jesus fulfilled this feast by becoming the first fruits of the resurrection, meaning that every believer will one day experience this resurrection and will never experience death again, but will have everlasting life in the presence of God.

The question many wonder, is if we know of others – especially before Jesus's death – who were resurrected from the dead (such as Lazarus in John 11:1-44), then how is Jesus the First Fruits of the resurrection? The answer is because there are two types of resurrections.

- The first type is merely a restoration back to natural life. This means that one would die again later. Those who were raised from the dead both before the resurrection of Jesus and up until the present time, all died again in the flesh.

- The second type of resurrection is ultimate transformative resurrection, when mortality puts on immortality, corruption puts on incorruption, and one is no longer subject to death (1 Corinthians 15:53-54). At this time, the believer will receive an immortal body. When Jesus was raised from the dead, He was raised with this type of glorified body. This is what it means by saying Jesus was the first fruits of the resurrection – He was the first to receive this kind of body.

Jesus came to become the progenitor of a new race of believers – ones who would experience the New Covenant of the Spirit indwelling with the ultimate destiny of receiving glorified, immortal bodies.

Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, **that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.**

-James 1:18

And he is the head of the body, the Church. He is the beginning, the **firstborn from the dead**, that in everything he might be preeminent.

-Colossians 1:18

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the **firstborn among many brethren.**

-Romans 8:29

This resurrection of New Covenant believers is included in the First Resurrection, mentioned in Revelation 20:5-6. Through His resurrection, Jesus became the first to experience this First Resurrection. His body – the Church (1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:12; 5:23; Colossians 1:24; et al.), will one day be resurrected, transformed, and caught up to be with Him forever (1 Corinthians 15:50-58). Paul tells us that this concept of Jesus being the First Fruits

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conveys an order of resurrection events that all take place as part of this First Resurrection that spans over thousands of years.

For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

-1 Corinthians 15:21-23

An examination of scripture reveals a number of individual resurrection events separated in time, all of which fall into one of two categories.

1. The Resurrection of Life (the First Resurrection)
2. The Resurrection of Condemnation (the inferred Second Resurrection)

The First Resurrection consists of several sequential resurrection events which are treated as a single category involving the raising of all who are redeemed. While the resurrection to eternal life is described as “the First Resurrection” (Revelation 20:5-6), the resurrection to judgment and torment is described as “the Second Death” (Revelation 20:6; 13-15).

See the following chart for more details:

The Order Of The Resurrections

Order	Which	Who	Timing	Description	Scriptures
1	First	Jesus Christ	The Third Day	The resurrection of Christ, the "first fruits"	Mt. 28:1-7; Mk. 16:1-11; Lk. 24:1-12; Jn. 20:1-18; 1 Cor. 15:20
2	First	A few OT saints	Shortly after Christ's resurrection	At the earthquake that took place at the crucifixion, graves were opened	Mt. 27:50-53
3	First	The Church	Before the Tribulation	The resurrection of Church-Age believers at the rapture	Jn. 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:50-53
4	First	The Two Witnesses	Middle of the Tribulation	God's two witnesses will be raised after being killed by the Antichrist	Rev. 11:11-12+
5	First	The OT Saints	After the Tribulation	The OT saints will be resurrected to enter the Millennial Kingdom	Dan. 12:1-2; Isa. 26:19; Ez. 37:13-14
6	First	The Tribulation Martyrs	Beginning of the Millennial Kingdom	The Tribulation martyrs will be resurrected so they can rule and reign with Christ	Rev. 20:4-6+
7	Second	The Unbelieving Dead	End of the Millennial Kingdom	At the end of the Millennium, the final resurrection will consist of all of the unbelieving, wicked dead. They will be found guilty at the Great White Throne Judgment and be cast into the Lake of Fire	Rev. 20:11-15+

Note: Concerning #7 of the above chart, the Second Death or Second Resurrection (of Condemnation), the question has been raised concerning the judgment of those who die during the Millennium and whether they are resurrected as part of this final resurrection. It is clear that the *unsaved* who die in the Millennium are included in the Great White Throne judgment. However, the scriptures are silent concerning any Rapture or translation of righteous believers who survive the Millennium and concerning the resurrection of righteous believers who may die during the Millennium. We were not given divine revelation about these things, probably because it is of no practical application us.

Anyway, we see that Jesus Christ was the first of all the First Resurrection participants. He was the first to receive a glorified resurrection body, but will be followed by each group in their own order.

First Fruits (Plural)

"First Fruits" (plural) implies that there are others accompanying the "First Fruit," which we now recognize as Jesus Christ (as we reviewed

in the last point). So then, who were these others who were the “First Fruits” along with Him? In the last bullet point, we saw how the New Testament describes the Church as being a sort of first fruits along with Christ (James 1:18; et al.), but the Church was not established yet when Christ rose from the dead, so we couldn’t physically rise with Him back then. But a true first fruit is never harvested alone. So then, does the Bible tell us about any other resurrections taking place at the time Christ rose?

Yes! As alluded to earlier, the New Testament tells us that at His resurrection, Jesus brought others with Him!

And the graves were opened; and **many bodies of the saints which slept arose,**

And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

-Matthew 27:52-53

This is the origin of the belief in Christianity that while His body lay in the grave, Jesus after declaring victory over the imprisoned spirits, emptied out the “good” side of *Hades* – Abraham’s Bosom – in which the souls/spirits of the Old Testament believers had been resident.

So, Jesus neatly fulfilled the typology of First Fruits in that He was not alone – He brought others with Him!

The Grain Offering

In the Temple, a ceremony is held on the Feast of First Fruits. In this ritual, sheaves of barley were brought into the Temple, and ground into fine flour. The fine flour would be used as part of a grain offering mixed with oil (Leviticus 23:13). This ritual shows the death of the grain and its resurrection into a new form (fine flour).

The idiom of “First Fruits” representing “resurrection” is a continual theme throughout the New Testament. The Apostle Paul wrote that this First Fruits ritual taught how we would be resurrected

in a glorified form – different from the current corruptible bodies we inhabit now – just as Jesus was resurrected in a glorified body on this feast day. Jesus was the first to receive a glorified body that will never die. We as true Christians, in like manner, will also obtain similar bodies in our resurrection in the proper order, as we’ve discussed. Let’s reread a passage we examined earlier, as it will lead us to another understanding regarding this holiday.

For since by man came death, by man came also the **resurrection** of the dead.

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

But every man in his own order: **Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.**

-1 Corinthians 15:21-23

Later in the same chapter, Paul continues to expound on this subject of resurrection, again using this same idiom of an agricultural crop.

Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened [resurrected], except it die:

And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:

So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

-1 Corinthians 15:36-37, 42-44

So, we see Paul likening our future glorified bodies to that of an agricultural crop, in keeping with the resurrection theme of First Fruits.

As we conclude our examination of First Fruits, we can see how

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simple it all is if we understand these feasts. Jesus kept this divine appointment of First Fruits by rising from the dead as the First Fruits of a new harvest on this day. Jesus kept this “appointed time” by resurrecting right on schedule – just as He had precisely kept the other spring feasts – Passover and Unleavened Bread, each with the appropriate actions. Jesus even presented His proper First Fruits offering to the Father. Graves were opened and dead saints of Old rose and were seen in Jerusalem following His resurrection. As the High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-16), and as the sprouted (or resurrected) “grain of wheat” (John 12:24-26), Jesus presented Himself as the First Fruits to the Lord so that the rest of the harvest of believers would one day be accepted. Jesus, as any devout Jewish harvester, gratefully showed God the Father the early crops of what will ultimately be a magnificent harvest of souls!

First Fruits was the last of the feasts that Jesus was seen personally fulfilling on earth. But His masterplan regarding humanity was to continue in the ensuing feasts. We will now look to the fourth feast, which was held fifty days after First Fruits.

CHAPTER 6

THE FEAST OF WEEKS (HAG HA-SHAVUOT, OR PENTECOST)

The Feast of Weeks (in Hebrew, *Shavuot* – meaning “weeks,” or from the Greek, Pentecost – meaning “fiftieth day”) celebrates the beginning of the summer wheat harvest (Exodus 34:22), which marked the end of the grain season in Israel. Although scripture does not link it to any particular event from the Exodus, Pentecost has been said to commemorate the giving of the Old Covenant Law from Mount Sinai, as rabbinical tradition says it took place on this same day. As a type referring to a future event, it prefigured the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and establishment of the New Covenant Church on the Day of Pentecost in 33 AD, following the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ (Acts 2).

We get our term Pentecost from the Greek *Pentekoste* (Strong’s #G4005), which means “fiftieth day after” (meaning fifty days after Passover). Beginning back on the Feast of First Fruits, the Jews would start the ritual called the “Counting of the Omer” (*Sefirat ha-Omer*). It is from this counting of weeks that this feast day is termed the Feast of Weeks, or *Shavuot* in Hebrew. Seven Sabbaths would be counted (in other words seven weeks, or forty-nine days). Pentecost would be the next day - the fiftieth day – which, rather than always falling on a certain numerical day (like Passover and Unleavened Bread), always

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fell on a Sunday. On this festival, a wave offering of two leavened loaves of bread would be presented before the Lord – similar to the waving of the barley *omer* on First Fruits. Pentecost celebrates the first fruits of the wheat harvest and is the second of three festivals that involve different agricultural harvests.

And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest...

-Exodus 34:22a

The following is a longer description of this holiday, found in Leviticus.

And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath [meaning First Fruits], from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering [the waving of the omer on First Fruits]; seven sabbaths shall be complete:

Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days [Pentecost]; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord.

Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals; they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the Lord.

And ye shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they shall be for a burnt offering unto the Lord, with their meat offering, and their drink offerings, even an offering made by fire, of sweet savour unto the Lord.

Then ye shall sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings.

And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits for a wave offering before the Lord, with the two lambs: they shall be holy to the Lord for the priest.

And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work therein: it shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the Lord your God.

-Leviticus 23:15-22

In ancient times, the grain harvest (barley, wheat, etc.) lasted seven weeks and was a season of gladness (Jeremiah 5:24; Deuteronomy 16:9–11; Isaiah 9:3). It began with the harvesting of the barley during Passover and ended with the harvesting of the wheat beginning on Pentecost. Pentecost was thus the concluding festival of the grain harvest.

Pentecost was also a first fruits festival, and was the first day on which people could bring the *Bikkurim* (first fruits) to the Temple in Jerusalem (Mishnah Bikkurim 1:3). The *Bikkurim* were brought from the Seven Species for which the Land of Israel is known: barley, wheat, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates (Deuteronomy 8:8).¹

Let's begin to examine this feast day in order to better recognize the typology embedded into its rituals.

The Day of the Old and New Covenants

According to Jewish tradition, Pentecost is the same day that God came down on Mount Sinai and delivered the Old Covenant Law to the children of Israel. On Passover, the people of Israel were freed from their enslavement to Pharaoh; on Pentecost they were given the Torah and became a nation committed to serving God.²

The giving of the Torah to Israel established her as a nation and founded the *Old Covenant*:

And the Lord delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which the Lord spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly.

-Deuteronomy 9:10

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It was on this Feast day of Pentecost that the disciples were gathered (at Jesus's instruction) in the Upper Room in Jerusalem awaiting the outpouring of the Spirit – the establishment of the *New Covenant*:

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

-Acts 2:1-4

On this Feast of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came and wrote God's Law on people's hearts (the fulfillment of that Law)! This confirmed God's prophetic promise made hundreds of years earlier through the writings of Old Testament prophets such as Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that **I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:**

Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord:

But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, **I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.**

And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

-Jeremiah 31:31-34

Ezekiel the prophet also anticipated the New Covenant when God declared through him.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

And **I will put my spirit within you**, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

-Ezekiel 36:27

This New Covenant was the promise from the Father that Jesus had told His disciples about in Acts 1:4.

And, being assembled together with them, **commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father**, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

-Acts 1:4

So, on Pentecost, we can see both the historical establishment of the Old Covenant Law for Israel (the type), as well as the ultimate fulfillment (or antitype) it pointed towards – the New Covenant Law written upon the hearts of believers. The Holy Ghost outpouring, which established the New Covenant body of Christ – the Church – fulfilled this divine appointment to the very day.

The Timeline

Like we mentioned already, Jewish tradition maintains that the first Pentecost coincided with the day God gave the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. There is good reason to think that this probably was the case. But like with most issues, there are always differing views among different people – especially whenever a calculation is involved. Some believe the Sinai event took place exactly on what would have been Pentecost; some believe it's just an approximate convergence;

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and some believe that Sinai absolutely did not take place on a Pentecost.

Since the Feast of Pentecost had not yet been established, Exodus 19 says nothing explicit about it; but on the basis of the parallels we're observing, it seems reasonable that the day God drew near and gave His Law to His people did fall on this feast day. Let's go over the rationale for the affirmative belief that Sinai took place exactly on what would have been a Pentecost, or fifty days from the Sabbath after the Passover in Egypt.

The problem right off the bat is that we don't know when the Sabbath was in relation to the first Passover. If that is the case, then we cannot be precise in our calculation. Pentecost was calculated by counting fifty days, beginning the count with the first Sabbath after Passover. Since Passover could fall on any day of the week, sometimes there was up to a six-day wait until the first Sabbath came by and you were able to start counting the fifty days.

Therefore, the actual number of days between Passover and Pentecost could vary from exactly fifty days if Passover fell on a Friday to as many as fifty-six days if Passover fell on a Sunday. So, because we don't know for sure when the Sabbath fell in relation to the first Passover, we don't have enough information to precisely calculate whether the Law on Sinai was given exactly on Pentecost. But if we count fifty days from Nisan 15 (the Day of Unleavened Bread when they left Egypt), we can approximate. Let's try.

Numbers 33:3 tells us that the Israelites left Egypt on the **15th day of the first month** (Nisan, also called Abib).

And they departed from Rameses **in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month**; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.

-Numbers 33:3

The next anchor point is where some disagree on the interpretation of the timeline. It is found in Exodus 19:1.

In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, **the same day** came they into the wilderness of Sinai.

-Exodus 19:1

For the affirmative belief, Exodus 19:1 is interpreted to mean that Israel arrived at Mount Sinai on the **first day** (or the new moon) **of the third month** (Sivan 1). Some have also interpreted it to mean the third day of the third month (Sivan 3). Others interpret it to mean something very different – but for now, let's assume the affirmative belief.

So, if they left on the fifteenth day of the first month, and arrived on the first day of the third month (Sivan 1), then at this point, it would have been about forty-five days from the time the Israelites left Egypt.

After this, the timeline is a bit vague from the record in Exodus 19. The next hard anchor point provided in the narrative is in Verses 10-11, which tells us that God told Moses that in three days, He would appear on the Mount and give the Law to the people.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes,

And be ready against the third day: for **the third day** the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.

-Exodus 19:10-11

But between Exodus 19:1 (when the Israelites arrived at Sinai) and Exodus 19:10 (when God told Moses that in three days He would appear on the Mount), there had to be enough time for Moses to climb Sinai (Verse 3), hear God tell him to convey the offer of a Covenant to the people (Verses 3-6), climb back down the Mount, meet with the elders, have the elders convey the offer to the people, get their answer, and then apparently climb the Mount again to relay their answer back to God (Verses 7-9).

Forty-five days plus however long it took for these things we just

mentioned, plus the three days to prepare until God appeared would bring you to right about fifty days from the day the Israelites left Egypt. But the Pentecost countdown doesn't start from the 15th of Nisan (the day Exodus tells us the Israelites left Egypt) – it starts from the day after the Sabbath that follows Passover. And like we said earlier, we don't know when the Sabbath following this first Passover was – we only know they left Egypt on the 15th of Nisan. So, keep in mind what we mentioned, that the actual number of days between Passover and Pentecost could vary from exactly fifty days if Passover fell on a Friday to as many as fifty-six days if Passover fell on a Sunday. So, because we don't know for sure when the Sabbath fell in relation to the first Passover, we don't have enough information to precisely calculate whether the Law on Sinai was given exactly on Pentecost. From our examination of this however, we can definitely see that we appear to be firmly in the ballpark of between fifty and fifty-six days.

The Jewish tradition maintains that it's exact, and they are probably correct, but we just don't have enough information to know this for certain. So, although we cannot be dogmatic, this total time-line closely approximated the fifty days after the Sabbath following Passover that the Feast of Pentecost was supposed to be held on. So, we can say that about fifty days after the original Passover, the *Old Covenant* was given. About fifty days after the Passover on which Jesus was crucified, the *New Covenant* was given.

The Old and New Covenants Contrasted

Another connection between the giving of the Law and the pouring out of the Spirit is by way of contrast. In Deuteronomy 16:12, the Lord commanded Israel that, on the Day of *Shavuot*, or Pentecost, "You shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall be careful to observe these statutes."

In the New Testament, slavery is symbolic of the yoke or bondage of the Law, which, according to Galatians 4:21-31, we are to reject in favor of the liberty we have in the Spirit of Christ, the Author of a

New and better Covenant. Let's take a moment to examine this passage and understand this.

Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman. But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise. Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written,

“Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear;
break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor!
For the children of the desolate one will be more
than those of the one who has a husband.”

Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now. But what does the scripture say? “Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman.” So, brothers, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman.

-Galatians 4:21-31 (ESV)

Let's break down what Paul is trying to convey in this passage. First, he addresses those who wish to put Christians back under the Law. His point is to make them realize the Old Covenant is inferior, and that as members of the Church, we have the blessings of the superior New Covenant.

Paul then describes the two sons of Abraham – the elder, being Ishmael, who came from Abraham's Egyptian servant Hagar, and the younger, being Isaac, who came from Abraham's wife Sarah (here called a “free woman”). He contrasts the two sons by saying Ishmael

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was a son born after the “flesh” – a reference to things earthly and physical. Meanwhile, he says Isaac was a son born through promise – referring to God’s prophetic word to Sarah that she would miraculously give birth, despite being barren and an old woman. Nothing about this was earthly or physical. This was supernatural, or you might say, heavenly or spiritual. This was the promised son whom God said would inherit the Abrahamic Covenant and become a progenitor of the Messianic lineage.

Next, Paul actually states that these two women (Hagar and Sarah) are allegories (or types) representing the Old and New Covenants! He says that Hagar (an Egyptian slave) represents the Old Covenant given to Israel at Mt. Sinai after the Israelites escaped Egyptian slavery. He says that Hagar corresponds to the earthly city of Jerusalem, which is in bondage under the Mosaic Law. Meanwhile, he says that Sarah (ironically, the actual mother of Israel), as a free woman, represents the New Covenant, corresponding to the heavenly New Jerusalem (the Jerusalem from above).

Later in Revelation, we are told that following the Millennial reign of Christ on earth, this city – the New Jerusalem – will descend from heaven (Revelation 21:2-4). It is described as being the eternal home of the bride of Christ, the Church (cf. Hebrews 12:22, 13:14), making it a perfect idiom for the New Covenant.

Paul also contrasts the children of each woman. The children of Hagar, he ironically equates to the children of the Old Covenant – the nation Israel! Meanwhile, he declares that “we” (the Church, in which he included himself) are children of the “free woman” Sarah. In other words, members of the Church are children of the New Covenant. He says this despite the fact that Sarah is actually the mother of Isaac, the progenitor of the physical tribes of Israel!

So, we can see that the Feast of Pentecost is the perfect holiday to reflect upon the former “Egyptian slavery” of the Old Covenant Law and contrast it with the freedom of the New Covenant through the Spirit.

Mount Sinai Versus Mount Zion

Mount Sinai and Mount Zion are both real places, but they are also both symbolic. Sinai is the place Moses received the Ten Commandments and represents the Mosaic Law and the Old Covenant. It was the place of Covenant, the place of hearing God speak, the place of receiving the Law, the place of the revealing of the Word of God, and the place of encountering the presence of God. But we find that in Hebrews 12, scripture tells us Mount Sinai is a type of a more ultimate fulfillment – Mount Zion. We're told that the physical mountain, Mount Sinai, was a type or a shadow of the mountain with a spiritual fulfillment, Zion. Through the New Covenant, we have come to this spiritual reality – Mount Zion.

Physically, Mount Zion is Jerusalem, where the Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost. Mount Zion is the high hill on which David built a citadel on the southeast side of the city. Zion is described both as the city of David and the city of God. But spiritually and typologically, Zion is the antitype of Sinai. Zion refers to the spiritual fulfillment of what Sinai pointed towards – the New Covenant experience of entering the body of Christ, or the Church. In Hebrews 12:22-23, we read that the Christian experience is said to bring us to the greater mount – Mount Zion, the city of the living God and the heavenly Jerusalem.

For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:

(For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:

And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living

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God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:

-Hebrews 12:22-25

So, we can see the incredible parallels between the two mounts that characterize the events of the Old and New Covenants – Sinai and Zion. On that ancient day after the Israelites left Egypt following the first Passover – that day that was probably on what would be Pentecost – the Old Covenant was given on Mount Sinai. But on the ultimate fulfillment of the Day of Pentecost, the New Covenant was given on Mount Zion, as the promised Holy Ghost fell on the believers in Jerusalem in the Upper Room, and then on the three thousand that gathered that day.

Incredible Parallels Between Sinai and the Upper Room

When the events at Sinai and those at the Upper Room in Jerusalem on Pentecost in Acts 2 are further examined, we uncover some incredible parallels. For example, at Sinai, about forty days after God descended to the mount and established the Old Covenant with Israel, Moses brought the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments down from the mountain.

Upon his descent, he learned that the Israelites had fashioned a golden calf as a god and were worshipping it. As a result, three thousand rebellious Jews who had already broken the Covenant were destroyed (Exodus 32). On the other hand, on Pentecost when the

Church was born, three thousand Jews were saved by the New Covenant (Acts 2)!

Let's now continue to explore some incredible parallels between Sinai and the Upper Room on Pentecost, specifically concerning the notable presence of similar supernatural phenomena.

- At Sinai, there was thunder and a very loud trumpet sound (Exodus 19:16); on the Day of Pentecost, there was a noise like a violent rushing wind (Acts 2:2).
- At Sinai, there were lightning flashes (Exodus 19:16); on the Day of Pentecost, there were what appeared to them tongues as of fire (Acts 2:3).
- At Sinai, the *Shekinah* Glory, the visible manifestation of the presence of God, covered the mountain in the form of smoke and fire. Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire (Exodus 19:18); on the Day of Pentecost, the *Shekinah* Glory fell in the form of tongues as of fire (Acts 2:2-3).

On each of the occasions, the phenomena evoked strong emotional reactions from the crowds, as well.

- At Sinai, all the people perceived the thunder and the lightning flashes and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood at a distance (Exodus 20:18); on the Day of Pentecost, the crowd that gathered was bewildered and astonished at the sound, and at hearing the believers speaking in their own native languages, or tongues (Acts 2:6-8).

But in further examination of the connection between Sinai and Pentecost in Acts 2, we find out there is more. There appears to be a

hidden connection regarding the account in Deuteronomy 9:10 of God speaking out of the fire and writing the Law on the stone tablets and the Acts 2 account of “cloven tongues of fire” sitting on the believers as the Holy Spirit entered and “wrote the law on their hearts” (Jeremiah 31:32).

According to the Jewish rabbinical teachings regarding the giving of the Law (or Old Covenant) on Mount Sinai, it is believed that when the Law came forth, the words of God actually emerged as sound waves of fire that were visible to the people. They record that these waves of fire encircled the camp before engraving the words on the stone tablets.³

This would correlate with the cloven tongues of fire that visibly manifested on the heads of the believers at Pentecost as the law was symbolically written upon the hearts of the New Covenant believers.

There is also a belief in Judaism that at Mount Sinai, God verbally proclaimed the Law in the seventy languages of earth. The Jewish Midrash records this belief, saying the following.

And it is stated [Exodus 20:15], “And all the people saw the sounds (literally, voices)” – it is not written, “sound,” here, but rather, “sounds.” Rabbi Yochanan said, “The voice would go out and divide into seventy voices for the seventy languages, so that all the nations would hear.”⁴

This would correlate with the manifestation of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, when the receivers spoke in tongues as the Spirit gave utterance (Acts 2:4). We are told that Jews from all the nations were present in Jerusalem to celebrate the feast, and that they heard the believers speaking in their native tongues (Acts 2:6-11).

It is important to remember that the disciples and followers of Jesus would likely have all been well aware of these Jewish traditions related to the giving of the Law at Sinai, which they would have already associated with Pentecost. They knew the story of the words of fire resting on each individual at Sinai on what the Jews believe was Pentecost. They knew the story of God’s voice speaking to all mankind

in every language at Sinai on this day. Therefore, the corresponding miracles, signs and wonders that came upon them in Acts 2 carried deep significance.

The tongues of fire and the speaking in every tongue were both direct allusions to the Mount Sinai experience and the receiving of the Law. God was underscoring a direct connection between the type – His Holy Law (the Old Covenant) – and its ultimate antitype – His Holy Spirit indwelling (the New Covenant)!

Before moving onto some other aspects of Pentecost, let's summarize the parallels and contrasts, some of which we have already highlighted, along with some others we will only briefly mention here:

- Both events occurred on a mountain known as the mountain of God (Mt. Sinai and Mt. Zion, or Jerusalem – Exodus 24:13 and Isaiah 2:3).
- Both events happened to a newly redeemed people. The Exodus marked the beginning of the Israelite nation while the Pentecost events recorded in Acts 2 marked the beginning of the fulfillment of Mosaic Judaism – Christianity.
- Both events involved God's people receiving a gift – the Torah and the Spirit.
- In both events, the gift was given by God settling on a mountain with the fire of His Spirit.
- Both events took place at the same time on the same month.
- The Israelites left Egypt the day after Passover, and shortly after arrived at Sinai. Then Moses went up on a mountain to see God (Mt. Sinai). Moses then came down with the Torah and found the Israelites had already broken the covenant. Three thousand people died as a result. In similar fashion,

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Jesus died on Passover and forty days later went up on a mountain to see God (his ascension on the Mt. of Olives). Ten days after Jesus ascended, the Holy Spirit came down, a New Covenant was established, and 3,000 people were saved!

- Both events had similar sounds and symbols – wind, fire, smoke, and voices. The Hebrew word translated thunder in Exodus is *kolot* (Strong's #H6963), which means voices or languages.⁵ Think about this in light of the Acts 2 events, in which the believers spoke in foreign tongues, or languages.
- The fire at Sinai was one fire visible by all; the fire at Pentecost involved individual fires on each person.
- In the event at Mt. Sinai, the people were kept away from the fire, but in Acts, the fire came to the people.
- Both events had manifestations of God – that is, God showed up (Exodus 19:18-20; Acts 2:4).
- In both events, God gave His Law to His people. At Sinai He gave the Law written on tablets of stone. At Pentecost, He gave the Law written on their hearts.
- At Sinai, the Torah was given. At Pentecost the Holy Spirit was given. The word “Torah” means teaching, and in John 14:26, the Holy Spirit is called the Teacher.

So, as we conclude this examination of the parallels between these two events, we should recognize how prominently they resemble each other, helping us recognize the typological significance embedded within the Feast of Pentecost.

The Counting of the Omer – A Jubilee Typifying Freedom From the Law

The fifty-day ritual countdown to Pentecost – called the Counting of the *Omer* – carries much meaning. The wording mimics that of the Hebrew year of Jubilee instituted by God in the Old Testament (Leviticus 25:8-13). The year of Jubilee comes after seven cycles of seven years (called Sabbatical years or *shmitas*). These seven cycles of seven years total forty-nine years. The following year – the fiftieth – was the Jubilee year, in which the overarching themes were liberty and a new beginning. For instance, in the Jubilee year, those in debt were released from those debts. Slaves and prisoners would be freed, debts would be forgiven, and the mercies of God would be particularly made manifest. It was the year of freedom and redemption.

The Counting of the *Omer*, starting on First Fruits and culminating on Pentecost, is exactly the same as the Jubilee count, only on a day-scale instead of years. They would count seven cycles of seven days (or weeks, or Sabbaths), totaling forty-nine days – and then the following fiftieth day was the day of Pentecost. It too was a day of liberty and freedom from the bondage of the Law (Romans 7:6; Galatians 5:1-5). While the Law was not bad (Romans 7:12), it was temporary and imperfect (Hebrews 7:19; 8:6-7). It was not intended to be enduring, but was inferior and future-looking (Jeremiah 31; Ezekiel 36). It educated a primitive people on basic morality, but was intended to act as a schoolmaster that would lead to a more perfect fulfillment in the Messiah (Galatians 3:19-4:7). This ultimate fulfillment was the New Covenant, initiated by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost following the resurrection and ascension of Christ, which began something completely new – the Church.

So, we can see the significance that this ritual countdown – the Counting of the *Omer* – plays in revealing yet another mystery of Pentecost – a jubilee typifying freedom from the Law through a New and better Covenant made possible through the Messiah.

The Wave Offering of Two Leavened Loaves

There are a number of distinctive aspects of Pentecost that emphasize the New Covenant Church, which obviously largely includes Gentiles. On this feast day, a wave offering of two loaves of bread made of fine flour and leaven would be presented to the Lord.

Pentecost is unique among all of the feasts in that it involves the use of bread made with leaven. You may recall that during the earlier Passover feasts, leaven (representative of sin) was specifically prohibited. The two loaves of leavened bread offered to God during this feast appear to be types of the Jew and Gentile being brought together as one body in Christ – the Church. While they were formerly two separate groups, together they make up one body, the Body of Christ (Ephesians 2:14-16). Likewise, while the loaves of bread were two separate loaves, together, they made up one offering. Keep in mind that both loaves were leavened, possibly indicating that both Jews and Gentiles are still in their sin-nature while in the physical, yet the life-altering experience of receiving the Spirit is made available to all.

So, while the Passover feasts required unleavened bread because they typify Jesus who is without sin, Pentecost typifies Jew and Gentile under the New Covenant being made one through the body of Christ (or the Church), where sin still exists – probably the reason God calls for using leavened bread in its ceremony.

The Reading of the Book of Ruth

On Pentecost, the Jews traditionally read through the book of Ruth, with this tradition being still active today. In Ruth, we find a wonderfully elegant love story centering on the harvest that turns out to be a strategically designed prophetic portrait of the panorama of scripture, centering on the future marriage relationship between Christ and the Church as well as the role of the nation Israel.

The story narrates the in-gathering of Ruth the Moabitess, a Gentile bride (representative of the Church) who came to know God through Naomi (representative of Israel), and married Naomi's kins-

man, Boaz, who redeemed Ruth as a wife, and redeemed the land back to Naomi (Boaz representing Christ, the ultimate kinsman Redeemer).

So, we find another incredible proof of the link between the Church and Pentecost, in that the Book of Ruth – a typological profiling of the Church coming to Christ through Israel – is read on this day!

Pentecost – The Marriage of God and His People

In the Jewish tradition, Pentecost is referred to as the “marriage day” between God and the Jewish people, while the earlier feast, Passover, is considered the time of Israel’s “betrothal” to God.⁶

Just as a bride eagerly counts the days between her engagement and her wedding, so Israel counts the days between the Passover week and Pentecost, which is represented in the “Counting of the *Omer*.” This is reflective of the event at Mount Sinai, which according to the mind of God (as well as Hebrew tradition), was in fact a marriage. Let’s take a closer look at this idea.

The Lord served as the bridegroom, the nation of Israel served as the bride, the Law served as the marriage covenant or vows, and Moses served as the minister between the two, who issued forth the vows of the covenant. But before continuing, let’s understand several key points of the Sinai event in order to understand this truly was a marriage.

- First, God proposes:

Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

-Exodus 19:5

- Then, the people accept:

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And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.

-Exodus 19:8

- The people then cleanse themselves, as at a *mikvah* (a Jewish ritual bath, traditionally used by a bride before the wedding):

And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their clothes.

-Exodus 19:14

- Then God and the people join under the mountain, as a bride and groom would under a *chuppah* (a traditional Jewish wedding canopy):

And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount.

And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.

-Exodus 19:17-18

- And the Law acts as a *ketubah* (a Jewish marriage contract):

And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them.

-Exodus 24:12

So, we can see that throughout the Sinai narrative, Jewish wedding metaphors abound. But to further understand that God was married to Israel in the larger scope of the Old Testament, let's look to Isaiah 54:5-6, which summarizes the marriage of God and Israel.

For thy maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and the Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called. For the Lord hath called thee as a **woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth** when thou wast refused, saith thy God.

-Isaiah 54:5-6

In order to not only appreciate the fulfillment of Pentecost, but of the Spring Feasts in general, you must recognize one of the deeper understandings regarding the purpose of the crucifixion. Although God was married to the unfaithful wife Israel (Ezekiel 16; Hosea 2; et al.), His ultimate desire was always to marry all of humanity, namely the Church. However, the law of God had always stated that the law of marriage between two individuals is binding. Though polygamy was common in many ancient cultures, it was never God's ideal plan or desire – He would have only one wife as His object of love and affection. So, this is the issue: God could not marry the Church, while being also married to Israel.

To understand the law of God regarding this, we will look into the New Testament, and hear the commentary of the Apostle Paul speaking to the Church on this subject.

Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that **the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?**

For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: **but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.**

-Romans 7:1-3

So, God was married to Israel, but His ultimate plan was to marry the Church. But by His own law, He was already bound by the law of

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marriage to Israel, and would not be married to two brides in the earth at the same time. What then was He to do and still stay within the confines of His own law?

Remember the words of the Apostle Paul in the passage above, explaining to us that the law of marriage is binding only while you are alive. Herein lies the key. **By Him incarnating as a man as the Son of God, and by dying on the cross, He broke the marriage with the unfaithful wife, Israel ... and by resurrecting, He became free to marry another (that “another” being all of humanity, or the Church)!**

So, in rising from the grave, Jesus was now free to marry. Now the problem was that we were not free. We were bound to the law of sin and death. Therefore, even though He was now free through death, burial and resurrection, He could not simply marry us in our present condition. The true depth of the plan of God in action would be to liberate us from our fallen state of bondage to the law of sin and death. But He would have to devise a plan that would liberate us without killing us, since we all could not literally go to the grave in death and arise in resurrection to be free. We needed a formula that could allow us to obtain this freedom through a death that would free us from this bondage but yet allow us to remain alive, being free to marry another. Paul explained the solution as he continued the above passage in Romans 7.

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

-Romans 7:4

Paul explained that the mechanism for us to become dead to the law of sin and death in order that we might also become free to marry Christ, is through the body of Christ, or the Church, which we know was established on Pentecost. In other words, he is telling us that the way we entered into the body of Christ is actually the way we partici-

pate in this process whereby we become free to become married to Christ.

So, we can already begin to clearly see the connections between Israel marrying God at Sinai on Pentecost and the Church's origin on Pentecost. This plan, first put into action on Pentecost, the day on which He poured out the promised Holy Spirit, provided His prospective bride – the Church - with the means of becoming free from the law of sin and death in order that she might also become free to marry another, even Christ!

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

-Romans 8:2

You must not limit your understanding of the cross to be simply a means of dealing with sin. You need to recognize the depth of what His plan was intended to accomplish. Yes, the cross was to take care of the sin issue. But why did Jesus need to take care of the sin issue? The word sin means, “to miss the mark.”⁷ What was the mark? The mark was marriage! Sin prevented us from enjoying intimate relationship with Him. It created a chasm between fallen man and the holy God. Jesus came to remove anything that prevented us from being able to marry Him!

Let's keep in mind also that God will get Israel back as well! One of the reasons Rapture must take place for the Church, is so that God can then turn and get Israel, the divorced wife forsaken by her harlotry. Many Old Testament passages prophetically declare that in the future, God will reconcile the unfaithful wife Israel back to Himself. God promised to remarry Israel in the last days and never be separated from her again (Hosea 2:16-23 – esp. 19, 20). For her part, Israel will repent of her wickedness and return to God, her husband, saying, “I will go back to my husband as at first, for then I was better off than now” (Hosea 2:7). God will be glad, saying, “In that day...you will call me ‘my husband’” (Hosea 2:16). This is still future, and represents the time around the Second Coming of Christ, when God's

people, the remnant of Israel, will turn and be faithful to Him. Just as the first “marriage” was a covenant (the Old Covenant at Sinai), this new marriage will be associated with the New Covenant (established at Pentecost), and it will last forever (Jeremiah 31:31-33).

Does this mean that the remnant of Israel will become part of the Church? Not exactly, as the Church will already have been raptured. There are several variations of views regarding this question – but that topic is outside of our purposes for this study.

So, on the Feast of Pentecost, which the Jews traditionally reckon as being the day that commemorates their “marriage” to the Lord on Mount Sinai, God enacted the fulfillment of what that prophetic type ultimately pointed towards – the marriage between Christ and His pure virgin Bride from all nations, the Church!

The First Trump of God

In Exodus 19, as the Lord descended on Mount Sinai, the people of Israel heard a loud trumpet begin to sound. As time passed, this trumpet grew louder and louder. The Jews traditionally have referred to this as the “First Trump of God.” The trumpet sounding at Mount Sinai was understood to be represented by the first of the two ram’s horns that were present on Mount Moriah during the event known as the *Akedah* – Abraham’s attempted sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22 in obedience to God’s instruction.⁸

But after God intervened and prevented him from going through with this, Abraham instead offered up a ram that appeared caught in a thicket (Genesis 22:13). In the Hebrew writings, the ram represents the Messiah’s salvation, and the thicket represents the sins of the people.

From this story in Genesis 22, the Jews referred to the ram’s left horn as the First Trump and the right horn as the Last Trump. The Jewish people understood that there were three primary trumps that mark major events in the redemptive plan on God. These three trumpets are known as the First Trump, the Last Trump, and the Great Trump.⁹

The ancient rabbis taught that the ram was a picture of the salvation the Messiah would bring to all mankind. They also taught that the ram's two horns represented an outgrowth of the Messiah's salvation. Its left horn – the First Trump – was connected with the Law God gave on Sinai, which is why the festival of Pentecost was also called the Festival of the First Trump. We will see further ahead in this study that for the same reason, the right horn is connected to the resurrection of the dead, which is why the Feast of Trumpets is also called the Festival of the Last Trump.¹⁰

The ancient rabbis said the left horn represented the birth of Israel (at Sinai), and the right horn represented Israel's complete restoration when the Messiah comes.¹¹ In other words, the horns represent the giving of the Law on Sinai and the resurrection of the dead. Christians recognize this as true, but also see the festivals of the First and Last Trumps as picturing the birth of the Church and the Rapture of the Church. We will discuss this again in the subsections ahead.

The Former and Latter Rains

Let's examine one final prophetic theme related to the agricultural aspect of the feasts in general, but having special significance to Pentecost. As we know, the Levitical festivals are celebrated in two seasons, which correspond to the two agricultural seasons of spring and fall. As we have seen already, the four spring feasts took place during the ingathering of the grain harvests in Israel – mainly barley and wheat. And as we will see, the three fall feasts begin at the time of the ingathering of the fruit harvest (grapes, figs, pomegranates, and others).

Of course, these harvest seasons depend upon rain. In Israel, there is a time of rain in the spring, known as the **latter** rain, and a time of rain in the fall, known as the **early or former** rain.¹²

This division typifies the two appearances of the Messiah on earth – the First Coming and Second Coming, and also foreshadows the outpourings of the Holy Spirit at both Comings (with corresponding harvests of souls). In scripture, rain usually typifies the Spirit outpour-

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ing. Let's examine several passages that demonstrate these understandings.

Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

-Joel 2:23

Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.

-Hosea 6:3

Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

-James 5:7-8

So, in the Old Testament through the prophets, God said that the comings of the Messiah would be like the former and latter rains on earth. This is repeated in the New Testament as James ties the coming of Christ to these early and latter rains, also linking it with the spiritual harvest of souls.

So, we can see that the harvest also speaks of the salvation of people. The early and latter rain also teach us about the pouring out of God's Spirit upon all flesh – after Christ's First Coming during the spring feasts, and then again after Christ's Second Coming during the fall feasts. The spring harvest was the beginning of the harvest of people receiving the Spirit after the time of Christ's First Coming, and the fall harvest is the harvest to take place after Christ's Second Coming. Jesus referred to this harvest of souls in the following passages.

Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few;

Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

-Matthew 9:37-38

The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;

The enemy that sowed them is the devil; **the harvest is the end of the world**; and the reapers are the angels.

-Matthew 13:38-39

Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

-John 4:34-36

So, we can see Jesus's emphasis on the "harvest" of that time and the soon-coming outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost in 33 AD. But we also notice His reference to a yet-future harvest at the end of the world, and an ultimate Spirit outpouring in final fulfillment of the many Old Testament prophecies telling of an outpouring on Israel, which we know will take place at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom following Christ's Second Coming. We will discuss these themes in more detail in future chapters of this study that pertain to the Fall Feasts.

And that brings us to the end of our exploration of the Feast of Pentecost. So, to summarize, on Pentecost we see the initiations of both the Old and New Covenants. At Sinai, we have the giving of the Law, while at Pentecost, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We see

how this holiday uniquely anticipates the Church. As we close this chapter on the feast of Pentecost, let's come away with the understanding of how this holiday reminds us of the incredible importance of relying upon God's Spirit to both enter and live the Christian life. We want to recognize the profound contrasts between the Old Covenant Law and the New Covenant Spirit. Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, took the opportunity to emphasize this contrast in order to prevent them from falling back into the pitfalls of reliance upon the Law.

O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

This only would I learn of you, **Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?**

Are ye so foolish? **having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?**

Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.

He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; **that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.**

-Galatians 3:1-14

There are several contrasts here which show the superiority of the New Covenant and the coming of the Holy Ghost to indwell believers. As we close this chapter of our study, let's highlight a few.

- Whereas the Law given to Moses was written on tablets of stone, the Church is founded on the New Covenant, where the Law is written into our hearts (Jeremiah 31:33; 2 Corinthians 3:3).
- Just having the Law brings death (Romans 7:10) but having the Spirit brings life (John 6:63; 2 Corinthians 3:6).
- The Law was called a ministry of death and condemnation (2 Corinthians 3:7, 9), whereas the Spirit is called a ministry of glory (2 Corinthians 3:8-9).
- The Law was based on blood sacrifices but the blood of Jesus through the New Covenant provides a far better promise (Hebrews 12:24).

So, it is incredible to recognize the importance of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost and how it conceived the New Testament Church – pictured throughout scripture as the bride of Christ for all time.

Now that we've discussed the three spring feasts plus the early

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summer feast of Pentecost, we can look back and appreciate the unique way in which these celebrations served as prearranged “dress-rehearsals” or prophetic anticipations of future “appointed times.” This incredible example of the precision of God adds to the evidence we have that demonstrates the origin of the Bible to be from outside of time.

A Quick Review

- The Feast of Passover (*Pesach*) foreshadows the death of Jesus Christ.
- The Feast of Unleavened Bread (*Hag HaMatzah*) foreshadows the burial of Jesus Christ.
- The Feast of First Fruits (*Yom ha-Bikkurim*) foreshadows the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- The Feast of Weeks (*Shavuot*/Pentecost) foreshadows the giving of the Holy Spirit/establishment of the Church (the beginning of the New Covenant).

As we’ve pointed out in this study, to the Hebrew mind, prophecy is not simply **prediction** and fulfillment, but also **pattern** and fulfillment. As we can see quite vividly, God established these spring and summer feasts as prototypes or “patterns” of future divine appointments to be fulfilled with great precision by the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

So, we can say that the spring festivals may be applicable in at least two dimensions.

- They pertain to the nation of Israel historically and agriculturally.
- They are fulfilled in the Messiah.

We should be already very familiar with the first dimension of being historic to Israel. But let's quickly review.

- On the first Passover, the Israelite slaves in Egypt applied the blood of the lamb to their lintels and doorposts in obedience to God's command, as the final of the plagues would take place later that night – the slaying of every firstborn not protected by the blood. God's angel of death passed over every Israelite house marked by the blood, sparing their firstborns. The Passover commemorates the slaying of the Passover lamb on the 14th of Nisan in preparation for the ritual Seder to be consumed on the 15th as Unleavened Bread begins.
- Unleavened Bread commemorates the night the Israelites prepared to leave Egypt quickly, in which the bread had no time to rise.
- First Fruits commemorates the first fruits of the barley harvest unto the Lord.
- And Pentecost represents the first fruits of the wheat harvest, and according to Jewish tradition, is the day of the giving of the Law at Sinai.

As far as the feasts being fulfilled in the Messiah, we can summarize by saying the following.

- The spring festivals of course were ultimately fulfilled by Jesus, who was our Passover Lamb, dying as our sacrifice on the day of Passover.
- He was without sin and is the Unleavened Bread of Life. Jesus was in the sepulcher on the day of Unleavened Bread and He was the kernel of wheat that was buried in the earth.

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- Jesus arose as First Fruits of the barley harvest, He Himself being the first of those to rise from the dead and received a resurrected body.
- And finally, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon all flesh during the Feast of Pentecost, in order to make us “first fruits” along with Christ, and to gather all believers in the Lord to be God’s spring harvest in the earth.

In the next chapter, we will explore some important and incredible aspects regarding the period in between the spring and fall feasts – the summer months – and how they relate to the time in which we are now living.

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CHAPTER 7

THE SUMMER MONTHS

As we continue our study, we will continue to see that the Hebrew feasts prophetically hold the mystery of the Church and the mystery of the age. In the Hebrew calendar, there is a long period of summer in which there are no feast days. As discussed earlier, the spring feasts take place mainly in the month of Nisan, which corresponds to our April/May. Meanwhile, the fall feasts take place in the month of Tishri, which corresponds to our September/October. These two months of Nisan and Tishri are separated by the summer months, in which the crops would be tended and eventually harvested. It would seem as though God set up the Hebrew sacred year to be a picture representing this age, and the summer months help us understand this very clearly. Let's look at this in more depth.

The first four feasts were fulfilled nearly two thousand years ago at the beginning of the Church age. For almost two thousand years, there have been no more feast-day fulfillments. The separation in time between the spring and fall feasts on the Hebrew calendar (or the summer months) seems to represent the Church age in God's planning. In other words, it appears that God has ordered the sacred Hebrew year to be a prophetic pattern of this age, with the spring and

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fall feasts separated by the summer months of sowing and reaping the harvest for God's kingdom.

Still another way of putting it, is God has set up the entire age as a Hebrew year! For the Church, the summer months are representative of working the harvest of souls through worldwide evangelism. This is the directive in the Great Commission that Jesus gave to the Church that was to be exercised following the fulfillments of the first four feasts (Matthew 28:16-20). But from the Old Testament perspective, we can see this represented in Leviticus 23 – the chapter that details the seven Levitical feasts. As the chapter finishes describing Pentecost, and before it begins detailing the fall feasts, there is one verse in between that discusses the summer harvest.

And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the Lord your God.

-Leviticus 23:22

This verse tells us that the summer harvest is focused on the needy and the stranger, representing the going forth of the gospel into all the Gentile nations. During these past two thousand years, the Church's mission has focused on going out into the mission fields and getting the gospel out to the far corners of the world. Every time we open our mouths to spread the gospel, we are partaking in this ancient mystery of the summer harvest in the sacred Hebrew year! But it gets much more interesting.

What happens after the spring feasts are over? The Jewish worshippers leave Jerusalem and go out to their lands, their fields, and their vineyards to cultivate, reap, prune, and gather in their crops. They are scattered all over the land and they continue to work in the fields. It's the time of the summer harvest. It's the longest period of the sacred Hebrew year with no holy days in Jerusalem. There are no more holidays until the summer harvest comes to its close in the autumn, when the focus will again return to center on Jerusalem for

the fall feasts. But for the days of the summer harvest, the focus is no longer Jerusalem – it’s their fields.

So then how is this part prophetic? How does this aspect of the sacred year hold the mystery of the Church Age? Well, let’s examine this in three layers of fulfillment.

As we begin, let’s first recognize that the early believers were present to see the fulfillments of the spring feasts – the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, followed by the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost. This began the Church Age, which we are living in presently. But what has happened since then? We will focus on three things.

#1 – The Gospel’s Departure from Jerusalem into the World

Just as the Jewish worshippers would go out from Jerusalem into their fields following the spring feasts, the apostles and the gospel went out from Jerusalem and into all of the world to work the harvest of God’s kingdom. The focus now is on the fields (or the mission fields) – the gospel being sent out to all the corners of the earth, to the spiritually “needy,” and the Gentiles (or strangers) of every nation.

But there’s more. What else has happened since Pentecost?

#2 – The Jewish People’s Departure from Jerusalem into the Diaspora

Just as the Jewish worshippers would leave Jerusalem after the spring feasts to go out to their fields, the Jewish people also left Jerusalem as they were scattered to the ends of the earth. In effect, they followed the gospel without even trying! God sent out the gospel to every nation, and the Jewish people were scattered to every nation in what we call the Diaspora. It’s almost as if God was saying, “you were meant to spread the gospel, and if you won’t, I’ll send you anyway.”

This all began to occur very soon after the spring feasts were fulfilled in 33 AD. In 70 AD, the Romans leveled Jerusalem and the

Temple, and the worldwide dispersion of the Jews began. In fact, the Romans even renamed the land Palestine, purposely slighting the Jews by using the name of their ancient enemies the Philistines.

So, for these past two thousand years, the focus has not been on Jerusalem, but rather the fields. And even the Jewish people have not had a focus in Jerusalem for most of it, as they were dispersed away from their lands.

But there's still more. What else has happened since Pentecost?

#3 – The Church's Departure from its Judaic Roots into Romanism

Just as the Jewish worshippers would leave Jerusalem after the spring feasts, during this near two thousand-year time period, the Church has greatly departed from its Hebrew roots and its original center in Jerusalem. This began in the centuries following the beginning of the Church Age, as its epicenter moved from Jerusalem to Rome. Much of the mainstream sentiment at that time became very anti-Semitic, as the Roman Church detoured from all of the Church's Jewish roots and the rich typology and meanings of the holy days were forgotten. So, for nearly two thousand years, the Church's focus has not been on its Jewish roots in Jerusalem.

So, we've taken a look at three layers of prophetic fulfillment that align with the patterning of the Hebrew sacred year, as the Jewish worshippers would depart from Jerusalem to the fields following the spring feasts. But then what happens in the Hebrew sacred year as the summer months of harvest begin to draw to a close?

The opposite begins to take place, as everything begins to shift back towards Jerusalem in preparation for the High Holy Days of autumn! Just as the Jewish worshippers returned to Jerusalem for the fall feasts, as this age begins to draw to a close, everything will once again begin to refocus upon Jerusalem and the Jewish people, culminating in the ultimate removal of the Church and the final shift of God's time-clock back to Israel. So, is there any evidence that our above three points are reversing? Let's take a look!

In our first point, we noted that just as the Jewish worshippers would go out from Jerusalem into their fields following the spring feasts, the apostles and the gospel went out from Jerusalem and into all of the world to reap the harvest of God's kingdom. The gospel began with Jews in Jerusalem and was spread to every nation in obedience to the Great Commission. Well, do we see the opposite of that happening today?

Yes! As the Church left their Jewish roots and became Romanized, remaining Jewish believers in Jesus were assimilated into the non-Hebrew-focused religion that mainstream Christianity had become. Historically, throughout most of the past two thousand years, the hardest person to convert to Christianity was the Jew. But in the past hundred years or so, the rise of Jewish Messianic evangelism has exploded and there are now such prominent Messianic congregations that even Israel has been forced to recognize them.¹

Note: Messianic Judaism is a religious movement lead by Jews who recognize Jesus as their Messiah. Please understand that we are *not* affirming the Hebrew Roots movement, which largely includes those who wish to place New Testament Christians back under the Mosaic Law (many of them not even being Jewish). We simply mean Jews who understand that Jesus was the Jewish Messiah.

Let's continue to examine some of the developments that highlight the explosion of Jewish Christian belief in recent times.

Evangelical missionary efforts targeting the Jewish people began to intensify in the nineteenth century. The London Society for the Promotion of Christianity Amongst the Jews was founded in 1809.² The Hebrew Christian Alliance of Great Britain, known today as the British Messianic Jewish Alliance, was founded in 1866 by Carl Schwartz "to promote the combination of Jewish heritage and Christian theology."³

With the rising interest in Biblical prophecy and the departure from Roman eschatology, an increasing number of Evangelical preachers began recognizing that Israel would return to the land, and

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that this would signify the eventual conversion of the remnant Jews and the return of the Lord.

The growth of Messianic Judaism continued in the 1900s, and saw a huge boom in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations (UMJC) was formed in 1979. In 1986, the International Alliance of Messianic Congregations and Synagogues (IAMCS) formed.⁴ Jews for Jesus, a Messianic Jewish non-profit organization, was founded in 1973. This ministry seeks to share the belief that Jesus is the promised Messiah of the Jewish people. It has a full-time staff of more than two hundred employees running branch offices in seven cities across the United States and has locations in ten foreign countries including Israel.⁵ Today, there are literal directories of Messianic congregations and organizations in Jerusalem, as well as Israel as a whole!⁶

So, yes, we can see that just as the gospel began with Jews in Jerusalem, but subsequently moved away from Jerusalem following the spring feasts, we now see the reverse taking place. Instead of the Jews reaching the Gentiles with the gospel, now it is the Gentiles reaching the Jews with the gospel – and many Messianic Jews are now also reaching other Jews. So, we can see everything returning to refocus on Jerusalem as the age comes to a close in preparation for the fall feasts!

In our second point, we noted that just as the Jewish worshippers would leave Jerusalem after the spring feasts to go out to their fields, the Jewish people also physically left Jerusalem as they were scattered to the ends of the earth in the Diaspora. Do we see the opposite of that happening today?

Yes! In the late 1800s, a movement began that is still progressing to this day. Theodor Herzl was the visionary behind modern Zionism (a movement meaning “the return to Zion”) and the reinstitution of a Jewish homeland. In 1896, he published *The Jewish State*, in which he wrote his thoughts regarding the reasons for establishing a sovereign Jewish state.⁷ In 1897, the first Zionist Congress was held in Basel, Switzerland, as the movement gained traction.⁸

Several huge events then took place in 1917. As the Turks were

allied with Germany in the First World War, the British found themselves fighting against the fading Ottoman Empire in the Middle East. The British General Edmund Allenby – a Christian who recognized the significance of Israel – was charged with liberating Jerusalem, which he did, ending 973 years of Muslim rule and 400 years of Ottoman rule.⁹ Also in 1917, the Balfour Declaration was issued by the British foreign secretary Arthur Balfour, expressing official British support for a Jewish homeland in Palestine.¹⁰

On May 14th, 1948, in Tel Aviv, amidst Arab-Israeli conflict following the pulling out of the British from Palestine, Jewish Agency Chairman David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the State of Israel, establishing the first Jewish state in two thousand years. U.S. President Harry S. Truman recognized the new nation on the same day.¹¹

On June 7th, 1967, Israel captured the Old City of Jerusalem for the first time in two thousand years. In the past century, Jewish people from all nations have returned to their homeland in large numbers.¹²

In 2017, U.S. President Donald Trump issued a declaration officially recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and committed to moving the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem – becoming the first country to do this.¹³

So, yes, we can see that just as the Jewish people were scattered away from Jerusalem in the Diaspora following the spring feasts, they are now being gathered back as the age comes to a close in preparation for the fall feasts!

In our third point, we noted that just as the Jewish worshippers would leave Jerusalem after the spring feasts, during this near two thousand-year time period, the Church has greatly departed from its Hebrew roots and its original center in Jerusalem. Do we see the opposite of that happening today?

Yes! During the past several hundred years, the Church has begun turning back to Jerusalem and away from a Rome-based faith. The Church and Israel, who had been separated for two thousand years since the times of the Book of Acts and shortly thereafter, suddenly have begun turning again to each other. Christian Zionism is a belief among many Christians that the return of the Jews to the Holy Land

and the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 were in accordance with Bible prophecy. The term began to be used in the mid-twentieth century.¹⁴

Traditional Catholic thought does not consider Zionism in any form, as they believe in the anti-biblical doctrine of Replacement Theology, which proposes that the Church has replaced Israel and that Israel as a nation no longer factors into God's future plans.¹⁵

But Christian advocacy for Zionism grew after the Protestant Reformation in support of the restoration of the Jews. A contemporary Israeli historian suggests that evangelical Christian Zionists of the 1840s "passed this notion on to Jewish circles," actually providing the Jews with the inspiration to want to return to the land. Jewish nationalism in the early nineteenth century was widely regarded with hostility by, for example, British Jews.^{16 17}

In the past hundred years, Israel has recognized that their most ardent supporters come from the Christian ranks. Evangelical Christians are overwhelmingly supportive of Israel's nationhood and recognize that God is not finished with Israel. The Roman dogma of replacement is largely rejected by mainstream evangelical Christianity. During this same time, the symbols of Israel (the Israeli flag, the Star of David, menorahs, and shofars) have started appearing in Christian churches.

Many Christians are beginning to have a greater appreciation for the value of understanding the Hebraic roots of Christianity and the Bible. Christians have increasingly adopted Judaic practices such as having a *ketubah* (a marriage contract), choosing to get married under a Judaic wedding canopy (a *chuppah*), and having a Passover Seder. Thanks to studies such as this one, many Christians have also developed a love for the Levitical feasts, as they have begun to recognize that their true fulfillments can only be understood through the Christian revelation of Jesus as Messiah.¹⁸ So yes, we can see that just as Christianity departed from its original Hebraic roots following the spring feasts, it is now returning to them as the age comes to a close in preparation for the fall feasts!

But even beyond these three examples, there are yet further exam-

ples that can be noted. For one, after the fulfillments of the spring feasts in 33 AD, the focus of the world quickly moved away from Jerusalem. The Romans destroyed the city in 70 AD, and for most of the past two thousand years, the whole region of so-called Palestine lay a barren wasteland that basically nobody thought twice about. Although many other writers and historians can also be quoted, we can consider the testimony of noted author Mark Twain who visited Israel in 1867 and published his impressions in his book *The Innocents Abroad*. He described a desolate countryside – with little vegetation and human population, and a Jerusalem that was nothing but a small village filled with poverty and desolation. The following are excerpts from his memoirs.

We traversed some miles of desolate country whose soil is rich enough, but is given over wholly to weeds – a silent, mournful expanse, wherein we saw only 3 persons...A silent mournful desolation is here that not even imagination can grace with the pomp of life and action ... hardly a tree or shrub anywhere. Even the olive tree and the cactus, those fast friends of a worthless soil, had almost deserted the country ... No landscape exists that is more tiresome to the eye than what which bounds the approaches to Jerusalem ... A fast walker could go outside the walls of Jerusalem and walk entirely around the city in an hour. I do not know how else to make one understand how small it is ... To reproduce a Jerusalem street, it would only be necessary to upend a chicken-coop ... To see the numbers of maimed, malformed, and diseased humanity that throng the holy places and obstruct the gates ... Jerusalem is mournful, and dreary, and lifeless. I would not desire to live here ... Of all the lands there are for dismal scenery, I think Palestine must be the prince ... It is a hopeless, dreary, heart-broken land ... Palestine sits in sackcloth and ashes. Over it broods the spell of a curse that has withered the fields and fettered its energies ... and renowned Jerusalem, itself the stateliest name in history, has lost its ancient grandeur and is become a pauper village ... Palestine is desolate and unlovely.”¹⁹

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So, we can see that Twain's testimony of the land here so-called "Palestine" and the city of Jerusalem was sad and desolate. But what do we see happening in the world today? The very opposite is occurring! Since the Jews have returned, the land has blossomed and the attention of the world has returned to Jerusalem. Our daily news sources are headlined by a focus upon particularly, Israel and Jerusalem – but the attention is anything but supportive. It would seem that the entire world has gathered together to *oppose* Jerusalem – just as scripture foretells. The following are several examples.

- As of 2016, thirty-one United Nations member states did not recognize the State of Israel, including eighteen of the twenty-one UN members in the Arab League.²⁰
- From its creation in June 2006 through June 2016, the UN Human Rights Council, over the span of one decade, adopted one hundred thirty-five resolutions criticizing countries; sixty-eight out of those one hundred thirty-five resolutions have been against Israel (over fifty percent).²¹
- From 2012 through 2015, the United Nations General Assembly has adopted ninety-seven resolutions criticizing countries; eighty-three out of those ninety-seven have been against Israel (eighty-six percent).²²
- Each year, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopts around ten resolutions a year criticizing only Israel. UNESCO does not criticize any other UN member state in a country-specific resolution. An exception occurred in 2013, when, under pressure from UN Watch, UNESCO adopted one resolution on Syria.²³
- As we mentioned earlier, on December 6, 2017, U.S. President Donald Trump formally announced the United

States' recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and ordered the planning of the relocation of the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The vast majority of international leaders, including the United Nations and the European Union, soundly criticized the announcement. A motion condemning the move was proposed in the United Nations Security Council, but was vetoed by the United States after a fourteen to one vote. The United Nations General Assembly later passed a motion condemning Trump's announcement by a vote of one hundred twenty-eight to nine, with thirty-five abstentions.²⁴

Many more examples than this can be provided, all demonstrating how the entire world appears to be gathering against Jerusalem. Many well-known Old Testament prophecies directly anticipate this idea of the world coming against Jerusalem as this age culminates near the Second Coming of Christ.

Zechariah chapters 12 through 14 prophetically detail the nations of earth coming against Jerusalem to battle. It will be then – at the end of the final seven-year period of time that Christians call the Tribulation – that Christ will return and fight for Israel. Leading up to that time, the Jewish remnant will have recognized Him as their true Messiah, called out for His return, and will then mourn over their nation's continual rejection of Him who they had pierced. These events take place at the end of the age and are involved in the fulfillments of the fall feasts to be discussed later.

But to conclude our examination of the summer months, we can see that this phenomenon of reversal back to Jerusalem has been very evident in the past century and is one of the great mysteries that seem to reveal that we are entering into the end of the age. These all suggest the closing of the age and the re-centering of the focus back upon Jerusalem in preparation for the fulfillments of the fall feasts.

Our next task will be to investigate the four remaining Feasts of the Lord - the feasts of autumn. These four feasts – unlike the first four – have not yet had their ultimate fulfillments occur. However,

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after witnessing the record of the precision involved in the fulfillments of the spring and summer feasts, it would be make sense to expect that same level of precision in the fulfillments of the fall feasts!

Moreover, since the spring fulfillments took place exactly on the actual feast days, and keeping in mind the literal meaning of *moedim* (meaning the appointed times), we then have good reason to expect that the fall feasts will also be fulfilled to the actual day. But this time, since they are yet unfulfilled, we will not have the luxury of being able to look into the New Testament for their plainly documented fulfillments. Instead, we will have to investigate what the Bible says about future significant events in God's plan. We will then have to see how what the Bible says about these future events parallels with the Jewish traditions associated with each of the fall feasts. The Bible, as well as Jewish tradition, both give us significant clues as to the framework and idioms of these future appointed times, allowing us to have some level of confidence in what their fulfillments might in fact be.

Throughout the remainder of this study, we will examine each of these, in order to see if we can draw any conclusions concerning what future events they prophetically anticipate. First, we will have to examine the Levitical instructions and the Jewish rituals connected to these feasts and then examine the scriptures to see if future significant events in God's plan correlate with them in any compelling way.

The fall feasts, all taking place in the month of Tishri (our September/October), include:

- The Feast of Trumpets (*Yom Teruah*)
- The Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*)
- The Feast of Tabernacles (*Hag ha-Sukkot*)
- The Eighth Day (*Shemini Atzeret*)

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CHAPTER 8

THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS (YOM TERUAH)

We have seen how God deliberately established the first four feasts as a prophetic outline of what He would fulfill at His First Coming. We have seen how they were fulfilled to the exact day in precise fashion. Knowing this, we can expect the fall feasts to also be fulfilled with similar precision. The lone exception, at least in this author's mind, may be this feast of Trumpets. While it will certainly be fulfilled with the same precision as the spring feasts, there is a unique quality inherent in Trumpets that suggests it may not be fulfilled on the exact actual calendar day that this feast is celebrated. We will discuss why this might be the case as we continue.

In the Bible, we are told much about future end-time events. We are given information regarding the prophetic framework for the rest of time according to God's plan. We will see that the pattern of the fall feasts acts as a blueprint for the timeline of the end of days – the **broad period of the Day of the Lord** and all that it encompasses – as laid out prophetically in scripture. So then, we should expect the Feast of Trumpets to represent the fulfillment of the next major event to take place on God's prophetic calendar. This next event we know from scripture to be the Rapture, or the supernatural catching away of the Church by Christ, which is the occasion that initiates the broad period

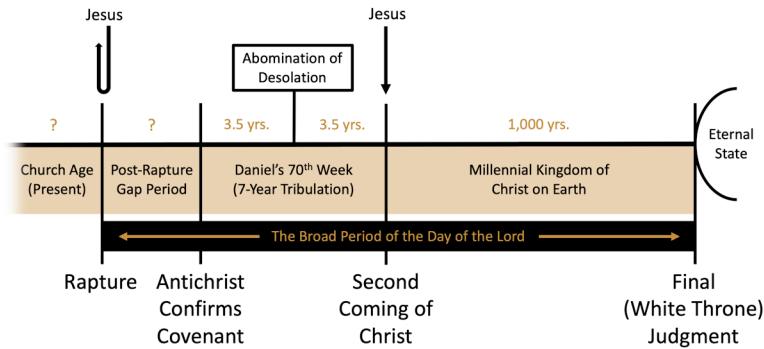
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of the Day of the Lord and its end-times sequence of events. So, we will advocate that this first feast of autumn represents the Rapture and beginning of the broad Day of the Lord.

From scripture, the boundaries of the Rapture and the Day of the Lord appear to be simultaneous, or coterminous in their beginning (meaning they share the same boundaries – in this case, that they begin at the same time). We will find that the Rapture seems to be a momentary event, but the Day of the Lord continues on as an extended period, acting as the final age of God's government. It includes the potential gap of time after the Rapture, and then will include the Tribulation, the Second Coming, and the thousand-year Millennial Kingdom. Let's break down that chronology in a bit more detail.

Following the Rapture, there will likely be an intervening gap of time that precedes the final period of seven years (though this whole period falls under the broad Day). This final seven-years is normally referred to as the Tribulation, or Daniel's seventieth week. At the end of the seven years is the Messiah's Second Coming proper, when He returns to conquer His enemies and rescue the remnant of Israel. Following this, the Messiah sets up His Millennial Kingdom and rules on David's throne on the earth for a thousand years – and the righteous rule with Him. All of these events are included in the broad Day of the Lord, which again, begins simultaneously with the Rapture. We believe it is important to point out this basic timeline and definition of terms at the outset, as we will refer to them throughout the remainder of our exploration of the fall feasts (as these events are what the fall feasts typify).

The End-Times



Note: Although there is widespread disagreement in Christianity regarding the timing of the Rapture, let's set aside those differences for a moment and simply investigate the prophetic patterning embedded into the Feast of Trumpets and the autumn holy days as a whole. Once through, we will find that understanding the fall feasts will itself emerge as a strong support of a *pretribulation* eschatology (the Rapture occurring prior to the Tribulation, initiating the broad Day of the Lord – as shown on the above chart). So, let's begin to look into the Feast of Trumpets and the season of *Teshuvah*, which begins these autumn holy days.

Just as the spring feasts prophetically anticipated the First Coming of the Messiah, the fall feasts anticipate the Messiah's Second Coming. The fall festival season begins with a forty-day period called *Teshuvah*, which means "to repent or return." This forty-day period is sort of an introductory period leading into the fall feasts, beginning on the first day of the sixth month of the religious calendar, the month of Elul, and concluding on the tenth day of the seventh month, which is *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement. Of these forty days, the first thirty days are a preparation for the final ten days, referred to as the High Holy Days, or the Days of Awe (*Yamim Nora'im*).^{1 2}

During these first thirty days of *Teshuvah*, the attitude is to be one

of solemn self-examination and repentance while awaiting and anticipating the return of the Messiah. Each morning in the synagogue following the morning prayers, a ram's horn trumpet (called a *shofar* in Hebrew) is blown (except on sabbaths and the day preceding *Rosh ha-Shanah*, or the Feast of Trumpets), and Psalm 27 is read.

Psalm 27 is a warning that the Time of Jacob's Trouble (Jeremiah 30:7) – in other words, the Tribulation – is approaching. However, those who look to God will have nothing to fear. Ezekiel 33 and Zephaniah 1:14-2:3 are sometimes also read – both heavily involving the subject of the approaching days of Tribulation during the Day of the Lord.³

Thirty days into *Teshuvah*, on the first day of the Hebrew month of Tishri (our month of September), at the sighting of the new moon, trumpets were blown to announce the first fall feast – the festival of *Yom Teruah* (*teruah* – Strong's #H8643 – meaning an awakening blast, the blowing of trumpets, shouting, alarm, joy, jubilee, rejoicing, etc.).⁴

The themes of the Feast of Trumpets include the resurrection of the dead, the coronation of the Messiah, the wedding of the Messiah, the opening of the books of judgment, the opening of the gates of heaven, the call to repentance, and more.^{5 6}

We will get into more specifics on these later on. But let's first better understand the calendar timing of the Feast of Trumpets as the beginning of the fall feasts, and its relation to the two different calendars of the Jewish people – the religious and the civil...

The **religious** calendar starts in the **spring** with the month of **Nisan** (the Passover season – around our March/April). This is the calendar instituted in Leviticus 23. The **civil** calendar begins in the **fall** with the month of **Tishri** (around our September/October). In English, we refer to this first day of Tishri as the Feast of Trumpets. Modern Jews refer to it as *Rosh ha-Shanah* (meaning the “head of the year”), the beginning of their civil New Year, which they also believe is the birthday of the world. Therefore, there are two New Year's: **Nisan 1 in the religious year** and **Tishri 1 in the civil year**.

But like we said, the Feast of Trumpets begins on the 1st of Tishri (our September), with this day beginning the time known to the Jews

as the High Holy Days of autumn, preceding the next feast day called Yom Kippur – the Day of Atonement on the 10th of Tishri. However, this first feast of autumn is actually celebrated for two days instead of just one, for reasons we will discuss later. The days in between the beginning of Trumpets (Tishri 1) and the beginning of Atonement (Tishri 10) are called the *Yamim Nora'im*, or the Days of Awe. We will look deeper into this in more depth later, as these days uniquely parallel the calendar of the end-times as laid out in scripture. But at this point, let's start at the beginning and recognize the institution of the Feast of Trumpets, or *Yom Teruah*, as the fifth feast of the Lord as described in the Torah.

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing [Hebrew: zikrown teruah] of trumpets, an holy convocation.

Ye shall do no servile work therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord.

-Leviticus 23:23-25

And in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work: it is a day of blowing the trumpets unto you [the word “blowing” is the Hebrew word *teruah*].

-Numbers 29:1

One of the unique aspects concerning the Feast of Trumpets is the fact that it was known to the ancient Jews by so many different names and themes – each indicating a unique truth or hint regarding its future fulfillment and purpose. These themes and names include the following:

- *Yom Teruah* (the Day of the Awakening Blast, or Day of Blowing of Trumpets)
- *Teshuvah* (Repentance)

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- The Festival of the Last Trump
- The Birth Pangs of the Messiah
- *Yom HaKeseh* (the Hidden Day, or Day of Concealment)
- The Opening of the Gates of Heaven
- The Resurrection of the Dead
- *Yom HaMelech* (the Day of the Coronation of the King)
- *Yom HaZikkaron* (the Day of Remembrance or Memorial)
- *Yom HaDin* (the Day of Judgment)
- The Wedding Ceremony of the Messiah
- *Rosh ha-Shanah* (the Head of the Year, or Birthday of the World)

Let's begin to examine this feast day in order to better recognize the amazing typology embedded into its rituals.

The Timeline of Teshuvah

As mentioned earlier, *Teshuvah* is the forty-day period of warning, self-examination, and repentance in preparation for the coming High Holy Days of autumn. It begins in the month of Elul, thirty days before Trumpets and extends until the following feast, *Yom Kippur*. The message of *Teshuvah* from Elul 1 to Trumpets is clear: Repent and turn toward God before the Feast of Trumpets! Don't wait until after Trumpets, or you will find yourself entering the Days of Awe! Like we mentioned earlier, the Days of Awe (*Yamim Nora'im*) are the final ten days, starting on Trumpets and extending until *Yom Kippur*.

How does this impact us today? Within this pattern, God has embedded the blueprints of His plans for the end of days – the beginning of the Day of the Lord. Let's examine these parallels.

- First, *Teshuvah* (repentance) speaks to all people. Those who believe in the Messiah are called to examine their lives and determine if and where they have departed from God. It is a call for unbelievers to examine the scriptures and the evidence that the Messiah was who He said He was. It is a

period of time to get serious and prepare for what is coming! God has always had a heart to warn people before He proclaims judgment. Typologically, this represents a warning call going out to all people to examine themselves, repent, and prepare before the arrival of the Day of the Lord.

- Next, we recognize from the many clues we will discuss in this chapter, that the Feast of Trumpets likely anticipates the future Rapture of the Church that begins the eschatological Day of the Lord – the next major event expected in God’s prophetic timeline laid out in scripture. It is important to recognize that the Feast of Trumpets was actually a two-day feast that was considered to be one single day by the rabbis, but celebrated on two consecutive days. So, typologically, we believe it is clear that Trumpets represents the Rapture (the next prophetic event on God’s calendar). The fact that it’s celebrated on two days may typologically represent the idea that the Rapture and the Day of the Lord are coterminous, or begin together. Or, the second day of Trumpets may also indicate that the Rapture is followed by an indeterminate period of time before the start of the Tribulation. This second day may represent this intervening gap of unknown duration. But from a practical standpoint, this feast was celebrated on two consecutive days due a uniqueness in its nature: By definition, the Feast of Trumpets is an *unknowable* or *unpredictable* day – a profound characteristic that we will discuss in much greater detail as we continue.
- Next, as Trumpets begins, we have the start of the ten Days of Awe – *Yamim Nora’im*. If the first two days are Trumpets, and the last day is the Day of Atonement (which later on we will see likely represents the Second Coming), then we can subtract those three days from the ten, and see that we are left with seven days left in between them. Does this typologically represent the seven years of the Tribulation –

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Daniel's seventieth and final "week of years" on God's calendar that falls in between these two feast-day fulfillment events?

It would appear obvious that this is the case. In Judaism, these days are known as the days of repentance. We know that one of the primary purposes of the Tribulation is to drive Israel to repentance! We are told in fact that the Messiah's Second Coming is dependent on the remnant of Israel turning to their true Messiah, and it will unfortunately, take seven years of Tribulation (the Time of Jacob's Trouble – Jeremiah 30:7) to drive them to it!

I will go and return to my place, **till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face:** in their **affliction** they will **seek me early** [meaning "earnestly"].

-Hosea 5:15

So, we conclude that the seven Days of Awe in between the two days of Trumpets (Tishri 1 and 2) and the day of *Yom Kippur* (Tishri 10) typologically represent the seven-year Tribulation period in between the Rapture and the Second Coming.

- Then, the final day of *Teshuvah*, and also the final day of the ten Days of Awe takes place on *Yom Kippur* – the Day of Atonement (Tishri 10). We will discuss this in detail further ahead in this study, but right now let's just understand that typologically, it likely represents the Second Coming of the Messiah at the end of the seven-year Tribulation.

So, to recap our examination of the period of *Teshuvah* as a blueprint for the end-times, we can see that the first thirty days represent the call to repentance and turning to the Lord in preparation for His return. If you prepared during the first thirty days, meaning "before the Rapture," you would be taken to heaven at that time. If you did not turn to God before the Rapture, you may face entering into the

Day of the Lord, more specifically the seven-year Tribulation represented by the seven Days of Awe in between Trumpets and Atonement. During these final days of *Teshuvah*, or Days of Awe, you would face your last chance to turn towards God in the midst of Tribulation, and be saved from ultimate eternal death before the Second Coming on Atonement. So, we find that the fall feast days provide a blueprint for the exact timeline of the end times that we see taught to us in scripture, helping us to further understand that these fall feasts will be fulfilled with the same precision as the spring feasts!

The Festival of the Last Trump

The Feast of Trumpets is known as the “Day of Blowing” and the “Day of the Awakening Blast,” referring to the blowing of the ram’s horn trumpet called the *shofar*. This is the only Feast Day in which the *shofar* is blown one hundred times during the service. These trumpet blasts are blown in a set pattern of three different sounds.

1. *Tekiah*: a single long sound
2. *Shevarim*: three short blasts
3. *Teruah*: nine blasts in rapid succession

These three sounds are blown in sets of certain patterns for a total of ninety-nine blasts. After that, the final one hundredth sound is the climax of the Feast of Trumpets – the *Tekiah Gedolah* – a long, triumphant blast that lasts for as long as the *shofar* blower has breath.⁷
⁸ This final one hundredth blast is known as the “Last Trump”!

Noted Jewish scholars (who are not Christians) such as Theodor Gaster and Herman Kieval have documented this association of the Last Trump with the Feast of Trumpets.^{9 10 11} It should be emphasized that this recognition of the Feast of Trumpets being associated with the phrase “the Last Trump” comes from Judaism, and those who have no agenda concerning the New Testament, the Rapture, or anything at all to do with Christianity.

The “Last Trump” is the expression that Paul linked with the

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timing of the Rapture, or the supernatural catching away of the Church detailed in 1 Corinthians 15:52.

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.

-1 Corinthians 15:52

So, we see that Paul describes the moment when the Christians are translated from this earth and receive new glorified bodies as taking place specifically at the “Last Trump.” The noted Jewish Christian scholar Arnold Fruchtenbaum wrote confirms this, but also notes an important point that we’ve already noted and will continue to emphasize: the Rapture, though clearly linked with the “Last Trump,” may not actually happen on the Feast of Trumpets. That point is built on the fact that the basic character of both Trumpets and the Rapture/beginning of the broad Day is that of *unpredictability*. Therefore, we can, with a great deal of certainty, expect that Trumpets *does* represent these events, it *doesn’t* require that they actually occur on a Feast of Trumpets in order for them to be prophetically fulfilled by this festival. Fruchtenbaum writes:

[The Rapture] is said [by Paul] to happen at the time of the last trump. Both midtribulationists and posttribulationists try to identify this trump with the seventh trumpet of the book of Revelation. However, when Paul wrote 1 Corinthians, Revelation had not been written yet. The Corinthians would not have had any knowledge of seven trumpets. But Paul used the definitive article “the” before “last trump,” and so he must have expected his readers to know what he was talking about. The only knowledge they would have of trumpets are those spoken of in the Old Testament. The last trump refers to the Feast of Trumpets and the Jewish practice of blowing *shofars* during this feast. There are a series of short trumpet sounds followed by one long trumpet blast which is called the *tekiah gedolah*, “the great trumpet blast.” This is what Paul meant by “the last trump.” As such, it says

nothing concerning the timing of the rapture; only that the rapture, whenever it comes, will fulfill the Feast of Trumpets.¹²

It would seem clear then that Paul, a highly educated Jewish Pharisee, used this clear *Yom Teruah* language to purposely link the Rapture with the Feast of Trumpets. Because the Last Trump is only blown on the Feast of Trumpets (which all Jews of Paul's day, and by extension, many Gentile Christian converts would have known), and because the apostle Paul specifically mentions that the Rapture of the believers will take place at the Last Trump, it seems obvious Paul was indicating this linkage.

The Last Trump is a wonderful and joyful sound for the righteous, but at the same time is a sounding of alarm for the unrighteous! It is a warning of the onset of the Day of the Lord – a sounding of alarm intended to draw the people to repentance in preparation for the Second Coming.

You may recall that earlier in the study, we made reference to the three trumpets of God that mark major events in the redemptive plan of God. While discussing Pentecost, we noted that the first of these three trumpets – called the First Trump – is associated with Pentecost, where the Torah records the trumpet blasts that occurred at the giving of the Law on Sinai. As we just discussed here, the second of the three trumpet events is the Last Trump, which takes place on the Feast of Trumpets (representing the Rapture of the believers). The final of the three trumpet events – called the Great Trump – will take place on the next feast – the Day of Atonement, or *Yom Kippur*, signaling the Second Coming of the Messiah.

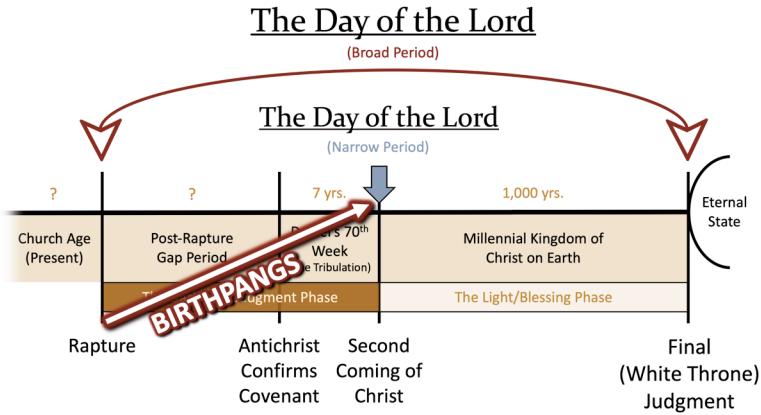
The Birth Pangs of the Messiah

The birth pangs of the Messiah is a major theme of the Bible, and refers to the times of struggle for the nation of Israel that occur close to the Messiah's Coming.¹³

In other words, the mother represents Israel, and she endures birth pangs, or travail, like she is in labor in order to bring forth the

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Messiah. We find that birth pangs, in the context of Israel’s future distress, is actually a consistently used term in both the Old and New Testaments that includes a broad period of eschatological woes that is identified as taking place *during* the Day of the Lord, and *culminating* in the seven-year Tribulation – a period that concludes with the Second Coming of Christ.



While we do feel we can confidently say that the birth pangs *begin* with the broad Day of the Lord and *end* with the Second Coming proper of Christ, we do not feel confident in designating the birth pangs only to the Tribulation. Rather, we feel it is safer to say that they *culminate* in the Tribulation – especially its latter half. Many people mistakenly equate the Tribulation with the broad Day of the Lord, not realizing that the Tribulation is a **subset *within* the broad Day**. Even fewer recognize that the broad Day **begins with the Rapture**, which seems to be followed by a **gap period of indeterminate length between the Rapture and the start of the Tribulation**.¹⁴ We will discuss this in more detail shortly, but in order to rightly understand the birth pangs with Biblical precision, this chronological clarity is key.

How? Because scripturally, the birth pangs seem to immediately begin during this potential gap period separating the Rapture from the

Tribulation, provoking the conditions on earth to take shape in preparation for the start of the Tribulation. This would appear to be the time period in which the Antichrist is revealed and/or begins his rise to global power, or it could be that this time period will include the formative events that trigger his eventual appearance.

This issue of the timing of the beginning of the birth pangs is not left open to our interpretation or speculation. To the contrary, this issue is actually extremely clear and well-defined in scripture. Paul, in 1 Thessalonians 5:2-3, clearly states that **the birth pangs begin during the broad Day of the Lord**. In fact, even more specifically, **he states that they begin immediately or very soon after the beginning of the broad Day**. Put yet another way, they mark the onset of the judgment phase of the broad Day.

For you yourselves are fully aware that **the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night**. While people are saying, “There is peace and security,” **then** sudden destruction will come upon them as **labor pains** [Greek: “*ōdin*,” meaning birth pangs] **come upon a pregnant woman**, and they will not escape.

-1 Thessalonians 5:2-3 (ESV)

This passage makes clear that the birth pangs won’t initiate **until the broad Day of the Lord has begun**. The onset of the broad Day will be marked by the birth pangs, which initiate a protracted period of progressively increasing destruction on the wicked and unsuspecting world (parallel to the progressively worsening birth pangs of a woman in labor). The Greek word for “labor pains” in this passage is *ōdin*, which means birth pangs (Strong’s #G5604).¹⁵

So, the birth pangs seem to begin in this intervening gap of time – yet, scripture is clear that they will reach their greatest intensity during the final seven-year Tribulation – and especially the latter half of it. We will explain all of this in more detail further, as we go along.

In the terminology of our current study, the *culmination* of the birth pangs correlate with the seven intervening days of *Yamim Nora'im* – the Days of Awe (representing the Tribulation period), in between Trum-

pets and Atonement. The point we will be attempting to establish here (and as we've already just mentioned) is that just as the Feast of Trumpets initiated the Fall Feasts and leads into the Days of Awe, the main eschatological event that Trumpets typifies (the Rapture) initiates the broad Day of the Lord, which brings the birth pangs that lead into the Tribulation. In other words, just as the Rapture kicks off the eschatological broad Day of the Lord, the Feast of Trumpets kicks off the Falls Feasts (which typify the main events within the broad Day).

But before looking deeper into the birth pangs, we must first gain a clear understanding of the Day of the Lord, as it is a critically foundational term that many Christians have not sharply defined. The future Day of the Lord is complex in its makeup because several different programs of God are going on at the same time. It is essential to recognize that when taking into account all of its uses in scripture, the future Day of the Lord has a double sense – it is **both broad and narrow**. The **broad** sense refers to an extended time period, beginning with the Rapture and covering at least the intervening gap period after the Rapture, the Tribulation period, and the Millennium. The **narrow** sense refers to one specific and climaxing time of ultimate significance – the more immediate time surrounding Christ's actual return to the earth at His Second Coming proper (again, see first chart).

This is similar to the way we might use the term "Christmas" in our modern culture. When referring to Christmas, we often mean the entire Christmas season, rather than just the specific day of Christmas; but yet, there is one specific climaxing day – Christmas Day, December 25th. But this realization is lost on many. Often, commentators have only associated the Day of the Lord with the climaxing events occurring around the *end* of the Tribulation period close to the Second Coming proper, failing to recognize that it encompasses the entire broad period we just described. Further yet, many also fail to recognize an incredibly important point, which we already mentioned earlier – a statement that is new to many Christians but is easily demonstrable in scripture: the understanding that **the Rapture is the initiating event that begins the broad period of the Day of the Lord**.

We believe scripture is clear that the Rapture begins (or is coterminous or simultaneous with) the beginning of the broad period of the Day of the Lord. In other words, they share a beginning point. What we cannot be sure about is how long of a time period will exist *between* the Rapture and the beginning of the Tribulation. Like we said, after the Church, along with the indwelling Spirit of Christ in the earth is removed, there will be an intervening gap period where society degenerates, shaping up for the Beast system and the Antichrist's rise to power (among other things).

An interesting possibility to consider arises from the recognition that Trumpets is celebrated as a two-day feast that is considered one long day by the rabbis. It is possible that in the typology of the Fall Feasts, the second day of this two-day Feast of Trumpets celebration (which precedes the middle seven days of *Yomim Nora'im*) may represent this intervening gap period following the Rapture?

Let's take a moment to again recap our claim: the broad period of the Day of the Lord begins with the Rapture, and then extends throughout an intervening period of time where the birth pangs begin as the events on earth take shape to lead into the Tribulation. The broad Day then continues throughout the seven years of Tribulation. The Tribulation ends with the climaxing events surrounding the Second Coming of Christ. The broad Day then continues throughout the Millennial Kingdom as well. This is why in scripture, there is an abundance of both gloomy and joyful passages that refer to the Day of the Lord – the gloomy concerning the Tribulation (the judgment phase) and the joyful concerning the Millennium (the blessing phase).

Let's now explain where we get some of those understandings from scripture. We will start by understanding why the broad Day is immediately initiated by – or is coterminous with – the pretribulational Rapture of the Church.

Put simply, the broad Day and the Rapture must begin simultaneously because of the clear Biblical teaching that we will refer to as “dual imminence.” Dual imminence is the implicit and explicit scriptural teaching that both the Rapture and the broad Day of the Lord are temporally-connected events whose occurrences are imminent (or

“any-moment”), leading to the logical conclusion that they must then occur simultaneously.

“Temporally connected” simply means that they are connected in relation to time. Put another way, since essentially all Christians already hold a view on the timing of the Rapture (pre, mid, post, etc.) in relation to the Day of the Lord (or events within it), then that itself takes for granted a belief in the temporal connection of these two events. Everyone already believes they have a fixed sequence. Nobody believes the Rapture is a floating event that can occur randomly at any point during God’s eschatological program. If we agree they are temporally connected (or connected in time and sequence), and recognize that scripture teaches that they are both imminent events, **then the necessary conclusion is that they must occur simultaneously, or else they both could not be truly imminent.** In other words, if one were to precede the other, then the other could not be described as imminent.

For further exploration, please consult Dr. Robert Thomas’ treatment of this subject in two articles published in *The Master’s Seminary Journal*,^{16 17} as well as this author’s full analysis of the topic in *The Missing Key in Dispensational Eschatology*.¹⁸ The latter also discusses the scriptural necessity of a post-Rapture gap period. Although we cannot fully develop all of these points in this study, let’s spend some time laying some groundwork that helps to establish this understanding.

Paul and Peter are clear that the Day of the Lord comes as a thief – meaning there are no necessary preceding or forewarning events – it is sudden, or imminent. They describe it coming unexpectedly and without warning during a time of seemingly relative peace and safety, or complete normalcy (1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 and 2 Peter 3:1-11).

But we also notice that scripture describes Christ’s coming for the Church at the Rapture in the exact same way – as being imminent, or sudden, without any necessary preceding signs or events (Philippians 4:5; Jude 1:21; James 5:8; et. al). From the perspective of humans, there are no observable preceding events that need to take place first in order for either the Rapture or the broad Day to begin.

So, if both events are described as imminent and are fixed in a

related time sequence (temporal connection), then logically, the start of the broad Day of the Lord and the Rapture must be simultaneous. If one were to occur first, then the other couldn't be described as imminent since it would first require the occurrence of the first, furnishing a forewarning of the second.

Furthermore, this description of a signless, sudden, imminent occurrence means that these events certainly couldn't take place anywhere near Christ's Second Coming at the end of the Tribulation, since that time period is the **least imminent, least sudden, and most marker-filled** time period in the entire Bible. In other words, if the Day of the Lord was only understood to begin at the end of the Tribulation (its narrow sense), how could it be considered imminent? This time will be preceded by well-known eschatological marker points such as the rise of the Antichrist, his confirming of a covenant to begin the Tribulation, and his abomination of desolation near the midpoint. It is one of the most marker-filled sequences in human history, as described by Jesus in Matthew 24, and the books of Daniel and Revelation.

In similar fashion, this is one of the scriptural reasons that necessitate a pretribulational Rapture for the Church. If the Rapture were to take place sometime *during* the Day of the Lord, then it would cease to be an imminent "any moment" event that we could expect to occur at any time. Believers would be forced to expect the Antichrist and the occurrence of numerous end-time signs before they could expect the arrival of Jesus Christ. **Only pretribulational believers can confess the expectation that Jesus Christ can return at any time, including today.** Let that sink in. Mid and posttribulational believers do not believe Jesus can come back today.

So, because both the Rapture and the Day of the Lord are described as being imminent, it is obvious then that they both take place at the same time. Actually, this is not only an implicit conclusion; it is taught plainly in scripture. We can say that the Rapture *initiates* the beginning of the broad period of the Day of the Lord. Although this is clearly taught throughout the entire New Testament, one of its clearest passages is one we looked at early in our discussion

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of the birth pangs as occurring *during* the broad Day. This passage also makes clear the imminent nature of both the broad day and the Rapture.

But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

-1 Thessalonians 5:1-4

In this passage, Paul clear describes the judgment of the broad Day as coming upon the world suddenly, like a thief without warning, during a period of complete normalcy. This is a description of imminence and complete signlessness. The presence of a thief is not heralded by signs. To the contrary, a thief's appearance is totally unexpected and can happen at any time. Commenting on this, the highly-esteemed Bible scholar Robert L. Thomas wrote:

The only way that [the Rapture] ... is an imminent prospect is to see it as simultaneous with the beginning of the divine judgment against earth. Only if the rapture coincides with the beginning of the Day of the Lord can both be imminent and the salvation of those in Christ coincide with the coming of wrath to the rest (Verse 9, "For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation...") ... Were either the rapture or the Day of the Lord to precede the other, one or the other would cease to be an imminent prospect to which the "thief in the night" and related expressions are appropriate. That both are any-moment possibilities is why Paul can talk about these two in successive paragraphs. This is how the Lord's personal coming as well as the "day's" coming [or Day of the Lord's coming]

can be compared to a thief (2 Peter 3:4 and 10; Rev. 3:3 and 11; 16:15).”¹⁹

All of this perfectly aligns with Jesus’s teaching in Matthew 24:36, in which He describes the arrival of the broad Day of the Lord in the exact same way as Peter, Paul, and John’s writings: with the same lack of signs, and at a day and hour unknowable to all but the Father.

But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

-Matthew 24:36

Jesus describes a completely unknowable commencement of this entire period of judgment against the unbelieving world. Throughout the remainder of this chapter, His entire point focuses on the imminence of this time period. In fact, the other New Testament writers we just mentioned probably got their understanding of the imminence of the broad Day of the Lord from this discourse by Jesus. The Bible is communicating to us that there will be a simultaneous rescue of the righteous (the Rapture) and outpouring of judgment on the wicked (the beginning of the broad Day).

And as we mentioned before, 1 Thessalonians 5:2-3 also states that the birth pangs happen *during* the broad Day of the Lord – *not during the Church Age!*

For you yourselves are fully aware that **the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night**. While people are saying, “There is **peace and security**,” **then** sudden destruction will come upon them **as labor pains** [Greek: “*ōdin*,” meaning birth pangs] **come upon a pregnant woman**, and they will not escape.

-1 Thessalonians 5:2-3 (ESV)

It is clear that the birth pangs won’t initiate *until* the broad Day of the Lord has begun. So, the clear impression is that at the initiation of the broad Day of the Lord, represented by the Feast of Trumpets, the

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shofar will sound and the resurrection of the righteous dead and Rapture of the righteous living will take place. They will receive their glorified bodies. They will be gathered for the coronation of the Messiah and the marriage of the Messiah to His bride the Church.

Meanwhile, on earth, those who are not caught up in the Rapture will immediately begin to witness and experience the birth pangs, which will climax in the Tribulation. During the Tribulation, or the culmination of the labor pains, the earth (and Israel) will be purged from sin, climaxing in Israel's "birthing" of the Messiah's Second Coming, which leads to the joyful establishment of the Millennial Kingdom. In other words, the beginning of the broad Day of the Lord brings a simultaneous rescue of the righteous and judgment upon the wicked. **For this reason, the *shofar* blast on Trumpets is a joyful sound to the believers, but is a terrible sound of alarm and warning to those still on earth, indicating the beginning of the dreadful segment of the Day of the Lord.**

Let's begin to explore this theme of the birth pangs a bit more, as we recognize that it is another theme linked to the Feast of Trumpets. In Matthew 24, the disciples approached Jesus and asked him several questions related to the end-times.

And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

-Matthew 24:3

Essentially, the disciples asked Jesus two questions: when His coming would take place and what would be the signs related to it. Jesus answered their last question first, in which He began to identify the sequence of signs that would take place when the broad Day of the Lord begins. Jesus said the following.

And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:

and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

All these are the **beginning of sorrows.**

-Matthew 24:6-8

The Greek word translated as “sorrows” here is the same word we pointed out a short while ago – *ōdin* (Strong’s #G5604), meaning “birth pangs.”²⁰ As Jesus pointed out, this is just the *beginning* of a period of sorrows or trouble, but *the end is not yet*. As Paul said, the birth pangs begin *during* the broad Day, but unfold over a protracted period in which they progressively increase in frequency, intensity, and duration (like the actual birth pangs of a woman in labor).

In other words, the Rapture initiates the broad Day of the Lord, an intervening gap of time follows in which the birth pangs immediately begin to fall upon the wicked, and they then culminate in the seven-year Tribulation, especially the latter half, in which the most intense pangs are felt.

Most of the Biblical references to the birth pangs do associate them with this time of Great Tribulation immediately prior to Christ’s actual return. This of course, is not unexpected, as it’s representative of the way actual birth pangs occur during a woman’s pregnancy. As she gets closer to the time of delivery, the pangs are most intense. Just prior to her delivery, the pangs reach a climactic point of intensity, frequency, and duration.

But birth pangs are not just a New Testament concept. The birth pangs of the Messiah is a well-known Jewish concept that stems from Old Testament passages describing the coming time of trouble, or the Tribulation. The birth pangs, or travail, are spoken of often in the Old Testament, for example, in Jeremiah 30:4-7, where it is written:

And these are the words that the Lord spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah.

For thus saith the Lord; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace.

Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child?

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wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?

Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.

-Jeremiah 30:4-7

The reference to that “day” being “great” in KJV English does not convey greatness in the way we may think of in modern English. Other Bible translations render this word “great” as “terrible” or “awful.” Verse 7 says “there is none like it,” and then labels it as “the time of Jacob's trouble.” Jacob of course, is Israel.

In other words, there's a definite and specific future time-period that will be the worst trouble or tribulation that Israel has ever endured as a nation – this of course being this final seven-year period, and especially, the final three and a half years of it, which Jesus termed the *Great Tribulation* in Matthew 24:21. And as we saw in Jeremiah 30:6, this time period is associated with great travail, or birth pangs. (For other Old Testament references to the birth pangs, see Isaiah 13:8; 26:17-19; 66:7ff; Micah 4:9-10. All refer to a context of the Messiah's comings and/or the concept of the Day of the Lord).

Transitioning our focus back to the New Testament, a reference to Israel's end-time birth pangs can also be seen in Revelation 12:1-2.

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:

And she being with child cried, **travailing in birth** [*ōdin* - birth pangs], and **pained to be delivered.**

-Revelation 12:1-2

This period of birth pangs – culminating in the time of Jacob's trouble, or the Tribulation, directly prior to the Messiah's Second Coming – will be Israel's most trying time ever. Jumping again back to the Old Testament, we find this pictured in Daniel 12:1 as well.

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a **time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time...**

-Daniel 12:1a

Throughout scripture, this final time period is referred to by several names, but always involves the same elements of trouble, trial, wrath, and indignation. So, although the birth pangs will begin in the intervening gap of time prior to the Tribulation, we should recognize that they are ultimately linked to the time of Jacob's trouble, Daniel's seventieth week, or the seven-year Tribulation. This will be a time when God will ultimately judge sin and all the nations on the earth. Through it, the nation of Israel will be purged and physically saved by God from total destruction, and a repentant remnant will finally recognize and call on Jesus Christ as their Messiah. Recall the end of our earlier passage in Jeremiah 4.

It is even the time of Jacob's trouble, **but he shall be saved out of it.**

-Jeremiah 30:7

Hosea 5:15, a passage we read earlier reads:

I will go and return to my place, **till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face:** in their **affliction** they will seek me early ["earnestly"].

-Hosea 5:15

Israel will face genuine crisis during this time. The prophet Zechariah foretold that two of every three inhabitants of Israel will perish during this time, with a remnant of only one third of the population being saved.

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And it shall come to pass, that **in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein.**

And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: **they shall call on my name, and I will hear them:** I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God.

-Zechariah 13:8-9

But through this period of birth pangs and trouble, Israel “births” or brings to pass the Messiah’s arrival. Although we’ve just spent time focusing on Israel’s *end-time* travail, let’s recognize a very important point: there are actually *several* incidents of Messianic birth pangs experienced by Israel.

- Isaiah 66:7 describes a birth *before* travail. This passage says, “**Before** she travailed, she brought forth; **before** her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.” This is linked to the **First** Coming of the Messiah which, as this passage describes, came “*before* she travailed.” The birth pangs that Israel experienced relative to Jesus’s **First** Coming came *after* His arrival in 33 AD, with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple and the dispersion of the Jewish people out of Israel by the Romans in 70 AD and following. The “birth” paradoxically took place *before* the period of travail.
- Then, Isaiah 66:8 describes a birth *after* travail. This passage says, “**As soon as** Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.” This travail will occur as a normal pregnancy – before or leading up to the birth. This is eschatological and is linked to Jesus’s return to the earth at His **Second** Coming proper (His Coming in glory at the end of the Tribulation) during the Day of the Lord, as Israel experiences her most intense birth pangs immediately prior to His arrival.

So, the Tribulation is the culmination of the birth pangs of the Messiah. What will be witnessed in the end times, is the woman (Israel) becoming larger and larger, coming closer and closer to the time when she's about to give birth. Her most intense birth pangs will take place during this last seven-year period, and especially during the final half of this time, termed the *Great Tribulation* by Jesus in Matthew 24:21.

So, we should recognize the significance of the Feast of Trumpets as being the first Fall Feast and the prophetically appointed time that will initiate the eschatological timeline of the end of days – the broad Day. Like we said, Trumpets typifies the resurrection/Rapture and the beginning of the broad Day of the Lord.

So, we continue to notice that it seems as though God has incredibly laid out the entire panorama of human history according to the typological template of the Hebrew religious year!

The Hidden Day/Day of Concealment – Yom HaKeseh

We will not discuss a critical aspect of understanding the typology of the Feast of Trumpets: the idea of concealment, which may represent the concealment of the righteous at the Rapture, but is also linked to the *unpredictability* of its timing. This feast is also known as *Yom HaKeseh* (the Hidden Day, or the Day of Concealment). The ancient rabbis took this term from Psalm 81:3.

Blow up the trumpet in the **new moon**, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.

-Psalm 81:3

The Hebrew word *keseh* (Strong's #H3677) is translated “new moon” in this passage, but the rabbis say that this word actually means “to conceal” – which we may now view as a picture of the concealment of the Church by the Rapture. The new moon is a picture of concealment, as it's the time when the moon is least visible.²¹

Every day during the month of Elul, a *shofar* is blown to warn the

people to turn back to God, except for on the thirtieth day of Elul, the day preceding Trumpets. On that day, the *shofar* is not blown, because it is believed that the Feast of Trumpets was hidden from Satan, the adversary. In other words, it represents Satan being taken off-guard by the onset of this festival. It is taught that the *shofar* does not blow on this day so that he does not know when the judgment (or the broad Day of the Lord) begins.²²

Of all the first seven major feasts, Trumpets is the most mysterious one (although we will find that the eighth feast is also a great mystery). There are very few scriptures about the meaning of Trumpets. You might say that even its very meaning is concealed, or hidden. In fact, of all the feasts, this one is the only one that doesn't have an exact starting time. This feast begins when the new moon is sighted, but the timing of its sighting has some variability, causing it to be celebrated as a two-day feast. For this very reason, the Feast of Trumpets is also known as being the feast whose beginning is hidden or concealed. Let's examine this even further.

Trumpets is the only holiday celebrated for two days in Israel. This began because of the uncertainty of predicting the sighting of the new moon – which signaled the start of the new month (called *Rosh Chodesh*, or the head or beginning of the month). The new moon would have to be observed by reliable witnesses and then confirmed and announced by the Sanhedrin, the central Jewish religious court.²³

Because it wasn't always possible to sight the new moon on the first day (for various reasons including unfavorable weather conditions and because it took time for news of the Sanhedrin's announcements to travel), the two-day Feast of Trumpets observance began as a solution. Today, Trumpets is the only holiday celebrated for two days both inside and outside Israel. However, in the rabbinic view, the two days are regarded as a *yoma arikhta*, or "one long day."²⁴

So, we understand why the idiom of concealment is associated with the Feast of Trumpets – because the timing of its onset was uncertain, or in other words, hidden or concealed. It could only be known once it happened. How does this then profile the Rapture? The Rapture also is a concealed and hidden day. The New Testament

describes “imminence” as being one of the primary characteristics of the Rapture. It is always described as being a signless and sudden event whose exact timing is impossible for anyone to predict.

Because the Rapture is an imminent event that could happen at any time, we cannot dogmatically assert that it must be fulfilled on the actual calendar day on which Trumpets is traditionally celebrated. Therefore, while the pattern of the spring feasts did involve precise fulfillments on the actual festival days, the very nature of the Rapture is built on the idea of an imminent, any-moment occurrence. By very nature, it is not compatible with pinned to a certain calendar day. Christians are intended to expect it on *any* day. Yet, clearly, the typology embedded within the Feast of Trumpets is linked with the Rapture. In fact, as we can see, this very aspect of unpredictability is revealed in the typology of this feast. So, we can absolutely appreciate the typological linkage with the Rapture/beginning of the broad Day while also not expecting the necessity of its fulfillment on this actual feast.

Let’s discuss a deeper, and maybe even more panoramic understanding of this theme of concealment, as it relates to the mystery of the unique entity called the Church – an entity that is hidden/concealed in the Old Testament, and only revealed in the New. You will continue to see how this theme of mystery concealment connects the Church to the Feast of Trumpets in some incredible ways.

One of the unique things about Trumpets is that the Torah does not say what the purpose of this holy day is – so then, we can say that its true purpose or nature is concealed or hidden. The Torah gives at least one reason for all of the other holy days, and two reasons for some. But in contrast to the other festivals, Trumpets has no clearly defined purpose other than simply that the Jews were commanded to rest on this day. We can conclude that the purpose is *deliberately* hidden by God.

We have already mentioned the Jewish teaching that this day was hidden from Satan, because it initiates the broad period of the Day of the Lord (or the judgment phase of the broad Day). Obviously, God’s plan is to take Satan by surprise. Satan did not know of, or understand

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the plan of the Cross either, according to 1 Corinthians 2:7-8; so, the Cross was hidden from him as well. The Cross was the central event around which the spring feasts were built. So then, we can notice an equivalence with the onset of the fall feasts (representing God's eschatological program called "the broad Day of the Lord") *also* taking Satan by surprise. But let's explore an even deeper understanding of this theme of the meaning of Trumpets being hidden/concealed.

To do this, we need to understand things from a panoramic viewpoint of God's plan throughout Biblical history. We must recognize that in the Old Testament, God used the nation Israel to establish His prophetic intentions for the future. Within this construct, we recognize that He established the "appointed times," or the divine appointments that His feast days would prophetically anticipate. Furthermore, we need to come to the understanding that God's ultimate plan and purpose for the creation of humanity was to separate for Himself a bride, which we know as the Church (1 Corinthians 11:2b; Ephesians 5:31-32). Since God is love, His entire ultimate purpose for the creation of humanity seems to be to have an intimate relationship with a "be-loved."

But how does this answer our question concerning the true purpose and meaning of the obscured meaning of Trumpets in the Old Testament? To understand the answer, we need to examine one of the passages just referenced, which describes one of the "great mysteries" that Paul expounds on in his writings.

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

This is a great **mystery**: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

-Ephesians 5:31-32

In this passage, we see Paul using marriage as an idiom to describe the true nature of the relationship that God intends between Himself and the Church. But the real key to answering our question is found in the Greek word used here that is translated "mystery" in English.

That word in Greek is *mystērion* (Strong's # G3466), and has a slightly difference meaning than our same word does in English. In the Greek New Testament *mystērion* is a term normally used to convey "that which has been kept secret by God in the past, but which He has now chosen to reveal."²⁵

Paul considered it his unique privilege to reveal the formerly hidden and concealed mystery of the Church as God's bride! If you look throughout the Old Testament, you cannot find the Church explicitly referenced. It is only possibly found in vague references and prophetic typology that we can now look back on with some clarity. But to the Jewish mind, the Church was an unknown and unexpected entity. It was completely concealed. The Jews instead looked forward to the Messianic Age that was promised, in which their coming Messiah would rule as a descendant of David. This is made clear for us in the following exchange between Jesus and His disciples.

And, [Jesus] being assembled together with them [the disciples], commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

And he [Jesus] said unto them, **It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.**

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

-Acts 1:4-8

Here, following Jesus's death, burial, and resurrection (fulfilling

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the first three feasts), the disciples were still confused as to what was to follow. They had it in their minds that the next thing to transpire was Jesus, as the Messiah, introducing the earthly Messianic Kingdom. They had no concept that His true purpose – hidden in the Old Testament – was His bride the Church, the centerpiece of His plan from the beginning (Revelation 13:8)!

When they asked Him if Israel’s restoration through the Messianic Kingdom was to follow, Jesus essentially brushed off their question, letting them know this Kingdom was irrelevant for them at that moment. Christ didn’t deny that a Kingdom would one day come, but it wasn’t the focus at that time. Instead, their true identity and purpose was far greater: to participate in the formation of the Church – the body and bride of Christ!

As mentioned, this truth is most clearly revealed in the writings of Paul, who more than any other was given the privilege of expounding upon the doctrine of the Church, which he consistently referred to as a “mystery” (*mystērion*). He consistently portrayed it as a time hidden to the understanding of the Old Testament prophets.

Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to **the revelation of the mystery** [*mystērion*], **which was kept secret since the world began,**

But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, **made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:**

-Romans 16:25-26

Paul states that the gospel of Jesus Christ, which would be made available to all nations (a description of the Church Age) was a mystery that was kept secret since the world began – but had not been made manifest (or revealed). He also teaches this truth in his Epistle to the Ephesians:

Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in **the mystery** [*mystērion*] **of Christ**

Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

-Ephesians 3:4-5

Paul teaches that the Church (comprised of Jews and Gentiles becoming one body in Christ through the gospel) was a mystery that was not made known to earlier generations. It was only now revealed through the apostles and prophets of the Church Age. Once again, he confirms this in his letter to the Colossians:

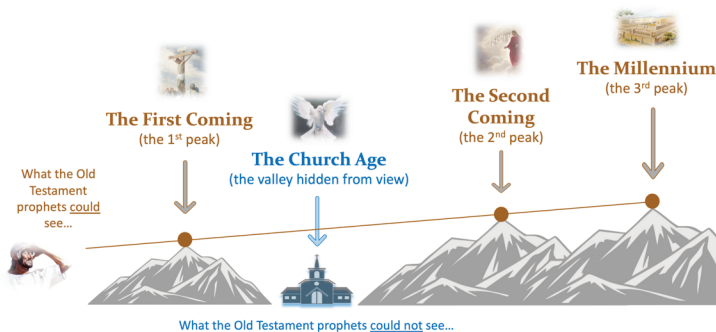
Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

Even the mystery [*mystērion*] which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

-Colossians 1:25-27

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Is it any wonder then that the true fulfillment of Trumpets – the day that prophetically anticipates the future hiding and concealment of this unknown entity at the Rapture – was *purposefully* hidden and concealed in the Old Testament? It would seem that this clearly explains the reason why the Torah seems to give no true explanation of the real purpose behind this feast day! If the Church was not revealed in the Old Testament, neither could the true depth of meaning of the Feast of Trumpets.

However, we can now look back and notice places in the Old Testament that seem to prophetically speak of a special group of righteous people being hidden/concealed during the Day of the Lord's wrath, which can only refer to the Church's Rapture just before the judgment begins on earth. You will notice that in most of the following verses, it is clear that those being hidden, are being hidden *because they are righteous* – and that they are being hidden *before* – and *from* – the indignation/wrath (Old Testament terms for the Tribulation).

This eliminates the idea that these hidden people could be Israel, as one of the major reasons why Israel must enter and endure the Tribulation, is because they are *not* righteous. The whole idea of Israel *not* being exempted from wrath is that it will take the refining fire of the Tribulation in order to produce the righteousness of the Jewish remnant at the *end* of the Tribulation, where they will finally acknowledge Christ as their Messiah, and call out to Him. On the other hand, the Church is described as being a pure and righteous virgin bride that is exempted from the coming wrath of the Tribulation, by way of the pretribulational Rapture. So, with that said, let's examine several of these passages that describe the righteous being hidden and concealed during the Day of the Lord's wrath.

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.

-Isaiah 26:20

Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: **it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.**

-Zephaniah 2:3

For in **the time of trouble** he shall **hide me in his pavilion**: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he **hide** me; he shall set me up upon a rock.

-Psalm 27:5

Interestingly, this passage in Psalms is actually read daily during the season of *Teshuvah*.²⁶ Let's examine one more:

The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that **the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.**

He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness.

-Isaiah 57:1-2

We can see the similar themes here of the righteous people who are ready, being taken and hidden away with the bridegroom, but the unrighteous being left to enter the wrath. So, we can recognize the hidden Old Testament references to the righteous being raptured and hidden away in accordance with the theme of the Jewish marriage ritual in which the bride is concealed in the *chuppah*, or wedding chamber. We will discuss this theme further ahead in this study, and even view scriptures that picture the bridegroom and the bride coming out of this place of concealment, helping us firmly recognize the identity of this righteous group that gets removed and hidden away during this period of Tribulation on earth.

So, when we put all of this together, a clear picture emerges. The Feast of Trumpets is profiled as the hidden or concealed day, due to the celestial uncertainty of its timing, picturing its ultimate fulfillment in God's plan – the beginning of the Day of the Lord, and the receiving

of His mystery bride (whose identity is hidden and concealed in the Old Testament). Only God could put together such a plan as this!

The Day of the Awakening Blast, the Opening of the Gates of Heaven, and the Resurrection

The Feast of Trumpets is also referred to as the Day of the Awakening Blast, or *Yom Teruah*, based on the Hebrew for the words “day of blowing of trumpets” found in Numbers 29:1. A theme of the Feast of Trumpets is “to awaken.” *Teruah* is also translated as “shout.” The goal of God is always to awaken us, but we can recognize that the fulfillment of Trumpets is a more ultimate awakening – the resurrection of the dead in Christ and the Rapture!

The rabbis always connected the themes of the awakening trumpet blast and the shout with the resurrection of the dead and the opening of the gates of heaven.²⁷ At the end of the *musaf* (or the “additional”) services on Trumpets, the trumpet would blow the loudest and the people would shout “the gates of heaven are open!” Interestingly, on *Yom Kippur* – the next feast – the gates of heaven are said to be closed during what is called the *neilah*, or the service marking the closing of the gates.²⁸

So, this theme of the awakening blast of the trump accompanied by the shout teaches us about the resurrection and the Rapture. If you’re a Christian knowledgeable in the Bible, this should automatically remind you of Paul’s words in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, linking the Rapture to the sound of the shout and the trumpet. We will get there later, but for now, let’s continue to develop this understanding.

Many Old Testament passages refer to a door or gates being opened, the resurrection occurring, the righteous then entering into the wedding chamber until the wrath is over, and the Lamb of God being crowned King. As we read through several of these passages, keep this sequence in mind, and make the connection to the Rapture, the Church (or bride of Christ) being hidden away from harm in the wedding chamber in heaven while the Tribulation occurs on earth, and then the Lamb of God like a bridegroom, emerging at the end of the

seven years at the Second Coming to conquer and be crowned King, establishing the earthly Millennial Kingdom.

We see this prophetically pictured in the Old Testament prophets, such as in Isaiah 26:2-3, and Verses 17-21.

Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

-Isaiah 26:2-3 and 17-21

So, we saw that Isaiah mentioned the “opening of the gates” – a Feast of Trumpets theme – followed by the resurrection of the dead at the same time the righteous nation (the bride of the Messiah) enters into the bridal chamber and is hidden until the indignation (or the Tribulation) is past. We also saw Isaiah make allusion to the birth pangs of the Messiah experienced by Israel around this time.

But let’s make special reference to the phrase, “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 over-

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past.” The term chambers in this passage speaks of the *cheder*, or the bridechamber (like the *chuppah*). However, it is instructive to note that many Bible’s (such as the NASB, NIV, and others) translate this word into English as “room.” Well where else does scripture say a room will be prepared for someone?

In John 14:2, Jesus introduces the basic concept of the Rapture, making the promise of a bridegroom to His followers, telling them that there are many mansions in His Father’s house, and that after preparing one for them, He would one day return to receive them, that where He is, they might be also. This word “mansion” shows up in for example the *King James Version* – but it actually translates as “room.” To see this clearly, let’s read it from the *Contemporary English Version*, which does translate the word as room instead of mansion.

There are many rooms in my Father’s house. I wouldn’t tell you this, unless it was true. I am going there to prepare a place for each of you. After I have done this, I will come back and take you with me. Then we will be together.

-John 14:2-3 (CEV)

This word room in this passage actually refers to the room that a bridegroom would add onto the father’s house before he would go to receive the bride. So, we should have no uncertainty as to whom the previous passage in Isaiah was speaking about when it mentions a righteous group of people being taken to safety in a prepared chamber, or “room.” But let’s look at several other examples in the Old Testament that also demonstrate this same theme.

Another place we see this is in Zephaniah 2:3, where the people of the earth are encouraged to seek righteousness, in order that they might qualify to be hidden before the day of the Lord’s anger.

Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: **it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord’s anger.**

-Zephaniah 2:3

We see an allusion to this same theme in Psalm 27:5 as well.

For in the time of **trouble** he shall **hide** me in his pavilion:

-Psalm 27:5a

Like we mentioned earlier, this specific passage in Psalms is actually read throughout *Teshuvah!*²⁹ Then in Joel, we are given a glimpse of the reverse happening at the end of the Tribulation – the Bridegroom (Christ) emerging from the bridechamber along with His bride.

Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: **let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.**

-Joel 2:16

So, we have the whole pictured painted here, with this last passage likely being a Yom Kippur passage. But it begins on Trumpets with the awakening blast, the gates being opened, the righteous people (the bride of Christ) being resurrected and/or raptured and being hidden away in heaven in the bridechamber during the Tribulation.

Along these same lines, part of the ritual for the Feast of Trumpets consists of the Book of Remembrance being opened and the *natzal* occurring. *Natzal* is the Hebrew word that corresponds to the Greek word *harpazó*. *Harpazó* is the New Testament Greek word from which we get the term Rapture. *Natzal* means “a catching away.”³⁰ Although the word *natzal* is not found directly in scripture, the rabbis coined the term based on passages such as the one in Zephaniah we just read, referring to living believers who are changed, and then hidden with the rest of the resurrected righteous dead.

But getting back to the themes of a trumpet sounding, the gates/doors opening, and the resurrection and Rapture occurring, we should recognize that the apostle John also was given a glimpse of this event in his great vision recorded in Revelation.

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After this I looked, and, behold, **a door was opened in heaven:** and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a **trumpet** talking with me; which said, **Come up hither,** and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

-Revelation 4:1

In other words, John heard a trumpet sounding, saw the doors/gates of heaven opened, and witnessed the resurrection and Rapture of the Church. In fact, John in a way, actually experienced the Rapture in his vision, as the voice called him up and then told him he would be shown what would happen next (in other words, what would happen after the Rapture, as the Day of the Lord continued and Tribulation began). And we know from reading the rest of Revelation, that that is exactly what was shown to him.

As mentioned earlier, the apostle Paul also connects these themes in 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.

Behold, I shew you a mystery; **We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,**

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.

-1 Corinthians 15:51-52

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven **with a shout,** with the voice of the archangel, and **with the trump of God:** and the **dead in Christ shall rise first:**

Then we which are alive and remain **shall be caught up** [*harpazó*] **together with them in the clouds**, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

For yourselves know perfectly that **the day of the Lord** so cometh as a thief in the night.

For when they shall say, Peace and safety; **then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.**

-1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:3

So, Paul also connects the resurrection and Rapture with an awakening trumpet blast, and a shout, hiding us from the Day of Wrath which is to come. Although the passage we just read doesn't mention the wrath, we know from earlier in this same book that this is the case.

And to **wait** for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, **which delivered us from the wrath to come.**

-1 Thessalonians 1:10

So, we see that these same themes are exhibited all throughout scripture, amazingly demonstrating its consistency and integration over the centuries. But it may amaze you to recognize one additional, if you will, "hidden shadow" of this day – the falling of Jericho in the Book of Joshua!

And when they make a **long blast with the ram's horn**, when you hear the **sound of the trumpet**, then all the people shall **shout with a great shout**, and the **wall of the city will fall down flat**, and the **people shall go up**, everyone straight before him.

-Joshua 6:5 (ESV)

In this passage, we first see the “long blast of the ram’s horn” – in other words, the Last Trump on the Feast of Trumpets – the long and final blast called the *Tekiah Gedolah*, where the trumpeter maintains the blast for as long as he has breath. Then we see another reference to the sound of the trumpet and a great shout. After that, the wall of the city falls down – in other words, the gates or doors open. After that, the passage says, “and the people shall go up!” This is exactly the sequence of events that will evidently take place when the Last Trump sounds, the trumpet blast and a shout will be heard, the gates of heaven will be opened, and the righteous people will be resurrected or raptured!

So, we not only find prophetic references to this by both the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament apostles, but we also find this same typological pattern strategically hidden in otherwise unrelated Old Testament stories. Amazing!

The Coronation of the King

A theme and term associated with the Feast of Trumpets is *Yom HaMelech* (the day of the King, more specifically referring to the day of His coronation). We mentioned earlier that the *shofar* blown on the Feast of Trumpets is known as the Last Trump, which the apostle Paul mentioned in First Thessalonians 4:16-17. At this time, the believers in Christ who are righteous will be taken to heaven in the Rapture, along with the righteous who had died before this time. Earlier, we connected this with the events being recorded in Revelation 4:1.

After this I looked, and, behold, **a door was opened in heaven:** and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a **trumpet** talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

-Revelation 4:1

John in a sense is “raptured.” What is the next thing that he immediately sees once “raptured” up to heaven? Verse 2 says:

And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a **throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.**

-Revelation 4:2

John was brought immediately into the throne room, ready to witness the coronation of the Messiah, recorded in that chapter and the next (Chapter 5). As John saw in this vision, on the Feast of Trumpets, the coronation of the Messiah Jesus Christ as King will happen in heaven. Jesus, who had come to earth during His First Coming to play the role of the suffering Messiah, will be crowned as King over all the earth in preparation for His coming back to earth to reign as the King Messiah during the Millennium (Revelation 19:16 and 20:4). So, the Feast of Trumpets is the Messiah's coronation.

If a new king was to be crowned that year in Israel, the coronation would occur at the Feast of Trumpets. A king always has his bride with him at his coronation. In like manner, when Christ is crowned king in preparation for His return to establish the Millennial reign, His bride the Church will be with him. In other words, if the Feast of Trumpets represents the day He is crowned, and the bride is always with the king at his coronation, then that is another indicator that the Church's rapture is linked to Trumpets – just as John (representative of the Church) was “raptured” up just in time to witness this event.

The Wedding Ceremony of the Messiah

Another Feast of Trumpets theme is the wedding of the Messiah. In Hebrew, the term *kiddushin* refers to sanctification (in bridal contexts, referring to the ceremonial sanctification necessary as part of the ritual), and the term *nesuin* refers to the romantic abduction, or catching away of the bride. In order to fully appreciate this aspect of the Feast of Trumpets, it is important to become familiar with the ancient Jewish wedding customs, which God gave to prefigure the wedding process of the Messiah. We will quickly go over a brief outline of the ancient Hebrew wedding ritual and how it parallels with the wedding of the Messiah.

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First, when the prospective bridegroom was of age, there were several ways he could go about finding a bride. His parents could choose an appropriate bride for him (Judges 14:1-10), an agent working on his behalf could arrange it (Genesis 24), or the young man could pursue making his own arrangements (Genesis 29:15-30).

The young man would leave his home and travel to the home of the prospective bride's father, carrying three important items – a sum of money to pay the bride price, a betrothal agreement, and a skin of wine. The prospective bridegroom would meet with the girl's father and lay out the proposal and agreement. When the agreement was reached, and the father consented, the prospective bride would be offered a cup of wine from the wine skin. If she drank from the cup, she was accepting his marriage proposal. If she refused it, she was refusing his proposal.

After drinking from the cup, a legal contract between the two would be in place (the *ketubah*). At this time, they were called husband and wife, although it was only yet the betrothal period and the actual wedding ceremony and consummation had not yet taken place. Their official status was “betrothed,” and not yet fully married. After this was done, the bridegroom made the statement to his bride-to-be that he would leave her to go back to his father's house and prepare a place for her. This addition onto the father's house was referred to as the *cheder*, meaning the bridechamber, but could also be called the *chuppah*, a bridal canopy. His promise was that he would one day return to receive her.

During this period of betrothal, the bride was considered sanctified, consecrated, and set apart for her future husband, as she had been bought with a great price. This price to the Jews did not signify that the bride was purchased as an item like a piece of furniture or a servant, but rather that by the exchanging of something of value, a change of status was conferred upon her. In other words, she goes from single to betrothed-to-be-married. During this time of betrothal separation, which typically lasted about one to two years, the bride spent her time preparing for her wedding and awaiting her bride-

groom's promised imminent return. She would faithfully keep watch, lest he returned while she was unaware and unready.

Meanwhile, the bridegroom returned to his father's house and began construction of the bridechamber, which was typically a room added onto his father's house. The construction is examined and approved only by the father. When the father was satisfied with the construction, he would give his son permission to go and receive his bride.

When it was time for the bridegroom to go and receive his bride, there was great celebration and rejoicing. The groom would select two of his trusted friends to act as the "friends of the bridegroom," or what we today would call the "best man." They would act as the two legal witnesses required for the marriage to be legal. The bridegroom and his friends would form a wedding party to travel to the home of the bride, along with virgin bridesmaids that would run ahead.

In the form of a torchlit procession, typically at night, they would approach the home of the bride. Although the bride was expecting her groom to come for her, she did not know the exact time of his coming. To maintain her readiness, she may keep an oil lamp lit throughout the night. As the procession approached the home of the bride, at a distance, a *shofar* would be blown, and there would be shouts to alert the bride that "the bridegroom cometh!"

She would be prepared and ready, and would use these last moments to gather her belongings and be ready to immediately leave with her bridegroom. The arrival of the groom at the bride's house signaled his intention of "taking her to wife." This act of "taking" or in a sense romantically abducting the bride was referred to as *nesuin*, which literally means "taking." She would be lifted up, placed onto a bridal litter, and carried off to the bridegroom's father's house with great joy and celebration.

Once back at the father's house, the ceremony was performed. Many guests would be assembled for the week-long wedding celebration. On this day, the bridegroom and the bride would be treated like a king and queen at their coronation. Every expense was taken to ensure their joy.

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Following the ceremony, the bridegroom and his bride would retire in seclusion to the bridechamber, where they would consummate the marriage through sexual intimacy. When the marriage was consummated, the friend of the bridegroom would joyfully deliver than news to the guests outside, and the week-long wedding celebration would begin. The new couple would emerge at the end of the seven-day celebration feast and the bride would be unveiled for all to see, as she is introduced to the community.^{31 32 33 34}

Throughout the scriptures, the terminology and themes of the ancient Jewish wedding ritual are consistently applied to the relationship between the Messiah and His bride. We can say that the ancient Hebrew wedding is a type of the ultimate wedding – that one between Jesus Christ and His pure virgin bride the Church. Let's explore these similarities in parallel to what we just went through.

Jesus, like the prospective bridegroom, left His Father's house (in heaven) and travelled to the home of His prospective bride (He came to earth in the form of a man – the Incarnation). And just like the bride did not initially choose the groom, we did not choose Christ.

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you...

-John 15:16a

At the Last Supper meal, Jesus presented a cup of wine, and assuming the position of a Bridegroom, He told His bride-to-be that by the drinking of the cup, she is agreeing to His marriage proposal.

After the same manner also **he took the cup**, when he had supped, saying, **this cup is the new testament in my blood**: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, **in remembrance of me**.

For as **often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup**, ye do shew the Lord's death **till he come**.

-1 Corinthians 11:25-26

So, He established this tradition of the Lord's Supper meal to commemorate and celebrate the marriage covenant. And just as the

earthly bridegroom would leave after the bride's agreement, in order to go prepare a place for her, and then later return, our heavenly Bridegroom instructed us to do this in remembrance of Him until He returns for us.

Then, Jesus, before His crucifixion, made the promise of a bridegroom to His disciples who would soon become the foundation of His future Church. He had been warning the disciples of His coming departure and death, and gave them a comforting promise.

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. **I go to prepare a place for you.**

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

-John 14:1-3

This was Jesus's first explicit promise of what the disciples would later learn to recognize as the Rapture, or the *nesuin* – the romantic abduction or snatching away of the bride – and He presented it using the phraseology of a Bridegroom. Like we mentioned earlier in this study, the word “mansion” here in Greek refers to a lodging, a dwelling-place, or a room, as in the room that would be added onto the father's house. When asked about the timing of His return, like any Jewish bridegroom, Jesus said:

But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

-Matthew 24:36

And like the Hebrew brides, the Church has been bought with a price – the unblemished blood of Christ.

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

-1 Corinthians 6:20

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Like the Hebrew brides were sanctified, consecrated, and set apart for their betrothed bridegrooms, the Church has been declared as being consecrated, sanctified, and set apart exclusively for Christ.

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church,
and gave himself for it;

That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be **holy and without blemish.**

-Ephesians 5:25-27

For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

-2 Corinthians 11:2

Like the Hebrew brides who would await their bridegrooms during the betrothal period (typically one to two years), the Church has been eagerly awaiting the return of her Bridegroom for about two thousand years.

Just as the bridegroom would come for the bride at any time, often at night, and with a shout and sound of a trumpet, in like manner, the Lord will return as a Bridegroom for the Church. Jesus's parable in Matthew 25 emphasizes the practice of the Hebrew bridegrooms often approaching at night, with a cry or a shout alerting the bride of His arrival.

And at **midnight** there was a **cry** [or a shout] made, **Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.**

-Matthew 25:6

Many of these same idioms are included by Paul in his description of the Rapture in the following passage.

For the **Lord** himself shall descend from heaven **with a shout**, with the voice of the archangel, and with the **trump of God**: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

-1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

Like in ancient times, where the couple was treated like royalty on their wedding day, we find that both Christ and the Church will be wearing crowns. The following passage from Revelation 14 describes the newly coronated Bridegroom, Christ, coming out of the bridal chamber to visit judgment upon the earth – and He’s wearing a crown.

And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto **the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown**, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

-Revelation 14:14

The Church is also promised a crown at this time.

Henceforth there is laid up for me a **crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but **unto all them also that love his appearing**.

-2 Timothy 4:8

And the description of the Church’s future is portrayed as being royal.

But ye are a chosen generation, a **royal** priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people...

-1 Peter 2:9

Like the ancient Hebrew brides, scripture describes a bridal week for the Church in which we will be in the wedding chamber with our Bridegroom, Christ. Biblical eschatology describes a final seven-year

period of time that is connected with the Jewish people specifically (Daniel 9). This chapter in Daniel describes time in periods of “weeks,” which is a common Hebraic expression for a period of seven (in this case, years). This time period is also described thoroughly in Revelation, and we’ve been referring to it as the Days of Awe in the Day of the Lord, or the Tribulation.

This last seven-year “week” of time, especially the last half of it (called the “Great Tribulation” by Jesus in Matthew 24:21), is a time of great trouble, and is characterized by the wrath, or indignation of God. Pretribulational eschatology, (which turns out to be the eschatological perspective that best aligns with the typology of the Jewish wedding) asserts that scripture teaches that the Rapture, or catching away of the Church, will happen prior to this seven-year period. So, according to that pattern, while the Jewish people’s final “week” is taking place on earth, Jesus and His bride, the Church, will celebrate their marriage “week” in our heavenly *chuppah*, hidden away from view!

Though the Church was unknown to the Old Testament audience, we find prophetic allusions to the heavenly *chuppah* in the following passages, which we’ve mostly alluded to earlier.

You’ll find that especially with the final three feasts, we may be repeating certain scripture passages several times – not to be repetitive only, but literally because there are so many amazing linkages with the themes of these festivals. In order to adequately “peel back the layers of the onion” that we might understand all there is to know, some repetition is necessary. But repetition is also the primary method of learning, so with that, let’s continue to re-examine these amazing prophetic passages of the heavenly *chuppah*.

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.

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.

-Isaiah 26:20-21

This passage describes a special group of people being brought into God's "chambers," for a period of time, until the "indignation" (an Old testament term for the Tribulation) is over. It then describes the Lord coming out of "his place" to punish the inhabitants of the earth, which we know will happen at His Second Coming. In other words, this passage likely means that we will be safely concealed in our heavenly wedding chamber with Christ for one "week" (in other words, seven years), while the Tribulation is happening on earth. At the end of this seven years, Christ returns to earth at the Second Coming to bring justice and establish His Millennial Kingdom.

The same theme of the Lord coming out of His chambers to visit judgment on the earth at this time is spoken of in Joel 2, speaking prophetically of the "Day of the Lord." It then speaks of a bridegroom coming out of his chamber and a bride from her *chuppah*.

And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?

...

Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly:

Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: **let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet [chuppah].**

-Joel 2:11, 15-16

And just as every Hebrew wedding celebrated with a great wedding feast, in like manner, following the seven years in our heavenly *chuppah* while the Tribulation was taking place on earth, Jesus Christ will return to earth (at the Second Coming) with His unveiled bride – the Church – to also celebrate with a marriage supper. At this time, the angels will gather the scattered remnant from all over the earth who had survived the Tribulation, and they

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will enter the Kingdom and partake in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the **marriage supper of the Lamb**. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

-Revelation 19:9, 11-14

So, we can see that throughout scripture, the ancient Hebrew wedding ritual serves as an incredible prophetic type of the wedding of the Messiah, and the relationship between the Messiah and His bride. And we can see the association, linkages, and overlapping themes of the “return and marriage of the Bridegroom” with those of the Feast of Trumpets.

The Day of Remembrance and the Day of Judgment

Two other closely related titles and themes for the Feast of Trumpets are *Yom HaZikkaron* (the Day of Remembrance) and *Yom HaDin* (the Day of Judgment). Let’s first examine the Day of Remembrance.

The rabbis took this name from Leviticus 23:24, in which the word **memorial** is the Hebrew word *zikkaron*, or remembrance.

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a **memorial** of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation.

-Leviticus 23:24

From Malachi 3:16-18 – where the phrase “Book of Remembrance” is mentioned – the rabbis taught that it was on this festival day of Trumpets that the Book of Remembrance is opened and the righteous are judged according to their works.³⁵ In the Christian understanding, this would be the Bema Seat Judgment described in 2 Corinthians 5 – the judgment after the Rapture and before the Second Coming, where the righteous will receive rewards based on how faithfully we served Christ; and has nothing to do with salvation.

The Day of Remembrance, *Yom HaZikkaron*, concerns a judgment of how much a believer will be rewarded; but the Day of Judgment, *Yom HaDin*, reveals a judgment regarding how much an unbeliever will be punished.

Let’s now discuss *Yom HaDin*, the Day of Judgment. This is the time when God sits on His throne and judges mankind. This is seen in many passages, such as Daniel 7:9-10.

I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.

A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: **the judgment was set, and the books were opened.**

-Daniel 7:9-10

Keep in mind that although this “Day of Judgment” theme is associated with the Feast of Trumpets, the judgment is not thought to be final until *Yom Kippur*. Let’s explore this.

It was seen that on Trumpets, God would sit in His courtroom and all men would be judged. According to Jewish tradition, three great books will be opened as each man’s life is weighed in the balance and placed into one of three categories. It has been taught that there will

be three groupings, one of the righteous, one of the wicked, and one of the intermediates. The righteous are at once inscribed and sealed for life in the world to come; the wicked are at once inscribed and sealed for damnation.³⁶

However, the intermediate person has until *Yom Kippur* until his fate is sealed forever. In other words, the intermediate person will have until the end of the seven-year Tribulation to repent and turn to God. The intermediate person on Trumpets is judged by God and is neither written in the Book of Life or the Book of the Wicked. His fate is yet to be decided. The intermediate person and the wicked have to go through the “Days of Awe,” the Tribulation, until they reach *Yom Kippur* (the end of the Tribulation when even the intermediate person’s fate is sealed forever).

For Israel as a nation, the fulfillment of *Yom HaDin* – the Day of Judgment – will begin a dark time, the Time of Jacob’s Trouble in the Day of The Lord. This is the day anticipated in the Old Testament prophets, who warn of a coming day of judgment for the nation. It is interesting that just as the Feast of Trumpets occurs on a day when the moon is darkest (the new moon), the Day of the Lord is described as being a day of darkness when God will turn off the heavenly lights.

For just a small handful of the many examples of this, Amos 5:18-20, Zephaniah 1:14-16, and Joel 2:31 all speak of that day of darkness, in which the Lord will pour out the wrath of His judgment on the wicked, and ultimately through this period of Tribulation, bring Israel to repentance. In fact, the passage in Zephaniah speaks of this as the “day of the trumpet.”

The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.

That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,

A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers.

-Zephaniah 1:14-16

We see this introduced similarly in Joel 2:1, also incorporating the blowing of trumpets to welcome in the Day of the Lord.

Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand;

-Joel 2:1

So, we can see that the fulfillment of this Day of Judgment – *Yom HaDin* – for Israel, will be one of terrible judgment during the Time of Jacob’s Trouble, but ultimately leading to their redemption just prior to the return of the Messiah on Atonement.

We should understand that the trumpets being blown on the Feast of Trumpets represent a sound of alarm to the inhabitants of the earth, and the nation of Israel, acting as a sound of coming judgment and reminding the people of the approaching culmination of the season of *Teshuvah* – or repentance. It is a warning that the terrible Day of the Lord is beginning and those still on earth will be plunged into the Tribulation period – the final time for people to repent and turn to God before the fateful day of the Second Coming. So, the blowing of the shofars on Trumpets are associated with alarm and judgment for the people left on earth, but are a wonderful sound of salvation for those ready to be Raptured!

That brings us to the end of our exploration of the Feast of Trumpets. Let’s quickly recap.

In the Feast of Trumpets, known to the Jews by many different names and themes – we clearly see the representation of a number of future events on God’s prophetic calendar. On the festival calendar, we discussed the forty-day period of repentance called *Teshuvah*, with the final ten days (the Days of Awe) including the two days of Trumpets,

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followed by seven days in between, followed by one day of *Yom Kippur*. We discussed the themes of repentance, alarm, awakening, a shout, a trumpet blast, the Last Trump, the resurrection of the dead, the marriage of the Messiah, remembrance, concealment, the coronation of the king, judgment, and the birth pangs of the Messiah.

Through these themes, we can see a picture of the Biblical timeline of the future events that initiate the period known as the Day of the Lord. We can see that the season leading up to this feast represents a call to repentance and readiness in preparation for the coming Rapture (for the righteous) and the onset of the judgment phase of the Day of the Lord (for the wicked). It is a call to spiritual awakening and preparation. But it also represents the awakening of the dead, as the resurrection is thought to take place on this day.

Linked with the resurrection is the Rapture of the Church, preceded by a shout and the sounding of a trumpet – but not just any trumpet – more specifically, the Last Trump. The gates of heaven open and the righteous Church – the bride of Christ, will enter her heavenly *chuppah* where the marriage of the Messiah will take place. Christ is crowned King with His bride by His side. Meanwhile, those left behind by the Rapture will (immediately or eventually) enter into the final seven years of Tribulation, the culmination of the birth pangs of the Messiah, represented by the seven Days of Awe in between the two days of Trumpets and *Yom Kippur*.

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CHAPTER 9

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT (YOM KIPPUR)

The Day of Atonement, or *Yom Kippur*, is the second of the fall feast days, and is considered the holiest day in the Jewish religious year, taking place on the 10th day of the month of Tishri. It is a solemn day of fasting and mourning for sin, yet it is also a day of rejoicing in God's provision of a covering (or an atonement).

The ritual of the Day of Atonement is detailed in Leviticus:

And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you:

For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord.

It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever.

And the priest, whom he shall anoint, and whom he shall consecrate to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen clothes, even the holy garments:

And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation.

And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as the Lord commanded Moses.

-Leviticus 16:29-34

This solemn feast day is further detailed in Leviticus Chapter 23:

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord.

And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the Lord your God.

For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people.

And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people.

Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

-Leviticus 23:26-31

Like the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement also has a number of themes and names associated with it. These include the following:

- The Day of Redemption (*Yom HaPeduth*)
- “Face to Face”
- The Great Trump (*Shofar HaGadol*)
- The Regathering
- The Day, or The Great Day (*Yoma*)

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- The Day of Judgment (*Yom HaDin*)
- The Closing of the Gates (*Neilah*)
- The Jubilee

Let's begin to examine this feast day in order to better recognize the typology embedded into its rituals.

The Day of Redemption and "Face To Face"

On this day, God grants or denies atonement, or redemption for the coming year. Because of this, one of the other names associated with this festival is *Yom HaPeduth*, the Day of Redemption. Because the atonement ritual involved the high priest going into the Holy of Holies (where God's glory dwelt) on this one day of the year, this festival day is associated with the theme "face to face." It's the one day the priest would be essentially "face to face" with God on behalf of the nation.

Although this ritual each year only provided temporary atonement and redemption from sin, the scriptures prophetically spoke of a day when a future Messiah would return and complete this redemption for all-time. Atonement means a reparation for a wrong, or in this case, specifically referring to the reconciliation of God and man.¹ A similar word, redemption, refers to atoning for a wrong or mistake.²

Sin creates a chasm between man and the holy God. In order to atone for sin, and eliminate the chasm, the Bible teaches that the blood of an acceptable substitute is required, making us profoundly aware of the seriousness of sin and the sin problem within humanity.

For the life of the flesh is in the **blood**, and I have given it for you on the altar to make **atonement** for your souls, for it is **the blood that makes atonement by the life.**

-Leviticus 17:11 (ESV)

Because God is both holy and just, He must punish sin. Scripture tells us that the "wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). So, when we

sin and become separated from God, we become separated from true life. Therefore, we begin to experience death.

While on earth in the flesh, there is a level of grace that withholds the immediate judgment of physical death, but in the ultimate sense, no one can live separated from God. Do you see the problem? We can't live without Him, but sin separates us from Him, as His nature is Holy. And because He is a Just God, He must punish sin. But, yet, He is also a God of love, who wants us to be reconciled to Him. The entire purpose of the creation of man is to be God's be-loved. So, the mission of God and the epic theme of the Bible and the history of mankind can be summed up in one word – redemption. Through the process of atonement, God's mission has been to redeem mankind back to a place of relationship with Him. This is the story of the Bible.

In the Old Testament, in order to teach us these things and instill in us an understanding of the ways of God, He instituted the Levitical system of animal sacrifice for atonement to be given – but only on a temporary basis. Later, through taking on the form of a man, God entered into this saga personally to present Himself as the perfect sacrifice for sin – the perfect atoning blood sacrifice that would fulfill the typology of the Old Testament sacrificial system and end the yearly sacrifices. He would be the one sacrifice effective for all mankind, for all-time. But until this event, which was the crucifixion of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, in 33 AD, the Day of Atonement was the day where the nation of Israel received temporary atonement of sin – pointing them towards this ultimate fulfillment.

In the days of the Temple, on the Day of Atonement, there was an elaborate ritual involving two goats – one to be slain, and one to be led off into the wilderness to die, symbolically bearing away the sins of the people. A priest brings out a box containing two lots – a black stone and a white stone – one being “for the Lord” and one being “for *Azazel*,” meaning the scapegoat. Depending on the drawing of these lots, it is determined which goat would be slain and which would be taken into the wilderness to die (Leviticus 16:8-10). The high priest placed his hands upon the scapegoat and conferred upon it the sins of the people.

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The blood of the slain goat was brought by the high priest – who served as the mediator between God and man – into the Holy of Holies, where only on this one day of the year, he was allowed to enter and be “face to face” with God. The high priest would sprinkle the blood on the Mercy Seat – the lid of the Ark of the Covenant. The word for mercy seat in Hebrew is *kapporet*. It comes from the root word *kaphar*, which is the same word used for “atonement.” The mercy seat can also be translated as the seat of atonement.³

The High Priest sprinkling the blood onto the Mercy Seat typologically represents the future actions of Jesus, the true High Priest at His Second Coming on a future Day of Atonement. In Isaiah 52:13-15, the Messiah is seen sprinkling many nations.

Behold, my servant [meaning the Messiah] shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men [speaking of his mutilation during the crucifixion]:

So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

-Isaiah 52:13-15

Verse 14 depicts a man so marred that He didn't resemble a man. We know from Isaiah 50:6 that His beard was ripped out. Verse 14 is speaking about Jesus during His First Coming, while Verse 15 is speaking about Him sprinkling many nations at His Second Coming, meaning he would forgive their sins. This sprinkling of the High Priest is earlier referred to repeatedly in Leviticus (1:5, 11; 3:2, 8, 13; 4:6, 17; 7:2). Jesus came as a prophet at His First Coming, but will come as a High Priest and King at His Second Coming. But going back to Isaiah 52:13-15, if we backtrack several verses earlier in this same chapter, we can see the clear Day of Atonement language.

Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know **in that day** that I am he that doth speak: behold, it is I.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see **eye to eye**, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.

Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, **he hath redeemed Jerusalem**.

-Isaiah 52:6-9

So, we can see that this passage speaks of “in that day,” speaking of the future Second Coming of Christ likely on a Day of Atonement, where Israel will see and know the deliverance and salvation of God. They will see him face to face, or “eye to eye,” and God will begin to reign on earth, after having redeemed Israel and the righteous of the nations. In fact, if we back up even further in this chapter to the beginning, we can actually see the clear Feast of Trumpets terminology as well.

Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.

Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

-Isaiah 52:1-2

Clearly, we can see the Feast of Trumpets themes of the call to awaken and arise (or repent) in preparation for what takes place next. So, when we understand the typology of the feasts, these prophetic Old Testament passages are not so difficult to understand. They give us a very clear picture of the timeline of God’s end-time program.

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In Ezekiel 36:24-26, we see the second regathering of Israel back to Jerusalem after the Second Coming (we'll talk more about this concept of regathering later). We are told that God will sprinkle clean water upon them when they return back to the land of Israel – an illusion to the *Yom Kippur* event, but also to the New Covenant that the nation will receive as they enter the Millennial Kingdom.

For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

Then will I **sprinkle clean water upon you**, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

-Ezekiel 36:24-26

So, we can see that the Old Testament is clear that the divine appointment of *Yom Kippur* speaks of the future day when the Messiah will return, conquer the enemies, gather the repentant remnant of His people that turns to Him during the Days of Awe (Tribulation), and as their High Priest, sprinkle and cleanse the nation, providing them with national atonement and redemption as he issues unto them the New Covenant.

Isaiah 63:1-3 also describes the Second Coming of Christ, and Verse 3 specifically mentions His garments being sprinkled with blood.

Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?

I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in

my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.

-Isaiah 63:1-4

So, once again, this describes Jesus, the High Priest coming back to earth on *Yom Kippur* and executing His righteous judgment.

But let's discuss one further element of the *Yom Kippur* atonement ritual, as carried out in ancient times. The Talmud records some additional details on how this ritual was carried out. We are told that the high priest would tie a cord of red painted wool between the horns of the scapegoat. He also tied another such cord around the neck of the goat reserved for the sin offering. The cord used for the scapegoat was later divided in two. One piece remained between the scapegoat's horns, and the other half hung upon the opening of the hallway leading to the Temple, so that all might see it.^{4 5}

In years when the sacrifice was accepted by God and atonement was granted Israel, both parts of the cord miraculously turned white.⁶ Therefore, when all eyes saw this incredible picture of God's forgiveness, the hearts of the people rejoiced. The *Yom Kippur* ritual is directly linked to Israel confessing its sins and ceremonially placing the sins of the nation upon the sacrificial goat. The sin was then removed by this goat's death. Sin was represented by the red color of the cloth (the color of blood). Redemption was represented by this red cloth miraculously turning white. You may recall this theme from Isaiah 1:18.

Come, let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet [crimson], they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as [white] wool.

-Isaiah 1:18

The rabbis actually associate this passage with the *Yom Kippur* ritual in the Talmud, Tractate Yoma, 68b.⁷

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But amazingly, the Talmud records that this miraculous occurrence of the red cord turning white on this day unexpectedly changed in the early 30s, AD. The Jewish records state that the thread stopped turning white about forty years prior to the Temple's destruction in 70 AD – in other words, around the early 30s AD – around the time when Jesus died.

We read in the *Jerusalem Talmud*:

Forty years before the destruction of the Temple, the western light went out, the crimson thread remained crimson, and the lot for the Lord always came up in the left hand. They would close the gates of the Temple by night and get up in the morning and find them wide open.⁸

A similar passage in the *Babylonian Talmud* states:

Our rabbis taught: During the last forty years before the destruction of the Temple the lot [“For the Lord”] did not come up in the right hand; nor did the crimson-colored strap become white; nor did the western most light shine; and the doors of the Hekel [the Holy Place in the Temple] would open by themselves.⁹

The clear indication is that something had changed in the early 30s AD. Clearly, God wasn't accepting the sacrifices of goats and lambs anymore. Atonement apparently was to be gained in some other way. Undoubtedly, the impactful event here was the atoning death of the true *Yom Kippur* Lamb – Jesus Christ in 33 AD. He Himself was put to death as the ultimate sacrifice for sin. Because His death was the fulfillment of the symbolism that *Yom Kippur* was instituted to look toward, atonement was now no longer achieved through the two goats offered.

The ultimate Sacrifice had already come. Like an innocent sacrificial lamb, the Messiah was put to death, though no fault was found in

Him! But unlike Temple sacrifices or the *Yom Kippur* events – where sin is only covered over for a time – the Messianic sacrifice comes with the promise of forgiveness of sins for all mankind for all time, to those who obey Him.

This stoppage of the miraculous red cord ritual was an indicator that the Jews needed to recognize their true Messiah, understand that the Levitical system He instituted was now fulfilled, and obey the commands of this Messiah to enter into the salvation that His work on the cross provided. The New Covenant was now in place and He was no longer honoring Old Covenant practices.

The writer of Hebrews emphasizes the significance of Christ's atoning sacrifice. Jesus was not only the pure, spotless Passover Lamb slain for our sins, but he was also the High Priest, able to go into the true Holy of Holies in heaven (which the earthly Temple was just a figure of), and offer His blood as the perfect atoning sacrifice for sin.

But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, this is to say, not of this building;

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

-Hebrews 9:11-14

The high priest served as a mediator between God and the people, and was the only one who had close contact with the Holy of Holies, and that only once a year on the Day of Atonement. So, we can see that Christ came as that mediator, serving both the role of the High Priest and the perfect atoning sacrifice. Hebrews 9 continues:

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And for this cause **he is the mediator of the new testament**, that by means of death, for the **redemption of the transgressions** that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.

Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood.

For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,

Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: **but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.**

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them

that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

-Hebrews 9:15-28

So, we can see that everything given to Israel was a type or figure of an ultimate reality that would come. Even the Temple and Holy of Holies were given as a model of the true Temple and Holy of Holies in heaven, where Christ appeared as High Priest and presented His own blood as our atoning sacrifice. The *Yom Kippur* rituals were given to Israel as types of these future events.

However, we know that as a nation, the Jews did not accept their Messiah at that time and did not receive the New Covenant. So, as eluded to earlier, the ultimate fulfillment will take place for the Jewish nation on a future Day of Atonement, at the Second Coming of their Messiah to conquer their enemies, regather the remnant, and administer the redemption of the New Covenant as He begins to sit on David's throne and establish the Millennial Kingdom.

The Day and the Day of Judgment

Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, comes on the 10th day of the Jewish month of Tishri (our September/October). It is the last day of the Ten Days of Awe, and the last day of the forty days of *Teshuvah*, or repentance; and it is the most solemn day of the Jewish calendar. It is believed that those who have not been written in the Book of Life immediately on Trumpets, or *Rosh ha-Shanah*, are given until the Day of Atonement to repent, pray for forgiveness, and turn to God. On *Yom Kippur*, if they still have not turned to God, their eternal fate is decided. The entire Day of Atonement is spent fasting and praying. Because this day is the most solemn day in the year, it is known as "The Day", or *Yoma*.¹⁰

But like the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement is also known as the Day of Judgment, or *Yom HaDin*. In the case of Trumpets, it was a day of heralding alarm, alerting people of the beginning of the judgment of the Day of the Lord and the Days of Awe, or the Tribula-

tion – and the books of judgment being opened in heaven. In the case of the Day of Atonement, it speaks of the final judgment as the Second Coming of the Messiah takes place and His enemies are destroyed.

This theme of judgement taking place at the Second Coming of the Messiah is repeatedly spoken of in the Old Testament prophets, including many of the passages we have examined already in our exploration of Trumpets and Atonement. But let's examine several more, as we continue to put together the puzzle pieces of Old Testament prophecy in our attempt to form a clear picture of the timeline for the last days.

First, let's take a look at Isaiah 63:1-6, which we partially examined earlier, as we recognized Christ's role as the High Priest with the blood-sprinkled garments. But let's now recognize this from the perspective of *Yom HaDin* – the Day of Judgment, as we see this incredible back and forth question-and-answer exchange between Isaiah and the returning Messiah.

Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?

I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.

And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; **and my fury**, it upheld me.

And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.

-Isaiah 63:1-6

This passage is a fascinating back and forth conversation between the prophet Isaiah (in the previous chapter described as a watchman on the wall) and the Messiah. These verses reveal that at His Second Coming, the Messiah will utterly defeat the nations of the world who gather against Israel. God's wrath is described as a wine press in this passage (cf. Revelation 14:19-20).

Isaiah, as a watchman on the wall in Jerusalem, sees the Messiah approaching from Bozrah with bloodstained garments. Bozrah is the ancient capital of Edom. Many commentators think that the city carved into the mountains called Petra in Jordan (modern-day Edom, very close to Bozrah) could be the place the believing Jewish remnant goes to seek shelter when the nations try to slaughter them at the end of the Tribulation (Revelation 12:6). It would be the ideal representation of a winepress, as it is a narrow canyon where the blood of Israel's enemies could literally flow as high as a horse's bridle, as Revelation 14:18-20 predicts. Other passages seem to describe it as a sheepfold (Micah 2:12), which also serves as a perfect description. In fact, the word Bozrah actually means "sheepfold."¹¹

The events in Bozrah are just one part of the multi-stage conflict we may title the "campaign of Armageddon," where the nations will gather to destroy Israel. Isaiah, speaking as a watchman on the wall of Jerusalem, sees the returning Messiah approaching wearing blood-sprinkled garments after destroying these enemies near Bozrah.

The next passage we will examine, found in Zechariah, describes how Jerusalem has been ravaged at the end of the Tribulation – the event that caused the Jewish remnant to flee to the wilderness (or Bozrah) in the first place. Then it skips ahead to what Isaiah saw in the previous passage, the Messiah approaching Jerusalem from Bozrah to fight against the armies still gathered there. His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives outside Jerusalem, causing a huge earthquake to take place. The enemies will be destroyed, and the Messiah will become King over all the earth – with this passage highlighting the climactic literal Day of the Lord within the larger period also known by the same name.

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Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.

For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; **and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.**

Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark:

But it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.

And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.

And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one.

-Zechariah 14:1-9

These two passages – the first in Isaiah and this second one in Zechariah – are just two of many Old Testament prophecies that describe these events, but they convey to us the main points.

We can see Jesus coming back at the end of the birth pangs of the

Messiah (the Tribulation), with Jerusalem having fallen under siege and the remnant trapped at Bozrah. After destroying the enemies at Bozrah, saving the remnant, Jesus returns and saves Jerusalem. His feet will touch the Mount of Olives and there will be a great earthquake as the Antichrist is deposed, the enemies are vanquished, Christ becomes King over all the earth, and the Messianic Kingdom is ready to begin. At this time, the gates of Heaven are closed. These future events taking place on a future Day of Atonement will not be the rehearsal, but the real thing – the final fulfillment.

The Great Trump and the Regathering

Like we've mentioned several times already throughout this study, there are three significant trumpet blasts in Jewish tradition – the First Trump, the Last Trump, and the Great Trump. We have already discussed the first two of these. The First Trump is associated with Pentecost, representing the birth of Israel, the giving of the Old Covenant, and the “betrothal of the Messiah.” The Last Trump is associated with the Feast of Trumpets, representing the resurrection and the heralding of the coming of the Messiah as a Bridegroom to gather His bride (the Rapture). We will now discuss the third of these three trumps – the Great Trump, or in Hebrew, the *Shofar HaGadol*, which is associated with the sixth feast, the Day of Atonement.

But before exploring this Great Trump ritual of the Day of Atonement, we first need to appreciate one commonly misunderstood concept – the two national regatherings of Israel. If you do not recognize that scripture teaches there will be two national regatherings – one in unbelief and one in faith – you will likely end up mistaking many of these passages with Rapture passages. Let's briefly develop this understanding before continuing.

The first thing to take note of is that from the very beginning of Israel's history, God had promised to scatter them among the nations worldwide if they refused to keep the terms of the Mosaic Covenant and later refused to recognize Him as Messiah when He visited them. For instance, Deuteronomy 28:64 says God would:

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Scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other...

-Deuteronomy 28:64

From this passage, it's clear that the dispersion would be **global**, as God had promised to scatter them from **one end of the earth to the other**. Predictions like this one are spoken of in a number of places throughout the Old Testament. Although the nation was somewhat scattered during the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions, in which many were brought captive into those lands, **these events were only a local dispersion and cannot act as the ultimate fulfillment of these prophecies describing a worldwide dispersion.**

Instead, these prophecies of worldwide dispersion find clear fulfillment in the events of 70 AD and following. At this point in time, God brought discipline upon unbelieving Israel through the invasion of the Roman general Titus Vespasian, whose armies would level Jerusalem and the Temple in order to quell the Jewish uprisings of the late 60s AD. During this time, many Jews were killed or sold into slavery and removed from the land. Then, during the 130s AD, the Bar Kokhba revolt would result in most of the remaining Jewish population of Judea being killed, sold into foreign slavery, or forced to flee the land. The area of Jerusalem was renamed Aelia Capitolina by the Romans. For the last two thousand years, the Jews have found themselves in this worldwide dispersion without a home country (this dispersion referred to as the Diaspora) exactly as foretold by God through the writings of Moses in Deuteronomy, and in many other places.

But just as Israel's disciplinary dispersion is prophesied in the Old Testament, so is her eventual restoration. As we already stated, the Bible specifically predicts **two worldwide regatherings** for national Israel. First, there would be a regathering in **unbelief** when Israel returns to part of her original land promise – a return in preparation for the eventual judgment of the Tribulation, through which the nation will be brought to faith. But this regathering will be followed by another future regathering in **faith**, after the discipline of the Tribulation leads the Jewish remnant to cry out unto Christ in their

time of trouble – prompting His response. After He returns to save this righteous remnant and destroy their enemies, He will then regather the global outcasts of Israel and bring them back to the land in preparation for blessings in the Kingdom Age. In this final regathering, Israel will be restored not only to part of her land, but to all of her land, according to the original boundaries promised by God to the Patriarchs and reiterated to Joshua in the Old Testament (Genesis 15:18 and Joshua 1:4). These boundaries have never yet been completely under Israel’s control, but they will be in this future Kingdom Age.

But here’s a key point to recognize: We know that there are *only* two worldwide regatherings of Israel, and that this second and final one will occur after the Tribulation, prior to the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom. We learn all of this from Isaiah 11:11-12.

And it shall come to pass **in that day**, that the Lord shall set his hand again **the second time to recover the remnant of his people**, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and **shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.**

-Isaiah 11:11-12

The setting of this passage is clearly eschatological, referring to the final regathering in faith after the Tribulation as the Millennial Kingdom is being established. Verses 1-5 of this chapter describe the Second Coming of Christ in judgment to rule the earth. Verses 6-9 depict the peaceful conditions of restoration under the New Covenant, and Verse 10 introduces Israel’s national repentance and return to their true Messiah. Verses 11-12 (which we just read) continue this theme, helping us understand the context of this final worldwide end-time regathering. You will see this clearly in the other parallel passages we will examine further ahead.

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But let's recognize the important marker given to us in Verse 11 – the phrase “the second time.” In light of what we just discussed, it becomes clear that if this final worldwide regathering is the “second one,” then that means there was an earlier worldwide regathering – “the first one”. The Hebrew-Christian scholar Arnold Fruchtenbaum explains this further.

[Isaiah] is speaking of the final worldwide regathering in faith in preparation for blessing. Isaiah numbers the final worldwide gathering in faith in preparation for the Messianic Kingdom as the **second** one. In other words, the last one is only the second one. If the last one is the second one, how many can there be before that? Only one. The first one could not have been the return from Babylon since that was not an international regathering from the four corners of the world, only a migration from one country (Babylonia) to another (Judea). The Bible does not allow for several worldwide regatherings in unbelief; it allows for one worldwide regathering in unbelief, followed by the last one, the one in faith, which is the second one. This text only permits two worldwide regatherings from the four corners of the earth. Therefore, the present Jewish state is relevant to Bible prophecy.¹²

The phrase “gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth” is the same language used in Matthew 24, which some mistake for a Rapture passage.

Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall **gather together his elect from the four winds**, from one end of heaven to the other.

-Matthew 24:29-31

If you know your Old Testament, and understand the concept of the two end time worldwide regatherings of Israel, it should be easy to recognize that this passage in Matthew 24 is speaking of their second and final regathering in faith, which occurs at the Second Coming of Christ, who then establishes His Kingdom on earth. We know that this is the final regathering, as we see from scripture that they will never again be scattered. Let's discuss these two regatherings in more detail.

The first regathering is the current one that has taken place progressively over about the past hundred years, highlighted by the reformation of the nation of Israel in 1948 and the restoration of control over Jerusalem in 1967. But the nation has not returned in faith. Instead, this first regathering is a restoration to the land only (and a partial restoration of the land, at that). This current regathering in unbelief is setting the stage for divine discipline during the birth pangs (occurring during the Day of the Lord).

But the second and final regathering will take place after the end of the Tribulation, after the Jewish remnant returns to the Messiah in faith, and He redeems the nation at His Second Coming – the ultimate Day of Atonement event. This latter regathering of Israel will set the stage for her national prominence and restoration during the Millennial Kingdom that will be inaugurated soon after.

Numerous passages appear to speak of Israel's initial regathering in unbelief prior to the Tribulation period – for example Zephaniah 2:1-2.

Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired;

Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you.

-Zephaniah 2:1-2

This passage depicts a regathering of the nation clearly described

as taking place *before* the outpouring of God's discipline upon Israel in the Tribulation – helping us to recognize this as a first regathering passage. As we continue to go through these examples, it will become clear that there is one regathering *prior* to the Tribulation and one directly *after* the Tribulation, as the Millennial Kingdom is being introduced.

It is also evident that when this first regathering takes place, the nation is still in unbelief, since they're described as a "nation not desired" (Verse 1), or as the NASB puts it, a "nation without shame." In other words, they are shamelessly in sin. Clearly, this indicates that they haven't yet repented, and are in unbelief at the time of this regathering. For this reason, they are threatened with judgment when the Tribulation arrives (as we see in Verses 2-3). Therefore, this passage unmistakably shows a regathering of the nation in unbelief prior to the Tribulation – through which they will be brought to national repentance.

We should also note the contrast presented one chapter later in Zephaniah 3:11, which speaks of the later Millennial Kingdom, saying, "In that day shalt thou *not be ashamed* for all thy doings." Rather than conveying a condition of shamelessness while in sin (as before), the nation at this point will have repented and been redeemed, thereby removing their shame. This further clarifies for us that this regathering in Zephaniah Chapter 2 was the regathering in unbelief prior to the discipline that would lead to their repentance and the removal of their shame. So, this first regathering is a regathering in unbelief in preparation for the judgment and discipline of the Tribulation.

Some people today disregard this current regathering because of the fact that the Jews have not returned in faith. But we should understand that this is a necessary part of the progression of God's program for national Israel, and her first regathering in unbelief has been clearly prophesied. In order for God to ultimately bring Israel to faith at the end of the Tribulation (which is one of the main purposes of the Tribulation to begin with), God must first regather them back to the land in unbelief in preparation for this coming time of punishment.

There are many other passages that also refer to Jews inhabiting Jerusalem in the end times, which by inference, require an initial regathering phase. In other words, since we know they were dispersed out of the land in 70 AD and following, how could they be described as being in the land in these end times passages, which we know take place prior to the final regathering, which we will see takes place later after the Second Coming? They imply an initial regathering phase.

But the far more frequent mentions of Israel's regathering refer to her second and final regathering at the end of the Tribulation. In fact, Bible scholar Thomas Ice notes:

Every Old Testament prophet, except Jonah, speaks of a permanent return to the Land of Israel by the Jews.¹³

The final regathering of the Jews at the Second Coming of the Messiah is one of the most talked-about events in all of Bible prophecy. For example, let's read through the following passage, Ezekiel 20:33-38, and try to pick out the Day of Atonement terminology that leads us to further conclude that the regathering being discussed takes place at the end of the Tribulation.

As I live, saith the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and **with fury poured out**, will I rule over you:

And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and **with fury poured out**.

And I will bring you into the **wilderness of the people**, and there will I plead with **you face to face**.

Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God.

And I will cause you to **pass under the rod**, and **I will bring you into the bond of the covenant**:

And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country

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where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel:
and **ye shall know that I am the Lord.**

-Ezekiel 20:33-38

We see that the Lord will pour out His fury and wrath (the Tribulation), purge the people (Zechariah 13:8 says two thirds of the Jews will perish in the Tribulation), bring them into the wilderness (Bozrah?), plead with them face to face (another Yom Kippur theme), and bring them into the New Covenant.

The Bible is filled with prophetic passages that probably or definitely refer to this final regathering. We've already examined many of these passages throughout this study, but let's go over several more, beginning as early as Deuteronomy.

That then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will **return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee.**

-Deuteronomy 30:3

We know this refers to the final regathering because the previous verse (Verse 2), describes the regathering in the context of the Jews turning back to God – or in other words, finally acknowledging Christ as their true Messiah. Obviously, that was not the setting of the initial regathering in the 1900s. Additionally, many of the other verses surrounding this passage seem to clearly describe more ultimate events that have yet to take place, helping us recognize its context.

Let's look at another passage that also describes this final regathering – Isaiah 43:5-7.

Fear not: for I am with thee: **I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west;**

I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth;

Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

-Isaiah 43:5-7

Again, this passage quite clearly refers to the final regathering, as the previous chapter (Chapter 42) describes the Tribulation in Verses 15-16, and the context of Chapter 43 involves the ultimate redemption and restoration of Israel – events that characterize the time of Israel's final regathering.

Yet another passage is Ezekiel 36:24-28.

For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

Then will I **sprinkle clean water upon you**, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

-Ezekiel 36:24-28

Again, the Second Coming and ultimate redemption and restoration of Israel is the clear context of this passage, helping us to understand that this prophecy speaks of the final regathering.

While could certainly continue here and provide many additional passages, our point should be clear. Israel is prophesied to experience both an initial regathering in unbelief and a final regathering in faith.

With that in mind, we will move on to further discuss the concept of the Great Trump sounding on the Day of Atonement – and what it signifies in relation to what we've been discussing. We will examine some passages shortly that will connect the second regathering of

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Israel with the blast of the Great Trump, helping us to further recognize the linkage between these Day of Atonement events.

Understanding the distinction between the Last Trump and the Great Trump is a key that helps us to organize and understand the prophecies in scripture. When we see “Last Trump” mentioned, we immediately know to associate that passage with the Feast of Trumpets events – the resurrection/Rapture of believers. Whenever we see “Great Trump” mentioned, we immediately know to associate that passage with the Day of Atonement events – the Second Coming of the Messiah and the second regathering of Israel for national redemption. Let’s begin to examine some prophetic “Great Trump” passages, beginning with Isaiah 27:12-13.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt, and **ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel.**

And it shall come to pass in that day, that **the great trumpet shall be blown**, and **they shall come** which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and **the outcasts** in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at **Jerusalem.**

-Isaiah 27:12-13

So, we can see that the Great Trump and the second national regathering of Israel are connected – **they happen at the same time.** As eluded to earlier, we see this in Matthew 24 as well, as Jesus states that at the blowing of the **Great Trump**, or on the Day of Atonement, people would witness his return and his angels would gather the elect (in other words, the second regathering of Israel – the remnant who had survived the Tribulation and turned to Christ). They would be brought to Jerusalem. It also gives the same “directional” language as many of the regathering passages we’ve already read, which make reference to the four cardinal directions – north, south, east, and west.

And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see **the Son of man coming** in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

And he shall send his angels with a **great** sound of a **trumpet**, and they shall **gather together** his elect **from the four winds**, from one end of heaven to the other.

-Matthew 24:30-31

So, we notice that at the Second Coming, there will be a **great** trumpet blast – the Great Trump of *Yom Kippur* – and at this time, the elect will be regathered from the cardinal directions. We understand the elect to clearly speak of Israel. This is a Jewish prophecy and it will have a Jewish fulfillment. However, some have speculated that it potentially could even include other non-Jewish believers worldwide who were able to survive the Tribulation.

Now that we have discussed the Last Trump on the Feast of Trumpets, the intermediate seven Days of Awe, and then the Great Trump on the Day of Atonement, our next exercise will be to read through the entire chapter of Joel 2 with the themes we've discussed in mind. But before starting, let's quickly review what we have learned so that you can have it fresh in your mind while we read through this chapter. You will see the clear progression laid out here that we can easily understand just by learning about the feasts.

We will see the timing of the events of the Day of the Lord here in Joel 2 and his clear use of festival language. The blowing of the **Last Trump** occurs on **Trumpets** and **sounds an alarm**, beginning the terrifying segment of the Day of the Lord. The blowing of the **Great Trump** on **Atonement** is associated with a **gathering** and a **solemn fast**, which takes place on this day. This teaches about the Second Coming when the Bridegroom and the bride – who have been hidden away in the bridechamber for their wedding week – emerge and come to earth. At this time, the second regathering of Israel will take place – their ultimate regathering in faith, where they will be gathered from the four cardinal directions and brought to a solemn assembly in Jerusalem – solemn because they now realize

their national rejection of their atoning Messiah and the devastation it took to bring them to repentance. The priests weep between the porch and the altar in the Temple and recite the prayer recorded here during the *neilah*, or the closing part of the service on Atonement. Although this passage does not differentiate the two trumpet blasts it mentions with the words “Last” or “Great,” now that we understand the themes of these feasts, it will be obvious which is which.

But as we read through this chapter, if your still not sure, you can keep in mind the following outline.

- Verse 1: The Feast of Trumpets – the Last Trump
- Verses 2-14: The Days of Awe, or Tribulation
- Verse 15: The Day of Atonement – the Great Trump

Let’s begin.

1 Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for **the day of the Lord cometh**, for it is nigh at hand;

2 A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.

3 A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.

4 The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run.

5 Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array.

6 Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness.

7 They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like

men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks:

8 Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded.

9 They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief.

10 The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining:

11 And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?

12 Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:

13 And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

14 Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the Lord your God?

15 **Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly:**

16 **Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.**

17 Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?

-Joel 2:1-17

In Verse 1, we see a trumpet blast signaling alarm to alert people of

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the beginning of the Day of the Lord (this representing the Last Trump on the Feast of Trumpets). We then see the Days of Awe, or Tribulation represented in the next number of verses, including the Lord's pleas for His people to repent and turn to Him before it is too late (descriptive of this season of *Teshuvah*).

Then in Verse 15, we see another trumpet blast, this one associated with a fast and a solemn assembly, along with a gathering of Israel (this representing the Great Trump on the Day of Atonement). At that time, the Second Coming takes place, as we see the Bridegroom, (the Messiah) and his bride (the Church) emerge from their bridechamber (heaven, where they've been for their wedding week – the final seven-year Tribulation). The priests are seen weeping and offering prayers between the porch and the altar – an activity done on the Day of Atonement.

Christ redeems the remnant who have turned to Him, and at that time or shortly after, pours out His Spirit upon them as they receive the New Covenant, bringing the many Old Testament prophecies of this promise to ultimate fulfillment.

So, when you understand the themes of the feasts, the Old Testament prophetic passages discussing these last days events become much simpler to understand.

The Closing of the Gates

You may recall that while discussing the previous feast, Trumpets, we referred to the theme of the “opening of the gates of heaven” to receive the righteous. We saw that the gates of heaven are opened on the Feast of Trumpets. We discussed how then, following Trumpets are the Days of Awe, representing the Tribulation. All of these days are still the days of *Teshuvah*, or repentance, meaning that all who did not get raptured as part of the bride of Christ and are left behind to endure this time period, are still encouraged to repent before the final Great Trump on the Day of Atonement.

The service that closes the prayers on the Day of Atonement is called the *neilah*, or the closing of the gates.¹⁴ It communicates the

message to all of those that have not yet repented that there comes a point when it is too late to turn to the Messiah for salvation. During this *neilah* service, the Great Trump, or *Shofar HaGadol* is blown just before (ceremonially) the gate of heaven is finally closed. In like manner, at the Second Coming, the Great Trump will be blown, the gates will be closed, and the opportunity for redemption will have past, bringing about the judgment and purging of the wicked prior to Christ setting up the Millennial Kingdom.

The Jubilee

The jubilee cycle was a fifty-year cycle. They would first count seven cycles of sabbatical years. A sabbatical year was every seventh year, so seven cycles of sabbatical years, seven times seven, is equal to forty-nine years total. Then the following year – the fiftieth year – was the year of jubilee. This was a year of liberty, where debts were cancelled, slaves were set freed, and land returned to its original owners. But **the year of jubilee always began on the Day of Atonement** (Leviticus 25:8-13).

And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.

Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.

And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

A jubile shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed.

For it is the jubile; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.

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In the year of this jubile ye shall return every man unto his possession.

-Leviticus 25:8-13

Isaiah 61:1-3 alludes to this theme of the ultimate jubilee year of restitution and liberty being prophetically announced.

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to **preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;**

To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.

-Isaiah 61:1-3

Jesus came to preach and proclaim this coming liberty at His First Coming. In Luke 4:17-21, Jesus stands up to read from the scriptures in the synagogue. He finds this prophecy from Isaiah and begins to read it, indicating to the audience that these events would be fulfilled during His earthly ministry. But you will notice if you read this passage that He stops reading halfway through the passage. He stops right before the Isaiah passage reads “And the day of vengeance of our God...” and everything that follows. In other words, He was introducing this spiritual liberty that would be given after His death, resurrection, and pouring out of the Spirit.

But He purposely stopped reading the prophecy abruptly right in the middle of Isaiah’s sentence. Why? because at His First Coming, His mission did not include “the day of vengeance” and everything that Isaiah said that followed. This comma in the sentence has lasted around two thousand years. The day of vengeance and all that follows are Second Coming events still yet to come. So, by stopping halfway

through this prophetic passage, Jesus was making it clear that although the First Coming events would introduce liberty and freedom, the full-scale and ultimate fulfillment of this liberty and restitution would not take place until that future day at the Second Coming. Let's see this for ourselves in Luke Chapter 4.

And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

-Luke 4:17-21

Jesus was introducing this liberty and freedom (clear jubilee language) – but He spoke of it in a spiritual sense. Although He introduced the first several aspects spiritually at His First Coming, His stoppage halfway through Isaiah's quote demonstrates that it's full manifestation would not be realized until a future point – that being, when Christ returns at His Second Coming, undoubtedly on the ultimate Day of Atonement. Further, the aspects that Christ **didn't** read deal exclusively with His Second Coming - involving events that were not part of His mission at His First Coming.

The Apostle Peter made reference to this in Acts 3, further linking it with the jubilee theme of restitution.

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Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

-Acts 3:19-21

The ultimate fulfillment of the year of jubilee will take place at the Second Coming of the Messiah on a future Day of Atonement and will set the stage for the Millennial Reign of Christ on earth. The earth will be redeemed and will begin to rest from the curse brought upon it by Adam's sin. Even the environment will begin to undergo restitution, as sin and death will be restrained (although they will not yet be completely defeated until after the end of the Millennium).

Restoration of man's lost inheritance will begin. God's people will be totally set free – set at liberty, from all sin, sickness and disease, death, and the curse. And the land that God promised to Israel will be returned to her as the original owners. During the Millennium, Israel will be restored to the original boundaries promised to her in the Old Testament and she will be elevated to a place of prominence on earth. The entire world will exalt her, and she will finally fulfill her mission as being a light unto the nations. But on an even grander scale, the entire earth will return to its original owner, God, as His enemies are defeated, and Christ rules from Jerusalem as the Messiah.

Satan, the source of the loss of all these things, will be bound for a thousand years, and a true Sabbath Age of rest will be realized by all. The tabernacle of God will be with men and He will dwell with them. Although this will begin in the Millennium, it will continue on into the Eternal State where it will reach its ultimate fulfillment after the final victory over sin (Revelation 21:1-4). So, the year of jubilee and the Day of Atonement picture the fullness of the redemptive plan of God for man and the coming time of the restitution of all things.

That brings us to the end of our exploration of the Day of Atonement. Let's quickly recap.

We've see that the hidden typology embedded in the Day of Atonement is revealed by its many different names and themes, including: the Day of Redemption (*Yom HaPeduth*), the Day (or The Great Day), the Day of Judgment (*Yom HaDin*), and the themes of "face to face", the Great Trump (*Shofar HaGadol*), the regathering, the Closing of the Gates (*neilah*), and the beginning of the Year of Jubilee – the restoration.

Through our exploration of the rituals, names, and themes associated with this day, we recognize that the Day of Atonement represents the Second Coming of the Messiah at the end of the Tribulation, the final day of the ten Days of Awe. On this day, after seven years hidden away in the bridechamber in heaven, the Messiah will return together with His bride (the Church) as the High Priest, King and Judge. As the remnant of Israel sees Him face to face, He will bring deliverance, and judgment will be poured out as His enemies are vanquished. At the sound of the Great Trump, He will regather the elect of Israel and potentially even surviving Tribulation believers, and administer the New Covenant, "sprinkling the nations" as the High Priest. At this time, the gates of heaven are closed, and the ultimate year of jubilee begins in preparation for the Millennial fulfillment of the next feast – the Feast of Tabernacles, through which the full restitution of all things takes place, and God tabernacles with man for a thousand years.

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CHAPTER 10

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES (HAG HA-SUKKOT)

The Feast of Tabernacles, or *Sukkot*, is one of the three compulsory “pilgrim” feasts that required faithful Jews to travel to the Temple in Jerusalem (the other two being Passover and Pentecost). It’s Hebrew name *Sukkot* means “booths,” and it’s sometimes called the Feast of Booths – commemorating the time when Israel travelled in the wilderness as God lead them. The Feast of Tabernacles is a festival of great rejoicing and celebration following the solemn Day of Atonement. It is celebrated for seven days, beginning on the 15th of Tishri and ending on the 21st of Tishri. Then, the 22nd of Tishri, called the Eighth Day (or *Shemini Atzeret*), there was a final sabbath that ended Tabernacles, yet technically it’s actually a festival day of its own, holding some deep mysteries. We will discuss it more after discussing Tabernacles.

Leviticus 23 tells us about the details of the Feast of Tabernacles:

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the Lord.

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On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.

Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein.

...

Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath.

And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days.

And ye shall keep it a feast unto the Lord seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month.

Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths:

That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.

-Leviticus 23:33-36, 40-43

The major names and themes associated with the Feast of Tabernacles are:

- The Feast of Booths (*Hag ha-Sukkot*)
- The Dwelling of God with Man
- The Messianic Kingdom (*Athid Lavo*)
- The *Luvav*
- The Drawing and Pouring of the Water (*Simchat Beit ha-Shovah*)
- The Season of Our Joy (*Zeman Simchatenu*)
- The Illumination of the Temple

- The Dedication of the Temple
- The Marriage Feast of the Messiah
- The Restitution of All Things
- The Festival of Ingathering (*Hag ha-Asif*)
- The Festival of the Nations
- *Hoshanah Rabbah*
- The Ultimate Sabbath

We will spend more time discussing this feast than any of the others, as it is absolutely loaded with prophetic meaning. Let's begin to examine this feast day in order to better recognize the typology embedded into its rituals.

The Feast of Booths, the Dwelling of God With Man, and the Millennial Kingdom

The Feast of Tabernacles is also known as the Feast of Booths, and involves the theme of God dwelling with man. The Jews are required to dwell in temporary shelters, or booths (called a *sukkah*, or plural *sukkot*) for seven days – the duration of the feast – in order to remember the salvation of God and of their stop in the desert at Sukkoth – their first stop after leaving Egypt. These booths are typically made of tree branches and palm leaves, with some requirements being that the wind must be able to blow through the walls, and those inside of it must be able to see the stars at night. This reminds them of Israel's long encampment in the wilderness under Moses.

During this time in the wilderness, the Israelites lived in these booths, or temporary dwellings. Also, during this time, God dwelt with the people in His own Tabernacle, in Hebrew called the *mishkan*. Why was the Tabernacle built? The Torah says, in Exodus 25:8:

And let them make Me a sanctuary; **that I may dwell among them.**

-Exodus 25:8

So, the Tabernacle was built to establish and facilitate the relation-

ship between God and Israel. God would dwell amidst the people. Tabernacles is a remembrance of this time in the wilderness when God protected, led, and sustained the children of Israel. God provided the people with a supernatural cloud of covering that shaded the people by day and a supernatural fire that warmed them by night. He also provided food and water for the people (Exodus 16; Numbers 11:31-35; Exodus 17:1-7). The cloud is known spiritually as the immersion (or baptism) into the cloud (1 Corinthians 10:1-2; Hebrews 6:1-2).

This seventh feast is understood to represent the Millennial Kingdom, where God will “tabernacle” with man on earth just as He did in the Tabernacle in the wilderness – only in a much more physical way. The promises of God ruling earth as a descendant of King David, while sitting on his throne in Jerusalem, are numerous throughout the Old Testament, but especially in the passages that refer to the Davidic Covenant – a covenant God made with David concerning his ultimate eternal descendant that will rule forever – the Messiah (1 Chronicles 17:10-14; et al.). This earthly Messianic Kingdom reign – in which the nation Israel will be elevated to a place of prominence – was the ultimate anticipation of Jews in the Old Testament days.

Note: It is important to recognize that this basic understanding of a future Millennial Kingdom is denied by many mainstream Christian denominations today, as they embrace what is called an Amillennial eschatology, accompanied by the dangerous doctrine of Replacement Theology – the belief that the Church has replaced Israel in God’s future plans. Under this belief, the promises God made to the nation of Israel throughout the Bible are essentially allegorized away, and are said to represent a present and ongoing spiritual fulfillment for the Church. In other words, the Amillennialist ignores the plain reading and context of these prophecies and instead inputs his own personal interpretation, deleting Israel from God’s future program. This view not only misunderstands the basic eschatological teachings of the Bible, but also impugns God’s character and calls Him a liar. It undermines God’s clear unconditional promises that He made to Israel throughout the Bible – promises that He still intends to keep. So, be

sensitive to the fact that this erroneous belief exists and is actually (and unfortunately) quite mainstream.

So, the wilderness experience for Israel was a clear picture of the Millennium. During the Millennial Kingdom, God will provide shelter, protection, and providence, just as He did to Israel in the wilderness. And like we mentioned, during the wilderness wanderings, the *sukkah* the Jews would dwell in was a temporary dwelling. In like manner, during the Millennium, the yet-unresurrected people of God (such as national Israel and Millennial believers) will live in their “temporary” or physical bodies until it is time to leave these temporary habitations and enter into their permanent home – the Eternal State. So, this theme of a “temporary” dwelling in the wilderness suggests a temporary dwelling in the Millennium before life in the Eternal State begins. Let’s examine a few prophetic references in the scriptures and further connect these dots.

One of the most significant Old Testament Millennial prophecies we need to make note of is the incredible prophecy of the future kingdoms found in the book of Daniel. In this prophetic vision, Daniel saw the future kingdoms of man that would dominate the earth, followed by an everlasting kingdom established by the coming of the Son of Man – Jesus Christ.

I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

-Daniel 7:13-14

This kingdom Daniel saw is the Millennial Kingdom that we’ve been discussing. However, this is a kingdom that will not only last for those one thousand years, but will continue on after that into the

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Eternal State. So, it is important to have our perceptions grounded in this understanding.

Let's now begin to examine some of the other incredible prophecies that anchor our insights of the eschatological chronology pictured by the Fall Feasts, culminating in the picture of the Millennium by the Feast of Tabernacles.

Isaiah prophetically spoke of the future fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles in Isaiah 4:3-6. As we read through these verses, notice how he first references some of the survivors of the Days of Awe or Tribulation – the righteous remnant left in Jerusalem. He then recalls those Days of Awe and culminating day of *Yom Kippur*, referring to the purging of sin from Israel to reveal that righteous remnant. After that, he then goes on to describe the idioms of the Feast of Tabernacles, referring back to God's providence and protection during the wilderness wanderings of Israel (the cloud by day, the fire by night, and the Tabernacle in their midst) as a type of the future Millennium.

And it shall come to pass, that **he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem**, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem:

When the Lord shall have **washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion**, and shall have **purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning**.

And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a **cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night**: for upon all the glory shall be a defense.

And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.

-Isaiah 4:4-6

So, we can see that Isaiah speaks of the future fulfillments of these divine appointments – first judgement, and then the joy of Taberna-

cles. We see these same themes also prophetically described in the New Testament.

In Revelation 7:9-17, we can see those who have come through the Great Tribulation period which had become believers in Christ during that time (Revelation 7:14). In Revelation 7:15, we see that the Messiah will “dwell” with them – referring to the Millennium.

And he said to me, **These are they which came out of great tribulation**, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: **and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.**

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the **Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.**

-Revelation 7:14-17

Notice the theme of protection provided by God in this passage (Revelation 7:16), corresponding to the passage we just read before that (Isaiah 4:5-6), as well as the fountain of living waters in Revelation 7:17 (and also in 21:4). This reference to a fountain of living waters is another Feast of Tabernacles theme, represented by a water pouring ceremony that took place on this feast. We will reference that more later on, but for now, let’s note the word “dwell” that we just read in Verse 15 – “and he that sitteth on the throne shall **dwell** among them.”

This Greek word *skénoó* means “tabernacle, booth, shelter, or covering.” It literally means the Messiah will “spread His tabernacle over them.”¹ This same Greek word, which means “tabernacle” or “booth” in Greek, is used to speak of Christ during His First Coming (John 1:14).

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And the Word was made flesh, and **dwelt** among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

-John 1:14

Christ “tabernacled” among us when He, as God, put on a body of flesh and lived as a genuine human man. This was prophesied in Isaiah 7:14, as it tells us that a virgin would conceive and bear a Son, whose name will be called Immanuel, meaning “God **with** us.” We will find that this theme of Christ “tabernacling” with us has both a near and a far term application. The near term was obviously Christ’s First Coming, but the more far-term fulfillment will take place in the Millennium after His Second Coming, and most ultimately, in the New Jerusalem in the Eternal State. This is demonstrated in Revelation 21:3, a culminating verse that describes God’s ultimate tabernacling with man in the New Jerusalem after a “new” heaven and earth had been restored. This passage also uses the Greek word *skénoó*:

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, **the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell** [*skénoó*] **with them**, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

-Revelation 21:3

But let’s back up and briefly focus on the more near-term fulfillment, and examine several points relating to Christ’s First Coming. There are many ways that Tabernacles points to Jesus at His First Coming.

Jesus as the Manna in the Wilderness and the Giver of Living Water

God gave the Israelites manna (a kind of heavenly bread) and water in the wilderness, and Jesus is spiritual bread and water for all who believe in Him. Jesus said to the Jews:

I am the **bread of life**: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me **shall never thirst**.

-John 6:35

On the final day of the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus stood up in the Temple and in a loud voice, made allusion to the water pouring ceremony that took place on the Feast of Tabernacles (which we will discuss in detail later).

In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, **If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink**.

He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, **out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water**.

-John 7:37-38

Jesus here was speaking of the pouring out of the ultimate waters – the “waters” of the Holy Spirit – the basis of the New Covenant, which He had come to establish. We will discuss this more later as well.

Also, Paul taught that as the Jews wondered in the desert over those forty years, they all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual Rock which followed them – and that Rock was Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4).

Jesus As the Light of the World

Jesus was the light of the world, which He seems to have proclaimed during the Feast of Tabernacles – a reference to the ceremonial lighting of four huge golden lamps in the Temple that took place on this holiday.

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, **I am the light of the world**: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the **light of life**.

-John 8:12

Again, we will discuss this ritual in detail later on.

Jesus As the Branch

The Messiah was known as the Branch in the Old Testament prophetic writings (Zechariah 6:12; et. al). The cluster of different types of branches called the *luyav* is yet another prominent theme of the Feast of Tabernacles (which we will also discuss later). These clusters of palm branches were waved and laid before Jesus as He approached Jerusalem at the Triumphal Entry.

On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, **Hosanna**: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written,

Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.

These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.

-John 12:12-16

Although this took place before Passover, the practice of waving palm branches and crying *hosanna*, which the crowd did on this occasion, was a practice associated with the Feast of Tabernacles, in which the Messianic arrival to establish the Kingdom was anticipated.² According to the rabbis, whenever the Messiah appeared, the Jews were to pick up palm branches and hail Him with *hosannas*.³ They did this to Jesus on the day of His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, thinking that He, as the Messiah, was there to establish the Millennial Kingdom at that time.

So, we can see that Jesus is the manna, the water, the light, and

the man whose name is The Branch. He is the Messiah that came to dwell or tabernacle among His people in the “temporary booth” called the flesh. In short, the Feast of Tabernacles is all about Him. But in the more far-term sense, the dwelling of the Messiah among the people will take place during the Millennial Kingdom, leading into the Eternal State that follows. Let’s begin to examine this from scripture.

First, where do we get the idea of a thousand-year time period called the “Kingdom” at the end of time? Although the Old Testament tells us an incredible amount of detail regarding what is obviously referring to this period, it is less clear about its duration. The first explicit statements that the Kingdom of God will reign on earth for one thousand years appear toward the end of the Bible, in the Book of Revelation.

Revelation 19 describes the return of Jesus Christ, coming in glory and power to take over the kingdoms of this world and to institute a new, just reign here on earth. He will put down rebellion, remove the last wicked human empire ruling on earth and institute the reign of the government of God. In Revelation 20, we read of one of the first events to take place following this return of Christ.

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a **thousand years**,

And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the **thousand years** should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

-Revelation 20:1-3

Here we read for the first time of the duration of this initial phase of the reign of God on earth, and we see that it will last for one thousand years! We are also given insight into why it will be a very good time: Satan the devil, the enemy of God and His plan, will be banished

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for those same one thousand years. But let's keep reading. In the next verse, John continues.

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a **thousand years**.

-Revelation 20:4

Here, we see that the saints of God – those who refused to follow the beast power of the last days – will have the privilege of reigning with Jesus Christ for one thousand years. Let's continue reading:

But the rest of the dead lived not again until the **thousand years** were finished. This is the first resurrection.

-Revelation 20:5

Who are “the rest of the dead”? This will be the great majority of humanity (excluding the saints) who will have to wait in their graves for one thousand years until they are brought back to life in a resurrection separate and distinct from that of the saints. The First Resurrection refers not to the preceding sentence describing the resurrection of the wicked after the thousand years, but instead refers back to the previous group – the resurrections of the saints at the Second Coming.

In other words, it's saying that the First Resurrection concludes with the final phase of its resurrections – those occurring at the Second Coming. In fact, it can be said that the First Resurrection began with Christ's resurrection after His crucifixion (He was the First Fruits of the First Resurrection), and it includes all resurrections of the righteous between that time and the those at the Second Coming – including of course, the Rapture which happens at least seven years prior to this final stage at the Second Coming. Then, a

second resurrection will take place one thousand years later. Which resurrection is more desirable? The Book of Revelation makes it clear in the next verse.

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him **a thousand years.**

-Revelation 21:6

The Second Death (or this Second Resurrection group) is the group including the resurrections of the wicked at the end of the Millennium. The First Resurrection is the group you want to be a part of!

But shifting our attention back to the thousand-year duration of the Kingdom, we then see that the next verse (Verse 7), again mentions the thousand years, as it speaks about Satan being temporarily loosed at the end of the thousand years.

And when **the thousand years** are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

-Revelation 20:6

This is the sixth explicit mention in Chapter 20 of a future thousand-year Kingdom on earth following the Tribulation. The point here is that the Bible is clear on the duration of this earthly Kingdom reign of Christ.

But let's recognize that although the Old Testament is less clear on the duration, traditional Jewish thought has always acknowledged a thousand-year final "sabbath" in which the Lord's Kingdom would take place on earth, based largely on the creation week as being a template for the duration of man's time on earth.⁴

So, we understand that the duration is a thousand years. But let's now focus on some of the qualities and characteristics of the Millennial Kingdom. Let's examine some prophetic references to it in the Old Testament.

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Like we mentioned earlier, Daniel reveals that the kingdoms of the earth will all be temporary, but that there will be an ultimate kingdom established by God on earth that will never be destroyed – referring to the eternal Messianic Kingdom that will begin in the Millennium. The following is another passage found in Daniel that we haven't looked at yet, but also demonstrates this.

And in the days of these kings shall **the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed:** and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, **and it shall stand for ever.**

-Daniel 2:44

Zechariah 8:3 describes this future period where God will have returned to Zion (or Jerusalem) to dwell among the people.

Thus saith the Lord; **I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem:** and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain.

-Zechariah 8:3

Zechariah 14:9 also speaks of this future Millennial Kingdom where the Messiah – the Lord Jesus Christ – will physically reign on earth.

And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one.

-Zechariah 14:9

Later in this chapter, we are told that during the Millennial Kingdom, all the nations of the world will be required to come to Jerusalem yearly for the keeping of this festival – reinforcing our reasons for understanding that the Feast of Tabernacles is a type of the future Millennium.

And it shall come to pass, that **every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.**

And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen **that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.**

This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations **that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.**

-Zechariah 14:16-19

It is interesting to keep in mind that from the agricultural point of view, Tabernacles was associated with thanking God for the coming autumn rains that would prepare the soil for the next planting cycle. In the passage we just read, we can see that God will withhold the rain from the rebellious nations in the Millennium who refuse to keep Tabernacles. So, again, we can clearly see the profound linkage of Tabernacles with the Millennium.

In Isaiah 2:2-4, we are shown that during the future Millennial Kingdom of the Messiah, Jerusalem is described as the capital of the world in a time of peace, where men will no longer practice war. During this time, the Lord will teach His ways of righteousness to the inhabitants of the earth.

The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of

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Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

-Isaiah 2:2-4

Another passage that we pointed out earlier, but is worthwhile to rehash, is Isaiah 4:2-6, which demonstrates these same Millennial themes. It is very clear in its association of the Millennium with Tabernacles, referring back to the fire and the cloud in the wilderness, and even mentioning the “tabernacle.”

In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.

And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem:

When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.

And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a **cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night**: for upon all the glory shall be a defence.

And **there shall be a tabernacle** for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.

-Isaiah 4:2-6

In the following passage – Isaiah 65:17-25, we get another amazing glimpse of the Millennium. Many commentators agree that in Verse 17, a glorious picture was presented of the ultimate new heavens and

new earth of the Eternal State, but the prophet then returns to the theme of Jerusalem in the Millennial Kingdom, in which there will be longevity, but also death. These following prophecies seem to fit the Millennium rather than the Eternal State.

For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.

And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.

And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.

-Isaiah 65:17-25

So, we can see that the Millennium is a time of great joy, rejoicing, and deliverance for the people of God, and yet, sin and death, while greatly diminished, will still be present. In expressing Israel's future hope, the Old Testament often seems to mingle prophecies of the Millennial Kingdom with that of the New Jerusalem in eternity. The distinctions between these two periods are apparent when the details are observed. Here, although the Eternal State seems to be referenced

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in the beginning, the Millennium seems to be discussed throughout the passage, because in the Eternal State it is believed that there will be no death, no sin, and no judgment.

We see this also in the New Testament in Revelation 21, though it appears to focus less on the Millennium and more on the eternal qualities of the New Jerusalem. As the new heaven and new earth is created, and the New Jerusalem descends – we find a glimpse of the ultimate form of God “tabernacling” with the redeemed from all ages. Later in this study, we will find that the Eternal State is typified by “The Eighth Day” or *Shemini Atzeret* – the mysterious concluding festival day following the final day of Tabernacles. So, file that away in your mind and we will come back to it later. But for now, let’s take a look at this Revelation 21 excerpt, which we took a quick look at earlier.

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, **Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.**

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

-Revelation 21:1-5

Bear with us if we repeat several key passages such as this one. Repetition is the key to learning, but it also brings out different layers of understanding regarding the prophetic aspects of these feasts.

The incredible glimpse we get of the New Jerusalem continues into the next chapter, as it is described in further detail. But for our

purposes here, let's recognize the New Jerusalem as the ultimate heavenly *sukkah* – the tabernacling of God with man.

And that will conclude our examination of a handful of key scripture passages concerning the Millennium and the Eternal State. These passages give us a solid overview of the descriptions of these future appointed times.

So, as we conclude this examination of the typology of the main theme of the Feast of Tabernacles – God “tabernacling with man” – we should recognize that the *sukkah* on this holiday was built to teach about the thousand-year Millennial Reign of the Messiah, the Messianic age, the Millennium, or the *Athid Lavo* in Hebrew eschatology – the joyful time of peace when God dwells with man. And in a more final sense, it represents the same theme of God dwelling with man, but also into the Eternal State.

The Luvav Cluster

The Feast of Tabernacles includes a ritual involving a cluster of branches called the *luvav*. The *lulav* is actually a bundle of branches that include the *lulav* (or palm), the willow, and the myrtle, along with a yellow citrus fruit called the *etrog*, or citron (similar to a lemon). We see this in Leviticus 23:40.

And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days.

-Leviticus 23:40

Hebrew Christian Scholar Alfred Edersheim tells us the following regarding the most obvious meanings of this cluster.

There can be no doubt that the *luvav* was intended to remind Israel of the different stages of their wilderness journey, as represented by the different vegetation – the palm branches recalling the valleys and plains, the ‘boughs of thick trees,’ the bushes on the mountain

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heights, and the willows those brooks from which God had given His people drink; while the [*etrog*] was to remind them of the fruits of the good land which the Lord had given them.”⁵

On *Sukkot*, worshippers hold the four species together and say a special blessing over them in the *sukkah* or in the synagogue. The three branches were held in the right hand and the *etrog* on the left, and they were brought together to be waved east, south, west, north, up, and down. Since the palm branch, or *lulav*, was the stiffest and the most prominent element of the four species, the whole ceremony was called the waving of the *lulav*.⁶

The four plants are also used during the Tabernacles holiday in making a *hakafa* (circuit) around the congregation standing in the synagogue. The cantor leads the procession, and each man who has a *lulav* and *etrog* follows behind him. During the procession, the cantor recites the *Hosanna* prayers, asking for blessings on the land and fruit of Israel.⁷

At the start of the ceremony, the *etrog* is upside down. The spiritual meaning is, before we came to God, we were in a state of being upside down. Through the ceremony, it is turned right side up and joined to the other three. This represents a marriage that is taking place. After we are turned right side up and turn to God, we later are joined to Him in marriage – marriage being another prominent theme of Tabernacles.⁸

The Drawing and Pouring of the Water and the “Season of Our Joy”

One of the most distinctive rituals associated with the Feast of Tabernacles was the drawing and pouring of the water (called *Simchat Beit ha-Shovah*, or the Celebration of the Water Drawing). This ritual was an exuberant and joyful celebration, part of why this festival is also referred to as the “Season of Our Joy.” In fact, the Talmud states in *Sukkah* 5:1: “He who has not seen the *Simchat Bet ha-shoevah* has never seen rejoicing in his life.”⁹

On each of the seven days of Tabernacles, this ceremony was performed. The priests were divided into three divisions during this daily special ceremony of Tabernacles. One division for the Altar, one for the willows, and one for the waters.

The first division was the priests on altar duty, which would slay the sacrifices found in Numbers 29. But prior to the first group's ascension of the Altar, a second group of priests went out the Eastern Gate of the Temple and went to the Motzah Valley (where the ashes of the red heifer were dumped at the beginning of the Sabbath). There, they would cut willows. The willows had to be twenty-five feet in length. After this, they would form a line with all the priests holding a willow. About twenty-five or thirty feet behind this row of priests, allowing room for the willows, would be another row of priests with willows. So, there would be row after row of the willows.

The whole road back to the Temple was lined with pilgrims as they went to Jerusalem to celebrate the festival as they were commanded by God to do. Tabernacles, Pentecost, and Passover were known as the three pilgrimage festivals (Deuteronomy 16:16). There would then be a signal and the priests would step out with their left foot, and then step to the right (in cadence), swinging the willows back and forth.

Meanwhile a third group of priests, headed by the High Priest, went out the gate known as the Water Gate. They went to the spring known as Siloam (John 9:7, 11), which means "gently flowing waters." There, the high priest had a golden vase and drew the water known as the living water, and held it in the vase. His assistant held a silver vase containing wine.

The priests in the valley of Motzah began to march toward Jerusalem swinging the willows. The willows made a swishing sound in the wind as they approached the city. The word wind and spirit in Hebrew are both *ruach* (Strong's #H7307). This ceremony was symbolic of the Holy Spirit of God coming upon the city of Jerusalem.

As each of the parties reached their respective gates, a trumpet was blown. Then one man would stand up and play the flute. The flute player is called "the pierced one" – which we understand represents

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the Messiah. The holes in the flute are “pierced,” and Christ was pierced during the crucifixion. The flute player led the procession.

The pierced one blows the call for the wind and the water to enter the Temple. The priests from Motzah walked in a cadence swishing the willows in order to come into the Temple. This group then circled the altar seven times. The priests that were slaying the sacrifices would now be ascending the altar, and begin to lay the sacrifices on the fires. The high priest and his assistant ascend the altar while the multitudes of the people would be gathered into the courts around them. The people would begin rejoicing and singing, quoting from Isaiah 12:3 – “With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.”

The high priest takes his golden vase full of the “living waters” from Siloam and pours its contents onto one of the corners of the altar where the horns are. There are two bowls built into the altar. Each bowl has a hole in it. The water and the wine are poured out over the altar, as the priests who had the willows start laying the willows against the altar, making a *sukkah*, or booth – picturing God dwelling with man. This setting up of the willows upright on the side of the altar in effect forms a wedding canopy or *chuppah* – which we can understand as a picture of the bride of Christ together with the Bridegroom during the Millennium.

The ceremony of the water drawing and pouring points to that day when, according to the ultimate fulfillment of the words of the prophet Joel, God will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh during the Millennial Kingdom, as anticipated in 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:

-Joel 2:28

This familiar passage in Joel is another description of the Spirit outpouring, which was to be the basis of the New Covenant also

prophesied of in Ezekiel 36, which includes an illusion to the sprinkling of water.

For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

Then will I **sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean:** from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

A **new heart** also will I give you, and a **new spirit will I put within you:** and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

And **I will put my spirit within you,** and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

-Ezekiel 36:24-28

The New Covenant is also prophesied of in Jeremiah 31.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a **new covenant** with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord:

But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, **I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts;** and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

-Jeremiah 31:31-34

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Keep in mind that while the New Testament Church has been experiencing the Spirit outpouring since it began on the Day of Pentecost, it is essential to recognize that the ultimate far-term context of all of these Old Testament prophecies points toward the Spirit outpouring upon Israel in the Millennial Kingdom. By reading each of them closely, it is obvious that this ultimate fulfillment spoken of has not yet taken place, but will be realized during the Millennium after the second regathering of Israel. At this time, all Israel will be saved and the knowledge of God will be common throughout the earth.

There was both a physical and a spiritual significance to the ritual of the pouring of the water. From a physical agricultural standpoint, the rainy winter season was about to begin, which was necessary for softening the ground for plowing. With this in view, through this water libation ritual, the Jews made a special thanksgiving offering to God for the coming winter rains He would send. The spiritual significance pointed to the coming of the Messiah who would give them the living water of His Spirit – the joyous anticipation of any serious Jewish worshipper.

One of the passages associated with this ritual, as we alluded to earlier, is from Isaiah 12, which actually refers to the future Millennial Kingdom, whose themes are easily seen in this passage.

And **in that day** thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.

Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.

Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

And **in that day** shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.

Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth.

Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel **in the midst of thee.**

-Isaiah 12

We can see the obvious themes pointing to the Millennial Kingdom, in the phrases “in that day,” meaning that this passage is referring to a specific future time. Earlier in this study, we’ve identified the phrase “that day,” especially when used in this context, with the Day of the Lord – the eschatological time period involving the Tribulation and the Millennium.

In this passage, we also see the reference to “with joy, drawing water out of the wells of salvation” – pointing to the New Covenant to be administered upon the Jewish remnant and the believers in the Millennium. We can see in this chapter the many references to “salvation.” In fact, the Hebrew word for “salvation” here is *yeshuah* (Strong’s #H3444), which is Jesus’s name in Hebrew.

The most obvious hint that this chapter is referring to the Millennium though, is in the last verse, which states that God is dwelling in the midst of them at that future time – which can mean only one time – the future Millennial Kingdom.

Another passage associated with the pouring of the water ritual on the Feast of Tabernacles is Isaiah 44:3.

For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

-Isaiah 44:3

Again, we see the pouring out of water associated with the pouring out of the Spirit – the basis of the New Covenant. We also notice the reference to “floods upon dry ground,” referring to the agricultural typology of the winter rains that would fall after the harvest, softening the hardened ground for plowing in preparation for the planting of the next harvest cycle.

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Yet another prophetic reference to living water being poured out during the Millennium is found in Zechariah 14.

And it shall be **in that day**, that **living waters shall go out from Jerusalem**; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.

And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one.

-Zechariah 14:8-9

This passage seems to convey that the reference to living waters in the Millennium will also have some sort of physical manifestation, reminding us of the passages that describe the River of Life in the heavenly New Jerusalem in the Eternal State.

And he shewed me a **pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.**

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

-Revelation 22:1-2

So, we recognize the clear association between the water pouring and the outpouring of the Spirit during the Millennium. But let's investigate this even further and gain some deeper understandings...

It's important to know something about the water being used during this ritual. It was sourced from a spring just east of Jerusalem called the Spring of Gihon. King Hezekiah later redirected the water of this spring into the city of Jerusalem through a long underground conduit known as Hezekiah's Tunnel. Within the walls of Jerusalem, the waters of Gihon ran into a pool named the Pool of Siloam – like we mentioned earlier.

Waters from the pool of Siloam were used in the ordinance of the red heifer described in Numbers 19, where Moses was instructed to

mix “running” water (in Hebrew, literally meaning “living” water) with the ashes of the red heifer. The water had to be fresh, able to give life – and not stagnant. This mixture of water and ashes was sprinkled on those who had become unclean to purify them. This same Pool of Siloam is also referred to in the New Testament. It was to this pool that Jesus sent a man, blind from birth, to wash off the clay that He had applied to the man’s eyes. After washing in the pool, the man miraculously received his sight (John 9:6-7).

The Pool of Siloam not only held historical significance, but in Jewish tradition it also had a prophetic connotation. First, as we already mentioned, the Old Testament scriptures speak of a time when:

I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

-Isaiah 44:3

Because the waters of Siloam were used to anoint the kings of the house of David, and that anointing was symbolic of the Holy Spirit coming upon an individual (1 Samuel 16:13), the living waters of Siloam became associated with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Secondly, this outpouring is to take place during the days of the Messiah, the Anointed One, a descendant of King David, through whom salvation will come to Israel. Based on Isaiah 12:3, the Pool of Siloam became known as the “well of salvation” and was associated with the Messianic Age. Thus, to the Jewish people of the Second Temple days, pouring water on the altar at the Feast of Tabernacles was symbolic of the Holy Spirit poured out during the days of the Messiah.

Alfred Edersheim confirms that this was the understanding of the rabbis. He writes:

For though the ceremony was considered by the Rabbis as bearing a subordinate reference to the dispensation of the rain, the annual fall of

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which they imagined was determined by God at that feast, its main and real application was to the future **outpouring of the Holy Spirit**, as predicted – probably in allusion to this very rite – by Isaiah the prophet. Thus, the Talmud says distinctly: “Why is the name of it called, The drawing out of water? Because of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, according to what is said: ‘With joy shall ye draw waters out of the well of salvation.’” Hence, also, the feast and the peculiar joyousness of it, are alike designated as those of “the drawing out of water”; for according to the same Rabbinical authorities, the Holy Spirit dwells in man only through joy.¹⁰

We see this fulfillment being spoken of in the words of Jesus, which actually took place on this very feast! On the last and climactic day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the day known to the Jews as *Hoshanah Rabbah*, meaning the Great Salvation, Jesus made what some believe to be His greatest proclamation.

In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

-John 7:37-39

This was no statement secretly whispered in a dark corner. The text says that Jesus “stood” to make His announcement, and He “cried” – meaning He spoke with a loud voice. He wanted everyone to hear the good news. The stunned crowd did hear it, and as Jews, being very familiar with their scriptures and with the traditions and rituals of this feast, they would have understood exactly what He meant. The Jews should have also been familiar with Joel’s, Jeremiah’s and Ezekiel’s prophecies of the New Covenant and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit during the days of the Messiah.

Jesus was declaring that He was the Messiah and that everyone who would believe in Him was promised the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit, the “living water,” not measured in terms of a trickling spring, like the Spring of Gihon, but a flowing river – even many rivers! This water pouring ceremony at the Feast of Tabernacles was the only water poured out onto God’s altar. This water was literally called “Yeshua” – the waters of salvation. So, the connections we’re making here are incredibly deep and prophetic – connections most Christians completely miss.

Jesus was in effect saying, “I am the reality that the water in this ceremony symbolizes – the true life-giver Whose Spirit would be poured out upon you – the ultimate fulfillment or antitype of this water pouring ritual!” He was trying to teach them of the true fulfillments of the *moedim* – the divinely appointed times to come! Unfortunately, the Jews as a nation, rejected Him as Messiah, and consequently, have been missing out on this outpouring of living water. But the final and far-term sense of this prophecy of the water of the Spirit being poured out upon Israel will be fulfilled during the Millennium as Israel finally receives the New Covenant as a nation!

But let’s recognize another important connection between living water and Tabernacles, brought out by Jesus. It was in the context and setting of the Feast of Tabernacles following Jesus’s cry to come unto Him for living water that the scribes and Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery to Jesus to hear His judgment upon her (John 7:53-8:11). Probably the day before, these men had either observed or taken part in the water pouring ceremonies during this holiday, and likely heard that Jesus cried out saying that if any man thirsted, to come to Him and He would give them living water.

When the woman was brought to Jesus, he bent down and began writing (probably these scribes and Pharisees’ names) with his finger in the dirt. As teachers of the law, these rabbis would have been very familiar with this concept of the living water found throughout the Old Testament – and with this understanding in place, what Jesus did in response to them by writing in the earth takes on new meaning.

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Let's connect these dots by looking to an ancient obscure prophesy found in Jeremiah.

O Lord, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and **they that depart from me shall be written in the earth**, because they have forsaken the Lord, **the fountain of living waters**.

-Jeremiah 17:13

When Jesus wrote (probably their names) in the earth, He fulfilled an obscure scripture reference already associated by these same rabbis with the water pouring ceremony. This took place in the context of Tabernacles. And they had just heard and rejected Jesus's cry about the living water on the great and final day of the feast. So, it seems that Jesus wrote their names in the earth, fulfilling this incredible prophecy.

Moving on, another layer of understanding regarding this theme of the pouring out of water is found in Psalm 22, the incredible prophetic chapter that actually reads as if it were a first-person account of Jesus while on the cross, although written around a thousand years beforehand.

I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

-Psalm 22:14

Although on the most superficial physical level, this is referring to the complete dehydration and exhaustion felt during the crucifixion process – as well as the stab wound in His side – we can see that on a deeper level, it is an incredible anticipation of the Messiah being “poured out” in death in order to then pour out His Spirit upon the earth.

Interestingly, we also find a similar allusion in the other incredible Old Testament passage that also describes in precise detail the Messiah's experience on the cross – Isaiah 53. Verse 12 says:

Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; **because he hath poured out his soul unto death:** and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

-Isaiah 53:12

So, we can clearly see a continual theme of the Messiah being “poured out” in death, and then the rain of the Holy Spirit being “poured out upon the earth.”

Jesus once encountered a woman who had come to draw water from a well. He told her about this coming outpouring of the Spirit, continuing the theme of water as representing the Spirit.

Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

But **whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.**

-John 4:13-14

Likewise, earlier in His ministry, He had taught saying:

Blessed are they which do hunger and **thirst** after righteousness: for **they shall be filled.**

-Matthew 5:6

In addition, scripture then begins to refer to the infilling of the Spirit as a form of “baptism” – the baptism of the Spirit. Obviously, baptism in the physical sense refers to the Jewish *mikvah* – the cleansing ritual of immersion in water. But this new form of baptism – the “baptism” of the Holy Spirit was first predicted by John the Baptist.

And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

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I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

-Mark 1:7-8

This baptism of the Spirit was then promised by Jesus before He ascended into heaven.

And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

-Acts 1:4-5

This promise was then fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

-Acts 2:1-4

For the first time, people were permanently in-dwelt by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the Church had begun. Jesus had poured out His soul unto death, and He then poured out the baptism of the Holy Spirit upon His followers. This promise is still available to us today, and is the basis of the New Covenant Christian conversion experience.

In his first epistle to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul continues this terminology, giving us more information on this baptism of the Holy Spirit, and even using the term “drink” as referring to the Spirit.

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

-1 Corinthians 12:13

So, the typology of the water libation ritual on the Feast of Tabernacles should be very easy for us to understand. Just as the people recognized that they needed physical rain to sustain their physical lives, Jesus pointed to Himself (and His Spirit which He would pour out) as the source of the “living water,” or “spiritual rain” that would sustain their spiritual lives. This outpouring of living water referred to the refreshing power of the Holy Spirit – the basis of the New Covenant – that would become an indwelling source of life for those who would receive Him.

This was introduced in the near-term sense when Jesus was crucified and then poured out the initial baptism of the Spirit on Pentecost. But in the far-term sense, it is critical for us to recognize that it describes the **final outpouring upon the believers in the Millennium, fulfilling the ultimate promise of the New Covenant upon Israel.** This anticipation of the Spirit outpouring on Israel, as well as their promise of dwelling with the Messiah during the Millennium is the basis of Tabernacles being known to the Jews as “The Season of Our Joy.”

The Illumination of the Temple

Another distinctive ritual associated with the Feast of Tabernacles was the illumination of the Temple. This ritual involved the lighting of four golden oil-fed lamps in the outer court in the Temple. Each candelabra had four golden bowls, and was reached by four ladders. Each bowl was capable of holding many gallons of oil. Four youths of priestly descent each held a pitcher of oil, which they used to fill the bowls. Wicks were made from the old, cast-off priestly garments and rags from worn-out clothing. When the lamps were lit, they generated such an intense and brilliant light, that according to the Talmud

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(Sukkah 5:3) not a courtyard in the whole city of Jerusalem failed to be illuminated by the blazing light.¹¹

The light of the lamps had two meanings: the first was symbolizing the Glory of God that had filled the First Temple (I Kings 8:10-11). The second was anticipating the “Great Light” – the Messiah – who would soon come and bring light to those who were spiritually dead and dwelling in darkness (Isaiah 9:2). God had promised to send the Messiah to renew Israel’s glory, release them from bondage, restore their joy, and bring spiritual light to the world. It was in this context of the illumination of the Temple ritual of the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:2) that Jesus declared:

I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

-John 8.12

Only the Messiah – God with us, could dare to make such a claim. The prophecy of the Messiah bringing the light is found in the Old Testament. We see in Isaiah 9:2:

Nevertheless the **dimness** shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.

The people that walked in darkness **have seen a great light**: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, **upon them hath the light shined.**

-Isaiah 9:1-2

Matthew records the fulfillment of this prophecy in Matthew 4:12-17.

Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee;

And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:

That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;

The people which sat in darkness **saw great light**; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death **light is sprung up**.

From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand

-Matthew 4:12-17

Contemplating the words of Jesus within the framework of this ceremony gives us a wonderful picture of the glorious illumination that occurs when the light of the Spirit of God is shed abroad in our hearts. Paul reflects upon this understanding in 2 Corinthians 4 and Romans 8.

For God, who commanded **the light to shine out of darkness**, hath **shined in our hearts**, to give the light of the knowledge **of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ**.

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

-2 Corinthians 4:6-7

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with **the glory which shall be revealed in us**.

-Romans 8:18

Keep in mind also that scripture reveals that the Christian believer is called the “temple” of the Holy Ghost.

Know ye not that **your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost** which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

-1 Corinthians 6:19

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So, we are the temple, and God's Spirit dwells inside of us, revealing His glory and light. Although the glory is veiled while we are in the flesh, we have the assurance that we're being transformed into His likeness through the work of the Spirit within us.

Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, **are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.**

-2 Corinthians 3:17-18

And this transformation will be completed when Christ returns for us and we receive glorified bodies like His!

For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also **we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:**

Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

-Philippians 3:20-21

So, we can see how this ritual of the illumination of the Temple is fulfilled in not only the Messiah, who was the Light of the World, but also in the New Covenant, in which the glory of God would be revealed in the believer through the indwelling presence of the Spirit.

In the Old Testament, the typology of the Feast of Tabernacles – which involved the theme of God dwelling among the people in the Tabernacle or Temple – pointed towards the day when God's Spirit would dwell among His people in the temple of their bodies, revealing His glory through them. In another ultimate sense, we see that the illumination ritual is also representative of the future Millennial Kingdom – in which God will dwell among the people and will also pour out His Spirit upon the remnant of Israel and the believers during this period.

The Dedication of the Temple

Another theme of the Feast of Tabernacles is the dedication of the Temple. There have been two temples in Jerusalem to date, and there will be a third in the Tribulation – but there will also be a Millennial Temple. Let's examine the First Temple in order to see if we can detect any obvious typological clues that may give us insight regarding the Millennial Temple.

The dedication of the First Temple in Jerusalem by King Solomon is recorded in 1 Kings 8:1-21. Verse 2 gives the timing as follows.

And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, **which is the seventh month.**

-1 Kings 8:2

The *ATS Bible Dictionary* says that the name Ethanim was the earlier name for the month Tishri, and means “constantly flowing,” which referred to the autumn rains.

Constantly flowing, a month so named before the captivity, because the autumnal rains then begin to fill the dry river channels. It was afterwards called Tishri, and answers nearly to our October. On this month Solomon's temple was dedicated...¹²

Another passage that records this dedication of the First Temple is found in 2 Chronicles 5:1-3.

Thus all the work that Solomon made for the house of the Lord was finished: and Solomon brought in all the things that David his father had dedicated; and the silver, and the gold, and all the instruments, put he among the treasures of the house of God.

Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of David, which is Zion.

Wherefore all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto the king in the feast which was in the seventh month.

-2 Chronicles 5:1-3

So, again, we see that the dedication took place during the feast of the seventh month (or the Feast of Tabernacles in Ethanim, or Tishri). So, it is well-known that the First Temple was dedicated during Tabernacles, which is why this feast is also called the Feast of Dedication. But could this point to anything in the ultimate sense? In other words, is there an ultimate Temple dedication of which this acts as a prophetic type pointing towards? Actually, it appears that the answer is yes!

First, let's recognize the typology from this passage in 2 Chronicles. After the portion we just read, it goes on to say that during this most glorious dedication of the Temple, where the Levitical worship team was leading the entire congregation in praise and thanksgiving, the glory of God came down and filled the Temple. But it did to such a degree that the priests were not able to continue ministering because the cloud of God's glory was so thick!

We should recognize that his event is directly connected to the prophetic Millennial Temple that will someday not just have an aspect of His presence, but that He will fill with the fullness of His glory to the point that there's nothing else to be seen but Him! The Feast of Tabernacles is all about the dedication of the Final Temple into its incorruptible and glorious state!

In Ezekiel Chapters 40-48, Ezekiel is shown a prophetic portrait of this ultimate Temple of God during the Millennium. In Chapter 40, Ezekiel is taken in a vision to Jerusalem in the future. There, he was given a tour of the Millennium Temple – the outer courts, gates, etc. In Chapter 41, he is taken inside the Temple, and the outer buildings surrounding the Temple. In Chapter 42, Ezekiel then describes the chambers for the priests who minister before the Glory of the Lord, as well as the outer dimensions of the Temple area. And in Chapter 43, Ezekiel witnesses the return of the Glory of the Lord, Jesus Christ, who returns to the Millennial Temple, the seat of His earthly throne,

where He rules over the nations. So, there in Chapter 43, Ezekiel is given a glimpse of God's glory filling the future Millennial Temple. Let's take a look at some parts of this chapter.

Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east:

And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory.

And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city: and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face.

And the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east.

So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house.

-Ezekiel 43:1-5

Chapter 43 continues to describe the dimensions of the altar, then proceeding to describe the series of sacrifices to be performed. Interestingly, a Feast of Tabernacles-like sequence can be noticed. After describing some of the sacrifices, it then says the following.

Seven days shalt thou prepare every day a goat for a sin offering: they shall also prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock, without blemish.

Seven days shall they purge the altar and purify it; and they shall consecrate themselves.

And when these days are expired, it shall be, that upon **the eighth day, and so forward**, the priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord God.

-Ezekiel 43:25-27

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So, we see that the sacrifices would go on for seven days, just like the sacrifices on the Feast of Tabernacles. Then it makes mention of the burnt offerings that would take place on the eighth day, and perpetually forward. This seems to mirror the day following Tabernacles, which is actually called The Eighth Day, or *Shemini Atzeret*. So, we can continue to see the themes of Tabernacles parallel with the Millennium, and specifically, this Millennial Temple seen by Ezekiel.

Yet another interesting prophetic preview seems to appear in Revelation 7:9, where many commentators believe we're given another glimpse of the future dedication of the Millennial Temple on the Feast of Tabernacles.

After this I beheld, and, lo, a **great multitude**, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and **palms in their hands;**"

And cried with a loud voice, saying, **Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.**

And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which **came out of great tribulation**, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night **in his temple**: and he that sitteth on the throne shall **dwelt among them.**

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall **feed them,**

and shall **lead them unto living fountains of waters:** and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

-Revelation 7:9-17

There's a lot we need to go over here in order to make sure we recognize the clues and links in the passage. We will examine a number of these clues from this passage that help us understand that what is being described is a Feast of Tabernacles event, taking place in the Temple, during the Millennium, cluing us into the likelihood that this is a prophetic glimpse of the ultimate dedication of the Millennial Temple.

In this passage, we can clearly see that the prophet John depicts masses of people gathering before the throne of God in the Temple, holding what are apparently *luyav* clusters, worshipping God by crying out what is essentially a Feast of Tabernacles prayer. On Tabernacles, what is referred to as the *Hallel* is recited as *hosannas* are cried. (the *Hallel* being Psalm 113-118). Recall that *hosanna* means "save now." The worshippers in this passage are declaring that God had saved them. In other words, this is essentially a culminating and final fulfillment to the *hosanna* cries on Tabernacles. God *had* just saved them at His Second Coming, and as we see later in the passage, He would dwell among them – another Tabernacles theme.

It also says He would feed them, bringing to mind what we discussed earlier about how God feeding the Israelites during the wilderness wanderings was a prophetic type of the future Millennium, the ultimate Tabernacles fulfillment. But the passage gives us yet another dead giveaway that this is a Millennium/Feast of Tabernacles reference – it refers to God leading them unto living fountains of water! You may recall our exploration of this typology in the water drawing and pouring ceremony that was done on Tabernacles, prophetically anticipating the New Covenant outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the nation of Israel in the Millennium!

In *John Gill's Exposition of the Bible*, his commentary on Revelation 7:9 agrees, identifying this excerpt with the Millennium – and it makes the connection to Tabernacles, saying the following.

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So the Jews, at the feast of tabernacles, which they kept in commemoration of their having dwelt in tents in the wilderness, carried “Luvavs”, or palm tree branches, in their hands, in token of joy, (Leviticus 23:40); and in like manner, these being come out of the wilderness of the world, and the tabernacle of God being among them, express their joy in this way;¹³

So, we continue to see that understanding “festival language” and terminology helps reveal many of the hidden mysteries in the Biblical text that allow us to better understand the true meanings it intends.

Before moving on, let’s briefly point out another depth of understanding related to this theme of God’s glory filling the Temple of God. In a deeper spiritual sense, this theme also typifies the glory of God’s Spirit filling the New Covenant believer. Remember that scripture describes us – our bodies – as the “Temple of God.”

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

–Corinthians 3:16-17

So, let’s understand that the most glorious Temple-filling available for us at this moment is the incredible baptism of the Spirit experienced by New Testament Christians – the true New Covenant “tabernacling” of God among men!

The Marriage Feast of the Messiah

The ancient Hebrew wedding rituals reveal the mystery of the plan of God for the Church, and act as the typological pattern for many future events in God’s eschatological timeline – including the Marriage Feast of the Messiah in the Millennial Kingdom. Let’s begin by going through a quick review of the typological aspects of the ancient Hebrew wedding ritual (also discussed earlier in this study). After this

quick review of the entire process, our main purpose here will be to focus in on this concept of the Marriage Feast in the Millennium, and recognize some striking connections to the celebration of Tabernacles.

First, in order to initiate the process of the marriage, the prospective bridegroom had to make a journey from his house to the house of the prospective bride, where she lived with her family. Then, in the house of the bride, he would have to reach an agreement with her father, and also gain the woman's consent to marry. If the prospective bride and groom reached agreement, they would seal the betrothal by drinking from a cup of wine together, representing covenant. The bridegroom would shower her with costly gifts for her to remember him by, until his return when it was time for the wedding. He would also leave her his signet ring as a sort of "downpayment" for her in order to demonstrate his commitment to her and that she was his betrothed.

Then the groom would go back to his father's house and prepare a home for her, usually by adding a room onto his father house – after promising her that he would return at some undetermined future day to take her back to his father's house for the wedding ceremony. They would be separated for some time, often around one to two years. During this time, she would prepare herself for him and him for her.

Then, when the father gave his permission, his son the bridegroom, along with his friends, would set out toward the home of the bride in the form of a torchlit procession. As they approached, often around midnight, there would be trumpet blasts and shouts, alerting the bride that "the bridegroom cometh!" She would have to be prepared and ready for his imminent arrival, and would have only a short while to gather her things and leave with the wedding party. He then would carry her away with great pageantry to his father's house. There, the wedding guests would be assembled, and the wedding ceremony would be performed.

Following this, the bride and groom would consummate their marriage in private in the prepared *chuppah*, or bridal chamber. As soon as the guests recognize that the marriage had been consummated, they would begin the week-long wedding celebration. For

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seven days, the guests would celebrate the wedding in the father's house while the bride and groom were in the bridechamber. At the end of the seven days, the bride and groom would emerge together from their chamber – with the bride's veil removed – and would be presented for the first time as husband and wife to their guests and to the community. They would then conclude the celebration with a great marriage supper with their guests. There would be joyous celebrating during this feast, and the wedding celebration would conclude with this great wedding supper.^{14 15}

Hopefully you can already begin to make the typological connections between these Hebrew rituals and what the Bible says about Christ and His bride, the Church. Let's briefly outline some of them.

Two thousand years ago, Jesus Christ journeyed from His Father's house in Heaven to our home – earth. He has produced a very costly price in order to purchase our freedom from sin and death to become His betrothed bride – that price being His precious sinless and spotless blood on the cross of Calvary. He established this New Covenant of marriage by sharing a cup with us – the drink of wine at the Last Supper ritual, which we are to do in remembrance of Him until He returns. He then left our home on earth, promising to prepare a place for us in His Father's house, and then at some undetermined future day, return to gather us.

We are now in this period of betrothal separation, awaiting His return. Once He comes, He will take the Church – His bride – to the prepared place in heaven, where the marriage will be “consummated” and the guests will celebrate for seven years while the Tribulation is taking place on earth.

After being hidden away for these seven years, the Bridegroom with His bride will then emerge, present His unveiled bride to the community on earth who have survived the Tribulation, and enter into the Millennial Kingdom – a one thousand year reign and celebration that likely begins with the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. And so, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb will be a magnificent end-time event.

What does the Bible tell us about a coming Marriage Feast? First, we don't find this feast explicitly referred to as a Marriage Supper

until Revelation (a passage we will examine later), but yet, we do see allusions to this feast all throughout the Bible – even in the Old Testament prophets. For example, Isaiah looks forward to a time when the nations of the world will no longer be separated from fellowship and covenant with God by sin, but will participate in this coming banquet of the great King.

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples
a **feast** of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine,
of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.
-Isaiah 25:6 (ESV)

But what is the context of this feast? Is it prophetic? Yes! Is it Millennial? Yes! In fact, to easily understand that the context of this passage is at least Millennial, and maybe even including allusions to the Eternal State, all we have to do is continue to read the following several verses, which make that fact obvious.

And he will swallow up on this mountain
the covering that is cast over all peoples,
the veil that is spread over all nations.
He will swallow up death forever;
and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces,
and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth,
for the Lord has spoken.
It will be said on that day,
“Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might
save us.
This is the Lord; we have waited for him;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”
-Isaiah 25:7-9 (ESV)

So, we can easily see the themes of the Millennial Kingdom present in these verses. There are then some New Testament passages that seem to refer to this Marriage Supper, often being quotes by

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Jesus, and also identifying the timing of this supper with the Millennial Kingdom. Let's take a look at these. The first one we will point out is found in Luke Chapter 22. Jesus, while initiating the New Covenant ritual of the Last Supper, says the following to His disciples.

For I say unto you, I will not any more **eat** thereof, **until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.**

And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:

For I say unto you, I will not **drink** of the fruit of the vine, **until the kingdom of God shall come.**

And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

...

And I appoint unto you a **kingdom**, as my Father hath appointed unto me;

That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

-Luke 22:16-20, and 29-30

Here, we see Jesus establishing the ritual of the Lord's Supper, which He inaugurated for the Church to perform in remembrance of Him until His return. Jesus promised to not eat or drink of it again until He does so in the Kingdom (or the Millennium). This proves to us that He will not be celebrating His Marriage Supper until the inauguration of the Millennial Kingdom – in fact, some believe the Marriage Supper is the inaugurating event that begins the Kingdom Age.

As we saw, that idea is then restated in Verses 29-30, as Jesus again speaks of eating and drinking in the Kingdom, which we just read. A parallel passage to this one in Luke is found in Matthew 26:29,

where Jesus also promises to not drink of the fruit of the vine until the day when He does it with them in His Father's Kingdom.

But before moving on, let's focus for a moment on this cup of wine that Jesus was referring to. First, the Last Supper seemed to be a sort of pre-Passover meal, as we know Jesus died the following day on Passover. Let's recall our study of the Feast of Passover, and the four different cups of wine involved in the Jewish Seder. During the Last Supper meal, Jesus called this cup of wine "the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:20). The apostle Paul later called it, "the cup of **blessing** which we bless," as well as "the cup of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 10:16, and 21). In the Jewish tradition, the third of these four cups is called the "cup of redemption," or the "cup of **blessing** ." So, there can be little doubt that this "third cup" is the cup the Lord emphasized at the Last Supper.¹⁶

The wine represented the redemptive blood of Jesus – emblematic of the New Covenant – as He told His disciples at their (pre)Passover Last Supper meal. But if Jesus and the disciples drank the third cup, then what about the fourth cup? Like we read, Jesus promised not to drink of the fruit of the vine again until He does so in the Kingdom.

Is this future cup the fourth cup? And what is the fourth cup? The fourth cup at the Passover Seder is called "the cup of praise, or restoration." The Hebrew word for praise is *hallel*, and Jews often refer to this cup as the "cup of *hallel*." Recall the association of the *Hallel* (the name for Psalm 113-118) with the rituals of the Feast of Tabernacles. Also, consider the term restoration and its association with the Millennium. As we will examine further ahead in this study, the Millennium is thought of as the time of restoration, or restitution when all things will be made whole – most importantly, the relationship between God and man, and especially the nation of Israel. In this passage we just read, as well as the parallel passage we mentioned earlier (found in Matthew 26 – shown next), Jesus gives us the understanding that this fourth cup does in fact refer to the Kingdom, and this will be the time that He will drink of it again.

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But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

-Matthew 26:29

So, we recognize that from the Passover context, we can definitely see allusions to the Millennium. But the “cup” typology was richly embedded into the ancient Jewish traditions. Another area of incredible “cup” typology is in the ancient Hebrew wedding traditions, which we just described earlier. You may recall that the first cup was drunk during the betrothal ceremony, as the bridegroom and the bride became engaged. But the second cup was drunk during the wedding ceremony – a cup of joyous celebration of the wedding covenant.

It would seem that although the wedding ceremony between the Bridegroom (Christ) and the bride (the Church) occurs in heaven during the final seven years, apparently Christ will wait to drink of this cup until the Marriage Supper in the Millennium. Some commentators have suggested two wedding feasts – one in heaven during the Tribulation, and one afterwards on earth during the Kingdom. Although this could turn out to be the case, we tend toward the belief that there is only one Marriage Supper, and it will be on earth during the Millennial Kingdom. To this point, recall that we just highlighted Jesus's promise to not drink of the cup again until the Kingdom, which would seem to invalidate any potential earlier Marriage Suppers.

So, it is at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb that the Lord will drink with His beloved bride, the fourth and final cup which He left untouched at His Passover when He walked out of an unfinished meal.

There are a few other references to this feast found in the Gospels that we will refer to later. But the next passage we will discuss, and the final reference to the Marriage Feast, is the most explicit, found in Revelation 19, which calls it the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

But let's first recognize the context of this passage according to the typological chronology of the Fall Feasts. In this passage we are about to read, we see the eschatological events of the Day of Atonement

ending and the events of the Feast of Tabernacles beginning. At this time, the Messiah (the Bridegroom) has emerged from heaven (the bridechamber) with His Church (His bride), and has returned to earth to conquer His enemies, and regather and redeem the remnant of Israel, in preparation for the next appointed time – the Feast of Tabernacles. As we know, a central theme of Tabernacles is the wedding feast at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom that Christ will establish. So, keeping that order of events in mind, let's now read through this prophetic glimpse given to us by John.

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: **for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.**

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

And he saith unto me, Write, **Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.** And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King Of Kings, And Lord Of Lords.

And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, **Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;**

That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.

-Revelation 19:6-9, 11, 16-18

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So, we can see that this incredible passage describes what is clearly the apex of the entire story of mankind – God and His beloved bride that He died for – are finally united. The marriage has taken place, and the Marriage Supper the of the Lamb – the next event – was imminent. John saw and heard the heavenly multitudes praising God because the wedding feast of the Lamb – literally, the “marriage supper” – was about to begin. All of heaven rejoiced, as this pinnacle event had been realized and the Millennium – also known as the “Season of Our Joy” was beginning.

But we also need to notice that in this passage, we actually saw two suppers – the Marriage Supper of the Lamb and then another one referred to as the Supper of the Great God – a feast for the vultures to gorge themselves on the dead bodies of the wicked that have been gathered together for judgment. If you happen to be invited to this supper, you’ll be the meal. So, it seems that if you’re not attending the first feast, there’s a good chance you’ll be attending the second feast ... as the main course.

Let’s now discuss another aspect of the Marriage Supper – the invited guests. There is an old Jewish custom related to the Feast of Tabernacles, which is still observed today, called *ushpuzin*, which means “exalted guests.” Essentially, while you were to dwell in a sukkah for seven days, the famous Biblical characters of the Old Testament symbolically came and ate with you. The Jews would set a plate for Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, and David. Jews still memorialize this practice today.¹⁷

But does this practice anticipate any actual future event related to Tabernacles? It seems the answer is yes! It looks to be a rehearsal for during the Millennium where the Old Testament saints will have been resurrected and will be guests of honor assembled to attend the Marriage Supper! Jesus seemingly referred to this in Matthew 8 and Luke 13, where He said that many would come from the east and west and sit and eat with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in the Kingdom.

And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with **Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.**

-Matthew 8:11

There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see **Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God,** and you yourselves thrust out.

And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall **sit down in the kingdom of God.**

-Luke 13:28-29

So, we see that even Jesus confirmed this idea of the famous Old Testament saints sitting down at the Marriage Supper in the future Millennial Kingdom Age, where they'll apparently be guests of honor. Concerning these guests invited to the Feast, Jewish Christian Bible scholar Arnold Fruchtenbaum writes:

The "many" who are bidden to attend the marriage feast on earth are all the Old Testament saints and the Tribulation saints resurrected after the Second Coming. While the marriage ceremony will take place in Heaven just before the Second Coming, the marriage feast will take place on earth after the Second Coming. In fact, it would seem that the marriage feast is what begins the Millennium or the Messianic Kingdom; the church's co-reigning with the Messiah will start with a tremendous marriage feast.¹⁸

So, part of the guests attending the Marriage Supper in the Kingdom will be the Old Testament saints such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, David, and all whose souls are currently in heaven, however, are not part of the Church, and thus are not the bride. Hebrews 12:1 refers to them as a "great cloud of witnesses." John the Baptist, described as being the greatest of the Old Testament

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prophets, identifies himself as a friend of the Bridegroom (John 3:29) – not the bride. In other words, the “best man.”

As the Millennium begins, these Old Testament saints – along with the Tribulation martyrs – both of whom are not part of the Church, will have received their resurrection bodies to rule and reign with Christ for one thousand years. So, these now-resurrected Old Testament saints and Tribulation martyrs – as well as potentially the righteous mortal Tribulation survivors will be the guests at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

And he saith unto me, Write, **Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb...**

-Revelation 19:9

So, we can recognize a number of conspicuous associations between the Marriage Supper of the Lamb and the coming Millennial Age, which Tabernacles represents. The imagery of Tabernacles, such as a covering, a bridal canopy, an overshadowing, a bridegroom, a tabernacle, and a dwelling all point to Millennial Kingdom after a world has just been judged, but where those who love God will be protected as He spreads His covering over each one. It seems to be much later at the end of the Millennial period that the full revelation of God’s bride is revealed as her ultimate dwelling place – the New Jerusalem – descends from heaven onto a new earth. This is the eternal home of the redeemed that we see coming down from heaven in Revelation 21.

The Restitution Of All Things

Another prominent theme of Tabernacles and of the Millennium is the restoration and restitution of all things. The Feast of Tabernacles is the time when Jewish tradition expects that the Messiah will arrive to set up His Kingdom. Another way of putting it is they believe that the Messiah’s arrival brings with it the Kingdom Age, which represents Tabernacles. This final Fall Feast is a picture of the final redemption,

when the Messiah reconciles all things back to God, and will reign over the earth.

Obviously, Christians agree, with the one difference being that unlike the Jews, we recognized His two arrivals. At His First Coming, He did not establish a physical Kingdom Age – but at His Second Coming, He will. Jews think it’s the Messiah’s First Coming, while Christians recognize it’s His Second. So, taking that into account, Christians and Jews mostly agree on this aspect of the Kingdom Age being an age of restoration and restitution. That’s why for the Jews, the Feast of Tabernacles is considered the greatest of the three pilgrimage feasts. It’s the feast that anticipates the restoration and restitution of all things – including even the earth itself. The Messiah’s Kingdom will be established in a restored Israel. And Jerusalem, the city of the great King, will be the seat of this kingdom of righteousness and peace. His dwelling place will again be Jerusalem. Let’s start to dig into this a bit and see what the Bible has to say about it.

In Acts 3:21, the apostle Peter spoke of the coming “times of restitution of all things.” Speaking about Jesus, Peter implied that He ascended back to heaven *until* this time of restitution. In other words, His return would bring about this time of restitution. He also implies that this time of restitution is a period well-known and widely expected, a time known by all through the writings of the prophets.

And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

Whom the heaven must receive **until the times of restitution of all things**, which **God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.**

-Acts 3:20-21

This word “restitution,” is Strong’s #605 – the Greek word *apokatastasis*, and means restoration or reestablishment.¹⁹ *HELPS Word Studies* says the following about this word.

Restitution, referring to the “restoration of the physical earth in the Messianic kingdom (Millennium)”.²⁰

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Thayer's Greek Lexicon says it means:

The restoration not only of the true theocracy but also of that more perfect state of (even physical) things which existed before the fall.²¹

The word restoration, according to *Dictionary.com*, implies:

A return ... to a former, original, normal, or unimpaired condition, or the restitution of something taken away or lost.²²

Peter was speaking of a future time when things would be restored to their original state. The apostle explained that God had spoken this prophecy “by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began” and that Jesus would remain in heaven until it was time for this event to unfold. Christ’s return and the times of restoration are thus linked together, and many Bible passages point to these events happening in various stages, right here on earth.

Also describing this restitution, the apostle Paul wrote the following, mentioning how even the physical earth itself is in a state of perpetual decay as a result of the curse, and is awaiting this future time of reversal and restoration.

For the **earnest expectation** of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,

Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

-Romans 8:19-22

So, this time of restitution involves many different aspects. It includes changes to the earth, the way it’s governed, and the relationship God will have with humanity. But we should recognize that there

will actually be several times of restoration. The Millennium is the first phase, but the final restoration event, where a new heaven and a new earth are created, will be at the end of the Millennium, leading into the Eternal State.

But let's discuss several aspects of the Millennial renewal as best we can from scripture. We will discuss the restoration of Israel, the restoration of man, and the restoration of the earth.

The Restoration of Israel

The Millennial Kingdom will be a time period when God will fulfill His many unconditional promises concerning the nation of Israel and especially the city of Jerusalem. During this time, Israel and the city of Jerusalem, will enjoy a place of preeminence over the nations of earth, as Christ will rule from David's throne in Jerusalem. Israel will finally be the nation that fulfills its calling to be a light unto the world. The Old Testament prophets are full of incredible anticipations of this theme of Israel and Jerusalem being elevated in the Kingdom Age. Let's take a look at just a few.

Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.

And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

-Isaiah 49:22-23

Thus saith the Lord of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.

-Zechariah 8:23

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And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep: who, if he go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

-Micah 5:8

So, we see that Israel as a nation will be elevated above the other nations, and will be a light to lead all to the truth of God. The Old Testament prophecies pointing toward the outpouring of the New Covenant upon Israel will be fulfilled in their ultimate sense during the Millennium. It will be this final everlasting covenant that leads to God's law being written on their hearts instead of on tablets of stone. We've examined these passages in depth earlier in this study, but let's just review one in particular – Ezekiel 36:24-28, which describes Israel's second and final regathering in faith as the Millennial Kingdom begins.

For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

-Ezekiel 36:24-28

The New Covenant will also be offered to all nations, and the greatest outpouring of the Spirit upon the Gentiles will occur at this time.

But as we mentioned earlier, the city of Jerusalem will also enjoy a place of prominence, as it will be the seat of Christ's earthly govern-

ment where He will rule the nations justly, with a rod of iron, as the scriptures tell us (Psalm 2:9; Revelation 2:27). Jerusalem will be a source of blessing for all people. Let's examine a small sample of these passages.

The Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.

-Isaiah 24:23b

And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.

-Isaiah 16:5

Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the Lord.

-Zechariah 8:22 (ESV)

And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

-Zechariah 14:16

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

-Isaiah 2:3

So, we can see that the Millennium will represent a time of the restoration of Israel and the city of Jerusalem among all the nations of the earth. God will finally fulfill all of His ancient promises to Israel, and the many prophecies of this time that are found in the Old Testament will be realized.

The Restoration of Man

When Adam and Eve rejected God's instructions in the Garden of Eden, they lost access to the Tree of Life, which symbolized the opportunity to receive eternal life. They and all humanity, which followed their example of rejecting God, would temporarily be subjected to a curse on the earth, separating them from close fellowship with God, bringing about a life of labor, and introducing the dying process (Romans 5:12). This cursed creation has been the status quo for mankind since Genesis. But after Christ's Second Coming, He will begin to reverse this process, as the Millennium will act as a time of restored relationship between God and man.

The Millennium will be a time where the whole world learns of God's ways. God's government will be centered at Jerusalem and will span across the globe as both spiritual and physical blindness is removed under the ultimate outpouring of the New Covenant.

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing:

-Isaiah 35:5-6a

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

-Isaiah 11:9

But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it.

And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his

paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

-Micah 4:1-3

So, we can see that this will be a reign of peace, justice, and the knowledge of God on earth. As Satan is banished for a thousand years, God will begin pouring out His Spirit – the New Covenant – in abundance to all who repent of their sins and turn to Him. All nations will be taught God’s ways. When God’s laws are kept, peace, joy, prosperity and longevity will follow.

The prophets actually tell us that during this marvelous time God will bless people with long lives, affording them the opportunity to know their grandchildren and have sufficient time to learn and live God’s way of life.

Thus says the Lord of hosts: Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand **because of great age.**

And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets.

-Zechariah 8:4-5 (ESV)

No longer shall there be in it an infant who lives only a few days,

Or an old man who does not finish his days;

For the youth who dies at the age of a hundred,

And the one who does not reach the age of a hundred

Will be thought of as accursed.

-Isaiah 65:20 (AMP)

So, the Millennium involves a partial repealing of this curse that was instituted in the Garden. But at the end of the Millennium,

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leading into the Eternal State, God will completely remove every curse on man. Isaiah prophesied of this saying:

He will swallow up death forever;
and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces,
and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth,
for the Lord has spoken.
-Isaiah 25:8 (ESV)

Paul later explains that for the Christian, and those who will receive glorified resurrection bodies for the Millennial Age, this prophecy in Isaiah will have been fulfilled as the final curse and enemy of God's creation – death itself – will come to an end.

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.
-1 Corinthians 15:54

But the curse of death as a whole – although reduced in the Millennium – will be ultimately defeated as the Eternal State begins. In his great vision at the end of the Book of Revelation, John records the following.

And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:
-Revelation 22:3

Revelation Chapter 21 also describes this restored state, saying:

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

And he that sat upon the throne said, **Behold, I make all things**

new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

-Revelation 21:4-5

In the Eternal State, God will make the earth His permanent home with His bride in the New Jerusalem. As this heavenly city descends, a great voice from heaven is heard saying:

And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

-Revelation 21:5-6

So, Christ's glorious and triumphant return to establish the Millennial Kingdom begins this majestic process of the restoration of mankind and his relationship with God. And at the end of the Millennium, as the Eternal State comes into view, the curse is completely repealed and the ultimate completion of this restoration will be accomplished.

The Restoration of Earth

Earlier, we discussed earth's state of continual bondage to decay as result of the curse in Genesis. Because of Adam and Eve's disobedience, God said:

Cursed is the ground because of you ... thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you.

-Genesis 3:17-18 (ESV)

One of the key components of restoration during the Millennium will be a massive rehabilitation of the earth and its cities – especially

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in Israel. Once the sins of Israel are forgiven, God will cause the nation's land to be restored to beauty like the Garden of Eden.

Thus saith the Lord God; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded.

And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by.

And they shall say, **This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden;** and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited.

-Ezekiel 36:33-35

A number of agricultural and physical changes will take place on earth during this time. Earlier in this chapter we just read from – Ezekiel 36 – we are told about some of the agricultural changes.

And I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you.

And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen.

-Ezekiel 36:29b-30

The prophet Isaiah mentions the desert blossoming like a rose and the waters breaking forth in the wilderness.

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.

...

Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the

dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

-Isaiah 35:1-2 and 6-7

Interestingly, this actually seems to be the trend in Israel ever since the Jews began returning over the past century or so. However, we recognize that the ultimate fulfillment of this will take place in the Millennial context. This agricultural explosion is also described by Zechariah.

For the seed shall be prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause **the remnant** of this people to possess all these things.

-Zechariah 8:12

Furthermore, during the Millennium, even the sun and moon are described as being brighter.

Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.

-Isaiah 30:26

Another topographical change includes the Dead Sea coming back to life.

Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed.

And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall

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be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh.

And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from Engedi even unto Eneglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many.

But the miry places thereof and the marishes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt.

And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.

-Ezekiel 47:8-12

Bible prophecy even describes different relationships among the animals. For example, Isaiah paints a picture of this restoration as the predators will dwell in peace with their former prey, and even the lion will no longer eat meat, but straw.

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

-Isaiah 11:6-9

We can see that the restoration of the physical earth – including

the sun, the moon, the animals, the environment, agriculture, the waters, and the cities, is clearly spoken of in scripture.

So, we recognize that these three restoration areas that we discussed – Israel, mankind, and the physical earth – will all take place during the Millennium. The Millennium begins the restoration of what was lost in the fall of man, and the effects of the curse will be largely reversed. But there is another aspect of this that we need to look into – the theme of the Millennium as the ultimate year of jubilee of the sabbatical cycle. Before concluding this subsection on “the restitution of all things,” let’s spend some time seeing the Millennial restoration from this perspective.

Every seventh year, the Israelites were to let the land keep a “sabbath of rest” by not sowing their crops (Leviticus 25:2-7). This would allow the land to avoid being over-cultivated – a practice now recognized in modern times as being necessary to avoid pulling all of the nutrients out of the soil. So, the land would lay fallow on the seventh year. This would occur every seventh year for a cycle of seven – in other words, every forty-nine years would constitute a full cycle. Then, on the fiftieth year, it would be a Jubilee year – which was a year of restitution and restoration.²³

What would happen on this fiftieth year of jubilee? All property would automatically be restored to its original owner, and those who, compelled by poverty, had sold themselves as slaves, should regain their liberty. In other words – it’s a time of restitution and restoration of all things.

Is the jubilee year a type of the Millennium, when the earth will be restored to its original owner, God – and those who are slaves to sin receive their liberty under the ultimate outpouring of the New Covenant? It seems the answer is yes, as we know that during the Millennium, the earth will revert back to its original owner – God, and spiritual liberty will be proclaimed. However, this is not an ultimate reality until the end of the Millennium, when Satan, sin, and death are finally ultimately defeated and the Eternal State begins. So, we may want to think of the Millennium as a kind of Age of Jubilee, as the process of restoration begins – but we should recognize that the full

restoration is finally realized during the Eternal State. We will discuss this more, further ahead in this study.

Let's recognize one final point regarding the sabbatical and jubilee years. Interestingly, the announcement of the Sabbatical year (the seventh year) began with the seventh Jewish month in the fall – Tishri – the month during which the Fall Feasts take place (Leviticus 25:9).

According to Leviticus 25:9, a loud trumpet is blown to proclaim liberty throughout the land on the 10th day of Tishri (the Day of Atonement), after the lapse of seven sabbatical years, or forty-nine years. In this manner, every fiftieth year was to be announced as a jubilee year. So, we notice some amazing parallels with the Fall Feast chronology, as the Day of Atonement proclaims the start of the jubilee, leading into Tabernacles – the time that begins the restitution of all things.

So, as we conclude this subsection, we recognize one of the prominent themes of the Millennium – the time of the restitution of all things, which portrays this period as a time when the earth, the nation of Israel, and all mankind will begin to be restored back to their former state. We also note the linkages between Tabernacles and the Millennial Age, being pictured by the jubilee year – the final culminating year of restitution where liberty is proclaimed and property returns to its former owner – in this case, the earth returning to the government of God.

The Festival of Ingathering

Another name and theme for the Feast of Tabernacles is the Festival of Ingathering (*Hag ha-Asif*), which can be seen in Exodus 34:22 where the Bible calls it by this name.²⁴ It was called ingathering because it celebrated the ingathering of summer crops and fruits and the close of the agricultural year.²⁵ In other words, it commemorated the reaping of the final harvest of the yearly agricultural cycle.

It is the time when the produce of the field, orchard, and vineyard is gathered in. The granaries, threshing floors, and wine and olive presses are full to capacity. Weeks and months of toil and sweat put

into the soil have finally been abundantly rewarded. The farmer feels cheerful and overjoyed. No wonder Tabernacles is also called “The Season of Our Joy, or Rejoicing.” While all of the three pilgrimage festivals are times of rejoicing, Tabernacles is specifically designated as *Zeman Simchatenu*, the season of our rejoicing.²⁶

Tabernacles is not only a festival of celebration of the harvest of the field, but typologically, it also points forward to God’s ultimate harvest – the ingathering of His people from all the nations. In scripture, the agricultural harvest has always acted as a type of the ingathering of – or the saving of – people’s souls. In John Chapter 4, Jesus speaks of a spiritual harvest.

Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh **harvest?**
behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and **look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.**

And he that **reapeth** receiveth wages, and **gathereth fruit unto life eternal:** that both he that **soweth** and he that **reapeth** may rejoice together.

And herein is that saying true, **One soweth, and another reapeth.**

I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

-John 4:35-38

The apostle Paul uses this type of language as well, as he refers to his own evangelism as a spiritual harvest.

I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order **that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles.**

-Romans 1:13 (ESV)

This concept of souls being saved is also referred to in many other places as being typified by an agricultural harvest. Obviously, we know that within the New Covenant context, the “harvest” of lost souls has

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been taking place since its beginning at Pentecost. But just as the culmination of the harvest happens at the end of the yearly agricultural cycle, there is also coming an ultimate spiritual harvest at the end of God's planned cycle for humanity – the Millennium.

After the Second Coming of Christ to establish the Millennial Kingdom, the entire world will finally become reconciled to God. As Jesus Christ rules on earth from David's Throne in Jerusalem, all nations will learn the truth of God, and will begin to obey His commandments. One of the many prophetic passages that describe this is found in Isaiah Chapter 2.

The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

-Isaiah 2:1-4

So, we can see that the entire world will learn of the ways of God and the nations will live according to the law of God. Isaiah Chapter 11 tells us that this will take place, and that:

The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

-Isaiah 11:9

At this time, the whole world will then be made "at one" with God

and the knowledge of the New Covenant will be known by all people. With Satan banished, all will know the truth of God! That is not to say that full perfection and the total absence of sin will take place, but in general, this will be a time of righteousness and the ways and government of God, as the Tempter – Satan – is imprisoned. This will be the great Fall Harvest pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles which is also called the “Feast of Ingathering,” or the “Feast of Harvest”! This feast depicts the celebration of the ingathering of all mankind into God’s Kingdom.

At this time, Israel will be the chief among the nations, and the laws of the Lord will flow forth from Jerusalem to the whole world. Christ will sit upon the Throne of David in Jerusalem and rule the world. This will be a great time of tremendous rejoicing, happiness, and celebration among all nations, but especially Israel! This is the long-awaited Messianic Kingdom Age promised throughout the Old Testament and spoken of by Jesus – and all of Israel will be saved! Right now, blindness covers their nation, but at that time, God will have removed the scales from their eyes. The apostle Paul put it plainly. He said:

For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, **until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.**

And so **all Israel shall be saved:** as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

-Romans 11:25-26

So, we see that this will be Israel’s greatest time of spiritual harvest. But it will also be the greatest harvest among all of the nations of earth. At our present time, few of the total population of humanity are living in God’s ways, but during the Millennium, the ultimate outpouring of the Holy Spirit as part of the New Covenant will be accomplished and all Israel and the most of the world will be saved – or at minimum, they will be aware of the truth of salvation! The veil covering people’s eyes will be gone and Christ will be physi-

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cally ruling in Jerusalem. Let's discuss this ultimate outpouring for a bit.

Although some like to apply the New Covenant promise of the outpouring of the Spirit found in Joel Chapter 2 only to Pentecost in 33 AD and the Church, it is of extreme importance to recognize that the actual context of this passage is the Millennial Kingdom. We've already read through this chapter in great detail earlier in this study, but let's quickly review it again in order to see this context. You may want to open a Bible and follow along as we refresh the outline of this chapter.

First, we've recognized that in Verse 1, the Feast of Trumpets is pictured (the event that begins the Day of the Lord and is a call to alarm, warning of the Second Coming of the Messiah). In Verses 2-14, we then see the Days of Awe picturing the culmination of the birth pangs of the Messiah, or the Tribulation, as well as a call to repentance – continuing to picture the period of *Teshuvah*. Then in Verse 15, we see the Day of Atonement pictured (representing the Second Coming of Christ in judgment of the nations). It then begins to describe the second and final regathering of Israel in faith as the Millennium is established. God is seen restating His promises to Israel, and speaking of their blessing and restoration in the Kingdom Age. Let's pick up reading this chapter here, as God is seen emphasizing the outpouring of the autumn rains of the Spirit outpouring upon the remnant of Israel in the Millennium. We will start reading at Verse 23.

Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.

And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you.

And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of

the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed.

And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.

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.

And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come.

And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.

-Joel 2:23-32

This passage was quoted by the apostle Peter in Acts Chapter 2 after the outpouring of the Spirit at the beginning of the New Testament Church. Peter clearly applied the outpouring of the Spirit part of this prophecy to the events that took place on the Day of Pentecost. This has led many to believe that the events on Pentecost and following were the full and final fulfillments of Joel's prophecy – but this is not correct. As we can easily see from not only this passage, but many other New Covenant "Spirit" passages, the ultimate context relates to the Millennial Kingdom – in fact, the Pentecostal fulfillment in 33 AD was completely unexpected by all, in that it did not accompany the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom on earth.

So, yes, this "outpouring of the Spirit" of the New Covenant has absolutely been realized as a near-term fulfillment with Christians in the present Church Age that began at Pentecost. But we should recog-

nize that this was only a type of “first fruits” of this eventual full spiritual harvest, and that the outpouring of the New Covenant awaits a complete fulfillment in the Messianic Age, apparently beginning with the remnant Israel, but extending to all nations.

The New Covenant is described as being an eternal covenant (Hebrews 13:20; et al.). In other words, this is the ultimate and final covenant – or basis of relationship – that God will make with mankind. It is the complete and enduring covenant that all other Biblical covenants pointed toward. If anyone will be saved at any point in the future, it can only be through the New Covenant, which has as its foundation, the Spirit infilling.

We see the New Covenant prophetically anticipated beginning in Jeremiah Chapter 31. After God describes the second and final regathering of Israel at length, He then introduces the promise of a New Covenant, beginning in Verse 31. But notice, the context is that this will be fulfilled *after* their regathering, which we know takes place at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a **new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:**

Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord:

But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

-Jeremiah 31:31-34

Although this passage doesn't go as far as to describe the Spirit

component of this New Covenant, God would begin to give more details through the inspired insights of future prophets. For instance, we see that Ezekiel Chapter 36 also prophesies of this New Covenant, but this time describing the Spirit infilling promise for Israel. And again, notice that it describes it as taking place after their final regathering in faith – in other words, as the Millennium begins.

For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

-Ezekiel 36:24-28

This passage is repeated almost word for word in Hebrews 8 in the New Testament, being clearly applied to the Church. However, this New Covenant still has its far-term fulfillment waiting, especially for Israel, but also for the Gentiles in the Messianic Age.

God says that this New Covenant will be not broken by Israel – unlike the Mosaic Covenant given when God brought Israel out of Egypt through the wilderness to the Promised Land. So, unlike that Old Covenant, Israel will be faithful to keep the New Covenant and honor God with it during the Messianic Age. God says He will put His law in their inward parts and write it on their hearts instead of expecting them to try to keep the law from external guides like the priests, prophets, kings and judges. Of course, the means by which God will write His law on the hearts of His people the Jews (and also believing Gentiles) in the Messianic Age will be to send His Holy Spirit. God's Holy Spirit will indwell the hearts of all surviving

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believing Jews and Gentiles from the Tribulation who are then allowed to populate the earth in the Messianic Age with mortal bodies.

Note: Whether or not the Spirit infilling is available during the Tribulation on the other hand, is debated, but there's good reason to assume that it will not be, as the New Testament tells us the "Restrainer" – which is likely identified as the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of Church Age believers – is removed in order for the Antichrist to emerge (2 Thessalonians 2:7). It is thought that for those believers who are killed during the Tribulation, as well as those who lived and died prior to Pentecost will be resurrected and have the opportunity to receive the New Covenant during the Millennium.

We know the New Covenant will be extended to all people including the Gentiles for a number of reasons, but most plainly because going full-circle back to Joel 2, we see the promise being made to "all flesh" – meaning all people, not only Jews.

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon
all flesh;

-Joel 2:28

Obviously, since even in the Book of Acts time, the Gentiles received the New Covenant promise of the Spirit, which Peter applied this passage to, we should expect the same to be true in the future. During the Millennium it will not only be the Jews who are followers of God, but it will include those of all nations who will serve Him. As Isaiah the prophet wrote:

And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over
all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations.

He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off **all faces;** and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it.

And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

-Isaiah 25:7-9

This is a beautiful allusion to the “feast of ingathering,” of course, focusing on Israel, but also including all nations – and is also what seems to be pictured in detail in the Book of Revelation, where we see the ingathering of all people who survived the Tribulation and would not take the Mark of the Beast. God leads these people to the living fountains of salvation, which we have discussed always refers to the New Covenant Spirit infilling, especially in the Millennium.

After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, **of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues,** stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and **palms in their hands;**

And cried with a loud voice, saying, **Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.**

And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, **These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and **he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.**

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

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For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

-Revelation 7:9-17

So, we see the same themes of the ingathering of the nations, God comforting all people and wiping away tears from their eyes, removing the veil from their eyes that they might know the truth, and Him tabernacling among men. The multitude of worshipers before the throne is pictured carrying palm branches, probably representing *luyav* clusters, and singing a song reminiscent of the Great *Hosanna* sung on Tabernacles. We again see the theme of God leading people unto living fountains of water, which we know from examining the Water Pouring ceremony on Tabernacles, represents the receiving of the Spirit in the New Covenant. So, again, within this passage in Revelation is represented all of the great themes of the Feast of Tabernacles, and is exactly what Isaiah described in the previous passage we looked at.

So, we understand that scripture described all the remnant of Israel as well as many of all nations being saved during the Millennium. We know that the Millennium will be a time where Satan is bound and the average person will know the truth of God. But before we conclude with this topic of Tabernacles representing the great Millennial harvest of souls, we need to examine one final aspect. That is, we need to recognize the potential magnitude of this harvest by understanding the conditions that will exist during this age.

In the Millennium, the earth's population will explode. Without war, disease, famine and death, the earth will rapidly multiply with people. As of 2020, the population of earth is estimated to number around eight billion. After the Tribulation, much of the earth's population will be killed. Those alive during the Second Coming of Christ will be judged, and only those found worthy will enter the Millennial Kingdom. Those who do enter the Millennium will repopulate the Earth as mortals.

We know that during the Millennium, wellness and long lifespans will be the norm. The main cause for premature death during the

Millennium will apparently be for rebellion and apostasy. Scripture tells us that even death at one hundred years old will be like the death of an infant today (Isaiah 65:20). How many will be alive by the end of the Millennium is total speculation, but a hypothesis of ten times the current population of the Earth would not seem outrageous at all. Without the factors that decrease population, sixty to seventy billion might actually be conservative.

If we assumed that only one million people survived the Tribulation period and entered the Millennial age, and we assume the population doubled every fifty-five years, in the first three hundred thirty years the population would grow to thirty-two million. In the next three hundred thirty years, there would be over two billion, and by the end of the one thousand years, over one hundred thirty billion people. A doubling of the population every fifty-five years is extremely conservative, especially considering that there will be no war, death will be scarce, and the environment will not be unfavorable to humanity. This helps us sense the potential magnitude of this harvest!

So, we can see that this great Fall Harvest, when millions will have the blinders stripped from their eyes, and will see and understand God's truth for the first time, is symbolized by the Feast of Tabernacles – the Feast of Ingathering. As believers, we celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles looking both forward and backward. We look back with thankful hearts to our own deliverance from the bondage of sin, but we are also conscious that the final harvest has not yet been fully gathered in. We look ahead in eager anticipation to the joyous celebration that will accompany the final ingathering of the harvest during the Millennium.

The Festival of the Nations

Another name for the Feast of Tabernacles is the Festival of the Nations. Let's start by understanding that Israel's mission was to be a light unto the nations by being an instrument for God to introduce salvation and the knowledge of God to the whole world.

This concept has its origin in the Abrahamic Covenant recorded in

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Genesis. In fact, every promise that we have as Gentiles derives ultimately from the promises given to Abraham by God. In that agreement, God promised in Genesis 12:3 that all the nations of the earth would be blessed through Abraham's seed. From Abraham, God would raise up a people, Israel, to be a blessing to the nations. That promise was most ultimately fulfilled through Jesus, the Messiah, who introduced a new basis of relationship between God and man through the New Covenant, as stated in Galatians 3.

And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

-Galatians 3:8, 14, 16, 29

So, we can understand that God's mission for the Messiah through the nation of Israel was always to be a light to the nations. This is explained a number of times in Isaiah, including the following two passages, which describe the Messiah as the representative of the nation of Israel.

I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;

-Isaiah 42:6

And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

-Isaiah 60:3

So, we see that scripture presents the idea of Israel being an instrument through which God can bring light to the nations. Interestingly, at the modern state of Israel's inception, its first Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion emphasized his vision of the state of Israel as a moral and social beacon to the whole world, and by that, in his view, it would fulfill the vision of the prophets.²⁷

Furthermore, the selection of the Menorah as the Emblem of Israel is believed by many to be derived from the image of the state of Israel as a "Light Unto the Nations."²⁸ Further yet, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in his 2017 U.N. speech quoted Isaiah, saying that the state of Israel is "a light unto the nations, bringing salvation to the ends of the earth."²⁹ So, we recognize that throughout scripture, and even as a theme embraced by national Israel today, God's desire has always been to use Israel as an instrument to bring salvation to the nations.

In the near-term sense, this was fulfilled in the New Covenant outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost and its subsequent spread to the Gentiles. However, in the more far-term sense, the fulfillment of the Gentile nations receiving salvation and the knowledge of God through the New Covenant points toward the Millennial Reign of the Messiah. During this time, Israel will be restored to a place of global prominence, and they will finally fulfill this mission of being God's light in the world. At this time, there will be a universal knowledge and reverence of God throughout all the nations of the earth. Of course, this Millennial period is the antitype that the Feast of Tabernacles points toward, reinforcing the associations of this feast with the nations of earth. In fact, as mentioned already, we know from scripture that Tabernacles will be a required celebration by all the nations of earth during the Millennium. This command might seem mysterious at first glance, but when viewed in light of Israel's calling and mission as a light to all nations, it seems very appropriate. The prophet Zechariah prophesied of this future day.

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And it shall come to pass, that **every one that is left of all the nations** which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, **and to keep the feast of tabernacles.**

And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

-Zechariah 14:16-18

We also notice some hidden linkages embedded in the subtleties of the sacrificial rituals of Tabernacles. First, we need to recognize that symbolically, the number seventy represents the nations of earth. This originates from the Table of Nations in Genesis Chapter 10, which lists the seventy grandsons of Noah, who went on to form their own seventy people groups, or nations. Further, when Jacob and his family went to Egypt, there were seventy descendants who went, and it was there that they became a nation (Deuteronomy 10:22; et al.). Scripture then tells us that God set the boundaries of the nations according to this number (seventy) (Deuteronomy 32:8). So, the number seventy is conspicuous within the Jewish and Biblical traditions as being associated with the original seventy nations of earth.³⁰

How does this fit into Tabernacles? Simply that we find within the list of sacrifices to be performed on Tabernacles, as listed in Numbers 29:12-35, there are seventy bullocks required to be offered on the altar. Knowing what we read earlier, about the nations of earth coming to Jerusalem to celebrate Tabernacles in the Millennium, does this connect some dots for us? If there are seventy nations, and there are seventy required bullocks sacrificed in Tabernacles, does this mean that each nation will be required to sacrifice one? Of course, this is only speculation, but in the spirit of trying to decode the ultimate fulfillments of the feasts, it would make sense that Israel was required to sacrifice these seventy as a rehearsal for this future appointed time

on God's calendar. In fact, this is actually affirmed in the Jewish Midrash on Psalm 109:4 (Midrash being Biblical interpretations recorded by ancient Judaic authorities).

At the festival of Tabernacles we offer up seventy bullocks (as an atonement) for the seventy nations, and we pray that rain will come down for them.³¹

Let's examine one final linkage between Tabernacles and the theme of "the nations." We notice that the nations of the world are also associated with Tabernacles in 1 Kings 8:41-43 when Solomon dedicated the Temple during the Feast of Tabernacles. The following is a recording of Solomon's prayer at this dedication.

Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake;

(For they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house;

Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: **that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name.**

-Kings 8:41-43

Within this passage that records Solomon's prayer, we see constant references to strangers, or Gentiles from all the nations of earth, hearing about the knowledge of God through Israel, and through the dedication of the Temple of God by Solomon. Is this a type of the future Millennial Temple, which all the nations will come to during the Millennium, to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles and learn about the ways of God as He dwells among man? Again, we can only speculate, but in observing all that scripture teaches us about these themes, it would seem obvious that this is the implication given to us!

So, we can see the clear association between the Feast of Tabernacles and the nations of the world. For this reason, the festival is also called the Festival of the Nations.

Hoshanah Rabbah

The seventh and final day of the Feast of Tabernacles is called, in Hebrew, *Hoshanah Rabbah* (meaning the Great *Hosanna*, or the Great Salvation). This word *hosanna*, means “save now,” or “deliver us.” On this final great day of the feast, the Jews would pray for both the physical and the spiritual rains – the physical rain for the coming agricultural cycle, and the spiritual rain of the outpouring of the Spirit, God’s salvation through the Messiah.³²

The entire Feast of Tabernacles pictured, in a spectacular way, the great fall harvest, and it was also referred to as “The Festival of the Harvest.” But the seventh and final day of the Feast – the culminating day of the Feast – had a special meaning of its own. It represented in a unique way the *final* day of harvest. Prophetically, it pictures the celebration of the ingathering of the final harvest of souls in God’s plan which would take place at the end of the Millennium at the final judgment. It is at this time when God’s plan for human history reaches its culmination and the righteous of all generations are sealed to enter into the Eternal State.

So, for the righteous it is the Great Salvation – but for the unrighteous, it will be the Great Judgment. So then, it also pictures the final day of judgment – often called the White Throne Judgment by Christians, when the Second Resurrection (or Second Death) of the unbelievers will take place. We will now discuss two very overlapping and interconnected themes and rituals of this final day of Tabernacles. The first will be the salvation of the righteous and judgment of the unrighteous. The second will be the final harvest of souls.

The Salvation of the Righteous and the Judgment of the Unrighteous

On this day of *Hoshanah Rabbah*, the festival activities were different from those of each of the six previous days of Tabernacles, when the priests circled the altar in a procession, singing the *Hallel* – the ritual recitation of a portion of the Psalms, including Psalm 118:25.

Save now [or “*hosanna*”], I beseech thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.

-Psalm 118:25

On the seventh day, instead of the priests circling God’s Altar, the people circled the Altar seven times. As all of God’s people circled the Altar, they cried out: “Save now!” seven times. That is why the day is called *Hoshanah Rabbah*, or the Great Salvation, as all the people cried, “Save now!” seven times.

This is a picture of the final great salvation at the end of the Millennium – the culminating Day of Judgment where the wicked are sealed for eternal damnation and the righteous people throughout all of history are sealed to enter into the Eternal State as the new heavens and new earth are formed and the New Jerusalem descends to earth. It will be the final separation of the wheat and the chaff (meaning the godly and the ungodly) and the final end of sin on the earth.

Then the glory of God will illuminate His city and the pure water of the River of Life will flow from the throne of God and of the Lamb, and the trees that grow by it will be for the salvation of the nations (Revelation 21:22-24; 22:1-4).

The Final Harvest of Souls

Another theme that closely overlaps the one we just discussed, is the ritual beating of the willow branches as a representation of the judgment and the final harvest of humanity.

Every other day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the priestly procession

would march around the altar one time, holding and waving the four species of *lulav* branches and shouting praises to God. But like mentioned earlier, on this seventh day, this circling procession was done seven times while singing the ritual prayers. At this time, the people also waved their palm branches while the Levites chanted the *Hallel*.

But then, at the conclusion of the seventh circle, they took the willows which had been placed at the altar as part of the Temple ritual for the day, and they began to strike the willow branches onto the ground around the altar. This act caused the separation of the leaves from the branches.

The broken willow leaves are symbolic of man's sins that are cast off on what was considered to be the last and final day of judgment when the decision on high, originally sealed on the Day of Atonement, was confirmed. Jewish authors Mitch and Zhava Glaser tell us the following.

In contrast to the festive days of Sukkot, Hoshana Rabbah is observed solemnly, as an extension of the Day of Atonement. On this day, the rabbis tell us, the **gates of judgment finally close** and the decrees pronounced by God on the Day of Atonement take effect.³³

This is symbolic typology drawn from an actual harvest. When the harvest is brought in, it is laid on the threshing floor to dry out. Then it is beaten and winnowed to remove the grain from the chaff. This is when the grain (the righteous) is gathered and the chaff (the unrighteous) is blown away or consumed in a fire. The beating symbolizes the judgment process to harvest the grain.

The place of the Temple altar was originally the threshing floor of Ornan (or Araunah) the Jebusite which David purchased in order to have a place of sacrifice to remove the curse off Israel (1 Chronicles 21:13-25). The beating of the willow branches was a prophetic act of the winnowing of the harvest on the threshing floor.

This all pictures the judgment process which God will initiate when the harvest of the earth is reaped. As we see earlier at the end of

the Tribulation, the earth was reaped as well (Revelation 14:14-16). But at the end of the Millennium, there will be the final separation of the righteous from the wicked. During this, He will separate the chaff from the wheat and burn the chaff with unquenchable fire (the Lake of Fire) in the Great White Throne judgment.

Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

-Matthew 3:12

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

-Revelation 20:11-15

So, we can see the typology of the final judgment embedded into the themes of this final day of Tabernacles – *Hoshanah Rabbah*. We can see the two very different fates facing mankind. The prophet Daniel summarized these in his prophetic vision of the end times.

And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, **some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.**

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And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

-Daniel 12:2-3

The New Testament reveals further detail of separate resurrections for the just and the unjust. Revelation 20:4-6 mentions a “First Resurrection” and identifies those involved as “blessed and holy.”

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and **they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.**

But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the **first resurrection.**

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

-Revelation 20:4-6

The Second Death (the final spiritual death in the Lake of Fire – Revelation 20:14) has no power over these First Resurrection people. The First Resurrection, then, is the raising of all believers. It corresponds with Jesus’s teaching of the “resurrection of the just” (Luke 14:14) and the “resurrection of life” (John 5:29).

The First Resurrection takes place in various stages. Jesus Christ Himself (the “first fruits,” 1 Corinthians 15:20), paved the way for the resurrection of all who believe in Him. There was a resurrection of the saints that accompanied Christ (Matthew 27:52-53) which should also be included in our consideration of the First Resurrection. Still to come are the resurrection of “the dead in Christ,” as well as those still living, at the Lord’s return (1 Thessalonians 4:16) and the resurrec-

tion of the martyrs at the end of the Tribulation (which we just read about in Revelation 20:4).

Revelation 20:12-13 identifies those comprising the Second Resurrection (or Second Death) as the wicked judged by God at the Great White Throne Judgment prior to being cast into the Lake of Fire. The Second Resurrection, then, is the raising of all unbelievers; and is called the Second Death. It corresponds with Jesus's teaching of the "resurrection of damnation" (John 5:29).

The event which divides the First and Second Resurrections seems to be the Millennial Kingdom. The last of the righteous are raised to reign with Christ for a thousand years (Revelation 20:4), but the rest of the dead (that is, the wicked) live not again until the thousand years are finished (Revelation 20:5).

So, this final day of celebrating the harvest and ingathering, pictures the final stage of God's plan for humanity at the end of the Millennium – the Great White Throne Judgment! It literally pictures the final Day of Judgment and the sealing of the wicked who will enter into eternal life, as opposed to those who will suffer the fate of the final Second Death for all eternity.

The Ultimate Sabbath

A final fascinating aspect of the Feast of Tabernacles is found in its association with the Millennial Kingdom as being the "ultimate Sabbath" fulfillment. In order to see this most clearly, we need to begin by zooming out our focus and starting with what might initially seem to be an unusual question. The question is, "why did God choose to create over a one-week period with the final day being a day of rest, as we're told in Genesis?" It may seem more sensible to us to just do it in one day, or instantaneously. So then, what was God's mindset behind doing it over a period of a week with the final day being specifically designated as a period of God "resting" from His "work"? Let's examine this question, and as we do, we will begin to shed some light on Tabernacles and the Millennium as the ultimate fulfillment of this "seventh day of rest."

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First, let's begin by providing what seems to be the quick answer to the question we just posed. God set up the creation week this way because He knew it would act as a prophetic blueprint for His complete plan for human history – which centers on the theme of the redemption of man. Within this seven-day plan lies the Messianic plan of redemption. His creation was to echo redemption by defining a “day” as symbolizing one thousand years – a concept ancient and well-established within Jewish thought. In the ancient Jewish mind, this was called the “seven thousand-year week.”³⁴

The Jewish concept of a “week” is very different from our modern conception of the term. We may think of a week solely as meaning seven days. However, the Jews used this term “week” more so to mean a grouping of seven (usually referring to days, years, etc.) In fact, the Jews had a week of days (Exodus 20:8-11), a week of weeks (Leviticus 23:15-16), a week of months (Exodus 12:2 and Leviticus 23:24), a week of years (Leviticus Chapters 25-26 and Deuteronomy 15), and then finally, the jubilee cycle, which consisted of forty-nine years (seven weeks of years) followed by a jubilee year, which was the fiftieth year – a year in which debts were cancelled (Leviticus 25). But the most ultimate “week” in Jewish thought was the seven thousand-year week – essentially, a week of millenniums – with the final millennium being the eschatological Millennium of the Messianic Kingdom we've been discussing throughout this study.

So, according to this understanding, from beginning to end, God has determined that mankind was to have only six “days” (symbolizing six millenniums) to live out his time on earth. And on the seventh, God would bring His redemption plan to its completion.

This idea of a day being compared to a thousand years is hinted at in the Psalms.

“For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past...”

-Psalm 90:4a

This passage is alluded to again by the Apostle Peter in the New Testament.

“But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”

-2 Peter 3:8

This concept is not only found in the Old and New Testaments, but also in the ancient Jewish writings such as the Babylonian Talmud, which spell it out very clearly for us. For example, in Tractate Sanhedrin, section 97a, many well-respected and prominent rabbis expressed their views on the seven thousand-year week, with the final one thousand-year “day” being the Messianic Kingdom of peace (what we would call the Millennium).

The school of Eliyahu taught: Six thousand years is the duration of the world. Two thousand of the six thousand years are characterized by chaos; two thousand years are characterized by Torah, from the era of the Patriarchs until the end of the mishnaic period; and two thousand years are the period of the coming of the Messiah.³⁵

Amazingly, there seems to be a great deal accuracy in this opinion! These rabbis believed that there were two thousand years before Moses was given the Torah, two thousand years after it was given, and then two thousand years after the coming of the Messiah. Certainly, the last part especially, is amazingly accurate, as Jesus Christ arrived just about two thousand years ago. If this were true, it would be an indicator of the nearness of the end of this age!

The rabbis then believe that the seventh one thousand-year “day” corresponds to the Sabbath (the seventh day of the week) on the normal weekly cycle. Just as the seventh day of the creation week was the day God “rested,” the Jews were also commanded by God in the Torah to rest on the seventh day of each week (the Sabbath day). In like manner, they believe that the seventh day Sabbath of every Jewish week represents – or is ultimately fulfilled by – the final “day” of this

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seven thousand-year week. We see this belief demonstrated in another quote from the same section of the Talmud.

It is taught in a baraita in accordance with the opinion of Rav Ketina: Just as the Sabbatical Year abrogates debts once in seven years, so too, the world abrogates its typical existence for one thousand years in every seven thousand years, as it is stated: “And the Lord alone shall be exalted on that day,” and it states: “A psalm, a song for the Shabbat (*Sabbath*) day” (Psalm 92:1), meaning a day, i.e., one thousand years, that is entirely Shabbat (*Sabbath*). And it says in explanation of the equation between one day and one thousand years: “For a thousand years in Your eyes are but like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night” (Psalms 90:4).³⁶

Many modern Jews still see the seven thousand-year week. Rabbi Baruch Davidson, a modern rabbi, was asked about this. He responded by saying the following.

The Talmud tells us that this world, as we know it, will last for six thousand years, with the seventh millennium ushering in the cosmic Shabbat, the Messianic Era. Six days a week we work, and on the Shabbat we rest and enjoy the fruits of our labor; the same is true with millennia. The source of the Talmudic statement quoted is Rosh Hashana 31a and Sanhedrin 97a.³⁷

Early Christian beliefs apparently reflected this same chronology. For example, the Epistle of Barnabas (thought to have been written between 80 and 120 AD)³⁸ says the following:

Of the Sabbath He speaketh in the beginning of the creation; And God made the works of His hands in six days, and He ended on the seventh day, and rested on it, and He hallowed it.

Give heed, children, what this meaneth; He ended in six days. He meaneth this, that in six thousand years the Lord shall bring all things to an end; for the day with Him signifyeth a thousand years; and this

He himself beareth me witness, saying; Behold, the day of the Lord shall be as a thousand years. Therefore, children, in six days, that is in six thousand years, everything shall come to an end.

And He rested on the seventh day. This He meaneth; when His Son shall come, and shall abolish the time of the Lawless One, and shall judge the ungodly, and shall change the sun and the moon and the stars, then shall he truly rest on the seventh day.³⁹

Around 180 AD, early Church father Irenaeus wrote the following.

The day of the Lord is as a thousand years; and in six days created things were completed. It is evident, therefore, they will come to an end in the six thousandth year.⁴⁰

So, it is clear that the belief in a seven thousand-year plan for humanity – with the final one thousand-year day being a millennium of peace in the Messianic Kingdom – was widespread and common in both Jewish and Christian thought. The divisions of these millenniums from the ancient Jewish sources appear to be summarized as follows.

2,000 Years = “Age of Chaos”

2,000 Years = “Age of Torah”

2,000 Years = “Age of Messiah”

1,000 Years = “Millennial Reign of the Messiah”

Eternity = “New Heavens and a New Earth”

When we actually examine this dating in detail, based on the chronologies found in scripture, we do find that human history does seem to be roughly divided in this way. Obviously, we can’t be dogmatic about this down to the exact year, but the divisions of the millenniums can appear to be broken down as follows.

Adam to Abraham = 2,000 Years (“Chaos”)

Abraham to Jesus Christ = 2,000 Years (“Torah”)

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Jesus Christ to the year 2,000 AD = 2,000 Years (“since the Messiah”)
Jesus Christ’s Reign on Earth = 1,000 Years (“Millennial Reign of the Messiah”)
Eternity (“New Heavens and a New Earth”)

Furthermore, when we pause to examine the prophetic language and terminology used in scripture passages that refer to the Tribulation and Millennium, we do find that this same message seems to be conveyed. For instance, we learn from scripture of the term “Day of the Lord,” which we find to be an idiom that refers to this final one thousand-year day when God will conquer the enemies, rule earth directly, and establish a reign of peace.

This is why eschatologically, this period is “the Last Day.” It’s literally the last of the seven one thousand-year days. It’s also why scripture refers to the time period between Christ’s First Messianic Advent and the end of the world, as the “last days” (plural); (Acts 2:17 and Hebrews 1:1-2). In other words, we seem to be in the final several one thousand-year days of time ever since 33 AD. So, we are currently in the “last days” (plural). But the “last day” (singular) – seems to more specifically refer to the final one thousand-year day, the Millennium.

Again, this day corresponds back to the seventh day of creation in which God rested. His rest on that day is a prophetic type of the future day of rest for the earth in the Millennium. So, whenever you read the terms “the last day,” and “the Day of the Lord” in scripture, it may be appropriate to think of them as representing the ultimate Sabbath day of rest – a picture of the ultimate time of rest in the Messianic Kingdom – the final one thousand-years of “tabernacling” with the Messiah on earth!

Furthermore, this seven thousand-year plan of God seems to show up in typology all throughout scripture. The following are several incredible examples. You may want to take a moment and reflect on each of these, as they all seem to align with the sequence of eschatology that we’ve been discussing throughout this study.

- King Solomon (a type of Christ) had six steps to his throne and the seventh step was his throne (2 Chronicles 9:18). Likewise, after six thousand years, Christ will receive His earthly throne in the Millennium (the seventh millennium).
- Lazarus (a type of Israel) was sick and dead for a total of four days (John 11:1; 5-6, 14, and 39). If you recognize that Israel wasn't in existence until Abraham, and two "days" (or two thousand years) occurred before him – then if we plug this in, Lazarus is a perfect idiom for Israel – being spiritually dead for all four "days" (or four thousand years) of her existence – until she is resurrected to new life after six thousand years, in the Millennium on the seventh day. Likewise, we can also say Jesus resurrected Lazarus on the seventh day as a picture of this. (two days plus four days, equals six days, then he is resurrected on the seventh day)
- After six days, Jesus took his closest disciples up into a high mountain and was transfigured before them (Matthew 17:1; Mark 9:2). Likewise, after six thousand years, Jesus will Rapture His close followers and they will be transfigured with resurrection bodies.
- After six days, Moses was called up to Mount Sinai to be in the presence of God in the midst of the cloud (Exodus 24:16). Likewise, after six thousand years, the Church will be called up to heaven in the Rapture to be in the presence of God, and following that, Israel will be gathered to the Millennial Kingdom.
- Noah was six hundred years of age when God destroyed the world with the Flood (Genesis 7:6). And the ark rested in the seventh month (Genesis 8:4). Likewise, after six thousand years, the earth will be changed as the ultimate time of rest – the Millennial Kingdom begins.

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- King Joash was the rightful king of Israel but was hidden in the Temple for six years while an impostor reigned (Queen Athaliah). At the beginning of the seventh year, the king was brought forth to sit on his rightful throne, and the usurper was put to death (2 Kings 11:3, 16). Likewise, the Lord, the rightful king has been hidden from view for six thousand years while Satan, the great usurper has reigned over the kingdoms of the earth. But in the seven thousandth year, King Jesus will come forth, receive His rightful throne, and Satan will be chained and ultimately cast into the Lake of Fire.
- In ancient Israel, the Torah guaranteed that slaves would work for six years but received their freedom in the seventh year (Exodus 21:2; Deuteronomy 15:1). Likewise, humanity has been under slavery to sin for six thousand years – but in the seven thousandth year, there will be freedom and restitution in the earth as Satan is restrained during the Millennium.

But it still doesn't end there! The idea that there will be four days or four thousand years from Adam to Christ's death, and two days or two thousand years from Christ's death until the Second Coming also seems to be confirmed by Bible typology. Let's examine several examples.

- The Good Samaritan (a type of Christ) gave the innkeeper two pence (equal to two day's wages) to care for the wounded man, promising to then return and settle the account (Luke 10:35). Likewise, there will be two thousand years between Christ's First and Second Comings. When He returns the second time, He will settle all accounts as He establishes His rule in the Millennial Kingdom.

- The Passover lamb was set aside for four days before it was sacrificed (Exodus 12:3, 6). This of course is a type and shadow that pointed to Jesus, the Lamb of God, who was to come and die for the salvation of mankind. So likewise, the Lamb of God was sacrificed at Passover four thousand years after the creation.
- “Life” shows up after the fourth day in the creation narrative. Likewise, Christ shows up after four thousand years and brings “life” (John 1:1-5; 3:16; 10:10; 1 John 1:1-2; 5:12-13).

So, through these amazing examples, we can see that this seven thousand-year plan of God is strategically embedded all throughout the Bible. But this plan is not only hinted at through typology. An amazing set of prophetic verses that give us insight into this plan of God are found in Hosea. When you combine the information given in both verses, it is hard to not recognize that the prophet Hosea pictures the Messiah’s Second Coming as occurring two one thousand-year days after His First Coming. He then alludes to the third one thousand-year day as the time when Israel will be exalted and Tabernacle with the Messiah during the Millennial Kingdom.

I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early.

After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.

-Hosea 5:15 and 6:2

If you apply this verse inside the seven thousand-year-week template: “I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence...” refers to Jesus returning to heaven after being rejected and crucified by the Jews. He will remain there until they “acknowledge their offense” and “seek” him in the Great Tribulation, which the passage calls “their affliction.” They will then be revived “after two

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days,” or in other words, after two thousand years following His First Coming. And, “in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight” referring to the nation being totally revived and regenerated at the Second Coming of Christ and living in His sight in the Millennial Kingdom, which is the “third day” after Calvary, or the “third day” after their offense of rejecting Christ.

But there’s more. Interestingly, in scripture, even numbers convey meaning and typology. The number six represents mankind and rebellion (the six thousand years of man’s self-rule?). The number seven represents perfection (the Millennium?). The number eight represents new beginnings (the New Heavens and New Earth?). It definitely seems obvious that God is trying to show us something here if we are diligent enough to find it – and we will discuss this in greater detail in our next Feast Day – called the Eighth Day!

Note: In this subsection, we are *not* claiming to know an exact timeline for the end times, nor are we claiming that the six thousand-year dating is in perfect alignment with a sound understanding of history. This issue of the dating of the creation of Adam is an in-depth study of its own, and involves differing Biblical genealogies as recorded in the Septuagint versus the Masoretic Text – which is beyond the scope of this study. We are simply showing the **typological template** that seems apparent in scripture, which is reflected in the beliefs of ancient and modern Judaism as well as early Christianity.

As we wrap up our exploration of this topic of the Millennium as the ultimate Sabbath, let’s recognize some incredible linkages with Tabernacles. One fascinating way that this is represented in the rituals of the Feast of Tabernacles is hidden in the numerics of the sacrifices required for the celebration of this festival. What do we mean? Well, we notice that when the offerings are grouped or counted, their number always remains divisible by seven. During the week of Tabernacles, there are one hundred eighty-two sacrifices (seventy bullocks, fourteen rams, and ninety-eight lambs). Each of these figures, including their total are all divisible by seven. Add to this the meal

offerings, which are three hundred thirty-six tenths of ephahs of flour – also divisible by seven (Numbers 29:12-40). It is no coincidence that this seventh festival, which is seven days in duration, and which takes place at the height of the seventh month, had the perfect number (seven), imprinted on its sacrifices.

As we conclude our study of the Feast of Tabernacles, we recognize that it reveals some of the most anticipated prophecies in the Bible – the numerous prophecies related to the coming Millennial Kingdom when Christ will fulfill the many yet-unfulfilled Old Testament promises made to Israel. These promises will be realized in this Millennial reign of Christ, as He sits on David’s throne in Jerusalem, elevating the nation of Israel to a place of global prominence.

Throughout this incredible seventh Sabbath Age, the world will be in a place of partial restoration, and the effects of sin and death will be greatly reduced, as Satan is bound until the very end. Through the themes and details embedded in the Feast of Tabernacles, we gain incredible insight into the eschatological parallels they point toward, allowing us to understand this future divine appointment in great detail.

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CHAPTER 11

THE EIGHTH DAY (SHEMINI ATZERET)

The Eighth Day is surely the most overlooked of all the Hebrew festival days, yet it appears throughout scripture, always shrouded in mystery. This final day in the festival calendar that God commanded Israel to observe is in certain ways its own feast, and yet in many ways it's linked to Tabernacles, the feast that this day directly follows.

This one-day feast called the Eighth Day is inconspicuous in its mention in the Bible, and if you're not reading carefully, you probably would miss it altogether. And yet, this scarcely-mentioned day contains within it the culminating mystery of all of the ages. Let's begin by taking a look at how it is presented in Leviticus Chapter 23.

Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month [Tishri], when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord **seven** days [Tabernacles]: on the first day shall be a sabbath, **and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath.**

-Leviticus 23:39

So, here in Leviticus 23, after describing in full the first seven festivals given by God to Israel, there is a subtle addition found in Verse 39

– a mystery Sabbath falling on the day after the seven days of Tabernacles – which is referred to here as “the eighth day,” or the 22nd of Tishri. This mysterious Eighth Day (which the Jews call *Shemini Atzeret*, meaning the eighth gathering) seems to be separate from the seven-day Tabernacles celebration which ends on the 21st of Tishri, but yet, in a way, connected to it as well. As we examine this deeper, we will find that the Eighth Day celebration points to the new heaven and the new earth following the Millennium – the new beginning, the time beyond time – the Eternal State.

The Number Eight

As we begin to explore this concept of the Eighth Day being a picture of the Eternal State, the first thing we need to look at is the number eight itself. What is so significant about the number eight? What makes this number so peculiar and important in God’s plan for the ages?

First, the number eight is obviously linked to the number seven – probably the most significant number in scripture. Typologically, the number seven is the number of perfection and completion. But in order to understand the mystery of the Eighth Day, we first must understand the mystery of the seventh day.

As we discussed in the previous chapter on Tabernacles, God’s plan for the ages seems to include seven millenniums (seven thousand years), as pictured by the seven days of the creation week. We noted that the idea of God resting on the seventh day of creation is a type of the seventh millennium – the Millennial Kingdom, picturing an ultimate Sabbath rest in God’s seven thousand-year plan for mankind.

So then, if the Seventh Day is the Millennial Kingdom, then whatever follows the Millennial Kingdom must represent the Eighth Day. We know that what follows the Millennial Kingdom is the Eternal State. So, the mysterious Eighth Day is a picture of the Eternal State when God’s seven thousand-year plan for humanity has reached its completion (remember, the number seven stands for “completion”).

This is why everything having to do with the Jewish calendar is

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always in groups of seven – seven days in a week, seven months in the religious year, seven main festivals of the religious calendar, seven years in a sabbatical year, seven sabbatical cycles in the jubilee cycle, and according to Jewish tradition, seven millenniums for the completion of God’s plan. In other words, there are only seven of everything, and no more. Eight comes after the end, which makes no sense because it’s a contradiction. If the seventh day is the last day, there can’t be anything after it – but yet there’s an eighth day – which is the paradox and the beginning of the mystery.

To really see this, we need to go back to quickly review our source text in Leviticus.

Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month [Tishri], when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord **seven days** [Tabernacles]: **on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath.**

-Leviticus 23:39

The passage tells us that Tabernacles is seven days, and then mentions a Sabbath on the first day and on the eighth day – do you see something strange there? Tabernacles is only seven days, so where did the Eighth Day come from? And that’s the mystery! The Eighth Day shouldn’t exist! It’s part of Tabernacles but it’s not part of Tabernacles!

Eight is the number that comes after the end. But then that means that the end is not the end! So, eight is the day of paradox – it points to the theme of “beyond.” It points to the theme of being outside the order, or outside of time – a timeless, or eternal state.

Interestingly, this follows even in our modern culture. If you turn our number eight sideways, it becomes the symbol for infinity, or “eternity.” So, the Eighth Day follows the time when all things are completed and it signals the restarting of something new that is beyond the set end and outside of the established order – the Eternal State.

Let’s now look at some of the appearances of the eighth day in

scripture and Jewish tradition and see how they link up with the mystery of the Eighth Day.

Circumcision on the Eighth Day

And in the **eighth day** the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.

-Leviticus 12:3

The eighth day is the day when all Hebrew males had to be circumcised. It's the day when he enters the covenant. It's the cutting off of the flesh. It's the death of the flesh in a sense, and yet it's a new beginning. It's the putting off of the flesh and a moving beyond.

The Eighth Day in the Hebrew Wedding Celebration

In the Hebrew wedding, the bride and groom celebrate the wedding feast for seven days, as we've already mentioned in this study. So then, what is the eighth day? The eighth day is the first day of the beginning of the actual marriage. The first seven days were the ceremony, but on the eighth day, their actual married life begins. It takes them past what was promised in the wedding and into the reality of it. It takes them into the "beyond."

The Eighth Day in the Sabbatical Cycle

And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.

Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound ...

And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land...

-Leviticus 25:8, 9a and 10a

The jubilee is after the seventh sabbatical year when all property is restored back to its original owner and liberty is proclaimed to the slaves. When you think of the jubilee, you think of the number seven (or actually, seven squared). But, it's really the number eight! You have seven sevens, but then the jubilee year is the year that follows – the fiftieth-year total, or the eighth year – the year that follows the seventh seven.

So, it's in the eighth year that everything actually goes free. Earlier in this study, we discussed the Millennium as being the time that begins the restitution of earth back to God and the final end of sin and death – but it is actually the Eighth Day – the Eternal State – when this is completely fulfilled.

The Eighth Day in the Sabbath

The next example we will touch on is the Sabbath. We know that the seventh or last day of every week is the Sabbath day that God told the Hebrews to set aside as a day of rest. So, when every Sabbath day ends, the cycle begins again, with the next day being the first day – but it's also the eighth day!

In fact, this is even memorialized in the Jewish *havdalah* ceremony – the ceremony that commemorates the end of the week and the ushering in of the mystery of the “new beginning” – the new week.¹

The Resurrection of Christ and the Eighth Day

The plan of God is perfect, and even the death, burial and resurrection continues to reveal to us this mystery of the Eighth Day. Scripture tells us that the resurrection of Christ occurred on Sunday, the day that follows the seventh day Sabbath.

Let's see this from the standpoint of the numbers six, seven, and eight. If the seventh day represents a day of rest, then the number six represents the finishing of work. It was the day the Jews would finish their duties in preparation for the Sabbath of rest. If you then could

pick a physical representation of the word “rest,” there’s nothing that fits better than the example of a “tomb.”

So, Jesus finished His earthly “work” on the sixth day of the week – we know He was crucified on a Friday, the sixth day. We know He was laid to rest in a tomb just in time for the onset of the seventh day of rest – Saturday, the seventh day. We know He then resurrected on the day that followed – the eighth day, or Sunday, the day that starts a new beginning and points to the newness of life beyond death – the time “beyond.”

Sunday is simultaneously the first day and the eighth day of the Week. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the ultimate new beginning. This is reiterated yet again in Christ’s appearance to His disciples on the Eighth Day after His resurrection (John 20:26).

The early Christians began the tradition of gathering together for worship on this day, Sunday – the first day of the week, but also the eighth day. Many people think of Sunday as just being a nice tradition, but it’s much more than that. To say that we meet on the eighth day is like saying we meet on the new beginning outside of time. It’s like saying we meet in another realm. And that’s exactly what we’re supposed to be doing as the Church – living in another realm. It’s the most radical day, because it is the mystery day of the new beginning that goes beyond this life!

So, through these examples, we should recognize that the Eighth Day represents a time of new beginnings when everything resets and something entirely different begins! The Hebrew number seven stands for completion, but the number eight in Hebrew represents “beyond, overflow, abundant, surplus,” or in other words, you went beyond complete (beyond seven)!

The Seven Ages, the Passion Week, and the Eighth Day

Earlier, we spent a good deal of time discussing the idea of there being seven millennia total in God’s plan for mankind. We showed how the seventh millennium is the Millennial or Messianic Kingdom that the Bible devotes so much of its content prophesying about. We discussed

how this final millennium of God's plan for humanity represents a final Millennial Sabbath of rest, a time when all things begin to be restored – including the earth, mankind, and the nation Israel. But then what happens after this seventh millennial age? In other words, this seventh millennium is the end...but what happens after the end?

What happens after the end is the mysterious age beyond ages – the Eighth Day! So, the mystery of the Eighth Day is a mystery about the Eighth Age. The Eighth Age is not a part of the seven ages or seven millennia relating to the seven days of creation. Rather, the Eighth Age breaks out of the old creation and the old times, and represents the eternal age to come!

Let's recognize this from the standpoint of the Passion Week of Christ. Like we mentioned earlier, Christ finished His human life as a man on a Friday – the day of His crucifixion – with Friday being the sixth day of the week. We know from scripture that six represents the number of “man.” The Antichrist has the number “666” associated with him. The King James Version says that this 666 number is “the number of a **man**” (Revelation 13:18). The Greek can equally mean “a human number” or “a number of humanity.” Adam (the first human) was created on the sixth day of creation (Genesis 1:26-31). So, the number six has long been associated with man. Jesus's life as a man ended on this sixth day that represents man.

But what does this relate to as far as the Seven Ages or millennia? The sixth day, related to the Sixth Age, represents the final dawning of the Age of Man, as Christ deposes man's governorship of the earth and begins His own Millennial Kingdom – the Seventh Age. So then, let's talk about this Seventh Age.

From the pattern of the passion week of Christ, we know that He “rested” in death in the tomb on the seventh day of the week – Saturday, the weekly Sabbath – the day of rest. This is a picture of the seventh millennium, the Millennial Kingdom, when Christ establishes a reign of peace on earth. This will be the Sabbath rest of the Ages, when everything begins to be restored to its original order and the earth can finally rest as Satan is bound for a thousand years.

Well then, what is next on the Passion Week calendar? The next

day is the day of the resurrection – Sunday, the first day of the week, or the day that follows the seventh day – the Eighth Day! So then, continuing with our pattern of the seven ages, the Eighth Day is what follows the final Seventh Age. It's the time that follows the Millennium. But if there are only seven millennia, how can there be anything that follows? This is the time of the Eternal State – the time that goes beyond time – the time that breaks the order – the time that initiates a new beginning of a totally new thing! And just as Christ fulfilled the **pattern** of resurrection, this Eighth Day represents the **time** of resurrection!

To see the post-millennial Eighth Day from the standpoint of its correlation with Christ's resurrection, we need to recognize that the resurrection of all people will be completed as the seventh millennium ends and the Eternal State begins. As we've mentioned earlier in this study, scripture describes two resurrections.

As Christians, we are part of the First Resurrection. But at the end of the Millennium, all who have not been part of the First Resurrection will be resurrected in order to stand before the Great White Throne judgment.

Some believe this is only for the wicked, while some believe that the yet-unresurrected Millennial believers will also be part of this judgment. The Bible doesn't seem to address this possibility, although it may turn out to be the case. That being said, the second of the two resurrections and the Great White Throne judgment is generally associated with the wicked, who will give final account for their lives and receive their eternal judgments.

We discussed the association of this event with *Hoshanah Rabbah*, the final great day of Tabernacles. So then, it should make sense to us that as the Millennium transitions into the Eternal State (the Eighth Day), all who have ever lived will have been resurrected, and those who enter the New Jerusalem in the Eternal State will be the resurrected righteous! The New Jerusalem is a place for the resurrected believers of all generations. In addition, we should recognize that no matter when we were resurrected, it's that glorified body that we are

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given that will allow our entrance into the Eternal State. No physical body can enter there.

In terms of the New Covenant salvation pattern, the New Testament associates “resurrection” with the Spirit infilling experience that was first given on Pentecost.

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but **quickened** [to make alive or give life] **by the Spirit:**

-1 Peter 3:18

In this passage, Peter, who delivered the first message of the Church on Pentecost (Acts 2), later wrote this passage, declaring that Christ’s resurrection was due to the Spirit in Him being alive, or quickened. We can now understand that the Spirit baptism, first poured out on Pentecost, is that same element that causes new life (resurrection) in the believer! We can then understand the apostle Paul’s teaching in Romans 6.

“That **like as Christ was raised up from the dead** [as Peter said, “by the Spirit”] by the glory of the Father, **even so we also should walk in newness of life** [by the Holy Spirit].

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection [through the Spirit]:”

-Romans 6:4b-5

We then see the Spirit-infilling linked to our actual resurrection at the return of Christ.

“But if the **Spirit** of him that raised up Jesus from the dead **dwell in you**, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also **quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.**”

-Romans 8:11

The word being used in this passage – quicken – means exactly to give life, or resurrect. But if His Spirit does not/did not dwell in us, there will be nothing to quicken – or resurrect – our mortal bodies.

So, the New Testament is clear that this infilling of the Spirit – the foundation of the New Covenant – is linked to the resurrection of the believer and is the agent that will cause us to be quickened (or resurrected) at the Rapture!

How then can we apply this mystery of the Eighth Day to ourselves now? Through living a life in the Spirit! The mystery is that this Eighth Day is a Day that belongs to two realms – it is after time, but it is also outside of time. It doesn't follow the natural order of things. It is both future, but also right now. It is something that we can live in right now in a sense – but only through the infilling, or resurrection of the Spirit. Eternal life is both future and right now – it is outside of the limitations of time, meaning it's both now but also coming. As New Covenant believers, we can (and should) live in the newness of this spiritual resurrection right now! For the Spirit-filled Christian, the old things (or the old life in the flesh) is already passed away and we are made new creatures in Christ!

So, the Spirit infilling is in a way, a type of the future Eternal State. The Spirit is not physical, just like the Eternal State is not physical. The Spirit is beyond time and space, just like the Eternal State is beyond time and space. And yet, Christ poured out this eternal gift upon us and said that His Spirit would fill our physical mortal bodies and live with us until He comes to receive us at the resurrection.

When Jesus rose on the Eighth Day, He was the First Fruit of the First Resurrection. He is the beginning of a whole new creation – His resurrection was the beginning of the First Resurrection – the resurrection of the believers.

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

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But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

-1 Corinthians 15:20-26

It's easy then for us to see the association of the themes of resurrection and new beginnings with the Eighth Day, correlating with Christ's resurrection on the eight day of the passion week (Sunday), helping to establish this amazing pattern! So, from the understanding of the seven ages and the typology of the passion week of Christ, we can see the incredible parallels that reveal the mystery of the Eighth Day as the eighth age – the age beyond time – the Eternal State!

The Eighth Day – The Eternal State

Like we've mentioned repeatedly, the Eighth Day is a mystery. It has been called the most enigmatic day of the year on the Jewish calendar. All of the other festivals have physical symbols associated with them – but with the Eighth Day, there is none. This in itself is a major clue. The Eighth Day is a time beyond time and beyond the physical. It is a mystery age beyond the physical ages.

For the Jews, it signals the end of Tabernacles, and yet it's not actually part of Tabernacles. During Tabernacles, we know the Jews were commanded to dwell for seven days in a *sukkah*, meaning a temporary dwelling place. Tabernacles went for seven days, from the 15th of Tishri to the 21st. Then, at the end of the seventh day, on the 22nd, the Eighth Day, or *Shemini Atzeret*, it was the time where they would begin taking down their *sukkah*. It's the time when they leave their temporary dwellings or habitations and go home. The Eighth Day is the day of leaving your temporary Tabernacle and entering your final destination. Let that sink in for a moment. Do you see the typology?

In fact, in some places, it became customary to burn the *sukkah* after taking it down. Let's look to the writings of the apostle Paul to help us see deeper into this mystery.

For we know that **if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.**

For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be **clothed upon with our house** which is from heaven:

If so be that being **clothed** we shall not be found naked.

For we that are in **this tabernacle** do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, **but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.**

-2 Corinthians 5:1-4

What is Paul talking about here? He is talking about what we just discussed! He's making allusion to the taking down of the *sukkah*, or the Tabernacle in Verse 1 – the “dissolving” of this Tabernacle. But he says we have a “building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” What house is he talking about? Our temporary physical bodies and then our eternal bodies!

In Verse 2 he mentions how we groan, desiring to be “clothed” upon with “our house” which is from heaven. Then in Verse 4, he talks again about us groaning while we are in the Tabernacle of the flesh, but looks forward to being clothed with immortality! Paul is talking about the “house” of our earthly physical bodies – our temporary Tabernacles, or habitations. He uses the idiom of clothing, recognizing that the real you is a spirit not a physical body. But we look forward to the day when we will receive immortal “habitations” or glorified bodies!

Paul uses this allusion of taking down (or dissolving) the Tabernacles – an Eighth Day idiom – to refer to the immortal bodies we will inhabit for all of eternity! So, we can see that this is a reference to when the temporary passes away and the eternal comes in.

Let's now look to the end of the book of Revelation, which records

the eternal coming to pass and see for ourselves a glimpse of this mysterious eternal age to come – the new beginning of the Eighth Day.

And I saw a **new heaven and a new earth**: for the **first heaven and the first earth were passed away**; and there was no more sea.

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, **the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.**

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: **for the former things are passed away.**

And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, **I make all things new.** And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

-Revelation 21:1-5

We see here the introduction of the Eternal State, when the old has passed away and something new is beginning – a beginning past the end. This is the ultimate time of Tabernacle – the Tabernacling of God with man beyond the Millennium – the final Age of newness. We see that in Verse 4, we are told that the former things are passed away, and in Verse 5, “I make all things new.” There is no more death, pain, sorrow, or crying. This is a time beyond time and space – a new beginning with a new heaven and earth, and a New Jerusalem – the final destination, or final Tabernacle of the believers. As the chapter continues, we are told more about this city.

And the twelve gates were twelve pearls: every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

-Revelation 21:21-27 and 22:1-5

This New Jerusalem is the ultimate home of the bride of Christ and concludes the mystery of the Eighth Day. Even the Jewish rabbis link this together when they spoke of this mysterious Eighth Day at the end of the year. They likened it to a bride and groom going off together after their wedding. It's about the bride leaving her home and entering into the home the bridegroom has prepared for her. It is a

type of how Christ, our Bridegroom, will take us to our prepared place on the Eighth Day – the New Jerusalem.

So, the mystery of the Eighth Day brings home the ultimate mystery of all the ages – the final destination of the mysterious bride of Christ hidden in the Old Testament, but revealed in the New – the ultimate purpose of God’s creation.

Simchat Torah in the Eighth Day

There is one last aspect to the mystery that we need to examine – the mystery of the *Simchat Torah* celebration. *Simchat Torah* means “Rejoicing in the Torah.” In modern times, this celebration takes place on the day following *Shemini Atzeret*. But in ancient times, *Simchat Torah* was celebrated on the same day as *Shemini Atzeret*.²

Each week of the year in the synagogue, the Jews would publicly read a few chapters from the Torah scrolls, starting with Genesis Chapter 1 and working all the way through to Deuteronomy Chapter 34. On *Simchat Torah*, this last Torah portion in Deuteronomy 34 – the final chapter in the Torah – is read. This holiday marks the completion of the annual cycle of weekly Torah readings.³ Why is this significant? Let’s look deeper.

The first thing we need to recognize may seem totally unrelated, but you will see how the dots get connected shortly. The first thing we should recognize is the typology of the Jordan River in the Bible. Understand it from the perspective of the Israelites leaving Egypt to journey toward the Promised Land. The Jordan River marked the end of the journey, and what lay beyond it was the new beginning – the Promised Land. The Promised Land is a type of heaven, or the Eternal State – the place beyond the end. Crossing Jordan is a well-known idiom for death, and entering the Promised Land an idiom for eternal life. Many well-known songs and TV shows have been written even in our modern culture to reflect this common metaphor. So, the Jordan River is a symbol of the end, death, the finality of the journey, and when you go beyond it, you enter the Promised Land – a symbol of the Eternal State.

Now let's put this all together. On this final mystical day – the Eighth Day, in the celebration of *Simchat Torah*, there is a Torah scroll, and one of the things that is read during this concluding day of cycling through the Torah is the story of Joshua leading the people across the Jordan.

So, we have several things here. Every year, the Jewish people read through the Torah scrolls, ending with Deuteronomy. And what is Deuteronomy about? It's about the end! Moses is at the end – the end of the wilderness, the end of the forty years of wandering, the end of his life, and they're at the Jordan River. It's a picture of the end! And what happens here? God leads him up to the mountain and shows him the "beyond" – a glimpse into the Promised Land. In fact, even the Hebrew wording for the mountains – the mountains of the *abarim* means the mountains of the "beyond."⁴

Moses is shown everything beyond, but he died there, only seeing the Promised Land from a distance. The Jewish people read this story every year on this day, but they don't stop here. They continue into the story of Joshua in Joshua Chapter 1, crossing over into the Promised Land.⁵

The Eighth Day is about crossing over into the Promised Land. And interestingly, what is the name of this man, and the book written about him crossing over? Joshua, or Yehoshua, the same Hebrew name as Jesus, or Yeshua. He's a typological picture of Jesus, whose ministry also began at the Jordan River, who gives us the power to cross over from death into life, now and forever!

So, you have the reading of Joshua Chapter 1 after the reading of the end of Deuteronomy – but then there's more! *Shemini Atzeret* and the *Simchat Torah* celebration is a day of the scrolls. During the observance of this day, there is a rolling up of the scrolls at the end of the yearly cycle of reading through the Torah – a symbol of the end. Amazingly, this Bible gives us a picture of this, found in Isaiah.

And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together **as a scroll**:

-Isaiah 34:4a

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In context, this probably takes place during the Tribulation, as we're about to find out from what is likely a parallel passage found in Revelation. Specifically, the verses before it make clear that this is the Sixth Seal Judgment.

And the heaven departed as a **scroll when it is rolled together**; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

-Revelation 6:14

So, we know that earth undergoes massive changes during the Tribulation, and then it seems to be partially renewed for the onset of the Millennium. However, the most ultimate and most final destruction of earth takes place at the end of the Millennium as the Eternal State is ushered in with the new heaven and new earth. Revelation 20 discusses the transition from the Millennium to the Eternal State, and within it we seem to find a similar allusion.

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, **from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away**; and there was found no place for them.

-Revelation 20:11

As the old heaven and earth are dissolved in earth's final destruction, we see the similar imagery of earth and heaven fleeing away, as if being rolled up – like a scroll. So, God gives us this glimpse into that time, giving us a description similar the rolling up of the Torah scrolls on *Shemini Atzeret*, after the yearly cycle of Torah reading is completed. We are shown the beginning of the Eternal State, when He will take down the old world like a scroll and create one totally new!

This is also pictured in the Jews' Torah readings, as they then begin the cycle all over again with Genesis Chapter 1 – the creation – picturing this new Eighth Day re-creation of heaven and earth. Remember, the Eighth Day is also the First Day – it is a day that lives in two realms. So, here we have this mystery of the rolling up of the scroll – the end of the old creation and the beginning of the new.

Interestingly, in Jewish tradition, the one who reads from the scroll in Hebrew on this day is given the title of the “bridegroom”.⁶ It’s the Bridegroom who closes the old, it’s the Bridegroom who opens the new, and it’s the Bridegroom who brings the bride home to the new house. You have all of these mysteries culminating on this day – the Eighth Day – the day beyond the end.

So, when we look at the typology of this final age, we can see the mysteries of all the ages culminate in the revelation of the new creation, with the New Jerusalem ascending down from heaven – the final destination for the bride of Christ in the Eternal State. And it takes us full-circle right back to themes introduced at the very beginning of the Bible. All of the themes introduced in Genesis finally reach their completion with the beginning of the Eighth Day. The original creation is made new, the curse is gone, sin and death are vanquished, man’s relationship with God is restored, and Christ, the Last Adam, finally has His Eve, His beloved bride the Church. And so, the mystery of the Eighth Day is fulfilled, and the story of the Bible and of all history is completed with this final festival of the *moedim* – the final divine appointment of the Eternal State.

But there is an important application for us today. As Christians, we are children of the Eighth Day. This is why we must be born again. Why? Because the kingdom of heaven is of the Eighth Day. It is of the new beginning! And those who enter it must be the same way – they must go through a new birth. You must enter into the mystery of the Eighth Day – a new beginning! This is why even now in the Christian experience, all things in your life are made new and you become a new creation. This is why Christian’s worship on Sunday – the Eighth Day. This is why we’ve been filled with the Spirit. The Eighth Day is a life of the Spirit, and not of the flesh. Just as Christ rose on the Eighth Day, we too resurrect through receiving the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

So, while we are still alive on this earth in time and space, we are called to learn the secret of dwelling in the Eighth Day – leaving the realm of the flesh and entering into the realm of the Spirit – until the time when we finally enter into the fullness of the Eternal State.

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But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

-1 Corinthians 2:9-10

1. Susan Silverman, "Havdalah: Taking Leave of Shabbat," *My Jewish Learning*. (<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/havdalah-taking-leave-of-shabbat/> - Retrieved 2/04/20)
2. Good, p. 41.
3. Judaism 101, entry "Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah," *JewFAQ.org*. (<http://www.jewfaq.org/holiday6.htm> - Retrieved 2/11/20)
4. *Smith's Bible Dictionary*, entry "Abarim," *BibleHub.com*. (<https://biblehub.com/topical/a/abarim.htm> - Received 2/11/20)
5. Rabbi Ronald H. Isaacs, "The Simchat Torah Morning Service," *My Jewish Learning*. (<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-simhat-torah-morning-service/> - Retrieved 2/11/20)
6. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 12

CONCLUSION

Throughout this study, we have plunged to some incredible depths of understanding not often reached by most Christians. Because the information presented here has been so detailed, it is recommended to all viewers to review this study again at some point in the future in order to solidify your understanding. One idea is to review each feast on the calendar day that feast takes place on. In this concluding segment, let's now spend some time reviewing some of the high-level discoveries we've made.

The Torah (or first five books of the Old Testament) details eight feasts that the Israelites were commanded by God to celebrate during the Hebrew calendar year. God had instituted these feasts through the prophet Moses. The institution of these feasts by God has incredible meaning and relevance to modern observers in light of the events of the New Testament, which occurred over a thousand years later.

In fact, outside of the lens of the New Covenant, or Christianity – in other words, outside of recognizing the First Coming of Jesus Christ – it is impossible to fully understand the true meanings and fulfillments of these feasts! The tragedy to recognize, is that due to their rejection of Jesus as their Messiah, the Jews have been celebrating the symbols and rituals of these holidays for thousands of

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years without understanding the fulfillments they pointed towards! God had established these feasts to teach His covenanted people about His future plans – and to prepare them to be the first to receive them. But instead, they became overcome with the symbols and missed the true intention of their purpose.

These feasts each have different purposes. Some are commemorations of important events in Israel's history, others are strictly tied to the agricultural harvests, and others exemplify themes of God's character. Some have multiple layers of meaning, incorporating two or even all three of these purposes. But most significantly, each of the seven is also prophetic, looking ahead to a highly significant future event in the plan of God. The first four feasts primarily teach about the significant events related to the **First Coming** of the Messiah, while the last four provide insights related to the **Second Coming** of the Messiah.

Another point to be clear on is that we are only advocating for the spiritual importance of **understanding** the feasts. Scripture does not bid Christians to “keep the feasts,” as we are not under the Old Covenant.

Yet another important point that many modern observers fail to recognize, is that God said they are *His* feasts, not Israel's.

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning **the feasts of the Lord**, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even **these are my feasts**.

-Leviticus 23:1-2

In other words, Israel was commanded to observe them, but they belonged to God.

Next, it is absolutely critical to recognize that when God established these feasts, the very terms He used were suggestive of their future significance. Let's review the English translations of these Hebrew terms, which contain loads of hidden meaning.

These are the **feasts** of the Lord, even holy **convocations**, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.

-Leviticus 23:4

Feast = Hebrew: *moed* (Strong's #H4150), which means "to keep an appointment." Plural: *moedim* – "appointed times."¹

Convocation = Hebrew: *miqra* (Strong's #H4744), which means a "rehearsal."²

In order to gain a clearer perception of what this passage is really saying, let's insert the definitions of "feast" and "convocation":

These are the ("appointed times") of the Lord, even holy ("rehearsals,") which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.

So, these Levitical feast days could more literally be called typological dress-rehearsals for significant future divine appointments on God's calendar for mankind. Israel was commanded to observe these feasts as dress rehearsals to teach and prepare them for God's future appointed times. Another even better way to think of it is that God gave Israel – as the covenant nation – the unique privilege of having insight into His future appointed times through the institution and celebration of these feasts.

Let's do a quick high-level review of the divine appointments each feast was instituted as a rehearsal to point towards.

-The Feast of Passover (*Erev Pesach*)

- foreshadows the death of Jesus Christ

-The Feast of Unleavened Bread (*Hag ha-Matzah*)

- foreshadows the burial of Jesus Christ

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-The Feast of First Fruits (*Yom ha-Bikkurim*)

- foreshadows the resurrection of Jesus Christ

-The Feast of Weeks (*Shavuot*/Pentecost)

- foreshadows the giving of the Holy Spirit/establishment of the Church (the beginning of the New Covenant)

As we've pointed out in this study, to the Hebrew mind, prophecy is not simply **prediction** and fulfillment, but also **pattern** and fulfillment. As we can see quite vividly, God established these spring and summer feasts as prototypes or "patterns" of future divine appointments to be fulfilled with great precision by the Messiah, Jesus Christ. We can say that the spring festivals may be applicable in at least two dimensions.

- They were historic and/or agricultural commemorations for the nation of Israel.
- They are fulfilled in the Messiah.

The spring festivals of course were ultimately fulfilled by Jesus, who was our Passover Lamb, dying as our sacrifice on the day of Passover. He was without sin and is the Unleavened Bread of Life. Jesus was in the sepulcher on the day of Unleavened Bread and He was the kernel of wheat that was buried in the earth. Jesus arose as First Fruits of the barley harvest, He Himself being the first of those to rise from the dead and received a resurrected body. Finally, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon all flesh during the Feast of Pentecost, in order to make us "first fruits" along with Christ, that all believers in the Lord might be God's spring harvest in the earth.

Let's now move on to a review of the Summer Months and the Fall Feasts. These feasts – unlike the first four – have not yet had their ultimate fulfillments occur. However, after witnessing the record of the

precision involved in the fulfillments of the spring and summer feasts, it would logically follow to expect that same level of precision in the fulfillments of the fall feasts!

Moreover, since the spring fulfillments took place on the actual feast days, and keeping in mind the literal meaning of *moedim* (the appointed times), we should expect that the fall feasts will also be fulfilled to the actual day. But this time, since they are yet unfulfilled, we didn't have the luxury of being able to look into the New Testament for their plainly documented fulfillments. Instead, we had to investigate what the Bible says about future significant events in God's plan. A lot of this involved looking back to the Old Testament prophetic passages and interpreting them in light of what we know from the idioms of the Fall Feasts. The Bible, as well as Jewish tradition, both provided us with significant clues as to the framework and themes of these future appointed times, allowing us to have a great deal of confidence in what their fulfillments will be.

Let's do a high-level review of which eschatological event we identified that each feast was instituted to point towards.

-The Summer Months

- foreshadows the current Church Age of sowing and reaping in the field to bring forth God's harvest through worldwide evangelism

-The Feast of Trumpets (*Yom Teruah*)

- foreshadows the simultaneous Rapture of the Church and beginning of the broad period of the Day of the Lord

-The Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*)

- foreshadows the Second Coming of Christ

-The Feast of Tabernacles (*Hag ha-Sukkot*)

- foreshadows the Millennial Kingdom

-The Eighth Day (*Shemini Atzeret*)

- foreshadows the Eternal State

One of the remarkable factors related to the Fall Feasts is the sheer amount of prophecy and thematic details they contain. If you compare the amount of time we've devoted to the Fall Feasts as opposed to the Spring Feasts, that should become evident – and is a fact that should amaze you. We have more information on the future feasts that haven't yet been fulfilled than we do about the ones that already have been! If you look at this from the standpoint of prophecy, you will find that for every prophecy of His First Coming mentioned in the Old Testament, there are eight predicting His Second Coming. There is a total of over one thousand five hundred prophecies of Jesus's Second Coming recorded in the Bible. Christ's return is also mentioned an average of once in every five verses in the New Testament.³

This demonstrates the amazing prophetic perspective of the Bible, as well as its astonishing integration. As we conclude our study of the typology of the *moedim*, we should recognize the incredible depth of the prophetic we've encountered embedded within these festivals. The more one carefully examines the Old Testament narratives, feasts, and declarations, the more you can see the skillful and deliberate inclusion of "macrocodes" detailing specific events as well as their significance, in the distant future. Because the inclusion of these prophetic macrocodes was done by different authors, over a span of almost two thousand years, this serves as irrefutable authentication of the extraterrestrial origin of the Biblical text. In other words, the origin of the Bible is not from man and not from earth – it is from an Author beyond time and space.

It is our hope that this study heightened your awareness of not only this fact, but also solidified your understanding of the chronology of end-times events. The Bible is incredible, and it contains between its covers the answers that we seek. We hope that this study will help

to galvanize your belief in God and the Bible, and provoke you to undertake your own serious study of God's incredible Word.

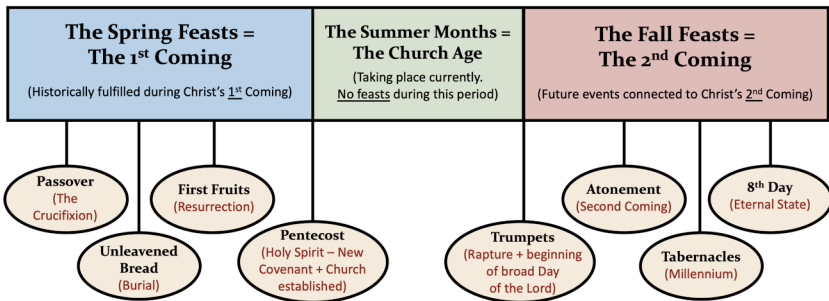
But even more importantly, we hope it will motivate you to personal readiness. What is the value of understanding all of these deep and rich mysteries of the Word of God if you haven't personally obeyed the Gospel yourself? Once can only fully appreciate the richness of the end-times typology we uncovered if that person is personally ready to enter those times and not be caught unaware when the Lord comes to gather His own!

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1. Strong, p. 1523.
 2. Ibid, p. 1533.
 3. Walter J. Vieth, "Signs of the Second Coming in the Bible," *AmazingDiscoveries.org*. (https://amazingdiscoveries.org/S-deception_end-time_Second-Coming_signs - Retrieved 2/12/20)

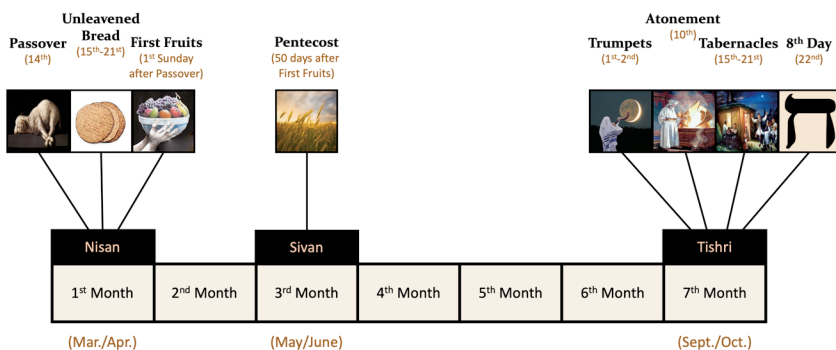
APPENDIX

KEY CHARTS

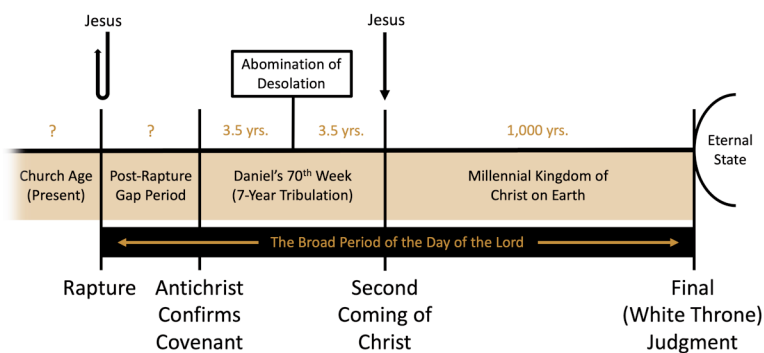
The Typological Chronology Of The Levitical Feasts



The Hebrew Religious Calendar



The End-Times



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