

"We are more concerned about looking stupid (a fear of people) than we are about acting sinfully (fear of the Lord)."

—Ed Welch

11-Sep-15

## Are the Blood Moons Significant? (Part Three)

While lunar eclipses are not necessarily rare events, what is unusual is for them to occur on God's holy days. Understanding those days is key to finding the right significance to these blood moons.

It is a little-known fact that the God's appointed times are arranged with an inverse relationship between the spring feasts and the fall feasts. That is, there is a correlation between the first festival of the year, [Passover](#), and the last feast day, the Eighth Day or Last Great Day. What is begun with Passover finds its ultimate completion with the Eighth Day. When the feasts are compared in this way, we find common or related themes in their instructions, meanings, or events that take place on them. Next, Passover is followed by a seven-day feast, just as the Eighth Day is *preceded* by a seven-day feast. Likewise, the third feast, the last day of Unleavened Bread, has a connection to the sixth feast, the [Day of Atonement](#). The feasts of Pentecost and Trumpets overlap in their themes and symbols in numerous ways.

Based on their arrangement, there is already a connection between the first day of Unleavened Bread and the first day of Tabernacles—and it is on these appointed times that the eclipses are occurring. One commonality is that they

both represent fulfillments of the covenant promises [God](#) made to Abraham. That is, the first day of Unleavened Bread (in particular) shows Israel being delivered from the power of Egypt, as well as Israel as a people redeemed by God. Just as God's promises include Abraham's descendants becoming a nation, so the Feast of Unleavened Bread shows the beginning of Israel as an autonomous nation.

The [Feast of Tabernacles](#) typifies the fulfillment of another part of the promises, that of the land. At Tabernacles, Israel is presented, not merely as a nation, but as a nation firmly established in the Land of Promise—so much so that they could enjoy the harvest that the land produced, a major part of the Israelites' observance of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Another connection is that both feasts focus on eating. The instructions for Unleavened Bread are to eat unleavened bread for seven days so that the [law of God](#) would always be in Israel's mouth ([Exodus 13:9](#)). The instructions for Tabernacles also includes eating, but more specifically, to "eat before the LORD your God" ([Deuteronomy 14:23](#), 26). The reason? "That you may learn to fear the LORD your God always" ([Deuteronomy 14:23](#)). These two feasts, then, are about national cohesion, national abundance, remembering the law of God, and remembering God's providence in order to grow in proper fear of Him continually.

One of God's foremost charges against Israel deals with Sabbath-breaking ([Ezekiel 20:12-24](#); [22:8](#), 26; [23:38](#)), which included not just breaking the seventh-day [Sabbath](#), but also the land sabbath—the *shemithah*—and the annual Sabbaths (see [Leviticus 26:27-35](#); [II Chronicles 36:20-21](#)). Regarding the annual Sabbaths, the prophets speak of God's hatred of Israel's ways of keeping the feast days ([Isaiah 1:13](#); [Amos 5:21](#)). They may have made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the feasts, but with the way they were conducting themselves, they may as well have already been in Babylon! They were eating and drinking, but it was not "before the LORD their God." They were rejoicing in their entertainments, but God was not their focus.

They were neither keeping the feasts to reinforce God's law, nor to learn to fear Him. They had an exciting time, but they were exactly the same after His appointed times as before—they kept the feasts in vain. Their observance was without understanding, without spiritual focus, without real

vitality. Their comprehension of what God wanted for them became darkened, like a man—a nation—about to die.

In this vein, when God speaks of Israel and Judah being reunited and re-established in the land, He speaks in terms of a resurrection, because Israel is pictured as having died ([Ezekiel 37:1-14](#)). Today, the [nations of Israel](#) continue to reject the Sabbath, [the holy days](#), the land Sabbath, and forgiveness of debts and of trespasses. The spiritual darkness is so great over the nations of Israel that most do not know even who they are! In this regard, it is quite fitting that we should see a darkening of heavenly lights on the second and seventh festival days—and in relation to the changing of the year and the year of release—because the nations of Israel have spit the law of God out of their mouths and certainly do not fear before Him.

But we should take this one step farther. The lessons of Israel are written for our admonition ([I Corinthians 10:11](#))—for spiritual Israel, the Body of Christ—and "to whom much is given, from him much will be required" ([Luke 12:48](#)). The promises to Abraham were not just for a physical nation, but for a spiritual one—a holy nation with the same [faith](#) as Abraham. That nation is redeemed spiritually, not with the firstborn of Egypt, but by the purchase price of the life of Firstborn from the dead. We have been delivered from spiritual Egypt and its ruler.

Under God's plan, Abraham's spiritual nation becomes the heir of [the world](#), along with Abraham, when the [Kingdom of God](#) is established on the earth. Spiritual Israel is commanded by God to eat the unleavened bread of life every day so that His law is always in our mouths. Likewise, we must continually deepen our fear of God. The instructions for the holy days apply even more to us than for ancient Israel.

We cannot afford to let it slip from our minds that this period in the church's history is characterized by a lack of comprehension—by darkness. In [Revelation 3:17](#), [Jesus Christ](#) says that we do not know that we are wretched, a reference to spiritual defeat. We think life is good, failing to recognize that we are miserable because we do not comprehend the spiritual abundance we are missing. We are spiritually poor, thinking we have riches to spare. We

are blind, believing that we see. We imagine that we are clothed in righteousness but do not realize that our covering has fallen from us through neglect.

We live in perilous times, not just in the nations of Israel, but also in the church ([II Timothy 3:1](#)). Perhaps the eclipses of 2014 and 2015 are only a coincidental natural phenomenon, but they may also serve as a prod to evaluate whether *we* are still walking in the light—or whether the lights above *us* are growing dark.

- David C. Grabbe

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## **From the Archives: Featured Sermon**

### **[The Fear of God \(Part One\)](#)**

by John W. Ritenbaugh

We must have established some relationship with God before we can rightly fear Him. Fear, faith, hope, and love serve as the four cornerstones upon which the whole superstructure of Christianity rests. A holy fear of the Lord is the key to unlocking the treasuries of salvation, wisdom and knowledge. Paradoxically the fear of God, because it unlocks knowledge, wisdom, and spiritual growth, should draw us toward God. Conversely, if we do not respect God, reciprocally God will not respect us. In order to reverence God, we must know Him. Christianity is experiential; we must live it to understand it. Our concept of God (and our fear of God) needs to come from observing His creation and absorbing His revealed word rather than the precepts of men.

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## **From the Archives: Featured Article**

### **[The Sixth Seal](#)**

by Richard T. Ritenbaugh

Sometime in the not-too-distant future, the sixth seal foretells of the sun

turning black and the moon turning red, stars falling, the sky rolling back, and a terrible earthquake moving mountains and islands. Richard Ritenbaugh examines this final judgment that announces the imminent Day of the Lord.

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