

A THIEF IN THE NIGHT
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Why does Jesus want us to keep our eye on the biblical calendar? Jesus wants those who are watching for His return to be ready when he comes to take the church out of the world. The only way one can do that is to know what they are looking for. It is clear as day what Christians are to look for, but I would say most Christians don't have a clue as to what the sign is. Why don't they know? I can see two reasons, first they are in a church where their pastor never teaches about the signs of the times and, second Christians are not studying the word themselves and they therefore would not know the signs. Let me help you understand a very important message from Christ. If you understand what Jesus was talking about, it will become clear to you what you and your family should be watching for.

Many people have asked me, why waste time trying to figure out when Jesus is going to come back when, Jesus himself said no man knows. Let me quote Jesus in Matthew 24:36 so you know what I'm talking about. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Now I want you to take notice what Jesus is really saying here in relation to the Jewish thoughts and Jewish traditions. The phrase but of that day and hour no man knows is a common Hebrew idiom for the Jewish holiday of Rosh Hashanah. Rosh Hashanah is one of the seven Jewish Holidays, and it is known to the Jewish people as the feast of trumpets. The Feast of Trumpets takes place in the fall. In Leviticus 23 you see these feasts are appointed times established as yearly rehearsals that taught both historically and prophetically the whole plan of God. This plan included the coming of Christ and how Christ would bring redemption to all who received him. In short, God has given us his biblical calendar. Out of the seven biblical holidays the only ones left to be fulfilled are the fall feast which are Rosh Hashanah also known as the Feast of Trumpets, Yom Kippur, which is the day of atonement, and tabernacles. I am going to center on the Feast of Trumpets because on God's calendar this is the next in line to be fulfilled. Knowing this information let me get back to Jesus' statement in Matthew 24:36 where he said "**no man knows the day or hour**". This verse has to do with the Jewish wedding. The father had to make sure the Son had everything prepared and ready for the wedding. If anyone would ask the Jewish man when is the wedding, he would say, "ask my father only he knows". This was the normal practice for the Jews. That statement was a traditional response. When it came time for this wedding to take place the man would go out at midnight sound the blast by blowing the sular letting his bride know he had come for her. The Feast of Trumpets, or Rosh Hashanah points to the Jewish cultural evidence that Rosh Hashanah will be the appointed time of the rapture of the church. As proof of this let me now show you what has already taken place with this Jewish wedding in relation to Jesus Christ and his bride the Church.

In a Jewish wedding the Jewish woman indicates she will marry him by accepting his proposal by drinking a cup of wine he gives her. What did Jesus do with the last supper? Jesus passed a cup of wine at the Last Supper and those who drank the wine accepted being his bride. Secondly, the Jewish man would have to pay a price to the bride's parents. What did Jesus do and what was the price he paid? Jesus paid the price for us as His bride with His own life by dying on the cross for us. The next thing and Jewish men would do to prepare for the wedding was to give His bride a gift. What gift did Jesus Christ give His bride the Church? Jesus gave us the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The next thing the Jewish man would have to do to prepare for this wedding was go and prepare a place for both himself and his wife to live in when they were married. Do you remember the words of Jesus Christ in John chapter 14: 3? Jesus said, "and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also". This is where Jesus is right now, he is preparing the home for His church the bride of Christ. The next thing the Jewish man would do to prepare for Jewish wedding is this, he would take a host of people with Him at midnight go out shouting and blowing the shofar for his bride. The shofar is a horn. Now read what Jesus told the Apostle Paul to write in (1 Thessalonians chapter 4 verses 15 through 16).

Paul mentions the exact timing of this event twice! In verse 15, he says that this occurs at the coming of the Lord, and in verse 16, Christ comes down from heaven with a shout with the voice of an ark angel, and with the **trumpet** of God. This is the point at which time Jesus will come for us, the church, just the same way the Jewish man would go out at midnight and call for his bride. This will be the next thing to take place on God's calendar at the Feast of Trumpets.

The next thing that would take place after a Jewish wedding, which came after the man went out to get his bride would be to spend seven days alone with his bride to consummate the marriage in their wedding chamber. When Jesus comes back for his bride the church, he takes the church to heaven for seven years. If you notice, this is the exact length of the seven-year tribulation. Listen to what it says in Isaiah chapter 26:20-21 concerning these chambers? "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 past. 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."

These are the chamber's Jesus will keep his church in while the seven-year tribulation is taking place on earth. The church, bride of Christ, will be hidden from these terrible times that will befall the earth during the tribulation.

As you can now see, everything that Jesus has done was in accordance to the traditions of the Jewish wedding which is also based on the Jewish holidays of the biblical calendar. I want to get back to what the Apostle Paul had to say in 1

Thessalonians chapter 5:1-4 when he stated the following, “**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”. Paul was a Jew and he understood the signs of the times would be taking place during the times and seasons, or the Jewish holidays. In the above verse Paul alludes to the sign of peace and safety and he tells the reader they won't be in the darkness because they would be watching for these events to take place during the Jewish holiday season. When you read Genesis chapter 1 verse 14 we see the word seasons which is the Hebrew word for a pointed time. The seasons, appointed time, Paul was referring to was the actual day that Jesus was going to return on the feast of trumpets which would take place in the fall. So when Paul told the Jews you have no need that I write and to you, being Jewish they understood exactly what Paul was talking about. The only people who will be in the dark when Jesus comes on his feast will be those who do not have the understanding of the word of God in them, and do not have any understanding of these biblical matters. Please take notice in relation to Rev. 3:3. In part of this verse Jesus tells the church at Sardis, which was considered a dead church to repent from their ways and to watch. Notice what happens when you aren't watching? I quote, that part of verse 3 here, “I will come on thee as a thief and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.” Do forget, Jesus is speaking to the dead church. What is Jesus showing us in this verse? Christ is showing us He only comes to the dead church as a thief, not to an alert and alive church, they will not be caught off guard.

In Revelation chapter 3 verses 17 through 18 Jesus is now speaking to the Church of Laodicea. This is another church that is not ready and Jesus calls this church and lukewarm church. What happens to a lukewarm church? Jesus tells us this answer in Revelation 3:16 where he says, “So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth”. Notice in those verses Jesus tells them to go and buy white raiment that “that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.” What most people don't understand is what this white raiment really means. Stay with me and you'll understand exactly what it is. Rev. 3:18 is another key to understanding what Jesus is showing us. I quote “I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see”.

Now I want you to tie in what is written in Revelation 16:15, by connecting this verse to Rev. 3:18, this will become clear to you why you have to make the connection. Revelation 16:15 says the following: “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame”.

Let's go back to the Jewish traditions for a second, and I will show you how all this is tied together. During the time that the Jewish Temple was standing when Jesus was here the first time, the high priest and the captain of the guard were known as the "thief in the night" and, this is why. There were watch posts at the Temple where the priest had to be watching. One of the things they had to watch for was that the fire on the altar would not go out. This was a Godly fire that fell on the altar and it was commanded by God that this fire never go out. The priest had to watch this fire. If the priest was found to be sleeping when the captain of the guard checked on his rounds, the captain of the guard would take his torch, which was next to the altar fire, and set the priest's garment on fire with the torch. The priest would be awakened by the fire, he would get up run through the Temple tearing off the garments that were on fire, and the shame of the priest's nakedness would appear.

Now you see how Revelation chapter 16 verse 15 ties into what Jesus said about the Church that was dead. Now, when you go back and read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4 Paul says the following: "for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" you now know what is meant by this phrase, "as a thief in the night". In other words, when Jesus comes back and finds you sleeping like the priest in the Temple, and obviously not on the watch, you'll end up like the priest, running in your nakedness and in shame because you were not ready for his visitation.

Now let us look at Matthew chapter 25:1-13. In these verses Jesus' is talking to two groups of virgins. One group was ready and on the watch, they were prepared for the bridegroom to come. This is a picture of the church doing the will of the Father, This again ties in to the Jewish wedding in keeping on the watch and the Lord coming back for his bride. Jesus said five virgins were ready and had oil in their lamps when the bridegroom came. Notice that the bridegroom comes at midnight as the custom of the Jewish wedding, notice also, he comes with a shout as with the custom. The five virgins who were ready went in to be with the bridegroom and the door was shut. This is what will happen at the rapture of the Church which we now believe will take place during the Feast of Trumpets, on the Jewish Holiday. This is why it is so important to keep on the watch at all times, especially during the Jewish Feasts.

What about the other five virgins who were not ready to go out to the bridegroom when he came at midnight? Jesus tells us they didn't prepare. These five virgins did not have oil in their lamps when he came at midnight so they had to go and buy oil to light the way. However, when they came back to the door of the bridegroom, the door was shut and the Lord said, "verily I say and to you". "I know you not". This is a picture of all the people who were not on the watch and are kept outside the door of safety in Christ Jesus. These five unprepared virgins is a picture of all the people who will find themselves tossed into the seven-year tribulation, because they like the priest at the Temple were fast a sleep. They like

the priest were discovered by the Captain of the guard who was known as the thief in the night, or in this case Jesus Christ. As a result of you not being ready you as the priest will have been found and become naked and ashamed just like the priest did.

Now look at the message Jesus gave to us about the good servants and evil servants found in Luke 12:37-40. This is the message to the good servants. "Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not".

In Luke 12:41-47 Jesus is now talking to the evil servants who were not doing the will of the father, they were not watching for the thief in the night. Look what Jesus said to these evil servants. "The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looked not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and he will cut him sunder, and will point him his portion with the unbelievers". These are the people who knew better, they knew the Lord's will but they are not doing the Lord's will.

The next verse tells us in verse 37,"and that servant, which knew the Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes". I ask you now, are you one of the so-called believers who are not abiding in Christ today, and you are not doing the will of the Father? We know for a fact that there are millions of people around the world who claim to be Christians but in fact are not doing the will of the Father. This class of Christians is neither doing the will of the Father or are they watching for the Lord's return as Christ asked them to do. These type of people we are told, they knew his will yet didn't follow his will.

In Luke 12 :41 Peter asks Jesus,"are you speaking this parable to us, or even tell all?". This question goes to the core of the question who is the evil servant? Jesus answered Peter by telling him of the evil servants who do not do the will of the Father. Once again we see a group of people being split in half. First there was the ten virgins, five which were wise and ready, and the other five who were not ready and were unprepared when the Lord came at midnight. Now we see good servants watching and doing the will of the Father who will be blessed, compared to the other half, the evil servants, who know God's will, but are not doing his will, and are not keeping watch, and will be beaten.

Another very important fact to remember about the Feast of Trumpets is this, no one knows the day or hour because the Feast of Trumpets started at the sighting

of the new moon. Let me explain. On the 30th of each month, the members of the high court assembled in the court yard in Jerusalem, where they waited to receive the testimony of the two reliable witnesses. These two witnesses were the people who could verify that they had seen the full moon.

At the spotting of the new moon it would allow the members of the high court to then sanctify the new moon. This would mean that the Feast of Trumpets would begin. The new moon is very difficult to see on the first day because it can be seen only about sunset, close to the sun, when the sun is traveling north. So, looking for a very slim, faint crescent moon, which is very close to the sun, is a very difficult thing to do. If the moon's crescent was not seen on the 30th day, the new moon was automatically celebrated on the 31st day. For this reason, the Feast of Trumpets is always celebrated for two days. These two days are celebrated as though it is just one day of 48 hours. The reason that it is celebrated for two days is because if they waited to start the celebration until after the new moon and then sanctified, they would have missed half the celebration because the new moon can only be sanctified during daylight hours. The command seems to be that we know the season, as Paul stated, but not the day or the hour as we have seen in Matthew 24:32-36.

Yom Teruah, or the Feast of Trumpets, is the only Jewish Feast that we do not know the day in which to keep it, as we are not sure when the new moon will be spotted. Therefore, we have to be on the look and watch for it. When Jesus is saying you won't know the day or the hour as recorded in Matthew 24 verse 36, He is telling us it is the Feast of Trumpets because it is this Feast and this Feast only that the Jews did not know the exact day or the hour in relation to when the full moon would be out. Hence the two-day celebration. No one could today tell you when the rapture of the Church will happen because it could take place at any time within a 48 hour period.

At the Feast of Trumpets Jesus will return to remove his bride the Church, it will not overtake the church who is doing the will of the Father, this Church will be standing on the watch for the master to return. Paul speaks of this rapture of the church in 1 Corinthians 15:51-53 where he says, behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of the night, at the last trump: for the Trump shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality”.

At some point in the very near future Jesus will come out from heaven and call his bride to himself, just as in the Jewish wedding. We who are on the watch, His bride, will be ready, and we are going to be changed from these human bodies to the heavenly bodies. The question to ask yourself at this point is, what class has Jesus placed you in? Are you one of the wise virgins who are ready to go out to meet the Lord? Are you standing watch for him to return, or are you one of those five who are not ready and have no oil in your lamps? Are you one of the

good servants who when Jesus comes will find you standing at the door on the watch, and waiting for the master to return, or are you the evil servant who says he is a Christian but is not doing the will of the father, those of who will be accounted with the unbelievers when the master finally comes for his bride? Wake up Church and choose what side you will be on, the light or the darkness. If you are not a Christian I say wake up to what Jesus has shown you and repent so you can be accounted worthy to escape all the things that shall coming to pass and stand before the Son of Man, Christ Jesus.

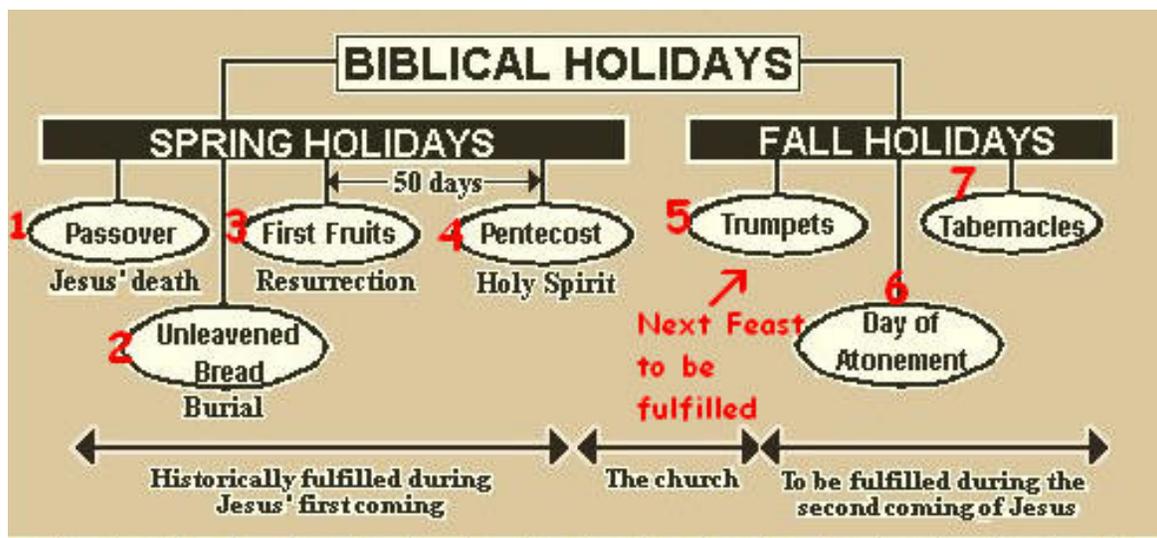
2011 Jewish Biblical Holidays Dates

Feast of Trumpets (Yom Teruah/Rosh Hashanah), Sunset of September 28 through nightfall of September 30 Sunset

Day of Atonement (Yom Kippurim) Sunset of October 7 through nightfall of October 8

Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot) Sunset of October 12 through nightfall of October 19

There are 7 Jewish Feasts. The first four take place in the Spring. These Spring Feasts were fulfilled literally the days of that feasts took place by Jesus Christ, when He came the first time. I believe the Lord will likewise be fulfilling the next 3 feast literally on the day of the feasts in connection to the Lord's second coming. The next feast to be literally fulfilled by Jesus will be #5. See chart below.



Exactly how did Jesus fulfilled the first four Feasts?

When you read Exodus 12:1-6 you will learn that the Jews would pick out a lamb, and they would watch this lamb closely for 4 days before killing the lamb on Passover. Jesus fulfilled this part to the letter, when He road in to Jerusalem sitting on a donkey. Christians know this day as Palm Sunday. For 4 days Jesus was watched very closely by the Jewish religious leaders, and civil authorities. Christ was the lamb without spot! He

fulfilled this lamb selection day on Nisan 10, which was actually on Saturday, a Sabbath. He came into Jerusalem riding a donkey, fulfilling Zechariah 9:9. Matt. 21:1-10 gives you the account of Christ riding into Jerusalem.

Let's read Exodus 12:1-6. ¹ The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, ² "This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year. ³ Tell the whole community of Israel that on the **tenth day of this month** each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. ⁴ If any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbor, having taken into account the number of people there are. You are to determine the amount of lamb needed in accordance with what each person will eat. ⁵ The animals you choose must be year-old males **without defect**, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats. ⁶ **Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month**, when all the members of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight."

The Bible tells us Christ was this perfect sacrificial lamb, in fulfillment of the Scriptures, on Nisan 10. The Apostle John tells us in three different places that Jesus was confirmed as the "Lamb of God" who takes away the sin of the world. Read John 1:29. ²⁹ "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Revelation 5:6: "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Revelation 7: 10: "And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb".

Here is the prophetic significance of each of the seven Levitical Feast of Israel

1) Passover (Leviticus 23:5) – Pointed to the Messiah as our Passover lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7) whose blood would be shed for our sins. Jesus was crucified on the day of preparation for the Passover at the same hour that the lambs were being slaughtered for the Passover meal that evening.

2) Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:6) – Pointed to the Messiah's sinless life (as leaven is a picture of sin in the Bible), making Him the perfect sacrifice for our sins. Jesus' body was in the grave during the first days of this feast, like a kernel of wheat planted and waiting to burst forth as the bread of life.

3) First Fruits (Leviticus 23:10) – Pointed to the Messiah's resurrection as the first fruits of the righteous. Jesus was resurrected on this very day, which is one of the reasons that Paul refers to him in I Corinthians 15:20 as the "first fruits from the dead."

4) Weeks or Pentecost (Leviticus 23:16) – Occurred fifty days after the beginning

of the Feast of Unleavened Bread and pointed to the great harvest of souls and the gift of the Holy Spirit for both Jew and Gentile, who would be brought into the kingdom of God during the Church Age (see Acts 2). The Church was actually established on this day when God poured out His Holy Spirit and 3,000 Jews responded to Peter's great sermon and his first proclamation of the Gospel.

JESUS WILL FULFILL THE LAST 3 FEASTS AT HIS SECOND COMING, SEE 5-7 BELOW:

5) Trumpets (Leviticus 23:24) – The first of the fall feasts. Many believe this day points to the Rapture of the Church when the Messiah Jesus will appear in the heavens as He comes for His bride, the Church. The Rapture is always associated in Scripture with the blowing of a loud trumpet (I Thessalonians 4:13-18 and I Corinthians 15:52).

6) Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:27) – Many believe this prophetically points to the day of the Second Coming of Jesus when He will return to earth. That will be the Day of Atonement for the Jewish remnant when they "look upon Him whom they have pierced," repent of their sins, and receive Him as their Messiah (Zechariah 12:10 and Romans 11:1-6, 25-36).

7) Tabernacles or Booths (Leviticus 23:34) – Many scholars believe that this feast day points to the Lord's promise that He will once again "tabernacle" with His people when He returns to reign over all the world (Micah 4:1-7). Like I said, no one knows for sure if the renewal of construction by Israel will set off another war that may begin the final prophecies for these last days. If the PLO attacks Israel over the renewed building on what they call their land we could see the Psalm war 83 break out, and who knows could we be raptured during this time? Only Jesus knows and I can tell you this, I will be ready whenever the Lord calls us home, what about you? Now let me get back to the call for Peace and safety prophecy.

No one has to be caught in the darkness like a thief in the night. Pay attention to the Fall Feasts and be ready especially during the Feast of Trumpets, as we know the Lord's coming for His Bride is not far off.