

Triennial Torah Study – 2nd Year 18/06/2011



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By Joseph F. Dumond

This week's Triennial Torah reading can be found at:

<https://sightedmoon.com/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf>

Ex 20	Isaiah 20-23	Ps 132-134	John 8
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Exodus 20

We'll hear it is right from Yehovah's own mouth. The Ten commandments which were given on the day of Shavuot in 1379 BC. And all the people heard it. Over 2 Million people heard the voice of Yehovah and saw the mountain shake and the smoke and they heard the trumpets and they saw Moses talk with Yehovah.

This was a big deal.

Notice what Yehovah says in Exo 20:20 And Mosheh said to the people, "Do not fear, for Elohim has come to prove you, and in order that His fear be before you, so that you do not sin."

Yehovah has come to test the people.

We noticed this in Exo 16:4 And Yehovah said to Mosheh, "See, I am raining bread from the heavens for you. And the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, in order to try them, whether they walk in My Torah or not.

The commandments are a test to us who follow Him to see if we will obey His commands. In particular the 4th commandment is the test commandment.

It is a good time right now to review the commandments once again.

Exo 20:1 And Elohim spoke all these Words, saying, 2 "I am Yehovah your Elohim, who brought you out of the land of Mitsrayim, out of the house of slavery.

Exo 20:3 "You have no other mighty ones against My face.

Exo 20:4 "You do not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of that which is in the heavens above, or which is in the earth beneath, or which is in the waters under the earth, 5 you do not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, Yehovah your Elohim am a jealous ?I, visiting

the crookedness of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, 6 but showing kindness to thousands, to those who love Me and guard My commands.

Exo 20:7 “You do not bring¹ the Name of Yehovah your Elohim to naught, for Yehovah does not leave the one unpunished who brings His Name to naught. Footnote: ¹Or lift up, or take.

Exo 20:8 “Remember the Sabbath day, to set it apart. 9 “Six days you labour, and shall do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath¹ of Yehovah your Elohim. You do not do any work – you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. Footnote: ¹There are other Sabbaths, but this is the weekly Sabbath. 11 “For in six days Yehovah made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore Yehovah blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart.

Exo 20:12 “Respect your father and your mother, so that your days are prolonged upon the soil which Yehovah your Elohim is giving you.

Exo 20:13 “You do not murder.

Exo 20:14 “You do not commit adultery.

Exo 20:15 “You do not steal.

Exo 20:16 “You do not bear false witness against your neighbour.

Exo 20:17 “You do not covet your neighbor’s house, you do not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, or whatever belongs to your neighbour.”

As the note above says the weekly Sabbath is just one of the Sabbaths we are to guard and keep Holy. Here are the others in Lev 23.

Lev 23:1 And Yehovah spoke to Mosheh, saying, ² “Speak to the children of Yisra’el, and say to them, ‘The appointed times of Yehovah, which you are to proclaim as set-apart gatherings, My appointed times, are these:

These appointed times are appointments we have to meet Yehovah and the very first appointment is none other than the weekly Sabbath

Lev 23:3 ‘Six days work is done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, a set-apart gathering. You do no work, it is a Sabbath to Yehovah in all your dwellings.

Having now stated the Sabbath as the first appointed time Yehovah now goes on to list the annual Sabbaths. They come once a year.

Passover

Lev 23:4 'These are the appointed times of Yehovah, set-apart gatherings which you are to proclaim at their appointed times. 5 'In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, between the evenings, is the Passover to Yehovah.

Days of Unleavened Bread

Lev 23:6 'And on the fifteenth day of this month is the Festival of Unleavened Bread to Yehovah – seven days you eat unleavened bread. 7 'On the first day you have a set-apart gathering, you do no servile work. 8 'And you shall bring an offering made by fire to Yehovah for seven days. On the seventh day is a set-apart gathering, you do no servile work.' ”

Wave Sheaf Offering during Unleavened Bread

Lev 23:9 And Yehovah spoke to Mosheh, saying, 10 “Speak to the children of Yisra’el, and you shall say to them, ‘When you come into the land which I give you, and shall reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest to the priest. 11 ‘And he shall wave the sheaf before Yehovah, for your acceptance. On the morrow after the Sabbath the priest waves it. 12 ‘And on that day when you wave the sheaf, you shall prepare a male lamb a year old, a perfect one, as a burnt offering to Yehovah, 13 and its grain offering: two-tenths of an Ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to Yehovah, a sweet fragrance, and its drink offering: one-fourth of a hin of wine. 14 ‘And you do not eat bread or roasted grain or fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your Elohim – a law forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

Pentecost

Lev 23:15 'And from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, you shall count for yourselves: seven completed Sabbaths. 16 'Until the morrow after the seventh Sabbath you count fifty days, then you shall bring a new grain offering to Yehovah. 17 'Bring from your dwellings for a wave offering two loaves of bread, of two tenths of an Ephah of fine flour they are, baked with leaven, first-fruits to Yehovah. 18 'And besides the bread, you shall bring seven lambs a year old, perfect ones, and one young bull and two rams. They are a burnt offering to Yehovah, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire for a sweet fragrance to Yehovah. 19 'And you shall offer one male goat as a sin offering, and two male lambs a year old, as a peace offering. 20 'And the priest shall wave them, besides the bread of the first-fruits, as a wave offering before Yehovah, besides the two lambs. They are set-apart to Yehovah for the priest. 21 'And on this same day you shall proclaim a set-apart gathering for yourselves, you do no servile work on it – a law forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

Lev 23:22 'And when you reap the harvest of your land do not completely reap the corners of your field when you reap, and do not gather any gleaning from your harvest. Leave them for the poor and for the stranger. I am Yehovah your Elohim.' ”

The Feast of Trumpets

Lev 23:23 And Yehovah spoke to Mosheh, saying, 24 “Speak to the children of Yisra’el, saying, ‘In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you have a rest, a remembrance of blowing of trumpets, a set-apart gathering. 25 ‘You do no servile work, and you shall bring an offering made by fire to Yehovah.’ ”

The Day of Atonement

Lev 23:26 And Yehovah spoke to Mosheh, saying, 27 “On the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be a set-apart gathering for you. And you shall afflict your beings, and shall bring an offering made by fire to Yehovah. 28 “And you do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before Yehovah your Elohim. 29 “For any being who is not afflicted on that same day, he shall be cut off from his people. 30 “And any being who does any work on that same day, that being I shall destroy from the midst of his people. 31 “You do no work – a law forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 32 ‘It is a Sabbath of rest to you, and you shall afflict your beings. On the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you observe your Sabbath.’ ”

The Feast of Tabernacles

Lev 23:33 And Yehovah spoke to Mosheh, saying, 34 “Speak to the children of Yisra’el, saying, ‘On the fifteenth day of this seventh month is the Festival of Booths for seven days to Yehovah. 35 ‘On the first day is a set-apart gathering, you do no servile work.

The Eighth Day Feast

Lev 23:36 ‘For seven days you bring an offering made by fire to Yehovah. On the eighth day there shall be a set-apart gathering for you, and you shall bring an offering made by fire to Yehovah. It is a closing festival, you do no servile work.

Lev 23:37 ‘These are the appointed times of Yehovah which you proclaim as set-apart gatherings, to bring an offering made by fire to Yehovah, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a slaughtering and drink offerings, as commanded for everyday – 38 besides the Sabbaths of Yehovah, and besides your gifts, and besides all your vows, and besides all your voluntary offerings which you give to Yehovah.

Lev 23:39 ‘On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you gather in the fruit of the land, observe the festival of Yehovah for seven days. On the first day is a rest, and on the eighth day a rest. 40 ‘And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of good trees, branches of palm trees, twigs of leafy trees, and willows of the stream, and shall rejoice before Yehovah your Elohim for seven days. 41 ‘And you shall observe it as a festival to Yehovah for seven days in the year – a law forever in your generations. Observe it in the seventh month. 42 ‘Dwell in booths for seven days; all who are native Yisra’Elites dwell in booths, 43 so that your generations know that I made the children of Yisra’el dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of

Mitsrayim. I am Yehovah your Elohim.’ ”

Lev 23:44 Thus did Mosheh speak of the appointed times of Yehovah to the children of Yisra’el.

Then once every seven years is a Sabbath year of rest for the land. This too is part of the 4th commandment and is also our test commandment.

Lev 25:1 And Yehovah spoke to Mosheh on Mount Sinai, saying,

Lev 25:2 "Speak to the children of Yisra'el, and say to them, 'When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall observe a Sabbath to Yehovah.

Lev 25:3 'Six years you sow your field, and six years you prune your vineyard, and gather in its fruit,

Lev 25:4 but in the seventh year the land is to have a Sabbath of rest, a Sabbath to Yehovah. Do not sow your field and do not prune your vineyard.

Lev 25:5 'Do not reap what grows of its own of your harvest, and do not gather the grapes of your unpruned vine, for it is a year of rest for the land.

Lev 25:6 'And the Sabbath of the land shall be to you for food, for you and your servant, and for your female servant and your hired servant, and for the stranger who sojourns with you,

Lev 25:7 and for your livestock and the beasts that are in your land. All its crops are for food.

Lev 25:8 'And you shall count seven Sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years. And the time of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years.

Lev 25:9 'You shall then sound a ram's horn to pass through on the tenth day of the seventh month, on the Day of Atonement cause a ram's horn to pass through all your land.

Lev 25:10 'And you shall set the fiftieth year apart, and proclaim release throughout all the land to all its inhabitants, it is a Jubilee for you. And each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you return to his clan.

Lev 25:11 'The fiftieth year is a Jubilee to you. Do not sow, nor reap what grows of its own, nor gather from its unpruned vine.

Lev 25:12 'It is a Jubilee, it is set-apart to you. Eat from the field its crops.

Lev 25:13 'In the Year of this Jubilee let each one of you return to his possession.

In Mathew 5:21 Yehshua expands on the commandment in Exo 20:13 "You do not murder. He shows us that it is not just the fact that you have not killed someone that justifies you. He goes to the root of the problem and shows us that even if we hate or are angry with someone we have committed murder

In Mathew 5 again Yehshua also speaks to us about Adultery Exo 20:14 "You do not commit adultery. He again goes to explain that even if you lust after a woman you have committed sin.

What Yehshua is showing us is that each of the Ten Commandments in its written form is just a summery and that each one can be expanded to show you the very heart in you.

The 4th commandment is also to be expanded and it includes the Holy Days of Lev 23 and the Sabbatical years of Lev 25. We are to keep all of these times Sacred and not to break them if we want to be righteous.

Psa 119:172 My tongue sings of Your word, For all Your commands are righteousness.

And if you're not keeping these Appointed times you naturally will be UNrighteous.

Pro 28:9 He who turns away his ear from hearing the Torah, Even his prayer is an abomination¹. Footnote: ¹See also 15:29, Isa. 59:1-2, John 9:31, 1 John 3:22.

And Yeshua too said something you need to keep in mind;

Mat 7:22 “Many shall say to Me in that day, ‘Master, Master, have we not prophesied in Your Name, and cast out demons in Your Name, and done many mighty works in Your Name?’ ²³ “And then I shall declare to them, ‘I never knew you, depart from Me, you who work lawlessness!’¹ Footnote: ¹ See v. 15.

1Jn 3:4 Everyone doing sin also does lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.

Those of you who will not keep the commandments are being lawless and if you continue to do so when Yeshua comes back He will say to you the words of Mathew 7:22.

Exo 12:49 “There is one Torah for the native-born and for the stranger who sojourns among you.”

Num 15:15 ‘One law is for you of the assembly and for the stranger who sojourns with you – a law forever throughout your generations. As you are, so is the stranger before Yehovah. ¹⁶ ‘One Torah and one right-ruling is for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you.’ ”

This Torah is not just for the Jews, nor is it just for those who are in the land of Israel. No it is for all mankind around the world.

Isa 66:1 Thus said Yehovah, “The heavens are My throne, and the earth is My footstool. Where is this house that you build for Me? And where is this place of My rest?

Mat 5:34 “But I say to you, do not swear at all, neither by the heaven, because it is Elohim’s throne; ³⁵ nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Yerushalayim, for it is the city of the great Sovereign;

Brethren the whole world belongs to Yehovah. It does not make any sense at all to have the Torah only in one part of the world and not in the entire world. The Torah is for all men everywhere. One torah for the native born and one torah for the stranger, but it is the same torah.

Most people understand that the seventh Millennium is near. They all want to enter into this period of rest. The 7th Millennium is the same as a Sabbath. Most people understand this and yet those same people will not keep the weekly Seventh Day Sabbath nor the other Holy Days or Sabbatical years that are also commanded rest periods. Let this good news profit you.

Heb 4:1 Therefore, since a promise remains of entering into His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. ² For indeed the Good News was brought to us as well as to them, but the word which they heard did not profit them, not having been mixed with belief in

those who heard it. 3 For we who have believed do enter into that rest, as He has said, “As I swore in My wrath, if they shall enter into My rest...” And yet His works have come into being from the foundation of the world. 4 For somewhere He has said thus about the seventh day, “And Elohim rested on the seventh day from all His works,” 5 and in this again, “If they shall enter into My rest...” 6 Since then it remains for some to enter into it, and those who formerly received the Good News did not enter in because of disobedience,¹ Footnote: 1See 3:18. 7 He again defines a certain day, “Today,” saying through Dawid? so much later, as it has been said, “Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.” 8 For if Yehoshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. 9 So there remains a Sabbath keeping for the people of Elohim. 10 For the one, having entered into His rest, has himself also rested from his works, as Elohim rested from His own.¹¹ Let us therefore do our utmost to enter into that rest, lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience.¹ Footnote: 1See 3:18.

There are some very serious things to think about if you choose not to keep the Sabbath.

Exo 20:8 “Remember the Sabbath day, to set it apart. 9 “Six days you labour, and shall do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath¹ of Yehovah your Elohim. You do not do any work – you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. Footnote: 1There are other Sabbaths, but this is the weekly Sabbath. 11 “For in six days Yehovah made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore Yehovah blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart.

Isaiah 20-23

In Chapter 20 we are told

Isa 20:4 so does the sovereign of Ashshur lead away the captives of Mitsrayim and the exiles of Kush, young and old, naked and barefoot, with their buttocks uncovered – the shame of Mitsrayim. 5 “And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Kush, their expectation, and of Mitsrayim, their boast.

This verse goes along with what Daniel tells us in Dan 11:40 “At the time of the end the sovereign of the South shall push at him, and the sovereign of the North rush against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships. And he shall enter the lands, and shall overflow and pass over, 41 and shall enter the Splendid Land, and many shall stumble, but these escape from his hand: Edom, and Mo’ab, and the chief of the sons of Ammon. 42 “And he shall stretch out his hand against the lands, and the land of Mitsrayim shall not escape. 43 “And he shall rule over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the riches of Mitsrayim, and Libyans and Kushites shall be at his steps.

In the last days, the very days we are now in; the time of Jacobs trouble, we would see the King of the North Assyria, today known as Germany, would lead a host like NATO against Egypt Libya and Kush, Either Ethiopia and or Sudan.

In January of 2011 we saw the Arab Spring begin. We now have NATO forces in Sudan watching the Arab north and Christian south fight mostly over oil but disguised as a war of religion. We have NATO forces going after President Khadafy of Libya and yet they do not go after Syria or Yemen or Bahrain with NATO forces. The Leadership in these countries have done far worst things to the people of their own nations than Khadafy has done. But these NATO forces fight for Europe which depends on the oil from Libya. There is oil in Sudan, but none worth fighting for in Syria or Yemen or Bahrain.

This fall elections will take place in Egypt. The only party that is able to organize is the Muslim brother hood. They have vowed to fight Israel. The gas from the Sinai has not been repaired and is prevented from being shipped to Israel.

The Sabbatical years are showing us that war is about to come to Israel in 2012. Those same Sabbatical prophecies are also showing us that the King of North will come in 2013 to rescue Israel from the next Arab uprising and it will be at this time that Egypt will be led away captive. This is a trait that the German army has done as far back as we can record them. Remember they were once known as the Assyrians and they led Israel away captive in 723 BC.

We explain all of this in much greater detail in *The Prophecies of Abraham*. Order a copy of it ASAP.

Isaiah 21:1-10 is a prophecy addressed to the “Wilderness of the Sea” (verse 1)—wilderness meaning a desert but in the sense of a deserted, uninhabited region. As indicated by verse 9, this apparently refers to Babylon. Various explanations are given for the label. One source says it “may be a sarcastic parody of Babylon, whose southern region on the Persian Gulf was called the ‘Land of the Sea’” (Nelson Study Bible, note on verse 1).

Another states: “One Greek writer gave this name to the plain on which Babylon stood, as it was divided by lakes and marshy country” (Bible Reader’s Companion, note on verse 1). In fact, the Chaldean rulers of Babylon were of the “Sealands” dynasty—this being the name of their district of marshlands to the south, which bordered on the Persian Gulf. Says another source: “The plain [stretching from Babylon south to Persia] was [originally] covered with the water of the Euphrates like a ‘sea’...until [the Babylonian queen] Semiramis raised great dams against it. Cyrus [of Persia, who conquered Babylon] removed these dykes, and so converted the whole country again into a vast desert[ed]-marsh” (Jamieson, Fausset & Brown’s Commentary, note on verse 1). Indeed, this was mentioned in our highlights covering Isaiah 14:23.

The image of Babylon—and the pagan gentile empires following in its tradition—rising from the “sea” is one we find elsewhere in Scripture (Daniel 7; Revelation 13; 17). In Revelation 17 the waters—while probably representing actual waters on one level since ancient Babylon and its later successor, Rome, were both situated near the sea—are also shown to be symbolic of “peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues” from which Babylon and its successor kingdoms are formed (verse 15). Yet at the same time “Babylon” can signify false religion and man’s corrupt

civilization sprung from there in general, and thus a figurative desert wilderness—a place of wandering in spiritual confusion, lacking in the much-needed truth of God.

It is interesting to consider that the prophecy in Isaiah 21 may have been given immediately after the fall of Ashdod mentioned in chapter 20. Notice what happened in the wake of the Philistine defeat: “After whipping his client states, possibly including Judah, back into line, Sargon returned to Assyria to deal once more with the intractable Marduk-apla-iddina [Merodach-Baladan] of the Sealands dynasty in Babylonia” (Merrill, Kingdom of Priests, p. 409). Indeed, at this time, in 710 B.C., the Assyrians forced Merodach from power following a 10-year reign.

Yet the prophecy of chapter 21 may also have come following events in 703 B.C. The Assyrian emperor Sargon II “suffered an invasion by the Cimmerians of the north [i.e., captive Israelites] in 706. It is possible that he died in the following year as a result of these hostilities” (p. 409). Following his son Sennacherib replacing him in 705, revolts broke out around the empire. Sennacherib “had barely come to power when he was faced with a rebellion in Babylonia led by the perennial foe of Assyria, Marduk-apla-iddina [Merodach-Baladan]. This leader of the Aramean Sealands dynasty had just returned from exile imposed upon him by Sargon, but with characteristic tenacity gained support for Babylonian independence from such widely scattered sources as Elam [or Persia] to the east and the Aramean [or Syrian] states to the west... In any case, [after a brief reign by Merodach in Babylon in 703 B.C.] Sennacherib prevailed, took the city of Babylon, and reasserted Assyrian authority. He also undertook a systematic subjugation of the entire Sealands area” (pp. 413-414).

So was Isaiah referring to one of these episodes? There may have at least been a lesson in them. In the previous chapter, Isaiah warned the people of Judah not to put their trust in Egypt to deliver them because it would fall. The only other likely option, then, for relief from Assyria would seem to have been Babylonian revolt. Yet Isaiah was essentially telling the Jews not to put their trust in Babylon either—because it would likewise fall.

However, as in Isaiah 13, chapter 21 presents us with Babylon being overthrown not by Assyria but by Media—and chapter 21 now mentions Elam or Persia as bringing Babylon down too.

[Brethren take special note here this is a huge teaching. It is the Medes who will destroy Babylon. The Medes today are Persia or Iran. Babylon is the European Union and Rome. The bow the Medes us to shoot her arrows in today's language are Missile launchers and the missiles will destroy all things and make the place as Sodom and Gomorrah. The smoke will rise up and block out the light of the moon. And at this time we will have to count each month as 30 days because we will not be able to see it. This is why Daniel says there are 1260 and 1290 days and 1335 days.

Read once again Isaiah Chapter 13.

Isa 13:1 The message concerning Bab'el which Yeshayahu son of Amots saw. 2 "Lift up a banner on the high mountain, raise your voice to them; wave your hand, let them enter the gates of the nobles. 3 "I have commanded My set-apart ones; I have also called My mighty men for My displeasure, My proudly exulting ones." 4 The noise of an uproar in the mountains, like that of many people! A noise of uproar of the reigns of gentiles gathered together! Yehovah of hosts is gathering an army for battle. 5 They are coming from a distant land, from the end of the heavens, even Yehovah and His weapons of displeasure, to destroy all the earth. 6 Howl, for the day of Yehovah is near! It comes as a destruction from the Almighty. 7 Therefore all hands go limp, every man's heart melts, 8 and they shall be afraid. Pangs and sorrows take hold of them, they are in pain as a woman in labour; they are amazed at one another, their faces aflame! 9 See, the day of Yehovah is coming, fierce, with wrath and heat of displeasure, to lay the earth waste, and destroy its sinners from it. 10 For the stars of the heavens and their constellations do not give off their light. The sun shall be dark at its rising, and the moon not send out its light. 11 "And I shall punish the world for its evil, and the wrong for their crookedness, and shall put an end to the arrogance of the proud, and lay low the pride of the ruthless. 12 "I shall make mortal man scarcer than fine gold, and mankind scarcer than the gold of Ophir.

This is a nuclear attack! So many nuclear bombs that the earth is shaken out of her place. We read in Daniel above but we stopped short. Now read what else Daniel tells us in Dan 11:44 "Then reports from the east and the north shall disturb him, and he shall go out with great wrath to destroy and put many under the ban, 45 and he shall pitch the tents of his palace between the seas and the splendid set-apart mountain, but shall come to his end with none to help him.

This King of the North goes off to make war with those of the east. And then the east strikes back and we are about to read what happens.

Isa 13:13 "So I shall make the heavens tremble, and the earth shall shake from her place, in the wrath of Yehovah of hosts and in the day of the heat of His displeasure. 14 "And it shall be as the hunted gazelle, and as a sheep that no man takes up – every man turns to his own people, and everyone flees to his own land. 15 "Whoever is found is thrust through, and everyone taken falls by the sword. 16 "And their children are dashed to pieces before their eyes, their houses plundered and their wives ravished.

Here Yehovah is telling us He is going to use the Medes, the Persians, the Iranian and they will have nuclear capabilities. So the Nuclear plan they are on will not be destroyed. It will flourish and grow into an arsenal that will be unleashed on Rome and Europe.

Isa 13:17 "See, I am stirring up the Medes against them, who do not regard silver, and as for gold, they do not delight in it. 18 "And bows dash the young to pieces, and they have no compassion on the fruit of the womb, their eye spare no children. 19 "And Bab'el, the splendor of reigns, the comeliness of the Chaldeans' pride, shall be as when Elohim overthrew Sed'om and Amorah. 20 "She shall never be inhabited, nor be settled from generation to generation; nor shall the Arabian pitch tents there, nor shepherds rest their flocks there. 21 "But wild beasts of

the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be filled with owls. And ostriches shall dwell there, and wild goats frolic there. 22 “And hyenas shall cry in their citadels, and jackals in their pleasant palaces. And her time is near to come, and her days are not drawn out.”

Yet in Isaiah’s day the Medes and Persians were allied with the Babylonians against the Assyrian yoke. It was not until around 170 years later (in 539 B.C.) that the Neo-Babylonian Empire—ascendant after the fall of Assyria—fell to the Medes and Persians. Not surprisingly, because of this fact, many try to postdate this prophecy to after Babylon’s fall. Significant in this regard is the fact that Isaiah used the word Elam and not Persia: “The name ‘Persia’ was not in use until the captivity; it means a ‘horseman’; Cyrus first trained the Persians in horsemanship. It is a mark of authenticity that the name is not found before Daniel and Ezekiel” (JFB Commentary, note on verse 2).

Yet while this prophecy did find partial fulfillment in the events of 539 B.C., we should view it, as with so many other prophecies in this section, as an end-time prophecy. Supporting this likelihood is the cry “Babylon is fallen, is fallen!” in verse 9, which is repeated in Revelation 14:8 and 18:2 as applying to the end of this present, evil age.

Yet that would seem to indicate that modern Medes and Persians will be involved in the overthrow of the final Babylon. Who, then, are the Medes and Persians today? No doubt many still live in their ancient homeland of Iran. The name Iran apparently derives from “Aryan”—Indo-European people ranging from India to Europe. That some Persians later migrated eastward is well attested to by the existence of the Parsis (Parsees) in India. But to see the Persians’ northern and westward migration, we should perhaps consider the Medes first.

The first-century Roman scholar Pliny the Elder wrote in his *Natural History* of “the river Don [north of the Black Sea], where the inhabitants are said to be descended from the Medes” (Book 6, sec. 11). The Caucasus Mountains between the Black and Caspian Seas formed the northern border of the Median Empire. When conquered by Alexander the Great, many evidently fled north through the Caucasus, following the migration pattern of the Israelites and Assyrians before them. Thus, the Medes today would appear to refer to people dwelling in northwest Iran, southwest Russia and the Ukraine.

Many of the Elamites or Persians appear to have followed essentially the same course, though traveling along the south coast of the Black Sea as well (through northern Turkey) and going even farther into Europe. The Greeks used the term *Elimaei* to designate Elam near Babylon. Yet they also stated that the *Elimaei* lived northwest of them in the area of southern Yugoslavia (“*Elimea*,” *Smith’s Classical Dictionary*).

Strabo, the first-century-B.C. Greco-Roman geographer, referred to the people of Yugoslavia on the Adriatic Sea as the *Eneti*—from Paphlagonia in Asia Minor or Turkey (*Geography of Strabo*, p. 227). Thus the Latin word for these people was *Eneti* (or *Veneti*)—and the Germans referred to them and the other Slavic peoples in Eastern Europe as *Wends*. The Elamites had actually named the most famous mountain of their homeland *Elwend* (George Rawlinson, *Seven Great*

Monarchies, chap. 1: Media)—of which Wend seems a reasonable shortening. In the Persian conquest of the Babylonian Empire, the River Orontes in northern Syria was renamed Elwend. Indeed, it appears that Persians migrated here and into Asia Minor when they ruled the area. Upon Alexander's takeover, these appear to have continued on westward, eventually migrating into Eastern Europe.

Interestingly, a tribal territory of ancient Elam was named Kashu (Encyclopaedia Biblica, map, p. 4845) and in Poland we find a language called Kashubian named after a people known as the Kashub (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th ed., "Lekhitic languages"; 11th ed., "Kashubes," on-line at 25.1911encyclopedia.org/K/KA/KASHUBES.htm).

Thus, Elam today would seem to be many of the Iranians, a small minority of India, and many of the Slavic peoples of Eastern Europe.

According to Ezekiel 38-39, the people of eastern Eurasia will be allied together at the beginning of the Kingdom age—shortly after the return of Jesus Christ. It is likely that this alliance will have come together prior to His arrival—and that some of the various national leaders of the eastern regions constitute the "kings from the east" mentioned in Revelation 16:12. While some of these nationalities will initially participate in the end-time Babylonian or Tyrian system (Ezekiel 27; Revelation 18), they will later come against end-time Babylon.

Thus, in the end, Media and Persia appear to again play a role in Babylon's downfall.

Chapter 21

In verses 11-12, a prophecy is given against "Dumah." Seir, also mentioned here, is a reference to Edom (compare 34:5-17; Genesis 32:3; Ezekiel 35), either the people or the land of Idumea in what is now southern Jordan. Concerning Dumah, it was apparently an actual place "located at the intersection of the east-west trade route between Babylon and Edom and the north-south route between Palmyra (in Syria) and Edom. Dumah played a vital military and economic role in the relationship between Mesopotamia and Edom, and its fate greatly affected Edom" (Nelson Study Bible, note on verse 11). Dumah may also be used for all of Edom here because its name meant "silence" in Hebrew, thus implying that Edom would "soon be reduced to silence or destruction" (Jamieson, Fausset & Brown's Commentary, note on verse 11). Indeed, the NIV margin states that Dumah is actually a word play on the name Edom.

The Edomite asks, "What of the night?" (verse 11)—or, rather, "How much of the night is left?" The watchman, Isaiah, answers that "morning comes, and also the night" (verse 12). This is interpreted in various ways. One way is that things will get better for the Edomites before again turning bad. Another way is that things will turn better for God's people yet turn worse for Edom (see Jamieson, Fausset & Brown's Commentary, notes on verses 11-12).

Either way, this would seem to refer in part to ancient events. Edom was about to come out from Assyrian domination for a while—only to come under Judah's dominion. And later, Edom would be subjugated by the Babylonians. Yet the prophecy may also have end-time parallels.

Edom will escape out of the hand of the latter-day king of the North (Daniel 11:41 and shall enter the Splendid Land, and many shall stumble, but these escape from his hand: Edom, and Mo'ab?, and the chief of the sons of Ammon.). But then, when Israel and Judah are delivered at Christ's return, Edom will be destroyed (see Obadiah). The only way to escape punishment, Isaiah explains, is to "return" (Isaiah 21:12)—the Old Testament term for "repent."

Isaiah then follows with a prophecy against Arabia. Place references are Tema, modern Tayma about 200 miles southeast of Dumah in northwest Arabia, and Dedan, about 90 miles southwest of Tema. However, it is also possible that the name Tema is the origin of the name for the western coastal plain of Arabia, Thiamah, where Mecca sits (see "Arabia," Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1985, Vol. 13, map on p. 872). This entire area, the Hejaz, is extremely holy to Muslims.

Reference is also made to Kedar, a son of Ishmael (compare Genesis 25:13). "The tribe seems to have been one of the most conspicuous of all the Ishmaelite tribes, and hence the rabbis call the Arabians universally by this name" ("Kedar," Smith's Bible Dictionary, 1986).

The year reference in verse 16 is not clear. Sargon did invade Arabia in 715 B.C. If this is what's meant then Isaiah's prophecy would be dated 716 B.C., out of order from surrounding chapters (chapter 20 being dated to 711 B.C.). Perhaps, more likely, the prophecy refers to the Simeonite attack on Edom in the days of Hezekiah about which we will soon read: "Those of the far south, Tema and Dedan, will have to succour their more exposed brother tribe of Kedar. This could mean that the trading caravans will have blundered into war-ravaged parts and returned empty-handed and starving" (New Bible Commentary, note on verses 13-17). This seems to have occurred before Sennacherib's invasion, thus dating this prophecy to shortly before 703 or so.

Yet it is perhaps most likely that the year prior to destruction refers to a point in the end time—perhaps a year from when light begins to dawn on the captive Israelites, at the beginning of the Day of the Lord. This would imply destruction upon Arabia at the return of Jesus Christ

Chapter 22

"Valley of Vision [verses 1, 5] sarcastically describes Jerusalem. Mount Zion is ironically personified in its valleys from which it could see nothing. Instead of partying on housetops, the ailing city should have been in its prayer closets" (Nelson Study Bible, note on verse 1).

Isaiah explained that "a day of trouble and treading down and perplexity" was coming (verse 5). In verse 6 it appears to have already come, but the words of verse 7 show that it had not yet occurred. God often speaks of things that have not yet happened as though they already have (compare Romans 4:17). The day of trouble likely refers to the impending invasion of Sennacherib in Isaiah's day. However, given the messianic reference later in the chapter—which we will take note of shortly—it is possible that the rest of the passage has a dual application, referring to events in Isaiah's day as well as the latter days. And in an end-time context, the day of trouble would represent the time of Jacob's trouble—the coming awful Great Tribulation.

Isaiah 22:6 shows the involvement of Elam. This would seem to indicate Elam attacking but perhaps not. It says Elam “bore the quiver,” which could indicate that it is serving another army, perhaps even by compulsion, which would make sense if this applied to the ancient Assyrian army, which likely had Elamites and other peoples pressed into involuntary service (the Elamite nation as a whole was supportive of Babylon against Assyrian rule). Again, however, it is conceivable that the reference is dual, applying also to the end time. As modern Elam is found in Eastern Europe, Iran and India, perhaps weapons from these areas will be utilized by the end-time Assyrian army in its initial assault on the modern nations of Israel. A “quiver” in a modern context might represent a store of missiles.

Verse 8 refers to the armor of the “House of the Forest”—no doubt a reference to the “House of the Forest of Lebanon,” which Solomon built. It was used as the national armory (compare 1 Kings 7:2; 10:16-17). The Jews were not relying on God but looking to their own military stockpiles. How different is that from the Israelite nations today?

As to what was transpiring in Isaiah’s day, we should realize that Hezekiah was making preparations for a rebellion against Assyria. He was evidently in talks with Egypt, certain of the Philistines and Merodach-Baladan of Babylon about throwing off the Assyrian yoke. Remember that a general spirit of rebellion broke out all over the empire following the death of Sargon in 705.

Within two years, in 703, Merodach-Baladan was back on the throne of Babylon for a short stint. Indeed, this prophecy likely dates to the period between 703 and 701, the latter date being when Sennacherib comes to stem the rebellious tide. In the meantime, Hezekiah and Jerusalem’s other leaders were making preparations for war.

That brings us to Isaiah 22:9-11. The city of David is damaged (verse 9) by great numbers of houses being torn down to expand and fortify the city wall (verse 10). “Confirming this, Israeli archaeologist Nahman Avigad, in the course of his excavations of the old Jewish Quarter, uncovered a massive 130-foot stretch of city wall, partly built directly onto bedrock, and partly on top of houses only recently constructed. The dating of the pottery in these houses provided clear evidence that the huge wall was part of this same Hezekiah-directed fortification effort” (Ian Wilson, *The Bible Is History*, 1999, p. 162).

Verse 11 appears to refer to the pool and tunnel also mentioned in 2 Kings 20:20, referring to “improvements in the water supply of Jerusalem in preparation for possible attack (compare Isa 22.8b-11). This conduit, with an identifying inscription has been found and is now popularly called Hezekiah’s Tunnel, or the Siloam Tunnel (compare 2 Chr 32.30). It runs from [the spring of] Gihon (see 1 Kings 1.33 n.), which was outside the city wall, to the Pool of Siloam, which was inside the wall. Extending 1700 feet through solid rock, this tunnel was a remarkable engineering achievement in its time” (Oxford Annotated Bible, note on 2 Kings 20:20-21).

“At the southern end of the tunnel, workmen inscribed in ancient Hebrew script on the walls of the tunnel a vivid description of the completion of the tunnel on the day when workmen cutting

from the two sides met. The inscription is now in the Istanbul Museum. The text runs in part: ‘... while there were still three cubits to be cut through, (there was heard) the voice of a man calling to his fellow, for there was an overlap in the rock on the right (and on the left). And when the tunnel was driven through, the quarrymen hewed (the rock) each man toward his fellow, axe against axe; and the water flowed from the spring toward the reservoir for 1,200 cubits, and the height of the rock above the head(s) of the quarrymen was one hundred cubits’” (E.M. Blaiklock and R.K. Harrison, *The New International Dictionary of Biblical Archaeology*, 1983, p. 414).

We will read of further developments in this project in 2 Chronicles 32:2-5, 30. Sadly, these verses continue to point out Judah’s trust in its own defenses instead of trusting God.

Verse 13—”Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!”—is cited by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:32 to describe the futility of life if there were no resurrection. If we were living only for today, then this could logically be our whole pursuit. But God has revealed otherwise. And God had revealed to Jerusalem that they needed to draw close to Him in sincere repentance. Through the Bible, He proclaims the same thing to the people of Judah and Israel today (and, by extension, to all people). Yet because of their flippant attitude—”Hey, might as well live it up because we’re going to die anyway”—God says they will die (verse 14).

In connection with Hezekiah’s preparations for Sennacherib’s impending attack, a change in leadership is demanded. Shebna has been the “steward” who is “over the house”—like a modern prime minister or chief of staff. He is accused of making a tomb “on high” (verse 16). Archaeologists have actually found a lintel fragment of a tomb with Hebrew script from Hezekiah’s time, which stood in Silwan, on the steep slope across the valley from David’s city, in full view of the inhabitants of ancient Jerusalem. The fragment (now in the British Museum) says it belonged to a person who was “over the house.” The name, partially destroyed, ends with the common Hebrew ending -yahu, meaning God—and the name Shebna is thought to be a short form of the name Shebanyahu or Shebaniah, applying to someone else in Nehemiah 9:4. Many scholars believe this fragment was part of Shebna’s sepulcher.

“Pride is the sin of this official, who like the pharaohs of Egypt sought to build himself a lasting monument while his land was in peril. Perhaps we can see a parallel between Shebna and those modern elected officials who put reelection above the good of the nation” (Bible Reader’s Companion, note on Isaiah 22:15).

The Bible says Shebna is to be driven from his office, pulled down and dragged away into a large country and killed—and his job given to Eliakim, son of Hilkiah. We will later see that when Sennacherib sends his representatives to Jerusalem, they are met by Eliakim, who is said at that time to be “over the house” (36:3, KJV), and either the same or a different Shebna is the scribe. There is no evidence that Shebna the steward was dragged away, say to Assyria, although it is possible that he was.

It is of course possible that this prophecy did not apply to the present Shebna and Eliakim of Isaiah's day—or did not primarily apply to them. They could have been used as types of others. Eliakim, incidentally, means “God Will Establish.”

Some have seen links in the passage to a later “son of Hilkiah,” Jeremiah the prophet—who was apparently given stewardship over the house of David, overseeing its transfer to another land. Furthermore, we know that Eliakim represents the future Messiah. Verse 22, regarding the key of David and opening and shutting, is specifically said to apply to Jesus in Revelation 3:7. This perhaps ties in with the “keys of the kingdom” given to Peter (Matthew 16:19)— seemingly related to the “key of knowledge” (Luke 11:52) of salvation in the Kingdom (compare Matthew 23:13). It ties back to David because Jesus Christ will inherit the throne of David (Isaiah 9:6-7), and His saints will share His throne—the Davidic throne—with Him (Revelation 3:21).

Yet why would the Messiah, as King, be taking over a steward's office? Consider that when He is crowned as King of the Kingdom, Christ will actually be the Steward of the Kingdom of God the Father. Indeed, this is parallel to the past history of the Davidic monarchy, wherein the human ruler actually rules as a steward for the real king—God.

The rejected steward, Shebna, if a scenario of Jeremiah's day or the end time is intended on some level, could apply to a later steward—that is, a prime minister or a monarch—in Jeremiah's day dragged off to Babylon at Jerusalem's fall, or in the end time dragged away into Israel's final captivity

Chapter 23

Chapter 23 is a prophecy against Tyre, a chief city of the Phoenicians—inextricably linked to Sidon, of which Tyre was the primary colony. Tarshish refers to lands in the west, generally Spain—where sat the Phoenician colony of Tartessus. Chittim (KJV) is translated Cyprus in the NKJV, although it can mean “western lands” generally (see NKJV margin). The Sidonians and Tyrians are told to “cross over” to these “western lands” (see verse 12). This is likely referring to their fleeing to Spain and their colonies in northwest Africa, such as Carthage. Shihor (verse 3) is generally recognized as another name for the Nile (see Jeremiah 2:18).

Verse 13 mentions “the Assyrian” (KJV) who founded Babylon (by implication) for the Chaldeans. This could refer back to the founding of Babel by Nimrod, from which Asshur went out to build various Assyrian cities (compare Genesis 10:8-12). In this sense the Assyrians founded Babylon—that is, the original empire of Babylon. But more likely this is referring to the later involvement of Assyria in that land, and to the city that had been reestablished under Assyrian rule more recently. Just as Babylon was brought to ruin (and would be again), so would Tyre be destroyed.

Sargon had completed the Assyrians' five-year siege of Tyre in 720 B.C. It is possible that this prophecy of Isaiah is out of chronological order and was actually given previous to many other prophecies we've been reading—back to before Tyre's fall. However, it seems more likely that

Tyre's destruction referred to here is the one the Babylonians would bring about around 573 B.C.

Verses 15 and 17 refer to a 70-year period. This may refer to basically the same 70-year period Jeremiah refers to (Jeremiah 25:11-12)—the time from Nebuchadnezzar II beginning his reign to the fall of Babylon (609-539 B.C.). The “days of one king” may mean the days of one kingdom—that of Babylon—or possibly the lifespan of a man.

Of course, the prophetic statements here may all represent events that are yet to come. In the highlights on Isaiah 13, we saw how the ancient Babylonians became the Romans—as did many of the Phoenicians. Incidentally, this directly ties the Chaldeans and Phoenicians together, as they are in the current passage. In any event, the Phoenicians were the merchants of the ancient world. And they were also the merchants of the Middle Ages and Renaissance—the merchants of Venice and many other European cities having descended from the Syro-Phoenician traders spread across southern Europe.

Tyre was the “marketplace for the nations” (23:3). You can read about the rise of another “Tyre” as a great end-time trading block in Ezekiel 26:1-28:19. This trading block is referred to in Revelation 18 as Babylon. In Revelation 17, in a more religious context, we see a direct tie-in to Isaiah 23:17: “She will return to her hire, and commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world on the face of the earth” (compare Revelation 17:2). Perhaps we can see a connection in the “virgin daughter of Sidon” (Isaiah 23:12)—that is, a supposed virgin but really a harlot (verse 16). Jezebel, daughter of the king of Sidon, was a direct type of the end-time religious and commercial system that will soon plunge the world into the final crisis leading up to the return of Christ (compare Revelation 2:20-23).

Further prophecies against Tyre can be found in Joel 3:4-8, Amos 1:9-10 and Zechariah 9:1-4.

Ps 132-134

Psalm 132 is a royal psalm touching on God's covenant with David and His royal successors. As the first song of ascents in the fifth and final set of three, the expected setting would be one of distress. Though there is dispute about the time this psalm was composed, we should note the prayer in verse 10 that, for David's sake, God not reject His anointed one—that is, an anointed king of David's dynasty. While Solomon originally spoke these words as a general plea for himself and his successors—as verses 8-10 are adapted from his dedicatory prayer for the temple (compare 2 Chronicles 6:41-42)—it may be that the words are recalled in the psalm because a later Davidic king, and perhaps the continuance of the dynasty, were now seemingly in jeopardy.

In this light, consider that some identify the author of the unattributed songs of ascent or songs of the degrees as King Hezekiah. That would fit a time of seeming peril for David's royal dynasty, as he faced the Assyrian invasion of Judah and siege of Jerusalem. However, the

reigns of a few other kings of Judah would also fit such a time, and the author could be someone other than the king referred to in the psalm.

The song begins by asking God to remember David and all his afflictions (verse 1)-all that he suffered as a servant of God, as detailed in so many other psalms-along with his deep devotion to a dwelling place for God (verses 3-5). This began with David bringing the Ark of the Covenant, representing God's presence, to a tabernacle he raised up for it in Jerusalem and, beyond that, his commitment to a fixed temple for God (see 2 Samuel 6-7). Though God did not permit David to actually build the temple, as it was to be built during Solomon's reign of peace (1 Chronicles 22:9-10), David nevertheless invested great wealth and energy into the temple plans before turning the project over to his son. David purchased the property for the temple (2 Samuel 24; 1 Chronicles 21:28-22:1) and "made abundant preparations [for it] before his death" (22:5; see 22:1-29:20).

Verses 6-9 of Psalm 132 appear to follow the progression of the ark to David's tabernacle and then to Solomon's temple. Note in verse 6 the hearing and discovery of "it" in Ephrathah and the "fields of the woods" or "fields of Jaar" (NIV). "Ephrathah by itself could refer to the vicinity around Bethlehem (Ruth 4:11; Mic 5:2) or to Kiriath Jearim [meaning 'City of Woods'] (cf. 1 Chronicles 2:19, 24, 50); but with the further description of 'the fields of Jaar'-a reference to Kiriath Jearim (Jearim is a plural of 'Jaar')-the identity of Ephrathah is further delimited in favor of Kiriath Jearim, where the ark was located [when David and his men sought it out] (cf. 1 Sam 6:21-7:2)" (Expositor's Bible Commentary, note on Psalm 132:6). Yet the "it" heard there probably refers not to the ark itself, but to the call in verse 7 to take it into the Jerusalem tabernacle and worship there, for "in Hebrew the pronoun is feminine, but the Hebrew for 'ark' is masculine" (Zondervan NIV Study Bible, note on verse 6). The word footstool in the call in verse 7 refers to God's sanctuary as the place of His feet, set down on the earth among His people (compare 99:5; Isaiah 60:13; 66:1).

Verses 8-10 of Psalm 132 are, as noted earlier, evidently adapted from Solomon's prayer in the dedication of the temple (2 Chronicles 6:41-42)-when the ark was moved from the tabernacle to the new structure intended to be its permanent dwelling. And here in the same prayer linking God with Jerusalem as His perpetual holy dwelling place, Solomon also asked that God, for David's sake, would not reject His anointed (Hebrew *mashiach* or *messiah*). Solomon was no doubt referring to himself, but by extension this included all of David's dynastic successors-prophetically culminating in the ultimate Messiah or Anointed One, Jesus Christ.

"If, as some have proposed, the petitions in vv. 1, 10 form a frame around the first half of the psalm, the second half offers assurance that the prayer will be heard.... In any event, David's vow to provide the Lord a dwelling place, which would be for his royal sons and for Israel a house of prayer (see 1Ki 8:27-53; 9:3; 2Ch 7:15-16; Isa 59:7), is made the basis for the appeal that God will hear his anointed's prayer" (Zondervan, note on Psalm 132:10).

It is interesting to note a few parallel statements between the first and second halves of the psalm. The words adapted from Solomon's prayer in verses 8-10 call on God to occupy His resting place, for His priests to be clothed with righteousness, for His saints to shout for joy and for God to not turn away His anointed. In verses 14-15, God answers that Zion is the resting place He has chosen to permanently dwell in and that He will bless accordingly. In verse 16, God responds that He will clothe Zion's priests with not just righteousness but even salvation (compare Isaiah 61:10)-and further answers that the saints will shout for joy. And rather than rejecting His anointed, God will make the "horn" of David-symbolizing power and authority-grow. Further, God would prepare a "lamp" for David-the metaphor here of a light that wouldn't go out, symbolizing his perpetual dynasty (Psalm 132:17; compare 1 Kings 11:36; 15:4). The enemies of God's anointed would be put to shame while his own crown or rule would flourish (Psalm 132:18).

Of course, salvation and the everlasting perpetuity of Jerusalem and David's dynasty will only come through the ultimate Anointed-Jesus Christ. Indeed, whatever the original circumstances that prompted the composition of Psalm 132, we should recognize that as one of the songs of ascent, it became part of festival worship focusing on Zion as God's perpetual city, the place of His temple-His dwelling place-and the throne of David to one day be occupied by the coming Messiah, who would redeem Israel and make Jerusalem the capital of the world.

Psalm 133, the fourth of four psalms of David among the songs of ascent, concerns the joy of brotherly unity among God's people. As the second song of ascents in the fifth set of three, it looks in trust to God to provide His commanded blessing of eternal life. The key word in the psalm, missed in English because it is translated different ways, is the thrice-repeated yarad rendered "running down" twice (verse 2) and "descending" once (verse 3). The idea is that goodness and blessing comes down from above-from God.

David may have composed the psalm when the tribes, after many years of conflict, agreed to unite under his leadership (2 Samuel 5:1-5). As well, the psalm speaks to the pleasure of traveling together in harmony to keep the feasts in Jerusalem-and participating there in the great throngs of unified worship. Furthermore, the song applies to the blessing of unity within and among the congregations of God's people-even today.

The delightful unity described is between "brethren"-brothers-emphasizing family kinship. This goes far beyond immediate family. For people in Old Testament times this was understood in the sense of national brotherhood. And of course we in God's Church understand it to refer, on an even higher level, to spiritual brotherhood through the Holy Spirit of God. God's children getting along and happily working together is truly a delightful experience-and a blessing that comes down from Him.

The "precious oil" (verse 2) was the anointing oil specially prepared for use in the tabernacle (see Exodus 30:22-33). "When the high priest was anointed, the oil ran down his beard to the front of his body and over his collar. This suggests that the oil 'bathed' the twelve precious

stones that he wore on the breastplate over his heart, and this ‘bathing’ is a picture of spiritual unity” (Wiersbe, Be Exultant, note on verse 2).

In verse 3, Mount Hermon, a high, snowy peak on the border between Israel and Lebanon, was a significant source of water for Israel. One avenue for this was evaporation-carrying water from Hermon to settle in the south as dew and rain. Also, snowmelt sank into the Hermon region and emerged in many streams in northern Israel, even forming the headwaters of the Jordan River-the word Jordan also being derived from the word yarad. (Yaraden apparently meaning “coming down from Dan”-which was in the Hermon area). As water was carried this way from Hermon down through the land of Israel to the mountains of Zion, so was further evaporation and precipitation. Yet note that precipitation in general is not in mind here, but specifically dew. From around May to October, encompassing Pentecost and the Feast of Tabernacles, virtually no rain fell on Jerusalem, so that refreshment came only through the blessing of daily morning dew-and, the comparison is made, through the unity of God’s people at His pilgrim feasts.

“The two similes (vv. 2-3) are well chosen; God’s blessings flowed to Israel through the priestly ministrations at the sanctuary (Ex 29:44-46; Lev 9:22-24; Nu 6:24-26)-epitomizing God’s redemptive mercies-and through heaven’s dew that sustained life in the fields-epitomizing God’s providential mercies in the creation order” (Zondervan NIV Study Bible, note on verse 3). Moreover, anointing oil and water precipitation are both representative in Scripture of the Holy Spirit-sent down from God to transform and spiritually sustain His people.

This blessing from above is the source of the unity of God’s people-as well as the closing blessing of this joyous life continuing through all eternity.

Psalm 134 is the last of the song of ascents. As the third song in the fifth and final set of three, the psalm returns to the concluding theme of blessing and peace in Zion. Indeed, the key word here is bless, used three times in three verses.

Verses 1-2 contain a call to God’s servants to bless God, while verse 3 is a declaration of blessing from God on His people. In the first case, as noted in the Bible Reading Program comments on Psalm 103, a “blessing” from a human being directed to God is a word of heartfelt praise or thanksgiving or an expressed wish to see all of God’s purposes fulfilled, implying cheerful and committed cooperation with Him-submitting fully to His will.

There is some question regarding the identity and circumstances of the “servants of the Lord , who by night stand in the house of the Lord ” (134:1). This is widely believed to refer to Levites on watch each night, after the temple was closed and secure-or to their continuing to sing after this closing (compare 1 Chronicles 9:33; Psalm 42:8; 77:6). Yet it may refer, or may have come to refer, to a tradition that developed during the Feast of Tabernacles of Levites and worshippers of the nation participating in night festivities in the temple court that ran late into the night on every night of the feast except the first. Tradition states that there was singing, dancing, juggling and the Levitical performance of the 15 songs of ascent on 15 steps ascending from the court of the women, as noted in our introduction to the songs of ascents. This may be related to Isaiah

30:29: "You shall have a song as in the night when a holy festival is kept, and gladness of heart as when one goes with a flute, to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the Mighty One of Israel."

So the "servants" in Psalm 134 could be Levites or priests who are called on to bless God on behalf of the people-or they could be all the people collectively calling on each other to bless Him. Either way, this is with lifting up hands in the sanctuary-this being one of the standard postures of prayer (compare 1 Timothy 2:8).

The last verse of Psalm 134 is a form of benediction, asking God's favor on the pilgrims who were traveling from Jerusalem following the festivals (verse 3). Here either the priests declare a blessing from God on the departing worshippers or all the worshippers collectively pronounce a blessing on one another. This blessing is from "the Lord who made heaven and earth," repeating an earlier formula in the songs of ascents (compare 121:2; 124:8). And remarkably, the God of all creation blesses through His chosen dwelling of Zion-which signifies ancient Jerusalem and the instruction provided through its worship system, the faithful of God, the Church, the millennial Jerusalem, the Kingdom of God and the heavenly Jerusalem that will one day descend to earth. May our own pilgrim journey bring us there -to the wonderful eternal blessings God has in store.

John 8

In John 8 we must keep in mind Yeshua was in Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles. It starts off by telling us Yeshua spent the night on the Mount of Olives. The exact same place I stay when in Jerusalem and have taken some of you. The reason why, is very simple, but in order to find out you must go there and see for yourself because you will not believe me unless you see it.

So you have to come there.

I do hope you will read this whole chapter. I find it an awesome read. I do want to point out something to you.

We read in Joh 8:23 And He said to them, "You are from below, I am from above. You are of this world, I am not of this world. 24 "Therefore I said to you that you shall die in your sins. For if you do not believe that I am He, you shall die in your sins."

The words I Am in verse 24 in Semitic thought conveys the thought of Eternal existence which is reserved only for Elohim. I am- Ena-na. This then caused the Jews to ask the next question.

Joh 8:25 Then they said to Him, "Who are You?"

Again in verse 58 Yeshua again tell them I Am.

Joh 8:58 Yehovah? said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham came to be, I am."

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with Elohim, and the Word was Elohim.

Exo 3:14 And Elohim said to Mosheh, "I am that which I am."¹ And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Yisra'el, 'I am has sent me to you.'" Footnote: ¹The Hebrew text reads: 'eyeh 'asher 'eyeh, the word 'eyeh being derived from hayah which means to be, to exist, but the Aramaic text here in v. 14 reads: ayah ashar ayah. This is not His Name, but it is an explanation that leads up to the revelation of His Name in v. 15, namely: Yehovah.

Exo 3:15 And Elohim said further to Mosheh, "Thus you are to say to the children of Yisra'el, 'Yehovah Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Yitsh'aq, and the Elohim of Ya'aqob?, has sent me to you. This is My Name forever, and this is My remembrance to all generations.'

One other point I would like to mention; The light from the Feast of Tabernacles lamps illuminated the whole city. Scholars suggest that Yehshua referred to this custom when he spoke those well-known words, "I am the light of the world..." (John 8:12)

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with Elohim, and the Word was Elohim. 2 He was in the beginning with Elohim. 3 All came to be through Him,¹ and without Him not even one came to be that came to be. Footnote: ¹Eph. 3:9, Col. 1:16, Heb. 1:2, Heb. 11:3, ²Peter 3:5, Ps. 33:6. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. 6 There was a man sent from Elohim, whose name was Yoh'anan. 7 This one came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all might believe through him. 8 He was not that Light, but that he might bear witness of that Light. 9 He was the true Light, which enlightens every man, coming into the world.

Joh 9:5 "While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

The young priests filled the lamps of the large chandeliers with oil, and lighted them all, even that the place was so bright that its reflection lighted the streets of the city. Hymns and praises were chanted by the pious ones, and the Levites praised the Lord with harps, cornets, trumpets, flutes, and other instruments of harmony. They stood upon fifteen broad steps, reaching from the lower floor to the gallery, the court of the women. And they sang fifteen psalms as they ascended, beginning with "A song of Degrees," and the large choir joined voices with them. These are the psalms we have just studied in our studies. <http://philologos.org/eb-ttms/temple14.htm#significance>

It seems clear that this illumination of the Temple was regarded as forming part of, and having the same symbolical meaning as, 'the pouring out of water.' The light shining out of the Temple into the darkness around, and lighting up every court in Jerusalem, must have been intended as a symbol not only of the Shechinah which once filled the Temple, but of that 'great light' which 'the people that walked in darkness' were to see, and which was to shine 'upon them that dwell in the land of the shadow of death' (Isa 9:2). May it not be, that such prophecies as Isaiah 9 and 60 were connected with this symbolism?

Isa 9:2 The people who were walking in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death a light has shone.

Isa 60:1 “Arise, shine, for your light has come! And the esteem of Yehovah has risen upon you. 2 “For look, darkness covers the earth, and thick darkness the peoples. But Yehovah arises over you, and His esteem is seen upon you. 3 “And the gentiles shall come to your light, and sovereigns to the brightness of your rising. 4 “Lift up your eyes all around and see: all of them have gathered, they have come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are supported on the side. 5 “Then you shall see and be bright, and your heart shall throb and swell, for the wealth of the sea is turned to you, the riches of the gentiles come to you. 6 “A stream of camels cover your land, the dromedaries of Mid’yan and Ephah; all those from Sheb’a come, bearing gold and incense, and proclaiming the praises of Yehovah.

Isa 60:19 “No longer is the sun your light by day, nor does the moon give light to you for brightness, but Yehovah shall be to you an everlasting light, and your Elohim your comeliness. 20 “No longer does your sun go down, nor your moon withdraw itself, for Yehovah shall be your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning shall be ended.

Rev 21:23 And the city had no need of the sun, nor of the moon, to shine in it, for the esteem of Elohim lightened it, and the Lamb is its lamp. 24 And the gentiles, of those who are saved, shall walk in its light, and the sovereigns of the earth bring their esteem into it.

The Pouring and Lighting Post-Mosaic

It will have been observed that the two most important ceremonies of the Feast of Tabernacles — pouring out of water and the illumination of the Temple— of post-Mosaic origin. According to Jewish tradition, the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night had first appeared to Israel on the 15th of Tishri, the first day of the feast. On that day also Moses was said to have come down from the Mount, and accounted to the people that the Tabernacle of God was to be reared among them. We know that the dedication of Solomon’s Temple and the descent of the Shechinah took place at this feast (1 Kings 8; 2 Chron 7). Nor can we greatly err in finding an allusion to it in this description of heavenly things: ‘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’ (Rev 7:9,10).

Whether or not our suggestions be adopted as to the typical meaning of the two great ceremonies of the ‘pouring out of the water’ and the Temple illumination, the fact remains, that the Feast of Tabernacles is the one only type in the Old Testament which has not yet been fulfilled.

Rev 22:4 And they shall see His face, and His Name shall be upon their foreheads. 5 And night shall be no more, and they shall have no need of a lamp or the light of the sun, because Yehovah Elohim shall give them light. And they shall reign forever and ever. 6 And he said to

me, "These words are trustworthy and true. And Yehovah Elohim of the set-apart prophets has sent His messenger to show His servants what has to take place with speed. 7 "See, I am coming speedily! Blessed is he who guards the words of the prophecy of this book."