

An Abib Resurrection?

There is a time coming when some of God's people will be found in Jerusalem carrying out the task God has set for His Church, Joel 2:1: **'Blow the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD comes, for it is near at hand.'**

Our God is just and merciful and will not bring punishment upon this world without first giving people everywhere a warning to depart from their evil ways, and, in order to do that, He will first reach every man and woman around the world with a miraculous warning through dreams or visions, delivered by an angel, Revelation 14: 6-7: **'And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment has come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.'**

Despite the immediate worldwide impact of that earth-shaking event, very few people will actually repent, forgetting the warning in their rejoicing and celebration of what they believe is their future safety, 1 Thessalonians, 5:3: **'For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction comes upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.'** Hence the need for a continuous warning from Jerusalem, first from the faithful Church of God, and finally in the last 3½ years, from the two witnesses.

At this time, almost none of the Church of God appreciate this heavy responsibility which God has laid upon them (See our End Time tab), preferring to believe their given current scenario that the Tribulation lasts just 3½ years, during which they believe that the Church will be taken to a place of safety. They forget that that scenario was suggested more than a generation ago and that, as we approach the 'time of the end,' God has promised to grant His *faithful* servants much more understanding, Daniel 12:9: **'And he said, Go your way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.'**

Sadly, almost all of God's people are fast asleep. Matthew 25:5: **'While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.'** They are lulled into a false sense of security by placing their trust in large corporations which have proved blind to the scriptures they do not choose, and unreceptive to any change in their doctrinal beliefs, lest they lose both members and income, and so God has had to raise up just a few independent ministers who, like Elijah, are prepared to proclaim all His words without fear or favour to all, even though it may not be popular, and largely ignored, Amos 3:7: **'Surely the Lord God will do nothing, unless he reveals his secret unto his servants the prophets.'**

God's first step was to remind those few ministers that the Hebrew Calendar, as we find it today, used by the Church of God to establish the Holy Days, did not exist at the time of Christ, and that they should return to the process used then to **correctly** establish those vitally important Holy Days. Vitally important, because each one pictures an important stage, if we wish to fully understand the Plan of God!

Once that had been achieved, and put into practice by a few, God began to reveal deeper understanding to them of the events pictured by those Feast Days, and that has been an on-going process which is necessary if God's instructions are to be carried out at Jerusalem, leading up to the return of Jesus Christ at the 6th Seal, not the 7th Seal, to gather in His Saints at the resurrection.

Although it is possible for us even now to recognise the fulfilment of scriptures which are leading up to the tribulation and the Day of the Lord, we know that it will not be possible to predict in advance the specific time of the beginning of those last **7 years**. We are to watch and prepare ourselves for His return, but we will still be surprised when He begins His intervention, Mark 13:5: **'And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you.'**

Luke 12:35-36: **'Let your waists be girded about, and your lamps burning. And you yourselves be like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return [Greek 'breaks away,' cf. Matthew 25:10] from the wedding; that when he comes and knocks, they may open unto him immediately.'**

Revelation 3:3: **'Remember therefore how you have received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore you will not watch, I will come on you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.'**

So, when the angel of Revelation 14:6-7 flies, it will come as a complete shock to the world, but not to those who have been carefully preparing their lives to fulfil their God-given task at the end-time, which is documented from those scriptures which are usually ignored, in our End Time Series.

God has actually given us many scriptures that will help us prepare our lives for these momentous events that will occur during the first few months of those last seven years, after the angel flies.

To the majority then, even of the Church, the end-time will come as a shock, but gradually God is preparing His servants so that they will know what to expect and what He requires them to do. 1 Thessalonians 5:4: **'But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.'**

The very fact that the Christian world then rejoices, but actually fails to seek God or repent, is also a sign to them, 1 Thessalonians 5:3: **'For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction comes upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.'**

The angel's message, of Revelation 14:6-7, is the sign to them to carry out God's instructions in Revelation 18:4 and make their move to Jerusalem, something completely neglected in the teaching of the Churches of God: **'And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues.'** This chapter speaks of geographical Babylon, unlike the spiritual Babylon of chapter 17.

Sadly, that neglect will mean that they will become trapped in their nations when, just months later, the Western nations of Babylon fall, and, with the world's policeman removed, widespread wars result. Revelation 14:8: **'And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her**

fornication.' (See our article 'What Is Babylon?')

They never get a chance to carry out the will of God from Jerusalem. Neither will some of them reach Petra, because they have placed their trust in the words of men and a mistaken scenario, rather than the words of God. They are *unprepared* like those virgins of Matthew 25, and so it is unlikely that they participate in the resurrection, either, and will as a result experience the Great Tribulation!

Just before the 3½-year point during Daniel's 70th week, Daniel 9:27 (read our article 'Understanding Daniel's 70th Week'), the work of the Church from Jerusalem will be complete: **'And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the offering to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.'**

Their **'sacrifice and offering'** will be their giving all they possess to preach the words of warning, and the promise of God's Kingdom, from Jerusalem. Now it is time for them to flee before they are trapped in Jerusalem by the Beast's armies, Daniel 12:11: **'And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that makes desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.'**

Luke 21: 20-21: **'And when you shall see Jerusalem surrounded with armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let them who are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them who are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the country enter into it.'**

There are indications that they pause in Tekoa, a small town some 12 miles South of Jerusalem, to sound a last warning about the encircling armies, but then they press on towards the mountains. Significantly, the Greek word here for 'mountains' is specific for the "mountains on the East of Jordan and those in the land of Ammon and the region of Petra," states Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words.

Before they pause to rest at Engedi, where David hid from Saul, while following the track from Tekoa towards the Dead Sea, the Beast's armies approach, and the events of Revelation 12:14-16 will take place: **'And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood.'** (Read 'Division of the Saints' on the End Time tab in order to understand the events around the resurrection.)

Now, the question is, have we actually understood *WHEN* the resurrection is to take place? We do not know exactly when Jesus Christ will intervene directly, through His angel, to *begin* the End Time last 7 years, but, if we have fully prepared by repentance and closeness to the words we have received from God, and keep His true Holy Days, we can then know when the resurrection is to take place in relation to current events, Revelation 3:3: **'Remember therefore how you have received and heard, and hold fast, and repent.'**

If therefore you will not watch, I will come on you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.'

The Firstfruits are not casual Christians. They are deeply committed, serious students (disciples) of Jesus Christ, and Christ expects us to be aware of and place all the scriptures together to complete the jigsaw, even those ignored by most. Isaiah 28:10: **'For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.'**

We have already seen that there is no doubt that *these events* take place some 3½ years before Jesus Christ finally returns from Heaven with His Bride, the Saints (*halfway through Daniel's 70th Week*).

There has been speculation that, once we understand that Christ's harvest of His Firstfruits must take place at the time of the firstfruit barley harvest in Israel, the resurrection may take place at the day of Pentecost, at the end of the barley harvest, Leviticus 23:16-17: **'Even unto the day after the seventh sabbath shall you number fifty days; and you shall offer a new grain offering unto the LORD. You shall bring out of your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the first fruits unto the LORD.'**

However, those loaves contain leaven, and so are unlikely to picture the Firstfruits who become Christ's Bride, who are counted as holy and sinless by Christ, Revelation 14:5: **'And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.'**

In 2002 I went to Israel with two fellow ministers, on the first of the now annual Abib inspections, to follow the example set by the priests at the time of Christ, in order that we might establish the beginning of God's New Year and the true Holy Days, after the pattern used at the time of Christ. On my return I gave a sermon at church on the second High Sabbath during Unleavened Bread in which I first suggested that the resurrection was likely to be on the day of the Wave Sheaf offering. This is what I said in that sermon:

"There is one aspect of the Feast of Unleavened Bread that I want to zero in on today, Leviticus 23:10-13: **'Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When you are come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then you shall bring a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: the next day after the sabbath the priest shall wave it. And you shall offer that day when you wave the sheaf a male lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the Lord. And the grain offering thereof shall be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire unto the Lord for a sweet aroma: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of a hin.'**

"In particular I want to examine the special offering in verse 13: **'And the grain offering thereof shall be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire unto the Lord for a sweet aroma: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of a hin.'** (Normally, there would

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be only one tenth deal of an ephah offered here.)

"Until this year this offering has meant little to me. We have always understood that the 7 week period from the Wave Sheaf until Pentecost pictured the Firstfruit harvest of Christians—all those begotten by God's Holy Spirit—and of course we understand that the Wave Sheaf itself pictures the very first of the Firstfruits, Jesus Christ, the first resurrected from the dead, but what does this offering represent?

"Numbers 18:12: *All the best of the oil, and all the best of the wine, and of the wheat, the first fruits of them which they shall offer unto the Lord, them have I given you.*'

"The whole of the Firstfruits are special to God, but the first of the Firstfruits are even more special—Exodus 23:19: *The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God.*'

"This is an offering **from amongst** the Firstfruits, Leviticus 23:13-14. It is detailed in Leviticus 2:14-15: *And if you offer a grain offering of your first fruits unto the Lord, you shall offer for the grain offering of your first fruits green ears of grain dried by the fire, even grain beaten out of full ears. And you shall put oil upon it, and lay frankincense thereon: it is a grain offering.*'

"It is not to be confused with the Firstfruits of Pentecost, Leviticus 23:17: *You shall bring out of your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the first fruits unto the LORD.*'

"Only **this** year, after we participated in the search for abib barley in Israel to determine the start of God's year, did I understand exactly what *abib* barley is. [The firstfruits of] the Abib barley, which must be used for this special offering, is barley that has matured enough to be parched (that is, dried by the fire) and still produce a solid grain that can be ground into a flour. This is the barley that determines the start of the year: the first month is named after it—the Abib. Two to three weeks later, most barley is now fully mature and ready to reap as a crop.

"But this special offering is not the fully mature barley; it is the earliest abib barley that has to be parched by the fire to produce useful grain. It is not as plump and rounded as fully mature grain . . .

"Interesting, then, that God demands this special early offering of the first of the abib Firstfruits of the barley harvest. What does this mean?

"Jesus Christ is the Wave Sheaf offering, the very first [sheaf] 1 Corinthians 15:20: *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.*'

"At His coming they that are Christ's arise, 1 Corinthians 15:23: *But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.*'

"These are they who have the Holy Spirit, Romans 8:23: *And not only they, but ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, that is, the redemption of our body.*'

"They are the Firstfruit harvest, James 1:18: *Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.*'

"But let us remember that even amongst the

Firstfruits, there are two kinds, Revelation 7:4, and 13-14: *And I heard the number of them who were sealed: and there were sealed a hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel . . . And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, Who are these who are arrayed in white robes? and from where did they come? And I said unto him, Sir, you know. And he said to me, These are they who came out of the great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'*"

I then went on to compare the 144,000 who are special even amongst the Firstfruits, who take part in the first resurrection, and then become the Bride of Christ [in Heaven, before the throne of God!].

Revelation 14:1-4: *And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads . . . These are they who were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb—with the second group of 144,000 and the innumerable multitude of Revelation chapter 7 verse 4 and 9, who **come out of the Great Tribulation**, verse 14.*

Continuing from the sermon:

"The 144,000 of Revelation 14 do not follow the broad way, the comfortable journey, for as Christ said, *'strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leads into life and few there be that find it,'* and their testimony to others about God's word can bring persecution.

"The road to life can be harsh and sometimes lonely, beset with tough spiritual challenges. One has to be prepared to stand alone for Christ and His word, and that, my brethren, is why God values the abib barley and demands **it** as an early special offering from amongst the Firstfruits. The abib Christian has matured in a tough environment and not been afraid to stand up and witness, against the flow, strengthening his fellow brethren in God's Word."

Here in this sermon, I had referred to an offering which I suggested pictures the early Firstfruit harvest, which becomes the Bride of Christ on the Sea of Glass in heaven, Revelation 19:7: *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his wife has made herself ready.* That marriage, after the pattern of the first marriage of God to Israel at Sinai, **will** take place in Heaven, at Pentecost.

Eleven years have passed since that sermon, and as a result of concerns from faithful brethren it became obvious that *the suggestion* that the resurrection of Christians pictured by the abib barley offering on Wave Sheaf day was not enough. It needed more evidence from the scriptures, and the point that 3½ years cannot be fitted into the period between the Feast of Trumpets and Wave Sheaf day, let alone Pentecost, needed to be answered.

God expects us to put all the scriptures together to solve such problems. The first conclusion must be that Pentecost is ruled out as the time of the resurrection. There is no way that half a year can be fitted into the time between Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpets, Revelation 12:14: *And to*

the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.' But Wave Sheaf day, seven weeks earlier, did not seem to fit in either.

Obviously, we are actually talking about a point six months before the Feast of Trumpets takes place on the first day of the seventh month. The earliest time that Wave Sheaf day can occur during the **Feast of Unleavened Bread** is when the Sabbath falls on the previous Saturday. See **Figure 1, below.**

When Passover falls on the Sabbath, the following day, Sunday, is also Wave Sheaf day in order for it to occur during the Feast, Leviticus 23:11, *And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: the next day*

FIGURE 1

Sabbath	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Passover	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14th	15th						21st

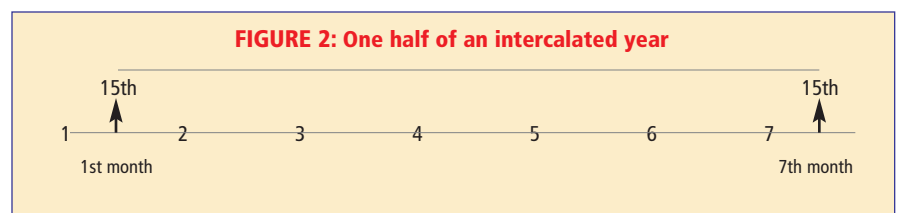
after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.'

When this occurs, Wave Sheaf day falls on the 15th day of the first month, Leviticus 23:6: *And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord: seven days you must eat unleavened bread.'*

How does that help solve the problem? Well, in an intercalated year, which was, at the time of Christ and still is, decided by God's control of the weather and the barley crop in Israel, one extra month is added before the next year starts, making 13 months in that year.

Half of such an intercalated year will therefore have 15 more days than normal, leading to the conclusion that the resurrection year, here, has to be in an intercalated year in order for 3½ years to separate the resurrection from Christ's return with His Bride at the Feast of Trumpets, which is a scriptural requirement according to the timing of Revelation 12:14: *And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.'*

Then, if we count back from the Feast of Trumpets, the first day of the seventh month, 6 months would *normally* bring us to the first day of the first month. But, if we count back from 15 days *beyond* the first day of the seventh month, because of an intercalated year, **we reach Wave Sheaf day**, when the 14th of Abib,



Passover, is on a Saturday. This is no coincidence if the scriptures are to be fulfilled.

Two things then, must occur, for the scriptures to be fulfilled:

1. Passover in the resurrection year must fall on a Saturday-Sabbath.
2. In an intercalated year (which we will not see until the end of the year).

See **Figure 2, above.**

So it is that we find the timing of the resur-

rection remains a mystery to most of the Church of God because most have been led to believe that the resurrection occurs on a day which does not reflect its true symbolic position in God's Plan, the harvesting of God's Firstfruit harvest. Instead, they believe it to occur on a day picturing the blowing, by an angel (not God, as actually occurs at the resurrection, Zechariah 9:14) of the final trumpet, before Armageddon, a sign of danger and war. (See Vines' 'Trumpet.')

But, through the keeping of the true calendar of God, the knowledge which Daniel was told to expect to be revealed at the time of the end has been given to those faithful Christians whose minds are open to the words of God, and so we see the fulfilment of 1 Thessalonians 5: 1-4: *But of the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you. For you*

yourself know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night [if they are in darkness], For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction comes upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.'

Here are contrasted two groups of Christians: one group who will be caught up in the Great Tribulation, and one group who will escape God's wrath because they are diligently and personally examining the scriptures, verses 6 and 9: *Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober . . . For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.'*

Into which group will you fall? Will you follow the earlier *traditions* of the Church of God, or trust the end-time revelation of truth **which has been there all the time in God's Word**, plain end-time instructions for those who have had their eyes open to God's word and faith to follow it?

As it says in the same chapter, verses 20-21, *Despise not prophesying. Test all things; hold fast that which is good.'*

See also our FAQ tab, soon to include questions on this subject.

2000 years have passed since the New Testament Church believed Christ would return in their

lifetime, but God's true Church continues to grow in grace and knowledge. It was my task to simply present these scriptures, and those on the web site, so that, when the angel of Revelation 14:6-7 flies, God's witness *will* go forth from Jerusalem just as His word requires, because some of God's faithful people will be ready and prepared to act, in the brief period then before the Israelite nations fall.

Thank you for reading this series.

—Ozwitness

'For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the LORD our God. For thus saith the LORD; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of Israel' (Jeremiah 31:6-7).