

## The Blood Moon Tetrad (Blood Moons - Pt. 1)

*Opening Text: Joel 2:28-32*

Today I will begin looking at a teaching that has gotten major attention in the past couple of years, and especially as of late. It is the teaching about the blood moon tetrad, or as some know it more simply as: the blood moons. It has become popular mainly through Mark Biltz (a messianic, charismatic type teacher) and John Hagee, a preacher out in Texas that you can watch on TBN.

Now I have to say here at the start that I have a lot of agreement with Mark Biltz when it comes to the Biblical calendar and understanding and celebrating the appointed times. I've watched videos where he has explained the basics of the biblical calendar and the need for us to be coming before Yahweh, at His Feasts, according to His time pieces, the sun and the moon. I appreciate Mark's position on these things.

I will admit, when I first heard about these so called "blood moons" back in 2013 I was intrigued. I think it was mainly because Mark Biltz was associating this blood moon teaching with the Biblical calendar teaching. After doing my own research however, I must say that I disagree with Mark Biltz and John Hagee on their teaching concerning the "blood moons" and the "blood moon tetrad" being a sign of a something special or a sign of a prophetic end time event.

Here's a clip where Mark explains his views on the Sid Roth show called "Its Supernatural," back in September of 2014. This will give you a little insight into what he is saying.

[Show Mark Biltz Clip](#)

[Show Hagee Second Coming Clip](#)

So in their teaching, this current blood moon tetrad is a series of what are actually 4 lunar eclipses (that give the moon a red appearance to someone on the earth) occurring at Passover and Tabernacles in 2014 and again in 2015.

Now... I think I can cover what I need to cover in two lessons, so this first lesson will contain *some* specific information, but it will be mostly an introductory to the next lesson.

Right here at the beginning I would like to go ahead and give you a list of all the Bible verses that speak about the blood moon tetrad, so you can jot them down and do some personal study on your own time.

Here's the list up on the screen...

That's right. **There are no verses that speak about the blood moon tetrad** i.e. lunar eclipse tetrad - that you may have heard so much hype about the past couple of years,

even to the point that *some people* have used the tetrad to predict the return, the second coming of the Messiah.

I find this interesting, amazing, perplexing, and disturbing: when you take the time to research and study a teaching that claims Biblical authority, but you cannot find it in the Bible.

What is it with the hype and attention that non-Biblical matters receive? A man claims something as Biblical, but when you get to actually looking - in the Bible - for the teaching, you find nothing stating such. Only little tidbits that might contain a few of their key words are found, but always taken out of context and added to the hysteria of their own making.

This reminds me of the false "Mystery of the Shemitah" teaching. It's like the Bible isn't good enough so we need to add something to it. We need to claim that we received a word directly from the Lord. He's speaking to us so everyone needs to listen, *but* you won't find it directly in the Bible because it's a hidden mystery. It's something you need to buy my book and DVD set to learn for only \$49.95 plus shipping and handling.

When I hear teachings like this, and I see people flocking to these teachings, people that I know of, and sometimes know personally (and love), I can't help but think of Scriptures like Matthew 15:14, "They are blind guides, and if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit." I also think of 2 Peter 2:1 and 3 - "But there were false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you... In their greed they will exploit you [make merchandise of you] with deceptive words..."

Teachers who make merchandise of people, leading them down non-Biblical rabbit trails that end up nowhere will be severely judged by Almighty Yahweh. But listen to me friends, it is not just the blind leader that falls into the ditch, it is also the blind follower.

Just because something sounds good doesn't mean that it is good. Romans 16:18 teaches us that the hearts of the simple can be deceived by good words and fair speeches, and the more I meet and talk to people that have bought into this whole "blood moon tetrad" thing, the more I see that they have only taken someone else's word as gospel truth. They haven't done their own research; they haven't been a Berean.

In fact, let's stir up our minds by way of reminder today about the Bereans. Look with me to Acts 17:10-11, I've got the passage on the screen:

### **Acts 17:10-11**

10 As soon as it was night, the brothers sent Paul and Silas off to Berea. On arrival, they went into the synagogue of the Yehudim (or Judahites).

11 The people here were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, since they welcomed the message with eagerness and **examined the Scriptures daily** to see if these things were so.

I want to really focus on the "examining the Scriptures daily" part. I know we all know this text about the Bereans, but are we actually following their example?

First: are we examining THE SCRIPTURES?

Not the news media, or the alternate news media. Not social media or YouTube videos. Not what he said or she said. Not the latest hype in the charismatic world of prognostication. THE SCRIPTURES. Are we examining the scriptures?

What makes your heart feel excited? You know, in Luke 24:27 (after his resurrection) Yeshua explained (to the men on the road to Emmaus) all the things concerning himself beginning from the Books of Moses and then into the Prophets. He took the time to teach them about all the Scriptures that spoke about him. Then in Luke 24:32 they said this: "Weren't our **hearts ablaze within us** while He was talking with us on the road and **explaining the Scriptures** to us?"

Weren't our hearts *ablaze*...

That word ablaze means "to set on fire." Their hearts were set on FIRE when Yeshua was **explaining the Scriptures** to them!

What sets your heart on fire? When you read or here about the latest prognostication and speculation from a self-proclaimed prophet? Do you get excited when another Joe blow makes a prophecy about the end times? Is that what sets your heart on fire?

Our hearts should be set on fire when we study the Scriptures or when we listen to the Scriptures be explained in detail. That's when our hearts should burn. That's what made the hearts of the Bereans burn for Yahweh. They received the message with great eagerness and then examined the SCRIPTURES daily to make sure the message was truth.

And there's the next part of their example for us. DAILY examination. Are we in the Word daily? Now this is between you and Yahweh so just be honest with yourself. Are you in the Word daily? If not, repent of that today and begin today to get into the SCRIPTURES every day. It's your spiritual food. It's what you need. It's the only thing that will feed a hungry soul.

So I'm beginning to wonder how many of us are really Bereans? Who cares if you can quote Acts 17:11? Are you following the example of Acts 17:11? That's what matters.

You know, I have a responsibility as a pastor here in this assembly to teach you the Scriptures, and to focus in on what is most important. That means you are going to hear me say a lot of the same things over and over again because I am doing what I can to impress these things into your mind and heart.

You will not hear me comment much on the latest news, the latest hype, or the latest religious fad. You won't hear me push hidden Shemitah mysteries or blood moon tetrads. I'm not going to spend my time making you fearful of any enemy or telling you to go hide in a bunker somewhere and wait for a so-called rapture. I'm not going to waste your time filling your minds with that ridiculous garbage.

Instead I'm going to keep hammering, week after week, month after month, year after year, basically the same thing over and over and over again from the Holy Scriptures. As I teach directly from the Scriptures you are going to hear me keep focusing on faith in Yeshua and keeping the commandments of Yahweh. Look at this...

**Revelation 12:17**

So the dragon was furious with the woman and left to wage war against the rest of her offspring — those who keep Yahweh's commands and have the testimony about Yeshua.

**Revelation 14:12**

This demands the perseverance of the saints, who keep Yahweh's commands and their faith in Yeshua.

That's what I'm going to focus on, from the Scriptures. I want to drill that into you. Faith in Yeshua and the keeping of Yahweh's commandments. I want our faith in Yeshua, in who he is, in what he stands for, in his ministry, in his perfect life, in his sacrificial work at Calvary, in his resurrection on the third day, in his seat at the right hand of the Father, I want our faith in all of that to grow deeper, stronger, more focused, and steadfast and immovable.

When I die and my children are still here, I do not want them remembering me for talking about the latest news hype. I don't want them remembering dad was obsessed with non-Biblical teachings and always took them down crazy rabbit trails on the hunt for something more than the SCRIPTURES.

I want their hearts to be SET ABLAZE when they remember how daddy kept telling them about Yeshua. How beautiful he is. How wonderful he is. How precious he is. How that he is Yahweh's Son. How that Yahweh sent him to save us from our sins. How that they don't have to trust in their self or believe in their self, but they can trust in Yeshua of Nazareth, the humble man from Galilee who came not to be served but to serve others and give his life as a ransom for many.

**THAT'S** what I want my children to remember. Faith in Yeshua, and also the keeping of the commandments of Yahweh. Don't forget that part, it's right there with faith in Yeshua in both Revelation 12:17 and 14:12. I know a lot of teachers in Christianity forget that part, but it shouldn't be forgotten because it's right there as an essential of our faith.

And so I will continue to teach the commandments. I will continue to teach the law. I will teach it as a mirror to show you your sin and drive your face down in the dirt at the feet of a blood stained Savior. Then when you get up I will teach the law as a guide to show

you how you ought to live in this life. And I will keep doing that, over and over and over and over again. That's my sermons in a nutshell, they all contain some form of those two essentials, and by Yahweh's grace that will be my sermons when I'm old, gray, and feeble, and have to sit in a chair to teach instead of stand. I will be shouting it straight from the Scriptures: "Keep your faith In Yeshua and keep the commandments of Yahweh!"

Now let me calm down here and focus on some specifics in this introductory message. I began this lesson with Joel 2:28-32 because this is the only Scripture in the entire Old Testament that says anything about a moon turning to blood. This passage is quoted in the New Testament in Acts 2:16-21, again it mentions the moon turning to blood (because it is a direct quotation of prophet Joel), and there is one more text in Revelation about the sixth seal which speaks of the moon becoming like blood (Revelation 6:12).

These are it. Three texts of Scripture that speak of the moon turning to blood *in some sense* (I don't personally know of anyone who believes that means the moon will literally turn into blood).

But there is nothing in the entire Bible about a blood moon tetrad landing on the Feasts and it being a significant end-time event, and there is also nothing that says the moon turning to blood has to be talking about a lunar eclipse, which is what Mark Biltz and John Hagee (and others) are promoting.

Let's take a moment to understand what happens at a lunar eclipse so you can see at least how they are attempting to make the connection. We just had one of these last night actually, a rare total super-moon lunar eclipse. I'm taking my information about lunar eclipses from NASA, the national aeronautics and space administration. Instead of me reading a lengthy piece, I'd just like to show you a couple of videos that explain this.

The first will talk about the lunar eclipse tetrads. Remember, the latest tetrad occurred from April 2014 up to just last night, September 2015.

### FIRST VIDEO

This second video will explain a little bit about what we got to see last night through the high-grade binoculars. It was beautiful, especially when we realize Yahweh makes this happen in the heavens.

### SECOND VIDEO

Now, let me share with you something written by a man named Geoff Gaherty from [space.com](http://space.com).

"So while a tetrad of total lunar eclipses is somewhat rare, it is not extraordinarily so, and probably nothing to make a fuss about. After all, the only thing that

happens during a lunar eclipse is that the moon spends a couple of hours passing through the Earth's shadow, hardly something to be concerned about.

Unfortunately, there are still many superstitious people in the world. Such is the case in the book "Four Blood Moons: Something Is About to Change" (Worthy Publishing, 2013) by John Hagee, which suggests a link between the new total lunar eclipse tetrad and biblical prophecy about the end times.

When the mechanisms behind eclipses were less well understood, they were thought to be omens of bad tidings, just as comets were. Now people know that these are just normal events in the clockwork of the solar system, things which have occurred regularly for thousands of years and which will occur for thousands of years into the future.

Associations between "disastrous" events and normal astronomical events are all fabrications of the human mind, as people attempt to find explanations for why disasters affect them. Because of the Internet and cable news channels, people now hear reports of disasters from around the world, including earthquakes, tsunamis and volcanic eruptions, which they never would have been aware of in the past. It's almost inevitable that *something* bad will happen right after an eclipse or a visit from a comet.

As an ardent skywatcher who derives much pleasure from beautiful events like lunar eclipses, it saddens me that there are "prophets of doom" in the world who view these life-enriching events as portents of disaster."

So what we see from experts in the field of astronomy is that these so called "blood moons" i.e. lunar eclipses -have been occurring throughout the entirety of history. Even the more rare lunar eclipse tetrad has happened before multiple times, and will continue to happen after this current tetrad which just ended.

Take for instance this clip I'm about to show of Dr. Hugh Ross discussing this matter with John Hagee and a few other men. Hugh Ross is the president and founder for Reasons to Believe, a Christian ministry dedicated to harmonizing scientific data with the Bible. He holds a degree in physics from the University of British Columbia, and a PhD in astronomy from the University of Toronto. Listen to what he says about the regularity of these blood moons.

### Play Hugh Ross Clip

So if these lunar eclipses are signals for the end time judgment or second coming, why didn't they signal the second coming long ago? Why are some men acting like the lunar eclipse tetrad of 2014-2015 is the "biggie" when this has all happened before?

Well, as much as this pains me to say, it seems to be a fear tactic to make money. They sell their books, their DVD sets, and then they are linked up with survival websites that

sale their survival packages. In the end, nothing has happened and the people who propagated this false teaching are rich.

**For example... Get Rich off Others Video**

But here's the thing...

Why is it that we think the mentioning of the moon turning to blood in Scripture is talking about a lunar eclipse in the first place? Who put that idea into our mind? Sure, during a total lunar eclipse the moon has a red color, but did we make this link from studying the Bible or did we just believe someone who told us that a lunar eclipse is what the Bible is speaking about in Joel 2:31?

Look back to Joel 2:31. I want you to notice something that goes unnoticed even though it's right there in the verse.

### **Joel 2:31**

The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the great and awe-inspiring Day of Yahweh comes.

*If* this verse is actually speaking of a heavenly phenomenon (I'll cover that issue in the next lesson), but *if* it is speaking of such, then notice that this phenomenon would NOT be something like a common lunar eclipse or even a lunar eclipse tetrad which is still somewhat a common occurrence.

It would rather be a *simultaneous* darkening of the sun and the moon turning to blood. In other words, there would be something **ABNORMAL** happen to **both** the sun and the moon simultaneously - on the same day - and not something fairly normal only happen to the one heavenly body of the moon.

In the words of Jay Dryer, an author from [classicalastronomy.com](http://classicalastronomy.com):

During a total eclipse, the Moon can take on a reddish-orange color, causing a "bloody" appearance, evoking Joel 2:31 and Acts 2:20, and the "breaking of the sixth seal" in Rev. 6:12. But each of these prophecies also mentions a *concurrent* darkening of the Sun, as in a total solar eclipse. But this cannot happen at the same time as an ordinary lunar eclipse, since the Moon cannot be in two places at once! Further, the causes of solar and lunar eclipses were well understood in New Testament times, and were commonly known even then to be natural phenomena and not supernatural signs. So the ancient hearers of these Scriptures were undoubtedly looking for a supernatural event to fulfill these prophecies, rather than the commonplace, twice-annual lunar eclipses. (from a paper titled "Shemitah Years and Blood Moons as Market Timing Tools?" p.22)

On the heels of that I'd like to show you one final video clip from a Bible student named Chris White who did an excellent job explaining this point in rebuttal to the blood moon

tetrad theory. He rightly brings *even the stars*, and not just the sun and moon into the picture.

### Play Chris White Video

Such a great rebuttal from Christ White, showing that if Joel 2 is a reference to the actual sun, moon, and stars, the heavenly bodies themselves, all three would have to simultaneously cease shining in the heavens. Not just 1 of the 3 or 2 of the 3. This alone proves the whole lunar eclipse being the biblical blood moon of Joel 2:31, false.

But... is Joel 2:31 even talking about a heavenly astronomical phenomenon? When the Bible speaks of the sun becoming dark and the moon turning to blood (and now we've seen "the stars falling from heaven"), is that to be taken astronomically, or is it symbolic language standing for something else?

Well...you'll have to come back for the next lesson, where I will examine and answer this question from Holy Scripture.

## Sun, Moon, and Stars Symbolism (Blood Moons - Pt. 2)

*Opening Text: Joel 2:28-32*

In the last lesson I began uncovering the theory presented by Mark Biltz and John Hagee concerning the so-called "blood moon" tetrad, or better put -- the lunar eclipse tetrad. By way of review I'd like to briefly mention some of the points we covered in that lesson:

1. What the teaching presents or claims. That the 4 lunar eclipses on Passover/Tabernacles in the concurrent years of 2014 and 2015 could mean anything from "a sign for the land of Israel," "that something 'big' is about to happen," or "that Yeshua is about to come back to earth physically."
2. We also dealt with the need to be Bereans, meaning that we aren't just to *know* about the Bereans in Acts 17, but we are actually to *practice* what they practiced. Our hearts should be ablaze when we read and study *the Scriptures*, or when we hear *the Scriptures* taught and explained to us. Instead, many people get excitement from extra-Biblical teachings or the latest "prophetic" prognostication.
3. I shared with you some videos explaining what a lunar eclipse is, and what a lunar eclipse tetrad is. We saw that lunar eclipses are common, happening about twice a year. Tetrads are common as well. And even tetrads that occur on Passover/Tabernacles, two years in a row, although not as common, have still happened 8x (that's 32 total) in the last 2,000 years, as even Biltz admits.
4. I talked about how that the Bible doesn't have anything to say about a lunar eclipse tetrad. Zero. Nothing at all.
5. And I shared that there were only 3 texts in the entire Bible that spoke of the moon turning to blood in some sense. However, in each of those texts, the surrounding context

also mentions that the sun becomes dark and the stars cease from shining. Sun, moon, and stars are a package deal, so if we are to interpret these texts as literal-astronomical catastrophes, then we must look for an event in which the sun, moon, and stars all stop shining in the heavens. An abnormal, uncommon, supernatural event.

Let me add here that if such an event is to happen in the future, it won't be an event that can be predicted, because it is abnormal, uncommon, and supernatural. It won't be an event that NASA can tell you will happen in a certain year on a certain day. It will be an event that happens without anyone knowing it will happen in advance.

Now, I talked about other things as well, but this is just a brief review, anyone can listen to the first lesson online free of charge. There's no fee, no sales gimmick, and certainly no shipping and handling. :) You can download the lesson right off of the website - [ministersnewcovenant.org](http://ministersnewcovenant.org) - I will be placing my entire sermon notes on the website as well for anyone to read if they choose.

### **The Past Blood Moon Tetrads on the Feasts**

Before we get into the Scriptures to examine what the Bible *means* when it speaks of the sun, moon, and stars going dark (or the moon turning to blood), I would like to point out another glitch in the teaching presented by Mark Biltz and John Hagee (and others). Let's listen to and watch Mark Biltz explain this part of his research.

#### **Play Biltz Video Clip**

Mark Biltz is quick to point out that when you research past lunar eclipse tetrads you find that significant events happened to what he calls "the Jewish people" or to the land of Israel (I'm not equating those 2 things, I'm only using the terms Biltz uses). But there's a problem here. That problem is this: when we actually DO THE RESEARCH, we find that in 2 of the 3 cases that are usually mentioned, the significant event happened BEFORE the tetrad even began! In the other case the event happened after the first lunar eclipse in the tetrad, and the event was then followed by the final 3 lunar eclipses within the tetrad.

To illustrate and explain this glitch or problem more fully, let me show another clip from Chris White's video that I showed in part last week where he debunks this blood moon tetrad theory.

#### **Play Chris White Clip**

I would encourage everyone to do some research yourself, and what you will see is that this false teaching has basically stretched to the max any little straw they could find. When they couldn't find a straw, they just ignore that tetrad and move on to the next one that they can stretch long enough to make it fit into their teaching somehow.

This is why John Hagee only said, "something big is about to happen."

#### **Play John Hagee Something Big Clip**

The reason he wasn't more specific is because by just saying generically "something big" he left wiggle room for himself to find *something* happening in the world at the time of the lunar eclipse tetrad in 2014-2015. And you know what, he'll find something, and he probably already has. But, don't be one of the blind followers of this blind leader. Choose instead to study your Bible. Blindly following a man is not honoring Yahweh. Studying your Bible and listening to true Biblical teaching is honoring Yahweh.

### **Getting to the Biblical Texts**

So, at this point what I'd like to do is be a Berean by delving into these Biblical sun, moon, and stars texts to see if we can determine what a text like Joel 2:28-32 is talking about. I'll be teaching on this today and I'll continue this teaching in our New Moon service as well.

I'll go ahead and tell you right here before we get into the Holy Scriptures that I do **NOT** believe that Joel 2 or its quotation in Acts 2 (by Peter) is speaking of a literal astronomical event. I believe that it is symbolic, metaphorical language that stands for something else. I intend to prove this in these lessons, from the Bible.

I believe the biggest reason that people have misinterpreted texts like these is because of being *unfamiliar with* or *ignorant of* the ENTIRETY of the Old Testament portion of the Bible. In other words, if people actually studied the Old Testament, and knew all of what the Old Testament speaks in these sun, moon, and stars texts, they would not misinterpret Joel 2:28-32 or Acts 2:16-21 where Peter quotes the prophet Joel.

What has instead happened is that someone has went into Joel 2, grabbed the "moon turning to blood" out of verse 31 (out of its context in Joel, and the rest of the OT), and then hypothesized that it is talking about a lunar eclipse. What they should have done is examine Joel 2 in its entire context, while at the same time examining all of what the Old Testament says in similar or parallel passages to Joel 2.

### **Begin at the Beginning (Genesis)**

Let's start by looking at Genesis 1:14-18. I'll be using the KJV (a lot) in this lesson because it is a more literal translation than the HCSB, and we'll be uncovering some key Hebrew words and their literal translations into English.

**Ge 1:14** And (the) Mighty One said, **Let there be lights** in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:

**Ge 1:15** And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

**Ge 1:16** And (the) Mighty One made two great lights; the **greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.**

**Ge 1:17** And (the) Mighty One set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,

**Ge 1:18** And **to rule over the day and over the night**, and to divide the light from the darkness: and (the) Mighty One saw that *it was good*.

I've taught on this text a few times before, and have shown that this is a foundational text for the Biblical calendar. The two great lights are the sun and the moon, and you'll notice that the stars are mentioned as well at the end of verse 16.

In this lesson I would like to point out the word "rule." The greater light has RULE over the day, the lesser light has RULE over the night.

The Hebrew word here is **memshalah** and is defined by Strong's as "to rule, a realm, or a ruler." Gesenius (Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon) defines the word as "dominion, rule, jurisdiction, princes, chief rulers."

If you read the HCSB, you'll notice that in Genesis 1:16 it says, "the greater light to have DOMINION over the day, the lesser light to have DOMINION over the night." The NASB has "the greater light to GOVERN the day, the lesser light to GOVERN the night."

Notice how the word **memshalah** is translated in the KJV of Isaiah 22:20-21

**Isa 22:20** And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah:

**Isa 22:21** And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy **government** (*memshalah* - power, rule, authority, dominion) into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah.

In my studies, I found that **memshalah** is translated in the KJV as dominion 11x, rule 4x, government 1x, and power 1x. So you get the picture. It is a word that speaks of ruling and reigning; high ranking. The sun is like a high ranking official over the day and likewise the moon over the night, as well as the stars. Psalm 136:9 is a complimentary passage to Genesis 1:16 and it says "the moon and the stars to RULE (**memshalah**) the night."

Knowing this, we might now automatically think that the sun, moon, and stars could - in some Scriptures - stand for or represent high ranking people, rulers, authorities, and governments. But we don't just have to assume that, we can prove that in the Bible.

Our next text, still in Genesis, is Genesis 37:9-10

**Ge 37:9** And he (Joseph) dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, **the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.**

**Ge 37:10** And he told *it* to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What *is* this dream that thou hast dreamed? **Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?**

A couple of things in this text. First, note that Joseph's father (Jacob) immediately knew the interpretation of Joseph's dream. He realized that the dream had nothing to do with the literal sun, moon, and stars bowing down to Joseph, but rather that they stood for, they represented something else. The sun stood for Jacob (the father, greater light). The moon stood for Rachel (the mother, lesser light), and the stars stood for the 11 brothers (and the stars also, Genesis 1:16). Joseph would be the 12th star, representing the 12 sons (tribes) of Israel in all.

Secondly, realize an important point here that the sun, moon, and stars can represent the family of Israel in Scripture. The Israelites were Yahweh's chosen people then. Israel was Yahweh's chosen people at the time of the prophet Joel, and Israel was Yahweh's chosen people in the first century A.D. at the time of Yeshua. Israel is still His chosen people today. We will see that Israel's dominion or rule is represented in Scripture by the sun, moon, and stars language. This will help us understand correctly what Joel's prophecy actually means.

It is quite interesting to see how the greatest man to ever live in the nation of Israel describes himself. Look at Revelation 22:16.

**Re 22:16** I Yeshua have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, **and the bright and morning star.**

Yeshua uses this symbolic heavenly light language to depict himself as the brightest star in Israel. He is the brightest morning star among all of his brethren in the nation.

I won't turn to these, but in Genesis 22:17 and 26:4 we find that both Abraham and Isaac are told that their offspring will be as numerous as the "stars of the sky." Here we have two further references in Genesis linking the Israelites with this "star language" or "heavenly light" language in Scripture. Also jot down Exodus 32:13 and Deuteronomy 1:10, parallel texts to Genesis 22 and Genesis 26.

### **A Parallel in the book of Revelation**

With Genesis 37:9-10 in your mind, let's look now to a NT reference in the book of Revelation 12:1

**Re 12:1** And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman **clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:**

Now, this is similar in language to Genesis 37 as you can see. Is this in Revelation a literal woman who is wearing the sun like a garment? Is there a woman big enough and powerful enough to be draped in the sun as her robe? Of course you see my point. This is symbolic, figurative language. She's not literally standing on the moon either, and she certainly doesn't have a 12 starred crown on her head. One star would burn a woman's head right off with its heat.

This woman depicts Israel as a whole, as a nation. Some have limited it to only Eve or to the mother of Yeshua, Miriam, but I think it's better to see the symbolism to be Israel as a whole, as Israel is typified as the wife of Yahweh many times in Scripture.

Just don't miss the sun, moon, and stars language (12 stars mind you, standing for the 12 tribes) here in Revelation. It is a parallel to Genesis 1:14-16 and even more specifically to Genesis 37:9-10, the family of Jacob/Israel.

### **This Symbolic Language in Daniel**

One text that does this same thing later on is the book of Daniel. Look at Daniel 12:2-3.

**Da 12:2** And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame *and* everlasting contempt.

**Da 12:3** And **they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament**; and they that turn many to righteousness **as the stars** for ever and ever.

Daniel is depicting the wise and righteous in Israel as bright shining stars in the heavens. They are like the stars in that they shine bright for Yahweh and His law.

The same is to be understood in Daniel 8:9-10, although it isn't as easily understood at first glance.

**Da 8:9** And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant *land*.

**Da 8:10** And it waxed great, *even to the host of heaven*; and it cast down *some* of the host and **of the stars to the ground**, and stamped upon them.

I dealt with this text in detail when I taught through Daniel chapter 8 years ago. I won't be detailed here, but just point out that the little horn in verse 9 is the Grecian ruler named Antiochus Epihanes (who lived in the 2 century B.C.), and the pleasant land in verse 9 is the land of Israel. Antiochus grew powerful, even to the HOST of heaven and when it says that he cast down some of the stars to the ground (it doesn't mean he flew up to heaven, grabbed some stars and threw them to earth), it means he persecuted and even killed some of the children of Israel.

The Israelites are here depicted as the "host of heaven" and the "stars." You can compare Daniel 8:10 (the vision) with Daniel 8:24 (the interpretation of the vision). 24 says that this Grecian king will destroy the mighty and holy people. Again, the holy people (Israel) are depicted in the vision as stars in heaven.

### **Can Stars Fight in a Battle?**

I'd like to turn now to a text that is brand new to my understanding in the past couple of weeks of study. It's found in the book of Judges 5. Just to give you a little background, Judges 4 is an account of a battle between the Israelites (specifically from Zebulun and Naphtali) and the some the Canaanites. Judges 4:15 says that Yahweh threw Sisera (the

commander of the forces of Canaan) and all of his army into confusion with the sword. Judges 4:23 says on that day the Almighty subdued Jabin king of Canaan before the Israelites.

Judges 5 is the follow up chapter, and contains a song sung by Deborah the judge in Israel at that time, and Barak, the commander of the army of Israel. So the warriors of Canaan fought against the warriors of Israel.

But I want you to notice how this is spoken about in Judges 5:18-20 in the song of Deborah and Barak. Look at this:

**Jg 5:18** Zebulun and Naphtali *were* a people *that* jeopardized their lives unto the death in the high places of the field.

**Jg 5:19** The kings came *and* fought, then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo; they took no gain of money.

**Jg 5:20** They fought from heaven; **the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.**

Verse 19 says KINGS came and fought, and then it mentions the kings of Canaan. But the next verse speaks of the KINGS (mighty men) in Israel that fought against Sisera. It is said that they fought FROM HEAVEN - the STARS IN THEIR COURSES fought against Sisera. Now did literal stars fight against Sisera? No.

Again, this is figurative language that depicts the Israelites as stars. The idea is that the stars rule the night along with the moon. Remember, the sun has government over the day, and the moon and stars have government over the night.

### **When the Lights Go Out (Blood Moons - Pt. 3)**

*Opening text:* **Joel 2:28-32**

In the last lesson we went through several Scriptures in the OT showing that the nation of Israel is depicted as the sun, moon, and especially the stars. Just as the sun, moon, and stars govern the day and night - Israel, when they are righteous and ruling well, are symbolized as these heavenly bodies, ruling brightly in the world.

### **The Point of the Symbolic Language**

Now, seeing that all through the Bible, the sun, moon, and stars are depictions of the rule, authority, and government of the Israelites, what language might then be used for rebellious, apostate Israel? In other words, how might Yahweh describe the fall and destruction of a rebellious nation of Israel?

Is it possible that whereas they are *bright* when ruling, they may be said to be *dark* when brought down low? In other words, when rebellious, their lights go out.

Let's take our Bibles and turn to Amos 5:1-20, I'm reading from the HCSB.

**1** Listen to this message that I am singing for you, **a lament**, house of Israel:  
**2 She has fallen; Virgin Israel will never rise again.** She lies abandoned on her land, with no one to raise her up.  
**3**For the Sovereign Yahweh says: The city that marches out a thousand [strong] will have [only] a hundred left, and the one that marches out a hundred [strong] will have [only] ten left in the house of Israel.

Right here in these first 3 verses we see judgment language being spoke against a rebellious house of Israel. This word is spoke AGAINST her. She is fallen and forsaken. A city that was once 1,000 people shall now be brought down to 100 people. Let's keep reading.

**4** For Yahweh says to the house of Israel: Seek Me and live!  
**5** Do not seek Bethel or go to Gilgal or journey to Beer-sheba, **for Gilgal will certainly go into exile, and Bethel will come to nothing.**  
**6** Seek Yahweh and live, or He will spread like fire [throughout] the house of Joseph; **it will consume [everything,] with no one at Bethel to extinguish it.**  
**7** Those who turn justice into wormwood **throw righteousness to the ground.**  
**8** The One who made the Pleiades and Orion, who turns darkness into dawn and darkens day into night, who summons the waters of the sea and pours them out over the face of the earth - Yahweh is His name.  
**9 He brings destruction on the strong,** and it falls on the stronghold.  
**10** They hate the one who convicts [the guilty] at the city gate and despise the one who speaks with integrity.  
**11** Therefore, because you trample on the poor and exact a grain tax from him, you will never live in the houses of cut stone you have built; you will never drink the wine from the lush vineyards you have planted.  
**12 For I know your crimes are many and your sins innumerable.** They oppress the righteous, take a bribe, and deprive the poor of justice at the gates.  
**13** Therefore, the wise person will keep silent at such a time, for the days are evil.  
**14** Seek good and not evil so that you may live, and Yahweh, the Mighty One of Hosts, will be with you, as you have claimed.  
**15** Hate evil and love good; establish justice in the gate. Perhaps Yahweh, the Mighty One of Hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.  
**16** Therefore Yahweh, the Mighty One of Hosts, the Sovereign, says: **There will be wailing in all the public squares;** they will **cry out in anguish** in all the streets. The farmer will be called on to mourn, and professional mourners to wail.  
**17** There will be wailing in all the vineyards, for I will pass among you. Yahweh has spoken.  
**18** Woe to you who long for **the Day of Yahweh!** What will the Day of Yahweh be for you? **It will be darkness and not light.**

Let me stop here for a moment. I want to point out that there are many times in Scripture that we read of the Day of Yahweh. It is always a judgment, but it's not just a one time

judgment. I'm going to show you that there are many judgments where Yahweh comes and brings calamity, and each one is called the Day of Yahweh.

Notice at the end of verse 18 that the Day of Yahweh (judgment upon rebellious Israel) is DARKNESS, and not light. In other words there is a ceasing of shining. We might say that the sun, moon, and stars lose their light. Let's read 2 more verses.

**19** It will be like a man who flees from a lion only to have a **bear confront him**. He goes home and rests his hand against the wall only to have a **snake bite him**.

**20** Won't the **Day of Yahweh be darkness rather than light, even gloom without any brightness in it?**

There it is again: DARKNESS and not light. Very DARK and no brightness in it. The reason this day is darkness is because the rule, dominion, and government of Israel is snuffed out by the wrath of Yahweh because of their rebellion. They stop shining as bright lights. Yahweh puts them out. This is judgment language.

Let's look at another one the book of Amos. Turn to Amos chapter 8 verses 1-10.

**1** The Sovereign Yahweh showed me this: A basket of summer fruit.

**2** He asked me, "What do you see, Amos?" I replied, "A basket of summer fruit." Yahweh said to me, "**The end has come for My people Israel; I will no longer spare them.**"

Notice the judgment language here. The END is come upon my people Israel. Verse 3.

**3** In that day the temple songs will become **wailing**" - the Sovereign Yahweh's declaration. "**Many dead bodies**, thrown everywhere! Silence!"

**4** Hear this, you who trample on the needy and do away with the poor of the land,

**5** asking, "When will the New Moon be over so we may sell grain, and the Sabbath, so we may market wheat? We can reduce the measure while increasing the price and cheat with dishonest scales.

**6** We can buy the poor with silver and the needy for a pair of sandals and even sell the wheat husks!"

**7** Yahweh has sworn by the Pride of Jacob: I will never forget all their deeds.

**8** Because of this, **won't the land quake and all who dwell in it mourn?** All of it will rise like the Nile; it will surge and then subside like the Nile in Egypt.

**9** And in that day - [this is] the declaration of the Sovereign Yahweh - **I will make the sun go down at noon; I will darken the land in the daytime.**

**10** I will turn your feasts into **mourning** and all your songs into **lamentation**; I will cause everyone to **wear sackcloth and every head to be shaved. I will make that grief like mourning for an only son and its outcome like a bitter day.**

All of this is judgment language, and one of the things Yahweh says He will do is cause the sun to go down at noon and DARKEN the earth in the daytime. Now, is Yahweh speaking of literally causing the sun to go down (stop ruling) at noon -- OR -- is he speaking of Jacob/Israel as the sun (remember Joseph's dream in Genesis 37 where his father - the sun - bowed down to him)... is Yahweh saying here in Amos that Israel is like the ruling sun at noon, but in judging the nation Yahweh will cause the sun (Israel) to go down (be judged and brought low) at noon (at their highest peak)?

I believe the latter to be the case. I believe Amos 8:9 is symbolic language depicting the judgment of the nation of Israel. Their judgment is like Yahweh causing the sun to stop ruling in midday.

Let's look at another one, and this one is actually in Joel 2. Turn to the beginning of the chapter, Joel 2:1-11.

**1** Blow the horn in Zion; sound the alarm on My holy mountain! Let all the residents of the land tremble, for **the Day of Yahweh** is coming; in fact, it is near-  
**2 a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and dense overcast**, like the dawn spreading over the mountains; a great and strong people [appears], such as never existed in ages past and never will again in all the generations to come.  
**3 A fire destroys in front of them, and behind them a flame devours.** The land in front of them is like the Garden of Eden, but behind them, it is like a desert wasteland; there is no escape from them.  
**4** Their appearance is like that of horses, and they gallop like war horses.

Quick note here: Yahweh is speaking of judging the rebellious nation of Israel here with some type of an army coming against them. Yahweh is using this army - this strong people - as a rod in his hand against the rebellious Israelites. Verse 5.

**5** They bound on the tops of the mountains. Their sound is like the sound of chariots, like the sound of fiery flames consuming stubble, **like a mighty army deployed for war.**  
**6** Nations writhe in horror before them; all faces turn pale.  
**7** They attack as warriors [attack]; they scale walls as men of war [do]. Each goes on his own path, and they do not change their course.  
**8** They do not push each other; each man proceeds on his own path. They dodge the missiles, never stopping.  
**9** They storm the city; they run on the wall; they climb into the houses; they enter through the windows like thieves.  
**10 The earth quakes before them; the sky shakes. The sun and moon grow dark, and the stars cease their shining.**  
**11** Yahweh raises His voice in the presence of His army. His camp is very large; Those who carry out His command are powerful. Indeed, **the Day of Yahweh is terrible and dreadful - who can endure it?**

Now, note all the judgment language in these verses. Here we have another Day of Yahweh reference, meaning a day of calamity; a day of judgment. One of the ways this judgment is depicted is that the sun and moon shall be dark and the stars shall withdraw their shining (vs. 10). In other words, when the children of Israel are performing righteousness in the land they are like the ruling sun, moon, and stars - shining brightly. But, when they are judged for their unrepentant sin and rebellion, their lights go out. The sun and moon go dark and the stars stop shining.

I don't believe Joel 2:10 is speaking literally. It is figurative, symbolic language depicting the judgment of rebellious Israel.

### **Same Language Used to Judge Other Nations**

It is interesting that this sun, moon, and stars language - the lights going out in judgment - is used of Yahweh's judgment upon non-Israelite nations as well. Nations of the earth which at one time are glorious and mighty in government (ruling like the sun, moon, and stars), but later Yahweh brings down judgment upon their wickedness.

Let's turn our Bibles to the book of Isaiah, chapter 13, verses 1 through 11.

**1** An oracle **against Babylon** that Isaiah son of Amoz saw:

**2** Lift up a banner on a barren mountain. Call out to them. Wave your hand, and they will go through the gates of the nobles.

**3** I have commanded My chosen ones; I have also called My warriors, who exult in My triumph, to execute My wrath.

**4** Listen, a tumult on the mountains, like that of a mighty people! Listen, an uproar among the kingdoms, like nations being gathered together! Yahweh of Hosts is mobilizing an army for war.

**5** They are coming from a far land, from the distant horizon - Yahweh and the weapons of His wrath - to destroy the whole country.

**6** Wail! For **the day of Yahweh is near. It will come like destruction from the Almighty.**

**7** Therefore everyone's hands will become weak, and every man's heart will melt.

**8** They will be horrified; pain and agony will seize [them]; they will be in anguish like a woman in labor. They will look at each other, their faces flushed with fear.

**9** Look, **the day of Yahweh is coming - cruel, with rage and burning anger - to make the earth a desolation and to destroy the sinners on it.**

**10** Indeed, **the stars of the sky and its constellations will not give their light. The sun will be dark when it rises, and the moon will not shine.**

**11** **I will bring disaster on the world, and their [own] iniquity, on the wicked. I will put an end to the pride of the arrogant and humiliate the insolence of tyrants.**

Here Yahweh is bringing the high-ruling kingdom of the Babylonians down low. It is a day of Yahweh, where Yahweh comes in judgment. Babylon's destruction is depicted here as the sun, moon, and stars going dark. Did the sun, moon, and stars literally go dark

back then at the destruction of Babylon? Maybe, but their rule, dominion, and government definitely ceased, thus the figurative language is used.

Turn to Isaiah 34:1-4.

**1** You **nations**, come here and listen; you peoples, pay attention! Let the earth hear, and all that fills it, the world and all that comes from it.

**2** **Yahweh is angry with all the nations** - furious with all their armies. He will set them apart for **destruction**, giving them over to **slaughter**.

**3** Their slain will be thrown out, and the stench of their corpses will rise; the mountains flow with their blood.

**4** **All the heavenly bodies will dissolve. The skies will roll up like a scroll, and their stars will all wither as leaves wither on the vine, and foliage on the fig tree.**

Here Yahweh judges the nations in His anger and it is depicted as all the host of heaven being dissolved (in other words, their lights go out). It's as though He rolled up the heavens like a scroll and all their host fall to the ground. Nations, rulers, dominion, governments fall to judgment. Their lights go out.

Turn now to the book of Ezekiel chapter 32:1-8.

**1** In the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, on the first [day] of the month, the word of Yahweh came to me:

**2** "Son of man, **lament** for Pharaoh king of Egypt and say to him: You compare yourself to a lion of the nations, but you are like a monster in the seas. You thrash about in your rivers, churn up the waters with your feet, and muddy the rivers."

**3** This is what the Sovereign Yahweh says: I will spread My net over you with an assembly of many peoples, and they will haul you up in My net.

**4** **I will abandon you** on the land and hurl you on the open field. I will cause all the birds of the sky to settle on you and let the beasts of the entire earth eat their fill of you.

**5** I will put your flesh on the mountains and fill the valleys with your carcass.

**6** I will drench the land with the flow of your blood, [even] to the mountains; the ravines will be filled with your [gore].

**7** **When I snuff you out, I will cover the heavens and darken their stars. I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon will not give its light.**

**8** **I will darken all the shining lights in the heavens over you, and will bring darkness on your land.** This the declaration of the Sovereign Yahweh.

Here Egypt is under the judgment of Yahweh, specifically Pharaoh of Egypt. Yahweh depicts him as great sea creature that Yahweh catches, kills, and then feeds to the wild animals of the earth.

But notice that when Yahweh judges him, this judgment is depicted as a covering of the heavens. The stars go dark, the sun is covered with a cloud, and the moon stops shining. Darkness is upon Egypt's land.

When Pharaoh ruled, it was as though the sun, moon, and stars governed brightly. When Pharaoh was judged, it was as though the lights went out.

### **What We Have Seen**

When we allow the Bible to interpret itself what we see is that this sun, moon, and star language, this language where the lights stop shining in the heavens, is figurative language. When Yahweh comes in judgment against the nation of Israel, or against *any* high ranking nation or king, those people are snuffed out. They once ruled brightly, but now they are darkness. Their sun has stopped shining, as well as their moon and stars. Destruction has come upon the land.

### **The Opposite Language**

Let me show you that the opposite is true as well. It would stand to reason that when Yahweh exalts the nation of Israel in battle - when they are acting righteously and Yahweh rewards them, that they would be depicted as the bright lights in the heavens, shining in righteousness and strength. And we find that exact symbolic language in Scripture.

Remember the last lesson in Judges 5:19-20 where it says that the stars fought from heaven against the kings of Canaan? Well, let's look at Judges 5:31, right at the end of that chapter.

**31** Yahweh, may all your enemies perish as Sisera did. **But may those who love Him be like the rising of the sun in its strength.** And the land was peaceful 40 years.

Let your enemies perish Yahweh, but let those who love you be like the sun in its strength. Those who love Yahweh are depicted as the mighty, ruling sun in the sky.

I'd also refer you to Isaiah 30:18-26; let's turn to it.

**18** Therefore **Yahweh is waiting to show you mercy, and is rising up to show you compassion**, for Yahweh is a just Mighty One. Happy are all who wait patiently for Him.

**19** For you people will live on Zion in Jerusalem and will never cry again. **He will show favor to you** at the sound of your cry; when He hears, He will answer you.

**20** Yahweh will give you meager bread and water during oppression, but your Teacher will not hide Himself any longer. Your eyes will see your Teacher, **21** and whenever you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear this command behind you: "This is the way. Walk in it."

**22** Then you will defile your silver-plated idols and your gold-plated images. **You will throw them away** like menstrual cloths, and call them filth.

**23** Then He will send rain for your seed that you have sown in the ground, and the food, the produce of the ground, will be rich and plentiful. On that day your cattle will graze in open pastures.

**24** The oxen and donkeys that work the ground will eat salted fodder scattered with winnowing shovel and fork.

**25** Streams and watercourses will be on every high mountain and every raised hill on the day of great slaughter when the towers fall.

**26 The moonlight will be as bright as the sunlight, and the sunlight will be seven times brighter-like the light of seven days - on the day that Yahweh bandages His people's injuries and heals the wounds He inflicted.**

This passage is all about the restoration and blessing of the nation of Israel. The restored, righteous Israel is depicted as the moon being as bright as the sun and the sun being 7x brighter than usual. You can cross reference this with Isaiah 60:1-20, Matthew 13:43, and Philippians 2:15.

When blessing occurs it is symbolized as the ruling of the sun, moon, and stars because these heavenly bodies depict governmental rule and dominion.

When judgment occurs it is symbolized as the falling of the sun, moon, and stars. They stop shining because the governmental rule and dominion have been brought down.

This is all eye-opening isn't it? But, we're not through yet. In my next lesson we will go back to Joel 2 as well as Acts 2 and see if we can now understand what Joel is speaking of and when Joel's prophecy was fulfilled.

## **Are We Living in the Last Days? (Blood Moons - Pt. 4)**

*Opening Text: Joel 2:28-32*

It's great to back today to continue teaching the Bible. I love to study the Bible. I've really enjoyed examining what the Bible *means* in all of these sun, moon, and stars judgment texts. If you missed part 3 in this blood moon series, I would ask that you go listen to it on the website. Even if you were here last week, it would be great for you to go back over it a few times, mainly just to **read the texts of Scripture** over again. I believe the eyes of your understanding will be enlightened by allowing the Scriptures to interpret the Scriptures.

I want to make an important point here before we get started today. This series is about way more than the blood moons. It does expose the incorrect understanding of the lunar eclipse tetrad as being the Joel 2:31 "moon turning to blood," but this series is about how to study the Bible properly rather than jump onto a sensationalist bandwagon or false prophetic prognostication. We are learning Bible study in these lessons. We are even learning how to study and understand prophetic texts of Scripture. We are learning how

to let the Bible interpret itself. We are learning how to *study* the Scriptures and *believe* the Scriptures, and put our faith in them, rather than to just believe what the latest book on the New York Times best seller list is saying.

When we come to the Bible, we've got to let go of all our personal prejudices. We've got to love what the Bible teaches more than we want it to say or teach. We've got to submit our thoughts to the standard of Holy Scripture.

### **So How Does all of this Help with Joel 2:28-32?**

Had everyone been familiar with all of this OT symbolic sun, moon, and stars language used time and time again in Scripture, they would have never been led astray by the whole "blood moon" teaching of Mark Biltz and John Hagee. They would have known immediately that it was a false teaching because they would have been able to correctly interpret Joel 2 and Acts 2 without having to step outside of the Bible. I hope this series helps people to know.

This means that a primary reason people were misled by the whole "blood moon" tetrad teaching is because of a lack of study, knowledge, and foundation of the Old Testament Scriptures. The irony is that they were quoting the Old Testament text of Joel 2:31, but they had no understanding. With all thy getting, get understanding.

In our opening text of Joel 2:28-32 we see both judgment and blessing. Judgment comes upon those who do not repent in Israel, they are the sun that shall be darkened and the moon that shall turn to blood. But blessing comes upon those who do repent and call out to Yahweh; they are the ones delivered. This judgment language involving the sun and the moon is mentioned right here in Joel 2:31. Knowing everything we have studied in the OT, we can now see that verse 31 is figurative language, symbolizing the destruction of the rebellious within the nation of Israel. Their lights go out.

By the way, the moon turning to blood is just another way of saying "the moon will not give its light," "the moon will grow dark," or "the moon will not shine." All of which are said in various places in the OT in these judgment passages. Joel 2:31 is not about a lunar eclipse. Joel 2:31 is a figure of speech depicting the judgment upon those who remain rebellious in Israel, refusing to repent.

### **Peter Quotes the Prophet Joel**

Now, the apostle Peter actually quotes the prophet Joel in Acts 2. He does so just after the gift of languages is poured out upon the apostles, where they were able to speak in languages they had never learned, and those in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost (who spoke various languages) were able to hear about the wonderful works of Yahweh in their own native language and dialect.

Many people that day who saw this take place were amazed, but some of them mocked and said, "These men are drunk on new wine!" After the accusation of being drunk was made, Peter stood up with the 11 (the 11 apostles) and began to proclaim his message. Let's begin reading this in Acts 2:15.

15 These people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it's only nine in the morning.

16 On the contrary, **this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:**

Let me stop here for a moment. Peter is an apostle, I would say based upon the entirety of the Gospels and NT, Peter is a primary apostle; he's a leader among them. When he stands up, he proclaims that what is taking place is fulfillment of Joel's prophecy right there in the 1st century A.D. He couldn't have said it plainer, "This is what the prophet Joel spoke about."

I think sometimes we await a future fulfillment of certain prophecies, when the fulfillment of that prophecy is recorded for us right in the NT. I'm not saying that there isn't some things yet to be fulfilled, I'm just saying that *much* prophecy was fulfilled right there in the first century.

And we all believe that don't we? For instance, we all believe that Isaiah 53 was fulfilled in the first century. Where Isaiah prophesied, "He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities." That was fulfilled at the death of Yeshua of Nazareth. That has been fulfilled and we don't await a future fulfillment of that.

Well, I am of the persuasion that Joel 2:28-32 was fulfilled in the first century, primarily because Peter (who had more knowledge of Joel than any of us) said that it was. I am persuaded that we are not awaiting a future fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32, just like we aren't awaiting a future fulfillment of Isaiah 53.

I realize that you may have been taught at some point in your life that Joel's prophecy (Joel 2:28-32) would be fulfilled at a future date, or fulfilled again at a future date. I was taught that as well. But just because we were taught such doesn't make it so.

And here's a HUGE point. If Joel's prophecy here was fulfilled in the first century, then that means the part about "the sun will be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and remarkable day of Yahweh comes" was fulfilled as well. In other words, back in the first century there was **a day of Yahweh, a judgment day, upon the rebellious within the nation of Israel.** Back in the first century, the sun was turned to darkness and the moon to blood - *meaning* - many in Israel were judged and brought down low. Why? Why were they judged? It all had to do with their rejection of Yeshua as Yahweh's Messiah. Reject him and be judged. Accept him and be saved. That's what Joel 2 is all about (according to Apostle Peter), and that's what was happening right there on the day of Pentecost. Some accepted, some rejected.

We have often heard of the 3,000 souls that were saved that day (Acts 2:41), meaning they accepted Yeshua as Yahweh's promised Messiah. But what about all the other souls? There were thousands upon thousands in Jerusalem that day - probably tens of thousands - for the Day of Pentecost, the second of three annual festivals in Israel. Most of the souls that day in Israel rejected Yeshua as the Messiah. When souls accept him, there are always more souls that reject him.

Ok, let's keep reading in Acts 2:17. Peter just told those listening to him, what was taking place *that day* was what Joel prophesied about, and then he quotes directly from Joel 2:28-32, beginning in Acts 2:17.

17 And it will be **in the last days** says (the) Mighty One, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; then your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams.

### **When Are the Last Days?**

I have to stop right here after verse 17 and make some comments. Peter uses the phrase "in the last days." I remember growing up my entire childhood life in church and hearing back in the 1980's and 90's that we were in the last days. I remember hearing the preacher sometimes say that we were in "*the last* of the last days." Usually the comment was made because some kind of war had broke out, or there was an earthquake somewhere, some catastrophe, or a modern invention, or he watched a TV program and interpreted the Bible by what was on 20/20 or the nightly news. But I will tell you what was never done, at least I can't remember any preacher I heard growing up doing this: I never heard them go to the Bible and allow the Bible to define what it means by the phrase "the last days" here in Acts 2.

I realize that many people want to be the ones to live in "the last days," and many people throughout history have believed that they were the ones living in "the last days."

A man by the name of Charles Taylor believed he lived in "the last of the last days" back in the summer of 1992. Listen to what wrote in his magazine "Bible Prophecy News."

"What you are starting to read probably is my final issue of Bible Prophecy News, for Bible prophecy fulfillments indicate that Jesus Christ our Lord will most likely return for us at the rapture of the Church before the Fall 1992 issue can be printed." ~ Charles R. Taylor (*Taken from "Last Days Madness" by Gary DeMar, page 26-27*)

I was 11 at the time Mr. Taylor wrote that. I'm 34 now. But Mr. Taylor isn't the only man who has believed he lived in "the last days."

Back in the 1500's, a man named Hugh Latimer "believed that he was living in the last days. He wrote 'All those excellent learned men which without doubt God hath sent into this world in these latter days to give the world warning, all these men do gather out of scripture that the Last Day cannot be far off.' In 1549, Latimer preached in the presence of King Edward VI that 'the End of the World is near at hand... Anti-Christ, the man of sin, the son of iniquity, is revealed, the latter day is at hand.' Later in a sermon before the Dutchess of Suffolk, Latimer said, 'Saint Paul says... The Lord will not come till the swerving of the faith comes, which thing is already done and past: Anti-Christ is known throughout all the world. Wherefore the Day is not far off.' In 1552, in a sermon

on Luke 21:25, Latimer said that rings around the sun and eclipses in his time signified 'that this fearful Day is not far off.' (Taken from "The Day and the Hour" by Francis Gumerlock, page 128)

So Latimer believed he was living in "the last days" back in the 1500's, but what about another man named Cyril of Jerusalem? He believed he was living in "the last days" back in 350 A.D. over 1,000 years before Hugh Latimer. "Cyril of Jerusalem believed that the Anti-Christ was coming soon, writing (this) 'But this aforesaid Anti-Christ is to come when the times of the Roman Empire shall have been fulfilled, and the End of the world is now drawing near.' And again (he wrote), 'This therefore is the falling away, and the enemy is soon to be looked for.'" (Taken from "The Day and the Hour" by Francis Gumerlock, page 21)

**Now *somebody* is wrong here.**

1. Cyril of Jerusalem believed the end of the world drew near in 350 A.D.
2. Hugh Latimer believed the final coming of Christ was near in the 1500's
3. Charles Taylor believed a rapture would take place in 1992.

But... what if we leave off all this speculation and allow the Bible to speak for itself? What if we let the Bible define the phrase "the last days" for us, instead of self-professed prophets and prognosticators? What if we quit interpreting the Bible by first going to what is happening in the news or the world, and instead first go... to the Bible?

I will tell you this, you will make a lot of people upset if you do this. If you place your faith in Scripture, and what it says about the last days, instead of reading the news on the internet or watching the news on television and thinking that every earthquake, tsunami, new invention in technology, or war in the middle East means we are in the last days right now. People will get upset with you for letting the Bible interpret the Bible, but we should care little about how people react and care much about the integrity of Scripture and honoring Yahweh.

Going back to Acts 2:17. Peter says "And it will be - **IN THE LAST DAYS** - says the **Mighty One.**" Then he goes on to quote Joel's prophecy just after he told those in attendance of the Feast, that what Joel wrote about was taking place. Peter is saying that **HE AND THOSE AROUND HIM AT THAT TIME**, were living in the "the last days." Peter was saying, "This is what Joel spoke about. This is what will happen in the last days. We are in the last days right now."

I realize that might not fit into our mindset of prophecy or end times events, but that's what Peter is saying. "The last days" were happening back in the first century A.D.

Let's examine a few passages that are parallel to Acts 2:17. Let's look at Hebrews 1:1-2a. Remember, the author of Hebrews wrote his work in the first century A.D.

**1 Long ago** (the) Mighty One spoke to the fathers by the prophets at different times and in different ways.

**2 In these last days**, He has spoken to us by [His] Son...

Notice the contrast.

1. Long ago... Yahweh spoke through prophets and other various ways
2. In THESE LAST DAYS... He speaks by His Son

The author of Hebrews is writing this to an audience in the first century. He calls the time that Yahweh speaks through His Son "these last days." The author is referencing Yeshua's ministry. He is speaking about when Yeshua walked the earth and Yahweh spoke through him and performed miracles through him. "The last days" again is a reference to the first century A.D. just like it is in Acts 2:17.

Look at another one from the Apostle Peter. This one is in 1 Peter 1:18-20.

**18** For you know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life inherited from the fathers, not with perishable things, like silver or gold,

**19** but with the precious blood of Messiah, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish.

**20** He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at **the end of the times** for you.

Destined before the foundation of the world, but revealed "at the end of the times." This is again speaking about Yeshua of Nazareth. Yeshua was revealed, came on the scene, at "the end of the times." The New Living Translation translates this phrase in verse 20 as "in these last days he has been revealed." The NASB has "He has appeared in these last times." Peter believed that "the last days" or "end of the times" was in the first century ministry of Yeshua the Messiah. Remember that Peter initially wrote his epistle to scattered Israelites *living in the first century*.

I realize this may be the first time you've ever heard anything like this, but realize something - I'm not speculating based upon current events or what's happening in the world right now. I'm using the Bible to define the phrase "the last days."

Look at this one from Apostle John in 1 John 2:18

**18** Children, **it is the last hour**. And as you have heard, Anti-Christ is coming, even now many antichrists have come. **We know from this that it is the last hour**.

Now, let's stay with the text here. John is writing to people living in the first century. We sometimes read books of the Bible and statements like these and think he is writing directly to us, but no, there was an initial audience that John was targeting when he wrote

this epistle. His first audience, the first recipients of his letter, are the PRIMARY recipients of his letter.

And John tells them, THEN, "it is the last hour." That's even more specific than "the last days" or "the end of the times." John narrows it down to the last **hour**, and there's a reason for that.

Then John says that they've heard that anti-christ is coming, and even now (remember, at the time John was writing) many anti-christ's have come. John says that they know from this that it is (right then) the last hour.

It sounds to me like these men - Peter, the author of Hebrews, Apostle John - all believed they were living in the last days. And it wasn't that they just believed it, they knew it for a fact because some of these men lived and walked with Yeshua. They weren't wrong in their assessment. [*Also consider Hebrews 9:26, 1 Corinthians 10:11, and 1 Peter 4:7.*]

### **Back to Acts 2**

Now, I've veered away from Acts 2, but for good reason. Most people in Christianity today are looking for a future fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32, but Peter said it happened in the first century. Most people in Christianity think the last days are happening in their life time right now. People have been thinking that for quite some time. Cyril of Jerusalem thought it was around the year 350 A.D. Hugh Latimer believed it was the late 1500's. Charles Taylor thought it was 1992, a lot of people thought it was the year 2,000. I can show you that people on earth thought the end of the world was happening at the first millennium turn after Christ in the year 1000 A.D. Harold Camping thought it was 2011, John Hagee thought it was 2014 to 2015 - but Peter, the author of Hebrews, and Apostle John said that the last days were *in the first century*.

Maybe, just maybe, we've completely botched the Bible's teaching about "the last days." Maybe, just maybe, many of the prophecies we are expecting to be fulfilled in the future have already been fulfilled in the past.

Maybe this "sun being darkened and moon turning to blood" prophecy in Joel 2:31 took place in the first century like Peter said it would when he quoted Joel in Acts 2?

Let's go back now to Acts 2:17-18.

**17** And it will be in the last days, says (the Mighty One), that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; then your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams.

**18** I will even pour out My Spirit on My male and female slaves in those days, and they will prophesy.

This all happened in the first century. Yahweh poured out His Spirit upon men and women right there in Acts 2 and **all through the book of Acts**. They prophesied (in Acts 2 they did it in other languages), they saw visions, and they dreamed dreams. Read the book of Acts, or re-read the book of Acts. You'll see these things time and time again.

**19** I will display wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below: blood and fire and a cloud of smoke. [Note: The word "wonders" here is the Greek *teras*. It is used again twice right here in Acts 2 of the wonders Yahweh did through Yeshua (vs. 22), and the wonders performed through the apostles (vs. 43). It is also used in Acts 4:30, 5:12, 6:8, 14:3, and 15:12 of wonders done upon the earth in the first century. The word "signs" here in Acts 2:19 is *semeion*, and is used in conjunction with "wonders" (*teras*) in Acts 2:22, 43, 4:30, 5:12, 6:8, 14:3, and 15:12.]

Did you know that many wonders did indeed take place in the first century? There were wonders seen in the heavens above. For example, the star that led the wise men to the Messiah when he was a baby (Matthew 2). The appearances of the angels that proclaimed the birth of the Messiah to the Shepherds (Luke 2). There were even comets that appeared in the heavens back in the first century. The famous "Halley's Comet" actually made its appearance in 66 A.D. four years before the destruction of Jerusalem. Flavius Josephus mentions (in Wars 6.5.3) that prior to the destruction of Jerusalem there was a star in the heavens that resembled a sword and stood over the city, and also a comet that continued for an entire year.

There were also signs on the earth below. Think about all of the miracles Yeshua and his apostles performed in the first century. You don't get any bigger signs upon the earth than that! What about at the death of Yeshua when the earth quaked, the rocks split, and the veil inside of the temple was torn from top to bottom. Tombs even opened up and saints who had been laid to rest (in death) were raised and appeared to many. You can read about that in Matthew 27. There were plenty of signs upon the earth in the first century.

The blood, fire, and cloud of smoke likely refers to the bloody deaths of those living in Jerusalem in the first century, when the Roman armies came in and ransacked Jerusalem, and pillaged and plundered the Temple there, slaughtering thousands upon thousands of rebellious, unbelieving Israelites, setting the city and its belongings on fire, and leaving nothing but a cloud of smoke after its destruction.

Joel prophesied about all this, and Peter knew it was happening in **their** lifetime.

Look now at Acts 2:20-21.

**20** The sun will be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and remarkable day of Yahweh comes;

**21** then whoever calls on the name of Yahweh will be saved.

Now... we have taken the time in the past few lessons to study what the Bible means when it speaks of the sun and moon ceasing to shine. It is always a judgment text, always a day of Yahweh text. It is always figurative, symbolic language of the destruction of high ranking people, officials, governments, or rulers. Many times it is a reference to the destruction of the rebellious within the nation of Israel.

And it is no different here. Joel 2:31, quoted in Acts 2:20 is a reference to those inside of the nation of Israel who do not call upon Yahweh. *They are that sun* that turns to darkness. *They are that moon* that turns to blood. Their position is taken away. Their light is snuffed out, and it is all because they refuse to accept Yahweh's means of salvation in His only begotten Son - the promised Messiah of and for Israel - Yeshua of Nazareth.

Notice though that Peter continues by quoting Joel 2:32. Whoever of them calls on the name of Yahweh, they are the ones who will be saved or delivered. In other words, Peter is saying that judgment is coming... judgment is near. The end of the age is upon us. The last days are here. The Old Covenant is coming to a close and the Messianic age is beginning. The Messiah has come. Messianic prophecy has been fulfilled. He has lived in accordance with the Torah. He has preached the good news of the Kingdom. He has been wounded for our sins and bruised for our iniquities. He has been resurrected by Yahweh. If you call out to Yahweh, meaning if you repent to Yahweh and receive the means of salvation that Yahweh has given, you will be saved from destruction. You will be delivered. Your sins will be forgiven.

But the opposite is true as well. Destruction will come upon the rebellious within the nation of Israel. Though the children of Israel be as "the stars of the sky," (in number) it is only a remnant that will be saved. Those who do not call upon Yahweh, those who do not accept the means that He has sent, will be destroyed.

Notice what Peter then does right after quoting Joel 2:28-32. He begins preaching about Yeshua of Nazareth. Look at Acts 2:22-24.

**22** "**Men of Israel**, (that's who Peter is preaching to) listen to these words: This Yeshua of Nazareth was a man pointed out to **you** by (the) Mighty One with miracles, wonders, and signs that **(the) Mighty One did among you through Him**, just as **you yourselves** know.

**23** Though He was delivered up according to (the) Mighty One's determined plan and foreknowledge, **you** (men of Israel) used lawless people (the Roman government) to nail Him to a cross and kill Him.

**24** (the) Mighty One raised Him up, ending the pains of death, because it was not possible for Him to be held by it.

Peter preaches about Yahweh's salvation, Yeshua of Nazareth. Yahweh pointed out the man Yeshua with miracles, signs, and wonders that Yahweh did THROUGH Yeshua. Yahweh sent this man to save Israel from their sins.

Yeshua was delivered up to die according to Yahweh's predetermined plan, but it was the men of Israel who used the wicked Roman government to nail Him to a cross and kill him. This proves that those who cried out "Crucify him! Crucify him!" were Israelites. It is highly likely that some of the same men who yelled that out just before Yeshua was crucified, were standing there in Jerusalem that day listening to Peter. Remember verse 22 - Peter is preaching to the MEN OF ISRAEL. It was the men of Israel who used the lawless Roman government to kill Yeshua.

But... Yahweh raised Yeshua from death.

Now, you can go on to read the remainder of Acts 2 where Peter tells the men of Israel in attendance that day to repent. Normally we would think that repent means stop breaking the law of Yahweh, but remember - Peter is preaching to men of Israel. They know the Torah. They live the Torah. They're *at* and *keeping* the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2. What *they* need to repent from is their denial of the Messiah. They were the ones who desired the death of Yeshua, and unless they repented of rejecting him as Yahweh's promised Messiah, they would be judged. Their sun would go dark and their moon would turn to blood.

There would be judgment in the first century. It was the Biblical last days, the last days of Old Covenant Israel, and the beginning of New Covenant Christian Israel. As Joel 2:32 says, there would be survivors. It would be those who called out to Yahweh that would be delivered. Calling out to Yahweh meant accepting the salvation which Yahweh had sent. Not rejecting His Messiah.

Those who received Yahweh's Messiah would shine brightly.

Those who rejected Yahweh's Messiah... their lights would go out.

And there's so much more to this, but that will have to wait for another series I am working on. (*Note: the salvation message is the same today as it was in the first century. Peter's sermon on how to be delivered still stands.*)

For now, I am persuaded that Joel 2:28-32 was fulfilled in the first century like Peter said it was. I do not believe we are awaiting any future, specific fulfillment of Joel.

The Bible was written for our learning and example. We can find principles and applications for us along the way, but let us never forget that the books and letters had a specific audience. We must interpret and understand all texts within the confines, context, culture, and figures of speech they are written in.

The last days, defined Biblically, have come and they have gone. I'll be teaching more about this soon, and the Scriptures will continue to dispel the so-called prophecy experts today. I believe you will be amazed to see how easy it is to understand texts like these if we just allow the Bible to interpret the Bible.