



# **THE WRAP-UP**

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**21 DAYS**  
TO LEARN WHAT THE BIBLE  
TEACHES ABOUT THE  
END OF THE AGE

**KAY D PAULSON**

## Introduction to Eschatological (future) Terms, Concepts and Style

The last days  
The last hour  
The last times

✓ In the Old Testament **the last days** often refer to the coming reign of God on earth (see Isaiah 2:2-4 [page 5]). However, when **the last days**, **the last hour**, and **the last times** are used in the New Testament, they usually relate to the period between the resurrection and the return of Christ—the era of the church. See Acts 2:17-21 [below]; also Hebrews 1:1-2 † [page 101].

### Acts 2:17-21

17 "In **the last days**," God says,  
"I will **pour out my Spirit on all people**.  
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,  
your young men will see visions,  
your old men will dream dreams.  
18 Even on my servants,  
both men and women  
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,  
and they will prophesy.

19 I will show **wonders in the heaven**  
and **signs on the earth below**,  
blood and fire and billows of smoke.  
20 The sun will be turned to darkness  
and the moon to blood  
before **the coming of the great**  
**and glorious day of the Lord**.  
21 and everyone who calls on the  
name of the Lord will be saved."

The day of the  
Lord  
The day; that day;  
at that time  
The day of Christ  
The day of God's  
wrath  
The day of  
judgment  
The great day of  
God Almighty

✓ When **day** is given a singular construction in the Old Testament, as in Isaiah 13:6 (below), it generally envisages **the day of the Lord** in which God comes in awesome power to punish the wicked, restore Israel, and establish His everlasting kingdom. From a New Testament vantage, **that day** and **at that time** encompasses Jesus' coming on the clouds of heaven in power and glory, gathering his elect to himself, destroying his enemies, and inaugurating his reign over the earth. See Mark 13:26-27 [35]; 2 Thessalonians 2:2-3, 8 [30]; Revelation 6:17 [43]; and Revelation 11:15 [52].

### Isaiah 13:6

Wail, for **the day of the Lord** is near;  
it will come like destruction from the Almighty.

The end  
The end of the age

✓ Jesus used **the end** and **the end of the age** to refer to the events that would usher in his all-righteous kingdom in which everything evil is expelled.

### Matthew 13:40-43a

40 "As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at **the end of the age**. 41 The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom **everything that causes sin and all who do evil**. 42 They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

The last day  
(singular)

✓ Jesus used **the last day** (singular) to identify that point in time when the saints will be raised (believers resurrected).

**John 6:39-40, 44**  
**39** “And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but **raise them up at the last day**. **40** For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will **raise him up at the last day**. . . . **44** No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will **raise him up at the last day**.”

The rapture  
*Parousia*  
Second coming  
Return  
of Christ  
Resurrection  
of the saints  
The first  
resurrection

✓ **The second coming** of Christ is the most important event of the end times. The Greek word Paul uses for Christ’s return is **parousia**, which means arrival. While the familiar term **rapture** embodies the biblical “concept” of believers being caught up to the Lord, it is not, strictly speaking, a biblical “term.” The passages cited below describe the **return of Christ** and the **resurrection of the saints** (a.k.a. the **first resurrection**) which happen almost concurrently. Because these Scriptures fix the moment *all* believers are resurrected and changed to be like Jesus, they will serve as an **ANCHOR** for the rest of this study. You will likely refer back to them frequently.



**1 Thessalonians 4:13-17:** This passage establishes the order of events that will take place at the glorious arrival of the Lord Jesus Christ on the clouds of heaven. The fanfare will be deafening and the occasion unmistakable. Revelation 1:7 [38] indicates that “**every eye will see him**.” He will *first* catch up all the dead saints whose spirits/souls come back with him but whose bodies are yet to be raised (resurrected). Then the saints who are still living will also be caught up to meet him in the clouds—never to be separated from Him again.

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-17**  
**13** Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who have fallen asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. **14** We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that **God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him**. **15** According to the Lord’s own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. **16** For **the Lord himself will come** down from heaven, with a **loud command**, with the **voice of the archangel** and with the **trumpet call of God**, and the **dead in Christ will rise first**. **17** After that, **we who are still alive** and are left will be **caught up together with them** in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.



**1 Corinthians 15:51-52:** When the last trumpet sounds, *all* believers, both dead and living, will be instantaneously raised imperishable. Interestingly, Paul counts himself among those who may still be living when the last trumpet blows.

**1 Corinthians 15:51-52**  
**51** Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but **we will all be changed**—**52** in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trumpet**. For **the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed**.



**Philippians 3:20-21; 1 Corinthians 15:49; and 1 John**

**3:2:** When Christ appears, we will be changed to be like him.

**Philippians 3:20-21**

**20** But our citizenship is in heaven. And we **eagerly await a Savior** from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, **21** who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will **transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.**

**1 Corinthians 15:49**

And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, **so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.**

**1 John 3:2**

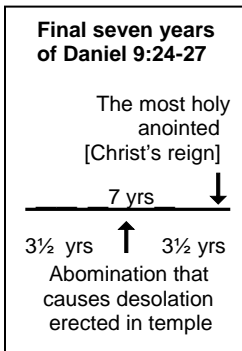
But we know that **when he appears, we shall be like him**, for we shall see him as he is.

The beast  
The little horn  
The antichrist  
The man of lawlessness  
The mark of the beast (666)

✓ **The antichrist** is the title popularly ascribed to the devilish world ruler of the end times. However, this term is found only in 1 and 2 John and there mostly in reference to the “spirit” of antichrist that is already at work in the world. The only place the term seems to specifically apply to an end-time personage is in 1 John 2:18 †: “. . .**you have heard that the antichrist is coming. . .**” Daniel describes this iniquitous person or power as the **little horn** or the **king**. The Apostle Paul calls him the **man of lawlessness**. The term most used in the Bible, however, and always in the book of Revelation, is the **beast**. During his reign, all mankind will be required to worship his image or die, and to wear his name or number (**666**) in order to buy or sell. See Revelation 13:14-18 [58].

Be aware that the term **beast** is used in both Daniel and Revelation in something of a double sense—sometimes referring to a beast kingdom or kingdoms (world empire or empires) and sometimes to an end-time personage (a.k.a. the antichrist). And often the concepts are intertwined.

The tribulation  
Great distress  
Great tribulation



✓ The concept of a seven-year period of **tribulation (great distress)** is derived primarily from the “70 ‘Sevens’” (490 years) prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 [23]. However, the **great tribulation** of Revelation 7:14 [44] probably refers to the *last half* of the 70<sup>th</sup> seven (the final 3½ years), during which the beast erects an image in the temple called the “abomination that causes desolation.” Compare 2 Thessalonians 2:4 [30]. Surprisingly, Revelation 7:14 is the sole instance in the Bible in which “tribulation” is used to specify the period of “great distress” preceding Jesus’ coming with the clouds [33, 35].

Note that Daniel and the Apostle John (author of Revelation) employ interchangeable time references—time, times and half a time; 42 months; and 1,260 days—all of which appear to describe either the first or last 3½ years of the seven-year period of distress in which God unleashes his judgments on the world. Although little is said about what happens during the *first* 3½ years, a great deal is said about the *last* 3½ years, which *begin* with the “abomination that causes desolation” (see Matthew 24:15 [33] and Daniel 9:27 [23]) and *end* when Christ returns on the clouds with power and glory (see Matthew 24:30 [35]). The last 3½ years are by far the more hellish. See Addendum E: *A Complete Listing of Biblical References to 3½-year Periods* [111].

**Armageddon**

✓ **Armageddon** is the biblical location (possibly the plain of Megiddo in central Israel) of the decisive global battle that will take place when the world’s armies mass against Israel at the end of the final 3½ years of the tribulation. The primary New Testament references to the battle of Armageddon, in which the beast’s forces are destroyed, are found in Revelation 16:12-16 [63] and 19:17-21 [73]. Later on, you will study passages in Psalm 2, Isaiah, Joel, Zechariah, Ezekiel and Zephaniah [76-86] that also describe the devastation of the beast’s forces on the “day of the Lord.” See, for example, Isaiah 13:6-11 [77] and 34:1-4 [below].

<b>Isaiah 34:1-4</b>	
<p><b>1</b> Come near, you nations, and listen; pay attention, you peoples! Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world, and all that comes out of it!</p>	<p>He will <b>totally destroy them</b>, he will give them over to slaughter.</p> <p><b>3</b> Their slain will be thrown out, their dead bodies will send up a stench; the <b>mountains will be soaked with their blood.</b></p>
<p><b>2</b> The <b>Lord is angry with all nations;</b> <b>his wrath is upon all their armies.</b></p>	

◆ Note that *another* significant battle appears to take place halfway through the seven-year tribulation period. The armies that surround and attack Jerusalem in Luke 21:20 [33] and capture the city in Zechariah 14:1-2 [32] apparently enable the end-time beast to take control of (and likely establish his headquarters in) Jerusalem during the last 3½ years of the tribulation.

**Millennium  
Thousand  
years**

✓ The **millennium** is the tag given the thousand-year reign of Christ that is cited *six* times in the 20<sup>th</sup> chapter of Revelation. The church down through history has interpreted the **thousand years** in three major ways, which are now called the 1) premillennial, 2) amillennial, and 3) postmillennial interpretations.

①  
**The  
premillennial  
interpretation**

✓ Those who accept the **premillennial interpretation** take a rather literal view of the thousand years, understanding the thousand years to portend a lengthy earthly reign of peace following Christ’s second coming. The premillennial view appears to have been loosely accepted by the early church (including the early church fathers Justin Martyr and Irenaeus) but lost out to the amillennial interpretation following the bishopric of Augustine in the fourth century. In the last century or two, however, the premillennial view has come back into favor among many, if not most, evangelicals. In this teacher’s opinion, the *concept* of an earthly reign of Christ (though accorded a thousand-year time frame *only* in the 20<sup>th</sup> chapter of Revelation) is widely scattered throughout the Scriptures (e.g. Isaiah 2:2-4 [5]). For further study, see pages 87-95.

Isaiah 2:2-4	
<p>2 In the <b>last days</b> the <b>mountain of the Lord's temple</b> will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be <b>raised above the hills</b>, and <b>all nations will stream to it.</b></p> <p>3 Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways,</p>	<p>so that we may walk in his paths." The <b>law will go out from Zion</b>, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.</p> <p>4 He will <b>judge between the nations</b> and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their <b>swords into plowshares</b> and their spears into pruning hooks. <b>Nation will not take up sword against nation</b>, nor will they train for war anymore.</p>

Those who hold the premillennial interpretation divide into two camps regarding whether the church *will* or *will not* go through the tribulation period that occurs before the millennium: They are appropriately called the a) pretribulation and b) posttribulation positions.

**(a) the pretribulation position**

✓ Those who embrace the **pretribulation position** believe the church will be "raptured" (caught up to be with Jesus) before the seven-year tribulation begins. (Still others think some or all believers will be raptured in the middle of the seven years.) This "pre-trib" position, as it is often called, had its beginnings in the dispensational teaching of J. W. Darby (Plymouth Brethren) in the early 1800's and was largely promulgated via the Scofield Bible and Dwight Moody. It is widely accepted today in evangelical circles; several well-known present-day adherents are Hal Lindsay, Jerry Jenkins and Tim LaHaye.

**(b) the posttribulation position**

✓ Those who hold the **posttribulation position** believe the church will be "raptured" when Christ appears at the *end* of the tribulation period to establish His earthly reign. They believe that Christ's coming will happen *once and for all*; they do not believe the Scriptures teach the church will be secretly and silently "caught up" to Jesus before the tribulation begins or that it will be rescued from tribulation distress. They believe, rather, that the church will go into the tribulation period and many (possibly millions of) believers will be martyred. This "post-trib" view is held by a growing contingent of evangelicals today, including many pastors and seminarians.

◆ Those who choose the "pre-trib" position should make certain their choice is based on their understanding of Scripture and not on the premise that God would never put his church through tribulation hell. *Jesus Freaks* (The Voice of the Martyrs, [www.persecution.com](http://www.persecution.com)), quoting the World Christian Encyclopedia, reports that 164,000 Christians were martyred in 1999. Since then that number has risen; in many places in the world today it's not "safe" to be a Christian.

**② The amillennial interpretation**

✓ Between the fourth and eighteenth centuries, most of the church embraced Augustine's **amillennial interpretation** of the thousand years. In his classic, *The City of God*, he explicated the apocalyptic passages of the Bible in an allegorical, non-literal fashion, understanding the thousand-year reign of Christ in Revelation 20 to symbolize the era of the church—that is, the period between Jesus' resurrection and the resurrection of the saints at his return. In this view, Christ's present reign in heaven links directly to the "new heaven and earth" of Revelation without an interim earthly reign of Christ. While this writer does not espouse this interpretation, it is important to know that the Roman Church and a good number of Protestant churches continue to hold this view

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and that there appears to be renewed interest in amillennialism among evangelicals today—particularly in the variant called *partial preterism*, which fixes the writing of Revelation in the 60’s AD and holds that Matthew 24, Daniel, and Revelation were all fulfilled before and during the fall of Jerusalem (with the exception of Christ’s return and the inauguration of the new heaven and earth in Revelation 21—22 [97-100]). See ✓ *A cursory comparison of premillennial and amillennial views* [146].

③  
The  
postmillennial  
interpretation

✓ The **postmillennial interpretation** is also a variant of amillennialism. It holds that the gospel will gradually permeate and transform the world into a reign of peace before the return of Christ. Jonathan Edwards and Charles Finney held views bordering on postmillennialism. But, for obvious reasons, this view has fallen on hard times. Note that both Daniel and Revelation [see below] document an increasing spiritual polarization at the end of the age. Also see 2 Timothy 3:13 †.

**Daniel 12:10**  
**Many will be purified**, made spotless and refined, but **the wicked will continue to be wicked.**

**Revelation 22:11**  
 Let him **who does wrong continue to do wrong**; let him who is vile continue to be vile; let him **who does right continue to do right**; and let him who is holy continue to be holy.

**Allegory  
Symbol  
Metaphor**

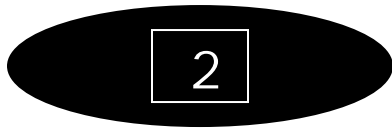
✓ Apocalyptic literature (revelation of a cataclysmic nature) often employs **allegory**—a story that is told to explain or teach something, especially a story with an underlying meaning that is different than the surface meaning; **symbol**—something that stands for or represents something else; and **metaphor**—an implied comparison between two different things; also, something concrete used to represent an idea, quality, or condition.

It appears that God may have used these constructions to help us grasp, in the most profound way, his ultimate righteous judgments on human rebellion and wickedness. Remember, Jesus often used parables to convey his message. It also appears God has given us the freedom to interpret the eschatological (future) passages in Scripture according to our own insights and to arrive at diverse conclusions. Whenever possible, however, Scripture passages should be interpreted according to the plain reading of the text and in conformity with what the Bible says elsewhere on the same subject.

**Types  
Prefigures  
Foreshadows  
Meshing  
Compression**

✓ As Issac, who was led to Mount Moriah to be sacrificed, is a **type** of Christ, who was later crucified at that location; or as Boaz, the husband of Ruth, is a type of Christ, our kinsman-redeemer; so the Greek Seleucid ruler, Antiochus IV Epiphanes [20] **prefigures** the end-time beast (a.k.a. the antichrist). Antiochus’s devastating invasion of Jerusalem in 168 BC appears to **foreshadow** the end-time horrors to be unleashed by the beast. But, be aware that in eschatological passages prefiguring persons or events can sometimes **mesh with** (merge into) fulfilling persons or events, making it difficult to ascertain who or what is which. And sometimes events thought to be separated in time are **compressed** together.

◆ Most of the information in Day 1 is intended to be just that: **information**. You have not yet encountered enough Scripture to form **conclusions**.



The Significance of the Jewish Feasts and Sacred Assemblies

➤ The yearly cycle of Old Testament feasts and sacred assemblies outlined in four books of the Pentateuch (Exodus 23:14-17; Leviticus 23:1- 44; Numbers 28:16—29:40; and Deuteronomy 16:1-17 [nc]) appears to prefigure New Testament events related to **God’s redemptive plan for man**. Four of the eight sacred feasts have already been fulfilled in exact fashion; the last four await fulfillment. The events suggested here as possible fulfillment of the last four holy days are somewhat conjectural—but remember, they look forward to *something*.

① **Passover** When Jesus offered Himself up as the Lamb of God whose blood was shed for the forgiveness of sins, he endowed Passover with its true significance. (Note: Passover can fall any day of the week; Jesus apparently shared the Passover meal with His disciples on a Thursday night.)

**John 1:29**  
The next day John [the Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, **the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world**”  
**1 Corinthians 5:7b**  
For **Christ, our Passover Lamb**, has been sacrificed.

② **The Feast of Unleavened Bread** Jesus was crucified at 9 AM on the first day of the weeklong Feast of Unleavened Bread (probably Friday morning). His atoning sacrifice removed our sins, which yeast symbolizes.

**1 Corinthians 5:8**  
Therefore, let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with **bread without yeast**, the bread of sincerity and truth.

③ **The Feast of Firstfruits** Christ, the firstfruits, was raised from the dead on the Feast of Firstfruits, which always falls the day after the Sabbath (or Sunday, the first day of the week) *during* the Feast of Unleavened Bread. (Notice that Jesus was raised on Sunday, the third day after he died.) When Jesus rose from the dead, he conquered death: “**He suffered death so that . . . he might taste death for everyone**” (Hebrews 2:9).

**1 Corinthians 15:22-23**  
**22** For as in Adam all die, **in Christ all will be made alive.** **23** But each in his own turn: **Christ, the firstfruits**; then, when he comes, those who belong to Him.

④ **The Feast of Weeks (Pentecost)** The Holy Spirit fell on the church on the day of Pentecost, another name for the Feast of Weeks. Pentecost always falls 50 days, or seven Sundays, after the Feast of Firstfruits.

**Acts 2:1-4**  
**1** When the **day of Pentecost** came, they were all together in one place. **2** Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. **3** They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. **4** All of them were **filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

⑤ The Feast of Trumpets

The Feast of Trumpets *may* prefigure the *parousia* (arrival), the second coming of Christ. Note the prominence of the trumpet call in 1 Thessalonians 4:16: “**The Lord himself will come down from heaven . . . with the trumpet call of God**” and 1 Corinthians 15:52: “**For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.**”

**Matthew 24:30-31**  
**30** At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the **Son of Man coming on the clouds** of the sky, with power and great glory. **31** And **he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call**, and they will **gather his elect** from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

⑥ The Day of Atonement

The Day of Atonement *may* prefigure the spiritual renewal of the Jewish remnant. Consider Joel’s prophecy regarding restored Israel: “. . . **Their bloodguilt, which I have not pardoned, I will pardon**” (Joel 4:21).

**Zechariah 12:10-11 and 13:1**  
**12:10** And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. **They will look on me, the one they have pierced**, and they will mourn for him as one **mourns for an only child**, and grieve bitterly for him as one **grieves for a firstborn son**. **11** On that day the weeping in Jerusalem will be great. . . .  
**13:1** On that day **a fountain will be opened** to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to **cleanse them from sin and impurity**.

⑦ The Feast of Tabernacles

The Feast of Tabernacles *may* prefigure a millennial reign of Christ in which God tabernacles with his people.

**Zechariah 14:16-17**  
**16** Then **the survivors** from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord Almighty, and to **celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles**.  
**17** If any of the peoples of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord Almighty, they will have no rain.

⑧ Sacred Assembly

The eighth and last day of the Feast of Tabernacles completed the yearly cycle of feasts. This closing sacred assembly *may* prefigure the new heaven and the new earth—our eternal home.

**2 Peter 3:12b-13**  
**12b** That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. **13** But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward **to a new heaven and a new earth**, the home of righteousness.

**Table of the Jewish Feasts and Sacred Assemblies**

<b>Jewish Feast</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Old Testament purpose</b>	<b>N.T. Fulfillment</b>
Passover	1 <sup>st</sup> month Abib 14 (March-April)	Slaying a lamb and eating it with bitter herbs and bread made without yeast commemorated the Israelites' deliverance from Egypt.	Jesus offered Himself as the Lamb of God whose blood was shed for the forgiveness of sin.
Feast of Unleavened Bread	1 <sup>st</sup> month Abib 15-21	Eating bread without yeast commemorated the Israelites hasty departure from Egypt.	Jesus died to take away the sin of the world.
Feast of Firstfruits (during Feast of Unleavened Bread)	1 <sup>st</sup> month day after the Sabbath during Abib 15-21	The people waved the first sheaves of barley before the Lord in recognition of His bountiful provision for them.	Jesus rose from the dead, defeating the power of death.
Feast of Weeks (Pentecost)	3 <sup>rd</sup> month Sivan 6 (May-June)	The people acknowledged God's blessings by presenting offerings from the field and flock.	Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to empower believers.
Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah)	7 <sup>th</sup> month Tishri 1 (Sept-Oct)	Israel celebrated a day of rest with trumpet blasts and offerings.	[Jesus returns for His bride and establishes His kingdom.]
Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)	7 <sup>th</sup> month Tishri 10	The priests and the people presented offerings to atone for their sins.	[The Jewish nation is cleansed and restored.]
Feast of Tabernacles	7 <sup>th</sup> month Tishri 15-21	The Israelites lived in booths for a week and presented offerings to the Lord in thanksgiving for a bountiful harvest.	[The Lord tabernacles with his people on earth.]
Sacred Assembly	7 <sup>th</sup> month Tishri 22	A sacred assembly on the eighth and final day of the festival celebrated the closing of the yearly cycle of feasts.	[God creates a new heaven and new earth where he will forever dwell with his people.]

Recorded in Exodus 23:14-17; Leviticus 23:1-44; Numbers 28:16 — 29:40; Deuteronomy 16:1-17

◆ **The Feasts:** Most biblical scholars are agreed that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, during the Israelites' forty years of wandering in the desert c 1400 BC. In these books, he recorded both early Hebrew history and the "law" given him on Mt. Sinai. God's directives for carrying out the eight compulsory feasts outlined above make up part of the law. As we study these eight feasts from our New Testament vantage, it appears obvious that God designed them to foreshadow the person and work of his Son, for Jesus has fulfilled the first four sacred feasts precisely. Those who love his appearing await his fulfillment of the last four.

## *The Wrap-Up*

### Study and Discussion Questions

These questions have been prepared to aid individuals, families, study groups, churches and schools in their quest to understand the end times. Each day's study will require one to two hours of preparation time.

Many of the questions are open-ended to encourage freedom of interpretation and stimulate lively group discussion.

Group facilitators can learn right along with the other members of the group. Expertise is not required. Humility is.

Many of the terms and concepts related to the end times are so bandied about in Christian circles that it seemed good to define them at the outset of this study. A good understanding of their meanings will go a long way in helping you to probe the Scriptures and ultimately arrive at your own conclusions.

✓ **Time-related terms** How does the way “the last days” (plural) is typically used in the New

Testament [page 1] differ from Jesus’ use of “the last day” (singular) in John 6 [page 2]? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What similarities do you see in “the day of the Lord” and “the end of the age”? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

✓ **The return of Christ / the resurrection** According to the anchoring Scriptures, the resurrection of all believers, both dead and living, is linked to the second coming of Christ. Sum up briefly what the following passages teach about the resurrection—what, when, where, how, and who?

• 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

• 1 Corinthians 15:51-52: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

• Philippians 3:20-21: \_\_\_\_\_

• 1 Corinthians 15:49: \_\_\_\_\_

• 1 John 3:2: \_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 15:42-44 states: “So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.” What does this verse add to

your understanding of the resurrection? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

✓ **The tribulation / the beast / Armageddon** What is it about the ways in which “the

beast” is used in Daniel and Revelation that can be confusing? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Why is the end-time period of “distress” (generally called the “tribulation”) thought to last seven years?

\_\_\_\_\_

What events begin and end the last 3½ years of the tribulation period? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What is Armageddon? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

✓ **The thousand-year reign** In regard to the three major interpretations of the millennium, the prefix “pre” (before) means Christ returns *before* the millennium, during which time He reigns on earth; the prefix “a” (not, without) means there is *no* earthly millennial reign of Christ; rather, Christ reigns over his church from heaven; and the prefix “post” (after) means Christ returns *after* the millennium, also understood to be the church age, to a world transformed by the gospel.

Now, summarize the background and beliefs of each of the three millennial interpretations [pages 4-6].

• Premillennial interpretation: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

• Amillennial interpretation: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

You may find it helpful to turn to pages 146-147 and read ✓ *A cursory comparison of premillennial and amillennial views.*

• Postmillennial interpretation: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

✓ What is the essential difference between the “pre-trib” and “post-trib” positions? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

On what points do they agree? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thoughtfully consider: Is either position hazardous to one’s faith? If so, why? If not, why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

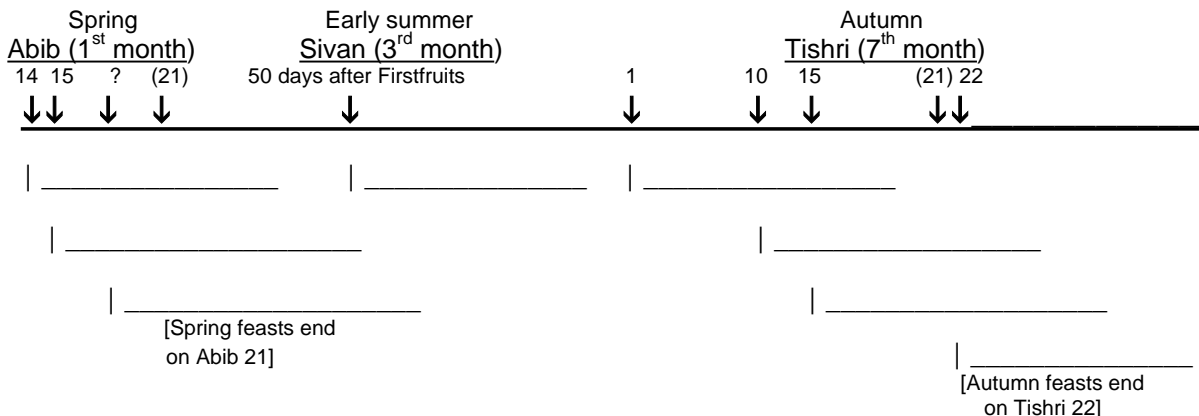
✓ **Symbolism** Does teaching truth through allegory and types (remember, Jesus used parables) make it easier or more difficult to understand what is being taught? Your thoughts: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

✓ **Consider** What questions have come to mind that you would like answered during the remaining studies? \_\_\_\_\_

That the Jewish feasts and sacred assemblies are outlined in four of the five books of the Pentateuch indicates their importance in Jewish worship. Read through each of the four passages in your Bible, jotting down any information pertaining to the feasts you find intriguing. The slight variations you encounter will enhance your understanding of the feasts.

- Exodus 23:14-17: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- Leviticus 23:1-44: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- Numbers 28:16—29:40: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- Deuteronomy 16:1-17: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

To help you fix the yearly cycle of feasts in your mind, identify what feast or sacred assembly falls on each of the dates in the diagram below (the diagram is not drawn to scale). You may need to consult the table on page 9 of the text. Note that the first three feasts fall in the spring, the fourth in early summer, and the last four in autumn. (Be aware that in the times of the patriarchs, the new year began in the spring.)



Like Christmas, Passover can fall on any day of the week. It appears that in the year Jesus died, he commemorated Passover (Abib 14) with his disciples on a Thursday night, telling them his blood was **“poured out for many for the forgiveness of sin”** (Matthew 26:27-28 †). Late that night he was arrested, and at 9 AM the next morning, Friday the 15<sup>th</sup>, the first day of the weeklong Feast of Unleavened Bread, he was crucified, becoming **“sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God”** (2 Corinthians 5:21 †). Then, in fulfillment of his prediction that he **“must be**

**killed and on the third day be raised to life**" (Matthew 16:21 †), he rose from the dead three days later, on Sunday, Abib 17, which that year just happened to coincide with Sunday, the Feast of Firstfruits—and in doing so made it possible for us to be **"united with him in his resurrection"** (Romans 6:5 †). And there's more! When Jesus' little band of followers gathered together in Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost, which always falls fifty days (or seven Sundays) after the Feast of Firstfruits, they were suddenly **"filled with the Holy Spirit"** (Acts 2:1, 4 †). On that day the power of the Spirit that fell on them was so strong 3,000 converts were added to their number.

In summary, Jesus fulfilled the first four feasts by providing a blood sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins (Passover), freeing us from sin to live a holy life (the Feast of Unleavened Bread), springing us from the jaws of death through his resurrection (the Feast of Firstfruits), and filling us with his own Spirit (the Feast of Pentecost). And it all happened on the set feast days of the Jewish calendar shown to Moses 1,400 years earlier. Question: Which do you chalk this up to: (a) incredible coincidence or (b) intelligent design? \_\_\_\_\_

The first four feasts prefigure events related to Christ's first advent. What do you think this fact

portends for the last four feasts and sacred assemblies? \_\_\_\_\_

What are your thoughts about the possible fulfillments of the last four feasts and sacred assemblies suggested on page 8 of the text?

- The Feast of Trumpets: \_\_\_\_\_

- The Day of Atonement: \_\_\_\_\_

- The Feast of Tabernacles: \_\_\_\_\_

- The closing Sacred Assembly \_\_\_\_\_

What does the prescribed cycle of feasts in the Jewish calendar indicate to you about God's plan of redemption for man? \_\_\_\_\_

**For reflection** God, who is eternal, exists beyond (outside) our time-space universe—which, the Bible tells us, had a beginning and was created by God. Because we humans think from a time-bound perspective, what blows *our* minds is what was in *God's* mind before the *beginning of time*. See below.

- "[God] saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus **before the beginning of time.**"  
(2 Timothy 1:9)
- "For he chose us in him **before the creation of the world** to be holy and blameless in his sight."  
(Ephesians 1:4)
- "... you were redeemed . . . with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen **before the creation of the world**, but was revealed in these last times for your sake."  
(1 Peter 1:19-20)
- "... all whose names have been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain **from the creation of the world.**"  
(Revelation 13:8)
- "The inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been written in the book of life **from the creation of the world.** . . ."  
(Revelation 17:8)