

Chapter Thirteen

Our Place In Time

"Surely the Lord God does nothing unless He reveals His secret counsel to His servants the prophets."

Amos 3:7

Many scholars and other knowledgeable christians believe the end of the age is near. On an intuitive level, many ordinary Spirit filled christians feel the Rapture and 2nd Coming are close. And I believe that opinion is widespread among fundamental conservatives. John F. Walvoord, in his commentary on Daniel, sums the general feeling.

"If God is reviving His people Israel politically, allowing the church to drift into indifference and apostasy, and permitting the nations to move toward centralization of political power, it may not be long before the time of the end will overtake the world."¹

But for all the belief that the end is near, no one has been able to put their finger on scriptural reason why. I offer an observation which suggests that God wants to reveal the approximate time of the Rapture. You will remember that Isaac, Abraham's son married Rebecca when he was age 40. I will show that since Isaac is a type of Christ (the bridegroom) and Rebecca is a type of the church (the bride), that the bridegroom will marry the bride when they meet. They meet at the rapture.

Isaac; A Type of Jesus Christ

I suggest the story of Isaac, as a type of Jesus Christ, reveals the approximate time of the Marriage of the Lamb. Many students of scripture have recognized Isaac as a type of Jesus.²

1. "Daniel, The Key to Prophetic Revelation", p.297.

So this idea in itself is not new. One new observation is the extent to which Isaac's life story compares to the life of Jesus from His first coming to His second coming. And, we can see from the following comparison that the stories have many elements in common.

The life of Isaac has in view the promise of redemption for faithful men of all ages. God promised Abraham that from his posterity all the nations of the world would be blessed.³ And we all agree this was fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. Do those few words really express the concept of the Gospel? If the essence of the Gospel is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus the Messiah, where is that concept in those few words? I don't see it. But yet Galatians 3:8 is very specific about that point.⁴

If the death, burial and resurrection is not directly found in those words, is it possible the gospel was preached by the life of Abraham and Isaac as they lived it? Can the type of Isaac be the way God preached the Gospel? Consider John 8:56 with Jesus speaking: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it, and was glad." If he saw it, then it looks like he understood the strange instructions and related events which he and Isaac endured. There seems to be no other answer.

The chart on this and the next page, compare the elements of Isaac's life with elements of Christ's life. In Isaac's life, we see the "type" of

2. Gen.22:18 with Gal.3:6-9; Heb.11:17-19

3. Genesis 22:18; Galatians 3:8-9

4. "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'All the Nations shall be blessed in you.'"

promises to people of faith. That is, the *promise* of Jesus' first coming to die for our sins; and, His second coming to take us to be with Him (Marriage of the Lamb). We do *not* see therein God's dealing with faithless people. We see a type of God's dealing with faithless people under Moses and the Law. An incredible correlation exists in the type, shown below, that can only be explained by the perfection of God! See for yourself.

At the end of the table on the next page, I draw your attention to the concept that just as Isaac was married at age 40, so the Marriage of the Lamb will occur when Jesus is figuratively age 40. Can we say that because all the rest of the Isaac's life matches the life of Christ, that Christ must

also meet His bride at age 40? I am convinced we can. This is where I get the idea that God wants to tell us the approximate time of His arrival.

The question is: how does 40 figurative years of Jesus' life relate to the actual passing of time since the birth of Christ? I suggest to you that it relates by the figurative meaning of the numbers $40 \times 50 = 2000$.

Let's start with what we know. Since Jesus was crucified, resurrected and taken up into Heaven at about age 33, we know that literal years are not in view here. Therefore, the years must have a figurative meaning. Christians who believe in the rapture of the church also believe that it is yet future to 2008 for reasons external to this book.

Isaac; A Type of Jesus Christ

General References: Genesis 22, 23, 24; I Corinthians 15:3-4;
Galations 3:6-9; Romans 4:1-25; Hebrews 11:17-19

ISAAC	JESUS
Abraham's only begotton son. Hebrews 11:17	The Father's only begotton Son. John 3:16
Isaac's birth is a miracle. Genesis 17:17	Jesus' birth is a miracle. Matthew 1:22-25
God asks Abraham to sacrifice his son. Genesis 22:2	The Father decides to sacrifice His Son. Isaiah 53
The son whom Abraham loved. Genesis 22:2	Jesus, the Son whom the Father loved. John 17:23-26
Isaac carries wood up the hill. Genesis 22:6	Jesus carries cross up the hill. John 19:17
God will provide Himself a lamb. Ram in thicket. Genesis 22:7	Jesus, "the Lamb", who is the Son of God. Revelation 5:12
Abraham tries to sacrifice Isaac but does ram instead. Genesis 22:9-11	God allows His Son to be crucified. John 19:17
Abraham sacrifices Isaac on Mt. Moriah. Genesis 22:2,9	God sacrifices Jesus on Golgotha; probably Mt. Moriah. John 19:17
Isaac resurrected to Abraham's eyes on the third day. Genesis 22:9-11 Hebrews 11:19	Jesus resurrected on the third day. I Cor. 15:3-4

Isaac; A Type of Jesus Christ

Continued

ISAAC	JESUS
Isaac disappears from the record until united with His bride. Genesis 24:62	Jesus ascends to Heaven until united with His bride. John 14:3
Sarah, Abraham's wife, dies. Genesis 23:1-20	Israel, God's "wife", dies as a nation 70 a.d. Hosea 1-5; Isaiah 54:5-6
Abraham sends Eliezer to find a bride for Isaac. Genesis 24:3	The Father sends the Holy Spirit to find a "bride" for Christ. John 16:7
Eliezer qualifies her with questions of faith. Genesis 24:40-46	H.S. qualifies the true church (bride) by faith. Hebrews 11:6
Eliezer gives her gifts. Genesis 24:53	Holy Spirit gives gifts. I Cor. 12:11
Rebekah chooses to follow Eliezer to Isaac. Genesis 24:58	Christians choose to follow the H.S. to Jesus. Matt.4:19
Isaac marries Rebekah. Genesis 24:67	Jesus marries church. Revelation 19:7-10
Isaac marries at age 40. Genesis 25:20	Jesus, figuratively, marries the Church, at age 40?

Many may argue that it comes after the Great Tribulation but that is still future to 2008.

Since we are still looking for the rapture, 40 figurative years of Jesus' life must relate to *at least* 2,008 elapsed years. Of course, this is because He was born more than 2,008 years ago as of July, 2008.

There is no maximum number of years to which 40 figurative years could relate. But intuitively we believe its relates to the previously discussed 2000 year dispensations.

The next section makes the connection between figurative years and literal years. This is done by relating the significance of the present dispensation, that of Grace and of Christ calling out His Church, to the significance of numbers in the scripture.

Significance of Numbers

Since God is perfect and we see design in the Word of God, each part of the design must have significance. For the purposes of this discussion, that means the whole content of the Bible is significant including the numbers.

Scripture uses numbers consistently which give them significance as types.

Jesus buried 3 days - Mark 8:31
 7 days of creation - Gen. 1:1 - 2:3
 Circumcision on 8th day - Gen.17:12
 The 10 commandments - Exodus 20
 12 Patriarchs, 12 Apostles,
 24 Elders - Revelation 4:4
 40 years in wilderness - Duet. 8:2-5
 70 years captivity - Jeremiah 35:11
 153 fishes netted - John 21:11
 666 a number of a name - Rev. 13:17,18

In these statements we find structure. God has locked Himself into doing certain things at a certain time. In the above case, He has decreed 24 not 22 elders; 12 not 13 apostles, and 40 not 38.5 years in the wilderness.

The fact that God has specified certain things evidences planning. Since God is perfect, and in His car every part has design and significance, and it follows that everywhere the same numbers are used, the meaning (and hence significance) is the same. This concept is commonly recognized in fundamental churches.

The next paragraphs speak of the figurative definitions of numbers in Scripture. E.W. Bullinger⁵ has observed the way God uses numbers and deduced that each has its own figurative definition. And wherever a particular number is used, it carries the same definition. Bullard has a whole book full of reasons for these numbers having typical significance. So I will not repeat them. Here are the figurative definitions of some common numbers.

- One - Unity; the First one - Eph.4:4-6
- Two - Division; (good/evil; old/new)
- Three - Divine perfection; Trinity
- Four - Speaks of the creation (seasons)
- Five - Grace, redemption
- Six - The number of man (created 6th day)
- Seven - Completeness (all creation days)
- Eight - Regeneration, new beginnings
- Nine - Judgement, finality
- Ten - Ordinal perfection (cycle repeats)
- 20 - Expectancy
- Forty - Probation, trial or chastisement
- Fifty - Deliverance and rest or jubilee

The numbers forty and fifty are of particular interest to us in this study. So, let's look at those numbers in more detail.

Bullinger says,

“Forty has long been universally recognized as an important number, both on account of the frequency of its occurrence, and the uniformity of its association with a period of probation, trial and chastisement - (not judgement, like the

number 9, which stands in connection with the punishment of enemies, but the chastisement of sons, and of a covenant peoples). It is the product of 5 and 8, and points to the action of grace (5), *leading to and ending in revival and renewal* (8). This is certainly the case where forty relates to a period of evident probation. But where it relates to enlarged dominion, or to renewed or extended rule, then it does so in virtue of its factors 4 and 10, and in harmony with their signification.

“There are 15 such periods which appear on the surface of the Scriptures, and which may be thus classified:

“Forty Years of Probation by Trial
Israel in wilderness, Duet. viii, 2-5; Ps. xcv.10; Acts xiii.10 (the third 40 of Moses' life, 120 years).

Israel from the crucifixion to the destruction of Jerusalem.

“Forty Years of Probation by Trial
under Othniel, Judges iii.11,
under Barak, Judges v.31,
under Gideon, Judges viii.28.

“Forty Years of Probation by Prosperity in Enlarged Dominion
under David, 2 Sam. v.4,
under Solomon, I Kings xi. 42,
under Jeroboam II. See 2 Kings xii.17, 18;
xiii. 3, 5, 7,22, 25; xiv. 12-14, 23, 28,
under Jehoash, 2 Kings xii.1,
under Joash, 2 Chron.xxiv.1,

“Forty Years of Probation by Humiliation and Servitude:
Israel under the Philistines, Judges xiii.1,
Israel in the Time of Eli, I Sam. iv.18,
Israel under Saul, Acts xiii.21,

“Forty Years of Probation by Waiting
Moses in Egypt, Acts xii.23,
Moses in Midian, Acts xii.30.”⁶

5. The definitive work in this study is Number In Scripture.

6. Bullinger, p.266

Did you notice that every time the number forty is used it retains the same figurative meaning? It is the same way with the number 50.

Bullinger states,

“The number 50 is the number of jubilee or deliverance. It is the issue of 7x7 (7 squared), and points to the *deliverance and rest following on as the result of the perfect consummation of time.*”

50 is a product of 5x10 its factors which speak of grace (5) multiplied ten fold. We can see this illustrated in Leviticus 25:8-10.

“You are also to count off seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years, so that you have the time of the seven sabbaths of years, namely forty-nine years.

“You shall sound a ram's horn abroad on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the day of atonement you shall sound a horn all through your land.

“You shall thus consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim a release through the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, and each of you shall return to his own property, and each of you shall return to his own family.”

This is the authorization that establishes 50 as the number of deliverance. However, the same theme is present in other uses of the number.

Azariah is Fifty years old when Menahem, King of Israel dies. The kingdom of Israel is delivered to the next king (II Kings 15:23).

The breadth of Noah's ark was 50 cubits. The Ark was the tool of God's delivering Noah and his family (Genesis 6:15).

God would save the city of Sodom if 50 righteous men were found. Deliverance is associated with 50. (Genesis 18:26).

The Levites worked in Tabernacle service from 25 to 50 years old. At fifty years old they were relieved of duty (Numbers 8:25).

David buys a threshing floor and oxen for 50 shekels of silver for an altar to sacrifice in order that the Lord would deliver Israel from a plague (II Samuel 24:24).

Fire from heaven delivers Elijah from 50 soldiers of King Ahaziah (II Kings 1:9-14).

Jews are delivered when Haman is hung on

his own 50 cubit high gallows (Esther 7:10).

Thus we see a figurative association of deliverance with the number 50. And we already discussed 40 as the number of probation.

The forty *figurative* years between the birth of Jesus and the marriage of the Lamb, represent a time of probation for mankind. In this period, God offers man the opportunity to accept forgiveness of sins. The Holy Spirit seeks people who will love Jesus, the bridegroom.⁷ And people either accept or reject Him. For the people who accept Jesus, the remainder of their life will prove that God's leadership is good, acceptable and perfect.⁸ Therefore, peoples lives will demonstrate their saved or lost condition. However, we know most people will not accept Him and perish. Thus, this 2000 year period since Jesus lived is one of probation, just as the examples cited earlier were for Israel.

This period of probation is also known as the dispensation of grace. The name comes from the fact that forgiveness of sins is unmerited favor.

This 2000 year period we are in is also characterized by the redemption of the creation.⁹ We saw that in the figurative definitions of the number 50.

Thus, the numbers 40 and 50 are intimately associated with the character of this period. This suggests to me that 40 probationary periods of grace, each 50 years long, make up the full 2,000 years of grace which I suggest God has planned from the beginning.

If this is true, we see a perfect plan. It coordinates with the overall 7,000 year plan of man. It coordinates with the Biblical history of this 2,000 year dispensation and the previous 2000 year periods from Adam to Isaac and from Isaac to Jesus Christ. This idea is consistent with all God's word as far as I can see.

I pray that you will accept the following view in the spirit of love. If you believe it, share Christ with your friends while you still can. Time is short. He will be back soon.

Let us consider for a moment, the numbers of the year 2008 in view of the possibility that this might be the year of the Rapture of Christ's church.

The number 20 is the number of expectancy.

7. John 3:29

8. Romans 12:2

9. Romans 8:19-21

The number 2000 could be considered an extension of expectancy; that is great expectancy! The number 8 is the number of renewal. Maybe its possible this is the Rapture year because the two numbers taken together, form the concept of great expectancy of renewal. I realize this is very speculative. However, are you doing your part to witness to those who need Christ in their life?

The Rapture Season

At the beginning of this chapter, I suggested Isaac's life was a type of events from the first coming to the second coming of Jesus Christ. Now here is another "type" of the highlights of the same period.

We find this type in the various feasts that God told Israel to celebrate. Each feast was celebrated at a specific time of the year. And each feast is associated with a significant Christian celebration. The first feast is the Passover, and it is associated with the Cross. It came in the Spring of the year; probably in April.¹⁰ We can see the Cross reflected in the eating of the Passover meal.

On the night Jesus was betrayed, He and the 12 gathered in the Upper Room to eat the Passover meal. In Luke 22:19-20 we read,

"And having taken some bread, when He had given thanks, He broke it, and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.'"

"And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, 'This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.'"

Isn't this what the Passover looked forward to all those years? The sacrificing of the "Lamb" for the sins of the world. Then can't we say the Passover feast is a type of the cross? And if that is true, isn't it reasonable to believe the other feasts relate to other events after His first coming? I believe so.

On the next page, a chart outlines the feasts and related prophetic events. Victor Buksbazen, in his book "The Gospel in the Feasts of Israel",

spends 100 pages giving reasons why he believes the Feasts relate to christian events. He speaks from a scriptural view while giving much Jewish background.

Intuitively, you can see the feasts relate to the major milestones in the first to second coming events. Clarence Larkin, a conservative scholar of the early 20th Century, confirms this thought:

"The First Four Feasts foreshadow truths connected with this present Gospel Dispensation and those who form the 'heavenly' people of the Lord, the Church; while the Last Three Feasts foreshadow the blessings in store for God's 'earthly' people, the Jews."¹¹

I would add a small note to his view. He suggests the last three feasts apply to Israel and not the Church. While I agree that the Feast of Trumpets, Rosh Hashannah (5th) signifies the regathering of Israel as he does, I suggest it also signifies the end of the Church age. Pentecost (Weeks) is the feast immediately prior. It signifies the beginning of the Church age. And believers in a Pretribulation Rapture would say the Rapture is the end of that age.

If the fact that the first four feasts came at the time of the year specified in Scripture, then can we depend on God to cause the last three feasts to come at the specified time? It would seem so.

To sum the opinions, it appears to me, the Rapture is both the finish of the Church age and the start of God's dealing with Israel again. This means the Feast of Trumpets signifies both events. We have suggested the year and season for the Rapture and Second Coming, but no one can predict the day or hour.¹²

Perhaps God's reasons for not predicting the day or hour is very practical. One reason could be that the day and hour are different in every part of the world. When its 11AM in Israel, its 11PM in California the previous day! Another reason is secular history is not accurate enough to pinpoint the birth of Jesus to the day. Get hot for Christ while you still can! Maybe God just doesn't want to tell us exactly when.

In the year 2009, Rosh Hashannah (the Feast of Trumpets) will be on September 19.

10. Encyclopedia of World History, P.1382

11. Dispensational Truth, p.159.

12. Matthew 24:36, 25:13

Jewish Feasts In Prophecy

General References: Leviticus 23; Dueteronomy 16

Jewish Calendar M/DD	FEAST	SEASON	PROPHECY
1/14	Passover - sacrificial lamb slain Exodus 12:1-13	SPRING (March / April)	The Cross - Jesus, The Lamb, slain John 1:29; I Cor.5:7
1/15	Unleavened Bread - Exodus 12:17; Leviticus 23:6		Burial - Luke 22:7, 19; I Cor. 5:7-8
1/21	First Fruits - Leviticus 23:6		Resurrection - I Cor. 15:23
3/04	Weeks - 50 days after Passover Leviticus 23:16-17	SUMMER (May / June)	Pentecost - 50 days after the Cross
7/01	Trumpets - Leviticus 23:27	FALL (Sept. / Oct.)	Rapture - I Cor. 15:52
7/10	Day of Atonement - A humbling Leviticus 23:27		Israel humbled - Daniel 9:27; they discover Jesus is Messiah. Romans 11:19, 20, 26
7/15	Booths (Tabernacles) - “... gathered in the crops” Leviticus 23:39 “... wave palm branches” Leviticus 23:40		2nd Coming of Christ - “... gathered clusters” Revelation 14:19-20 Zechariah 14:12-20 “... wave palm branches” Matthew 21:8-9

Look out, your redemption draweth nigh
(Luke 21:28).

