

God is a Date-Setter!

by
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There are numerous arguments from the Scriptures to support the statement that God is a date-setter! In this treatise we will consider some of the obvious ones. I do so knowing that many view the term “date setter” in the same way they do the word “heretic.” Thus, anyone who dares to set a date for the “Rapture” or the “2nd Advent” is viewed by most as either a “heretic” or a “lunatic.” This is because those who have made predictions about the “2nd Advent” of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the past, were wrong. The irony is that God “expects” us to know when these two events are to take place. Otherwise, why are we repeatedly told to “watch” for them?

God has always revealed the time of events He has foretold, either by way of His Word, His prophets, or by recognizable signs! All of which has allowed mankind to know certain things at specific times. Thus, the Scriptures reveal that God has always told mankind, in advance, WHAT He was going to do, WHY He was going to do it and WHEN He would act (Isa. 46:10; 48:16; Amos 3:7). This truth is confirmed throughout the Holy Bible by people and prophets, chosen by God, living in various nations and periods of time. Some examples of God’s revelations to mankind by way of people and His prophets involved: 1. Adam (Gen. 2:16-17). 2. Noah (Gen. 6:3; 7:4). 3. Abraham (Gen. 15:13; 20:7). 4. Lot (Gen. 19:12-25). 5. Joseph (Gen. 41:1-7, 25-32). 6. Moses (Num. 14:11, 33-34). 7. Isaiah (Isa. 6:1-13; 10:5-12, 20-22; 11:1-12:6; 13:1, 17-19). 8. Jeremiah (Jer. 25:8-12; 27:6-8; 29:10). 9. Ezekiel (Ezek. 29:8-15, 19). 10. Daniel (Dan. 4:4-37; 5:5, 25-28, 30; 7:7-8, 24-25; 8:13-14; 9:2, 24-27; 10:14; 12:1, 6-7, 11-12). 11. Jonah (Jon. 3:4). 12. Zechariah (Zech. 12:1-14:21) 13. John the Baptist (Mt. 3:1-2). 14. Lord Jesus (Mt. 12:38-40; 23:13-36; 24:34; 26:1-2; Jn. 2:18-19, 21). 15. John the apostle (Rev. 1:3, 9-11, 19; 2:1-22:19).

Another truth is that God always gives a “sign,” to authenticate His message, whether it is one of warning or of something else (Isa. 7:14; 9:6-7; Mt. 1:18-25). God has also revealed future events by way of annual “feast days” for the nation of Israel to observe. These “festivals” were given so Israel would not forget how God had provided for them before leaving Egypt and during their years of wandering. These festivals are called the “Seven Holy Feasts of the LORD” (Lev. 23). What the Jews of the Old Testament and most Christians in the New Testament have in common is their ignorance of the “prophetic significance” of these seven festivals. They knew not that each of these “feasts” were to be “literally” fulfilled by the Lord Jesus Christ at an “appointed” period of time! The English word "feast" is translated from the Hebrew word "moed" meaning: “appointed sign, appointed time, appointed season, place of assembly, or set feast.”

All Christians should know that the Lord Jesus Christ **HAS** fulfilled the first of the annual “seven holy feasts of the LORD” called the “Feast of the Passover” with His “death,” as in the Old Testament (Ex. 12:1-28; Lev. 17:11; 23:4-5; Dt. 16:1-2,5-7,12; Ps. 51:5), and the New Testa-

ment (Jn. 1:29; Rom. 3:23; 1 Cor. 5:7; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 1:18-19).

Some Christians might know that the Lord Jesus Christ **HAS** also fulfilled the second feast of the year called the "Feast of Unleavened Bread," with His "burial" as in the Old Testament (Ex. 12:14-20, 34, 39; 23:15; Lev. 23:6-8; Dt. 16:3-4, 8, 12, 16-17), and the New Testament (Jn. 6:35; 1 Cor. 5:6-8; 2 Cor. 5:7, 21). The third feast and the first "harvest" feast of the year is called the "Feast of First Fruits," which was fulfilled with His "resurrection" as in the Old Testament (Ex. 23:16a; Lev. 23:9-14; Num. 28:26a; Dt. 16:12), and the New Testament (Mt. 27:52-53; Lk. 24:1-7; Rom. 8:34; 1 Cor. 15:20-23; Heb. 4:14-15; 7:25; 9:24-26; Jas. 1:18). The fourth feast and second "harvest" feast of the year is called the "Feast of Weeks" [Pentecost], and was fulfilled with the "birth of His Church," as in the Old Testament (Ex. 34:22a; Lev. 2:11; 23:15-22; Num. 28:26b-31; Dt. 16:9-12, 16-17; 2 Chr. 8:13), and in the New Testament (Acts 2; 1 Cor. 16:8).

Few Christians know that the Lord Jesus Christ **WILL** fulfill the fifth feast and last "harvest" feast of the year that is called the "Feast of Trumpets," with the "Rapture" as in the Old Testament (Ex. 23:16b; 34:22b; Lev. 23:23-25; Num. 29:1-6), and in the New Testament (Mt. 24:36-42, 50-51; 25:6-10; Mk. 13:32-37; Lk. 17:26-30, 34-36; Jn. 4:34-35; 14:2-3; 1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 Th. 4:13-5:6; 2 Th. 2:1; Rev. 3:3, 10-11; 4:1; 22:12-13, 17, 20). The sixth feast is called the "Feast of a Day of Atonement," and will be fulfilled with His "2nd Advent" to earth, as in the Old Testament (Lev. 16; 23:26-32; Num. 29:7-11; Zech. 12:10; 13:1), and the New Testament (Acts 27:9; Rom. 11:26-27; Heb. 7:27; 9:1-7, 11-12; 10:12, 17). And lastly, the seventh feast that is called the "Feast of Tabernacles" [Booths], will be fulfilled with His 1000 year reign on earth, as in the Old Testament (Lev. 23:33-44; Num. 29:12-40; Dt. 16:13-17; 31:9-13; Ezra 3:4-5; Neh. 8:14-18; Ezek. 37:26-27; Zech. 14:16-19), and in the New Testament (Jn. 7:2-15, 28, 37-39).

One third of the Scriptures were prophetic when they were written. Many of these prophecies have been fulfilled. Those prophecies that remain will also be fulfilled at their "appointed" time. There can be no doubt of this since the Holy Bible is the only source of truth in the world. Bible Prophecy is simply "prerecorded history." Prophecy is why the Holy Bible is unique among all books. No other book, whether deemed holy or not has ever dared to tell of events before they happen, refer to places that are yet to exist and tell of people not yet born. The Holy Bible and its prophecies are what distinguishes Christianity from all other beliefs and teachings. The Lord Jesus Christ could not have been verified to be the "Messiah" without knowing the prophecies of the Old Testament (Acts 17:10-12). This is why the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ is based upon prophecy (Rev. 19:10b). Thus, Christianity is totally dependent upon Bible Prophecy!

Teachings that are believed to be true by most Christians is that the Lord Jesus Christ never taught about, spoke about, or even alluded to His return in the event known as the "Rapture." Another common belief, among Christians, is that it is impossible to know the day of the "Rapture" since it is believed that it could take place at any moment, in any day, of any year. This doctrine is called the "imminency" of the "Rapture." Also, most Christians do not believe that the day of the "Second Coming" to earth, by the Lord Jesus Christ, can be known either!

The Lord Jesus said, “. . . for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; and hidden, that shall not be known” (Mt. 10:26). “For there is nothing hidden, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come [to light]” (Mk. 4:22). “But take heed; behold, I have foretold you all things” (Mk. 13:23). “For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither *any thing* hidden, that shall not be known and come [to light]” (Lk. 8:17). “For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hidden, that shall not be known” (Lk. 12:2). “Jesus answered him, I spoke openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, where the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing” (Jn. 18:20).

By taking the Lord Jesus Christ at His word, I believe the day of the “Rapture” and His “2nd Advent” will be known prior to their taking place! How can anyone think otherwise when He repeatedly said that He has foretold “all things” and that nothing is, or will be, “hidden.” Also, for anyone not to know when the “Rapture” will take place, runs contrary to how God has dealt with mankind throughout the ages.

Noah “warned” the people of his day repeatedly for 120 years, that God was going to “judge” them (Gen. 6:3,13, 19-7:3). The arrival of the animals that boarded the ark was to be the “sign” to authenticate the warning given by Noah, followed by the “judgment” of God. Lot and his family were “warned” that the “judgment” of God would fall upon the cities of Sodom and Gommorah, and the other three cities of the plains, for their gross sin, the day they departed Sodom (Gen. 14:2-3, 8; 19:1-29). The “sign,” to authenticate this “warning,” was the blinding of the entire homosexual mob which was attempting to assault the two messengers of God in Lot’s house. Upon the departure of Lot and his family from the city of Sodom, God “judged” the five cities He had “warned,” with their complete destruction. Thus, God’s way of warning, sign, judgment!

The Lord Jesus Christ described how life would be on the earth when the “Rapture” took place. They are the same things that were taking place when Noah’s generation drowned and the cities of the plain were destroyed. Those things are: 1. eating. 2. drinking. 3. buying. 4. selling. 5. building. 6. planting. 7. marrying. 8. divorcing. 9. remarrying (Mt. 24:37-41; Lk. 17:26-30, 34-36). This cannot be true of the days prior to the “2nd Advent” to earth by the Lord Jesus Christ since His “2nd Advent” takes place AFTER the years of “great” tribulation (Mt. 24:21-22)!

The Lord Jesus Christ gave an example of God’s way of first giving a “warning” of coming judgment (Lk. 11:50-51), then a “sign” to authenticate the warning, which is followed by His “judgment.” He did this three days before His crucifixion in 30 A.D. when He told the scribes and the Pharisees of all that would come upon them and why (Mt. 23:13-35). Then He told them it would take place within their generation (Mt. 23:36). Later that same day the Lord Jesus Christ told His twelve disciples “three” different times that the Temple and Jerusalem would be totally destroyed (Lk. 21:5-6; Mk. 13:1-2; Mt. 24:1-2). This caused four of His disciples to ask Him when this would take place and what would be the “sign” to indicate the soon fulfillment of this “warning” (Mk. 13:3-4). They were told that the “sign” would be when an army surrounded Jerusalem (Lk. 21:20). History reveals to us how this warning, sign and judgment were fulfilled!

In his book entitled, “The Wars of the Jews” the Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus, gave his eyewitness account of why and how the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem took place. The war between the Jews and the Romans began in 66 A.D. with a Jewish rebellion that was deliberately provoked by the procurator of Judea. The Jews who had sedition in mind persuaded those who officiated in the divine service of the Temple to refuse a gift of sacrifice from all foreigners, including Caesar. The war between the Jews and the Romans began with this act by the priests (Book 2, Ch. 17).

It was after the Roman garrison in Jerusalem was killed (Book 2, Ch. 17), that a legion of Roman troops came and surrounded Jerusalem in 68 A.D. to end the rebellion (Book 2, Ch. 19). The Jews who were of the seditious element of the city, were ready to surrender, after being besieged, when the Roman commander decided to retreat. Many Roman soldiers were killed as a result and much equipment lost as the Romans fled from the city (Book 2, Ch. 19). It was while this retreat by the Roman troops was taking place, that those who remembered and believed the “warning” and the “sign” given by the Lord Jesus Christ thirty-eight years earlier, were able to flee from the city of Jerusalem (Book 2, Ch. 20). Thus, they escaped the death, destruction and horror of what was to come upon those who would later be trapped within the walls of Jerusalem.

Judea was in arms and in turmoil as the Jewish people rebelled against their Roman rulers. To quell this rebellion, the Roman Emperor sent three of his finest legions to Palestine under the command of Vespasian. As a result, order was soon reestablished in the region (Book 4, Ch. 9). It was late in 69 A.D. when Vespasian sailed back to Rome to become her emperor. His son Titus was given command of the three legions brought from Rome, along with the legion that had suffered a large loss of men and equipment while being chased from Jerusalem in the early days of the rebellion (Book 5, Ch. 1). Titus, who would later succeed his father as emperor, was ordered to destroy the city of Jerusalem (Book 4, Ch. 11).

While Vespasian had been laying Judea to waste in his effort to end the Jewish rebellion, many acts of atrocity had been suffered by the citizens of Jerusalem from the three seditious Jewish factions, fighting among themselves for control of the city. These Jewish factions were also responsible for the destruction of great quantities of corn and other provisions stored in the city (Book 5, Ch. 1). This is why Josephus wrote, “. . . the sedition destroyed the city, and the Romans destroyed the sedition.” He also wrote, “. . . that we may justly ascribe our misfortunes to our own people, and the just vengeance taken on them to the Romans” (Book 5, Ch. 6).

In April, 70 A.D. a great number of Jews and proselytes from all over Judea and other countries were in Jerusalem. They had come, as was the custom, to celebrate the “Feast of the Passover” and the “Feast of Unleavened Bread” (Book 5, Ch. 3). It was at this time when Titus came upon Jerusalem and began his siege of the city. Titus set the strongest part of his army by the northwest corner wall of the city (Book 5, Ch. 3). After twenty-four days of heavy fighting, Titus had control of the first two walls of the city, with one wall remaining (Book 5, Ch. 7 & 8).

Many of the Jewish people in the city attempted to surrender to the Romans who offered them food and safety. But they were prevented from doing so by the seditious factions (Book 5, Ch. 10). Thus, they all retreated into the inner fortified city. This area included the Temple and the tower Antonia, which was like a fortress. It had been built by King Herod the Great and named after his good friend, Mark Antony (Book 1, Ch. 21 & Book 5, Ch. 5).

It was fear of what the seditious Jews would do to the relatives they would leave behind that kept many of the Jewish people from deserting to the Romans. In their quest for something to eat outside the city walls, many Jews were captured by Roman soldiers. Thus, five hundred or more Jews a day were tortured and crucified in grotesque positions while being killed. The forest of crosses before the walls of Jerusalem grew larger as each day passed (Book 5, Ch. 11). The famine in the city, “. . . began to extend its progress, and devour the people by whole houses and families” (Book 5, Ch. 12). It was reported that many of the Jews who did desert to the Romans overate so much upon receiving food that it caused their stomachs to literally burst open (Book 5, Ch. 13). It was after taking the tower Antonia when both Josephus and Titus made pleas to the seditious Jews to spare the Temple from damage by moving their forces to another location. Their pleas were ignored (Book 6, Ch. 2).

Josephus wrote, “Now of those that perished by famine in the city the number was prodigious; and the miseries they underwent were unspeakable.” He also wrote, “Moreover their hunger was so intolerable, that it obliged them to chew everything.” It was when Titus heard that a mother had roasted and eaten her own child that he said, “Men ought not to leave such a city upon the habitable earth to be seen by the sun, wherein mothers are thus fed, although such food be fitter for the fathers than for the mothers to eat of, since it is they that continue still in a state of war against us, after they have undergone such miseries as these” (Book 6, Ch. 3).

Titus had given orders to his soldiers that the Temple was to be spared! However, those of the seditious Jews had not the same concern for they were the first to set fire to it (Book 6, Ch. 2). When the assault by the Roman soldiers finally reached the inner courts of the Temple grounds, they were out of control. Josephus was to record that one of these soldiers “. . . cast fire on the gate’s hinges in the dark, so that the flames leapt out from the holy house, and Caesar and the generals retired, and no one any longer forbade its burning; and thus was the holy house destroyed, without Caesar’s assent” (Book 6, Ch. 4).

Titus completed the devastation by ordering that the city be demolished (Book 7, Ch. 1). The destruction of the Temple by fire caused the vast amount of gold and silver that had graced the walls to melt between its building blocks. Thus, it was necessary for the Roman troops and their Jewish captives to totally dismantle the Temple, block by block, to gather the melted gold and silver. All of this fulfilled not only the prophecies of the Lord Jesus Christ but also those of Micah and Daniel (Jer. 26:18; Dan. 9:26; Mic. 3:12). The prophecies of these two men, in regards to the destruction of the city and Temple, had been given and recorded hundreds of years earlier!

Jerusalem had become a city of the dead! According to Josephus, “. . . the number of those that perished during the whole siege . . .” was “. . . 1,100,000 . . .” (Book 6, Ch. 9). “Nor was there any place in the city that had no dead bodies in it, but what was entirely covered with those that were killed, either by the famine, or the rebellion” (Book 6, Ch. 7). Josephus wrote that Titus, “. . . frequently cursed those that had been the authors of their revolt” (Book 7, Ch. 5).

Those Jews who had survived the siege were dispersed throughout the world as slaves, where they had little value since their numbers were so great (Book 6, Ch. 9). This dispersion of the Jews and their small value as slaves among the nations of the world was another fulfillment of prophecy from the Old Testament and the Lord Jesus Christ (Lev. 26:33, 38-39; Dt. 4:27; 28:63-68; Ps. 44:11-12; Lk. 21:20-24).

This is why, while on His way to being crucified, the Lord Jesus Christ said to the women wailing and lamenting for Him, “. . . Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in which they shall say, Blessed *are* the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the [breasts which never nursed]. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry” (Lk. 23:27-31)?

The number one reason given by those who believe that no one is to know when the “Rapture” or the “Second Coming” to earth by the Lord Jesus Christ will take place is the answer given by Him to the question, “And what *shall be* the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled” (Mk. 13:4b). He answered that the “sign” would be the “Rapture.” However, He prefaced His answer with, “But of that day and (Mt. 24:36a; Mk. 13:32a) *that* (Mk. 13:32b) hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels (Mt. 24:36b; Mk. 13:32c) of heaven (Mt. 24:36c), who are in heaven, neither the Son (Mk. 13:32d), but (Mt. 24:36d; Mk. 13:32e) the Father (Mk. 13:32f), my Father only (Mt. 24:36e).” [The preceding is a composite of Mt. 24:36 and Mk. 13:32]. “Take heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is” (Mk. 13:33).

It is interesting to note how the “day” that the Lord Jesus Christ is telling of in these two verses are said to be applicable to both the “Rapture” and His “Second Coming” to earth by those who use them to support their position that we cannot know the day when either of these two events will take place. However, the intellectually honest proponents of these two teachings know they have a dilemma as to deciding which return is He talking about. It should be obvious to all that He can only be referring to one of His two returns, in these two verses!

Another problem with teaching that no one can know when the “Rapture” will take place is how Paul ended his teaching on the “Rapture” (1 Th. 4:13-5:3). “But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all [sons] of light, and [sons] of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep, as *do* others, but let us watch and be [sober-minded]” (1 Th. 5:4-6).

Thus, according to Paul, those who would take part in the “Rapture” should know when it was about to happen. To avoid having Paul contradict the Lord Jesus Christ as to whether we can or cannot know when the “Rapture” is to take place, we have to conclude that **what the Lord Jesus Christ said was true at the time He said it, but it was not to be true at the time the “Rapture” took place.** We must keep in mind that He knew only what God the Father allowed Him to know as is evident with the woman who touched Him (Mk. 5:25-34; Lk. 8:43-48). Also, in the “espousment” stage of a Jewish marriage, the bridegroom does not know when he will return for his bride, since it is his father who will determine that (Jn. 14:1-3; 2 Cor. 11:1-2).

“And what *shall be* the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled” (Mk. 13:4b). The “all these things” was what the Lord Jesus Christ had described would take place up to and including His “Second Coming” to earth (Mt. 24:4b-35; Mk. 13:5b-31; Lk. 21:8b-33).

The “Parable of the Ten Virgins” was part of the answer given to the question, “And what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?” It is about two groups of people who represent “professing” [foolish] Christians and “true” [wise] Christians prior to the “Rapture” (Mt. 25:1-13). Please note how both groups woke up from their sleep, got up, and went out to meet the bridegroom who, represents the Lord Jesus Christ. This can only mean that they knew when He is returning for them! Otherwise, how could they go out to “meet him?”

Those who witness the signing of a seven year “defense treaty” between the President of the European Union [EU] and the leaders of Israel can know when the “Second Coming” of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth will take place by simply looking at a calendar and counting forward 2520 days [seven years]. When the President of the European Union [EU] breaks this treaty and proclaims himself to be God in the new Jewish Temple in Jerusalem (Dan. 9:27; Mt. 24:15; 2 Th. 2:3-4) all anyone will need to do is count forward 1260 days to know the day when the “2nd Advent” of the Lord Jesus Christ will be. Thus, there can be no excuse for not knowing the day of the “Second Coming” of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth! This is when He will begin to rule over the earth for one thousand years from the city of Jerusalem (Zech. 12:1-14:9; Rev. 19:11-20:6)!

I say again, what is unknown to most people, including “true” Christians, is that God has always told in advance, **WHAT** He was going to do, and **WHY** He would do it, and **WHEN** He would act. This will be as true for our present day generation as it has been for those in previous “ages.”

We should all be very thankful that God is indeed a “date-setter” and does not change (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 6:17). Maranatha and amen!