

Opening Scripture Reading/Prayer:

Exodus 31:12-17

The Sabbath

¹² And the Lord said to Moses, ¹³ "You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, 'Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the Lord, sanctify you . . . ¹⁶ Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant forever. ¹⁷ It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.'"

Isaiah 56

Salvation for Foreigners

¹ Thus says the LORD:
"Keep justice, and do righteousness,
for soon my salvation will come,
and my righteousness be revealed.
² Blessed is the man who does this,
and the son of man who holds it fast,
who keeps the Sabbath, not profaning it,
and keeps his hand from doing any evil."
³ Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD say,
"The LORD will surely separate me from his people";
and let not the eunuch say,
"Behold, I am a dry tree."
⁴ For thus says the LORD:
"To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths,
who choose the things that please me
and hold fast my covenant,
⁵ I will give in my house and within my walls
a monument and a name
better than sons and daughters;
I will give them an everlasting name
that shall not be cut off.
⁶ "And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD,
to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD,
and to be his servants,
everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it,
and holds fast my covenant—
⁷ these I will bring to my holy mountain,
and make them joyful in my house of prayer;
their burnt offerings and their sacrifices
will be accepted on my altar;
for my house shall be called a house of prayer
for all peoples."
⁸ The Lord GOD,
who gathers the outcasts of Israel, declares,
"I will gather yet others to him
besides those already gathered."

Isaiah 58:13-14

¹³ "If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath,
from doing your pleasure on my holy day,
and call the Sabbath a delight
and the holy day of the Lord honorable;
if you honor it, not going your own ways,
or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly;
¹⁴ then you shall take delight in the Lord,
and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth;
I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Isaiah 66:22-23

²² “For as the new heavens and the new earth
that I make
shall remain before me, says the LORD,
so shall your offspring and your name remain.
²³ From new moon to new moon,
and from Sabbath to Sabbath,
all flesh shall come to worship before me,
declares the LORD.

Ezekiel 20:20

*I am the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my
judgments, and do them; and keep my SABBATHS holy; and they shall
be a SIGN between me and you,
that ye may now that I am the LORD your God.*

Jesus Lord of the Sabbath

“For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.” **Matthew 12:8**

Shadows

Freedom from Human Rules

“Let no one therefore judge you in eating or in drinking, or in respect of a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths which are a shadow of what is to come but the Body of the Messiah.”

Colossians 2:16-17 (KJV)

Here, he is telling us that the **Appointed Times** (Feast Days) and the Sabbath are a **shadow of things to come**. A shadow is of the same image as what it is portraying. So, doesn't this imply these will be observed in the future kingdom? And note the text says that these commands **ARE** a **shadow of things to come**, **not** “were a shadow” or “used to be a shadow” of things to come. He then says, “**let no man judge you**” (in these things: new moon; Sabbath; feasts) “*but the Body of Messiah*.” The word “is” has been added to the original text and did not appear in the Greek.

The Body of Messiah is to judge each other with regard to these things. A second witness to this can be found in the following verses:

“But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone called ‘a brother,’ if he is one who whores, or greedy of gain, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler – not even to eat with such a one. For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge, to pick out by separating, to be of opinion, to judge those who are inside? But Elohim judges those who are outside. And put away the wicked one from among you!” **1 Corinthians 5:11-13**

“*not judge*” - (*krínō* (2919): to distinguish (to approve what is correct and reject what is wrong - discern).

“*to pick out*”: choose.

“*opinion*”: decide.

“*to judge*”: “bringing to trail” - expressing severe disapproval of (someone or something), typically in a formal statement).

Let's Remember what God told the People to do before they got delivered out of Egypt, which we are reminded to do prior to Christ's 2nd Coming:

1. I Will Provide the Way Out and All the Way Into the Promise Land

Exodus 11:2 - Speak now in the hearing of the people, that they ask, every man of his neighbor and every woman of her neighbor, for silver and gold jewelry.”

2. Know the Times

Exodus 12:1-17 - The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, “**This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you.**”

³ Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household.

. . . ⁷ “Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it . . .

. . . ¹³ The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.

¹⁴ “This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast . . .

. . . ¹⁷ And you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day, throughout your generations, as a statute forever.”

Word Study by Ryan Roberts of Key 2 Changes

Reflective Scripture:

Isaiah 54:11-14

⁷ For a brief moment I deserted you, but with great compassion I will gather you.

⁸ In overflowing anger for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you,” says the LORD, your Redeemer.

⁹ “This is like the days of Noah to me: as I swore that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you, and will not rebuke you.

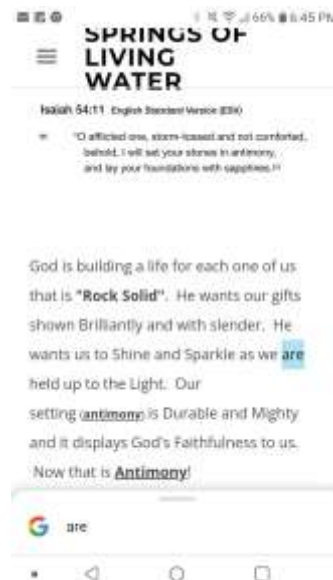
¹⁰ For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,”

says the LORD, who has compassion on you.

¹¹ “O afflicted one, storm-tossed and not comforted, behold, I will set your stones in antimony, and lay your foundations with sapphires . . .

. . . ¹³ All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children.

¹⁴ In righteousness you shall be established; you shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near you.



Week 2 - Parasha Noach (Noah / Rest)
Genesis 6:9–11:32; Isaiah 54:1–55:5; 1 Peter 3:8–22

“This is the account of Noah and his family.” (Genesis 6:9)

In last week’s Torah portion (Parasha), we restarted the cycle of the weekly study of the Word of God from the very beginning with the study by the same name: **Bereisheet** (In the Beginning).

This week, we continue our study in the first book of Moses with the Biblical character of Noah — the only righteous man of his generation.

“Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God.” (Genesis 6:9)

Transition: the story of Noah brings me to reflect on Jesus’ teaching on the Road Markers to the His Return just before His Millennial Reign on Earth, with the Lesson to **“Be Alert”**.

Lesson 49
of “A Journey with Jesus”
Be Alert

Introduction:

Jesus is concerned about the future. He wants His disciples to be prepared to meet its challenges. So He begins the Olivet Discourse cautioning His disciples not to be misled, then gives them the map of the future with road markers along the way and finishes by telling them to **stay alert**.

Jesus is adamant about **staying alert**. During the Olivet Discourse He issues twenty instructions that His disciples are to obey. The last ten deal with the issue of **alertness**.

Transition: today we are going to look at Jesus’ instruction to stay alert in the Last Days, as they will be like the days of Noah . . . which it would behoove us to learn what the days of Noah were like so that we are not caught off guard.

Reading the Scripture:

A Thief in the Night
Matthew 24:37-44

Scripture excerpts from “Follow Me: A Message from God”

“For the coming of the Son of Man will be just **like the days of Noah**. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that **Noah** entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. Then there shall be two men in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken, and one will be left. **Therefore be on the alert**, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. **But be sure of this**, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. **For this reason you be ready too**; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.”

Be Alert
Mark 13:33-37

Scripture excerpts from “Follow Me: A Message from God”

“**Take heed, keep on the alert**; for you do not know when the appointed time is. It is like a man, away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, assigning to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert. **Therefore, be on the alert** – for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, at cockcrow, or in the morning – lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all, **‘Be on the alert!’**”

Be A Faithful Servant
Matthew 24:45-51

Scripture excerpts from “Follow Me: A Message from God”

“Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes. Truly I say to you, that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But if that evil slave says in his heart, ‘My master is not coming for a long time,’ and shall begin to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkards; the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know, and shall cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; weeping shall be there and the gnashing of teeth.”

Stand Before the Son of Man
Luke 21:34-36

Scripture excerpts from “Follow Me: A Message from God”

Be on guard, that your hearts may not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day come on you suddenly like a trap; **for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth**. **But keep on the alert at all times, praying** in order that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

Pre-Tribulation Rapture:

Currently within the United States there is a prevailing view of eschatology (study of end time events). It is popularly called the “Pre-trib Rapture”¹ and arises from a system of theology known as Dispensationalism. The Dispensational system of theology began to be developed by John Nelson Darby of England in 1827. He inserted a pre-tribulation rapture view of eschatology after hearing a prophecy given by Margaret Macdonald in the spring of 1830. Darby’s dispensational views gained ground in the United States when C.I. Scofield included it in his reference Bible of 1917. After that, it began to be taught at Dallas Theological Seminary and one of its students; Hal Lindsey made it popular with his book, *The Late Great Planet Earth* (1970).

Four major components of the Pre-tribulation Rapture position are:

1. That Christians will be raptured (caught up to meet the Lord in the air) **before** a seven-year tribulation period.
2. That the rapture occurs **before** the second coming of Jesus Christ.
3. That the rapture is “**secret**”. (It will not be visible to anyone. Those who remain are either Jews or unbelievers and they will discover that all the Christians have disappeared in the twinkling of an eye.)
4. That the rapture is **imminent**. (It can occur at any time. No signs have to precede its occurrence.)

Group Discussion:

Based on the Pre-tribulation Rapture position as stated above please answer the following questions:

1. If Jesus’ return was imminent (could occur at any time)
 - a. Why didn’t He say so?
 - b. Why did He bother to tell His disciples about specific future events?
 - c. Why did He caution them not to be misled?
 - d. Why did He issue specific commands to the disciples when they observed the events happening?
 - e. Since according to this scheme no signs are required to precede the Rapture, why did the Apostle Paul say that our gathering together to Jesus would not occur until after the apostasy and the man of lawlessness was revealed?
2. Jesus commanded His disciples to be alert.
 - a. Why?
 - b. What difference does it make if a believer is alert or not, since the rapture is a secret?
 - c. What are they to be alert for?
3. If the rapture of Christians occurs before Christ’s coming why didn’t Jesus or any of the apostles or prophets tell anyone or write it down?

Transition: in fact, as we have read many times over the past couple of months, Paul himself teaches what he was taught by Jesus, in his letter to the church of Thessalonians:

1 Thessalonians 5:1-4

The Day of the Lord

¹Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³While people are saying, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. ⁴**But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief.** ⁵For you are all children of light, children of the day.

Who is “The Thief In The Night”?

“Remember, I have told you ahead of time,” [Matthew 24:25](#)

Be warned. After reading this you will no longer have any excuse for not studying about the return of The Lord. Yeshua Himself TOLD us to watch, stay alert, and be ready.

Yeshua said He was coming back to rule and reign from Jerusalem and I believe Him. He came as a real person in history and He will return a real person in history. “*A Light for the Gentiles and the glory of His people Israel.*” The natural branches will, and are, being grafted back in.

His first coming fulfilled the types and shadows of the Spring Feasts of the Lord: Passover, Feast of Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, and Feast of Weeks or Pentecost; and His second coming will be in accordance with the Fall Feasts of the Lord: Yom Teruah or Feast of Trumpets, Yom Kippur or Day of Atonement, and Sukkot or Feast of Tabernacles.

We’ve been duped. In 336 A.D. a council of men cut off the church from its natural ties to the Jewish nation with all her history and meaning. To our detriment, we lost the Jewishness of the faith.

According to scriptures, the lunar calendar is God’s method of calculating time. The lunar calendar (Jewish religious calendar) marks the seasons. In scripture, the word, “seasons” in Hebrew is “mo’ed” and means “appointed time”. This is referring to the “Appointed Times of The Lord” or “The Feasts of The Lord.”

¹This eschatological view is actually futuristic – pre-millennial – with a pre-tribulation rapture. It is opposed to the Church’s historic position, which is futuristic – pre-millennial – with a post-tribulation rapture. Alexander Reese outlines the Church’s historic position in a quote on page 136.

1 Thessalonians 5:1, "Now on the topic of times and seasons, brothers and sisters, you have no need for anything to be written to you."

Okay, let's stop right there. Times and Seasons. He's referring to the lunar calendar and the Appointed Times of The Lord. They were Jewish believers (and Gentiles) who not only knew these feasts, but celebrated them.

1 Thessalonians 5:2, "For you know quite well that the day of the Lord will come in the same way as a thief in the night."

Remember that we are a kingdom and priests. I found out that according to Jewish history, the Captain of Temple was called "the thief in the night." The priests and levites were in charge of guarding the Temple, including keeping the fire of God going. If the Captain of the Guard came in at night and caught the one of them sleeping on the job, he would hit the man with a stick then take the torch he was carrying and light the sleeping man's white priestly / levitical garments on fire. The sorry fellow would wake up and have to tear the soiled, burning clothes from his body, exposing his nakedness. Shedding new light on these verses:

Revelation 16:15, "Look! I will come like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays alert and does not lose his clothes so that he will not have to walk around naked and his shameful condition be seen."

Revelation 3:14, 18, "This is the solemn pronouncement of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the originator of God's creation, . . . Buy from me white clothing so you can be clothed and your shameful nakedness will not be exposed, and salve to put on your eyes so you can see!"

"Priestly Guard":

The captain of the guard saw that every man was alert, chastising a priest if found asleep at his post, and sometimes even punishing him by burning his shirt upon him, as a warning to others. (Mid. i. 1 - Jewish Encyclopedia)

The Captain of the Temple (the man of the Temple Mount) visited each guard, and burning torches were carried before him. And every guard which did not stand up (which was not standing), the Captain of the Temple said to him: "Peace be to thee." If he observed that he slept, he smote him with his stick, and he had authority to burn his dress. And they said, "What is the noise (voice) in the court?" "It is the noise of a Levite who is beaten, and his clothes are set on fire, because he slept upon his watch." (Perek I. - Mishnah-Middoth)

1 Thessalonians 5:3-10, "3 Now when they are saying, 'There is peace and security,' then sudden destruction comes on them, like labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will surely not escape. 4 But you, brothers and sisters, are not in the darkness for the day to overtake you like a thief would. 5 For you all are sons of the light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of the darkness. 6 So then we must not sleep as the rest, but must stay alert and sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night and those who get drunk are drunk at night. 8 But since we are of the day, we must stay sober by putting on the breastplate of faith and love and as a helmet our hope for salvation. 9 For God did not destine us for wrath but for gaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. 10 He died for us so that whether we are alert or asleep we will come to life together with him. 11 Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, just as you are in fact doing.

The Feast of Trumpets (Yom Teruah) was known as the feast that "no one knew the day or the hour." Again, "**YOU ARE NOT IN DARKNESS FOR THE DAY TO OVERTAKE YOU AS A THIEF!**" 1 Thessalonians 5:4

<http://fringers.org/2008/12/22/who-is-the-thief-in-the-night.asp>

2 Thessalonians 2:1-15

The Man of Lawlessness

¹ Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, ² not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. ³ Let no one deceive you in any way. **For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,** ⁴ **who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.** ⁵ **Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?** ⁶ And you know what is restraining him now (God's Appointed Times) so that he may be revealed in his time. ⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains (God's Appointed Times) it will do so until he is out of the way. ⁸ And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. ⁹ The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, ¹⁰ and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹ Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, ¹² in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Stand Firm

¹³ But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. ¹⁴ To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵ So then, brothers, **stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.**

The Lesson:

Immediately telling His disciples how He will return to earth, Jesus instructs them to learn the parable² of the after fig tree. Talk about using a parable for effect! Just hours before, the disciples had walked by a fig tree that Jesus had cursed the day before and noticed it had completely withered from the roots up in one day.

The reason Jesus cursed the fig tree was that it gave a **false sign**. The time of year was April. Normally, fig trees don't put forth their leaves until July or August and the fruit becomes ripe in October. However, with the coming of its leaves the fig tree also puts forth its fruit at the same time. So Jesus walked over to the tree to see if there was any fruit on it.³ Since there was no fruit⁴ on the tree Jesus knew it was an **aberration**⁵ and cursed it.

It was common knowledge in the Jewish culture that a fig tree put forth its leaves in the summer time. So it served as a practical sign to all the people that summer was near, at hand or right at the door. **In the same way Jesus wants His disciples to have common knowledge concerning the time of His coming.** The signs in the heavens: the sun and moon not giving their light and the stars falling from heaven are to serve as a sign, like the fig tree⁶, of His soon return. It is near, at hand or right at the door. There should be no doubt about the validity of these heavenly signs being a precursor to Christ's return, as all three of the synoptic gospels record the signs in the heavens immediately followed by the parable of the fig tree.

The issue of alertness revolves around the parable of the fig tree. Jesus knows that a person cannot be vigilant 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and He is not telling His disciples to do it either. However, He is telling them **when** to become alert. Like the fig tree, when you see the signs in the heavens **begin** to come to pass be alert, your redemption is drawing near. In fact, Jesus said that from the time that the heavenly signs begin occurring until His coming would occur within one generation.

The concept of **when to become alert** is reinforced by Matthew (24:37-41) when **he compares the coming of the Son of Man to the days of Noah.**

What it was like in the days of Noah

The Days of Noah

The Bible says this about what it was like in the days of Noah. *Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose. Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." The **Nephilim**⁷ were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God (be nei-ha 'e lo-him - angels of God) came into the daughters of men, and they bore children to them.*

Those were the mighty⁸ men who were of old, men of renown.⁹ Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence. God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth. (Ge 6:1-4 and 11-12)

The Book of Enoch¹⁰ supports the Biblical account and adds some additional information to it in chapters 6-11. According to the Book of Enoch **a band of 200 angels, led by Semjaza arrived during the time of Jared (3515-2553 BC).** One of the angels, **Azazel** (in Christian circles known as **"The Scapegoat"**) taught men to make swords, knives, shields, and breastplates.

² A parable is used as an illustration comparing the concepts about a known subject with an unfamiliar one.

³ The fruit would have been green and hidden among the leaves so closer inspection was required.

⁴ For the tree is known by its fruit. (Matthew 12:33) John the Baptist used a similar analogy when he confronted the Pharisees and Sadducees who came to him for baptism. He told them, "Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance. The axe is already laid at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." (Matthew 3:8 and 10)

⁵ **The tree was an aberration because it did not follow the pattern that God created for the fig tree.** In other words the tree was in rebellion against God and its own nature (i.e. Jeremiah 23:16-40, "¹⁶Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, filling you with vain hopes. They speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD."¹⁷ They say continually to those who despise the word of the LORD, 'It shall be well with you'; and to everyone who stubbornly follows his own heart, they say, 'No disaster shall come upon you.'"). It failed on two counts: 1) it put forth leaves at the wrong time and 2) it didn't produce fruit with the leaves, which provided Jesus with a two-fold witness against the tree. Therefore, it was worthy of being cursed. The cursing of the fig tree also serves as a sign and warning to hypocrites who themselves are an aberration (i.e. those who say they are Christians but do not produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit). The hypocrite's curse is that they will be assigned to a place where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 24:51)

⁶ *I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. (Revelation 6:12-13)*

⁷ The Hebrew word, Nephilim is the plural of the word Nephal which means, "a living abortion, to fall to the ground from heaven or to become ruin." The Nephilim are the offspring of angels and humans.

⁸ "The mighty ones" – HaGibborim – in the Greek Septuagint is translated "gigantes" . . . from where we get the word giants but it actually comes from the root word "gigas" meaning "earth-born".

⁹ According to Greek mythology the offspring are known as Titans.

¹⁰ **The Book of Enoch is considered as Scripture in** the Epistle of Barnabas (16:4) and by many of the early Church Fathers, such as Athenagoras, Clement of Alexandria, Irenaeus and Tertullian, who wrote about 200 AD that the Book of Enoch had been rejected by the Jews because it contained prophecies pertaining to Christ. **The Bible quotes the Book of Enoch in two places: 1 Peter 3:19-20 and Jude 1:14-15.**

He made metals known to man and the art of working them, and bracelets, and ornaments, and the use of antimony, and the beautifying of the eyelids, and all kinds of costly stones, and color tinctures. (*From this arose great disobedience: they were led astray; they committed immorality; they became corrupt in all their ways.*) **To him all sin is ascribed.** Semjaza taught **taught enchantments (cursing and root-cutting)**. Armaros the **resolving of enchantments (curse-lifting)**. Baraqujal taught **astrology (star-signs)**. Kokabel the **constellations (star patterns)**. Ezeqeel the **knowledge of the clouds (cloud-lore)**. Araqiell the **signs of the earth (land-signs)**. Shamsiel taught the **signs of the sun (sun-signs)** and Sariel the **course of the moon (moon-pathways)**.

The four archangels, Michael, Uriel, Raphael and Gabriel were commanded to bind these wicked ones for seventy generations. This is supported by **Jude 6. *And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day.*** According to the book of Jubilees these angels were not bound until sometime after the Great Flood in 2318 BC perhaps as late as 2000 BC.

The Book of Jasher¹¹ also gives us some additional insight about the days of Noah.

And it was in the days of Enosh that the sons of men continued to rebel and transgress against God, to increase the anger of the Lord against the sons of men. And the sons of men went and they served other gods, and they forgot the Lord who had created them in the earth: and in those days the sons of men made images of brass and iron, wood and stone, and they bowed down and served them. And every man made his god and they bowed down to them, and the sons of men forsook the Lord all the days of Enosh and his children; and the anger of the Lord was kindled on account of their works and abominations which they did in the earth. (Jasher 2:3-5)

And all the sons of men departed from the ways of the Lord in those days as they multiplied upon the face of the earth with sons and daughters, and they taught one another their evil practices and they continued sinning against the Lord. And every man made unto himself a god, and they robbed and plundered every man his neighbor as well as his relative, and they corrupted the earth, and the earth was filled with violence. And their judges and rulers went to the daughters of men and took their wives by force from their husbands according to their choice, and the sons of men in those days took from the cattle of the earth, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and taught the mixture of animals of one species with the other, in order therewith to provoke the Lord; and God saw the whole earth and it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted its ways upon earth, all men and all animals. (Jasher 4:16-18)

* * *

The Apostle's Creed in the Context of Church History and the Doctrine of “He descended into hell”

The Letter to the Church at Smyrna 100 – 325AD

“The Church Born in Blood”

Revelation 2:8-11 / Parallel Kingdom Parable – Mark 4:21-29 and Luke 8:16-18

Commendation: I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

Instruction: Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death. Do not fear the tribulation that will come upon you. Remain faithful in your testimony of Me.

The Ante Nicene Age began with the death of the apostle John and ended with the advent of the First General Ecumenical 9 Council, which was held at Nicea, in northwestern Asia Minor in 325 AD. In fact, the words, Ante Nicene mean “before Nicea.”

Like the “parable of the growing plant” the Church became visible. No longer was it just some obscure religion in the outlands of the Roman Empire but now a living and growing organism challenging Rome’s traditional religion and politics. It needed to be rooted out! Enemies appeared at every level as the **Church battled** against accusations from Jews, persecution by the government and **false teaching by heretical groups**, such as the Gnostics. Thousands were martyred for their faith: being burned to death or thrown to wild animals as a spectator sport. But the blood of the martyrs provided fertile soil for the Church to grow.

- The Rise of Creedal Statements -

As enemies of the Church began to emerge, church leaders found that they needed to develop some orthodox beliefs. They did this through the use of creeds. When the Church was attacked on a specific issue it formulated the correct belief about that issue and included it in an updated creed. The following creed was approved at **the Council of Nicea in 325 AD:**

We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten from the Father, only-begotten, that is, from the substance of the father, God

¹¹ The Book of Jasher is referenced in the Bible at Joshua 10:13 and 2 Samuel 1:18.

from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, through Whom all things came into being, things in heaven and things on earth, Who because of us men and because of our salvation, came down and became incarnate, becoming man, suffered and rose again on the third day, ascended into heaven, and will come to judge the living and the dead; And in the Holy Spirit.

* * *

The Apostle’s Creed in the Context of Church History and the Doctrine of “He descended into hell”

The Apostle’s Creed (the final form was written no later than 724 AD)

1. I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.
2. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord
3. who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
4. suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
- 5. He descended into hell.¹ On the third day He rose again;**
6. He ascended into heaven, He is seated at the right hand of the Father,
7. and He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
8. I believe in the Holy Spirit,
9. the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,
10. the forgiveness of sins,
11. the resurrection of the body,
12. and the life everlasting. Amen.

¹ **“He descended into hell.” This statement was added to the Apostle’s Creed sometime before 724 AD. The source of the statement is unknown but much controversy within the church has arisen over it. It appears that the basis for the statement might have been taken from 1 Peter 3:18-20 and 4:6.**

In Christian theology, the **Harrowing of Hell** (Latin: *Descensus Christi ad Inferos*, "the descent of Christ into hell") is the triumphant descent of Christ into Hell (or Hades) between the time of his Crucifixion and his Resurrection when he brought salvation to all of the righteous who had died since the beginning of the world. After his death, the soul of Jesus descended into the realm of the dead.

The word "harrow" comes from the Old English *hergian* meaning to harry or despoil and is seen in the homilies of the 10th Century. The term **Harrowing of Hell** refers not merely to the idea that Christ descended into Hell, as in the Creed, but to the rich tradition that developed later, asserting that he triumphed over *inferos* (the souls of the dead), releasing Hell's captives, particularly Adam and Eve, and the righteous men and women of the Old Testament period.

(NOTE: In spite of Paul proclamation 50 days after Jesus’ Resurrection regarding King David: Acts 2:29, “Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.”)

* * *

A summary of the development of the Apostles' Creed

Version	Year	Clause?
St. Irenaeus	AD 200	--
Tertullian	AD 220	--
St. Cyprian	AD 250	--
Novatian	AD 260	--
Marcellus	AD 341	--
Rufinus (Alquileja)	AD 390	DESCENDIT in INFERNA
Rufinus (Rome)	AD 390	--
St. Augustine	AD 400	--
St. Nicetas	AD 450	--
Eusebius Gallus	AD 550	--
Sacramentarius Gallicanum	AD 650	Descendit AD Inferna
Pirminius (current)	AD 750	Descendit ad Inferna

You'll notice that this particular clause **“He descended into hell”** is one of the least-attributed of all of them. **Especially notable is that it only appears in one version of the creed before AD 600.**

With respect to the first orthodox version containing the phrase (AD 390), **the phrase was actually interpreted in the context of the previous clause, "buried." If that's the case, then the first intentional orthodox/Western use of "descent into hell" was in AD 650.**

This history has encouraged some to call for removing "the clause" ("*descent into hell*") from the creed, such as Protestant theologian Wayne Grudem.⁴ Grudem and others, like John Piper, **also dispute the clause with biblical arguments**, so it's likely that Protestant churches that have removed the clause from their creeds are doing so only partially because of the clause's history.

<https://christianity.stackexchange.com/questions/41911/when-did-he-descended-into-hell-become-part-of-the-apostles-creed>

* * *

Source Text Interpreted for "the clause", "descent into hell", from the Apostles Creed

I Peter 3:19: the spirits in prison

I Peter 3:18-20

"For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits in prison, who once were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water."

What are these "*spirits in prison*"? Many people reading the word "*spirits*" in this passage translate it in their minds to dead people that supposedly live now (as spirits) in a prison. Such an understanding however is not founded on the **Word of God**, and here is why: the **Word of God** does not use the word "*spirit*" to denote dead, non-resurrected, men. To understand what are the spirits in prison, we need to look at the **Word of God** and see how it uses this word plus to take into consideration other references of the Bible on the subject described in the above verses of I Peter. For indeed the **Word of God** speaks not in just one but in four different places about what I Peter 3:19 speaks about. But first of all, let's see what could these spirits in prison be. As we said, they could NOT be dead men. Despite the fact that our age uses the word spirit for dead men that are supposedly living somewhere without resurrection, the Bible does not use this word with such a meaning. It does however use this word to denote angelic beings. As **Hebrews 1:13-14** says:

Hebrews 1:13-14

"But to which of the angels has He ever said, Sit on my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool? Are they not all ministering SPIRITS, sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?"

and some verses earlier:

Hebrews 1:7

"And of the angels He says: "Who makes His angels SPIRITS And His ministers a flame of fire.""

Angelic beings were created by God and they are spirit beings. They are "*spirits*". Could then be that these "*spirits in prison*" are fallen angels in prison? As we will see yes this is what it is. But let's first get some background information. As we saw angels are spirit beings. Though all of them were created by God not all remained with God. Some of them rebelled against Him and were fallen from their position. The chief fallen angel is the devil or Satan. Two passages that describe his rebellion and fall are: Ezekiel 28:11-19 and Isaiah 14:3-23. However, the above passage of I Peter 3:19 does not refer to this fall. I Peter 3:20 sets the time to the "days of Noah". The devil had rebelled long before those days as we see him active in the garden of Edem. Besides that, he and his angels are not in a prison now. Instead the devil is described as "prince of the **air**" and he and his fallen angels as "principalities...powers...rulers of the darkness of this age.. spiritual hosts of wickedness **in the heavenly places**". Spiritual hosts of wickedness are literally hosts of wicked spirits –and this is what fallen angels are - that are now active in the heavenly places. I Peter 3:19 therefore does not refer to the devil's fall but to another rebellion of angels that occurred "*in the days of Noah*" and before the Flood. These fallen spirits ended up in a prison and we will read more on this in II Peter and in Jude. But let's first go to **Genesis 6**, just before the Flood. We will find there details about the fall of these angels.

Genesis 6:1-8

"Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them.

Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown. Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."

There was something that happened when man started multiplying. The “sons of God” saw the daughters of men and took wives from them. See that verse 1 puts in contrast the men and the **daughters of men** with the **sons of God**. “The sons of God saw the daughters of men”, we read. Who were these sons of God? Although the believers in the New Testament have been given authority by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ and in His resurrection from the dead to become sons and daughters of God, this was not something that was available in the Old Testament. The term “sons of God” is used 3 more times in the Old Testament, in addition to Genesis 6. In all cases it denotes angelic beings. Let’s see these occurrences, all from the book of Job.

Job 1:6

*“Now there was a day when the **sons of God** came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.”*

and in a very similar reference: Job 2:10

*“Again there was a day when the **sons of God** came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD.”*

The sons of God that presented themselves before the Lord were obviously angels.

Also **Job 38:7** speaking about the earth:

*“To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, When the morning stars sang together, and **all the sons of God shouted for joy?**”*

What **Job 38:7** describes, refers to the creation of the earth when no human being was present. But the sons of God, the angels, were present and shouted for joy.

In short the beings of Genesis 6:1 were not human beings. Otherwise they would not be put in contrast with the daughter of men. There was and there is nothing wrong or strange for men to get married and have children. But this is not what happened in Genesis 6. What we have in **Genesis 6** is that non human beings, angelic beings, sons of God - not sons of men - saw the daughter of men and desired them and furthermore they had children with them! As the Bible tells us in Genesis 6:4, the result of this union were the giants, a race of beings that God had not created nor He intended to create but were instead product of this ungodly union between angels and men. Noah was present at those days. These were *“the days of Noah”* and to these days I Peter 3:19 refers to.

To the same events we have further references in the New Testament. Let’s see them, starting from **II Peter 2:4-5, 9**:

II Peter 2:4-5, 9

*“For if **God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;** and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly . . . the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment,”*

The phrase **“cast them down to hell”** is one word in the Greek text the verb “ταρταρώω” (tartaroo) and it means *“to cast down to Tartarus”*. As Bullinger says: *“**Tartarus**” is a Greek word not used elsewhere or at all in the Septuaginta. Homer describes it as subterranean. The Homeric **Tartarus is the prison of the Titans, or giants, who rebelled against Zeus**”* (The Companion Bible, Appendix 131). And as Vine also explains: *“the verb tartaroo, translated “cast down to hell” in **2 Peter 2:4** signifies to consign to **Tartarus, which is neither Sheol nor Hades nor Hell, but the place where those angels whose special sin is referred to in that passage are confined “to be reserved unto judgement;” the region is described as pits of darkness**”* (Vine’s dictionary, p. 553). **Tartarus is to be understood therefore as a prison and in this prison, as Peter says, were cast the angels that sinned, to be reserved in judgment.** They are in this prison of darkness reserved for the day of judgment. See that what follows this reference of **II Peter** is *Noah and the reference to the Flood.* This is not accidental as both these events are connected and happened not long from each other. But let’s also see the evidence from Jude who also speaks about the same subject:

Jude 6-7

*“And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own habitation, **He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;** as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to fornication and **gone after strange flesh,** are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”*

Jude speaks about the same rebellion as Peter and Genesis. Sometime during the *times of Noah*, angels *“left their own habitation”* and went after *“strange flesh”*, after the **daughters of men**. The result? They are now *“reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgement of the great day.”* This is the prison, the Tartarus that Peter speaks about in his letters. **To these fallen spirits, fallen angels, spirits in prison, Jesus went and preached, says the KJV. The NKJV has this translated better as “made proclamation”.**

Now the text does not say what He proclaimed. But I agree with what Vine is saying in his dictionary, when he speaks about the word “*kerusso*” that is translated in I Peter 3:19 as “*made proclamation*” “***to publish, proclaim openly: something which has been done***”:

“In I Peter 3:19 the probable reference is, *not to glad tidings* but to the act of Christ after His resurrection in **proclaiming His victory to fallen angelic beings**” (Vine’s expository dictionary of New Testament words, page 883, emphasis added).

To conclude therefore: when in I Peter 3:19 we read that Jesus went and *preached to the spirits in prison, we should not read into it dead people living in a prison, without resurrection, and Jesus going to them to preach the good news.* What the **Word of God** is speaking in I Peter 3:19 is not about dead people but about *spirits, angelic beings* that are in a prison, *in the Tartarus, bound in everlasting chains under darkness.* **Why?** Because of what they did *in the times of Noah, leaving their own habitation, giving themselves over to fornication and going after “strange flesh”, after the daughters of men.*

E. W. Bullinger: The Companion Bible, 1990, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Verses without "Hades" but doctrinal support

Although these verses do not contain the word "Hades", theologians have concluded that comparable terms are used as synonyms:

- **1 Peter 3:19–20:** (Jesus) "went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits—to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water...."
- **Ephesians 4:7-10 NIV:** "But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it^[or God] says, 'When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people.'^(Psalm 68:18) (What does 'he ascended' mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe."

Verse 8 above is a truncated paraphrase adapting Psalm 68:18, with a changed point of view: "When you ascended on high, you led captives in your train; you received gifts from men, even from the rebellious—that you, O LORD God, might dwell there."(NIV) The parenthetical verses 9–10 of Ephesians are widely read as an exegetical gloss on the text. The word for "lower parts" (the comparative form: τὰ κατώτερα) is similar to the word used for "Hell" in the Greek version of the Apostles Creed (the superlative form: τὰ κατώτατα, English: "lowest [places]").

Frank Stagg writes that the entire passage **Ephesians 4:1-16** is a prayerful exhortation to the readers that they measure up to their high calling in Christ. He takes "measuring up" to mean in terms of the unity and maturity of the one body which they already are (vv. 4,12,16). He says that in this long paragraph, the goal of redemption is the building up of the one body of Christ. **Verses 4 through 6** set forth their sevenfold unity: "one body, one Spirit, ...one hope..., one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, the one over all and through all, and in all." Without mentioning "harrowing", he writes that "The very Christ who *ascended* is then described as the one who *descended* and who gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors, and teachers to the church."

* * *

Most Christians aren't aware that Noah was given a prophetic sign on **when** to become alert or ready to enter the Ark. Lets take a closer look at his story.

It begins with Noah's great-grandfather Enoch, the seventh generation from Adam. **Enoch was a prophet according to Jude 14** and *he walked with God*. In his 365th year he went to God without dying.¹² Enoch being a prophet, named his son, **Methuselah**. **The root meaning of the name Methuselah is “his death shall bring”¹³** or some variant of that theme. According to the Jewish sages Methuselah died seven days before Noah received the word of God to enter the Ark. Then he remained in the Ark seven more days before the flood began (Genesis 7:4).

Though Noah had finished building the Ark he did not have to become “alert” or “ready” until Methuselah died, which was his prophetic sign that the flood was approaching. Then came the Word of God for Noah to enter the Ark through which he and his household would be saved from the impending wrath of God to come. In like manner, Christians are to become “alert” or “ready” upon observing the heavenly signs, recognizing that God's judgment is approaching. Then the Word of God (Jesus Christ) will come to save His household from the impending wrath of God to come.

Caught Up/Rapture Word Study

726 harpázō – properly, seize by force; *snatch* up, suddenly and decisively – like someone seizing bounty (spoil, a prize); to take by an *open display* of force (i.e. *not* covertly or secretly). Used of divine power transferring a person marvelously and swiftly from one place to another, to snatch or catch away.

¹² We currently call that event “raptured” or “caught up to God”. Enoch and Elijah are the only two people in the Scripture that did not die but were taken by God to heaven while still alive.

¹³ For example, Matthew Henry says, “The signification of his name, which some think was prophetic, his father Enoch being a prophet. Methuselah signifies, he dies, or there is a dart, or, a sending forth, namely, of the deluge, which came the very year that Methuselah died”.

Acts 8:39

³⁹ And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord **carried (harpázō)** Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.

2 Corinthians 12:2-4

² I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was **caught up (harpázō)** to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. ³ And I know that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows - ⁴ and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter.

1 Thessalonians 4:17

¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be **caught up (harpázō)** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

Revelation 12:5

⁵ She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was **caught up (harpázō)** to God and to his throne.

Precedence of Rapture:

Genesis 6:9-9:17: Noah’s Ark (the sign that was given to Noah was the death of the Grand-Father Methuselah, meaning, “When He is Dead it shall be Sent”)

Exodus 8:22-23: Jacob’s Family Settle in Goshen – And Salvation During Plagues

Exodus 33:17-23: Moses in the Cleft of the Rock and the Glory of God

Acts 8:39: Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch

2 Corinthians 12:2-4: Paul and the third heaven

Word Study by Ryan Roberts of Key 2 Changes

Commencing with the parable of the fig tree Jesus begins to exhort His disciples to remain alert. As He does so Jesus also weaves three other concepts together with alertness throughout his commentary:

- 1) Those who are not His disciples won’t know what about is to transpire.
- 2) No one will know the day and hour.
- 3) Darkness or night.

Since those who are not Jesus’ disciples won’t be looking for His appearing, the significance of the signs in the heaven won’t have the same meaning for them.

No one will know the day or hour of Jesus’ return because there are always two days and twenty-four hours existing on planet earth at any given moment. According to Hebrew tradition the judgment of men begins on the Feast of the Lord called Yom Teruah, the Day of Blowing¹⁴ doesn’t commence until the new moon is sighted; the Jewish people also refer to this feast as “The feast that no man knows the day or hour”

According to Jesus it will be dark¹⁵ when He comes and this is borne out through many Old Testament Scriptures concerning **the Day of the Lord:**

*“Behold, the **day of the LORD** is coming, cruel, with fury and burning anger, to make the land a desolation; and He will exterminate its sinners from it. For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light; the sun will be dark when it rises and the moon will not shed its light.”* (Isaiah 13:9-10)

*“For the day is near, even the **day of the LORD** is near; it will be a day of clouds, a time of doom for the nations.”* (Ezekiel 30:3)

*“**Blow a trumpet** in Zion, and **sound an alarm on My holy mountain!** Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the **day of the LORD** is coming; surely it is near, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness.”* (Joel 2:1-2)

*“For the **day of the LORD** is near in the valley of decision. The sun and moon grow dark and the stars lose their brightness. The LORD roars from Zion and utters His voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth tremble. **But the LORD is a refuge for His people and a stronghold to the sons of Israel.**”* (Joel 3:14-16)

*“Will not the **day of the LORD** be darkness instead of light, **even gloom** with no brightness in it?”* (Amos 5:20)

*Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the **day of the Lord** will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. **But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We***

¹⁴ This feast day is also called: Rosh Ha Shannah (New Year’s Day), Yom Hazikaron (Day of Remembrance and Yom Haddin (Day of Judgment.)

¹⁵ From the Scriptures we understand that Jesus will return when it is dark. It doesn’t matter what time of day it is because the sun, moon and stars will not be giving off their light. Why this is happening is a matter of conjecture. It should be noted that Yom Teruah the feast of trumpets falls on the first day of a new moon when the night skies are darker in the first place.

are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. (1 Thessalonians 5:1-10)

The Point of the Lesson:

Become alert when you see the signs in the heavens.

Covenant Keeping God ("And because you listen to these rules and keep and do them, the Lord your God will keep with you the covenant and the steadfast love that he swore to your fathers. He will love you, bless you, and multiply you." Deuteronomy 7:12-13):

God sets a rainbow in the sky as a sign of the covenant (ot brit / אֵיזֶת בְּרִית) with all people of the earth:
"I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth."
Genesis 9:13

This is not the only covenant that God has made. Other covenants were to follow, and each one comes with its own particular sign (ot). The sign of the Abrahamic covenant is **circumcision** of all male infants on the eighth day. The sign of the Mosaic covenant is the **keeping of the seventh-day Sabbath**.

A Renewal of Covenant, not a New Covenant!

Jesus said that the great hallmark of faith in Him — of having the Torah written inside our hearts and minds in the Brit Chadashah ("A Renewed" (New) Covenant) — is love:

"By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:35)

Jeremiah 31:31

The New Covenant

³¹"Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a **NEW** covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah,

New (chadash (2319) – new): **a new spirit** ("²⁶And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. ²⁸You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God," Ezekiel 36:26-28); fresh, new thing.

From chadash:

Fresh, new thing (chadash (2318) – **to renew, repair**): renew (5), renewed (1), repair (1), restore (3), restored; Make anew; to be new; causatively; to be rebuild; bring back (*bringest fresh (new) witnesses*). i.e. **Psalm 103:5 thy youth reneweth itself, like the eagle.**

The Coming Judgment

Just like the flood in the days of Noah, in the end times, judgment will come suddenly (*Matthew 24:36–41*):

No One Knows That Day and Hour

³⁶"But concerning that day and hour **no one knows** ("For you yourselves know full well that the **day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night . . . But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day.**" 1 Thessalonians 5:1,4-6), not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son ("Truly, truly, **I tell you, the Son can do nothing by Himself, unless He sees the Father doing it. For whatever the Father does, the Son also does.**" John 6:68 . . . "I and the Father are one" John 10:30), but the Father only. ³⁷For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the **Son of Man.** ³⁸For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, ³⁹and **they were unaware until the flood came** (except for the children of Light – "In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it," John 1:4-5) and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left.

But those who know the Lord need not fear, for He will provide a safe shelter, a teivah, from the raging storm of tribulation just as He provided the ark for Noah and his family.

Revelation 7:2-3

²Then I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, ³saying, "**Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have SEALED the servants of our God on their foreheads.**"

1 Peter 4:17

For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?

1 Thessalonians 5:9

For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

The prophet Isaiah wrote,

“Come, My people, enter your chambers, and shut your doors behind you; Hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation is past.” (*Isaiah 26:20*)

May we emerge from the Ark of God’s shelter in the unity of faith . . . under the rule of the Messiah, Jesus.

The Wrath of God

2 Peter 3

The Day of the Lord Will Come

¹This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, ²that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, ³knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. ⁴They will say, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.” ⁵For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, ⁶and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. ⁷But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

⁸But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

¹¹Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! ¹³But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Final Words

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. ¹⁵And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, ¹⁶as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. **There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.** ¹⁷**You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability.** ¹⁸But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

G-d has Forward us that a Future Delusion to Test the Hearts of Mankind to see if they are For Him or Against Him, through One Language, once again, the Mark of the Beast, allowing those who posses the Mark with the ability to Buy or Sale, ending in Eternal Damnation, while those who do not accept the Mark of the Beast, to Trust God for His Eternal Provision, in spite of the Greatest Persecution of G-d’s People, Unmatched to any time ever in History:

Genesis 11:1-9

The Tower of Babel

¹Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. ²And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. ³And they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. ⁴Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.” ⁵And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. ⁶And the Lord said, “Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. ⁷Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another’s speech.” ⁸So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. ⁹Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth. And from there the Lord dispersed them over the face of all the earth.

2 Thessalonians 2

The Man of Lawlessness

¹Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, ²not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. ³Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, ⁴who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. ⁵Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? ⁶And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. ⁷For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. ⁸And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. ⁹The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, ¹⁰and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, ¹²in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Stand Firm

¹³But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits^[d] to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. ¹⁴To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.

The Point of the Lesson:

Become alert when you see the signs in the heavens.

* * *

Luke 23 (ESV)

The Crucifixion

³²Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him.³³ And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And they cast lots to divide his garments. ³⁵And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, “He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!” ³⁶The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine ³⁷and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” ³⁸There was also an inscription over him, “This is the King of the Jews.”

³⁹One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!” ⁴⁰But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? ⁴¹And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” ⁴²And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” ⁴³And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

Luke 16:19-31 (ESV)

The Rich Man and Lazarus

¹⁹“There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. ²²The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried, ²³and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. ²⁴And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.’ ²⁵But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. ²⁶And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.’ ²⁷And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house— ²⁸for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’ ²⁹But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’ ³⁰And he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ ³¹He said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.’”

Revelation 20 (ESV)

The Thousand Years

¹Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. ²And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, ³and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

⁴Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. ⁶Blessed and holy is the one who shares in

the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

The Defeat of Satan

⁷ And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison⁸ and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea.⁹ And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them,¹⁰ and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Judgment Before the Great White Throne

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.¹³ And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done.¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.¹⁵ And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Matthew 25:31-46 (ESV)

The Final Judgment

³¹ “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.³² Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.³³ And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left.³⁴ Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink?’³⁸ And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you?’³⁹ And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

⁴¹ “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink,⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’⁴⁴ Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’⁴⁵ Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’⁴⁶ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Next Week’s Teaching:

Week 3 - LECH LECHA (GO FORTH!)

Genesis 12:1–17:27; Isaiah 40:27–41:16; Matthew 1:1–17

“Adonai said to Abram, ‘Go forth [lech lecha] from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you ... and I will bless you.’” (*Genesis 12:1–2*)

Our last Torah reading, Noach (Noah), concluded with a genealogy of Shem, Noah’s son. That genealogy ended with Terah, father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. Terah took his son Abram and Abram’s wife Sarai, as well as Lot, son of Haran, who had died, out of Ur of the Chaldeans and headed toward the Land of Canaan.

Instead of reaching their destination, however, they settled at Haran where Terah lived out the rest of his days

In this week’s Parasha, at God’s command, **Abram carries on with his father’s unfinished mission — to reach the Land of Canaan**, the name given to the Promised Land at this time.