

Sunday August 7th 2016
For Jews Request a Sign.....
Part One

1). Ge 1:14 ¶ *Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; 15 "and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. 16 Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. [He made] the stars also. 17 God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, 18 and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.*

Here on day 4 of the Genesis account of the restoration of the ruined creation we see that God made 'two great lights' which were set 'in the firmament of the heavens' to 'give light on the earth' – These 2 great lights we would know to be the sun and the moon. And at the end of v16, also with respect to giving light upon the earth and signs, we see 'the stars also'.

a). The words 'He made' have been added by the translators and do not appear in the original language.

b). And there would be no reason for the stars themselves to have to be restored along with the restoration of the earth because the ruined condition that we find in the first half of Genesis 1:2 was applicable to the earth and the heavens associated with the earth because of Satan's rebellion – and that rebellion impacted solely the province over which Satan had been given dominion, not the universe at large. In essence then his rebellion impacted our solar system only.

c). Now, before we look at the statement concerning signs there is one other intriguing truth we should take note of - Ge 1:3 ¶ *Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.*

The light that God spoke into being which He called Day, which brought a division in the darkness which He called Night, happens on day 1 of the restoration and so this light was already present before He 'made' the sun and moon and was itself responsible for the differentiation between day and night. In other words the light we see in these verses giving the 'evening and the morning' is not dependent upon or derived from the sun and moon, but exists because of that which God spoke on day 1. Which leaves the intriguing question; the light that we see in the day with our natural eyes now is it generated by the sun or is it that which God spoke into being on day 1? It can only be the latter as the scripture states quite clearly that it is this light that will divide day and night. Consequently then the sun must be seen as a bearer of the light spoken into being on day 1 not the producer of it and the same would apply to the moon and the stars.

d). So what might we learn from this? Something I hope that will be very exciting - Ps 104:1 ¶ *Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, You are very great: You are clothed with honor and majesty, 2 Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment, Who stretch out the heavens like a curtain.*

The word translated 'light' here, with which God is covered, is the same word for 'light' seen in day 1 and we would know that the light with which God is covered is what the scriptures call 'glory'. And we would know that the light which is the glory of God has always existed as God Himself has always existed covered in light. And so the light spoken into being in day 1 of the Genesis account is not something that never existed before but a revealing or restoring of that which had previously been removed as a consequence of Satan's actions – so the restoring of the light speaks directly to God's purpose for restoring the ruined creation – the rulership by Man in the 7th Day.

e). So as we think about the light of the glory of God that is borne by the sun, moon and stars in connection with God's purpose we can then add to this thought from what we find in – Mt 17:1 ¶ *Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; 2 and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.*

This of course is the mount of transfiguration where Peter, James and John see Christ in His Kingdom glory; they see Him as He will appear during His Millennial Kingdom. Christ's body prior to this point had looked perfectly

normal, like everyone else's, but here at the transfiguration His body is now covered with glory giving us a direct connection between glory and His Kingdom rule.

f). And we can also find the same contrast between the risen Christ who appeared to His disciples on the Emmaus road and Paul's experience on the Damascus road – Lu 24:15 *So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.*

Ac 26:13 *"at midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me.*

On the road to Emmaus Jesus drew near and walked with them looking perfectly normal, but after He had been received up into glory at His ascension His appearance to Paul is quite different. The risen Lord is now said to be 'brighter than the sun' – so bright that Paul was blinded by the light until the third day - Heb 1:3 *who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,*

g). What we see then with the brilliance of the light of the glory covering Christ's body, as it does God the Father, is the same principle that must be applied to the light seen from the sun, moon and stars. There is a covering or an enswathing of the object in question, whether Christ's body or the sun, with the light of the glory of God. It is impossible for us to look directly at the sun because of the brilliance of the light, but we can look directly at the stars, which are the same as our sun, because of the huge distances between them and the earth. The light that we see from the stars can only be the same light that we see from our sun – the light of God's glory, the same light that God revealed in the midst of the darkness on day 1.

h). And the light of the glory speaks directly to Christ's Kingdom rule. Rulership and glory are really inseparable - 2Ti 2:10 *Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.*

2). With all of this in mind, let's now look with fresh eyes at some verses from Ps 19:1 ¶ <<To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.>> *The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. 2 Day unto day utters*

speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge. 3 There is no speech nor language Where their voice is not heard. 4 Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their words to the end of the world. In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun, 5 Which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, And rejoices like a strong man to run its race. 6 Its rising is from one end of heaven, And its circuit to the other end; And there is nothing hidden from its heat.

‘The heavens declare the glory of God’, does not just refer to the inhabitants of the heavens, the angelic hosts, who glorify God, but also refers directly to the light which we see every day, which is the light of the glory of God. Do we want to have a tantalizing glimpse at the regal magnificence of the Godhead? Then we need to take a look in the sky at noon.

a). And if we were ever in any doubt that God rules over the entire universe we just need to look into the night sky to see His glory throughout the universe in the billions, upon billions of stars - 1Co 15:41 *There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory.*

b). Now as we know the restoration of the ruined creation, as seen in Genesis Chapter 1, was undertaken by the Lord for a specifically stated purpose; a purpose which as we saw, began with and is defined by His first sovereign act of revealing the light of His glory – Ge 1:26 ¶ *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion*

God restored the ruined creation for the purpose of creating Man on the 6th day and placing Man in the place of rulership over the newly restored earth instead of Satan and his angels. So as the sun, moon and stars bore the light of the glory of God declaring God’s purpose, so Adam and the Woman had to be covered with the glory of God as a precursor to rulership as glory and rulership are inseparably connected.

c). But as we know, because of Satan’s deception of the Woman both the Woman and Adam ate of the forbidden fruit resulting in the loss of the covering of glory - Ge 3:7 *Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked;*

Sin now separated Adam and the Woman from God's purpose for them and being separated from God's purpose they could no longer be covered in glory as they could not rule in this condition – the 'light' was taken from them. But the good news is that God's purpose still remains to be fulfilled, witnessed in the light of the sun, moon and stars every day. And just as God took 6 days to restore the ruined material creation, so He is taking 6 days [6000 years] to restore His ruined creation, Man. And with a view to rulership from the heavens over the earth in the place of Satan at the end of this process the one new man in Christ is called to faithful obedience and those who will engage themselves correctly towards this end, will in that future day be covered in glory, the light being restored to Man, as a precursor to the fulfillment of rulership in the 7th Day – Mt 13:43 *"Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"*

d). To see the light from the sun, moon and stars is to see God's revealed purpose concerning rulership and the earth – millions upon millions of dollars have been spent putting telescopes into orbit around the earth for the purpose of looking back in time to find out how things were at the beginning. It would take no money at all to walk outside to look at the noonday sun which reveals not only God's purpose for Man, but also the condition Adam and the Woman were in before the fall, covered in the glory. And looking at the noonday sun can do something no telescope could ever do – it looks forward in time to show us what awaits us in our future, which is why Psalm 19 v2 says concerning the declaration of God's glory - *2 Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge.*

The passage of the darkness of night giving way to the light of day is a constant picture, a visual declaration, of where we have come from, where we are and the certainty of what is coming next –Ro 13:12 *The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.*

e). Every day the certainty of God's purpose is revealed as the darkness gives way to the light and this declaration of God's glory, the speech uttered day by day, is seen by everyone throughout the earth. This is why Psalm 19 says - Ps 19:3 *There is no speech nor language Where their voice is not heard. 4*

Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their words to the end of the world.

And this will help explain what we read in - Ro 1:20 *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,*

f). And so, in the simple passing of the night to give way to the day, which we probably all take for granted, is a visual proclamation of the gospel of the glory of Christ - 2Co 4:6 *For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

3). Ge 8:22 *"While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, Cold and heat, Winter and summer, And day and night Shall not cease."*

And then here in the foundation in the 8th Chapter of Genesis we see that the declaration of the glory of God through the passage of day and night has a timeframe, 'while the earth remains'.

a). And we will remember how long the earth remains – it remains until the end of the Millennial Kingdom - 2Pe 3:13 *Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*

Re 21:1 ¶ *Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.*

So not only does the light of the sun, moon and stars, look to the 7th Day when 'the sun of righteousness will arise with healing in His wings', but also to the endless ages of eternity future where sin will have been eradicated for all time and God will dwell with His people upon the new earth from which the governance of the universe will take place - Re 22:5 *There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.*

At this future point there will be no night and nor will the sun, moon and stars be needed to be light bearers because these have been set in place as a natural

phenomenon for a period of time that we should see and understand the purpose of God – once His purpose is fulfilled there is no longer a need to declare it through the passing of night and day. At that future time there will be the light of the glory of God that has always existed, spoken on day 1 in Genesis, the very light that we now see, a light that is beyond all light, all pervading, pure and radiant – Nu 14:21 *"but truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD-*

Ps 72:19 And blessed be His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen.

b). And this future day when the glory of the Lord will fill the earth has been prefigured in a type by the glory of the Lord filling the tabernacle of Moses and the Temple of Solomon - Ex 40:34 ¶ *Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.*

2Ch 7:1 ¶ *When Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the temple.*

Re 21:3 *And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.*

And as God's Tabernacle will then be the new earth, so the earth will be filled with His glory.

4). *and let them be for signs* – As we started today we had seen that the sun, moon and stars are 'for signs', which they are, but here is where it is easy to get into a mess. Many seeing this statement about signs search the skies for planetary alignments, eclipses, blood moons etc. to portend events that are to take place on the earth in our here and now. However, as we hopefully know by now we have to let the scriptures say what the scriptures say and understand this statement by allowing the scriptures to explain it for us. If we do this then the whole of the matter becomes very simple.

a). And so to begin let's go to the verse from which the title of our message is taken - 1Co 1:22 *For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after*

wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Within the context of our verses here in 1 Corinthians the sign given to the Jews was to be seen through the preaching of Christ crucified – Joh 3:14 *"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 "that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*

But this 'sign' at the time of Paul's preaching during the re-offer of the Kingdom by the one new man in Christ was a stumbling block to the Jews. For the Greeks, or Gentiles, who seek after wisdom, the wisdom given to them was through the preaching of Christ crucified, which they considered foolishness – the reality of course for those with eyes to see, those who are called, is that Christ crucified is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

b). But, for the purpose of our study we need to establish firstly that 'signs' are for the Jews alone, it is the Jew who requests, or requires a 'sign' and as we will see in the course of our studies, 'signs' are always given to Israel and always with the Theocracy in view - Joh 6:30 *Therefore they said to Him, "What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You?*

c). And so as we see in Genesis that the sun, moon and stars are for 'signs' we must realize that the 'signs' they give are there for the Jews.

d). The next thing we will want to establish is how are the sun, moon and stars used as 'signs'? Are we now to look at celestial alignments and then apply these to Israel?

e). Well as we said earlier, if we allow the scriptures to say what the scriptures say, this becomes very easy to see - Ge 37:9 *Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me."*

Here is one of Joseph's dreams, a dream that has to do with Joseph ruling over his family which foreshadows Christ one day ruling over the house of Israel, which is Millennial in its scope.

f). Re 12:1 ¶ *Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.*

Here in the verse from Revelation we see Israel during the tribulation depicted as a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet with a crown of 12 stars on her head and this is a prophetic picture of what awaits Israel in her future, beyond the end of the tribulation, following national repentance.

g). So, let's take the imagery here back to Genesis – firstly let's remember that the light of the glory of God borne by the sun and moon is inseparable from God's purpose of rulership, With this in mind let's look again how the sun and moon are described on day 4 - *the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night.* The sun is greater, the moon is lesser because the moon's light can only come from the sun.

h). The woman, Israel, being clothed with the sun shows Israel to be the greater ruling authority and under Israel's greater authority and subject to it are placed the lesser authorities, the Gentile nations who come out of the tribulation. This then is Israel in her rightful place at the head of the nations, being the preeminent nation on the earth - De 28:13 *"And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath,*

De 14:2 *"For you are a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.*

i). And so as we look at the imagery in the verses from Genesis Chapter 37 and Revelation Chapter 12 we can see that the sun, moon and stars are used as 'signs' metaphorically, not literally.

j). And this use of metaphor and figurative language is something we have seen throughout scripture; another good example of which we can go to in - Isa 2:1 ¶ *The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD'S house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. 3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For*

out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore. 5 O house of Jacob, come and let us walk In the light of the LORD.

And these verses from Isaiah speak about the same time and the same situation that is pictured through the 'great sign' of the woman clothed with the sun with the moon under her feet, just presented from a different perspective.

k). The use of the sun, moon and stars as 'signs' as stated in Genesis 1:14 must always speak of rulership in the place of Satan and his angels because of the light of the glory of God seen in Genesis 1:3 and with respect to Israel this will always be pointing to the end of the times of the Gentiles with Israel forgiven, healed and restored at the head of the nations within the Theocracy.

l). And for ourselves? Well the 'signs' are not for us but that which the 'signs' declare with regards to Israel will be fulfilled because God will have called out of the Gentiles a people for His name, who will be the Bride of Christ without whom Christ cannot reign [Theocracy] because of that established with regards to rulership and a marriage relationship in the beginning.

m). It is as Peter says - 2Pe 1:16 ¶ *For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. 17 For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." 18 And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. 19 ¶ And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; 20 knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, 21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*

n). We will continue with this next time – if the Lord is willing.