

Yom Kippur is a very special day, and in Judaism, it is considered to be the most sacred day of the year. It is listed in Leviticus 23 along with most of the other appointed times of God. It is a day of fasting and of sacrifices for the cleansing of God's people, starting with Aaron and his house, and then for the people of Israel themselves. It concludes with the sins of Israel being put on the head of a goat called the 'Azazel' – the goat of departure - which is lead away to the wilderness. It pictures Messiah Yeshua taking our sins away to a place where even God himself can no longer remember them.

But there are other aspects of this day that are not often discussed, one of which is the role Yom Kippur plays in the Return of the Captives – the Exiles of Israel.

Just days before crossing the Jordan to enter the promised land, Moses warned Israel that they would eventually turn from God and be scattered throughout the nations; but in a day of calamity, they would return to Him.

^{ESV} **Deuteronomy 30:1** "And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God has driven you, ² and return to the LORD your God, you and your children, and obey his voice in all that I command you today, with all your heart and with all your soul, ³ then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you. ⁴ If your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there he will take you. ⁵ And the LORD your God will bring you into the land that your fathers possessed, that you may possess it ...

Other than those pertaining to the Messiah, the return of the captives - the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel, is probably the most mentioned prophetic theme in the Bible. It could be said that these prophecies begin as far back as Genesis 12 with the promise made to Abraham, and they continue through the book of Revelation.

Though Jeremiah prophecies of it being an event that far exceeds the greatness of Israel being delivered from Egypt¹, there is no festival dedicated to the gathering of the exiles. But God has not left us clueless. He has alluded to this 'second exodus' as part of an event that happens every fifty years – an event that takes place on Yom Kippur.

^{NKJ} **Leviticus 25:8-9** ' And you shall count seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years; and the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years. ⁹Then you shall **cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound** (literally – '*cause to pass over the shofar of shouting*') on the tenth *day* of the seventh month; **on the Day of Atonement** you shall make the trumpet to sound **throughout all your land**.

After seven cycles of seven years, on Yom Kippur of the first year of the next (eighth) cycle, God said that a shofar shall be blown throughout the land of Israel. That shofar would be heard everywhere in the land and that the people would shout for joy, just as the Hebrews shouted when the walls of Jericho began to fall, and as the Jewish people shouted in the days of Ezra when they saw the rebuilt Temple.²

¹ Jer. 16:14-16, 23: 23:7-8

² Ezra 3:12



Why would the people shout? Let's continue –

^{NKJ} **Leviticus 25:10** 'And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and **proclaim liberty** throughout *all* the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a **Jubilee** for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family.

The people shout because they will be liberated from slavery. They will have liberty – liberty to return to their homes and to live on their own land. Families will come back together as they return to the inheritances granted by God himself.

In this passage, the Hebrew word translated “liberty” is “derowr” (דֵּרוֹר – 1865). It means “a flowing, free run – the unrestricted flow of sap from a maple tree”. Unlike the ‘freedom from law’ that is espoused by many churches as well as liberal organizations, the freedom provided by the Jubilee is a freedom in law - a freedom that guarantees everyone’s ability to flow about, to run free. That freedom will be announced by the blast of a shofar, which in many cases is a ram’s horn. In fact, the word “jubilee” is translated from the Hebrew word “yovel” (יֹבֵל – 3104) which does mean “ram’s horn”; the root of which is “yabal” (יָבַל – 2986) which means “to bring, lead, carry”. So not only does this day picture liberty, it carries with it the idea that God’s people will be “lead” or “carried” to liberty.

When you consider that the Jubilee only takes place every 50 years, and that it always begins on Yom Kippur, is it possible that there is a message in the Jubilee that we may have missed? I believe there is. Though there is no single passage in scripture that ties the Jubilee year to a specific event in Biblical eschatology, I believe we can tie a number of prophecies together and build a picture of the end time “greater exodus” and tie it to the Jubilee. To do so, we will need to bring in a little understanding of the Hebrew wedding, tie that to the Biblical festivals of Leviticus 23, and also introduce the Jewish understanding of some oftentimes misapplied biblical terms.

So in this message, we’re going to briefly discuss the Hebrew wedding, introduce Jewish tradition to some biblical terms, see what the fall festivals reveal about the end times, and discuss one of Yeshua’s roles – especially the role He plays at the end of days. With that, we’ll see how all this ties in with the Jubilee and hopefully gain a better understanding of end-time prophecy.

Hebrew Wedding

The ancient Hebrew courtship/marriage process is somewhat like the traditional Christian process of years past (before it became acceptable to live together before getting married) with the major difference being that a person was legally married at betrothal. The process is loosely linked to the Biblical festivals in regards to theme. It goes like this:

- Covenant between Fathers (Passover)
- Courtship (DUB until reaching Mt. Sinai)
- Betrothal (Shavuot)
- Snatching the Bride (Yom Teruah)
- Leaving the Chuppah (Yom Kippur)
- Wedding Feast (Sukkot)
- New Life Together (Shemini Atzoreth)

To illustrate these relationships, it is understood that God made the covenant with Abraham³ on Passover then confirmed it 400 or so years later when He delivered Israel from Pharaoh at Passover. It is also clear that God took Israel as His betrothed bride at Shavuot some 50 days later. As we move to the fall

³ Genesis 12



festivals, it is widely believed that God will “take” His bride on Yom Teruah (the Feast of Trumpets), then after the pattern set by Jacob in Leah⁴, God will stay with the bride in the “chuppah” for seven years, then return for the wedding supper which takes place on Sukkot. After the wedding supper, they, like it is with the typical Christian wedding, will begin to build a new family and live their lives together.

Now that we have a general overview of the Hebrew wedding, let us take a look at a few terms that are defined by Jewish tradition. They, along with their ‘traditional’ meaning are:

- first trump (betrothal of Israel at Mount Sinai)
- last trump (fetching away of the bride; announces the arrival of the bridegroom. – Yom Teruah)
- great trumpet (the trumpet that is blown at the end of Yom Kippur); see Isaiah 27:13
- ‘at that day’; “in that day” (the end times, specifically the beginning of the birth pains)
- Day of the Lord (the ‘tribulation’, ‘birthpains’); see Joel 2:1,11; Is. 2:12, 13:6; Jer 46:10; Ezek 30:3; 2 Peter 3:10

Armed with the above information and beginning with Yom Teruah, let’s now take a deeper look at the sequence of the fall festivals which are a ‘shadow’⁵ of what is going to happen at the end of days.

Yom Teruah

The fall festivals begin with Yom Teruah. In 1st century Israel this day pictured the day that with repentance, a person might be considered worthy to avoid the “Birth Pains” (which we will get to later). An example of such is when the Pharisees come to John’s baptism.

^{NKJ} **Matthew 3:5-7** Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him ⁶ and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

It is clear that these people, which includes “all Judea”, came to John’s baptism at the Jordan River to repent, hoping they would be spared from the ‘wrath to come’- the birthpains of the Messiah.

Paul, a man who considered himself to be a Jew even though he was actually from the tribe of Benjamin, also understood the Jewish traditions surrounding the fall festivals, and thus provides further insight into the meaning of this day:

^{NKJ} **1 Thessalonians 4:13-17** But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. ¹⁶ **For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout**, with the voice of an archangel, and with **the trumpet of God**. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be **caught up together** with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

Paul made a similar statement in his first letter to the Corinthians -

^{NKJ} **1 Corinthians 15:51-52** Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed -- ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the **last trumpet**. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

⁴ Genesis 29:27 – to “fulfil her week” means to stay with her in the ‘chuppah’ – the wedding chamber – for seven days.

⁵ Colossians 2:16-17



With these three passages, we see that on Yom Teruah there will be a “catching away” followed by the “birthpains” or “tribulation”. Note that it begins when Yeshua descends with a ‘shout’ which is further defined as the ‘trumpet of God’ and at the “last trumpet”. It is at this time that the righteous believers and the “dead in Christ” will be resurrected to eternal life. Many believe this is the “resurrection of the Just”⁶ Note that the text does not indicate that Yeshua will actually set His feet on earth that day, but instead, the believers will rise up to meet Him in the air.

Birthpains of the Messiah

The “birthpains” are referenced throughout both the Old and New Testament. One of the most referenced scriptures is found in Jeremiah’s prophecy –

^{ESV} **Jeremiah 30:6-7** Ask now, and see, can a man bear a child? Why then do I see every man with his hands on his stomach like a woman in labor? Why has every face turned pale? ⁷ Alas! That day is so great there is none like it; it is a time of distress for Jacob; yet he shall be saved out of it.

This scripture points to a time when God will bring his wrath on the Hebrew people, both Israel and Judah, for their sins and blasphemy against God. When asked about this time, Yeshua said –

^{ESV} **Matthew 24:5-12** For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray. ⁶ And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. ⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ **All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.** ⁹ "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. ¹⁰ And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. ¹¹ And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. ¹² And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.

This will be an unprecedented time of war, famine, and lawlessness; a time when many will look to a human “king” to save them, but will be greatly deceived. On the other hand, those who proclaim these times as God’s indignation against a disobedient people will be hated, just as happened to the prophets of old.

The birthpains are generally believed to last seven years, with the final three and a half years being the “great tribulation” (see vs. 9 above). This is not a good time! But neither is it a time when God simply forsakes His people. Rather, it is a time when God brings correction on a disobedient child for the purpose of helping him to see where he has gone wrong. The purpose of the birthpains is to cause Israel and Judah to repent and turn back to God –

^{ESV} **Jeremiah 31:17-19** There is hope for your future, declares the LORD, and your children shall come back to their own country. ¹⁸ I have heard Ephraim grieving, 'You have disciplined me, and I was disciplined, like an untrained calf; bring me back that I may be restored, for you are the LORD my God. ¹⁹ For after I had turned away, I relented, and after I was instructed, I slapped my thigh; I was ashamed, and I was confounded, because I bore the disgrace of my youth.'

A Shelter From the Storm

What about those who have been walking in God’s way – those who have been diligently serving Him? Will they have to endure the birthpains as well? Scripture seems to indicate that they may be “hidden away” during this time. David speaks of a “time of trouble” when the righteous might be hidden –

⁶ Luke 14:14; Acts 24:15 - the unjust could simply be those who do not observe the law – not that they are necessarily against the law, but are not aware of it, or may have been blinded to it



^{NKJ} **Psalm 27:5** For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock.

Isaiah also speaks of at time when God's people will be sheltered from His indignation –

^{NKJ} **Isaiah 26:20-21** 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. ²¹ For behold, the LORD comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; The earth will also disclose her blood, And will no more cover her slain.

In this passage, the word “chambers” is translated from the Hebrew word “chedar” (חֶדָר – 2315) which means “bedchamber”. This indicates that during the birthpains, many of the righteous will be in the chedar while the rest of mankind endures the birthpains. This would include many “fence sitters” – those who believe in God, but are unwilling to walk in His ways because they have let the cares of the world overtake them. These people will likely repent sometime during this period of tribulation and God may spare them from the balance of this terrible time. Yeshua alludes to this possibility when He said –

^{NKJ} **Matthew 24:15-21** " Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), ¹⁶ "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁷ "Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. ¹⁸ "And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes ... ²¹ "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be."

“Fleeing to the mountains” is a reference to the story of Hanukkah where the priest Mattathias told those who followed God to flee to avoid the carnage that was about to come on Jerusalem –

1 Maccabees 2:27-28 And Mattathias cried throughout the city with a loud voice, saying, Whosoever is zealous of the law, and maintaineth the covenant, let him follow me. ²⁸ So he and his sons fled into the mountains, and left all that ever they had in the city.

Yom Kippur

The festival that follows the birthpains is Yom Kippur. It is a day of “afflicting our soul” as well as a time of forgiveness; and according to Yeshua, this day marks the time of His return to the earth.

^{NKJ} **Matthew 24:29-30** "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰ "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

Since we will be discussing this day for the remainder of this study, I will skip the details here except to note that it is the day that follows on the heels of the birthpains and that Yeshua clearly stated that He would return on this day.

Sukkot

The festival of Sukkot pictures the Messianic Kingdom, in which we have the Wedding Supper of the Lamb. It is a time of restoration. For 1000 years the Messiah will go about his father's business restoring the Kingdom of Israel as it was intended to be. Sukkot begins five days after Yom Kippur, which indicates there is a break between the return of the Messiah on Yom Kippur and the beginning of the Messianic Kingdom.

Shemini Atzoret



Literally “the Eighth Day Assembly”, Shemini Atzoret begins immediately after Sukkot and is chronologically a New Beginning. The seven “1000 year” cycle will have been completed at the end of Sukkot, and a new “cycle” begins, though this cycle is outside of time since there is no sun or moon by which we can determine time. The Messiah and His bride start a new life together back where it all began – the Garden of Eden. It is a life that will last forever.

To summarize what we’ve seen so far, the Biblical festivals are related to the Hebrew wedding and the events of the wedding help us to understand the festivals. We have also seen that the fall festivals, beginning with Yom Teruah, picture the catching away of the believers and the beginning of the Birthpains that precede the coming of the Messiah. With that, we will briefly discuss one of the main roles of the Messiah.

Yeshua’s Purpose

Just after Yeshua returned from being tested by HaSatan, and before He had called His disciples, He went into the synagogue in Nazareth. As part of the study He was asked to stand up and read the portion for that day which included Isaiah 42:7, 49:8, and 61:1-2. He said -

^{NKJ} **Luke 4:18-19** "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To **proclaim liberty to the captives**, and recovery of sight to the blind. To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

After reading to that point, He abruptly stopped in the middle of a thought and sat down. Because He did not finish the prescribed reading, everyone looked at Him with a quizzical look. He then gave a short and concise commentary on what He had just read. He said –

^{NKJ} **Luke 4:21** ... "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

This event more than likely took place on Yom Kippur as evidenced by the context of the passages and by the fact that the people’s outrage prompted them to attempt to throw Him over a cliff (vs. 29), something they traditionally⁷ did to the azazel goat of Yom Kippur.

The context of the passages He quoted speaks of the return of the exiles using terms such as “my people”, “prisoners” and “captives”. It was common knowledge in Yeshua’s day that the “kingdom” could not be restored until the Captives – the Exiles – were free to return to the land. The disciples knew that as well, after all Yeshua had Himself said –

^{NKJ} **Matthew 15:24** "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."⁸

So the Disciples – on the day the resurrected Messiah was taken up to the Father, asked Him –

^{NKJ} **Acts 1:6** "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

The gathering of the exiles and the restoration of the Kingdom of God was the main reason Yeshua was sent. It is through that Kingdom that ultimately all mankind will have the opportunity to know and follow God as is indicated by the prophet Isaiah –

^{ESV} **Isaiah 49:3** And he said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified." ⁴ But I said, "I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my right is with the LORD, and my recompense with my God." ⁵ **And now the LORD says, he who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him; and that Israel**

⁷ the Jews incorrectly associated the azazel with haSatan. See https://www.amiyisrael.org/articles.php#yomKippur_SinsBlottedOut-title

⁸ see also John 11:50-52; John 7:35



might be gathered to him- for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD, and my God has become my strength- ⁶ **he says: "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."**

Yeshua's purpose is to gather Israel back to God, but God knows the heart of man and that it oftentimes takes a crisis to make him stop and think about what he is doing and what has caused him to get into such a mess. Though many people will take notice when they see calamity around them – for instance, the events of September 11, 2001 – God knows it will take a cataclysmic event that shakes the entire world to get His scattered people to take notice. That is the purpose for the “birthpains”, which according to the festival cycle, end at Yom Kippur.

the Gathering Begins

Though the above passage shows that it is the role of the Messiah to gather the preserved of Israel, Isaiah provides us with a time frame in which that will happen.

^{NKJ} **Isaiah 11:10-12** " And **in that day** there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, And His resting place shall be glorious." ¹¹ It shall come to pass **in that day** *That* the LORD shall set His hand again the second time To recover the remnant of His people who are left, From Assyria and Egypt, From Pathros and Cush, From Elam and Shinar, From Hamath and the islands of the sea. ¹² He will set up a banner for the nations, And will assemble the outcasts of Israel, And gather together the dispersed of Judah From the four corners of the earth.

According to the prophet, it will begin “in that day” which as mentioned earlier, is a Hebrew idiom that means “at the end time” and more specifically, sometime around the times of the birthpains. When combined with Matthew 24:29-30 mentioned above, it is clear that Yeshua will begin the gathering of the exiles on Yom Kippur.

Many believe that when He comes, He will come by Himself, go directly to the Mount of Olives, and set His feet on it. This belief comes from the prophet Zechariah where it says –

^{NKJ} **Zechariah 14:4** And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east.

Though it is true that He will eventually stand on the Mount of Olives, to do that immediately on His return would void much of the prophecy about the return of the exiles, and would invalidate the purpose of the festivals, which according to Paul are “a shadow of things to come”⁹. If indeed the festivals provide an image of things that will happen to the followers of the Messiah, then we must take all the festivals as specific events and look at them in the context of wedding of the Messiah. In addition, we should also take into account a truth that should guide all prophetic understanding, and that is the words of King Solomon who said –

^{ESV} **Ecclesiastes 1:9** what has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.

⁹ Colossians 2:16-17 – a literal shadow is an image of something that is real. In the passage, the word “but” in verse 17 (KJV) is “de” (Strong’s 1161) and can be translated a number of ways including “and”, “moreover”, “also”, etc. Translated correctly, verse 17 would read “... which are a shadow of the coming things and the body of the anointed one”. The body of the anointed one is of course, the people who follow the Messiah.



So when we search to find what will happen, we should look for similar events that have already happened ... not that future events will perfectly match former events, but there would be clear similarities.

Jeremiah 16:14-16 and 23:7-8 show us that the return of the exiles in the latter days will be likened to the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. That then is a pattern that will help us understand what is going to happen. Another example is that Yeshua is going to be like His father – King David, who after uniting the Kingdom of Israel subdued the nations that surrounded her.

Messiah Returns!

When we take into account the ‘shadow’ provided by the festivals, the events of the Hebrew wedding, and the fact that there is nothing new, we see that when the Messiah returns, He – like Moses, will begin to gather Israel from the four corners of the earth¹⁰ and bring them to His holy mountain, Mount Sinai.

Going back to the Olivet prophecy, Yeshua, while seated on the Mount of Olives and likely looking down over the city of Jerusalem, told His disciples –

^{NKJ} **Matthew 24:27, 29-31** "For as the **lightning** comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be ... ²⁹" **Immediately after the tribulation of those days** the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰"Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming **on the clouds of heaven** with power and great glory. ³¹"And He will send His angels with a **great sound of a trumpet**, and they will **gather together His elect from the four winds**, from one end of heaven to the other.

There are a number of details provided in this passage that we should consider. The first detail is that the events will happen at the “great sound of the trumpet” which coincides with “immediately after the tribulation”. Like we learned earlier, the “Great Trumpet” – the “Shofar haGadol” in Jewish understanding is the one blown at the close of Yom Kippur. It is the shofar that announces the beginning of the gathering of the exiles. The prophet Isaiah confirms -

^{NKJ} **Isaiah 27:12-13** And it shall come to pass in that day *That* the LORD will thresh, From the channel of the River to the Brook of Egypt; And **you will be gathered one by one, O you children of Israel.** ¹³ So it shall be in that day: The **great trumpet** will be blown; They will come, who are about to perish in the land of Assyria, And they who are outcasts in the land of Egypt, And shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

The next detail is that the events He is describing are going to take place within a short period of time. Lightning is something that happens quickly, suddenly, and it always appears to come out of the sky. Such will be the return of the Messiah. He will come out of the sky and will quickly gather His people who like in the exodus, will probably be thrust out of the lands where they are living¹¹. He then has to take them to Mount Sinai, organize them into an army, rid Jerusalem of occupying armies, bind the adversary, and prepare for the wedding supper. All this takes place between Yom Kippur and Sukkot.

The Clouds of Heaven

A final detail on this passage is that Yeshua is coming “on the clouds of Heaven”. There is a very popular song that was written by a Northern Irish singer/songwriter named Robin Mark. In the chorus it says –

¹⁰ We know that Moses headed south after the Israelites were cast out of Goshen. Besides securing the bones of Joseph, he likely gathered Israelites that were scattered throughout Egypt.

¹¹ Exodus 6:1; 12:31-33, 39



“Behold He comes riding on the clouds, Shining like the sun at the trumpet call,
Lift your voice, it's the year of jubilee, And out of Zion's hill salvation comes.”

Though the writer has much of the facts correct, Yeshua's Olivet Prophecy statement does not say that He will be “riding” on the clouds, instead the Greek text infers that He is coming “with”, or “before” the clouds”. The Greek word “epi” (Strong's 1909) which is translated “in” or “on” in this verse can also be translated “by” or “before; and in fact was translated “before” 42 times in the New Testament.

Like Yeshua, the prophet Daniel spoke of the Messiah coming “with” the clouds –

^{NKJ} **Daniel 7:13-14** " I was watching in the night visions, And behold, *One* like the Son of Man, **Coming with the clouds of heaven!** He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. ¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him.

The book of Daniel was written in Aramaic – a close relative to Hebrew, and in this passage the word “with” is from the word “im” (אִם - Strong's 5974 and pronounced “eem”). “Im” is used 21 times in the Tnakh, and two-thirds of the time it is translated “with”. In this same passage, the LXX also translates the word as “with”.

So who are the “clouds” and how did they get to Heaven?

On the evening before Yeshua was crucified, He said to His disciples -

^{NKJ} **John 14:2** "In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

According to Jewish tradition, this is a statement that is typically made when a young Jewish man, immediately after betrothal, prepares to depart to build the ‘chuppah’ (חופה – 2646 - wedding chamber) in his father's house. The chuppah could be a separate room of the house or an addition made to the house, but in either case it is a specially prepared place to be used for one week as the new husband and bride consummate their marriage. For the bride, when the groom said this on departure, it was understood to mean that he would certainly return for her.

So if Yeshua went to His Father's house and built a chuppah, that pretty much indicates that his bride will eventually go there as well. But keep in mind – this is only temporary, in fact, the Greek word “mansion” (Strong's 3438) – translated “mansions”, actually implies a temporary residence. In other words, you're going to eventually move on.

If Jewish tradition is correct, Yeshua will come back to fetch His bride on Yom Teruah. He will take her to His Father's house in Heaven and she will stay with Him in the chuppah for seven days (or years). Thus the chuppah is the “shelter from the storm” – the place of refuge during the birthpains. At the end of the seven days, they come out of the chuppah and prepare for the wedding supper.

This scenario is supported by the prophet Joel.

Joel chapter 2 is about end-time events. It starts with Yom Teruah (Feast of Trumpets) and continues through Sukkot. In regards to Yom Kippur it says –

^{NKJ} **Joel 2:15-16** **Blow the trumpet in Zion, Consecrate a fast,** Call a sacred assembly; ¹⁶ Gather the people, Sanctify the congregation, Assemble the elders, Gather the children and nursing babes; Let **the bridegroom go out from his chamber, And the bride from her dressing room.**



The passage mentions blowing the shofar - most likely the Great Shofar that is blown at the close of Yom Kippur - and notes the bridegroom and the bride coming out of their rooms. The bridegroom comes out of his bedchamber¹², and the bride comes out of her "chuppah", the room where the bride and groom had been staying for seven days.

This indicates that the bride will indeed be with the groom for the seven days / years of the birthpains and will then leave the chuppah to accompany Him to the wedding supper which takes place at Sukkot. So what would they do for seven years? I believe they will become an army of leaders who can lead the people back to Mount Sinai, and Messiah Yeshua will go before them as their 'general'.

In the scriptures, clouds are sometimes personified as armies. For instance, Jeremiah refers to the armies of King Nebuchadnezzar as clouds.

^{NKJ} **Jeremiah 4:13** "Behold, he shall come up like **clouds**, and his chariots like a whirlwind. His horses are swifter than eagles. Woe to us, for we are plundered!"

Ezekiel also speaks of end-time wars where the soldiers are likened to clouds –

^{NKJ} **Ezekiel 30:1** The word of the LORD came to me again, saying, ² "Son of man, prophesy and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Wail, 'Woe to the day!' ³ For the day *is* near, Even the day of the LORD *is* near; It will be a day of **clouds**, the time of the Gentiles. ⁴ The sword shall come upon Egypt, And great anguish shall be in Ethiopia, When the slain fall in Egypt, And they take away her wealth, And her foundations are broken down.

"Day of clouds" would refer to armies of soldiers that bring the sword.

Another example is that of Yeshua who while on trial before the High Priest, is specifically asked if He is the anointed king – the 'Christ' - and Yeshua answers stating –

^{NKJ} **Matthew 26:64** ... "*It is as you said.* Nevertheless, (moreover) I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on (before) the **clouds** of heaven."

At that moment, the High Priest tore his clothes because he understood Yeshua claiming to be the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy – that He was the King of Israel, which implies that He will have an army, just like His father David.

The book of Revelation clearly shows that armies will follow Yeshua when He returns –

^{ESV} **Revelation 19:5-16** And from the throne came a voice saying, "Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great." ⁶ Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. ⁷ Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his **Bride has made herself ready**; ⁸ it was granted **her to clothe herself with fine linen**, bright and pure"- for the **fine linen** is the **righteous deeds of the saints**. ⁹ And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." ... ¹¹ Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a *white horse*! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. ¹³ He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. ¹⁴ And **the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses**. ¹⁵ From his mouth comes a sharp

¹² translated "bedchamber" in these passages: Ex. 8:3; 2 Sam. 4:7; 2 Kings 6:12, 11:2; 2 Chron. 22:11; Ecc. 10:20



sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. ¹⁶ **On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.**

If the clothing of the bride is fine linen, and the armies in Heaven are arrayed in fine linen, and the armies that follow Him ride on white horses, and He is the King of Kings, then the armies come from Heaven with Him. It is just as it says in Revelation chapter 1 –

^{ESV} **Revelation 1:7** Behold, he is coming **with the clouds**, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him.

It is interesting to note the Israelites, when they came out of Egypt, came out as an army as well.

^{ESV} **Exodus 13:18** But God led the people around by the way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea. And the people of Israel went up out of the land of Egypt **equipped for battle.**

So the “clouds” are the army of Holy Beings. They come from Heaven where they had been in training for seven years. They are dressed in fine linen, and they ride on white horses following their King – Messiah Yeshua – who is Himself riding on a white horse.

Gathering the Remnant

With what we’ve learned about the “clouds of heaven”, let’s now return to the Olivet Prophecy where Yeshua said –

^{NKJ} **Matthew 24:31** "And He will send His angels with a **great sound of a trumpet**, and they will **gather together His elect from the four winds**, from one end of heaven to the other.

Without understand who the “clouds” are, one might think that it is the angels that gather the elect¹³. Now we can see that it is the angels that blow the great shofar, but it is the “clouds”, the army that follows Yeshua, that gathers the elect – and they do it on His behalf. Thousands, maybe even millions of Holy Beings will scatter out to the four corners of the earth and begin locating and leading God’s flock - the remnant of Israel that repented and turned to God during the birthpains - back toward the land. They will sing for joy and shout for gladness as they go.

^{NKJ} **Jeremiah 31:7-10** For thus says the LORD: "Sing with gladness for Jacob, And **shout** among the chief of the nations; Proclaim, give praise, and say, '**O LORD, save Your people, The remnant of Israel!**' ⁸ Behold, I will bring them from the north country, And gather them from the ends of the earth, *Among* them the blind and the lame, The woman with child And the one who labors with child, together; **A great throng shall return there.** ⁹ They shall come with weeping, And with supplications **I will lead them.** I will cause them to **walk by the rivers of waters**, In a **straight way** in which they shall not stumble; For I am a Father to Israel, And Ephraim *is* My firstborn. ¹⁰ " Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, And declare *it* in the isles afar off, and say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him, And keep him as a shepherd *does* his flock.'

God will “lead” them – “yabel” them¹⁴ - along rivers of water and in a strait – a righteous¹⁵ path. It will be something to see, something that will make the exodus from Egypt pale in comparison.

^{ESV} **Jeremiah 16:14-15** "Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when it shall no longer be said, 'As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of

¹³ “elect” = “eklektos” (1588) which simply means “chosen”. God makes it very clear that Israel is His chosen – Isaiah 41:8-9; 44:1-2; Jer. 33:24-26

¹⁴ as the word “jubilee” implies

¹⁵ in the Tnakh, the word “strait” is often likened to “righteousness”. This picture is similar to Psalm 23



Egypt,'¹⁵ but 'As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.' For I will bring them back to their own land that I gave to their fathers.

Like at the exodus, God will provide food and water along the way – maybe a moving bolder with water gushing out of it. And if the technology remains, every news organization will be covering it. There will be drones buzzing all over the place and it will all be on TV! The nations will see it all, but the media will likely pass it off as a cult gathering. But it's not over yet!

^{ESV} **Isaiah 49:8-13** Thus says the LORD: "**In a time of favor I have answered you**; in a day of salvation I have helped you; I will keep you and give you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages,"⁹ saying to the prisoners, 'Come out,' to those who are in darkness, 'Appear.' **They shall feed along the ways**; on all bare heights shall be their pasture;¹⁰ **they shall not hunger or thirst**, neither , for he who has pity on them will lead them, and by springs of water will guide them.¹¹ And I will make all my mountains a road, and my highways shall be raised up.¹² Behold, **these shall come from afar, and behold, these from the north and from the west**, and these from the land of Syene."¹³ Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth; break forth, O mountains, into singing! for the LORD has comforted his people and will have compassion on his afflicted.

This is the “acceptable”¹⁶ year of the Lord”, the event spoken of by the prophets and by Yeshua in Luke 4:18-19. God will lead them to the wilderness just as He did in the exodus, and will once again bring them to Mount Sinai – the Mountain of God.

^{NKJ} **Ezekiel 20:34-36** "I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out.³⁵ "And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will plead My case with you face to face.³⁶ "Just as I pleaded My case with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will plead My case with you," says the Lord GOD.

He will speak softly to them and show them where they went wrong. This time they will respond to Him and as loving wife responds to a loving husband –

^{ESV} **Hosea 2:14-16** "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring **her into the wilderness**, and speak tenderly to her.¹⁵ And there I will give her vineyards and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. And there **she shall answer as in the days of her youth, as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt**."¹⁶ "And in that day, declares the LORD, you will call me 'My Husband,' and no longer will you call me 'My Baal.'

The significance of verse 16 is tremendous in that it shows Israel's attitude toward God. Instead of thinking of YHVH as her 'master' (baali) with all His silly rules and laws, she will think of Him adoringly as her 'man' (ishi) – her provider and protector. Therefore she will respond to Him as a wife and not as a slave – just as Israel did with dancing and tambourines when she crossed the Red Sea 3500 years earlier.

Israel will realize that God has extended undeserved grace to His people as both the northern and southern tribes join back together as one people, and He will again look at them as a virgin.

^{ESV} **Jeremiah 31:1-2** "**At that time**, declares the LORD, I will be the God of all the clans of Israel, and they shall be my people."² Thus says the LORD: "**The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness**; when Israel sought for rest,³ the LORD appeared to him from

¹⁶ “favor” is translated from “ratsown” (רָצוֹן) – 7522) which is also translated “acceptable” in Isaiah 61:2



far away. I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you. ⁴ Again I will build you, and you shall be built, **O virgin Israel!** Again you shall adorn yourself with tambourines and shall go forth in the dance of the merry-makers

There is indeed – nothing new under the sun!

Though the wilderness is where God takes His people to speak to them, educate them, and comfort them, the wilderness is not their destination. Their destination is the land of Israel. The Messianic Kingdom will start in Jerusalem, so that is where they ultimately need to be; but the city is occupied by foreign armies that must be driven out.

So after the wilderness, God begins to lead them to Jericho. Because there is 'no new thing under the sun', He will probably lead them along the very same path Moses did long before. They will make their way up the King's Highway to the eastern shore of the Jordan River across from Jericho. This is attested to in the Song of Moses – a 'latter day' prophecy for the people of Israel.

^{NKJ} **Deuteronomy 33:2** ... "The LORD came from Sinai, And dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, And He came with ten thousands of saints ...

Battles will be fought along the way, just as it was before. The fame and the fear of the God of Israel will precede them as they make their way from kingdom to kingdom – Yeshua riding on a white horse, followed by the Holy Beings and the remnant. As they enter the gates of the cities, the kings will surrender to the power of Israel and her King.

^{ESV} **Isaiah 49:22-23** Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I will lift up my hand to the nations, and raise my signal to the peoples; and they shall bring your sons in their bosom, and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders. ²³ **Kings shall be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers. With their faces to the ground they shall bow down to you, and lick the dust of your feet.** Then you will know that I am the LORD; those who wait for me shall not be put to shame."

Crossing the Jordan and heading west toward Jerusalem, they will begin the ascent to the Mount of Olives, and as they look over the city of Jerusalem and the carnage below, Yeshua will dismount from His horse, setting His feet on the Mount of Olives –

^{ESV} **Zechariah 14:1** Behold, a day is coming for the LORD, when the spoil taken from you will be divided in your midst. ² For **I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle**, and the city shall be taken and the houses plundered and the women raped. Half of the city shall go out into exile, but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city. ³ Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle. ⁴ **On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem** on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward. ⁵ And you shall flee to the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal. And you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, **and all the holy ones with Him.**

Yeshua and the Holy Beings with Him will cleanse Jerusalem of their foreign occupiers. They will then begin to subdue the nations surrounding her. Yeshua will follow the same steps as did His father David as He brings into subjection all the territory promised to Abraham.

^{ESV} **Isaiah 11:14-16** ... they shall swoop down on the shoulder of the Philistines in the west, and together they shall plunder the people of the east. They shall put out their hand against Edom and Moab, and the Ammonites shall obey them. ¹⁵ And the LORD will utterly destroy the tongue of



the Sea of Egypt, and will waive his hand over the River with his scorching breath, and strike it into seven channels, and he will lead people across in sandals. ¹⁶ And there will be a highway from Assyria for the remnant that remains of his people, as there was for Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt.

Yeshua has now established Himself as King of Kings and has chained the adversary so he will not be able to influence the nations. Sukkot and the Messianic Kingdom have now begun. Finally, the Wedding Supper will can take place. The Bride will arrive in her fine linen garments, and the guests – the remnant – those who were gathered along the way¹⁷ and became faithful to Him at Mount Sinai, have their wedding garments on as well.

The Kingdom has finally been restored to Israel, and now all Israel knows that YHVH is God.

^{ESV} **Ezekiel 39:26-29** ... They shall forget their shame and all the treachery they have practiced against me, when they dwell securely in their land with none to make them afraid, ²⁷ when I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them from their enemies' lands, and through them have vindicated my holiness in the sight of many nations. ²⁸ **Then they shall know that I am the LORD their God, because I sent them into exile among the nations and then assembled them into their own land.** I will leave none of them remaining among the nations anymore. ²⁹ And I will not hide my face anymore from them, when I pour out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, declares the Lord GOD."

This is the message of liberty pictured by the Jubilee year that starts on Yom Kippur. It is a new beginning for the people of Israel.

Shalom Alecheim

¹⁷ The parable of the Wedding Feast (Matthew 22:1-14) indicates that those who attend are those who were traveling on the highways.