

INSIGHT

September 2006

Is Satan's throne under seige?



Iraqi
War

The
Good
News of
the
Kingdom

Wars &
Rumors
of Wars

What
Teens
Say

The
Land
Sabbath

INSIGHT

September 2006 Volume 6 Number 3

A MAGAZINE OF BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING

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Insight is published by the International Congregation of Yahweh in Pocahontas, Arkansas.

ICY is a nonprofit, religious organization dedicated to the restoration of the original doctrines of the Apostolic assembly. ICY follows the practice of the New Testament assemblies who kept the Law of the Old Testament. The true assembly is built on the foundation of the apostles' and the prophets' (Eph. 2:20) message of obedience to Yahweh's Law (Isa. 8:20; Jer. 26:4-6; Ezk. 20:19).

Our major doctrines include the name of the Creator, Yahweh, and His Son, Yahshua. Only these names are to be used in worship rather than such names as Jesus, God, Lord, Jehovah, etc. Ample Scriptural and historical evidence support this belief; not the least of which is the commandment against taking the name of Yahweh in vain (Ex. 20:7).

ICY also teaches the restored truth that the weekly seventh-day Sabbath is from dawn-to-dark. It is NOT from sunset-to-sunset as commonly taught. Yahweh's true Holy Days and New Moons are to be observed as well. Another major fundamental belief is the atoning sacrifice of the Messiah Yahshua.

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Cover photograph by Spc. Danielle Howard, Dec. 12, 2005. Tankers from 2nd Battalion, 34th Armor Regiment, return to Camp Warhorse in their M1 Abrams tanks after assisting Iraqi forces, who secured Route Cheyenne, leading into the city of Udam. *army.mil*

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“...few there be that find it.”

Matthew 7:14

From the Editor: Gary C. Miller

From the dawn of human history, man's search for wisdom's truth has taken many forms, leading him down many "a road less traveled." It has led to the quest for the chalice called the "Holy Grail." Supposedly, a sip from this cup prolongs life indefinitely. Other adventurers have pursued the legends of the fabled "Fountain of Youth" or the Biblical "Tree of Life" whose powerful fruit energizes one to live forever (Gen. 3:22)...a kind of "fuel cell" for human cells.

The cure for the incurable, a panacea for halting disease and the ravages of aging, have lead the curious to remote Andean and Himalayan monastic hideaways, or to high tech proton-beam cancer therapies.

The supernatural powers of the Biblical "ark of the covenant" have drawn an endless stream of explorers to find its whereabouts. This box or gold-laden ark has supposedly been "discovered" many times...only to somehow always remain an arm's length away. A long-standing rumor says the ark, under the centuries-old protective custody of armed guards, rests in the chapel annexed to St. Mary of Zion's church in Axum, Ethiopia. There its guardian monk says the aura of power surrounding the ark "...makes it a thing of sheer terror..."

Eternal life—the prize of the ages—remains in the crosshairs of mankind's relentless search. Why not? Once attained, what other matchless feats are then possible? What could you not learn, see or explore?

But is this seemingly fruitless search realistic? Or is it a pipe dream after all? Is there any record from remote antiquity that might answer this age-old riddle?

Surprisingly, there are ancient records which indicate that man has lost ground along the distant path that "time has forgotten" where men lived as long as 969 years (Gen. 5:27)! The first man of ancient record, Adam, lived 930 years (Gen. 5:5)! These astonishing prediluvian life times seem impossible or make-believe when compared to current life spans. Why the tumble to the present lowly 70-100 year life expectancy? Some have suggested there is no way those ages could be measured in Earth's solar years.

Perhaps...perhaps not. Could some vital knowledge have been lost to history, buried in the dust of the ages?

Just over 2,000 years ago, a man, Yahshua, called "The Anointed," walked the Earth teaching that immortality was in fact attainable. Claiming to have the keys that unlock the shackles of mystery barring the way, this man's mission, his passion, he said, was to reveal those secrets. But was he just another wayfaring, self-styled guru, bent on drawing attention to himself? Or was he the real thing?

His bold statements include: "...Whoso eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, has eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:54); "My sheep hear my voice...And I give to them eternal life" (John 10:27-28).

When asked, "...what good thing must I do, that I may

have eternal life?," he replied, "...If you will enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matt. 19:17). Enthusiastic followers such as one named Simon Peter said, "...Master,...you have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). He was obviously a true believer!

High expectations. Is the dream, the ultimate quest of eternal life, really as that man said? One might ask, "Is Simon Peter still living?" Or "Where are those 'sheep' to whom he gave eternal life?" Are they still walking this Earth?

Truthfully, there is no verifiable record that any of those have continued to live for the last 2,000 years. Peter's death is supposedly well documented. What then, did this man fail to deliver on his promises?

What are we to make of it all? Are our hopes and those to whom he promised eternal life, beyond reach and based on empty promises; leading to another dead end?

Or is there something more? Note Yahshua also said, "Except a man is born from above ["again;" *KJV*],...born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of Yahweh" (John 3:3, 5; *RSV*).

Is another BIRTH via a resurrection (John 6:54), the coveted secret of immortality? It is an observable fact that birth perpetuates the human race, showing no signs whatever that the process cannot continue indefinitely. Apparently, a newborn today has the vitality of a newborn 1,000 years ago. Birth is clearly a key to the immortality of the human race as a whole. But what about immortality of a single individual? Yahshua indicates that some kind of supplemental birth or rebirth of the individual, independent of physical procreation, is the gateway to immortality on an individual basis! Clearly twenty-first century state-of-the-art biological technology and research are impotent to bring about such a process. How do you "rebirth" a person? Is the Bible well ahead of its time and our time after all? Modern science does not envision what the Bible advocates: the awesome advanced technology of human rebirth! Obviously science has yet to discover some profoundly fundamental laws of nature.

Keeping Yahweh's commandments is essential to the process of rebirth Yahshua advocated (Matt. 19:17). Religious devotees disagree on the need to keep the commandments, especially the Biblical weekly Sabbath, New Moons and annual Holy Days. These essential Laws are a vital part of the process of becoming immortal; of being born from above... being "rebirthed" of the Spirit.

Unfortunately, people generally resist keeping the "Old Testament" Laws (II Tim. 3:15-16) which clearly define sin. They never study them so they do not know what they are, and are usually not interested in finding out. Is it any wonder, then, that Yahshua also said, "...How strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leads to [eternal] life, AND FEW THERE BE THAT FIND IT" (Matt. 7:14)! —GCM

Wars & Rumors of Wars

Are earthquakes and armed conflicts increasing? Is *one* of Satan's *thrones* an *unseen* factor, a seat of sinister spiritual forces working behind the scenes?

"And you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that you be not troubled...For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilence, and earthquakes in various places...all these are the beginning of sorrows" (Matt. 24:6-8).

This quote is a partial reply Yahshua made when asked, "...what shall be the sign of your coming, and of the close of the age" (Matt. 24:3; *RSV*)?

Many today are asking the same questions. The answers are still the same.

There can be little doubt with modern global communication networks, *millions—even billions*—are *hearing* more often of wars, rumors of wars and earthquakes than in ages past. In previous eras, knowledge of such events would have remained isolated and unknown but to a small region of perhaps a few hundred or a few thousand at most. This fact alone makes Yahshua's statements more relevant to our day than *any* time in recorded history! This would apply particularly to *his disciples* who live where communication is technologically far advanced (cell phones, cable satellite TV, internet, shortwave receivers, etc.), and where global news services use these resources. Remember it was to *his disciples* that Yahshua was speaking in the quotes above.

We should also keep in mind that after listing these, he said, "...but the end is not yet...All these are the *beginning of sorrows*" (Matt. 24:6, 8). Wars, rumors of wars, earthquakes, famine, etc. are but the opening rounds of catastrophes so threatening and so widespread that "...except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved..." (v. 22).

Are Things Getting Worse?

The drumbeat of war and earthquakes is heard around

the globe. Look at a sample of *recent* newspaper and news-wire headlines:

"Bangladesh turning into a regional hub of terrorism"

"Hezbollah seeks a shift in balance of power"

"Terrorists make the rules"

"Leader says 3 nations aiding Somalia militia"

"Congo's chaos fatal to its kids"

"Coalition wraps up Taliban offensive as NATO steps in"

"3,700 U.S. troops head to Baghdad to quash violence"

"Philippines seeking release of captives"

"Sri Lanka troops seize town from rebels"

"British: Thwarted plot involved 10 jets"

(terrorist plot to down 10 U.S.-bound jets)

"Hundreds Dead in Pakistan-India Earthquake (7.6)"

[shook three countries]

"Moderate earthquake rocks Mexico City"

"Sumatra rattled by strong earthquake;" and on it goes

But are we having more earthquakes, more wars, etc.? *What do the numbers tell us?*

In the 20th century, the year 1976 had the highest toll of deaths by earthquakes in over 400 years! Too, the earth quaked with a vengeance in the beginning years of the 21st century. The five and one half years from January 2000 to June 2006 tragically logged more earthquake deaths (420,018) than the previous 39 years combined (1961 to 1999: 406,566).

Also, in the 20th century, U.S. casualties from two world wars (WWI & WWII) were more than the total U.S. casualties from *all* previous wars combined involving American troops.

The war-torn 20th century years of 1900 to 1989 logged 122 wars globally and the dozen years from 1990-2002 saw 23 wars worldwide.¹ Near the end of the 20th century, during 1993, the world experienced 16 wars, rebellions or other armed conflicts in 16 nations.²

Contrast this to the "calm" 1,456-year period from

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

43 A.D. to 1499 A.D. in which there were only 75 wars fought!¹ Population density during that time was hardly what it is today. Is over-crowding a factor contributing to strife and violence?

In an experiment with mice, behavioral scientists increased mice population in a controlled-confined living space and found that as the number of mice increased, so did social disorders. Violence, raids by packs of mice on others, homosexuality and chaos resulted in the over-crowded areas! “Woe to those that join house-to-house” (Isa. 5:8).

The 21st century appeared to usher in a period of peace. However, on Sept. 11, 2001, this nation and the world was shocked by the World Trade Center devastation. The ensuing Afghanistan and Iraqi wars followed resulting in non-stop tumult ever since.

During 2005 alone, the world’s people suffered 32 armed conflicts in 27 nations; most of which were on the continents of Africa and Asia. An armed conflict is generally defined as one in which at least 1,000 people are killed during the fighting.³

The period of 2003 to June 2006 spawned eight wars, of which the U.S.-coalition war versus Iraq and the Israeli-Hezbollah war in Lebanon are the most dominant.³ Presently in 2006 there are 20 significant ongoing armed conflicts, *half of which began since 1989*.

To put these numbers in perspective, consider that from 43 A.D. to 1899 A.D. there were 389 wars globally. So the 153 wars from 1900 through June 2006 have accounted for over 28 percent of all wars (542) since 43 A.D., in only 5.4 percent of the time!¹

You “...shall hear of wars and rumors of wars...” *indeed* (Matt. 24:6)!

Bear in mind too that the destruction and carnage from war during this one hundred five and one-half year period

“...from 43 A.D. to 1499 A.D....there were only 75 wars fought...”

have been *vastly* greater than in previous centuries. During the 20th century alone, an estimated sixty million were killed under ruthless communist regimes!

There is another global specter that continues to be a scourge of violence and death: terrorism. The almost daily (sometimes *hourly*) terrorist bombings, ambushes and hostage-takings in many nations have escalated far beyond previous decades and centuries. U.S. sources have identi-

fied some 44 foreign terrorist organizations. *Almost half* of these (19) have been founded *since 1990*.⁴

Terroism: Israeli-Hezbollah War A. How it started

On July 12, 2006, on the orders of Hezbollah leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, Shiite Hezbollah guerrillas in southern Lebanon captured two Israeli soldiers and killed three others in a cross-border raid on Israel’s northern border. Five other Israeli soldiers were killed as they pursued the militants back into Lebanon.

The raid sparked 34 days of fighting that ended Aug. 14, 2006, and opened a second front in Israel’s battle against Islamic militants. Israel responded with an air assault and moved ground troops into southern Lebanon. Ehud Olmert, Israeli Prime Minister, called this an “act of war.” On Aug. 9, 2006, the Israeli Parliament approved a broadening of the war as Israel continued to strike inside Lebanon in order to neutralize Hezbollah’s ability to wage war. As of Aug. 9, 2006, Hezbollah had launched 3,333 Katyusha rockets into populated Israeli areas since the beginning of the war; 132 on Aug. 9 alone.⁵ Daniel Ayalon, U.S. Ambassador from Israel says Hezbollah has an estimated 12,000 to 14,000 rocket arsenal “perched against Israel right on that border area.”⁶

B. Who is Hezbollah?

Hezbollah, the “Party of God,” (*hizbu-llah: Party of Allah*) was “officially” founded Feb. 16, 1985, when Sheik Ibrahim al-Amin declared the group’s manifesto. Their activities had been tracked before this date, however.

According to George Latanzio, (*Newhouse News Service*, Aug. 6, 2006) Hezbollah rose amid the aftermath of the Lebanese civil war between Christians and Muslims in 1975. It follows a distinct version of Islamic Shia ideology developed by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini of the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Shiites comprise about 10 to 15 percent of the world’s 1.3 billion Muslims.

Hezbollah grew from a charity run by a Lebanese Shiite in the ancient town of Baalbek, the birthplace of Hezbollah. The name, Baalbek, apparently means the *half [from the idea of dividing, breaking, ripping] (esp. half a shekel) of Baal*. Hezbollah continues the charity’s mission to the impoverished. One such effort is what Hezbollah terms its Iranian funded Dar al-Hikma *Hospital* in Baalbek. However, Israel, in targeting this operation on August 2, said the Dar al-Hikma building is a Hezbollah base, not a hospital, and that its soldiers captured five guerrilla fighters

and killed 10 more before withdrawing from that area. The Bekaa Valley area about 60 miles north of the Israeli border is a known major guerrilla stronghold.

However, Hezbollah's activities do not end with charitable acts. Hezbollah has two basic goals: *the destruction of the Jewish state of Israel* and *the formation of an Islamic state in Lebanon*. Both these goals are motivated by religious convictions. They view Israel as an infidel occupying land "God" (Allah) gave the followers of Islam.

One of Hezbollah's first acts was the bombing of the U.S. Embassy annex in Beirut in April 1983 killing 63. U.S. authorities claim Hezbollah later used a suicide truck bomb to attack the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut killing 241 marines in October 1983. They also charge that Hezbollah carried out the 1985 hijacking of TWA Flight 847 in route from Athens to Rome. Hezbollah denies these accusations.

How many wars have been started by "crusaders" on a "mission" from their special deity to convert the rest of the world at all costs?

The U.N., recognizing the militant goals of Hezbollah and their support from Syrian military material and troops, passed Security Council Resolution 1559. This required all foreign troops to leave Lebanese soil (Syria had 35,000 troops there) AND Hezbollah to disarm completely. Syrian troops left, but Hezbollah has not disarmed, and persists in its armed aggression. It is being supplied financially and militarily by both Syria and Iran.

Another U.N. resolution, 1310, required Israel to pull out of southern Lebanon in 2000, which they did. The U.N. thus set the border between the two nations, the so-called "blue line."

Satan's Throne Under Siege!

Is there something or *someone* far more sinister operating behind the scenes that was the driving force fomenting the war in Lebanon? Could it be that places where Satan rules, specific locations of his seat of power—his *thrones*—are critical focal points of present and future events?

Satan has thrones? On Earth? Certainly. A little-known, but *amazing fact* is that the Scriptures show Satan has no less than *THREE* thrones on Earth! He is called the *king* of TWO cities, and another city is named where Satan has a *throne*. Kings have *thrones* and a throne has a *king*. These locations have been important historically, and prophecy shows they will be in the future as well!

"The throne of Satan in Tyre was under seige."

Are Satan's thrones important? Absolutely! Knowledge of their location and role as strategic "centers of spiritual power" influencing events, has been largely overlooked.

The mistranslation of the word "throne" [*kasah*, SEC 3678] in Isaiah 14:13 in virtually every version of the Bible, leaves the mistaken idea that Satan has only *one* throne ("...I will exalt my throne above the stars..." *KJV*). The word in the Masoretic Hebrew text is actually *kasahim*, a plural, and should be translated *thrones*.

Another critical, but little-known fact is that the **WHY** of *current events* can often be understood by **KNOWING WHERE THESE THRONES ARE LOCATED!**

This principle applied to the Is-

raeli-Hezbollah War reveals in part *why* fighting was in southern Lebanon and spread to the ancient port city of **Tyre**. Israel recently sent commandos to attack suspected rocket-launching sites in Tyre and continues to tighten the "noose" around Tyre by bombing electricity transformers to cut off power to the city on Friday, Aug. 11, 2006. The mayor of Tyre said the city could run out of food in two days.

What is significant about *this* island city of antiquity besieged for 13 years by Nebucadnezzar (Ezk. 26:7) and finally overthrown by Alexander the Great? He used the famous land-bridge he built from the coast out to Tyre. Why armed conflict *there*? And why is *Israel*, a seventh-day Sabbath professing nation—the only such nation on Earth—the one punishing this area?

The answer has two parts. First, *Tyre is the location of A THRONE OF SATAN!* He is the *King of Tyre*; the invisible but *REAL* behind-the-scenes ruler of that important city. Shocking, perhaps, but true!

Notice the Scriptural *proof* of this fact: "...take up a lamentation upon the *king of Tyrus* (SEC 3678; Latinized form of *Tyre*), and say to him... You have been in *Eden*...you are the *anointed cherub that covers*...you were upon the *holy mountain of Elohim*...you were *perfect*...until iniquity was found in you" (Ezk. 28:12-15).

Now *who* was in Eden, was the anointed cherub (also v. 16), dwelled in the mountain of Elohim and was *perfect*? Only a *supernatural being* fits this description. This can only refer to *Satan*.

And notice what Satan, the King of Tyre, says, "...I sit in the seat of *Elohim*, in the heart of the seas (Tyre is an island city in the sea)..." (Ezk. 28:2). What is the seat of Elohim, a Mighty One? It can only be the *throne* on which he sits (Dan. 7:9). Satan admits to having a *throne* in Tyre!

NOTICE TOO, WHAT THIS GREAT PROPHECY SAYS, "...I [Yahweh, v. 2] will bring strangers

upon you [Tyre], the terrible of the nations: and they will draw their swords against you..." (Ezk. 28:7). The army of modern Israel which descended on the area of Tyre, Sidon and other cities in southern Lebanon, is one of the most feared in the world for its tenacity, firepower and fierceness in battle! This prophecy has been fulfilled more than once (note earlier references) and *now in the last days is fulfilled once again!*

THE VERY THRONE OF SATAN IN TYRE WAS UNDER SIEGE AS ARMIES ATTACKED HIS AREA OF INFLUENCE AND SEAT OF POWER. THIS IS THE UNSEEN BUT VERY REAL DYNAMIC BEHIND WHAT IS HAPPENING THERE! THE BIBLE LEAVES NO DOUBT IF YOU BELIEVE WHAT IT PLAINLY SAYS!

Many incessantly point to the European Union. "Watch the Middle East," they say. But exactly what part of the Middle East? We must pay more attention to Satan's centers of power, via his *throne locations* as world events unfold, influenced by conditions in *those* areas of the world!

Prophecy abounds with prognostications about Tyre, but few notice. Even serious Bible students rarely give them a passing thought. Think about it. Why are there three long prophecies *against Tyre* in Ezekiel 26-28? Because, as we can now see, *Satan* has a throne there, a strategic seat of powerful spiritual influence.

And *why* do these descriptions against Tyre so amazingly parallel the very extensive prophecies against *Babylon* (Rev. 18; Isa. 13; Jer. 50-51)? Why? Because *Satan also has a throne in Babylon* (Isa. 14:4-15)! Both Tyre AND Babylon are locations of thrones, seats of rulership and tremendous spiritual power of the adversary Satan himself! Astonishing and revealing.

This is a prelude to the future as recorded in the prophecy in Revelation: "And the fifth angel poured out

his vial upon the seat (*throne*: Rev. 13:2; *RSV*) of the beast..." (Rev. 16:10). The throne of the beast IS a throne of Satan (Rev. 13:2; *RSV*)! WHICH ONE?

Perhaps now you can see why Tyre is third (59 references) behind Babylon and Jerusalem in the number of times it is mentioned in Scripture!

Another Reason

There is another reason *this* ancient island city of Tyre is having armed conflict. Why armed conflict *there*?

Why? Tyre, a Lebanese city, is under a period of *280 years of punishment*, because it is Gentile. This period started in 1773 A.D. for *all* Gentiles and Gentile nations. In fact, Gentiles are presently in the last 70 years of their 280 years of punishment. This 70-year period is by far the most severe segment of the 280-year period of reprisal.

However, this is not the first time Tyre has been under a 70-year period of punishment (Isa. 23:1-12, 14-15):

"The burden of Tyre...it is laid waste (v. 1)...so shall they be sorely pained as the report of Tyre (v. 5)...Who has taken counsel against Tyre (v. 8)...[note verse 15]...And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten *70 years*...."

Periods of punishment are dominated by conditions described in Leviticus Chapter 26 such as "...terror, sorrow of heart [v. 26], slain before your enemies [v. 17], strength spent in vain [v. 20]..., etc." It should be noted too, that a period of punishment has "ups and downs" or is composed of smaller periods of less difficult, more moderate times. The general conditions, though, are as given in Leviticus Chapter 26.

But why is *Israel*, a seventh-day Sabbath professing nation—the only

such nation on Earth—the one punishing this area?

This is why. The modern Middle-Eastern nation of Israel is in a period of grace running 490 years which also began in 1773. Nations under a period of grace have a general destiny described by Daniel:

"Seventy sevens [490] have been determined upon you people...to finish the transgression [not to penalize it], to make an end of sins ["freeing from sin," *Good News Bible*], to make reconciliation for iniquity..." (Dan. 9:24).

Consequently, modern Israel is in a period of upward progress, independence, increasing power, dominance and general freedom.

Conclusion

As "wars and rumors of wars" continue, we know *where to look* and *why* for possible hidden causes of conflicts. On the surface these conflicts appear to have no particular geographical significance, beyond perhaps a connection to modern Israel. *Now* we can see connections between important events and the little-known centers of spiritual power and influence where Satan's *seats, his thrones*, reside. These age-old locations are certainly places to watch in the months and years ahead! —ICY

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PHOTOGRAPH

Department of the Army, Sept. 8, 2006. Soldiers from Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, pause at the end of a patrol near Wymot, Iraq.

Questions & Answers

Q: *“Are Yahweh’s Holy Days commanded or are they a ritual for passing the time of certain prescribed days?”*

A: The “great spiritual significance” of the Holy Days is that Yahweh commands that we keep these days as Sabbaths and holy worship times. They are of course, prophetic keys to understanding the future (Col. 2:16). Some seek an “experience,” feeling or thrill, which would somehow be a sign of “spirituality,” rather than the clear word of Yahweh commanding obedience to His law regarding the Holy Days. If one is truly guided by the Spirit of Yahweh [not some other spirit—there are *many* other spirits active today], then their heart’s desire is to OBEY HIS COMMANDMENTS (which include the Holy Days commands are a part). Obedience is the key rather than constantly seeking an emotional “high” to replace obedience to Yahweh’s commandments.

Q: *Is the International Congregation of Yahweh baptized in the Holy Spirit?*

A: If you are asking if ICY is charismatic, speaking in the gibberish of “unknown tongues,” falling backwards, etc., my answer is, “NO!” If you are asking, ‘Are we converted and baptized in water, being guided by the Holy Spirit to follow Yahweh in obedience to His great Law (II Pet. 3:18), then the answer is “YES!” As the Messiah said, “...if you will enter into life, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS” (Matt. 19:17). Yes, we are guided by Yahweh’s power, His Spirit, to keep His commandments, to discern the truth to avoid doctrines of demons (I Tim 4:1). We use the sacrifice of Yahshua to cover sins we commit, as sometimes we fail to perfectly obey Yahweh.

Q: *What is ICY’s Mission?*

A: Our mission is to spread the gospel of the kingdom of Yahweh to all nations. This entails revealing the truth of salvation through baptism and repentance of breaking Yahweh’s Law. Also, we must have Yahshua’s sacrifice applied to cover our past sins. To this end, we come to show just what the Law really says, so that we and others may enter into eternal life.

Q: *Should the words “El” and “Elohim” be used by Yahweh’s congregation?*

A: Many say that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob did not know to use the name of Yahweh; that it was inserted into the Scriptures at some later date. Some scholars profess that the word “El” and the plural “Elohim” were Canaanite words which Israel borrowed. The Bible shows otherwise. If the Canaanites used these words, so be it. This proves nothing except that they used them. The Scriptures predate the Canaanite usage. Notice, Gen. 5:1: “This is the book of the generations of Adam....” Notice, this is the Book of Generations (“the” is not in the Hebrew preceding the word “generations”) of...Adam. This is the book of Adam; the book that Adam apparently wrote recording generations. Notice also this book contains the word Elohim (Gen. 5:22-23). This goes back to the days of Adam himself—long before there were any Canaanites! It is very likely, therefore, that at least the early part of Genesis (called “the first book of Moses”) was actually written by Adam. Yahweh said, “I am Yahweh Elohim of Abraham...the Elohim of Isaac...” (Gen. 28:13). If the Bible is inspired, then the records of these men using these titles **COULD NOT HAVE BEEN CHANGED**. The word Elohim (SEC 430) is used 786 times in the Law of Scripture and is found 223 times in Genesis alone. Furthermore, the Dead Sea Scrolls contain a virtually complete manuscript of the entire book of Isaiah in which Elohim is used 136 times. Also, consider that Yahweh’s own archangel, MichaEL (Jude 9; Rev. 12:7) has EL in his name. Too, GabriEL (Dan. 8:16; Luke 1:19) also has the suffix EL in his name. Lastly, from Yahshua’s own mouth we have the assurance that the Law with its 786 uses of Elohim, was not and cannot be tampered with: “Till heaven and earth pass, ONE JOT OR ONE TITTLE SHALL IN NO WISE PASS FROM THE LAW, till all be fulfilled” (Matt. 5:18).

Q: *After checking several organizations giving different Land Sabbaths, which are we to believe as the correct year?*

A: You have used the right word “believe” because it is a proven fact that proof of a matter to anyone is strictly a matter of what they are willing to believe is true. If the

Scriptural, logical proof of a doctrine is shown giving the truth of a matter, then it is only “proved” to someone if they are willing to accept that proof. If not, then they will not believe it—no matter how high you stack the evidence verifying its truth. You should believe what is based on the Bible. Some organizations use references in I Maccabees 6:49, Josephus’ Dissertations, the Greek Olympiads, etc. These works are not part of the Bible and cannot be used to set doctrines. We base our teaching of the Land Sabbath on the BIBLE: Ezekiel: 1:1-2 which shows the 30th year of a 50-year cycle was the verifiable date of 593 to

592 B.C. This dating fits all other BIBLICAL references which indicate a Land Sabbath.

Q: Is it true our lifespan is not to exceed 120 years?

A: People usually get this from Gen. 6:3: “...Yet his days shall be 120 years.” In all likelihood this is referring to the time left before the flood came, rather than the life span. Note, that if this applied to man from that time on Noah could not have lived for 350 years after the flood (Gen. 9:28). —ICY

2006 Holy Days (and related observances)	
Passover	April 11 - April 17
Passover Sabbaths	April 11 & April 17
Passover Supper	Night of April 11
Feast of Unleavened Bread	April 12 (UB eaten April 11 - April 18)
Wavesheaf Offered	April 30
Pentecost	June 18
Shoutings (Trumpets)	September 23
Atonements	October 2
Feast of Tabernacles	Oct. 7 - Oct. 14
Sabbaths	Oct. 7 & Oct. 14
Last Great Day	October 14

New Moons Month		
January	30	11
February	28	12
March	29	1
April	28	2
May	27	3
June	26	4
July	25	5
August	24	6
September	23	7
October	22	8
November	21	9
December	20	10

Sabbaths and New Moons are observed from Dawn-to-Dark

(Note: New Moons may vary with Longitude and Latitude.)

Head of the Year Feb. 15
 End of the Year Oct. 26
 Seven-Year Cycle 7th year
 Jubilee Cycle 28th year

2007 Holy Days (and related observances)	
Passover	April 1 - April 7
Passover Sabbaths	April 1 & April 7
Passover Supper	Night of April 1
Feast of Unleavened Bread	April 2 (UB eaten April 1 - April 8)
Wavesheaf Offered	May 6
Pentecost	June 24
Shoutings (Trumpets)	September 12
Atonements	September 21
Feast of Tabernacles	Sept. 26 - Oct. 3
Sabbaths	Sept. 26 & Oct. 3
Last Great Day	October 3

New Moons Month		
January	19	11
February	18	12
March	19	1
April	18	2
May	17	3
June	15	4
July	15	5
August	13	6
September	12	7
October	11	8
November	10	9
December	10	10

Sabbaths and New Moons are observed from Dawn-to-Dark

(Note: New Moons may vary with Longitude and Latitude.)

Head of the Year Feb. 15
 End of the Year Oct. 26
 Seven-Year Cycle 1st year
 Jubilee Cycle 29th year

The Good News of the Kingdom:

The Word is Getting Out

The deluge of information filling our harddrives, "favorites list," and at-the-ready and at-our-fingertips worldwide web is telling us something more

ominous than just the information itself. What is it? In all this information explosion, what are we to look for that gives a really *sure sign* that we are living in the prophesied time of the end? Is there something by which we can know the answer to this question; a key that unlocks the mystery of the signs of the times?

As we entered the first year of the 21st century, the specter of world war seemed far less likely than even a decade earlier. Suddenly, without warning, our global timeout was rudely interrupted by the 9-11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City. In the five years since, the world has seen the cascading rampages of terrorism unequalled in history!

Suicide bombings, roadside bombs, Hezbollah rockets, train bombings, and all-out invasions have rocked and shocked the world from east-to-west and north-to-south. Earthquakes continue their devastating toll and weather upsets push the costs of fires, tsunamis, hurricanes and drought off the charts.

Where is the peace we hoped would come? Where are the simpler times, the more innocent days of not so long ago, the rain in due season?

The world needs some *good news!* The truth is, there *is* good news. There are times of abundance and joy ahead. *Peace is on the way!*

Yahshua the Messiah said that just prior to the world peace which

What is a sure sign of the end times?

is to follow the days of wars, rumors of wars, earthquakes, etc., there would be an announcement during those troubled times of a coming world government. This stupendous benevolent one-world government will be the Kingdom of Yahweh.

The proclamation of this coming Kingdom is now being preached on radio. It is unlikely you have heard it yet...*but you will eventually.* It is the beginning of the fulfillment of Yahshua's prophecy: "And *this* gospel of the kingdom shall be preached *in all the world for a witness to ALL NATIONS...*" (Matt. 24:14). It is the true gospel that is being preached on the airwaves, not just another gospel.

The International Congregation of Yahweh is sponsoring this ground-breaking broadcast which is called "The Good News of the Kingdom." It can be heard on KAAY, 1090 AM at 9 PM on Saturday nights.

Too often the signs of the end time, the *end of the age*, are thought to be the "...wars and rumors of wars...famines, pestilence and earthquakes..." (Matt. 24:6-7). But Yahshua said, "...see that you are not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, BUT THE END IS NOT YET..." (v. 6).

In other words, these are NOT the sign that the end is imminent. These are not the end but "All these are the BEGINNING of sorrows" (Matt. 24:8).

So *when will the end come?* What

is the *true sign* of the END of the age? Is it the accelerating "Information Age," some declaration of Benedict XVI, the explosive expansion of evangelical ministries? What?

Here is what Yahshua said happens when the preaching and publishing (Mark 13:10) of this gospel of the Kingdom of Yahweh—the true gospel—reaches ALL nations: "And this gospel (the *true* gospel) will be preached [also to *publish*: Mark 13:10] in ALL the world for a witness to ALL nations, *and THEN SHALL THE END COME*" (Matt. 24:14).

Why are "The Good News of the Kingdom" broadcasts and the publishing program of ICY important? Why is the broadcast airing *now*, in the most dangerous age of all time? Why is the work of ICY being done when wars and rumors of wars, earthquakes and false prophets are at all-time historical highs?

Why NOW? Is it that the end of the age *is* in fact nearer than we think?

Be sure to listen each week on KAAY 1090 AM at 9 PM Saturday night to "The Good News of the Kingdom" broadcast. Also, write for a literature list of numerous articles and books chocked full of in-depth Bible studies and many surprising doctrinal truths never-before published outside the Bible.

Also, write for your subscription to ICY's high quality magazine, *Insight*, which covers breaking world events in the light of Biblical prophecy and other topics of interest to the serious Bible student. Join our growing family of readers in over 30 foreign countries. There is no subscription price.

—ICY

THE U.S.-IRAQI WAR:

A Prelude to the Rise and Fall of Babylon?

Again, the U.S. finds itself entangled in *two more* agonizing wars! American troops had hardly taken a breather from the Gulf War when orders came to go again...to Afghanistan...and then to Iraq.

But why is there a *second major war on Iraqi soil* in a decade and a half? The present U.S.-Iraqi War is leading up to something. Is it the return, the RISE, of *Babylon the Great and its ultimate and final FALL?*

Historically, the U.S. has answered the calls of free-

"...freedom is gained and maintained at a price."

dom "From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli [Lebanon]..." as a refrain from an old U.S. Marine fight song reminds us. We can now add "...to the streets of Baghdad, Basar and Kirkuk..." This has meant bloody, expensive world wars and armed conflicts.

In these and other far-off places an American presence has left footprints and American blood in the soil of nations around the world. Where freedom is and has been endangered, and the oppressed have cried out against tyranny, American troops, U.S. aid and reconstruction have often been there. Some of those freed have turned to say "Thanks." Some have not.

To be sure, many continue to argue that it is only a matter of ideology: American imperialism imposing its will on others. But ask those who American GIs have snatched from the jaws of death, starvation and prison camps and see if it is just "ideology." The *rescued* are more likely to see it as a matter of *freedom, life* and securing the *right of self-determination*. To the oppressed, it is not about democracy, national pride or political agendas. First and

foremost, for *them*, it is about freedom.

Since the days when our founding fathers were sculpting a new American republic, and through the lessons of ancient history, we and the peoples of the world have known through bitter experience that freedom is gained and maintained at a price. It is not just a hollow platitude. Two world wars and hundreds of smaller "conflicts" are not imaginary. The tens of thousands of white crosses marking graves at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C. and at dozens of veterans' memorial cemeteries are not imaginary either.

The Iraq War: What the Numbers Say A. Coalition Contributors

Something else is very real: the price the U.S. is paying in the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. Spurred by the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist hijackings and resulting deaths, the U.S. is now embroiled in *two* wars with elusive enemies. Now, amid hit-and-run attacks and car bombs, U.S. troops find themselves in the hot deserts of Iraq and mountainous Afghanistan terrain...with no clear end in sight. While it is true NATO has now assumed the major role in Afghanistan, it will be sometime indeed before U.S. troops shake the Afghan dust from their boots on their way home.

We will take a brief look at the mounting costs to the U.S. in the now more visible U.S.-Iraqi war. We will also consider just *why* the *land of the Chaldeans* (modern Iraq) whose capital was the ancient city of *Babylon*, is now such a high profile conflict for the second time in a decade and a half.

When Iraq's first elections were held Jan. 30, 2005, U.S. troop strength was 138,000 versus 23,900 non-US troops. Four months later, by May 15, 2005, U.S. losses



Lance Cpl. Sheila M. Brooks, Dec. 16, 2005. Iraqis in the predominantly Sunni city of Husaybah, wait in lines to vote, during the national election, Dec. 15. Just a few weeks earlier, Soldiers and Marines battled insurgents in this city, located along the Syrian border.

were 1,356 compared to 161 for the other coalition-members. Though U.S. troop strength is about six times as great as coalition allies, American

“...the Korean War cost \$418 billion...and the...Vietnam War cost... \$597 billion.”

losses average about *nine times* the total of all the other 29 coalition forces combined. Obviously, larger numbers of U.S. troops are more often in harm’s way.

In financial support, when the U.S. pledged and delivered \$594.6 million, the United Arab Emirates, for example, offered and delivered a paltry \$10,000. At the same time, Saudi Arabia, a lavish financial contributor to the 1991 Gulf War effort, pledged \$80 million (about the price of sev-

eral of their nickel-plated autos in one auto collection) and delivered \$0 to the Iraq war effort!

Next to the US, the United Kingdom offered \$329 million and delivered \$178.5 million with the second largest number of coalition troops of about 8,500. Behind the United Kingdom, Italy maintained the third largest troop contingent of 3,196, offering financial aid of \$18 million and delivering \$16.2 million. The third largest financial contributor at that time was Japan who had offered \$141 million and delivered \$102 million.¹ Conspicuously missing from the list of coalition partners is Israel, who has had U.S. support dating from its formation as a separate country in 1948.

B. Contrasted with Other U.S. Wars

The 1991 Gulf War was a financial bargain for the U.S. According to the *Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments*, a nonpartisan Washington think tank, the 1991 Operation Desert Storm war against Saddam

Hussein cost about \$84 billion, adjusted for inflation. The U.S. was part of a coalition of wealthy countries like Britain, France, Germany, Japan and Saudi Arabia. These partners and the other allies paid about *90 percent* of the costs.

“This time we’ll probably pay 80 to 90 percent of the cost of the war ourselves, not only in human terms and casualties, but in financial terms as well.”²

“...Operation costs in Iraq are estimated to be between \$4 billion and \$5 billion per month while the average cost of U.S. operations in Vietnam...was \$5.1 billion per month adjusting for inflation...”³

Estimates of the final cost of the war if it is an ‘open-ended conflagration’ leading to a Vietnam war-sized bill range up to 12 percent of present GDP [gross domestic product] or around \$1.2 trillion!⁴

By contrast, adjusting for inflation the Korean War cost \$418 billion and

the eight-year Vietnam War cost approximately \$597 billion.⁵

C. The WMD Question

The WMD (Weapons of Mass Destruction) question, *one* often-cited reason given for going to war with Iraq, is an ongoing debate. According to the Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS), as of April 2002, *twenty-one* different countries were “known, probable or possible” possessors of WMD.

According to *ProCon.org*:

“Between January 1985 and August 1990, the U.S. Department of Commerce approved 771 licenses for exporting \$1.5 billion worth of dual-use items to Iraq. Dual-use items are those with both civilian and military uses. Those exports ranged from biological agents like anthrax and West Nile fever germs to personal computers and civilian helicopters.”

Noam Chomsky reported:

“When Saddam was reported to have gassed thousands of Kurds at Halabja, the White House intervened to block any serious congressional reaction...”

He further noted:

“Western corporations took an active role in building up Iraq’s military strength, notably its weapons of mass destruction... [and] Reagan and Bush [Sr.] regularly intervened... strenuously opposing any actions that might interfere with profits for U.S. corporations or with Iraq’s military build-up.”⁶

Former United Nations weapons inspector, Scott Ritter, said, “I bear personal witness through seven years as a chief weapons inspector in Iraq for the United Nations to both the scope of Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction

programs and the effectiveness of the U.N. weapons inspectors in ultimately eliminating them.”⁷

The U.S. voiced only occasional public concerns over possible Iraqi BWD (Biological Weapons Development) prior to Saddam amassing armies along the Kuwait border in mid 1990. However, U.S. troops were equipped with masks and clothing to protect against biological warfare agents. It was a known fact that Iraq’s BWD program was restarted in 1985 when fermenters and bacterial strains were purchased from the American Culture Collection.⁸

It is interesting to note that on July 25, 1990, April Glaspie, former U.S.

Arab-Arab conflicts like your border disagreement with Kuwait.”⁹

Brief Iraq History

Iraq was formerly known as Mesopotamia. Technically Mesopotamia was the region between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers which empties into the Persian Gulf. Present day Iraq includes much of that region. Mesopotamia (meaning “between two rivers”) is mentioned by name seven times in the Bible. Isaac’s wife, Rebekah, came from there (Gen. 24:10) and Abraham was from Ur in Mesopotamia (Gen. 24:4, 10; Acts 7:2).

It may be surprising to see even more cases where Mesopotamia (Iraq) was a part of Biblical history. For example, Iraq was the location of the garden of Eden where Adam and Eve were created (Gen. 2:10-14), where Noah built the ark,¹⁰ the tower of Babel, Nineveh where Jonah preached and the location from which the Wise-Men (“Magi”) are purported to have journeyed to visit the young Messiah.¹¹

There are 291 Biblical references to Babylon, a city in southern Mesopotamia. Many of these references are prophecies regarding Babylon’s (Iraq) role in coming events of major importance. *Babylon is second only to the city of Jerusalem* in the number of times it is referred to in Scripture. It was the capital of Babylonia (empire in the lower Euphrates and Tigris valleys; peak period 2800-1750 B.C.) and later of the Chaldean empire. The ancient region referred to as Chaldea was primarily in the lower Tigris and Euphrates valley. Chaldean (referenced 68 times in Scripture) was the indigenous Semitic language of



ambassador to Iraq, met with Saddam Hussein. In this meeting Saddam reportedly asked the U.S. position on an Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Six days later Iraqi armies attacked Kuwait. Glaspie’s much-quoted comment was perhaps what gave Saddam the biggest ‘green light’ of all:

“I admire your extraordinary efforts to rebuild your country. I know you need funds. We understand that, and our opinion is that you should have the opportunity to rebuild your country. But we have no opinion on

Chaldea, with Aramaic as auxiliary language.

The national boundaries of modern Iraq were drawn in the 1920's enclosing a land area about the size of California. It was created when the French and British divided up the formerly Ottoman-controlled lands in the Middle East.

In 1543 Ottoman Turk ruler Suleiman the Magnificent conquered Baghdad. Nearly four centuries later in 1917, the Ottomans relinquished control of Baghdad to the British. After the defeat of the Ottoman in World War I, British forces took control of the oil-rich Ottoman province of Mosul (1918). This brought a large Kurdish-populated area under British rule, and on April 25, 1920, Iraq was placed under British Mandate. On Aug. 23, 1921, the British installed Emir Faisal as king of Iraq.

By 1932 Iraq had declared its independence and was admitted to the League of Nations. However, the decades of the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s saw foreign invasions, overthrows of Iraqi monarchies and the development of Iraq's rich oil fields (Kirkuk, Mosul, etc.). These contributed to a general condition of prosperous instability.

The decade of the 1970s saw a 15-year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between Iraq and the Soviet Union, and the nationalization of Basrah Petroleum (1975). The Ayatollah Khomeini was expelled from Iraq in 1978

In 1979 Vice President Saddam Hussein, succeeded President Al-Bakr who resigned that year. The 1970s also saw a variety of Kurdish, Baathists and Iranian agreements with the Iraqi government deteriorate and collapse.

The eight-year war between Iraq and Iran (1980-1989) was the bloodiest war in the history of the modern Middle East and was accompanied by sharp declines in oil production.

What Is Ahead for Iraq?: The Force Behind the Scenes!

The answer to this question depends to a large extent on the answer to another question, "What is ahead for *Babylon*?" The Scriptures have a great deal to say about the future of Babylon. Specifically, the Bible points to the 4300-year old *CITY OF BABYLON* as a major player in future events.

One stunning, but little-known reason for Babylon's strategic role in present events and those just ahead, is the fact that Iraq *is the location of A throne of Satan himself. HE IS THE KING OF BABYLON!* As surprising, perhaps even surreal as it may seem, this is the clear fact of Scripture; as will be shown beyond doubt. This is the "force behind the scenes," an unseen hand operating at critical locations *down through the ages*. This ages-old archenemy of Yahweh is still very active and very dangerous!

Even more shocking perhaps, is that the Bible clearly shows Satan has **THREE** thrones on Earth and even pinpoints their geographical locations! People are often surprised to learn that Satan has a throne at all. But *three*? On Earth?

He is clearly shown to be the *king* of **TWO** cities, and another city is named where Satan has a *throne*: modern

"...HOW DO WE KNOW... SATAN...IS THE KING OF BABYLON?"

Bergama in western Turkey (Pergamos: Rev. 2:12-13). Another throne is located at *Tyre* just off the western coast of Lebanon (See article this issue: "Wars and Rumors of Wars"). A third is located at *Babylon* in southern Iraq about 50 miles south of Baghdad.

The existence of these thrones or strategic "centers of sinister spiritual power" is one of the salient overlooked facts behind many Biblical prophecies. Remember, Paul wrote:

"For our fight is not against any physical enemy: it is against *organizations and powers that are spiritual*. We are up against the *unseen power* that controls this dark world, and spiritual agents from the *very headquarters of evil*" (Eph. 6:12; *Phillips translation*).

From *where* does this unseen power operate? And *who* are we to assume *is* this spiritual power? The answer to these questions is now clear. Now we know *where* and *who*!

The existence of Satan's thrones is one of the mysterious reasons *why* there *are* so many Biblical prophecies about Tyre, Lebanon and Babylon, Iraq! And we must not forget Bergama, Turkey. Do not be surprised if Bergama too, comes into view on the radar screen of world events in the not-too-distant future!

The tales of these *three ancient cities* are being told again and will resound in new roles as their destinies are played out in the days and years ahead. They have been important historically, and prophecy shows they will be in the future as well! In fact, in only the last two months *one* throne (Tyre) has been prominent in world news! The existence and location of Satan's thrones, or seats of power and influence ("headquarters of evil"), are not fantasies, nor figments of the imagination. They are dynamic driving forces affecting the news reports we watch and creating the bold headlines we read. Paul knew...and now so do

we!

Now, how do we know that Satan has a throne at Babylon, i.e. is the *King of Babylon*?

Turn to Isaiah Chapter 14:

“...take up this proverb against the **KING OF BABYLON** (v. 4)...Your pomp is brought down to the grave (v. 11)...How are you *fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning* (v. 12)...”

WHO fell from heaven? Let Yahshua answer, “...I beheld **SATAN as lightning fall from heaven**” (Luke 10:18).

Notice what Lucifer—the King of Babylon—says,

“...I will ascend above the clouds, *I will exalt my THRONES above the stars of Elohim*: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north...I will be like the most High” (Isa. 14:12-14).

If Lucifer has thrones, then *he must be a king*. He is. He is the King of Babylon!

Babylon to Rise AGAIN: An exalted throne of Satan to emerge

Briefly, in the not too distant future, the ancient city of Babylon will once again take center stage on the world scene. Why, is now more evident. It is the location of *one* of Satan’s thrones.

One clear prophecy regarding Babylon’s rise says, “...the woman which you saw is that GREAT CITY, which *REIGNS OVER THE KINGS OF THE EARTH* (Rev. 17:18). How can a city *reign* unless a *king* resides there on a *throne*? And what king is and *will* this be?

Now, what is the name of this city? John tells us, “... upon her [the woman, vv. 3-4] forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, **BABYLON THE GREAT**...” (v. 5). The Babylon of prophecy is a **CITY** and is often referred to as a woman, “her” (see Jer. 51:1-4, 6-7, 9, etc.). The *king* that reigns there from his throne is *Satan, the invisible man!*

Notice this city, Babylon, will be of such great importance and influence that it is called a *great* city that actually *rules* (reigns) over the *nations of Earth*. That is awesome geopolitical and governmental power!

Recall that Satan, while tempting Yahshua, showed him “...*all the kingdoms of the world*...and said to him, “ALL these will I give you if you will fall down and worship me...” (Matt. 4:8-9). How could he give what was not his to give? He obviously was the King of those kingdoms then and apparently will be until Yahshua deposes of him after his second coming (Rev. 17:14)!

AND, Satan will or has apparently chosen Babylon as his pinnacle throne “of thrones” from which to rule over the kingdoms of Earth for at least *part* of the period described in the Revelation prophecy. Remember, the book of Revelation is a *prophecy*. So the rulership of the king of Babylon over the kingdoms of Earth from his throne in the city of Babylon *is yet to happen!*

Babylon, the *queen city* (Rev. 18:7; where there is a *queen* there is a *king*), is prophesied to be of such opulence that “...the kings of the Earth...shall bewail her [great political power]...and the merchants of the Earth shall weep and mourn over her [“...*made rich* by her...;” v. 15]...” (Rev. 18:19). Notice, too, the immense *global* scope of Babylon’s maritime commerce: “And...alas, that great city, wherein were *made rich ALL* that had ships in the sea...” (Rev. 18:19).

Two Things to Watch

What events ahead will propel Babylon to such prominence and worldwide influence as a (or perhaps “THE”) economic, governmental and *religious* world center in the end times?

The economic part of the answer almost certainly has to do with *oil*. The Middle East’s economic leverage of oil could be used by the beast of Revelations—once he ascends one of **SATAN’S THRONES** (Rev. 13:2)—to declare Babylon as the *capital of an as yet unnamed empire*. Since Babylon *reigns over the kings of Earth* (Rev.

17:18), it will be the *capital of a world-ruling empire!* Iraq is destined to remain an “item” of the major news networks for years to come!

What about a religious world center? Babylon has historically been a center of religion involving *idol worship* (Isa. 21:9). It is prophesied to become the home of *devils* (Rev. 18:2). Too, recall the beast, who has a devil (Rev. 16:13-14), is *worshipped* (Rev. 13:4, 8, 12) by *the entire world*. **THIS IS A ONE-WORLD RELIGION!** Martyrdom is the fate of those who refuse this religious system (Rev. 13:15).

Now, IF the beast reigns (he is a king: Rev. 17:10-11)

“...this religious system would...be centered NOT in Rome...but in Babylon, Iraq!”

from Satan's throne in Babylon during the city's coming brief-but-glorious heyday, then *Babylon must be the center of this religious system*. Glorious but brief, Babylon's rise will apparently last somewhat less than the 42 months the beast dominates (Rev. 13:5). During those coming "glory days," this religious system would, therefore, be centered NOT in Rome, nor Jerusalem, nor in some European Union nation, but at *Babylon, Iraq!*

Ahead we see a world-ruling empire headquartered at Babylon and a world-religion possibly headquartered there as well.

We should not be surprised if *already existing* political and religious capitals are *moved to Babylon*. If swift timing of these events is paramount, moving an established bureaucratic headquarters in tact could well expedite the transfer of the seat of power.

The Fall of Babylon & the King of Babylon

The rapid climb Babylon makes to prominence will be short-lived. She and her king will meet the same miserable fiery fate (Rev. 18:18; 19:20; 20:10).

In one prophecy Yahweh says, "...Behold I will punish the *king of Babylon* [actually SATAN] and his land [*Iraq*]..." (Jer. 50:18). He says further, "...I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an *assembly of great nations* ...Chaldea [*Iraq*] shall be a spoil" (v. 10).

Honestly, is there not an assembly of great nations [a coalition of nations] NOW operating against Chaldea-modern Iraq?

But Yahweh decrees an ultimate and decisive demise of Babylon:

"Because of the wrath of Yahweh it [Babylon] shall not be inhabited but it shall be wholly

desolate" (Jer. 50:13); "...and it [Babylon] shall no more be inhabited forever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation...so shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein" (Jer. 50:39-40).

Also,

"And the land shall tremble and sorrow: for every purpose of Yahweh shall be performed against Babylon, to make the *land of Babylon* [Iraq] a desolation without an inhabitant" (Jer. 51:29).

Notice too, the prophet Isaiah's record, "And Babylon, the glory of the kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' (Iraqi's) excellency, shall be as when Elohim overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. [Notice now] *It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation*" (Isa. 13:19-20); "...so shall no man abide there [Babylon]..." (Jer. 50:40).

The final fulfillment of these prophecies has not happened...YET! It is still ahead despite the fact that many claim these prophecies of Babylon's final fall have *already* been fulfilled. But have they?

The clear fact remains that *Babylon* is in part inhabited *to this very day!* Hillah is presently a city within the ruins of ancient Babylon. This very fact show these prophecies of the utter wasting of Babylon, are definitely on their way, but are *not* facts of history-*yet*. Though Chaldea and Babylon have been conquered more than once, (Sennacherib: 689 B.C.; Cyrus: 539 B.C.; Xerxes: 482 B.C.; Artaxerxes: 450 B.C.), Babylon has never been completely destroyed nor utterly void of inhabitants.

Babylon and her king will be destroyed completely as these prophecies say, but not until their final meteoric rise to world prominence in the not too distant future!

And what is the U.S. role in all this?

American and coalition troops are in Iraq, first to carry out the cause of Yahweh's vengeance on Chaldea by bringing an "...*assembly of great nations*..." so that "...Chaldea [*Iraq*] shall be a spoil..." (Jer. 50:10). This prophecy of old has had numerous fulfillments as mentioned earlier. This time mainly U.S. troops are *actually fulfilling this prophecy before our very eyes on ABC News, CNN, etc!*

BUT NOTE THIS. This prophecy WILL BE FULFILLED AGAIN!! This is the understanding generally lacking about Biblical prophecy: *It is fulfilled over and over again!* Prophecy is not just *dual* as so many claim. Prophecy has a multiplicity of fulfillments, successions of recurrences. Why? Because prophecy follows the cycle of the Biblical yearly Holy Days and Yahweh's little-known cycles of 7 years, 50 years, 280 years and 490 years, etc.

Secondly, American and other coalition troops are in Iraq to set the stage for the staggering events ahead. Coalition troops are providing the momentum to propel events onward to their final fulfillment in the last 70 years of the cycle of punishment laid on the Gentile nations!

They are setting the stage for the final fulfillment of the rise and fall of Babylon! —ICY

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What Teens Say

DRUGS - RELIGION - SUMMER JOBS

Survey-after-survey probes teenagers' views on everything from school, clubs, sports, friends and family, to church and work. So what do teens say?

DRUGS: Susan Vela (*Cincinnati Enquirer*) reports a survey by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University shows that *drugs remain U.S. teens' No. 1 concern!* Fewer than 51 percent expect to totally abstain from future drug use. This is down from 1999 when 60 percent expected to abstain. Marijuana, some Greater Cincinnati teens say, is easier to buy than cigarettes.

What can parents do? "The loud-and-clear message of the survey is this: Moms and dads should be parents to their children, not pals," said Joseph A. Califano Jr., the center's chairman and president. "Mothers and fathers, who are parents, rather than pals, can greatly reduce the risk of their children smoking, drinking and using drugs."

RELIGION: Are popular TV shows such as *Seventh Heaven*, *Joan of Arcadia* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* typical of what teens think about religion?

Christian Smith, professor of sociology at the University of North Carolina, summarizes a recent survey (March 2005) of teens in 45 states in the book, *Soul Searching, Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teens*. The survey revealed some rather surprising facts about teens and religion.

The widespread perception that America is becoming immensely more diverse religiously is not what the demographics show. He found the percentage of alternative religions such as Muslim, Buddhist and other minority religious groups is quite small to miniscule, and have little effect on American teens.

He was surprised to find that teens (13-17 years) are quite conventional when it comes to religion.

Very few pursue alternative religions. Only about one-third of one percent say they are pagan or wicked. About a third are involved with religion weekly, a third less often, and another third say they have no religion. All these groups, however, generally regard religion as pretty cool, if you need it.

The vast majority say they have the same religion (usually a form of Christianity) as their parents, and are pretty much satisfied just to go along with whatever they have been taught or raised to be; to get along without asking too many questions. When asked, "What do you believe?" teens generally cannot articulate their views very well. Often they reply, "I don't know." or "Nobody has asked me that before." Of all religious groups, Smith's data showed that Catholic teens are the most apathetic-among the worst. They say that religion is just not that important to them. Generally, Smith explains, that American teens have a concept of a Supreme Deity as a "divine butler" (He can get you what you want) or a "cosmic therapist."

SUMMER JOBS: More and more teens are saying, "No." to summer jobs writes Stephanie Armour (*USA TODAY*, June 2002):

"...the summer job, once a rite of passage for teens, is fading faster than a suntan. Studies indicate teenagers are forsaking work at a record pace: Labor market participation among the age group has sunk to its lowest point in almost four decades...Intense academic competition has parents pushing teens into summer learning programs and camps instead of entry-level jobs, experts say."

WHAT KING DAVID SAID: "Remember not the sins of my youth...O Yahweh (Psa. 25:7). "For you are my hope, O Yahweh...my trust from my youth" (Psa. 71:5). —ICY

2005-2006

Land Sabbath

Over thirty years ago the Scriptural basis for determining the Land Sabbath was uncovered. Here is the Biblical method for finding the time of the sacred Land Sabbath.

GETTING THE LAND SABBATH DATE FROM THE BIBLE

There are about as many theories of when the Jubilee (50th year) and other Land Sabbaths occur as there are theorists. The usual method involves searching for a Scripture which it is *believed* refers to a Land Sabbath or perhaps the Jubilee Sabbatical year.

This method is at best problematical, because a thorough searching of the Scriptures yields only doubtful cases which “might be” referring to a Jubilee Year or other Land Sabbaths.

Using non-canonical works such as I Maccabees 6:48-57 or a Talmudic source as the foundation for Land Sabbath dates obviously takes the matter out of Yahweh’s hands.

Such deferential regard for other works obviously moves the matter from its high seat within the declared word of Almighty Yahweh. A wrong foundation is laid.

The same goes for any other work such as Josephus, using Ussher’s chronology to start the Jubilee cycle, or other documents however aged, venerable or authoritative they may be. We must start from a Biblically precise basis and move outward from there.

If other documents concur with the Scriptural deductions, then their accuracy is thus established *by* the Scriptures. However, their dates must remain in doubt until such time as that happens.

Another approach is to look for a three-year equivalent crop in one year. This is based on Leviticus 25:20-22. This would show the sixth year similar to the sixth day episode involving the manna (Ex. 16:4-5, 22-27). No manna was

found on the seventh day—a Land Sabbath—because Yahweh rested that day. All Sabbaths are Land Sabbaths.

This method must also be approached with caution. For example, suppose you offered the prayer stated in Leviticus 25:20, and otherwise went about your gardening as usual. Further suppose you did not receive a triple harvest, but one actually less than other years. Would you conclude that year could not be the sixth year? Would it be valid to assume that only the land can tell us when the Sabbatical occurs?

No. For here again, as in the other cases cited above, we have come to the curious and illegal conclusion that some basis other than the Bible must be relied on to give the Sabbatical times!

The lack of the triple harvest could be due to other factors. We should first examine our personal circumstances. In this hypothetical scenario, let us suppose an examination of the facts revealed something like the following:

“WE MUST START
FROM A BIBLICALLY
PRECISE BASIS...”

You are regularly employed at the quite livable wage with no debts. We find on average you buy about 75-80 percent or more of everything you eat. Also you have stored, in canned goods and/or freezers, garden food leftover from previous years.

Would your situation fit the conditions of verse 20 where it says, “*What shall we eat the seventh year...?*” Hardly! When asking, “What will we eat?” one obviously is not in the condition of a wage earner who would do

about as well without the seventh-year harvest or any other harvest, that is, so long as food could be bought.

This verse describes the plea of one who *absolutely must have* the seventh-year crop to survive, if they have no other help forthcoming!

It is hardly a cavalier ritualistic prayer from one who has "...much goods laid up for many years..." (Luke 12:19) and did not need the harvest anyway.

We must be honest with Yahweh. He is not naive nor can be conned with only half-hearted attempts at obedience.

An alternative to the methods described above is a Scriptural reference, which clearly states that a given year is a certain year of the fifty-year cycle. If this year can be related to a known date, then the Jubilee Sabbath and other Sabbatical years can be determined.

The certainty this approach provides makes it superior to other methods, which are highly problematic at best.

EZEKIEL 1:1-2

This latter method now follows. Notice the following verses.

"Now it came to pass in the *thirtieth year*, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God [Elohim]. In the fifth day of the month which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity" (Ezk. 1:1-2; *KJV*).

The following versions translate this phrase "the thirtieth year."

Moffat, New World Translation, RSV, The Masoretic Text, Young's Literal, The Septuagint (C.L. Brenton translation), Good News Bible and New Jerusalem Bible.

Here are nine clear translations of the 'thirtieth year' phrase. Some commentaries speculate as to the meaning of this thirtieth year. For example, the *Jamieson, Fausset* and *Brown Commentary* says:

"**thirtieth year**—i.e. counting from the beginning of the reign of Nabopolassar, father of Nebuchadnezzar, the era of Babylonian empire, 625 B.C., which epoch coincides with the eighteenth year of Josiah, that in which the book of the law was found, and the consequent reformation began (Scaliger); or the thirtieth year of Ezekiel's life" (p. 669).

Unger's Bible Dictionary concurs with the Nabopolassar dating, noting that "...It now seems generally agreed that it was the thirtieth year from the new era of Nabopolassar..." (p. 336).

Despite the weight of this scholarly agreement, the crucial fact remains that the Bible does not concur with this consensus.

Having examined *every* reference (so far as I know) in Scripture to phrases like "twentieth year, twenty-fifth year of...etc.," I find *all* except two provides a Biblical link to someone's age, reign, etc.

One exception is the thirtieth year mentioned here in Ezekiel. It is no wonder we find the honest footnote in the *Good News Bible* admitting no one knows to what it refers. (The other exception is Lev. 25:10-11. See below.)

This fact is further corroborated by the *prima facie* evidence of no less than nine translations which simply render the phrase as "...the thirtieth year..." without any further links or assumptions. This is truly the literal Hebrew phrase.

Since the phrase stands alone without the usual ties to reigns of kings or ages, etc., it must be looked at in terms of the phrase itself. It refers to what is called an 'ordinal number,' such as 1st, 10th, 20th, 30th...

"EZEKIEL IS REFERRING
TO THE 30TH YEAR...
OF THE FIFTY-YEAR CYCLE."

Letting the Bible interpret itself, we find the only other exception in which such ordinal usage of years is found is the Jubilee cycle:

"And you shall hallow the fiftieth year...A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you..." (Lev. 25:10-11).

Obviously, there are 10th, 15th, 30th...years of this cycle.

Essentially what we arrive at is no actual interpretation at all. The phrase is accepted exactly as it is stated. Ezekiel was referring to the 30th year. This was **the** thirtieth year of the fifty-year cycle. Israel was taught to number the years just as they were taught to number the days of the week.

Note this important information was from a priest (v. 3) whose job was to keep up with matters of law in perpetuity:

"Thus saith Yahweh of hosts; *Ask now the priests concerning the law* (Haggai 2:11)...;" "And Yahweh spoke to Aaron...that you may teach...Israel

all the statutes which Yahweh has spoken to them by the hand of Moses” (Lev. 10:8, 11);
“And *Moses wrote this law*, and *delivered it unto the priests* the sons of Levi...thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing...that they may learn...and observe to do *all* the words of this law...And that their children...may hear and learn...*as long as you live* in the land whither you go over...to possess it” (Deut. 31:9, 11-13).

This same priest/prophet relayed Yahweh’s view about *all* His Sabbaths:

“Because they have despised my judgments...but polluted my SabbathS [Land Sabbaths ARE Sabbaths too]:...I am Yahweh your Elohim; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them;
And hallow my SabbathS; and **they** [All of them] shall be a **sign between me and you**, that ye may **know that I am Yahweh** your Elohim” (ch. 20 vv. 16, 19-20).

The Land Sabbaths are part of this great sign between Yahweh and His people. Ezekiel knew this. He revealed from his opening statement the necessary information by which the Land Sabbaths could be recovered.

Such indictments against breaking Yahweh’s Sabbaths could not be justified if nobody knew when they were.

**“...the fifth year
[of Jehoiachin’s captivity]
was 593-592 B.C.”**

Farmers around the world are most likely not taking a ‘break’ from plowing their fields during this Land Sabbath in the 28th year of the Jubilee cycle.



Ezekiel knew, and **now** so can we.

The simple truth is that no one has the true sign of Yahweh’s people if he does not keep **all** His Sabbaths. And that includes the Land Sabbaths.

Yes, they are for our age too. Remember Paul’s comments:

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God [Yahweh]; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and **prophets**...” (Eph. 2:19-20).

Consequently, the message of the prophet Ezekiel is for the congregation of Yahweh today as well.

Yahweh said, “The land shall not be sold forever; for the land is mine; you are strangers and sojourners with me” (Lev. 25:23). Such a statement obviously makes the Jubilee cycle an ongoing requirement which must apply all through the ages.

LAND SABBATH DATES

Now we will discuss the historical dates of Ezekiel 1:1-2.

It is interesting that Ezekiel connects this all-important thirtieth year with the fifth year of King Jehoiachin’s captivity. This allows easy reference to a firm historical date.

In the British Museum there is a tablet (No. 21946) on which the following Babylonian chronicle is recorded:

“In the seventh year, the month of Kislimu, the king of Akkad mustered his troops, marched to Hatti-land, and encamped against the city of Judah and on the second day of the month of Adaru he seized the city and captured the king. He

appointed there a king of his own choice, received its heavy tribute and sent them to Babylon”¹

Finegan explains this is doubtless the Babylonian account of the first fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar (II Kings 24). The Babylonian year began on Nisan 1. Nebuchadnezzar’s seventh year was 598 B.C. Nisan 1 that year

**“The next Jubilee would be...
574 B.C....to...573 B.C.”**

was March 27 of the Gregorian Calendar. He notes that the month of Kislimu began on Dec. 18, 598 B.C. and the second day of the month Addaru was March 16, 597 B.C. Finegan states that this date “...is the most exact information to come from cuniform records for an event recorded in the Bible...” (Finegan, p. 256).

II Chronicles 36:10 shows Jehoiachin was brought to Babylon at the time of year called “at the turn of the year”² an expression found in I Chron. 20:1 and II Sam. 11:1. This time of the year is apparently the “beginning of the year” recorded in Ezk. 40:1 (“*head of the year*” which was a better translation). This is not to be confused with the summer solstice referred to in Ex. 34:22.

Since 597 B.C. was an intercalated year (extra month added) in the Babylonian calendar system, the March 16 date is likely about a month later than the Biblical account in II Chronicles 36. It appears likely the Biblical accounts of “the turn of the year” correspond to an earlier date of about Feb. 15. This corresponds precisely with my calculations which show the head of the year (or “turn of the year”) begins on Feb. 15.

At any rate these dates agree—to within a month—for the year 597 B.C.

Dr. Herman Hoeh, noted historian of Ambassador College (Pasadena, CA), says the captivity year of Jehoiachin, 597 B.C., is known with a precision of three months: December-January, January-February, February-March (personal communication with the author, July 1980). This is also consistent with my findings of a Feb. 15 ‘turn of the year,’ and Finegan above.

Other documentation notes “...important document which refers to the campaign of Nebuchadnezzar in 598 B.C. which led to the captivity of Jehoiachin” (II Kings 24:10-16).³

Referring to Nebuchadnezzar, we find “He attacked Judah...and captured Jerusalem on March 16, 597 B.C., deporting King Jehoiachin to Babylon”⁴

Further, “...on the 15th or 16th of March, 597 B.C., the city was captured and had to pay heavy tribute...Jehoi-

achin lived in exile in Babylon...”⁵

FIRM DATE

We now have a firm date for the year of king Jehoiachin’s capture: March 16, 597 B.C., or perhaps a month earlier: Feb. 15, 597 B.C.

Since the new calendar year did not begin until Nisan 1 (recall this year had an extra month added to it), Jehoiachin’s first full year of exile began on Nisan 1 or April 13, 597 B.C., and extended to Adar 29 or Apr. 2, 596 B.C.

Finally the fifth year of his captivity (Ezk. 1:2) was the year 593 B.C. to 592 B.C. reckoned spring-to-spring.

SCRIPTURAL FALL-TO-FALL RECKONING

The Scriptural method of reckoning the year is from fall-to-fall. The year definitely ends in the fall after the Feast of Tabernacles: “...and the feast of ingathering, in the **end of the year...**” (Ex. 23:16).

The year does not begin in the spring; rather the *head* of the year occurs then. It is opposite to the end of the year in the fall. The year definitely ends in the late fall.

The **beginning of months** (Ex. 12:2) starts near the head of the year, but is not the same thing as the beginning of the year as so many suppose!

The start of the new year comes after the end of the year which follows the feast of tabernacles. The year then, is counted from fall-to-fall.

THE THIRTIETH YEAR: 594-593 B.C. FALL-TO-FALL

Let us now return to Ezekiel 1:1-2 for further proof.

Notice that Ezekiel dates the visions in the **fourth month of the thirtieth year**. This would have to be about July of the thirtieth year, which began with the previous fall. (Remember the numerical count of the months begins in the spring.)

Now since the fifth year of captivity was from 593 to 592 B.C. reckoned from spring-to-spring, the fourth month of the thirtieth year would have to be July of 593 B.C.

It could not be July of 592 B.C. since the fifth year of captivity expired around mid March of 592 B.C.

So the thirtieth year had to run from the late fall of 594

B.C. to the late fall of 593 B.C. The next Jubilee from this date would be the fall of 574 B.C. to fall of 573 B.C.

TESTING OTHER DATES

Armed with this Jubilee (574-573 B.C.), and counting by the clear Scriptural definition of fifty years from Jubilee-to-Jubilee, other dates can now be tested. We can now test the “might be” Land Sabbath scriptures.

1. First, Nehemiah 8:18. Here we find the law was read day-by-day during the Feast of Tabernacles after the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt that year. This reading was a seventh year requirement (Deut. 31:10).

Finegan (p. 336) gives the completion date of the wall as Oct. 2, 445 B.C. Since it is at the end of the year, subtracting 445 from 573 gives this year as the 28th year of the Jubilee cycle. So 446-445 B.C. was a seventh year, a Land Sabbath.

2. Next, “...to preach the acceptable year of Yahweh” (Luke 4:19). The phrase “the acceptable year of Yahweh” reasonably seems to indicate a Jubilee year. Many have reckoned it as such. So He would have preached this in a Jubilee or proclaimed the Jubilee year.

Ample evidence indicates Yahshua began His ministry in 27-28 C.E. If it is argued that He did not read this passage from Isa. 61:1-2 and indicate its fulfillment until He had preached a year, what did he preach the first year?

In the passage it *also* says, “...he hath anointed me to **preach the gospel** to the poor...” If He did not do this until a year later, then He simply did not preach the gospel at all that first year, nor did He heal the blind or brokenhearted, nor...!

Using the fall of 574 B.C. as the start of the Jubilee year makes the fall

of 27 C.E. also begin a Jubilee year. So 27-28 C.E., fall-to-fall, was a Jubilee year. This concurs with Yahshua preaching the acceptable or Jubilee year of Yahweh—a time when slaves were set free, lands returned and a Land Sabbath observed (Lev. 25:10-11).

3. Another case is often taken as a reference to a Jubilee year: Isaiah 37:30 (same as II Kings 19:29). Because this verse used the word “sign,” it is often easy to jump to the conclu-

“Remember this
[Land Sabbath]
is a Sabbath to
Yahweh...”

sion that this refers to a Jubilee. Let’s compare this verse with the specifications of the Jubilee year given in the Law (*RSV, NJB, NWT* and *KJV* agree):

Isaiah 37:30

“And this shall be a sign to you, **you shall eat this year such as grows of itself**; and the second year that which springs of the same: and in the third year sow, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof” (*KJV*).

Leviticus 25:11

“A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be to you; you shall not sow, **neither reap that which grows of itself in it**, nor gather the grapes in it of your vine undressed” (*KJV*).

Nothing could be more certain than that these (boldfaced) statements

are exact opposites. The Law says in the Jubilee year we cannot reap what grows of itself. The sign given to Hezekiah was just the opposite: they were to eat what grew of itself. This could not, therefore, refer to a Jubilee year, nor—by Lev. 25:5—a seventh year.

Even so eminent a mathematician and theologian as William Whiston, whose translation of Josephus appeared in 1737, erroneously attributed this reference in Isaiah 37 to a Jubilee year (See *Josephus Dissertation V*, pp. 701, 703). Whiston succeeded Sir Isaac Newton at Cambridge in 1703, and his translation of Josephus remains to this day the best complete English Translation.

II Kings 18:13 shows the Assyrian king, Sennacherib, invaded Judah in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah’s reign. Edwin Thiele gives Hezekiah’s accession year as 716-715 B.C.⁶ His fourteenth year would be 702-701 B.C. *Unger’s Bible Dictionary* (p. 995) notes this campaign occurred during 701 B.C., according to Assyrian chronological data.

Again using the 574-573 B.C. Jubilee date, we find 702-701 B.C. was a twenty-second year of the fifty-year cycle. So it was not a Jubilee year, nor a seventh-year Land Sabbath. This fits the Scriptural comparison discussed above.

4. I Maccabees 6:49: “...since the land was enjoying a sabbatical year.” The date of this indicated Sabbatical year is given by Ben Zion Wacholder as 163-162 B.C.⁷

By the 574-573 B.C. date this year was the eleventh year of the Jubilee cycle (the fourth year of the seven-year cycle). If I Maccabees 6:49 was in fact referring to a true *Biblical* Sabbatical year, then the Wacholder date is wrong. The Scriptural dating would place the year as 160-159 B.C. or the nearest earlier sabbatical of 167-166 B.C.

Again, it cannot be too strongly

emphasized that the *Bible* must be the basis for determining the Sabbatical/Jubilee cycles. And then, taking from the Bible, only what is definite there, not ‘might be’ or ‘could be’ Scriptures.

Also, non-canonical works outside the Scriptures do not supersede whatever is certain in the Scriptures.

The Ezekiel 1:1-2 dating far exceeds in certainty other supposed cases used as sabbatical references, even though other supposed cases (such as examples 1 and 2 above) may in fact be Sabbatical or Jubilee references. We must, however, **start** with the **most certain** case and use it as the standard by which to judge those scriptures; which are less certain.

WHAT TO DO IN A SABBATICAL YEAR

During the Land Sabbath of 2005-2006, Oct. 25-Oct. 25, all land cultivation is to cease (Lev. 25:3-4; Ex. 23:10-11). This of course includes gardening of whatever kind in which sowing and planting is done. The land is to “...rest and lie still...,” no cover crops, etc. Mowing hay for cattle is permissible (Lev. 25:7).

Remember this is a Sabbath to **Yahweh** (Lev. 25:4) in which He rests just as He rests on the weekly Sabbath. It is actually a sign of anyone who keeps it, that he is one of Yahweh’s people as Ezekiel so clearly points out in Chapter 20 verse 20.

Deuteronomy 15:1-2 gives further instructions. Verse two clearly shows the manner of release involves **lending**. Many different translations substantiate this. The *KJV* margin gives the literal Hebrew: “...master of the **lending** of his hand...” Many well-intentioned persons say this refers to debt generally, but that is not what it says.

The release of the seventh year clearly applies to loans only. Verse eight corroborates this, “...shall surely

lend him sufficient...” Business sales go on as usual. If someone is buying an item on credit, this is not a loan but a sale, and clearly does not come under the restrictions of the seventh year release. In a loan, the lender gets back in kind exactly what he lent. This is not the case in a sale.

If a borrower has not paid off a loan by the end of the seventh year, then the loan must be cancelled. The only exception is if the borrower is a foreigner. Otherwise it is to be forgiven.

Regarding may be eaten on the Sabbatical year: Many go to great pains not to buy any food harvested during a Sabbatical year. They store up large stocks of food to avoid buying food then. Actually the Bible does not indicate restrictions of that kind. These same zealous persons—as far as I know—make no such attempt to avoid food harvested on the weekly Sabbath which is also a Land Sabbath.

Of course it is nearly impossible in the societies of this world not to buy food that was harvested on the Sabbath. If we raised all our own food, then that problem could be solved.

In fact, the Bible indicates that it is permissible to buy food grown on a Sabbatical year. Notice:

In Gen. 42:2, Jacob instructed his sons to go buy food from the Egyptians when a worldwide famine prevailed (Gen. 41:56). The food they bought had been stored during seven years of plenty in Egypt (Gen. 41:34-36, 53-54, 56-57). One of those seven years was a Land Sabbath. They bought food anyway, and the Bible gives no hint they tried to find out just which year the grain had been grown and harvested.

PARTIAL LIST OF SABBATICAL DATES

Explanatory Notes: The ‘J’ following a listing indicates a Jubilee year.

The year preceding each Jubilee is a 49th year. The symbol ‘14th’ denotes the 14th year of the Jubilee cycle.

Sabbatical Year B.C.		Sabbatical Year	
574-73	J	827-28	J
374-73	J	1026-27	
175-74		1027-28	J
174-73	J	1226-27	
75-54		1227-28	J
74-73	J	1426-27	
25-24		1427-28	J
24-23	J	1491-92	14th
3-2		1626-27	
—	—	1627-28	J
5-6	C.E.	1826-27	
27-28	J	1827-28	J
226-27		1926-27	
227-28	J	1927-28	J
426-27		1941-42	14th
427-28	J	1976-77	
626-27		1977-78	J
627-28	J	1991-92	14th
826-27		2027-28	J

The Jubilee dates show that Ezekiel, Chapter 40, which describes the beginning of other visions, occurred in a Jubilee year. We might call this “the Jubilee visions.” It is also noteworthy that this set of visions which were given in a Jubilee, also contains a specific reference to the Jubilee year (Ezk. 46:17)

—ICY

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Christmas:

Do you know whose birthday is being celebrated?

What are professing Christians really celebrating during Christmas? Just whose birth are they really commemorating on December 25? They say it is the birth of Jesus Christ., but the Messiah's name is not Jesus; but Yahshua, meaning "Yahweh is Savior."

Yahshua was not born on December 25, and the Bible nowhere commands, nor allows, a celebration of his birthday. Church authority cannot override the Bible's firm directives.

So why this celebration? Why a birthday memorial with religious connections?

Could it be a celebration of Satan's birth? Could it be, since he is the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4), he is the one being adored, he is the one being worshipped?

If Christmas is not Satan's festival, then who is responsible for its fraudulent religious claims and customs Yahweh condemns? How do we account for its myriad of pagan rites masquerading as a Biblical celebration?

Would Yahweh sponsor a religious festival based on such lies, make believe, wanton revelry and upbraided by a priesthood that ignores His Sabbath and Biblical Holy Days?

Hardly. Who does the Bible say is the Father of lies? Read John 8:44: Satan the Devil.

Here is a surprising fact about this former archangel.

Notice what the prophet Ezekiel says of him: "You have been in Eden the garden of Elohim...in the day your were BORN" (Ezk. 28:13).

Shocking perhaps, but true! Satan was born!

Catholics and Protestants aggrandize and reverence Christmas as the birth of someone who cannot be the Messiah of the Bible. Who? Whose birthday is it?

Write today for the booklet *Christmas: The Untold Story*

(suggested donation \$2 US). Read the surprising story of Christmas—a story that goes back to the dawn of angelic history—to the birth of a great winged Cherub (Ezk. 28:14).

Christmas: The Untold Story



International Congregation of Yahweh

International Congregation of Yahweh

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