

The Foundation of the World

A meditative poem by Açaf,

Give ear to My Torah My people! Incline your ear to the influence of My mouth. I shall open My mouth with a parable, I shall pour out allegories from long ago...That which we have heard and known, and what our fathers have related to us, we shall not conceal from our sons. To a later generation shall be told praises of YaHWeH and His might, and the wonderful works He has performed.

He established a Testimony in Jacob and determined a Torah in Israel, which He charged our fathers to make known to their sons in order that a later generation may know. Sons they will sire shall arise and they will relate it to their sons. Then they may place their assurance in Divinity and not forget the Works of God, so they may observe His commandments and not be like their fathers, a perverse and rebellious generation; a generation whose inner heart was not firm and whose spirit was not faithful to God.

Psalm 78:1-8

The Traditions of the Fathers are the Foundation of the World. These traditions are passed down from one generation to the next in order to teach the Wisdom of God and instill faith in the Children of Adam. A tradition is not simply a legend. A tradition is an inherited or established way of thinking, feeling, and doing which is ingrained into society through anecdotes and holidays. The purpose of a tradition is to establish a coherent manner of instruction for the erection of society in moral and spiritual values so that the structure of society remains wholly progressive. This life-driving impulse is maintained through the elders of society who are responsible for the promulgation and preservation of the traditions. The ruining of tradition by irresponsible leadership leads to the transgression of morality and the collapse of the system of education which results in chaos and indifference. Hence, society decays and neglects the true purpose of life.

The Fountainhead of Tradition is the Wisdom of God. Of Wisdom it is written, "YeHWeH made me the head of His path long ago, from His works of old. From antiquity I have been invested, from the first, from the establishment of the earth. While there were no depths, I was conditioned. While there were no springs abounding with water, before mountains were impressed, at the face of the hills, I was conditioned. Even while there was no earth made, or the precincts, nor the first dust became the earth, when He prepared the heavens, I was there. When He decreed the circuit upon the face of the deep, when He determined the clouds from above, when He strengthened the springs of the deep, when He established for the sea its

measure, and the waters not to cross beyond His Voice, when He ordained the foundations of the earth, then I was near to Him, a trusted servant, and I was delightful daily, playing about Him daily at all times. Playing about in the established part of His earth, and my delightfulness was with the Sons of Adam.”¹ This poem to Wisdom serves as the basis of creation.

The universe that surrounds us is reared upon this Foundation of Wisdom. Upon this foundation “Wisdom has built her house, she has hewed out seven pillars.”² This house is built to accommodate the adherents of the Cause of God and it is the Revelation of the Wisdom of God which this house is built upon, the seven pillars. The Revelation of God is the expression of God Almighty’s Wisdom which is the Word of God: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was Divine.”³ The seven pillars which Wisdom has erected are the seven epochs in which the Word of God has been revealed to humanity, the seven periods in which the Spirit of God has been revealed.

The number seven is an insatiably mystical number which alludes to creation itself. The process of creation includes the creation of the heavens and the earth, the formation of Adam, and the forging of a covenant with Adam. The creation (ברא) of the heavens and the earth produces the arena for spiritual and material development. The formation (עשה) of Adam brings about a living creature to develop. And the forging (יצר)⁴ of a covenant establishes the parameter of the development. Within the Covenant are statutes which govern the duties which the Creator and Adam have with each other. It defines the nature of their relationship to each other. Thus, the traditions are passed down from Adam to Adam through adherence to the Covenant.

The traditions are transmitted through two methods, anecdotes and holidays. The anecdotes are the accounts of Adam which have a portentous sense related to the development of Adam. They are related by parables and hidden mystical expositions, though they are actual historical events. Through Prophets and Messengers God reveals Himself and They are the Well-Spring of Divine Portents. They relate the Wisdom of God not only by Their words, but also through Their deeds. The places They visit, the deeds They perform, and the events of Their lives all confirm the proper transmission and preservation of the traditions and relay to the Household of God the Will of God. The fathers pass on the traditions, partially understanding the meaning behind some, yet trusting for a more complete interpretation to come in the re-establishment of the Covenant through the ‘New Creation’ promised in every Covenant. Thus the tradition is preserved for a more thorough interpretation to be given through the subsequent Covenant.

The holidays are days that are set aside from the normal routine in order to celebrate the Manifestation of the Wisdom of God. They are appointed times (מועד) to convoke an assembly (מקרא) to recollect (זכרון) the blessings and mercies of God. These festivals, known as pilgrim- feasts (אג), signify the times when God manifests Himself to His creation. At such a time Adam is to make a journey to meet with the Lord at an appointed place. There They recollect the Covenant between Them and celebrate its refreshing nature. This is the prophetic element of the traditions which alludes to the times when the Representative of God, or Adam,

¹ Proverbs 8:22-31

² Proverbs 9:1

³ John 1:1

⁴ These three Hebrew terms are the three words that are used in Genesis ch.1-ch.2 to describe God’s process of creating.

would appear and refresh the livelihood of humanity by ratifying the Covenant and inspiring a fresh impulse into the spiritual and material development of the heavens and the earth.

THE PROMISES OF YaHWeH

YeHWeH spoke to Moses, saying: “Speak to the Children of Israel and instruct them: The Appointed Times of YaHWeH you shall reckon as ‘Holy Convocations’, these are My Appointed Times.”⁵

The Appointed Times of YaHWeH are called Mo’adey YeHWeH (מועדי יהוה) and can mean appointed times or promised times. They are called Mo’adim because they refer to the promise to meet with the Lord at an appointed time and place, that is, the Tent of Meeting called Ohel Mo’ed which was a tent within the court of the Tabernacle. There are seven appointed times that the Children of Israel were to keep sacred and meet with God Almighty. These correspond to the seven pillars of the House of Wisdom in relation to the seven epochs of Adam.

The Sabbath

“Six days you shall perform ministerial duty, but in the seventh day is a Sabbath of sabbatic observance, a Holy Convocation, all of the ministerial duty you shall not do. It is a Sabbath for YaHWeH in all your dwellings.”⁶

The term ‘Sabbath’ means to cease or desist, but always with the sense of completion. In this manner it refers to the time when God Almighty completed His favor to creation and blessed Adam as the pinnacle of creation. On the Sabbath the re-awakening of the Spirit and the refreshing of the spiritual, mental, and physical capacity of Adam takes place. Special observance of the Sabbath included the gathering of double the amount of daily provisions on the sixth day of the week, doubling the morning and evening sacrifices on the Sabbath Day, and the presentation of twelve new loaves of shewbread in the Holy Place of the Tent of Meeting.

The Sabbath is a memorial to creation. It is a day set aside for the celebration of the Divine Creation and of recollecting the promise of God to bring about peace and unity to the world. For those who observe the Sabbath the mercy of God is promised as well, and the observance of the Sabbath is recognized by setting aside all manner of servitude and ceasing from the daily routine. It is a time to reflect, rest, and prepare for the next routine. There should be a sense of renewal, as the next routine or next creation, may differ in manner than the previous week. In this way, every week, indeed each new creation, begins with a fresh outlook.

⁵ Leviticus 23:1-2

⁶ Leviticus 23:3

The Sabbath is a sign between God and all the world that He will sanctify and refresh it just as He was sanctified and refreshed on it. The prophetic portent of this weekly observance is, from a theological standpoint of Christianity, yet to come, for it is written, 'There remains a Sabbath observance for the People of God.'⁷ Jesus spoke also this way, "My Father til this very moment labors, I likewise labor."⁸ The works of God are yet to be completed and the Sabbath is a sign of the appointed time when God will have fully manifested His Wisdom to the Children of Adam. Its weekly occurrence is a constant reminder that creation is continual and repetitive.

As a symbol of creation its climax is the creation of Adam, both in the specific and general sense. The specific sense referring the Perfection of Creation, the Perfect Man and Representative of God. This is the station of the Messenger or Manifestation of God in the realm of creation, also known as the Son of God or the Son of Adam (Man). The powers of the Manifestation of God are listed specifically in the Book of Revelation.⁹ In the general sense, Adam refers to humanity as a whole. God resting on the Sabbath reveals the final evolution of creation with an intelligent being which is His ultimate creation, a creature that can know Him and himself. The Sabbath Day is set aside to be the day in which God and Adam commune. From the creation of humanity the universe itself takes on meaning and evolves according to the will of man. It's as if humanity itself manifests the attribute of God as creator and begins to fashion the universe through its perceptions and understanding gained through education and experimentation, exploration and settlement. The work of God is completed on the sixth day, and on the seventh day God rests from His work. At that point Adam takes over and refines the universe according to his determination of the will of God.

The Apostolic Fathers taught, "Of the Sabbath He speaketh in the beginning of the creation; 'and God made the works of His hands in six days, and He ended on the seventh day, and rested on it, and He hallowed it.' Give heed children, what this meaneth. 'He ended in six days.' He meaneth this, that in six thousand years the Lord shall bring all things to an end; for the day with Him signifieth a thousand years; and this He Himself beareth me witness, saying; 'Behold, the day of the Lord shall be as a thousand years.' Therefore, children, in six days, that is six thousand years, everything shall come to an end. 'And He rested on the seventh day.' This meaneth; when His Son shall come, and shall abolish the Lawless One, and shall judge the ungodly, and shall change the sun and the moon and the stars, then shall He truly rest on the seventh day."¹⁰ In this sense it refers to a time when God Almighty will bring to completion His Divine Plan for Adam and fully ratify His Covenant with him.

This is the first of the 'Holy Convocations' and is attributable to Adam, for He was the first Manifestation of God in the realm of creation. Upon Him was the image of God engraved. There are seven pillars to the House of Wisdom, Adam being the First Pillar, the first embodiment of Wisdom in the world.

⁷ Hebrews 4:9; the Author of Hebrews also shows how Jesus both fulfilled the Sabbath and how a Sabbath awaits.

⁸ John 5:17

⁹ Rev. 1:12-16

¹⁰ The Epistle of Barnabas, see also 2 Peter 3:8; Psalm 90:4

The Passover and the Pilgrim-Feast of Mažot (The Days of Unleavened Bread)

“These are the Appointed Times of YeHWeH, a Holy Convocation, you shall reckon them in their Appointed Time. In the first month, on the fourteenth of the month, between the two evenings, is the Passover to YaHWeH. On the fifteenth day of the month is a Pilgrim-Feast of Unleavened Bread, seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day there shall be a Holy Convocation for you, you shall not perform any ministerial service, and you shall bring near to YaHWeH an offering made with fire seven days. In the seventh day is a Holy Convocation, you shall not perform any ministerial service.”¹¹

The Pilgrim-Feast of Unleavened Bread begins with the Passover. The Passover is the commemoration of God Almighty’s passing~over the blood-sprinkled homes of the Israelites in Egypt just prior to the Exodus. In Egypt the Lord sent many plagues upon the House of Pharaoh and the Egyptians. The tenth and final plague was the decree of death for all the firstborn in Egypt. To escape the consequence of this plague the Israelites were to select a pure and spotless lamb and smear the blood of the lamb on the lintel and doorposts of their abode. When the Destroyer came to fulfill the decree of God Almighty He was to pass~over the blood-stained houses.

The observance of the Passover begins with the selection of a pure and spotless lamb. This selection process takes place on the tenth day of the first month. The lamb needed to be spotless because it was used to take the place of the penalty of the household’s sin, and only a pure and spotless sacrifice worthy of acceptance could take on the sin of the household. They had to give up the most desirable lamb, a symbol of their sacrifice. The pure blood of the lamb signified the household whose sin had been removed so that the Angel of Retribution would pass~over that household. All these figures pointed to the willingness of that household to observe the commandments of God and purify themselves for service in His Cause. This is another symbol of renewal, that is, the death of the wicked and the redemption of the holy.

From the tenth day of the month til the day of Passover the households of Israel were to bear in mind the love and redeeming power of God, as well as the duties prescribed for the

¹¹ Leviticus 23:4-8

observance of the Passover. During this time all leaven was to be removed from the house in which the lamb was to be eaten. The removal of the leaven represents the removal of that which causes degeneration and corruption which is the cause of malice and wickedness, sin. It is the purification of the household from falsehood so that the unleavened bread, which represents truth and sincerity, may persist and the sacrifice of the lamb would not be in vain. By the evening of the thirteenth day of the month all leaven was to be removed and the head of the household would go in search of any remaining leaven. After which he would declare the house clean and ready for the Passover. In the days of the Exodus the leaven represented the hastiness with which the Children of Israel fled from Egypt.

The few days prior to the Passover were ultimately days of expectation. Beginning on the tenth day of the month the household would also begin reading from the Book of Malakí and await the appearance of Elijah the Prophet to announce the coming of the great and dreadful Day of YaHWeH. So there is a messianic expectation related to the entire feast which is actually fulfilled in many ways.

After the days of expectation and preparation of the Passover was completed the pure and spotless lamb was to be slain “on the fourteenth day of the month, between the two evenings.” Between the two evenings has differing interpretations, but in general it refers to the time between the decline of the sun and the actual sunset. Care was to be taken so as not to break any of the bones of the lamb during the sacrificial stage. This was to signify the wholeness of the lamb and the true preservation of the lamb from harm by God Almighty, for it is written, “Great are the misfortunes of the Righteous, but YaHWeH delivers him from them all. He preserves all his bones, not a single one of them is broken.”¹² The term ‘bones’ signifies in the Holy Scriptures oneness of nature and singleness of purpose, as it is written, “Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh.”¹³ Iniquity was also said to reside in the ‘bones’, and since the lamb needed to be pure and spotless, its bones were kept whole.

Following the sacrifice of the lamb came the application of the lamb’s blood on the lintel and doorposts. First the blood was to be mixed with hyssop and then it was applied to the dwelling where the lamb was to be eaten. Then the lamb was to be roasted and eaten by all the circumcised members of the household, free or bonded, familiar or strange. The meal was to be eaten after sunset of the fourteenth day of the month. Three things were necessary for the meal: the lamb, unleavened bread, and bitter herbs. The consumption of the lamb signifies the partaking in the Covenant of God; the unleavened bread signifies the swiftness with which the Children of Israel left Egypt; and, the bitter herbs signifies the bitterness of their lives in Egypt during the four hundred plus years of bondage.

The dinner commenced with certain activities consisting of the drinking of wine through four cups, the recounting of the tale of the Exodus with an emphasis on the mystical significance, the singing of the Hallel, and much more. Each of the activities carried a mystical meaning which pointed to the coming of the Messiah and the redemption of the Children of Israel.

The Passover and all its formulae allude to the redemption from the bondage of error. From the selection of the lamb to its consumption, all references point toward the emptying of the self and the re-alignment of the soul with the Covenant of God in order to be fashioned into a new and superior Adam. Thus it is written, “Remember the Torah of Moses My servant, which

¹² Psalm 34:19-20

¹³ Genesis 2:23

I charged Him with in Horeb on account of all Israel, the decrees and statutes. Verily, I will send Elijah the Prophet, to come before the Day of YaHWeH, the Great, the Dreadful, and He shall turn the hearts of the fathers upon the hearts of the sons, and the hearts of the sons upon the fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with destruction.”¹⁴

The days of expectation were days of returning to the pure and spotless commandments of God Almighty. Elijah was to come and prepare the people for the coming of the Lord. Only those protected by the blood of the Lamb of God would survive the coming destruction, those who would return to the love of truth in the traditions and transmit them properly. The story of Elijah in the Bible points to the proper way to seek, hear, and obey the commandments of God Almighty. Elijah ran from the people in fear of his life where he hid in a cave to seek the Lord. Several apparitions appeared to him in the cave, a fire, a whirlwind and so forth. He did not hear the Lord in those things, instead he heard the Voice of God in a still, small voice that said to him, “What are you doing here? Go and fulfill My commandments, I will strengthen you.”¹⁵ He then had the courage to face the wicked of his age and prepare the way for Elisha, a Prophet who possessed twice the spirit of Elijah.¹⁶

Christ is also called ‘our Passover’¹⁷ and John the Baptist selected this Lamb to take away the sins of the world. Jesus considered John to fulfill the role of Elijah spoken of by Malakí,¹⁸ and He came to prepare the way for Jesus as the Messiah and turn the cold hearts of the Children of Israel towards God and one another, those living in the past and the present, so they could accept the Voice of God in the Messiah. Then they could be saved from the coming destruction and desolation foretold by the Prophets since the world began, enter into a new heavens and a new earth, and begin the Path of Redemption.

The days of John the Baptist and the days of the ministry of Jesus Christ were the days of preparation for the coming Days of Unleavened Bread, the days of the New Creation. Jesus appeared as the Head of the Household of Israel and continually urged His Disciples, those who heeded His Voice and followed His footsteps, to remove the leaven from their house. He provided them with a Covenant whereby they would be renewed and saved from the coming destruction, and He sacrificed Himself to establish this Covenant. He was the ‘Lamb slain before the Foundation of the World’.

The Days of Unleavened Bread signified a renewal of creation, similar to the Sabbath but with an added sense of destruction and rebirth. The sevenfold punishment process promised by Moses one hand,¹⁹ and the re-creation of the heavens and the earth on the other,²⁰ with that of a new Adam and a New Covenant. Leavened bread on one hand symbolizes the bondage and affliction of living under a decadent system, whereas the unleavened bread signifies the ‘haste’ needed to flee from such a system. This flight must be so quick that there would be no time for the ‘bread’ to rise. On account of such ‘haste’ the ‘unleavened bread’ symbolizes a new state of existence which none of the ‘leaven’ from the previous corrupted system could infect. The

¹⁴ Malakí 4:4-6

¹⁵ Paraphrased meaning of the dialogue between Elijah and God.

¹⁶ See 1 Kings ch.17-2 Kings ch.4

¹⁷ 1 Corinthians 5:7

¹⁸ Matthew 11:14;17:10-12

¹⁹ Lev. Ch.26

²⁰ Matt. 9:16-17;26:28;2 Cor. 5:17

corruption and degradation of the old system was left behind and those under the 'New Covenant' became a new 'lump' as they were 'unleavened'.

This sevenfold process of destruction and re-creation represents the Divine Order which is powerful and beautiful, great and dreadful. These days commence with a warning of destruction and a promise of redemption. This destructive and creative process brings order to the world for the new Adam as a Living Creature. Though Jesus ultimately fulfills the prophetic nature of the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, the first Passover was in the Days of Noah. This prophetic paradigm has repeated itself three times in history. First with Noah, then with Moses, and thirdly with Christ. These are the anecdotes previously mentioned.

The Passover signifies the salvation of those who are faithful to the Covenant of God. In the Days of Noah, God desired to wipe the face of the earth clean of Adam, whom He had created. But God found grace in the eyes of Noah and made a Covenant with Him and His Household to enter into the Ark and be saved from the 'first death', the first destruction of mankind. Thus the penalty of death passed over Noah and His Household. The Ark came to rest on Mt. Ararat on the seventeenth day of the seventh month, which according to tradition is counted from the civil year which begins in the fall. So the seventh month of the Jewish civil year is synonymous with the first month of the Jewish ecclesiastical calendar. If Noah came to 'rest' on Mt. Ararat on a Sabbath day during the Days of Unleavened Bread, it would correspond to the 'First Fruits' Festival and the forging of a Covenant on the Day of Pentecost fifty days later which is related next in His story. It's easy to see how the overlapping tales are woven together. So as far as building the House of Wisdom, the first Passover instituted corresponds to the Second Pillar which is Noah, the second embodiment of Wisdom in the world. From Adam to Noah we have the first epoch in Biblical tradition, known as the Ante-diluvian Period, and the beginning of the second epoch known as the Post-diluvian Period which is also known as the Age of the Patriarchs.

The Harvest of First-Fruits

And YaHWeH spoke to Moses, saying: “Speak to the Children of Israel and instruct them: Then when you enter into the land I am giving to you and you reap its harvest, you shall bring the first sheaf of your harvest to the Priest, and he shall wave with the sheaf before the Face of YaHWeH for your acceptance, from the morrow of the Sabbath the Priest shall wave it, and you shall offer on the day of your wave-offering with the sheaf a wholesome lamb, a son of its year, a whole burnt-offering to YaHWeH, and its tribute of two-tenths measure of fine flour mixed with oil shall be a fire-offering to YaHWeH of a soothing odor, and its drink-offering of wine shall be a quarter of hin. You shall not eat bread, parched grain, or fresh ears, until that day in which you have brought the offering of your God. An everlasting statute for your posterity in all your dwellings.”²¹

During the Days of Unleavened Bread, on the day following the weekly Sabbath, the first day of the week, is the wave-offering of the first-fruits of the field. This festive Day inaugurates the harvest of the Spring season. It is a memorial to God’s blessing of the land and the offering of the first-fruits of that blessing to God Almighty. The first-fruits of the field represented those who were redeemed by the blood of the Passover offering and their withdrawal from the land of Egypt and the affliction suffered therein. The gathering together of the first-fruits is presented to the Lord as a pure and wholesome sacrifice worthy of His acceptance at His banquet table.

The rites of this Festival begin on the weekly Sabbath day just as the sun begins to set. Three men would set out into the field, each with a sickle and a basket, to reap the first-fruits of the harvest. As the sun would set they would ask those who had gathered to observe the harvest five questions. First they would ask, “has the sun set?” Then they would ask, “with this

²¹ Lev. 23:9-14

sickle?” And, “into this basket?” And, “on this Sabbath?” Finally they would ask, “shall I reap?” After asking each of these questions three times and receiving an affirmative answer, they would gather one ephah of barley, which is ten ‘omers or three seahs (about three pints). The sheaves were then brought into the courtyard of the Temple and threshed with canes or stalks so as not to crush the grains. Then they were parched on a perforated pan so that each grain could be touched with fire, and finally the grains were exposed to the wind. Afterwards the grains were ground together and sifted to a determined delicateness and the offerings measured out. On the day of the Festival the portion of the ‘omer that was to be offered was then mixed with a ‘log’ of oil and a handful of frankincense and waved before YaHWeH before being burned on the altar.

All this points to those who have been ‘redeemed by the blood of the Lamb’ and are the first-fruits of the new season or New Creation. These are those who have left behind the spiritual bondage of the degenerate and wicked system and have become the First-Fruits of the renewed Covenant. As they withdraw from the decadent world they are meshed together, sifted, and made into a loaf to be waved or presented to the Lord and burnt on His altar. This symbol represents a resurrection and a new beginning. It is also a day celebrated as the day the Children of Israel left Egypt and the day of the consecration of the firstborn of the Children of Israel.

In prophetic terms this Festival is fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus as He was resurrected and loosed from the earth to be the First-Fruit of the New Creation as He was loosed from the bondage of death and arose to lead the new world into the Household of the Cause of God. It is written, ‘But now, Christ has risen from death, the First-Fruit of those who have fallen asleep...but if the First-Fruit is sacred, so also is the loaf of barley, and if the root is sacred, so also is the branch.’²² Similarly the Children of Noah and the Children of Israel are represented as the first-fruits of their respective ages. Here we begin to see how the Festivals create a prophetic paradigm that establishes a recognizable pattern that is used to form the very Foundation of The World.

According to Wisdom and the Third Pillar of her House, this Festival points to Moses and establishment of the Kingdom of God as they were not instructed to celebrate this Festival until being established in the Promised Land. This Festival marks the beginning of the Third Epoch known as the Age of the Kingdom or Period of the Torah/Law and Moses is the third embodiment of Wisdom in the world. This is not to say that the Patriarchs were not the embodiment of Wisdom, of course They were and They demonstrated and substantiated these Festivals in Their own unique way. However what is peculiar to Noah and Moses is the period of time in which They appeared. The enlightened understanding of the Harvest of First-Fruits is the establishment of the Kingdom of God on the earth. That occurring on the First Day of the week is as the Light coming into the Kingdom. The Kingdom representing the gathering of the people unto that Light. The Kingdom of Israel being the first kingdom of Adam in the general sense to be governed by Prophets and the Law of God. This initiated a new epoch in human history comparable only to the Flood. Another parallel here is that this is the only Festive Day that is not called a ‘Sabbath’ or a ‘Holy Convocation’ and Moses was not to enter into the Land of Israel and therefore did not enter with them into their ‘Rest’.

²² 1 Corinthians 15:20/Romans 11:16|In these chapters Paul clearly points to the relationship between the natural and spiritual Adam, the resurrection pointing to the renewal of life through the Spirit.

Pentecost and the Pilgrim-Feast of Shavuot
(The Feast of Weeks)

“And you shall count for yourselves from the morrow of the Sabbath, from the day you come with the wave-sheaf offering, seven whole Sabbaths there shall be. You will count from the morrow of the Sabbath fifty days, and you will draw near a new grain-offering to YaHWeH. From your dwellings you shall bring two loaves of bread to wave, two-tenths of fine flour they shall be, leaven baked, first-fruits to YaHWeH. And you shall offer along with the bread seven pure and spotless lambs of the first year, a bullock from the herd, and two rams. They shall be a burnt-offering for YaHWeH, and from the offerings and libations there shall be a sweet savor for YaHWeH. And you shall appoint one he-goat for sinfulness and two lambs of the first year for a peaceful sacrifice. And the Priest shall elevate these two lambs along with the bread, the first-fruits wave offering, to the Face of YaHWeH. They shall be consecrated for YaHWeH and the Priest. And you shall declare with firmness that selfsame day to be a Holy Convocation for you, all of the ministerial duty you shall not do. An everlasting statute in all your dwellings for your posterity. And when you reap the harvest of your earth, you shall not completely reap the corners of your field when you reap, and the gleanings of your harvest you

shall not gather up. Leave them for the poor and the stranger. I am YaHWeH your God!"²³

Although the Pilgrim-Feast of Unleavened Bread is completed, it may not be concluded until the Feast of Weeks is comes to pass. The Feast of Weeks is however a distinct Festival as itself is a 'Holy Convocation' just as Passover itself is. It is also a Pilgrim-Feast. All males were to appear before YaHWeH and bring two leavened loaves of bread from the first-fruits of the field from their homes fifty days after the Sabbath that occurs during the Days of Unleavened Bread. They were also to offer seven lambs, a bullock, two rams, and one he-goat and two lambs for the peace offering.

This Festival celebrates the first wheat harvest of the year. Before this Festival no wheat was to be consumed from the spring harvest. In contrast, the Feast of First-Fruits celebrated the first barley harvest, and no barley from the spring harvest was to be consumed before that Festival either.

The purpose of this Festival was to remind the Children of Israel of the blessings God bestowed upon them as He led them out of Egypt. The greatest of those blessings was the Torah, and the Feast of Weeks celebrates the day the Torah was given to the Children of Israel from God at Mt. Sinai.²⁴ The dedication of the harvest, beginning with the barley offering at First-Fruits, is concluded with the two wave loaves at the Feast of Weeks. The first without leaven, the second with leaven. The removal of the old leaven and the addition of the new leaven represents the purification process concerning the renewal of the season and the Covenant. A little leaven leavens the whole lump,²⁵ and the new leaven represents the New Covenant that will unite the believers and leaven the new lump formed from the removal of the old leaven.

The Feast of Weeks in the prophetic sense is fulfilled in the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon the Disciples.²⁶ This is complementary to the Torah being given to the Children of Israel as the Law is being etched into their hearts. This becomes the new blessing bestowed upon humanity and this is how the traditions of the Children of Israel were preserved, through the hearts of the followers of the Messiah. Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit being the Fourth Pillar of the House of Wisdom.

The followers of Jesus formed secret churches. The religion itself being outlawed for a few centuries. The Blood of His Covenant covered this church and they survived the Destroyer of the House of Israel. The Feast of Weeks brings to a conclusion the Spring Festivals of the Israelites and their prophetic nature is concluded with the coming of Christ. The early Christians preserved these traditions and explained the meaning behind them. After the coming of Christ the punishments promised to the Israelites by Moses was to return. These promises included dispersion among the nations and the desolation of the land of Israel for a decreed amount of time. This period is then known as the Period of Desolation.²⁷ The Fall Festivals complete the season for the Israelites and reveals the redemptive scheme, not only of the Israelites, but of all humanity as well.

²³ Leviticus 23:15-22

²⁴ Exodus ch.19-ch.20

²⁵ Galatians 4:9

²⁶ Acts ch.2

²⁷ Cf. Matt.24/Lev.26

The scheme of these Spring Festivals is pretty clear. There are three main days that require rites beyond the normal Sabbath. The Sabbath is clearly an observance of creation, and the continuous observance of it reflects the continuous and repetitive nature of creation. Each of the other days are Sabbaths as well but are known as High Sabbaths because they are Sabbaths outside the normal weekly observance. As Sabbaths though, there is an element of creation to them. Meaning that in their prophetic outcome the spiritual nature of creation repeats itself, from the entrance of Light into the world unto the climax of the appearance of the Manifestation of God, Adam. The Passover represents salvation and the passing over of the Destroyer who destroys the wickedness of the world. The Feast of First-Fruits represents the coming together of those passed~over, the formation of believers. And the Feast of Weeks represents the giving of instruction to the believers, a New Covenant.

In each epoch the rituals were literally performed in a historic manner. The first creation and the first Sabbath, Adam (Mankind) became wicked. God used Noah as a Passover, His children as First-Fruits, and His Covenant with God as Pentecost. Mankind spread again. God used Moses as a Passover, the Children of Israel as First-Fruits, and the Torah as Pentecost. The Children of Israel became wicked and they were dispersed. They were given a second chance during the second Temple period, but ultimately became wicked again. God used Jesus as a Passover, the Disciples and His followers forever as His First-Fruits, and the Holy Spirit as His Pentecost.

With each renewal of the Spring Festivals the Covenant took on a new and expanded role. The first renewal of the Covenant included promises from God to not completely destroy Adam again, and Noah would have to refrain from violence.²⁸ The second Covenant promised an everlasting worldly Kingdom, but Israel would have to live by a strict code of Law which it was unable to fulfill. The third Covenant promised an everlasting spiritual Kingdom where all of Adam would live through faith having the Law written in his heart. Praise God this Kingdom still exists. However, this Kingdom was not meant to represent the entire House. There are still three Pillars remaining to establish the House, and three fall Festivals. It is important to note here that the entire Western understanding of the Covenant of God and its philosophy is reared upon these Four Pillars. What is lacking is an understanding of the remaining Three Pillars.

A note about Eschatology: Eschatology is the study of finality which is the understanding of things to come. Christian Eschatology is the study or understanding of things to come as they relate to Christ. There are many schools of thought within Christian Eschatology, but they all recognize three main periods which include the Rapture/Millennium, the Great Tribulation, and the Last Judgment of God. There are various ways of interpreting these periods as they are related in layers throughout the Scriptures, however, the principles of these three periods are sound and universally accepted. It is the details of these periods and the intricacies of how those things are said to occur which have become a debatable topic and caused many to stray. Nevertheless, the universally accepted models draw on these three periods and the timeframe that they will last. As for the Rapture/Millennium, there are some who believe that the rapture occurs before the millennium and some that say after the millennium, but it is clear from the Book of Revelation chapter twenty that it is pre-millennial. The misunderstanding of such is reconciled through the understanding that there is more than one millennium. The duration of these periods is such: the Rapture followed by the thousand years reigning with Christ; the

²⁸ Gen.9:1-19

Great Tribulation for seven years; and, the Last Judgment of God to last for all eternity. The Great Tribulation is the pivotal point at which the other two longer periods revolve. Following the paradigm of the Festivals there are three periods, each with its own particular scheme and unique implementation of its eschatological fulfillment.

Rosh Hashanah and the Feast of Trumpets

YaHWeH spoke to Moses, saying: “Speak to the Children of Israel thus: In the seventh month, in the first of the month, there shall be for you a Sabbath memorial of *trumpet* blasts, a Holy Convocation. All the ministerial duty you shall not do, and you shall bring a burnt-offering for YaHWeH.”²⁹

The Feast of Trumpets also known as Rosh Hashanah, the Head of the Year, is a Pilgrim-Feast dedicated to the blowing of trumpets. On this Day the Children of Israel would gather around the Tent of Meeting or the Temple in Jerusalem and blow the trumpet 100 times in a prescribed manner. The customs of this Festival begin in the previous month, the month of Elul, where the trumpet is blown once a day after the morning service, except not on the weekly Sabbath days, in expectation of the Day of Blasts. During this month of preparation the Israelites went through a period of self reflection and repentance. The focus of the Feast is the awakening of the soul to the coming judgment of God on the Day of Atonement which is the subsequent Feast. The Feast of Trumpets is celebrated on one day, but the Israelites were

²⁹ Leviticus 23:24-25

supposed to carry this renewed feeling into the Day of Atonement which begins on the tenth day of the month. These ten days are the Days of Awe or 'days of repentance.'

There are many allusions in this Feast, the first of which is the creation of Adam and Eve. Tradition states that Adam and Eve were created on the Day of Trumpets and it is therefore celebrated as a celebration of life. On this day the Books of Life and Death are opened and inscribed until the Day of Atonement. It is during this period of ten days beginning with the Feast of Trumpets that the deeds of Adam are recorded and the fate of his next year is decided. The names are recorded in two books. The righteous in the Book of Life and the wicked in the Book of Death, and for those in between the ten days are the final period they have to repent and be reconciled before the sealing of the Books on the Day of Atonement. So at the Feast of Trumpets Adam enters into a trial and the number ten is very significant in Biblical numerology to indicate trial and tribulation. There were ten generations from Adam to Noah, ten nations beget from Noah, ten plagues in Egypt and Ten Commandments, and there were ten days between the ascension of Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

The binding of Isaac is also said to have occurred on the day of this Feast. This aspect is a reminder of the Covenant of Abraham carrying the message of hope, sacrifice, and continuity. It is for this reason that a ram's horn is used to sound the trumpet blasts on this day as it was a ram that took the place of Isaac on the alter. During the first Temple period, however, the Israelites used two silver trumpets to sound the blasts.³⁰ The sounding of the horn represents several things: the king's coronation, the awakening of the soul from spiritual slumber, a reminder of the Covenant, the Voice of God through His Angels and Prophets, the sacrifice made by Abraham, the Day of Judgement, to assemble for battle and declare victory, to invoke an assembly, to declare a new moon, and to raise the dead.

The Feast of Trumpets is the beginning of the fall season and the period known as the 'High Holidays'. These are high holidays because they relate the epic journey of the soul and bring about the completion of the Covenant with God. This month being the seventh month is also known as the sabbatical month. The reading of certain Psalms was attributed to this day as well, while the drink-offering was being poured out on this day Psalm 81 was recited. If this holiday occurred on the fifth day of the week this Psalm was recited twice, beginning the second time at verse seven. This is significant because this is the fifth Festival, the fifth day marked by a 'Holy Convocation', and correlates to the Fifth Pillar of the House of Wisdom. Psalm 29 was also recited during the evening sacrifice in which the phrase 'the Voice of YaHWeH' is repeated seven times.

The contrast of the Fall Festivals with that of the Spring Festivals is that the Fall Festivals were inclusive of all mankind. The Spring Festivals were significant in that they were inclusive of those only under the Covenant and exclusive of those outside the Covenant. Whether Jew or Gentile the trial of Adam began at the Feast of Trumpets. This brings about a prophetic implication that suggests the possibility that the Inaugurator of this epoch of human history may exist outside the Jewish realm of influence, and even Christian as well, and refers to the prophetic time known as the 'Times of the Gentiles'. The writers of the New Testament do not mention the fulfillment of this Feast, but they do make prophetic allusions to its fulfillment. There are innumerable commentaries and guesses about how this and the other Fall Festivals will find their fulfillment, but none fully grasp the significance of it. We have a pretty good

³⁰ Numbers 10:1-10/compare also the two Prophets, two witnesses and the two candlesticks

understanding of how the fulfillment and progression of the Spring Festivals took place, and if we use the paradigm portrayed in their fulfillment we can understand how these other Festivals will take shape and complete the House of Wisdom.

In the Spring Festivals the idea was to bring about a Covenant with a certain group of people who would fall under its shadow. This process took form through the Revelation of God to a Prophet, then a series of Prophets culminating into a Kingdom, both worldly and spiritually, and coming to a conclusion with the Messiah. With the Fall Festivals we should expect the same and indeed the prophetic allusions to them do indicate the same process, albeit more inclusive to the generality of mankind. Though the exact interpretation of the prophetic allusions to these Festivals differ, there is a common ground among them in that they all recognize a period of one thousand years, a seven year period of tribulation, and a final Kingdom age.

The prophetic allusions of this Feast are fulfilled in the Rapture/Millennium. The period of time when humanity would be tested and face the beast with ten crowns. Those who are righteous and whose names are written in the Book of Life take part in the first resurrection and are preserved from the test. They are those who are 'Raptured' and rule with Christ for a thousand years. Those who are wicked are recorded in the Book of Death and are numbered with the Beast. All others live normal lives during this period and face the test. This being the fifth Holy Convocation and the all allusions to it represent the Fifth Pillar of the House. The Book of Revelation points to this period of time and describes what humanity will go through in terms of trial and tribulation. For these allusions see the fifth letter, the fifth seal, the fifth trumpet, chapters 11-13, 14:15, the fifth bowl, and chapters 17 and 20:1-6. This is a period of time when the Gentiles would tread the Holy City for 1,260 prophetic days.³¹ But the question remains who are the Gentiles and who are the two Prophets that shall torment those on the earth?

The Gentiles are those people outside progeny of Isaac and Jacob. In the time of Christ the Romans were referred to as Gentiles but the term is not exclusive to the Romans. In fact those Gentiles that became Christians were grafted on to the branch and are no longer considered Gentiles in the prophetic sense. Once the Law was written in the hearts of the faithful, they were considered circumcised and grafted on to the branch of the House of Israel.³² This is the understanding that the early Christians had even though today it is not explicitly clear to the Christian nations, although it is a scripturally sound concept. So the 'Times of the Gentiles' is not a prophetic allusion to any Christian nation treading the land of Israel.

The next nation to come into possession of the land of Israel after the Romans was the Islámic nation. There are two main figures responsible for the institution of Islám, Muhammad and 'Alí. They stood against all odds until the firm establishment of Islám in the world was accomplished. After Their ministries the institution of Islám became divided, taking two paths. One the path of worldly domination, and other the path of spiritual enlightenment. Not very different from the establishment of any other kingdom, but the worldly domination part was ferocious, unlike any in history, a beast if you will.

How could Muhammad and Islám fulfill the Feast of Trumpets? This isn't exactly easy to explain, yet all the pieces seem to fit well. The celebration of this Feast is meant to awaken Adam and warn him of the final judgment about to come. This Feast represents the last chance

³¹ Prophetic days are equal to one year, so the times of the Gentiles is to last for 1,260 years. Cf. Numb. 14:34/Eze. 4:6. See also Gen. 29:25-28/ also vs.18, 30;

³² Romans ch.11

to turn away from evil and repent before the Day of Atonement. It is also the period of the great test and the ten days are symbolic of the thousand year period, or ten centuries in which humanity will face its final test. There are one hundred blasts on the horn, and ten days of trial. Ten times one hundred equals one thousand. The Qur'án declares itself to be the Book of God for a period of one thousand years³³ and Muhammad declared Himself to be the Seal of the Prophets meaning that it is humanity's last chance before the Day of Judgment to receive the Wisdom of a God. This is very explicit in the Qur'án. There are also allusions to the blowing of the trumpet and there being a ten day period afterwards.³⁴ The opening of the Book of Deeds is also significant in the Qur'án as it relates that two angels have been sent to record all our deeds.³⁵ The beginning of the second Suráh, just after the Opening of the Qur'án also divides humanity into three classes similar to that related about in this Festival. As soon as you begin reading the Qur'án you are told that there are three types of people: believers, nonbelievers, and hypocrites. The entire Qur'án is further a classification of the roles these three types of individuals play in the world.

Further considerations are made when comparing the significances of the trumpet itself: the coronation of a king: Muhammad was a king in the sense that he ruled over all the inhabited regions of Arabia before He died, the rest of Arabia and all its tribes became Islámic shortly after His death; the awakening of the soul from spiritual slumber: a major theme of the Qur'án and Islámic mysticism, can't mistake this one; a reminder of the Covenant: indeed the Qur'án recognizes and brings to remembrance all the Covenants God has made since Adam and even adds a new dimension to the Covenant of Adam;³⁶ the Voice of God through His Angels and Prophets: the Qur'án certainly claims to be the Voice of God which was delivered by the Angel Gabriel, and Muhammad declares Himself the Seal of the Prophets binding the testimony of God and offering the final period of trial³⁷ for humanity before the cleansing of the world in Day of Atonement; the sacrifice made by Abraham: this is an interesting one, because Islám retells the tale of the sacrifice and places Ishmael on the alter. This is interesting because it differs from the Biblical narration of the sacrifice but does not contradict it in the sense that Abraham did sacrifice Ishmael in favor of Isaac. It is also of note that part of the Covenant of Circumcision made with Abraham included Ishmael and his progeny.³⁸ So regardless of who is on the alter in the story, Ishmael and his progeny are included in the Promises given to Abraham in His Covenant and find their fulfillment in Muhammad and the twelve Imáms; the Day of Judgment: this is another major theme of the Qur'án and it is related as both a Day that has come and Day that shall come; to assemble for battle and declare victory: yep they fought wars and were promised victory; to invoke an assembly: 'O ye who believe! When the call for Prayer is made on the Day of Gathering, head swiftly to the remembrance of God and cease trade. That is best for you if ye but knew.'³⁹ Yes indeed, that's an invocation to assemble. The greater invocation is to assemble on the Day of Judgment;⁴⁰ to declare a new moon: the Islámic

³³ Qur'án 32:5

³⁴ Qur'án 20:103/89:2

³⁵ Qur'án 50:16-29 here it is also to significant to note that in verse 20 the blowing of the trumpet is in the past tense, though it is never translated that way.

³⁶ Qur'án 7:172-174

³⁷ Qur'án 27:82

³⁸ Genesis 17:20-27

³⁹ Qur'án 62:9

⁴⁰ Qur'án 42:7/64:9

Calendar is strictly a lunar calendar and the Qur'án explicitly states the measuring of the months by the moon;⁴¹ to raise the dead: another major theme of the Qur'án. Both spiritual resurrection and physical resurrection are themes found in the Qur'án.⁴²

From this outlook it is not only possible, but very likely that the Feast of Trumpets finds its ultimate fulfillment in the appearance of Muhammad and Islám in the world. What's even more interesting is the Beast that was to appear and overcome the two Prophets. In the Qur'án it states, 'When the Word is completed upon them, We shall draw out a beast from the earth against them. He will talk to them because humanity is not assured of Our signs.'⁴³ Suráh seventy-four describes this Beast as having an abundance of wealth and sons, whose path has been made easy, but God will ultimately destroy the Beast. This Beast of the earth is shown to nibble away at the power of Solomon after his death and refers to how the Kingdom of Israel became corrupted.⁴⁴

The prophetic nature of each Festival begins with a sabbatic observation pointing to the creation of the heavens and the earth climaxing in the creation of an Adam, the Perfect Man made in the image of God. With each Adam there is a revelation or a Covenant made with those who gather under His shadow, and a community of devotees is formed. It is very clear how this process takes shape and is repeated at each interval, with each new Festival. The allusions of the Feast of Trumpets point to a final period of time, ten days, in which humanity is given the opportunity to reflect, repent, and prepare for the judgment to come.

Any prophetic fulfillment of this Festival must meet these requirements, and indeed the Prophet of Islám fulfills each of these requirements: the sealing of Prophethood, a period of trial after the Message is completed, ie. the beast that shall arise from the earth and face humanity, and the promise of the Day of Judgment. Those 'Raptured' include the twelve Imáms who were purified by God Almighty and taught the true essence of Islám for a period of two hundred and sixty years, leaving exactly one thousand lunar years til the Day of Judgment, the end of the twelve hundred and sixty prophetic days. The Qur'án mentions the sanctity of Ahlu'l-Bayt, which is the inner circle of the Prophet's family.⁴⁵ This included His daughter Fátimah, His cousin and right hand man Alí, and their two children Hasan and Husayn.⁴⁶ The lineage of the Imáms continued through Husayn, him being the third, unto the twelfth who disappeared in 260AH. All of the original branches of Islám find their origination from these Imáms, and they 'Reigned' with Christ for a thousand years. In conclusion we recognize Muhammad as the Fifth Pillar of the House of Wisdom and the Inaugurator of the Fall Festival season.

⁴¹ Qur'án 10:5

⁴² Qur'án 6:122/75:1-40

⁴³ Qur'án 27:82

⁴⁴ Qur'án 34:14

⁴⁵ Qur'án 33:33

⁴⁶ Fátimah and Alí were husband and wife

The Day of Atonement

YaHWeH spoke to Moses, saying: “Verily on the tenth day of the seventh month there shall be the Day of Atonement. It is a Holy Convocation for you, and you shall debase yourselves and draw near with an offering made by fire to YaHWeH. All of the ministerial duty you shall not perform on that very day, for it is a day for reconciliation. It is a reconciliation for you unto the Face of YaHWeH your Lord. Indeed it shall be that whosoever

will not debase themselves on that very day, shall be cut off from his people.

And whosoever on that very day performs ministerial duty, I shall destroy that soul from the midst of his people. All ministerial duty you shall not perform, an everlasting statute for your posterity in all your dwellings. It is for you a Sabbath of sabbatic observance, and you shall debase yourselves from the evening of the ninth day of the month, from evening to evening, you shall observe a sabbatical Sabbath.”⁴⁷

The Day of Atonement, or Yom Kipper, refers to the day in which the Children of Israel were to come before the Face of God to make atonement and reconcile themselves to the Will of God. The term atonement and reconciliation carry the same meaning in the Hebrew word ‘kipper’. It has the meaning of cover, hide, reject, atone, and reconcile. It is the covering of our sins and reconciliation of our lives to the Will of God. To ‘debase yourselves’ refers to afflicting oneself, and from this is derived the tradition of fasting on this day. So this is the Day of the Israelites fast, and the holiest of all days.⁴⁸ The Day of Atonement falls on the tenth day of the seventh month.

On this day only the High Priest was allowed to make the offerings. He also was supposed to wear a special dress peculiar to this day, expressive of purity, and he would change these garments five times throughout day. The rituals performed on this day were extravagant and unique in their character, purpose, and result. This was the only day of the year, and indeed the only time the High Priest would ever enter into the Holy of Holies to perform his duties and make reconciliation for the people.

The rites of this atonement include the offering of two he-goats, one ram, and one bullock. The two he-goats were for the sin offering of the people. The High Priest was to cast lots on these two, one selected for the Lord, and one for the people. The chosen one for the Lord was sacrificed as an expiation of sins for the people, and the other became a scapegoat. The bullock was offered for the Priest and his household. The bullock was offered first, then the he-goat that was for the Lord. These were for the atonement of the Holy Place, the tabernacle, and the altar, to purify them. After these were purified, the High Priest was to come out and place his hands on the scapegoat placing the sins of the people upon it. Afterwards the he-goat was set free into the wilderness which was uninhabited, taking with it the sins of the House of Israel.⁴⁹ After the he-goat was let loose the ram was offered as a burnt-offering. During these rites on this day, the High Priest was to change his garments five times, wash his hands and feet ten times, enter and exit the Holy of Holies three times, once for each offering while repeating the Holy Name with each confession. One confession for the High Priest(bullock), one for the congregation(he-goat), and one for the commoners(scapegoat). Various other rites accompany this day and are significant in that they all point towards reconciliation and atonement.

It is said that on this day Adam committed his first sin and repented, Abraham was circumcised, and it is also the day when Moses came down from the mount the second time

⁴⁷ Leviticus 23:26-32

⁴⁸ Acts 27:9

⁴⁹ Leviticus ch.16

with a glorious appearance after making propitiation for the golden calf. The Torah was revealed on the day of Pentecost, from there Moses ascended the mount and spent forty days being instructed by the Lord. Before He came down from the mount the people had made the golden calf. Then Moses broke the tablets and spent forty more days making intercession for the Children of Israel. Here Moses tells the Lord to blot out His name from the Book, this Book referring to the Book of Deeds in which the names of the righteous are written in on the Day of Atonement. Then Moses went back up the mount to spend another forty days with the Lord. This would have occurred on the first of the month of Elul and corresponds to the time when the Children of Israel would begin to repent and prepare themselves for the Day of Atonement. Here the trumpet is sounded every morning after the service as stated in the rites of the Feast of Trumpets. When the Feast of Trumpets occurs the Children of Israel were reminded that only ten days remain before the Book of Deeds is sealed and their fate is decided for the next year. Forty days after Moses ascended the mount the second time falls upon the Day of Atonement and corresponds to the day he returned with the Glorious Appearance having with Him the second set of Tablets.⁵⁰

The Book of Hebrews goes on in great detail about how Jesus became the High Priest and entered into the Holy of Holies to make this propitiation for the world. In summary it states that as there are already priests in the world making atonement offerings for the people, Jesus is not a priest of the world, but of heaven. If He is heavenly then the world is made according to His image and He is therefore greater than what is earthly. This is expressive of the elevation of the Covenant through Christ by being written in the hearts of the believers. Ultimately it leads to the understanding that Christ has become the heavenly High Priest and faith is the driving force of things yet to come. By this it means that the Tabernacle or Temple on the earth is made according to the pattern of the Temple in heaven, and that Jesus is the High Priest of this heavenly Temple. Those things that are yet to come exist in heaven already and are being revealed piece by piece to the world. It is according to the House of Wisdom which it speaks, and it is the embodiment of this Wisdom which it refers to as the Order of MelkiZedeq, Who is the King of Righteousness, the King of Peace.

In a prophetic sense this Festival points to the Day of Judgment as the Book of Deeds is sealed and the High Priest enters into the Holy of Holies to meet with God Almighty. It is the Sixth 'Holy Convocation' and it is the Sixth Pillar of the House of Wisdom. Being the sixth it refers not only to the creation of Adam but also to the completion of the Covenant with Adam. On this Day the House of Israel was 'to finish the transgression, make an end of sins, and make reconciliation for iniquity, and usher in everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Holy of Holies.'⁵¹ It is this epoch that the Children of Israel looked forward to to bring about an end to their sins and return to the land of Israel, rebuild the Temple and anoint the Holy Place.

There are not many direct references to this Festival in the New Testament, though there are several subtle allusions. In the Gospel of John after the resurrection Jesus tells Mary not to touch Him because He has not yet ascended to the Father. This means that He has not yet entered into the Holy of Holies to make the reconciliation for sins. Later in the very same chapter Thomas puts his finger into the nail prints and puts his hand into the side of Jesus. At this time He allows Himself to be touched. This could only be because at this point in time He

⁵⁰ Exodus 31:18-34:35

⁵¹ Daniel 9:24

had ascended and entered the heavenly Holy of Holies to make reconciliation of sins. Before Jesus appeared to Thomas He had shown Himself to the other Disciples, gave them the Holy Spirit, and told them that whoever's sins they forgave was forgiven, and whoever's sins they retained were not forgiven. Only after having entered the Holy of Holies and made the reconciliation could He appear unto them and grant this gift to the Disciples. So here there is an anecdote or a prophetic allusion in the resurrection account about the Day of Atonement. Luke follows a similar thread, but shows Jesus during this stage teaching those on the road to Emmaus about Himself in the Scriptures. Essentially He is opening the Books for them. Other references include the sixth letter, the sixth seal, the sixth trumpet and the sixth bowl in the Book of Revelation, along with chapters 4, 5, 18, 19 and chapter 20:7-15.

Each Festival thus far has brought an Adam to the forefront accompanied with a faithful remnant of followers. These followers are gathered together under the shadow of Adam and given a Covenant that includes various promises and duties, both for God and man. What the followers do with this Covenant determines the outcome, but the Promise is always the same. That Promise includes blessings and success for obedience and punishment for disobedience. Among these promises is always a Promise of another Prophet or another Messenger, or the re-appearance of Himself. The meaning is the same, whether it is another Manifestation or the same Manifestation, it is still the embodiment of Perfect Wisdom. With this Festival it is no different. There is an Adam, a faithful remnant, and a Revelation.

In the Book of Daniel there is a prophecy about the fulfillment of this Festival. It is written, 'And I heard a Holy One speaking and *another* Holy One said unto the One that was speaking, "How long shall the vision, the offering, and the transgression of desolation persist, and the Holy Place and the Host be trampled?" And He said unto me, "For twenty-three hundred mornings and evenings, then shall the Holy Place be made righteous."⁵² Daniel is actually shocked by this vision because he understood from the Book of Jeremiah⁵³ that the Babylonian captivity would only last seventy years, and this vision and the time period given does not add up. At the end of the chapter he states he was shocked by the vision and had no understanding.

In Chapter nine Daniel states that he knew from the study of Books that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years, however, as previously stated he was shocked by his vision and did not understand exactly what was going on. So he did what any good man of God would do, he turned unto God Almighty to pray while fasting, wearing sackcloth, and covered in ashes. Now this prayer was so beautiful and sincere that before he even started God sent an Angel to him to make him understand the vision. Now the date of this prayer is unknown, at least the time of the year was not known, but it is very possible, in regards to the nature of this prayer and the topic of it, that it was made on the Day of Atonement. Regardless, God sent Gabriel, the One Whom he had seen in the vision in the beginning, to explain that four hundred and ninety days would be 'cut off' and removed from the twenty-three hundred mornings and evenings. This seventy weeks was further divided into seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and one week. And these would commence with the decree to rebuild and restore Jerusalem. Four decrees were made to return and rebuild the city and the Temple, but only one of them was fulfilled, that being the one by Artaxerxes I in 457BC. By the end of the seven weeks the city and Temple would be rebuilt, and after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah would come, confirm the

⁵² Daniel 8:13-14

⁵³ Jeremiah 25:11-12

Covenant for one week and in the midst of the week be cut off and bring to conclusion the sacrifices and offerings. Then the city and the sanctuary would be destroyed and desolation return to the land until the consummation of the previous vision.⁵⁴

In light of this Daniel now understands that the city and the sanctuary will once again be built and in service, however, after the Messiah comes and is 'cut off' the city and the sanctuary will be destroyed and the land be desolated once again, that is, until the remainder of the twenty-three hundred mornings and evenings. After the seventy weeks are concluded there are still eighteen hundred and ten days remaining of the vision. The seventy weeks concluded in 34AD, so the time period brings us to 1844AD. This marks the time that this Festival finds fulfillment, and from this point in time the Jews began to return to the Land of Israel.⁵⁵

This prophecy is well known and there is not much real debate about the calculations, however, what is peculiar to me is why the people who understood the timing of the prophecy paid no attention to the vision. The entire vision is filled with allusions about the Day of Atonement. There is a ram that represents the Covenant of Abraham and a he-goat that represents the sins of the people. The ram represents the Covenant of Abraham because there is no significance in the Scriptures about a ram, except as a burnt-offering and the substitute for Isaac. So the Ram represents the promises given to Abraham through which all the seed of the earth shall be blessed. The he-goat comes against the ram and breaks his two horns and kills him. In the interpretation of the vision it says that the he-goat came against and destroyed the Holy People and even stood up against the Prince of princes, though he was broken without a hand touching him.

The vision describes a kingdom, a gentile kingdom represented by the he-goat. And the he-goat is a scapegoat, on which the sins of the people have been placed and sent into the wilderness. This kingdom begins with a great King and after this King the kingdom is broken into four kingdoms, but they do not rule by the power of the first king meaning that the King ruled by the power of heaven, but the other kings ruled by the power of the world. This evolution represents the sins that are placed upon the he-goat. They had an earthly dominion without the essence of the true power of the Word of God that was revealed to them from the first King. And they are the ones who take away the offering and destroy the place of the sanctuary. All this was described during the Feast of Trumpets. It is in the latter time of this kingdom, when their transgressions are full, that they come against the Holy People and break the Covenant of Abraham. This vision is an illustration of the revolution that occurs with each Covenant. The he-goat in the place of the 'sinful' age of the previous period, and the ram the renewal of the Abrahamic Covenant. Those under the Old Covenant always attempt to stamp out and destroy the New Covenant leading to the tribulations that reverberate throughout the world because of the rejection of the Covenant.

So the vision is set to occur in 1844AD, and the ram is said to be the Kingdom of Persia. So we must look to Persia in 1844AD to see the fulfillment of the vision. From here we should also see the seven year period of the Great Tribulation, as that is what the vision is describing and the next prophetic period awaiting fulfillment.

⁵⁴ Daniel Ch.9:1-27

⁵⁵ The Edict of Toleration eased religious persecution of the Jews in Palestine and they began repopulating the area.

Alí-Muhammad, also known as the Báb, began a ministry in Persia in 1844AD/1260AH⁵⁶ proclaiming to be the Inaugurator of a new epoch in human history. He was of lineal descent from the Prophet Muhammad known as a Sayyid, which means He was also of the lineage of Abraham. The main focus of His preaching was that the Day of Judgment was at hand and that God was about to manifest Himself through His Supreme Manifestation. The Báb set Persia on fire with His teachings, and thousands gathered under His shadow. The clergy rebutted His claim fervently and at times violently. His ministry lasted seven years the end of which came with His atrocious execution by firing squad. A few years after an attempt was made on the life of the Shah who signed His death warrant and His followers began to be exterminated. No less than twenty thousand Babís were slaughtered following this misadventure by a deranged Bábí.

In the Qayyúmu'l-Asmá, the first Book composed by the Báb, He states, "O Thou Remnant of God! I have sacrificed myself wholly for Thee; I have accepted curses for Thy sake, and have yearned for naught but martyrdom in the path of Thy love. Sufficient witness unto me is God, the Exalted, the Protector, the Ancient of Days."⁵⁷ Here we see the willingness of the Báb to sacrifice Himself and make atonement for the sins of the people. Indeed the destiny of the Báb and His Disciples is that of sacrifice and tribulation, the like of which is unparalleled in history: "It is not a small or easy thing to endure what these have endured, and surely what they deemed worth life itself is worth trying to understand. I say nothing of the mighty influence which, as I believe, the Bábí faith will exert in the future, nor of the new life it may perchance breathe into a dead people; for, whether it succeed or fail, the splendid heroism of the Bábí martyrs is a thing eternal and indestructible."⁵⁸

In the Persian Bayán, the principal work of the Báb, He defines the Day of Judgment as such:

"The substance of this chapter is this, that what is intended by the Day of Resurrection is the Day of the appearance of the Tree of divine Reality, but it is not seen that any one of the followers of Shi'ih Islam hath understood the meaning of the Day of Resurrection; rather have they fancifully imagined a thing which with God hath no reality. In the estimation of God and according to the usage of such as are initiated into divine mysteries, what is meant by the Day of Resurrection is this, that from the time of the appearance of Him Who is the Tree of divine Reality, at whatever period and under whatever name, until the moment of His disappearance, is the Day of Resurrection.

For example, from the inception of the mission of Jesus -- may peace be upon Him -- till the day of His ascension was the Resurrection of Moses. For during that period the Revelation of God shone forth through the appearance of that divine Reality, Who rewarded by His Word everyone who believed in Moses, and punished by His Word everyone who did not believe; inasmuch as God's Testimony for that Day was that which He had solemnly affirmed in the Gospel. And from the inception of the Revelation of the Apostle of God -- may the blessings of God be upon Him -- till the day of His ascension was the Resurrection of Jesus -- peace be upon Him -- wherein the Tree of divine Reality appeared in the person of Muhammad, rewarding by His Word everyone who was a believer in Jesus, and punishing by His Word everyone who was not a believer in Him. And from the moment when the Tree of the Bayan appeared until it disappeareth is the Resurrection of the Apostle of God, as is divinely foretold in the Qur'an; the

⁵⁶ AH means After Hijra and refers to the lunar Islámic Calender;1844AD and 1260AH are the same respective years

⁵⁷ Qayyúmu'l-Asmá ch.58

⁵⁸ Quote from Prof. E.G. Browne, Religious Systems of the World, 3rd edition 1892

beginning of which was when two hours and eleven minutes had passed on the eve of the fifth of Jamadiyu'l-Avval, 1260 A.H., which is the year 1270 of the Declaration of the Mission of Muhammad. This was the beginning of the Day of Resurrection of the Qur'an, and until the disappearance of the Tree of divine Reality is the Resurrection of the Qur'an. The stage of perfection of everything is reached when its resurrection occurreth. The perfection of the religion of Islam was consummated at the beginning of this Revelation; and from the rise of this Revelation until its setting, the fruits of the Tree of Islam, whatever they are, will become apparent. The Resurrection of the Bayan will occur at the time of the appearance of Him Whom God shall make manifest. For today the Bayan is in the stage of seed; at the beginning of the manifestation of Him Whom God shall make manifest its ultimate perfection will become apparent. He is made manifest in order to gather the fruits of the trees He hath planted; even as the Revelation of the Qa'im, a descendant of Muhammad -- may the blessings of God rest upon Him -- is exactly like unto the Revelation of the Apostle of God Himself [Muhammad]. He appeareth not, save for the purpose of gathering the fruits of Islam from the Qur'anic verses which He hath sown in the hearts of men. The fruits of Islam cannot be gathered except through allegiance unto Him and by believing in Him. At the present time, however, only adverse effects have resulted; for although He hath appeared in the midmost heart of Islam, and all people profess it by reason of their relationship to Him, yet unjustly have they consigned Him to the Mountain of Maku, and this notwithstanding that in the Qur'an the advent of the Day of Resurrection hath been promised unto all by God. For on that Day all men will be brought before God and will attain His Presence; which meaneth appearance before Him Who is the Tree of divine Reality and attainment unto His presence; inasmuch as it is not possible to appear before the Most Holy Essence of God, nor is it conceivable to seek reunion with Him. That which is feasible in the matter of appearance before Him and of meeting Him is attainment unto the Primal Tree.⁵⁹

The final verses of this explanation defines the duty of the Manifestation of God to make atonement for the people, just as the Book of Hebrews described. It is not possible for the common human being to attain unto the 'Most Holy Essence of God' which is the Holy of Holies. Therefore, we have a High Priest of the Order of MelkiZedek to enter therein and make the necessary atonement.

We recognize the Báb as the fulfillment of this Festival, the sixth embodiment of Wisdom, and the Sixth Pillar of the House.

⁵⁹ Persian Bayán: Vahíd II, ch.7