

Is The Great American Eclipse a Harbinger of Doom?

By T.W. Tramm

ON MONDAY, August 21, 2017, millions of Americans will have their eyes fixed on the sky to witness something remarkable: the Moon will pass between the Sun and Earth, blocking the solar disc and casting an eerie mid-day darkness across the US.

Roosters will crow and insects will chirp as though night were falling. The temperature will drop and the landscape will take on an odd steely-gray metallic cast. In the 70-mile wide path of totality, the Sun will remain completely hidden by the Moon for about two and a half minutes, during which, one will be able to view the stars, the planets, and something utterly awe inspiring: the pearly white corona of Earth's nearest star, glowing softly around what appears to be an impossibly black hole that has been cut out of the fabric of the blue-black sky.

A total solar eclipse!

A total eclipse is truly a marvel, as the phenomenon depends on a host of variables related to the orbit of the Earth and Moon around the Sun—all bodies involved must be at just the right place at just the right time. The most fundamental variable is an improbable ratio of size and distance: The Sun's distance from Earth is roughly 400 times that of the Moon's distance from Earth. Additionally, the Sun's diameter is roughly 400 times that of the Moon's diameter. This "coincidental" ratio creates the illusion of equal size from Earth's vantage point, allowing the Moon to precisely cover the Sun.

Think about that.

If either the Moon or Sun were a different size or distance from the Earth, a total solar eclipse would not be possible. Also consider that the only location in the solar system from which such an eclipse can be viewed—the Earth—happens to be inhabited by intelligent beings capable of *witnessing* the phenomenon.

Does anyone believe *that's* a coincidence?

Due to the many factors involved, total solar eclipses occur at different points around the globe. The last time a total eclipse darkened the US in a manner similar to the impending event was nearly a century ago when the Moon's shadow cut a path from Washington State to Florida. The last time a total solar eclipse's path touched *only* the US was before its founding in 1776.

This makes the August 21 event a first for our nation!

For this reason, millions from coast to coast are planning to celebrate what's been dubbed the "Great American Eclipse" by attending viewing parties and festivals.

A minority of Americans, however—those attuned to the present-day unfolding of Bible prophecy—see the eclipse as something more than just an awesome event to be commemorated. They see it as an omen of terrible things to come.

Let's consider the reasons why.

SIGNS

In the first chapter of Genesis God says He will use the Sun and Moon for signs:

"And God said, let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons" (Gen. 1:14).

The Hebrew word for "sign," *owth*, means an omen, or warning, of something to come.

How would God use something as static, or unchanging, in appearance as the Sun for a sign, or omen?

Simple: by temporarily altering its appearance from the vantage point of those viewing it—as in an *eclipse*.

That God uses eclipses as signs, or omens, is confirmed in the many Scriptures that describe the sun being turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the "great and dreadful Day of the Lord" (Rev. 6:12; Joel 2:31; 3:14, 15; Isa. 13:9-10; Mark 13:24; Luke 21:25-27; Acts 2:20, 21).

Of course, not *every* eclipse should be interpreted as a sign from God.

The word "season" in Genesis, translated from the Hebrew *moed*, means "an appointed time." God's appointed times relate to the biblical calendar in Leviticus (23, 25). Therefore, God's eclipse-signs are those which coincide with pivotal times on the biblical calendar.

This brings us to the timing of the Great American Eclipse.

THE MONTH OF REPENTANCE

Occurring on August 21, the Great American Eclipse ushers in the biblical month of Elul.

According to Jewish tradition, the first day of Elul marks the beginning of a 40-day period of repentance¹ leading up to the Day of Atonement, a.k.a. the "Day of Judgment." A related tradition of Elul is that each day of the month a trumpet is sounded to warn the people to turn back to God before judgment falls.

The link between Elul and repentance derives, in part, from historical events that coincide with this timeframe. For instance, it was on Elul 1 that Moses ascended Mt. Sinai to make atonement for the sin of the golden calf (Ex. 32; 34:27, 28). Moses descended the Mount 40 days later, on the Day of Atonement, when repentance was complete.

Elul 1 also marks the beginning of Jonah's preaching to the Ninevites. The Lord sent Jonah to warn the wicked inhabitants of Nineveh that they had 40 days—the span from Elul 1 to the Day of Atonement—to repent or face God's wrath (Jonah 3:4). Fortunately, the Ninevites heeded the warning and were spared judgment (3:5-10).

In the case of Jonah, an intriguing link to an actual total solar eclipse is noted. NASA data confirms that a famous eclipse mentioned in ancient cuneiform tablets, the *Bur-Sagale Eclipse*, occurred in June of 763 BC, just before Jonah began preaching to the Ninevites. The path of this eclipse happened to cross directly over the City of Nineveh. Some speculate that the Ninevites interpreted the eclipse as an omen of God's impending wrath and that this is why they were so quick to repent when Jonah arrived a couple of months later.

With the above historical "types" in view, it's fascinating that the Great American Eclipse heralds the month of repentance and its daily warning blasts. For this reason, many are interpreting this month's darkening of the sun as a sign that judgment is imminent and time is short to repent.

What could the most Christian nation in the world, the United States, need to repent of?

A few things come to mind.

First, while the US was founded on Judeo-Christian principles, the nation has increasingly abandoned its roots—banning prayer and references to God in the Public Square in the name of religious equity and political correctness.

Second, the US has legalized and, thus, normalized things the Bible calls "abominations," e.g., abortion and same-sex marriage.

Third, the US has a decades-long record of pressuring Israel to make land-for-peace deals with her enemies. While the Trump Administration has taken a more pro-Israeli stance than its predecessors, it has nonetheless continued the policy of urging Israel to curtail settlements in its own land, as they are seen as an obstacle to future negotiations.

Concerning future negotiations, Trump has expressed eagerness to facilitate the "ultimate deal" between Israel and the Palestinians. While an ultimate deal may be music to secular ears, the Lord takes an opposite stance, calling such a deal a "covenant with death" (Isa. 28:14-29). The God of the Bible is not interested in making deals with those bent on Israel's destruction. He set the boundaries of the [Promised Land](#) millennia ago and gave it to Abraham's descendants for an eternal possession (Gen. 17:8,

19-22). Those who have made themselves enemies of the Lord by threatening Israel have no biblical right to the Land.

God says He will bless those who bless Israel and curse those who curse her (Gen 12:1-3). He further warns that those who aim to divide His land will be judged (Joel 3:1-2). America, despite some recent positive turns, is headed in the wrong direction. Just as the Lord sent warnings of imminent judgment in ancient times, it appears He is doing so today.

A WARNING FOR GENTILES

In the Talmud, a solar eclipse is said to be a sign for the Gentile world:

“Our Rabbis taught, when the sun is in eclipse, it is a bad omen for the whole world. This may be illustrated by a parable. To what can this be compared? To a human being who made a banquet for his servants and put up for them a lamp. When he became wroth with them he said to his servant, ‘Take away the lamp from them, and let them sit in the dark’” (Succah 29a).

With this understanding, it’s noteworthy that the crucially timed (Elul) Great American Eclipse is occurring over the United States—the world’s only superpower and de facto *head* of the Gentile nations.

A JUBILEE ECLIPSE

The Great American Eclipse is occurring in what’s believed to be a jubilee year. This is significant not only because Jubilees and total solar eclipses are both rare but because both are associated with *judgment* (Isa. 61:1, 2; 63:4; Joel 2:31). The US has the largest Christian population in the world and the Bible says, “Judgment begins in the house of God” (1 Pet. 4:17).

Another theme of the Jubilee is *redemption* (Lev. 25; Isa. 63:4). Redemption is the term Paul uses to describe the transformation of believers from mortal to immortal at Jesus’ coming (Rom. 8:23; Eph. 1:13, 14). With the Rapture in mind, it’s interesting that the name Elul is said to be an acronym for the phrase, “*Ani L’dodi V’dodi Li,*” or “*I am my beloved’s and my beloved is mine*” (Song 6:3). This association with the Song of Solomon, a book understood to be allegorical of the love-relationship between God and His people, is intriguing because many commentators see a type of the “catching away” in the verses that depict a shepherd coming to gather and spirit away his beloved, a Shulammitte (Gentile) maid:

“The voice of my beloved! Behold, he comes leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Behold, he stands behind our wall; he is looking through the windows, gazing through the lattice. My beloved spoke, and said to me: ‘Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away’ (Song 2:8-10).

As a rapture-related aside, it's noteworthy that the word Elul originates from the Akkadian word for "harvest."

A final fascinating link between the Jubilee and Elul derives from the fact that the letters that make up the word "Elul" have a numerical value of 67. Consequently, Jews associate Elul with another Hebrew word that shares the same numerical value, *binah*, which is Hebrew for wisdom or understanding. Those who understand 2017 to be a jubilee year, however, see another layer of significance in the number 67: It's the year of the *previous* Jubilee. It was in 1967 that the Jews returned to Jerusalem, fulfilling a key prophecy and, according to Daniel, initiating a countdown to Messiah's return (Dan. 9:25).

In view of the overlapping themes, "judgment," "redemption," and "harvest," a solar eclipse ushering in the month of Elul in a jubilee year is a sign to pay heed to.

A SUMMER ECLIPSE

Occurring on August 21, the Great American Eclipse is a late-summer event. In the Bible, summer is a time of judgment:

In Matthew, Jesus uses summer as a metaphor for the end of the age:

"Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near" (Matt. 24:32).

In Jeremiah, the Jews lament having not been saved during the summer harvest:

"The harvest is past, the summer has ended, and we are not saved" (Jer. 8:20).

In Micah, summer is a time when the upright people have been swept from the land and those who remain plot evil against each other:

"What misery is mine! I am like one who gathers summer fruit at the gleaning of the vineyard; there is no cluster of grapes to eat, none of the early figs that I crave. The faithful have been swept from the land; not one upright person remains. Everyone lies in wait to shed blood; they hunt each other with nets" (Mic. 7:1-2).

Significantly, summer is more than just a time of judgment in Scripture. In the Book of Ruth the spring/summer grain harvest is associated with a Gentile-Jewish wedding, typifying the "wedding of Messiah," or rapture of the Church.

SEVENTY MILES WIDE

According to the experts, the path of totality of an eclipse is determined by the distance between the Sun and the Earth at the time of the event. For instance, when the Earth and Sun are at their closest distance, the path of totality can be up to 170 miles wide.

The path of totality of the Great American Eclipse happens to be 70 miles wide. The number 70 is significant in Scripture, because...

- 70 nations descended from Noah after the Flood (Gen. 10).
- The Jewish Nation began with 70 Hebrews who entered the land of Egypt with Jacob (Gen 46:27).
- King David lived to be 70 years old (2 Sam. 5:4).
- The Jews were held captive in Babylon for 70 years (Dan. 9: 2).
- 70 “weeks” are associated with the culmination of God’s Plan of Redemption (Dan. 9:24).
- The Bible says a typical generation is 70 years (Ps. 90:10). This is important because in Matthew 24 Jesus says the generation who sees the rebirth of Israel will see the end of the Age (v. 32-34).

Related to Israel’s rebirth and the final generation, it’s interesting to note that, according to the Zohar, the 70 words contained in psalm 20 correspond to the 70 cries of a woman in labor. The pain associated with childbirth reminds us of the “birth pains of Messiah” connected to the rebirth of Israel and the time of redemption (Isa. 66:7, 8; Matt. 24:7, 8; Rom. 8:22). It just so happens that 2017, the year of the Great American Eclipse, marks the 70th anniversary of the 1947 UN mandate to establish the Jewish state, a decision that resulted in Israel’s rebirth as a nation just months later.

A PATH OF FUTURE CALAMITY?

The path of the Great American Eclipse crosses through the center of the US’s three most notable seismic hotspots: The Cascadia Subduction Zone on the West Coast, the Yellowstone Caldera in Wyoming, and the heart of the New Madrid Seismic Zone centered on the southern tips of Illinois and Missouri.



An internet search on any of the above seismic zones reveals alarming trends that point to sooner rather than later events—each with its own devastating consequences for the Nation.

In view of the host of variables that determine the path of an eclipse and, also, the biblical link between earthquakes and judgment,² it's uncanny that the path of totality of the Great American Eclipse passes *precisely* through the three most ominous earthquake zones in the US.

X MARKS THE SPOT

One of the most noteworthy features of the Great American Eclipse is that it's followed seven years later by *another* total solar eclipse with a path running diagonally opposite. The plotted course of the respective 2017 and 2024 eclipses form a giant "X" over the center of the United States. What's more, the crossing point of the "X" lies exactly at the heart of the New Madrid Seismic Zone.



Considering the relative rarity of total solar eclipses over a given location, it's remarkable that two solar eclipses (warnings for Gentiles) are occurring seven years apart (the timespan ascribed to the Tribulation) to form a giant "X" across the leading Gentile nation.

Another coincidence?

The Bible teaches that there are no coincidences. The administration of the universe is based not on serendipity but, rather, the mindful actions of an omniscient and omnipotent Creator.³ This means things we assume to be random or happenstance are, in actuality, part of an incomprehensibly elaborate plan aimed at accomplishing God's will for humanity.

On August 21, 2017, the Moon is going to pass between the Earth and the Sun, bringing an eerie mid-day darkness to the US. This awe-inspiring phenomenon will mean different things to different people:

To scientists and astronomers it will be seen as a “coincidence of nature” to be studied.

To everyday Americans it will be seen as a once-in-a-lifetime spectacle to be celebrated.

To a growing number of eschatologically astute believers, however, the eclipse will be seen as an ominous sign in the sky, orchestrated by the Creator of the Heavens before the world was formed.

The letters on the sign read:

“Repent America. Time has run out.”

. . .

NOTES:

1. The Hebrew word for “repentance,” *teshuva*, is most accurately understood as a turning back, or “return,” to God.

2. Matt. 24:7; Rev. 6:12; 8:5; 11:13.

3. Verses that describe God’s omniscience and omnipotence:

“The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD” (Prov. 16:33).

“The very hairs of your head are all numbered” (Luke 12:7).

“Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care” (Matt. 10:29).

Great American Eclipse info:

<https://www.greatamericaneclipse.com/20th-century/>