

For most of history most of the world has been in spiritual darkness. God chose the Jewish people, and particularly their prophets and their scriptures, to bring light to the world. Still this was only moonlight and still only reaching a small part of the world. Their last prophet, John the Baptist, proclaimed the spiritual sun, Jesus the Messiah. Sunlight replaced moonlight. The kingdom of heaven was at hand!

God poured out his spirit on the day of Pentecost. Nothing like this had ever happened before. Some people thought the Day of the Lord and the Kingdom of God had come. But the time was not yet. Wonderful though this was, it did not last. The earth returned again to darkness.

After many centuries of darkness the moon began to shine again. The Bible was translated into the languages of Europe and knowledge of the truth began to spread through Europe and then from there to the rest of the world. But still it was only moonlight.

Now at last the sun is beginning to shine. The Day of the Lord has come and the Kingdom of God is at hand! Isaiah spoke prophetically: “Behold, darkness will cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising” (Is 60:2,3).

As the world grows darker the light of God’s people shines brighter. Eventually the light will overcome the darkness and the kingdom of God will fully come.

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www.growthingod.org.uk/sun-darkness-moon-blood.htm

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The Sun will be Turned to Darkness and the Moon to Blood

Before his death Jesus promised his disciples he would **come again and receive them to himself**. Did he keep his promise to them? No, if you think he meant a physical coming. Yes, if you believe he came spiritually on the day of Pentecost.

At that time He came at the Festival of Pentecost. Now He is coming at the Festival of Tabernacles (see [Festivals of Israel](#)). Then it was the start of the Church Age. Now it is the beginning of the Kingdom Age.

Jesus foretold this time with the words: **“Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father”** (Matt 13:43).

Peter wrote: **“We have also a more sure prophetic word; to which you do well to pay attention, as to a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the morning star arises in your hearts”** (2 Pet 1:19). The morning star is arising in our hearts. (The morning star is actually the planet Venus, the brightest of the planets and much brighter than any star. When Venus appears in the east we know that sunrise is near.)

Paul, using different language, said: **“I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us. For the creation eagerly waits with anticipation for God’s sons to be revealed”** (Rom 8:18, 19).

I believe that around the world we are seeing the change from moonlight to sunlight. The cold and lifeless light of the moon is being replaced by the warm life-giving light of the sun.

Conclusion

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ... God said, ‘Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years’ ... And God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night” (Gen 1:1, 14, 16).

God created the sun and the moon for signs. They provide the earth with two kinds of natural light; but they are signs of two kinds of spiritual light.

Bible quotations are taken from the NIV or retranslated.

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Signs of the Day of the Lord

So Joel's prophecy has had its second fulfilment: the sun has again turned to darkness and the moon again ceased to shine. The great apostasy of which Paul spoke has undoubtedly happened. Are there other signs that the Day of the Lord has now come? I believe there are many. Here are just a few:

- Bible chronology shows we have reached the end of 6 days of 1000 years each from Adam. The 7th day is the Day of the Lord (see [Bible Chronology](#)).
- After 2500 years of Gentile rule Israel has again become a free country and the national home of the Jewish people.
- Two great wars of unprecedented horror and bloodshed have involved all the major nations of the world.
- In the 14 years following 9/11, more Muslims (between 2 and 7 million) left Islam and turned to Jesus than in all the previous 14 centuries.
- Since the 1970s between 50 and 200 million people in China have turned to Jesus. Latin America, Africa and other Asian countries also have huge numbers of new believers.
- We live in a new world. In the last 100 years, cars, aeroplanes, telephones, television, computers and the internet have totally changed the face of our planet.

I believe that the Day of the Lord has come!

The Fulfilment

What happens during the Day of the Lord? Many more things than I can write about in this short article! Here I will only continue my theme of the sun and the moon.

Is the sun Jesus? Is he about to return? Will the sun again shine in all its glory?

Many people believe Jesus is going to return soon. I agree; but I believe he is coming now as he did on the day of Pentecost; not coming again in a physical body as his disciples expected, but coming in spirit and in power in his people (see [Coming of the Lord](#)).

Introduction

Recently (in September 2015) a tetrad or sequence of 4 blood moons attracted much attention both among Christians and in the wider news media. Amazingly all of these blood moons fell on major Jewish festivals – either Pesach (Passover) or Succoth (Tabernacles). As always, a few people thought it might mean the end of the world, perhaps by collision with an asteroid. Others expected the rapture to take place and yet others thought there might be another major economic crash. Even NASA felt it necessary to issue a statement that “Nasa knows of no asteroid or comet currently on a collision course with Earth, so the probability of a major collision is quite small.”

What is a blood moon? Most people have no idea! The prophet Joel first uttered the words, “**The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood**” (Joel 2:31), and Peter quoted his words several centuries later on the day of Pentecost.

Should we try to understand these words literally? Could God turn the moon to blood? Would God turn the moon to blood?

Surprisingly, these words describe events that happen several times every year. The sun is turned to darkness when there is a total eclipse of the sun. The moon turns red and is known as a blood moon when there is an eclipse of the moon. Why do we not see these eclipses more often? Well, let's look at what happens in each case.

Eclipses

Eclipses of the Sun

An eclipse of the sun occurs when the moon gets exactly between the sun and the earth. The moon's shadow passes across the surface of the earth. This makes the sun go dark, but only over the small band on the earth's surface that lies directly in the moon's shadow. This band is approximately 100 miles wide. This means that, although solar eclipses can occur 2 or 3 times every year, they are only visible from about 0.5% of the earth's surface. Consequently, at any given place, though partial

eclipses may occur every few years, a total eclipse will probably only occur once in a lifetime. A total solar eclipse can last up to 7½ minutes.

Eclipses of the Moon

An eclipse of the moon takes place when the earth is directly between the sun and the moon. The earth's shadow passes over the moon. As the earth is much bigger than the moon, a total eclipse can last for up to 107 minutes. The sun's rays are refracted as they pass through the earth's atmosphere and the red light, which is deflected the furthest, hits the moon. This is the same effect that can make the sky go red at sunrise or sunset. Hence the moon takes on a red colour and is known as a blood moon. Eclipses of the moon are visible from anywhere in the world where it is night, i.e. from half the world. However we generally fail to see them, either because we are asleep or indoors when they happen, or because the moon is covered in clouds! Lunar eclipses can only occur at full moon. Both Pesach (Passover) and Succoth (Tabernacles) are also always at full moon; so actually it is not such a great coincidence when a lunar eclipse occurs on either of these Jewish festivals.

What Happened at Pentecost

Nothing dramatic happened in September 2015 at the final blood moon of the tetrad. The world did not come to an end and no one I know was raptured. But when Peter quoted Joel's words at the festival of Pentecost in June 33 AD, it was a very different story. One of the Bible's most dramatic events shook Jerusalem and its repercussions continue till this day.

Fifty days after the death of Jesus, his followers had assembled in a house to pray. Suddenly the sound of a powerful wind filled the house and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. This group of 120 men and women, who had been too frightened to appear out of doors after the public execution of their leader, began to praise God with an extraordinary boldness in the many different languages of the pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem for the festival of Pentecost. What ever had happened to these simple Galileans? A large crowd quickly gathered and many came to the conclusion that they were drunk.

Has that sun continued to shine without ceasing from that day to this? No! Almost the total opposite! After the first apostles departed from the earth, and even in New Testament times, clouds began to cover the sun. In subsequent centuries the darkness increased till light had almost entirely vanished from the earth. Once again the sun was turned to darkness.

Has the moon shone?

Has the moon shone through the last 2000 years?

In Psalm 89:37, the moon is described as “a faithful witness in heaven”. In John chapter 5 Jesus spoke about 3 things that bore witness to him:

- “You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth” (5:33).
- “The works which the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of me” (5:36).
- “You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of me” (5:39).

John the Baptist, the miraculous works that Jesus did, and the Holy Scriptures were all like the moon, witnesses that pointed beyond themselves to Jesus the sun. For many centuries all of these stopped giving their light. Prophetic voices like John became silent. Miraculous signs and wonders almost entirely ceased. For a thousand years the Scriptures lay languishing in Latin, incomprehensible to all but the clergy and barely translated even into European languages. The church, instead of shining as the moon and bearing witness to Jesus, often silenced or put to death the few witnesses that raised their voices for the truth. Past historians have even called this time the *Dark Ages*.

Since the Reformation the moon has again begun to shine. Sometimes it has been a full moon, sometimes a half moon and sometimes just a thin crescent moon; but at least not the total darkness of what went before. Prophetic voices have again been proclaiming the truth. Miraculous signs and wonders are again occurring worldwide; and the full Scriptures have been translated into more than 500 of the world's languages. After a long period of darkness the moon has again been shining.

Has that great day now come? Few people would doubt that Paul's "apostasy" has come. Have there been further signs in the sun and the moon? Have they continued to shine from the day of Pentecost till now? Or has the sun again turned to darkness? And has the moon again turned to blood?

Has the sun continued to shine?

We must ask now whether the first followers of Jesus were the moon like John the Baptist or the sun like Jesus himself.

Jesus made this amazing statement about himself: "I am the light of the world!" (John 8:12). And what did he say about his disciples? "Each of you is going to be a little candle to spread my light wherever you go!" No! Far from it. He said exactly the same about his disciples as he said about himself: "You are the light of the world!" (Matt 5:14).

Jesus never put his disciples below himself. Again and again his words will show this is true.

- Go to my brothers (and sisters) and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God'" (John 20:17).
- "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you" (John 20:21).
- He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne (Rev 3:21).
- "Anyone who believes in Me will also do the works that I do. And he will do even greater works than these, because I am going to the Father" (John 14:12).
- Anyone who listens to you listens to Me. Anyone who rejects you rejects Me (Luke 10:16).

Jesus had an extraordinary confidence in his followers; or rather in what the Holy Spirit would do in them. If he was the light of the world, so also were they the light of the world. If he was the sun, so also were they the sun.

Did Peter, Paul and John and others in New Testament times fulfil the high expectations of their master? Were they the light of the world? Did they shine as the sun? I believe they did.

Peter stood up to give some explanation, and his speech included the following words (familiar to many of his hearers) from the prophet Joel.

This is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel: "And in the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy, and your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams; even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they will prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke; **the sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day.** And it will come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Acts 2:16-21 quoting Joel 2:28-32).

These words of Joel were an extraordinary prophecy. In ancient times the Holy Spirit only came on great national leaders like Moses, David and Elijah and other prophets. Joel spoke of a day when very ordinary people would be filled with the Holy Spirit. Young men and even young women would prophesy, and God would pour out his spirit even on male and female slaves. Such things were unheard of. Girls prophesying? Slaves receiving the Holy Spirit? Was Joel out of his mind?

Six centuries passed with no fulfilment of Joel's prophecy until at last the momentous day of Pentecost arrived.

In Joel's prophecy we find the words, "**the sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood**".

This leads us to a simple question. What possible relevance did these signs have to the day of Pentecost? Unlike Passover and Tabernacles, neither a lunar eclipse nor a solar eclipse can ever occur at Pentecost because Pentecost always occurs on the 6th day of the Jewish month when the moon is crescent.

Furthermore how can events that happen 2 or 3 times every year be signs? Rare events that happen just once or twice, like a world war or the Jews returning to Israel, can clearly be signs. In the first century (as in every other century) there were about 250 solar and lunar eclipses.

How could Peter select two eclipses out of all these and say they were signs?

What possible meaning then had Peter and Joel's words "the sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood"? We need to look deeper - or rather higher.

The Sun will be Turned to Darkness

In natural terms the sun is the light of the world. It is infinitely brighter than any light generated on earth. Even though it is 90 million miles away it is still too bright for us to look at it for more than an instant. No other light in this world remotely compares with it. All other light is directly or indirectly derived from it.

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world". When Peter, James and John were with him on the mount of transfiguration we read that, "He was transformed in front of them, and His face shone like the sun" (Matt 17:2). When John saw Jesus on the island of Patmos he described him with the words, "his face was like the sun shining in full strength" (Rev 1:16). Malachi wrote: "But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings" (Mal 4:2).

Jesus is the real sun, the real light of the world. Peter quoted the words of Joel, "The sun will be turned to darkness". Could these words refer to the real sun, Jesus, rather than to the natural sun that we see in the sky? Was Jesus ever "turned to darkness"? Yes! That is exactly what happened when he hung upon the cross. The terrible burden of our sin came between him and God his Father, and his light was turned to darkness. Matthew, Mark and Luke all record: "From the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour" (Matt 27:45). Jesus, the real sun, was turned to darkness!

The Moon will be Turned to Blood

What about "the moon will be turned to blood"? If the sun was Jesus, what was the moon? The moon has no light of its own. It just reflects the light of the sun. Comparatively it's a very inferior light. In daytime it's hardly visible because of the far greater brightness of the sun. At night it's certainly enough to see where you're going when it's visible, but not enough to distinguish colours. Much of the time it's not even visible. Unlike the sun it cannot give life.

Who or what corresponds to the moon? What about John the Baptist? If Jesus was the sun, was John the moon? We read in John 1: "In it (the Word – Jesus) was life, and the life was the light of men. There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. He came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but he came to bear witness of the light" (vv 4, 6, 7 & 8).

The moon bears witness to the sun, just as John bore witness to Jesus.

When John compares himself to Jesus, he says, "I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandal!" When Jesus speaks of John he says, "I tell you, among those born of women no one is greater than John, but the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he" (Luke 7:28). John had a unique and special ministry, but his whole purpose was to point to Jesus. His words, "Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29), summarise his whole mission. His relationship to Jesus is well illustrated by the moon and the sun. When his mission was accomplished he was thrown into prison by Herod and then executed. The moon was turned to blood!

So Joel's prophecy went far beyond his own understanding and probably beyond Peter's. No outpouring of the Holy Spirit could take place before the sun was turned to darkness and the moon to blood. First John the Baptist must complete his testimony and depart. Then Jesus must die and rise from the dead and return to his father before the Holy Spirit could come.

The Day of the Lord

We must look now at another aspect of Joel's prophecy: "The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes".

So when is the day of the Lord? Did it come then, on the day of Pentecost? Most people would say no. In fact Paul, in a letter to the Thessalonians, very specifically rejects that idea: "Don't let anyone deceive you in any way. For that day will not come unless the apostasy comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction" (see [2 Thess 2:2-3](#)).