

Why the Solar Eclipse Will Trigger a Bold New Season of Repentance for America

On Aug. 21, 2017, a total solar eclipse will run across America—an event many intercessors believe is a call to prayer marking the beginning of the 40-day Jewish Teshuvah season of repentance.

The idea that God would use a sign in the heavens to send a message seems strange to many. Yet the idea goes all the way back to Genesis, where the sun, moon and stars were described as signs for the appointed times (Gen. 1:14).

The Hebrew Torah commentaries included eclipses among those signs. The Talmud stated that eclipses were bad omen, a darkness coming because of sin. However, later Jewish sages modified this view, holding that eclipses are warnings against sin, and an opportunity for prayer and introspection.

The fact that the eclipse comes on Teshuvah, the 40-day Jewish season of repentance leading up to the Day of Atonement, magnifies its meaning.

“Teshuvah” literally means to return to the presence of God, and the psalm associated with Teshuvah by Jewish Rabbis, Psalm 27, speaks of the benefits of dwelling in God’s presence. However, the second scripture associated with Teshuvah is Ezekiel 33, which warns believers of punishment for failure to warn sinners, and warns sinners of the judgment to come. Thus, Teshuvah is both an invitation to intimacy with God in prayer and a warning to repent and avoid judgement.

Eclipses are a sign for the church as well as the Jews, as Peter made clear on Pentecost when he quoted the prophet Joel, associating eclipses with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit

and salvation (Acts 2:17-21).

Psalm 19:4 likens the sun to a bridegroom and a champion, clearly a symbol of Christ. The moon is called the faithful witness in the sky in Psalm 89:37 and the Jewish New Moon Festivals were known as the Feast of the Born Again, symbolizing believers.

So when the sun and moon come together in a solar eclipse, we see the symbolic unity between Christ as the groom and the church as the bride—a perfect picture of unity in Christ. At the same time, the shadow which runs over the earth reminds us of the darkness of the day of the Lord (Amos 5:20) and calls for repentance before judgment falls. The solar eclipse thus reinforces the invitation to intimacy and warning to repent which characterize Teshuvah.

In the Teshuvah eclipses God has set before us life or death, blessings or curses, and is asking us to choose life (Deut. 30:19-20).

The American church had such a choice in the Teshuvah eclipse year of 1998, when prophet Chuck Pierce warned of the rise of Islamists, loosing of lawlessness and political losses for the church in three years if the church did not repent in the time frame of Teshuvah, 1998. The church failed to repent, and as a result a spirit of lawlessness was unleashed by President Bill Clinton's scandals, the church lost ground politically and the Islamists killed 3,000 Americans three years later on Sept. 11, 2011.

The Americans had another chance to repent in the Teshuvah eclipse year of 2008, but instead elected a president who weakened the country at home and abroad, attacked our religious freedom and fostered racial, economic and political division not seen since the Civil War.

Now comes a third chance to repent, as America sits in the shadow of division, like Jesus said, a house divided which may

fall (Luke 11:17). We must choose life this time, praying through the 40 days of Teshuvah for revival.

Jesus showed us how to choose life when He went through His 40 days of temptation (Matt. 4:1-11), a time which many scholars believe occurred at the Teshuvah time of year. Jesus confounded the devil because Jesus knew He was the son of God, had faith that God would meet His needs, knew to obey God to live and prosper and refused to sell out to the world. We must begin our Teshuvah prayer journey the same way Jesus did, as children of God standing in faith. But being human, we must also repent of our sins and make the Teshuvah journey to return to the presence of God.

As the moon, representing the believers, moves into the sun, representing Christ, during the Teshuvah eclipse, we are reminded how Jesus prayed that the believers would be united in Him and also united with each other (John 17:20-23). Jesus saw both unity in Him and unity with each other as essential to the Christian witness to the world.

This unity is not uniformity, as passages like Acts 15 and Romans 15 confirm, but is a unity in diversity, like a harmonious chord. We must pray and work for the healing of the body of Christ, which has been broken by our divisions, so the world will know Christ and revival can come.

As prayer leader Lou Engle has said, "Only a united church can heal a divided nation."

To heal our land, we must follow God's instructions in 2 Chronicles 7:14. God's people must first humble ourselves, recognizing that we are responsible for the spiritual malaise of our nation because of our failure to portray God's love in our generation. We must pray and seek God's face for His answers. Then we, the church, must repent of our wicked ways such as disunity, cursing instead of blessings, political factions and complacency. Then God will hear our prayers and

heal our land.

We invite you to join with intercessory prayer groups across America during the eclipse on Aug. 21 to hold sacred assemblies to pray for repentance and return to God's presence. Some may also feel called to a pilgrimage to pray in the path of the eclipse as it moves from Oregon to South Carolina.

Then, continue to pray for repentance, church unity and healing of the land during the 40 days of Teshuvah. We are on the edge of a great revival coming through the unity of the church if we will press in and pray through.

For more information, including a 40-day Teshuvah prayer plan, visit or [click here](#) to get a free download of the book *Teshuvah Eclipses*. {eoa}

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