

Keys to Unlock End-Times Understanding in the Book of Revelation

In the case of the Bible, skipping to the exciting ending isn't a wise course of action.

Author and pastor Mark Biltz, writer of the new book, *Decoding the Antichrist and the End Times: What the Bible Says and What the Future Holds*, says the book of Revelation alone references over 600 verses from the Old Testament.

"How can we understand Revelation if we don't connect the verses to the original Scriptures that were used as a reference?" Biltz says. "The book of Revelation relies extensively on imagery and allusions from the Old Testament, which is also known as the *Tanakh*, so the Christian view of the coming Messiah is most properly understood by looking through the Jewish lens."

For example, Biltz says, John 1:1 states, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John used the very first words from the book of Genesis, "In the beginning," implying Yeshua is the Word that was there at creation. Then in the first chapter of Revelation, the apostle John sees a menorah ("seven golden candlesticks"), and Yeshua is standing in the middle with eyes like flames of fire (verses 12-14). The Greek rendering states John is seeing the Alpha and Omega. But in Hebrew it is correctly rendered as the *Aleph* and *Tav*, the first and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet. In Genesis 1:1 there are seven Hebrew words representing the branches of the Menorah and in the middle is the word *Aleph Tav* representing Yeshua at the beginning of creation!

"The most exciting revelation I ever had concerning end-time

understanding was when my eyes were opened to how the feasts of the Lord were directly tied to the book of Revelation and the unfolding of end-time events,” Biltz writes in *Decoding the Antichrist*. “By the feasts of the Lord, I am referring to Leviticus 23, where God lays out His divine appointments according to His calendar for the timing of His feasts such as Passover, Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Trumpets, Yom Kippur, Tabernacles and others. I say this because too many Christians portray the feasts of the Lord as the feasts of the Jews and throw them into the trash bin of history because of the anti-Semitic philosophy of the early church fathers.”

Biltz said he first studied the feasts in the 1970s in Bible College, but they were taught from a replacement theology perspective.

“To properly understand who the Messiah is, we must look at His second coming and the book of Revelation through the eyes of the feasts,” Biltz says. “God said He declared the end from the beginning, so we must go to the beginning of the Bible to see what God says concerning the end of times.”

To start, in Genesis 1:14, God said He created the sun and the moon for signs, seasons, days and years.

“All too often we think this refers to our calendar made up of winter, spring, summer and fall as well as our days of the week and numbered years,” Biltz says. “There are many calendars in the world. The current pagan calendar most of the world uses today is only 2,000 years old, so it can’t be an original. Our calendar is very scientific and accurate, as it is based totally on the cycle of the sun. The Muslim calendar is also very scientifically accurate, as it is based solely on the cycle of the moon.

“But guess what?” Biltz continues. “In Genesis, God told us the calendar He uses is based on both the sun and the moon. When He talked about how they were to determine the days and

years, He was referring to His holy days such as Passover and Yom Kippur. The years referred to the seven-year cycle in which Israel was to let the land rest and settle all financial debts. It was known as the *Shemittah* year. There was also the Jubilee year, which was every 50th year, when the land returned to its original owner. Nowhere are any of these recognized on our regular calendar or the Muslim calendar, so our calendars are definitely not God's calendar."

As an illustration, Biltz shares that he once lived on the border between two time zones—Mountain Time and Central Time—where it was helpful to have two clocks, especially when living in one time zone and working in another, even if it is just a few miles away.

"It is the same for believers," Biltz says. "We must realize that we need to operate on two different calendars: the one God created, if we care about His schedule, and the one man created, because we still live in this world. The time is coming when our pagan calendar will be trashed, and all believers will be following God's calendar, as it says we will be doing at the end of Isaiah 66 when He creates the new heavens and new earth (verses 22-23). The Creator of the universe ordained a calendar at creation that He would reveal to mankind at the appointed time. In other words, He scheduled divine appointments to meet with His children. But the problem lies when many believers don't show up for the appointment because they are either unaware or don't care."

Many Christians are unaware this last weekend was the Feast of Shavuot known as Pentecost. While most Pentecostals claim this for their origins of their community, they don't celebrate it, and the Jews to this day still do! Other times when Christians do keep Pentecost, they are a month off from the actual date to celebrate because they are still on the Catholic calendar rather than the biblical one.

Decoding the Antichrist and the End Times, which released this

spring, takes an in-depth look at some of the deepest questions surrounding our culture and the coming Antichrist, such as the following:

- What does the Bible say about the Antichrist's tactics and his motivation?
- Will he be a Muslim, a Jew or a professed Christian—or something else?
- Will the Antichrist work through modern technology to seize control?

Mark Biltz is founder of El Shaddai Ministries and a well-known and popular commentator on the feasts of the Lord. In fact, he has produced a series of DVDs on the feasts that have gone around the world. Biltz is also the author of *Blood Moons* and *God's Day Timer*. His research and theories have led to guest appearances on both radio and television as well as being featured on the covers of magazines.

Decoding the Antichrist and the End Times is published by Charisma House, which has published books that challenge, encourage, teach and equip Christians, including 14 *New York Times*' best-sellers.