

Trumpets Herald Messiah

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“After these things there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.” (1)

This is a clear statement. It does, however, raise a few questions. What does after these things or some time later refer to? What feast? And up to Jerusalem is an intriguing statement, from where?

The last recorded message before John chapter five is that of the healing of the official's son. John 4:46 tells us that Jesus came again to Cana where He had made water into wine. 4:54 records this 'second sign' that Jesus performed when He had come out of Judea into Galilee. We can conclude that John 5:1 refers to this preceding text, unless 'some time after this' refers to a longer period of time.

If one does just a casual study, one finds oneself entwined into a survey of chronological order involving a harmony of the gospels. One could conclude that having a good understanding would lead to the identity of this feast. In researching other writings, what we found was uncertain and variance. It is very difficult from the gospel narratives to trace Jesus' steps throughout the 3 ½ years of His earthly ministry. We shall attempt to zero in on the time of John chapter 5, which will give the specific feast day and the proper insertion in an order of time in John's gospel. It should be pointed out that only John is very specific in discerning a chronological order, where the other three are much more concerned with thematic sequence, sometimes resulting in chapters in varied time slots.

Before we pursue that, I would like to examine 'going up to Jerusalem.' The gospels use the expression 'up to Jerusalem' several times: Matt 20:17,18 for the fourth Passover of Jesus' ministry; Mark 10:32,33 parallels the Matthew text; Luke 2:41,42 sets a pattern for Jesus to go up to Jerusalem annually for the Feast of Passover, this particular one when Jesus was twelve years of age; in Luke cf 10:30 the doctor tells a story of 'down from Jerusalem' to Jericho; Luke 17:11, passing between Samaria and Galilee on the way (up) to Jerusalem; and in John, which should have the greatest procedural weight on our text; John 2:13,23, Jesus went to Jerusalem for the Passover of the Jews; cf 4:20, conversation about where to worship; (* important, for later, to notice true worship will be in the Messiah) 11:55 and 12:12, went up to Jerusalem for the Passover.

Let us pause here to take a trip up to Jerusalem at the time of Jesus. We need to have an understanding of the city and its routes at this time. John Lundquist gives us an incredible overview on this subject. (2) A study of the gates of the walls of Jerusalem lists a total of 52 gate locations over a period of 16 centuries. There are twelve listed in Nehemiah 3 and in Herod's second temple period the consensus is eight gates, some with multiple names for the same gate. The national saying at that time was that all roads lead to Jerusalem. I recommend three different DVD's for informative understanding. (3) Roads to Jerusalem were from all four directions to the gates of the outer walls, and then into the temple complex itself.

The floor of the temple mount was constructed to an area of over 30 acres; 920' on the south side, 1070' on the north, 1540' on east, and 1630 on the west. Some commentators vary, but most follow Josephus' guidelines. (4) The main entrance to the temple mount

was on the south wall, with 24 steps 215 wide which went up to the two Hulda gates, one having 2 doors and the other, toward the east, 3 doors, which lead into tunnels which emerged into the Court of the Gentiles. The steps alternated in depth, one 12" deep and the next one being 35" in depth, with the purpose of making the penitent pilgrim more conscientious. On the west side were two massive arches leading to tunnels and stair cases, and on the east side was the incredible Golden Gate which then lead to the Beautiful Gate that lead into the Court of the Women. Underneath this (36 acre? platform) built on the peak of Mt Moriah (see 1 Chron 3:10) was a labyrinth of tunnels, arches, reservoirs, cisterns and chambers. (5)

Let us take a vicarious walk with Cunningham Geike at the beginning of the 20th century from Bethany to inside the temple. (6) I would love to quote this incredible rendering but because of volume must paraphrase. Bethany, 'the house of poverty,' lies on an eastern spur of the Mt. of Olives, on the edge of the wilderness of Judea, though it is surrounded by gardens and orchards. It was a home for lepers, attested by Simon (Matt 26:6) as well as a rest haven for Jesus, especially during passion week. There were two paths to Jerusalem, one for donkeys and camels, that circled the south side, and a foot path that went directly over the top, a distance of almost two miles. Jericho was 15 miles to the northeast descending 3500 feet, 1000 feet below sea level. After a short decline we start up a steep incline, winding up to the south, up a ridge where the southeastern wall of Jerusalem is visible The mountain on the right hides the temple mount. Now we descend down into Bethpage (pronounced beth-fu-gee) and then up to the right; and suddenly, awesomely, the entire city is revealed, unfolding before us. The top elevation of the Mt of Olives is about 100' above the 150' high frame (nounce) that holds the Nicanor Gate.

In Jesus' time the white stones and gold shrouds caused deep breath intakes. At night, the four fifty foot high candelabrum each supporting four large bowls for oil located in the Court of the Women light up the entire city during feast days. In 30 AD there was an arch that crossed about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Kidron Valley, up a 150' embankment, through the Golden Gate, into the south portico facing the Court of the Gentiles, up a flight of stairs to the Beautiful Gate and then into the women's court. The portico in the east wall of the Court of the Gentiles had four rows of 162 pillars, 28' high. Some commentators state there were 3 rows of pillars with the center row 40' high. To our left on the south wall we would see the Royal Portico, and on the southwest corner on the Rock of the Trumpets one would see where the floor of the valleys meet, 435' below. In the Court of the Women to our left we see 13 trumpet shaped offering (horns) and the 15 circular steps (steps of ascent, refer to Psalms 120-134) (Solomon's Temple had 15 steps, in a series of 7 plus 8) leading up to the Nicanor Gate, 66' high by 23' wide that required twenty priests to open. Around the inside of the wall of the women's court we see a 15' wide shelf, or Chel, lined with beggars.

Imagine, merchants in the Court of the Gentiles and in the Royal Portico, beggars inside the wall of the women's court as well all around the south stairwell entrances and the sheep pools at the northeast corner, between the Sheep Gate and the Prison Gate in the suburb called Bezeda. I have found four different names from different commentators for the pool of Bethesda, each having very different meanings which would change some interpretations with usage in particular cases. (ie – Bethsaida) If one uses the spelling

Bethsaida for this pool, it is not to be confused with the town east of Capernaum in Galilee found in Matt 11:21 and Mark 6:45; 8:22.

For Jesus' trip from Galilee to the Pool of Bethesda only Josephus and a couple of other writers give us a description of the outer walls, long ago destroyed, as much as twenty times. The pool is described as, (one) 60' X 12 ½' X 30' deep, and (two) 55' X 12 ½' X 30' deep and called by Sir Charles Warren the 'twin pools.' (7) There are several pools listed in the history of Jerusalem, two being the most renowned. The other was the Pool of Siloam, located on the southeast wall of the Old City, or City of David. We remember this pool's water source was the Gihon Spring, which fed the pool by a 1470' long tunnel, cistern, dug during King Hezekiah's reign 800 years ago. There is an intriguing story of how the two rock digging crews met in a zigzag pattern. The whole city stopped moving while listeners pin-pointed and steered the channelers forty feet below. This pool, partly excavated in 2007, measures 83' long by 23' wide. (Some commentators suggest that was the dimensions of the Nicanor Gate) There are three sets of five steps the length of the pool on the east side, and three sets of three steps on the west side, both for the total length of the pool. There is also a very steep set of narrow steps descending from the north.

The blind beggar of John 9 would have gone down the huge staircase south from the Hulda Gates, to the west to the Herodian stairwell, and south down these 'path of steps' about 3/5 mile distance from the Hulda (Chulda) to the pool. In the narrative of John 9 this blind beggar became one of the most incredible witnesses to Jesus as the Messiah! We mention this because there is a marvelous comparison between the healings and witnessing among Mark 2 and John 5 & 9.

Now, let us consider some contributors to the identification of the John 5 feast:

"Jesus had returned to Galilee in December, about the time of the Feast of Dedication, the feast next following would be Purim. Next was Passover, which is quite generally accepted as the time of the feast." (8)

Before we continue it would be well to illuminate the term feasts:

"Feasts – In the feast of the Jews, the number seven plays an important part. The seventh day, the seventh month, the seventh year, and the Jubilee at the conclusion of seven times seven years all set apart for worship and rejoicing. There were even seven festivals in the year, two of which had seven days; Passover and Tabernacles. They were to be celebrated in the centrality of Israel first in Shiloh and lastly in Jerusalem. (9)

"Feast day cycles were to review the past and plan for the future." There was a requirement for all males to attend the sanctuary services. (Ex 23:14-17; 34:23; Deut 16:16) An eschatological survey shows the fulfillment of the first advent for the Messiah: Passover – Redeemer; Pentecost – Priest; Tabernacles – King. (10)

"If this were the Passover, the time would be almost a year later than Jesus' arrival in Galilee described in John 4:46: Apparently John was less interested in chronology than in following the trend of Jesus' conflict with unbelief." This commentary then proceeds to question 'a' feast as compared to 'the' feast. "If one uses 'some time later' that breaks John's chronological sequence." (11)

On John 5: “Verse one provides the temporal and geographical location for the story; in Jerusalem during one of the Jewish feasts. The text gives *no clue* (my emphasis) as to which of these pilgrimage festivals (P Port) it might be.” (12)

“The festival is unnamed, but may have been Pentecost, on which was celebrated the giving of the law through Moses. (13)

“The feast of the Jews in verse one is unnamed. If it was Passover, this could prove that the total period of the ministry exceeded three years. It seems that the reason why a feast is mentioned is to account for Jesus’ presence in Jerusalem, although John stresses several feasts during the ministry of Jesus.” (14)

“Again (cf 2:13) Jesus went up to Jerusalem to attend a feast. (RVm, the feast, referring perhaps to Tabernacles; but the definite article ‘a’ is correct) Again there is a reference to Mark 2:1-12 but in John 5 Jesus takes the initiative of healing.” (15)

“The feast (5:1) is not identified. It was probably in the fall because the next feast mentioned is Passover the following spring. (6:4) “ (16)

“The time when this cure was wrought, it was a feast of the Jews, it was Passover, for that was the most celebrated feast. Christ, though residing in Galilee, yet went up to Jerusalem at the feast.” Henry goes on to state that the opportunity was to do good with general rendezvous – “in good frame to worship God.” (17)

“The cure at the Pool of Bethesda. If the feeding of the five thousand took place shortly before the Passover (6:4) a feast (5:1) might possibly be Passover, but was more probably the next great feast, Pentecost. ---verse 3b and 4 are not found in the original manuscripts, and was probably a later edition.” (18)

“A feast. Textual evidence is divided between this and the reading and the reading ‘the feast.’ Since ancient times commentators have been divided regarding the identity of this feast. (Some feasts, Passover and Tabernacles have been inserted in place of feast.) (*the wording*) Irenaeus; Against Heresies ii.22.3, in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol 1, Page 391, identified Passover. ---Passover has the strongest evidence.” (19)

John “Chapters 5:1-10:39 describe Jesus confrontation with the Jews, both in Jerusalem and in Galilee. In Jerusalem the hostility leads to different threats to kill Him; 5:18; 7:1, 19-25; 8:37, 40; 10:31-39. (*ref 11:45-57*) His activity is presented in the framework of Jewish feasts which ***Jesus replaces by His own person***. The exegetes who place chapter 5 after chapter 6 have not been able to give decisive arguments for their hypothesis; but it is possible that chapter 6 has been added to a second edition of the gospel, causing some tensions. There exists a subtle contrast between healing at the pool and that of the blind man at the Pool of Siloam in chapter 9. The former is merely a passive object of Jesus’ work, whereas the latter illustrates the active response of a man with growing faith. (Illustrates from death to life, judgment of unbelievers, and joint life-work of living by Father and Son.)” (20)

“Jesus may have made a second trip to celebrate a Jewish festival soon after He was dishonored in His own town. (Luke 4:18)” (21)

“The feast chosen by God for a central declaration concerning His Son has been termed by some ‘The Unknown Feast.’ On the contrary, although it may be properly designated

as an unnamed feast, it can hardly remain unknown to us, particularly in view of the contextual, ceremonial and temple readings Scripture readings available for examination.

Attempts by scholars to identify John's unnamed feast seem almost as varied as the sources consulted. Pentecost, Passover, Dedication, Purim and Rosh HaShannah and even an obscure occasion, 'Feast of the Wood Offering,' have all been set forth as possible contenders. In consulting authorities, however, one discovers an almost universal disregard for contextual clues contained in what Jesus did and said at this feast. We firmly believe that His conduct and discourse serve not only to identify the occasion but stand as an irrefutable link between the shadow of the festal ceremonialism and the substance of the revealed God Man.

Thus, we will not attempt to detail objections and postulate favoring or discounting other feasts but will simply harmonize the textual record with the historical and ceremonial events into which Jesus thrust Himself. Sound the Trumpets! The period in question was, we are convinced, Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish feast of the New Year. This celebration was to be marked by a (*two*) day-long blowing of silver trumpets and shofroth (ram's horn) in the ears of the nation." (22)

After years of study, I find myself in the fold of this 'we,' as I am not only convinced that the narrative of Jesus proclaimed the presence of the Messiah in their midst, but in these last days of this age, is one of the seven-fold thunders of Revelation 10:3,4 that is being trumpeted to announce the final days of awe before the Messiah's second advent. We must investigate and understand the ramifications of this feast as supplied by Jesus in deed and word as witnessed in John 5.

Before we do this I would like to commend all of these scholars whose references we have seen. Many have spent a whole lifetime in earnest prayer and study. Any one of us could spend decades scouring their writings, and other contributors such as the 16 volumes of Encyclopedia Judaica and 22 volumes of Judaica Librarianship in University of Florida, The Gates of the Seasons, and the Gates of Repentance and other annual publications from the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and literally countless rabbinical and Christian writings over the centuries.

Leviticus 23:23-25 "Again the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, in the seventh month on the first of the month you shall have a rest, a reminder by blowing the trumpets, a holy convocation. You shall not do any laborious work, but you shall present an offering by fire to the Lord."

Even prior to the seventh month of Tishri, there was a period of repentance starting with Elul one, the beginning of the twelfth month; called Teshuvah, forty days of repentance, self-examination and renewal. Tishri one had to be verified by new moon, and a number of things must be in place to verify and announce this most solemn occasion. Eyewitnesses, two or more, were stationed on the hill tops while the Sanhedrin held session in the Hall of Hewn Stones in the Court of the Priests. When the crescent of the new moon appeared, the witnesses would light the high torches across the land. When the one on the Mount of Olives was lighted, the Sanhedrin would announce, 'it is sanctified.' (Greek – hagiazo; to make holy, to consecrate) Then the four fifty foot candelabras, each topped by four bowls of oil would be lit and the shofar and trumpets would sound. The night hills would come alive as 'a sea of fire,' (Rosh 2:4) as "lights were lit on high

places from one end of Israel to the other.” (23) Genesis 1:16 intrigues; ‘moon to rule over the nights.’ (to govern)

Then the trumpeters standing on the Rock (Place) of the Trumpets on top of the southwest corner of the temple wall, would sound their horns. (24) First, the ram’s horn, the shofar with a gold mouthpiece, a long solid blast, then three short wavering blasts, then the longest blast of one long blast. This is followed by the two silver horns (Numbers 10:2,3) with three sharp, shrill blasts, and then again back to the shofar. Many Rabbis believe this to be repeated one hundred times; others say for the full two days of Rosh Hashanah, the beginning of the Feast of Trumpets.

Psalm 81:3,4; Blow the trumpet at the new moon, at the full moon, on our feast day. For it is a statute for Israel, an ordinance of the God of Jacob.”

“Every Rosh Hashanah we blow our breathe, the breathe God breathed into us, through a ram’s horn, in order to hear our soul reverberated.” We will have a renewal message. (25)

The heavenly court assembles when Rosh Hashanah is sanctified on earth. (Rosh 8c-b) the shofar were to remind; “meant full submission and strict obedience to the precepts designed to awaken people from spiritual lethargy and appeal for repentance.” (Tamid 7:3; Rosh 1:2) Rabbi Elkins remembers that Hannah’s song in 1 Samuel 2:1-10 is a major source of mindset for Rosh Ha-s-hannah. The first and last verses reminds us in the use of ‘horn’ and in part verse 10 is Jesus’ message in John 5. (26)

Rabbi Sy Zevin encourages “Truly heartfelt repentance – limitless depth of emotion and despair in availability for righteousness.” He remembers Nehemiah 8:1-12 where Ezra assembled Israel on the “the first day of the seventh month. As Ezra read the Torah to the sons of Jacob; all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.” (27)

“Perhaps the most sweeping portrayal of the ramifications of the Feast of Trumpets is found in the book of Joel (2:1-3:21) ‘Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly.’ (2:15) Israel was to experience her greatest day of regathering.”

A call to repentance 2:1-14

A question of Messiah 2:15-17

A call to the nation 2:18-3:1

A call to the nations 3:2-11

A call to judgment (Gentiles) 3:12-15

A call from the Messiah 3:16

A consummation under Messiah’s reign 3:17-21 (28)

Makes one inclined to sing, “Shall We Gather at the River.”

The Rabbis speak of the reading of the Complete Torah and Prophets in a three year period with special readings for the New Year. There is a group of Psalms we must include in conjunction with John 5. The songs and the Scripture readings are pertinent to our understanding. (29)

The Rabbis teach of many Psalms sung during this festival, and we have many sources that would encourage all Christians in participation.

Where Ps 115-118, songs of the Hallel, are sung at Passover, “Psalms 120-134 are named songs of ascent, songs of degree. (refer to *15 steps of ascent into Holy Place*)

Ps 122: “I was glad when they said unto me, let us go unto the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within the gates of Jerusalem.” “David wrote it for the people to sing at the time of their going up to the holy feasts at Jerusalem.” “David’s heart was in the worship of God, and he was delighted when he found others inviting him to go where his desires had already gone.” (30)

There are other ‘Psalms’ that address this scenario: Zechariah 9:14; “then the Lord will appear over them, and His arrow will go forth like lightning; and the Lord God will blow the trumpet, and will march in the storm winds of the south.”

Isaiah 27:13; “It will come about also in that day that a great trumpet will be blown, and those that were perishing in the land of Assyria and who were scattered in the land of Egypt will come and worship the Lord in the holy mountain of Jerusalem.”

As we shall see, these were completely fulfilled in the Person of Christ, and was announced in and by every healing, every word! We shall apply to John 5; 6; & 7-10.

The Rabbi says --- Rosh Hashanah will fix, will repair the soul, the spirit, heart and mind.
Service – God Remembers

Remember – God never forgets; He remembers

Messiah – God will be the Messiah with the proclamation of the Shofar.

It represents change, growth, repair of our world, our communities, our families and our souls.

Refer to Psalm 51:11-15, 19.

Rosh Hashanah is exemplified by the Song of Moses; Ps 90 --- judgment, mercy, to teach us God’s love; the favor of the Lord rests upon us. (In Jesus ministry it heralded, “The Messiah is here!” Psalm 91 follows, experiencing the days of awe in the time of trouble. Psalm 27 is read twice every day during Teshuvah which parallels Ps 91 in peace, salvation and presence. The Rabbi reminds us that this shout of joy, Teru’ah, is used in Joshua 6:5, 20 accompanying the fall of the walls of Jericho. Ps 27:7 is a mini-Shema; hear, cry, mercy, answer; verse 11, teach, lead, deliver; verse 14, wait for the Lord. We can already hear Jesus on Rosh Hashanah in 28 AD proclaiming to the temple; The Messiah has come, He is here!

Thus, we are now introduced to three new categories in the Feast of Trumpets: the Shema, the wedding (Hosea 2:19-23) and a covenant between God and His people. (a covenant is the wedding and Shema) “You are My people.” Sounds like Ruth singing to Naomi. (Ruth 1:11-18)

Jeremiah 3:12-14 was a song sung by the pilgrims ascending up to Jerusalem, even up to the 15 semi-circular steps to the Nicanor Gate: “I will bring you up to Zion.” Verse 15 “I will give you shepherds after My own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.” The pilgrim is ascending to the “Mountain of the house of the Lord. (Isaiah 2:2,3) Who shall ascend to the hill of the Lord: (Ps 24:3) And who shall stand in the holy place? We shall shout, exalt, rejoice: Ps 65:13; Joel 2:1; Num 10:7; Isa 16:10; Ps 47:5-7 – God has ascended with a shout, the Lord, with the sound of a trumpet. Sing

praises to God, sing praises. For God is King of the earth, sing praises, in the city of God, His holy mountain.

Rabbi Judah the Prince, redactor of the Mishnah, selected the Shema as the opening Halakha of the entire Talmud. Moses' use of the 'Hear' was because Israel had already failed in 'we will do.' (31)

Rabbi Moshe Shmuel Glaser teaching Ki Tissa of 1903 describes Shema as "we will understand" attributing behavior over understanding. (32)

The Rabbi is in wonderment: Midrash Tanhuma, Qedoshim 10 – "Jerusalem is the center of the earth and the Foundation Stone in front of the Ark is the foundation of the world." The stone on which Jacob slept on at Bethel was in place here at Solomon's Temple. This same rock Islam claims is where Mohammad ascended to heaven. 2 Chron 3:1 – place of temple is Mt Moriah where Abraham offered Isaac and where David bought the threshing floor from Ornan; 2 Chron 3:10. Our tabernacle was a pattern from heaven; Ex 25:9, joining earth to heaven.

All these subjects and many more are a prelude to the presentation of John 5. It does appear that Jesus' narrative reflects most of Scripture, both Old & New Testament. The hear, Shema, is synonymous with 'know' and 'understand.' Ex 24:7; 'we shall know and understand.' Rabbi Seadia Gaon, 900 AD, gives a second meaning quoted by David Abudarham, to 'witness.' (ayin and dalet together spell 'ed) – to give testimony; Isa 43:10, 'you are My witnesses.' Rosh Hashanah cannot begin without 'sanctified' witnesses, and this is the thrust of Jesus' narrative. R Nahman Bratzlav – "we must cast aside all of our 'wisdom' and stand before our Maker as children." (33)

What a mind set for the whole of Teshuvah! Hear and commit yourself! Commit even as you seek to understand. It is a great attitude for the Days of Awe, Yom Kippur (atonement) and Tabernacles into Dedication, our twenty two day of Feast of Trumpets.

The Rabbi teaches:

Creation was Elul 25

Adam was created Tishri one

Adam sinned Tishri 10

God (*Jesus*) clothed Adam in sheepskin Tishri 15

Isaac offered – Shofar is ram's horn – sacrifice

God remembered the women on Rosh Hashanah; Sarah, Rachael, Hagar, Rahab, (trumpets were blowing) Hannah, Abigail -- all had 'tears' (Gen 21:1; Rosh 1:2) Abigail is an interesting application to Rosh – She came to David on Rosh Hashanah with gifts --- her husband dies on Yom Kippur --- she becomes David's bride (HEAR)

God has judged; Gen 30:6, Tishri 1- birth of Dan; God has seen my heart, heard my voice. Judaica says Sarah heard trumpets upon learning of the binding of Isaac
Hannah's prayer on Rosh Hashanah; 1 Sam 2:1-10
Moses gave law on Sinai (40 days of Teshuvah) God thundered; you can choose life and I will dwell in the house (presence) of the Lord forever; cf Ps 13:6
(refer to Deut 30:15, 19; again choose life or death)

Jacob's time of trouble on Rosh Hashanah
Rosh is day of awakening; sounding of Shofar

Shofar is awakening blast; to shout
Shofar is to hear; a spiritual sense of experiencing the Shema from within the heart
Shofar announces we shall be judged
 (Rosh 1:2) "All who come into the world pass before the Creator like sheep, to be
 judged, one by one." (The sheep for offering had no blemishes)
Shofar announces we shall be sealed
Shofar announces we shall be resurrected (Isa 26:19)
Shofar announces we shall be free from the slavery on sin
Shofar is warning; enemy entices our passions and evil inclinations
Shofar announces the coming of the Messiah
Shofar announces that the King is here – our King of Kings is here
Shofar announces observing Sabbath *is a* Covenant

God remembers observance; Ex 20:8; Deut 5:12
I find it absolutely thrilling when the words of the Shema (Deut 6:4-9; 11:13-21;
Num 15:37-41) are entwined with the text of Isaiah 27:13 and Zechariah 14:9!
A great trumpet will be blown and we will come to worship the Lord in the holy
mountain of Jerusalem, and the Lord, ***THE ONLY LORD***, will be King over all the earth.

My hope and prayer here is that you, as well as myself, can discern this list in the literal
and spiritual understanding in the narrative of John 5, let alone John 5-10. We do have
assistance in this endeavor.

David Alexander lists points of Jesus' narrative of John 5 that we shall compare to the
Rabbi's preceding list.

John 5:16-47 ---

20 – knowledge of God's plan
19, 30 – God's authority for all Christ says and does
21, 24, 40 – power to give eternal life
25-29 – right and authority to judge all men; the dead and the living
37 – Witness; His Father spoke at baptism
33-35 – witness; John testified
36 – Works; Christ's miracles (one standing present)
39 – witness; Moses and Old Testament words (34)

To the Jew of any class these would have been the thoughts at the blowing of the Shofar
at Rosh Hashanah *if they had recognized Jesus as the Messiah in their midst*, while
listening to the conversation between the Pharisees and Jesus.

For four and one half centuries factions of Christianity celebrated the birth of John the
baptizer on April 24, as he was born on or near Passover, 5 BC. They all knew that Jesus
was born of Tishri 15, that year on the Gregorian calendar would be Oct 19. As the
church became more and more under the influence of pagan rituals, they changed Jesus'
birthday to Dec 25. The church was paralleling pagan Israel, with hundreds of idols in
and around Solomon's Temple. Jesus was baptized by John on Tishri 15, AD 27, on His

30th birthday. (there is not any absolute proof of this) Almost one year later He entered the north wall of Jerusalem on Tishri 1, Rosh Hashanah, went to the Pool of Bethesda and healed the invalid of John 5 with the blowing of Shofar sounding in their ears.

Days later, still in the season of Trumpets, Tabernacles, on His 31st birthday, Jesus read the first part of Isaiah 61 in His home synagogue of Nazareth. Like those in Jerusalem, they too wanted to kill Jesus for announcing that their Messiah had finally arrived. "God appointed Me," to release the captives, to give sight to the blind, to free you from your sins, (*to trump*) to proclaim, (*to announce*) (*to you*) that the Messiah is here -- Here I AM! "He was despised and forsaken of men; He was despised and we did not esteem Him." Isaiah 53:3

For those of us who have studied the harmony of the gospels to conclude that Rosh Hashanah is the feast of John 5:1, it may conflict with other's conclusions. We remember that John wrote his gospel thirty to forty years later than Matthew, Mark and Luke. When one studies the many available charts it may seem that John filled in some time gaps of the other writers, such as the Judaen ministry from autumn AD 27 to late AD 28. If you notice, many or most of apostles were not with Jesus during that time, or at the very least, were with Him only occasionally. The first call was early Ad 28 and later in AD 29 He again called the same disciples; Mark 1:16-20; the call of Matt 9:9; and the appointment of the twelve in Luke 6:12-16, the middle of AD 29. The designated twelve apostles were only consistently with Jesus for only two years. This may explain why there is sporadic reporting of Jesus ministry for the first one and one half years. In the rejections of Jesus by the Jews in both John 5 and Luke 4 Jesus is by Himself; His disciples are not present.

John 5---It must have been quite a sight to see so many at the Pool of Bethesda. So many in need; so heart-rending. Jesus must have selected one who was the most in need, probably the one least to recover, suffering for so long, 38 years. Verse 6; "Do you wish to get well?" I would have bluted; 'are you crazy, of course I want to get well! But this man had given up, totally despondent, lying by the pool every day; just a total no-hoper. Archeologists tell us that the stirring of the water was caused by stone plugs removed so that the cistern system would refill the pool. We only know that the mind can be a wonderful healer, but nothing compared to the One who created all living things.

The incredible life giving Words came forth; "Get up, pick up your bed and walk!" Over 4000 years ago this same Jesus had said; "Let there be light," and there was light. Naturally, immediately, the man's limbs surged with life, and he jumped to his staple feet, picked up his bed and walked.

I remember Jesus once told a parable about a prodigal son; who when he returned to his senses, returned to a loving, merciful Father. But there was an older brother who had turned inward to self; with a mind-set that disregarded any fruit of the Spirit, always making every happening for self only. Six hundred years of Babylonian influence, of accepting tradition equal to their Written Word, of actually worshipping those who claimed higher knowledge and understanding; the priests inoculated self to a condition Jesus called 'Nicolaitans' in two of the Revelation churches. They placed themselves above the common people; their knowledge was their salvation; they lived by the most utmost letter of the law.

“This was quoted and posted about the hearing ear and the seeing eye of acts that were placed in books that one would face in the future in regard to the study of the Torah and the practice of precepts – ‘My children! I created the evil inclination, but have created the Torah as an anti-dote; if you occupy yourselves with the Torah, you will not be delivered into the inclinations hands.’ (35)

The letter had been broken; there must be retribution. Even with the Shofar blaring that required love, mercy, repentance and forgiveness, the ram’s horn could not penetrate the shallowness of the letter of the law, the stature of a nature long dead in self-righteousness. The Pharisees asked of the healed one; what man? –they knew their nemesis was the culprit. No man could just speak and heal except HIM; he is not one of us. He should die!

When the healed crippled man walked, he walked a new way of life; like the ascent of the feast; he was fulfilling the very essence of Rosh Hashanah. In a provocative way Jesus was attempting to move them away from self in the spirit of the festival. In the context of verse 14, it appears that the man had led a life of indulging in sin. Jesus telling the man to sin no more indicated that one; he was forgiven for past transgressions, and two; he was to clean up his life and sin no more. These Jews were very indignant that someone would even consider infringing on any one of their 39 laws of Sabbath keeping.

“Jesus had come to ‘magnify the law, and make it honorable.’ He was not to lessen the dignity but to exalt it. The Scripture says, “He shall not fall nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth.” Isa 42:21,4. He had come to free the Sabbath from those burdensome requirements that had made it a curse instead of a blessing.” (36)

One does not have to go very far in these Scripture texts to see that the criteria for the feast days are being heralded. Although some of the points presented here could be applied to fit a pattern for some or all of the feasts, it should be known that all of the points in Jesus’ narrative will only match one feast, Rosh Hashanah.

“When they (the Jews) charged Jesus as a Sabbath-breaker, Jesus’ response was blunt. ‘Look,’ he said, ‘My Father doesn’t work on a part time basis, nor do I.’ On the charge of making Himself equal with God, Jesus faced them on the question; ‘The truth is,’ He said, ‘That I, my Father’s son, do not do anything by my own choice: I simply follow my Father’s example. He loves me and has disclosed his purposes to men. He’s going to reveal even more astonishing things to me so you had better be ready for it. It is the Father, as you know, who raises the dead, so also the son gives life to whomever he pleases. God no longer judges men: he has put that entirely in my hands so that I may be honored equally with him. If you fail to honor the son, you fail to honor the Father who sent him.’”

“Pay attention now, anyone who heeds what I say and believes in the God who sent me has eternal life. And, because he will have passed from death into life, he won’t have to face the judgment. The time is coming – actually, it’s here now –when the dead will hear my voice and , hearing, will live. The Father is the essence of all life. He has endowed me with the same life, and with it has given me the authority , as the Son of Man, to be judge over all mankind. ---Those who have done well will live forever and those who have done evil will be condemned.” (37)

The Shofar is blasting, the silver horns are like sirens; The Messiah is here, the Savior is here, the Goel Redeemer is among us, the Lord of Lord is in His earthly Temple. Every single aspect of the Feast of Trumpets has become alive, reality in their presence. Like Pharaoh of old, hearts are hardened beyond the reach of God's love and mercy. In Jesus' prayer, John 17:3, Jesus clearly states; "This is eternal life, that they know the Father, and the Son that He had sent." Emmanuel, God with us, the Sent One, here I AM. Jesus has declared He is the only way to life, that all will hear His voice, 5:28; and they will be judged of good and evil; 5:29. The unbelieving Sadducees were stricken beyond comprehension; how dare this unlearned man proclaim resurrection!

The feast required two or more witnesses, and the testimony sanctified. Now Jesus presents His own witnesses, which are irrefutable.

Isa 40:3; "A voice is calling, clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness; make smooth in the desert a highway for our God." "John lived that forecast. 5:35; John the lamp was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light." Jesus directs their attention that His own works testifies that Messiah is being physically present in their sight and hearing. The country side was teeming with those He had healed. He had healed the broken hearted, preached deliverance to the captives of sin, recovered sight to the blind, liberated the oppressed, the bruised. Luke 4:18; Isa 61:1,2. The living testimonies were at every hand.

The Father's word had spoken from heaven; Matt 3:17; "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Is 42:1; "My Spirit is upon Him, He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." John 5:39; "You search the Scriptures because *in them* (my emphasis) you think you have eternal life; it is these that bear witness of me"—vs 42; "you do not have the love of God in yourselves." (refer to John 2:24,25; "Jesus did not trust Himself to the Jews, for He knew all men, and would not accept their testimony for He knew what was inside men." 5:46,47; "If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But if you do not believe his writings, how can you believe My words?"

It is important for us to remember here that the conflict between Jesus and the Jews did not change nor affect the sanctity of the seventh-day Sabbath. The Father's people will worship that occasion eternally, Isa 66:23. Sometimes truth seems brutal. Those who observe any other day as their Sabbath are under the same influence as the spiritually darkened Jews in the first century, the worship of another god. The 'little horn' of Dan 7:24, 25, the same entity as the beast of Rev 13, the woman of Rev 17:3-7, and the harlots of Rev 17:5 (those who follow the whore's teachings, in any way) all directly worship the Prince of this Earth. Many of the leaders of churches and cultic organizations know they directly worship Satan, others, 'sheeples,' or as Walter Veith calls them, the cattle, the cate-chumen, the Goyim, only follow family tradition and misguided teachings. (38)

We leave this section with one more quote: "The Jews empty ritualism carped at the healing and the healed man carrying his bed on the Sabbath, 10-11, and vented its rage on Jesus, 16. Christ claimed a form of a unique relation to Deity, my Father,' 17, the Jews comprehending clearly that Jesus was claiming to be God, 18. (cf John 10: 30,33)" Yeshua claimed to be the Messiah, Lord and Savior for all seasons for every soul. (39)

This brings us directly to the next subject; John 5 and 6 and 7, 8, 9, 10 (7-10 is one narrative) forms a chiasm.

5 – fall festival, Rosh Hashanah; 6 – spring, Passover; 7 – fall, Tabernacles
5 – Jesus gives life/heals the lame/gives eternal life
6 – Jesus gives life/ feeds the hungry/gives the bread of life
7-10 – Jesus gives life/ gives sight to the blind/ “I am the light of the world . Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”
All three settings are confronted with opposition/conflict/denial
All three settings Jesus creates witnesses --- the witnesses illuminate Messiah

At the end of the age in Rev 18:1-4 we see an angel (messenger) coming down from heaven illuminating the whole earth with his glory. God’s people, one by one are lights, and in unison they illuminate the whole universe with the reflection of Jesus. (see Rev 12:1, the woman, church or God’s people standing on the moon reflecting the Son) In John 5-10 those that are healed, recreated, given new life, are living, breathing witnesses, trumpets, Shofars if you like, and with every breath, every step they testify that Jesus is the Messiah; they sanctify Him!

The light/darkness rages conflict in every chapter – every action of Jesus
darkness about law 7:19, 23 – refuse to hear truth 8:37
darkness about Messiah 78:47-52 – refuse message of She-‘ma – act to kill Jesus
darkness about sin 8:24 – servants of sin 8:34
darkness about signs 9:24 – will die in sin 8:34
darkness about door 10:1-20 – eternal darkness 8:21
Close examination will find similar conclusions in every chapter.
Jesus depends on Father
Jews display unbelief
Religion and tradition studies shut off Jesus
Traditions usurp Scripture
Self-righteousness supplants God’s righteousness

More careful analysis will display exactly the same condition of the 1st century Jews, in part in some cases, with 21st century Christians. Many were/are ‘stunned in their condition;’ caught up in worldly thoughts and activities, and in unhealthy habits; in laziness in diet and exercise, and in a lack of moral cleanliness. John 3:19; “This is the judgment, (condemnation) that light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light, for their deeds were evil. Vs 21; He who practices the truth comes to the light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought from God.”
Blow the trumpets; the Messiah is here!

Luke 17:20b, 21; “The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed, or will they say, look, here it is, or, there it is. For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst.” (First, Jesus is here; secondly, His character is within you, if you are in the light!)

We also must see John 5 in an eschatological theme. Rev 14;6-14 has the ingredients of all three of our chiasm in John; 5; 6; 7-10. Under consideration would be: worship, angels, (messengers, *witnesses*) angel from heaven, eternal gospel, preach, hour of judgment, worship creator of heaven, earth, sea and springs of waters, (ref Isa 61, Jesus intro into home town ministry) fear God, give glory, Babylon has fallen, immorality, false worship, (self; beast and image) mark on forehead or/and hand, (Shema, write on doors, hand, heart) keep commandments, have faith in Jesus, (Son is only way) blessed, rest, their

deeds follow them. After scanning this list, we could just read back over the preceding pages of the attributes of all scenarios and they would fit perfectly. We see here Rosh Hashanah and Jesus' plea to the nation Israel.

The plea has always been the same ever since it was given to Adam. Come unto me, I will cover you, cleanse you away your sin, I will make a covenant to give you a new heart, a new mind, a new soul. It is the Shema coming to life within the penitent. Jeremiah 31:7-9, 33; Ezekiel 36:220-31 – Remember, I will make you clean for My sake; I will put My Spirit within you; you will have a new heart. My grandmother would say; “what is good for the goose is good for the gander.” Human nature was turned inward to self in Eden. Quite possibly we have learned how to nurture it more over millenniums.

David Wilkerson wrote a tremendous article in his June '09 newsletter describing mankind stunned into his sinful nature condition. (40)

He describes many pretty, attractive packages that the enemy presents to hypnotize us into submitting to an expedient amount of temptations. One would think that after vicariously witnessing the stumble and rejection of Israel, the Gentile nation would avoid that valley of Hinnon, that valley of eternal death. Many from all ages and philosophies reject the marriage covenant of the Lamb. The eschatological Shema beholds the Messiah in His proper role and place. The reason we use Shema; not just because of its place in the Feasts and worship settings of Israel, but because it gives man's wonderment and awe to the most glorious and magnificent Creator, the **ONE AND ONLY TRUE GOD**, and in Him our only hope for life, even life for just today, let alone eternity.

It amazes how much Jesus actions and conversations paralleled earthly patterns and history. The 30 days of Elul plus ten reminds of 40 years of Israel in the wilderness and Jesus' 40 days in wilderness. The Rabbi taught that during Tabernacles that two subjects of pertinence were illumination and water. Isa 12:3 – “Therefore you will joyously draw water from the springs of salvation.” The Gihon Spring was that spring for Jerusalem. Israel felt safe in their 'city of refuge' guarded by natural topographies and fortress type walls. Did they not know that their true refuge was in the Messiah; trumpets blaring His presence? (Numbers 35:9-34; Psalm 7:1)

In the John 9 narrative, this light and water was Jesus' instrument in responding to the Jewish contenders. A priest was sent daily, Tishri 11-15, to lead a procession from the temple to the Pool of Siloam. He carried a golden pitcher and walked to the accompaniment of music until he reached the pool and there filled the vessel with water. The return to the temple was timed to correspond with the placing of the burnt-offering on the altar. Priests trumpeted his arrival and entrance through the Water Gate into the Court of the Priests. There he was met by another priest, who was designated to carry the wine (drink) offering. Together they walked up the rise (ascent) to the altar. Water and wine were poured into two silver funnels. Then all sang the Great Hallel. (Psalm 136 with response) Then the priest made seven circuits around the altar, remembering Jericho.

Two Scripture texts are very pertinent to this festival activity; 1 Kings 8, the dedication of Solomon's Temple, with a covenant promise of the Lord's first advent; and Zechariah 14: 3 – the Lord shall go forth; 4 – His feet shall stand; 5 – My Lord shall come; 9 – the Lord shall be King over all the earth; 16 – worship the Lord and Tabernacles. (Ex 25:8; Make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them) Jesus was tabernacled in the flesh and now

He is in their midst. When the man born blind made his descent to the Pool of Siloam and then used water libation and then made his ascent to the temple amidst the Shofar announcing that the entire scenario of the feast of trumpets had been fulfilled in the person of Jesus; the Jews were beyond furious, wanting to kill their chosen adversary.

Spiritual blindness does not have a designated time. 1 Cor. 2:14; “But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.” This is as evident today as it was at any time in history. Over the years, especially in the last few decades, prophetic appraisals have been promulgated, and predictions concerning the second advent abound; some teach specific dates. A world-wide daily radio broadcast predicts with some certainty that the creation of earth was in 11,013 BC and that the 2nd advent will occur on October 8-13, 2011. (41)

It is a rather curious coincidence that in a recent exchange with Robert Chapman of International Forecaster.com about the application of Revelation 18 with current events; Chapman predicts that the present international industrial-banking cartel that subjugates most of the world, will cause a worldwide economic collapse in the summer/fall of 2011, following in the economic philosophy of the late Larry Burkett of the Coming Economic Earthquake.

Many self-proclaimed prophets (profits) are emerging from every conceivable avenue. Twice this week I have encountered men who have declared themselves to be THE END TIME PROPHET. Such was the case in Jesus’ earthly ministry. (refer Matt 24:4-8, 23-28) Many have forgotten that Barabas’ name was Jesus; Jesus, son of Bas. When going up to Jerusalem to the temple one would behold the massive gates and doors into the walls and temple itself. To this end the Jews would declare their apertures as going through the ‘gates of heaven,’ ‘gates to heaven.’ Jesus responded by declaring Himself ‘the Gate.’ Referring to Scripture such as Ps 24:7; “Lift up your hands, Oh you gates, be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in;” and Ps 118:17-21; “the land has let me live – open for me the gates of righteousness – this is the gate of the Lord which I may enter – I will give thanks, for You answered me – You have become my salvation.”

John 10:1-10; Jesus tells us amazing truths; - I AM the Gate; I AM the Watchman; My people follow My voice. Next, I AM the Good Shepard; I lay down My life for My sheep. When we continue on with this pattern, in Ps 118:22-24; we find out that Jesus is the cornerstone. (Peter reinforces this; 1 Peter 2:4-10; the rejected living stone calls all you out of darkness into the living Light) It does appear that any area of life that is not inclusive with Jesus as Lord and Savior is deficient, falling short, is missing the mark. The many topics we have touched upon are all illuminating, either by denotation or connotation, to application and definition in the feasts up to Jerusalem.

Every congregation of any type generates a left or right paradigm, and many to extremes. This seems to be especially true in a religious setting, as witnesses by many radical events in history. Over the years I have been amazed at religious rituals around the world that I have witnessed, many based on cultural traditions or teachings outside the realm of Christian accepted doctrines. And yet it does not appear that one can be too extreme in the service of Jesus; almost as if He demands a radical following, if one can discern being born again and a complete life change in character.

Ekkehardt Mueller writes: “Those who know the gospel of John are intrigued when they begin reading the first letter of John and find an introduction similar to John’s gospel. Both passages begin almost identically.” (42)

Although Dr. Mueller expands on this theme throughout the rest of the quarter, I have taken that to much greater horizon. For many years I have taught that the gospel of John was a commentary on the book of Revelation and that the epistles of John were a commentary on both. It would be more correct to say that it is an illumination rather than a commentary, although I see both in many instances.

Our main text of John 5 ends with a terrible note: vs 44-47; You do not have the love of God in yourselves; you do not receive me even though I have come in my Father’s name; you will receive another, any other; you do not believe Moses who wrote about me; and you cannot believe me because you do not believe Moses. (Their mindset was in rejection of anything Jesus would say or do. They were locked into self and self-righteousness) When we compare this with 1 John 5:18-21 we are fascinated with the comparison; amazing. We know that no one born of God sins; (intentionally) the whole world lies in the power of the evil one; vs 20; “And we know that the son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true, and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.”

Sounds incredibly like John 17; this is eternal life, that you know the Father and the Son. May I suggest to every one of you something that I have been enjoying: Read through the book of 1 John and compare it to the texts of the gospel. Well then, what about the book of Revelation; how does this same practice hold true? Various discussions with some Jewish scholars have discouraged connecting the ‘hear’ to the Revelation churches with the Shema of the Old Testament. At the time of those little talks I had a little nagging doubt; but now I have strenuous opposition. Although the Shema is to praise and set on the most highest of high our magnificent Creator and Lord, it still is *a condition of character*. The seven-fold Spirit that He possesses found in Isaiah 11:1,2 is shared by Jesus in Rev 5:12 & 7:12 and are the same characteristics that Jesus offers to share with His people of all times.

The ‘he that has an ear, let him hear’ in an overcoming scenario attributes the ‘he’ that rejects self and adorns himself in Christ’s robe of righteousness to the rewards offered by each of the seven churches. My favorites are the ‘white stone’ with a new name cleansed and built into the wall of the holy city where our God resides, and the ‘eye salve’ that Jesus used on the blind beggar of John 9 that allows us to ‘hear and see’ in the church of the last day, allowing us to sit next to a healed Mephibosheth at the King’s table. When those who have eyes to see and ears to hear finally know that the seals and trumpets of Revelation are the effort of all of heaven and earth to save every individual who will, then the gospel will be heralded in full trump throughout the land.

God speaks, the messengers, both heavenly and earthly, are sent forth, the Spirit as an eternal motion like a gyroscope transforms and seals as completely explained in the first chapters of Ezekiel and Zechariah. John’s description of the horses fits perfectly. At the opening of Rev 4 John offers his hand and invites all who will to not just look through the door, but to enter into the realms of heaven that this ‘gate’ avails. In John five, Jesus offers His hand to all who will believe to come with Him into the heavenly realm, with

Moses and John and John and witnesses. Come unto Me, come with Me; I want you to meet My Daddy. He loves you so much more than you can ever know. Revelation trumpets sound the warning for all who reject heaven's efforts. A highlight would be in the 5th trump Jesus giving the 'key' to Satan to open the abyss and the demons of falling angels and men attack those who choose to be with their Lord and Savior.

Revelation 12 describes this incredibly well; there you are, a person of God, standing on the moon, reflecting the Son, being chased by the Accuser, into the wilderness of this life, but not alone, for Christ will never leave nor forsake His own. As Jesus takes your hand and beckons come with Me, He declares this a new day, a New Year, a new journey with Him throughout eternity. The eternal Rosh Hashanah has arrived, and we do not quiver and quake at the foot of Sinai at the sound of the Shofar, but we clutch the hand of the One who saves and protects us, and we ascend through the gates of the trials and tribulations of this life and into the presence of the only One to whom deserves the full intent of the feast days in every sense of their meaning and spiritual application. .

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- (24) Oskar Sherasane; *In the Shadows of the Temple; Inter-Varsity Press, 2002, pg 83*
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(Many rabbi point to this as the temptation place of Jesus) He states that Jesus drove out the money changers from the Royal Portico beneath.
- (25) Simon Jacobson; *Toward a Meaningful Life; quotes from Rabbis Menachem and Mendel Schneerson; Harper-Collins Publishing 2005, page 183*
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