

The Blood Moon Mania - Legitimate Sign or Hype?

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http://www.lamblion.com/articles/articles_signs15.php

In 2008 the pastor of a congregation in Tacoma, Washington, by the name of Mark Biltz, began to teach that the Second Coming of the Messiah might occur in the Fall of 2015. He based this prediction on the pattern of an astronomical phenomenon that he had discovered. His speculation was picked up immediately by the Bible prophecy sensationalists who specialize in playing around with such matters. The result was that Pastor Biltz's theory became an Internet sensation.

The basis of his theory — and not his conclusion — has now been given legitimacy by the publication of Pastor John Hagee's book, *Four Blood Moons*.¹

Red Flags

But is Mark Biltz's theory really legitimate? The first red flag of caution that must be considered is the source of the theory. Mark Biltz is involved in what is called the Hebrew Roots Movement.² This is an anti-Christian, Judaizing movement. Its members have done everything they can to delegitimize the writings of the Apostle Paul because of his teaching that the Law of Moses was invalidated by the Cross.³

The second red flag is that Biltz is involved in date setting. Both [Matthew 24:36](#) and [Matthew 25:13](#) state that we cannot know the day or hour of the Lord's return. With regard to the parable of the wise and foolish virgins contained in [Matthew 25:1-13](#), Biltz dismisses Jesus' warning in verse 13 that no one can know the day or hour of His return. He does this by arguing that it is directed at the foolish virgins, and not the wise ones.⁴ Yet, there is nothing in the parable to substantiate this conclusion.

With regard to Jesus' similar statement in [Matthew 24:36](#), Biltz tries to explain it away by saying it is a reference to the Feast of Trumpets because although there is a yearly date for this feast, no one knows for certain when it will actually begin because its beginning is dependent on the sighting of a new moon.⁵ Again, there is no justification in the context of the this verse for such a bizarre interpretation.

A third red flag is the fact that there is no way the Second Coming could occur in the Fall of 2015 because there are too many prophecies that must be fulfilled before the Lord's return. To name a few:

- The Rapture of the Church must occur.
- The seven year period called the Tribulation must take place.
- The Jewish Temple must be rebuilt.
- The Antichrist must be revealed.
- A second Jewish holocaust must occur.

To his credit, John Hagee does not set a date for the Lord's return in his excellent new book, *Four Blood Moons*. Instead, he simply takes Biltz's discovery and argues that it is an omen of a major development that will take place — a development that will most likely have a significant impact on the Jewish people.

Red Moons

So, what is this omen that Biltz and Hagee have in mind and which they refer to as "the four blood moons"?

A "blood moon" is the name that has often been assigned to a complete lunar eclipse, which occurs when the earth comes between the sun and the moon, putting the moon into a complete shadow. Such a moon often (but not always) appears to be red in color because of the way light bends around the earth's atmosphere, scattering short wavelength light (green through violet) and leaving longer wavelength light (red, orange and yellow). It's why sunsets and sunrises generally are red.⁶

Complete or total lunar eclipses are relatively rare. During the 20th Century, there was a total of 229 lunar eclipses of all types, but only 81 of these were total eclipses (completely obscuring the moon in the earth's shadow). The rest were partial eclipses. In this century there will be 228 lunar eclipses of all types and 85 total eclipses.⁷

What is rarer is what is called a "tetrad." This is a series of four total lunar eclipses in a row over a two year period of time. Since the time of Christ there have been a total of 87 tetrads, including the last one that occurred in 2003-2004. In this century, we are scheduled to experience 8 tetrads, the most that can occur in a century's time (some centuries have had none at all).⁸

Even rarer is a phenomenon that Mark Biltz discovered. Of the 87 tetrads that have occurred since the time of Christ, only 7 have fallen on Jewish feast days. Those seven occurred in the following years: 162-163, 795-796, 842-843, 860-861, 1493-1494, 1949-1950 and 1967-1968.⁹

For an example of what is meant by a tetrad falling on Jewish feast days, consider the tetrad of 1967-1968.¹⁰

1. Passover, April 24, 1967 — Blood Moon
2. Feast of Tabernacles, October 18, 1967 — Blood Moon
(Total Solar Eclipse, November 2, 1967)
3. Passover, April 13, 1968 — Blood Moon
4. Feast of Tabernacles, October 6, 1968 — Blood Moon

Biltz and Hagee both make much of the fact that the last three tetrads that fell on Jewish feast days occurred at times when significant events were happening among the Jewish people:

1. 1493-1494 — This tetrad followed the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492.
2. 1949-1950 — This tetrad followed the re-establishment of the state of Israel in 1948.
3. 1967-1968 — The beginning of this tetrad occurred right before the beginning of the Six Day war in 1967.

Notice that two of these tetrads *followed* the significant events. Only one (1967-1968) served as a partial precursor of the event. And notice that there was no significant event in Jewish history that was related to the first four tetrads that fell on Jewish feast days.

A Legitimate Omen?

So, what about it? Is the tetrad of 2014-2015 the herald of some major event that will impact Israel in particular?

It could well be.¹¹ The Bible makes it clear that God speaks through signs of nature, including signs in the heavens. The very first chapter of the Bible affirms this fact: "Then 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...'" ([Genesis 1:14](#)).

As for blood moons, the Bible refers to them several times. Some of the references only imply a blood moon when they speak of the moon being "darkened" ([Isaiah 13:10](#), [Joel 2:10](#), [Joel 3:15](#), and [Matthew 24:29](#)). Others specifically mention a moon "turned to blood" ([Joel 2:31](#) and [Revelation 6:12](#)).

But the one thing all these verses have in common is that all of them refer to the Second Coming of the Messiah, and since that cannot occur in 2015, the tetrad of 2014-2015 — if it has any prophetic significance — cannot be a sign that the Messiah is going to return to earth at that time. It must have some other biblical significance, if any at all — as John Hagee argues in his book.

A Caution

I think we should be very cautious about emphasizing things like the Jewish feast tetrads. Such "signs" usually end up as prophetic embarrassments. Consider the mania that occurred in 1982 over the "Jupiter Effect." This line up of the planets was supposed to cause giant earthquakes and tsunamis. The year came and passed with no such significant events. Since that time, we have had to deal with similar manias concerning the Hale-Bop Comet in 1997, the Y2K computer "crisis" of 2000, and the Mayan Calendar in 2012.

We should focus instead on the precise end time prophecies of the Bible that have been precisely fulfilled in our day and time — clearly indicating that we are living in the season of the Lord's return.

One other thing — the signs in the heavens mentioned in the Bible that will accompany the Lord's return may not be natural astronomical occurrences at all. Instead, they may prove to be supernatural in nature, provided by God to herald His Son's return.

A Response From Mark Biltz

When this article was released over the Internet, Pastor Mark Biltz wrote to me denying that he had ever set a date for the Lord's return. Yet the Internet is full of statements of his that clearly indicate his belief that the Lord could possibly return in 2015 at the time of the last blood moon in the 2014-2015 tetrad.¹² One of those statements is in the form of a transcript of a television interview.¹³ Another is a statement Mark posted on his website and then later removed.¹⁴ And if he does not think the Lord's return on that date is a possibility, why has he tried to explain away the warnings that no one can know the date of the Lord's return?

Regarding his being anti-Christian, he states on the home page of his website that "We do not want to convert Jews to Christianity or Christians to Judaism."¹⁵ Furthermore, the pastor of another Hebrew Roots congregation states on his website: "Pastor Mark Biltz and I are both in agreement that the foolish virgins of Matthew 25 are ALL the Sunday churches."¹⁶ The same posting refers to the Apostle Paul as "the spouter of lies."

Pastor Biltz also denied that he believes the basic doctrines of the Hebrew Roots Movement, but if that is true, then why does he identify with the movement? Furthermore, he has an article on his website that

strongly endorses the cornerstone belief of the movement — namely, that Sabbath worship is obligatory.¹⁷ There is nothing wrong with Sabbath worship or celebration of the Jewish feasts or following the Jewish kosher laws, as long as a person does so voluntarily. But when someone begins to teach that these things are obligatory in order to please God, and when they condemn others who do not observe them, that constitutes Judaizing, and that is a serious error — so serious, in fact, that Paul calls it a false Gospel in his Galatian letter.

Pastor Biltz says on his website that his goal is to make "non-Christian followers of Jesus." As one of his critics put it, that's like becoming a "vegetarian meat-eater."¹⁸

Notes

- 1) John Hagee, *Four Blood Moons: Something is About to Change* (Brentwood, TN: Worthy Publishing, 2013).
- 2) For excellent articles about the Hebrew Roots Movement, see:
 - a) Geoffrey Grider, "The Hebrew Roots Cult Movement: Hatred for Christians and the Apostle Paul," www.nowtheendbegins.com/writers/GG/the-hebrew-roots-cult.htm.
 - b) S. Michael Houdmann, "What is the Hebrew Roots Movement?" www.gotquestions.org/Hebrew-roots.html.
 - c) Dean Haskins, "Why Not Hebrew Roots? The False Teachings of the Hebraic Roots Movement," www.freerepublic.com/focus/religion/3000552/posts.
 - d) The Lush Family, "The Dangers of the Hebrew Roots Messianic Movement," www.angelfire.com/la/jlush/dangersHRM.html.
- 3) Geoffrey Grider, "The Hebrew Roots Cult..." (cited above).
- 4) Joe Kovacs, "Blood Moon Eclipses? Second Coming in 2015?" WND, 04/30/2008, www.wnd.com/2008/04/63076/. See also: Daniel Matson, "The Four Lunar Eclipses of 2014-2015," watchfortheDay.org/tetrad20142015.html.
- 5) Ibid.
- 6) Dr. Danny R. Faulkner, "Will Lunar Eclipses Cause Four Blood Moons in 2014 and 2015?" AIG, 07/12/2013, www.answersingenesis.org/articles/2013/07/12/lunar-eclipses-cause-blood-moons.
- 7) NASA, "Index to Five Millennium Catalog of Lunar Eclipses (2000 BCE to 3000 CE)," eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/LEcat5/LEcatalog.html.
- 8) Ibid.
- 9) Alf and Julie Saunders, "The Coming Blood Moons," www.pray4zion.org/TheComingBloodMoons.html.
- 10) Hagee, *Four Blood Moons*, page 210.
- 11) There is really little risk in predicting that something significant may happen to Israel in relation to the 2014-2015 blood moon tetrad. After all, significance has been given to events that happened a year before the tetrad (Spain's expulsion of the Jews in 1492 and the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948). And thus those who are enthusiastic about the Blood Moon Theory would surely not hesitate to give significance to an event that occurs one year after the tetrad. Since the tetrad itself consumes a time period of two years, this means that the prediction that something important will happen in Israel in relation to the 2014-2015 tetrad has a window of four years for its fulfillment!

12) Joe Kovacs, "Blood Moon Eclipses?" (cited above).

13) Alan Kurschner, "Answering Mark Biltz's 'Blood Moon 2014-2015' Date Setting Schema," www.alankurschner.com/2013/08/12/answering-mark-biltzs-blood-moon-2014-2015-date-setting-schema/.

14) It appears that after Mark Biltz appeared on the Prophecy in the News television broadcast in early 2008, he received a lot of flack for indicating that the Lord might return on the date of the last blood moon of 2015 (September 28). Also, people pointed out that the Tribulation, lasting 7 years, had to happen first. Biltz replied to these objections on his website by stating that there was room for the Tribulation, if it started in the Fall of 2008, because counting forward from that date would place the Lord's return in the Fall of 2015 at the end of the 2014- 2015 tetrad. When the Fall of 2008 passed without the Tribulation beginning, Biltz pulled the article from his website. See: Stuart Robbins, "Exposing Pseudo-Astronomy," podcast.sjrdesign.net/shownotes_o85.php. You can find the date-setting statement that Biltz removed from his website in an article titled, "MarkBiltz?" www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=37884&forum=36.

15) El Shaddai website: www.elshaddaiministries.us.

16) Last Trumpet Ministries website: www.lasttrumpetministries.org.

17) El Shaddai website (cited above). Article about the Shabbat.

18) Geoffrey Grider, "The Hebrew Roots Cult Movement..." (cited above)