

# Will Christ Return In 2015?

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**It's been suggested that solar and lunar eclipses occurring in 2014 and 2015 point to Christ's return in 2015. How much can eclipses be relied on to predict the return of Christ or other prophetic events?**

For millennia cultures have superstitiously regarded eclipses as omens of good or evil. These and other astrological "signs" have been used to mislead people into false beliefs concerning their conduct, as well as future events.

We are told in Scripture, "Do not learn the way of the Gentiles; Do not be dismayed at the signs of heaven, For the Gentiles are dismayed at them. For the customs of the peoples are futile" ([Jeremiah 10:2-3](#)). Yet, even among those who claim to be Christians, such superstitions are common.

In recent years, a minister of popular Christianity has gained notoriety suggesting that Christ would return on the Day of Atonement in 2015 based on eclipses occurring in 2014 and 2015 ([www.wnd.com](#)). In pointing out that a solar eclipse will occur on March 20, 2015, a day before the beginning of the new sacred year of the Hebrew calendar, and also the first day of spring in the northern hemisphere, he is quoted as saying, "A total solar eclipse speaks of judgment coming on the nations" ([breakingisraelnews.com](#)). Another prognosticator says of the event, "This is likely a message from God to the entire world" ([wnd.com](#)).

If not the second coming, the tetrad of four "blood moons" occurring in conjunction with Biblical feasts in 2014-2015 is said by another well-known minister to portend some other unspecified significant event or events leading to the fulfillment of end-time prophecies. "A popular speaker has claimed in his television show that there will be blood-red lunar eclipses visible at Jerusalem on April 15, 2014 and April 4, 2015 at the start of Passover in these two years, and on October 8, 2014 at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles in that year. It is then claimed that this is not the speaker's idea, but comes straight from NASA. NASA is also cited as showing that there will be a solar eclipse on March 20, 2015. These phenomena are presented as signs of the end times for Israel and the world" ("Eclipses: the Science and the Pseudoscience," Rodger C. Young, *Bible and Spade*, Spring 2013, p. 44).

As "proof" that such tetrads have prophetic significance, these ministers point to a tetrad coinciding with Biblical feasts in 1949-1950, following the founding of the modern Jewish state of Israel in 1948, and another in 1967-1968. The "six-day war," during which Israel took control of Jerusalem, occurred June 5-10, 1967. They also cite a tetrad that occurred in 1493-1494, and tie it to the Spanish Inquisition.

Before proceeding, let's do some fact checking, and make a few observations.

First of all, solar eclipses are not rare events. During the 21st century, there are projected

to be 224 solar eclipses, of which 77 will be partial, 72 will be annular, 68 will be total and 7 will be hybrids between total and annular eclipses ([en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org)). Total solar eclipses occur about every one to two years. There are expected to be 18 total solar eclipses between 1996-2020 ([csep10.phys.utk.edu](http://csep10.phys.utk.edu)).

Solar eclipses always occur just before the start of a new month (new moon) on the Hebrew calendar. In a given year, there is about a one in six chance of a solar eclipse occurring around Nisan 1 (the first month of the sacred calendar, in which Passover occurs). Recent years in which solar eclipses have occurred near Nisan 1 include 1988, 2005, 2006. Two of these were total, and one was hybrid.

Despite the claims cited in the article of blood-red lunar eclipses visible in Jerusalem, neither of the lunar eclipses that occurred in 2014 at the Passover and Feast of Tabernacles, respectively, were visible in Jerusalem. The lunar eclipse that will occur at Passover, 2015 will not be visible in Jerusalem. The lunar eclipse that will occur on September 28, 2015 will be partially visible in Jerusalem.

Lunar eclipses always occur in mid-month (full moon), There is about a one in six chance that a lunar eclipse in any given year will occur at the time of Passover or the Feast of Tabernacles.

In terms of lunar eclipses, a tetrad is a series of four total eclipses in consecutive order at approximately six-month intervals. Such tetrads are not everyday occurrences, but it's not unusual for several to occur in a given century. The 2014-2015 series will be the 56th tetrad since year 1 A.D. Seven tetrads since 1 A.D. have coincided with holy days in the Hebrew or sacred calendar. The 2014-2015 series will be the eighth.

The tetrad of 1493-1494 coinciding with the spring and fall festivals of the sacred calendar is said to be of prophetic significance because of its connection with the Spanish Inquisition. The Spanish Inquisition actually began officially in 1478, although Jews had long been subject to persecution in Spain and elsewhere in Europe. In March, 1492 the Spanish Monarchs issued a decree ordering Jews in Spain within four months to convert to Christianity, leave, or face death without trial. Many thousands fled, and many of those died without reaching a safe haven. This was only one of a series of expulsions of Jews and pogroms affecting them over a period of millennia.

Since the tetrad of eclipses cited began more than a year later, it came too late to serve as a "warning," or message of any kind to the Jews affected by the decree, had they known there was supposed to be any message in the eclipses to begin with. Only the two spring eclipses could have been seen in Spain, anyway. Is this how God "warns" people?

Tetrads coinciding with sacred calendar festivals also occurred in the years 162-163, 795-796, 842-843, 860-861. Evidently the proponents of the tetrad – prophecy connection could find nothing significant to report relating to these tetrads.

There was no tetrad warning the Jews of the Nazi holocaust, or the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. No tetrads connected with the captivity of the Israelites in the eighth century B.C.

No tetrad connected with the birth or death of Jesus Christ, although there was a partial lunar eclipse on Passover, 31 A.D., the day he died.

No tetrads associated with the building of Solomon's Temple.

No tetrads associated with the destruction of the Temple and the Babylonian captivity of the Jews in the sixth century B.C. No tetrad associated with the beginning of the restoration of the Jews to their homeland in 539 B.C. And none associated with the rebuilding of the Temple beginning in 519 B.C.

There was no tetrad associated with the desecration of the Temple and persecution of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes in the 160s B.C. In short, few if any significant events in Biblical history were in any way associated with a tetrad of eclipses. And if there were any it appears to have been mere coincidence.

A partial eclipse of the moon occurred at the time of the Passover, April 23, 1948. It was only a partial eclipse, shadowing just 2% of the Moon. It was not a "blood moon," as a total eclipse is required to give the Moon a reddish hue. The eclipse was not visible in Jerusalem. A penumbral eclipse occurred in 1948 on October 18, the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles. For most of their duration, penumbral eclipses are difficult to impossible to see, as the Moon is bathed in sunlight during such an eclipse. For a brief time at maximum eclipse the shadow across the moon would have been visible in Jerusalem. This was not a "blood moon."

A tetrad of total eclipses occurred at the time of Passover in 1949, Feast of Tabernacles the same year, and Passover and Tabernacles in 1950. Only two of these, in the fall of 1949, and the spring of 1950, were visible in Jerusalem (data from [moonblink.info](http://moonblink.info)).

Violence broke out between Jews and Arabs in Palestine almost immediately after the UN approved a plan on November 29, 1947 to partition into separate Jewish and Arab states the twenty percent of Palestine that had not been allocated to Transjordan. When the British, who had administered Palestine under a League of Nations mandate, left, Israel declared its independence on May 14, 1948. The new state was recognized immediately by the United States, and other countries followed suit, although there are several countries that have never recognized Israel as an independent state.

Israel was immediately attacked by the armies of five Arab states (Egypt, Syria, Transjordan, Lebanon, and Iraq). Israel, fighting with little support from anyone (except God), managed to beat off the attackers. Beginning in February, 1949 to July, 1949 separate armistices were signed between Israel and the other combatant nations (except Iraq, who withdrew anyway).

The war was essentially over before the first of the tetrad of eclipses beginning in the spring of 1949 and ending in the fall of 1950. It's hard to see any meaningful connection between the tetrad and the founding of the Jewish state, especially since only two of the four "blood moons" were visible in Israel.

Similarly, the six-day war between Israel and several Arab states lasted June 5-10, 1967. There was a tetrad of lunar eclipses beginning at the time of the Passover in 1967 to the Feast of Tabernacles, 1968. None of these eclipses was visible in Jerusalem. Where is any meaningful connection?

Yes, Israel captured the portion of Jerusalem not already under their control. Both the

establishment of the Jewish state and gaining control of the city are important to the fulfillment of end-time prophecy. But after-the-fact eclipses, natural occurrences, appear to have little relevance. These events only gain relevance to the overall picture when placed in the context of Biblical prophecy, and that's what we should focus on, not coincidental eclipses, which add nothing to our understanding of why these events are important.

Incidentally, the Yom Kippur war of October, 1973 began on the Day of Atonement. The war resulted in a victory for Israel, mitigated by U.S. intervention, and led eventually to a peace pact with Egypt. It did not coincide with any eclipse. The only total eclipse of 1973 was a solar eclipse on June 30.

The total solar eclipse of March 20, 2015 will be visible in the North Atlantic Ocean. Only a few people on land, in the Faroes and Svalbar, will be able to see the total eclipse. Varying degrees of a partial eclipse will be visible to people in Europe, Greenland, Iceland, northern Africa, the Middle East and northwestern Asia. Any total solar eclipse has only a narrow path of totality, meaning that under the best of circumstances, it will be visible as a total eclipse to only a relatively small number of people on earth. A strange way for God to send a message "to the entire world." And, by the way, what is the message?

There is no discernible message to be found in the solar eclipse of March 20, 2015. Nor in the lunar eclipse tetrad of 2014-2015. Assertions to the contrary may excite people and sell books, but Christ is not coming back in 2015.

The Bible does mention signs in the heavens associated with the "Day of the Lord," a time of God's judgment being executed on a stubbornly sinful and rebellious world. But what does it say?

Speaking of armies sweeping across the earth, "The earth quakes before them, **The heavens tremble; The sun and moon grow dark, And the stars diminish their brightness.** The Lord gives voice before His army, For His camp is very great; For strong is the One who executes His word. For the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; Who can endure it? 'Now, therefore,' says the Lord, 'Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning' " ([Joel 2:10-12](#)).

"And **I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord.** And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the Lord Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the Lord has said, Among the remnant whom the Lord calls" ([Joel 2:30-31](#)).

"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. **The sun and moon will grow dark, And the stars will diminish their brightness The Lord also will roar from Zion, And utter His voice from Jerusalem; The heavens and earth will shake;** But the Lord will be a shelter for His people, And the strength of the children of Israel" ([Joel 3:14-16](#)).

"I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, **there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken**

by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 'For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?' " ([Revelation 6:12-17](#)).

"Immediately **after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.** Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" ([Matthew 24:29-30](#)).

Note the context of these Scriptures. None suggests a tetrad of eclipses, nor other eclipses occurring in their regular, predictable fashion. Rather they suggest profound disturbances in the natural order of catastrophic proportions. Unmistakable signs of out-of-the-ordinary events, events that will shake the earth to its core.

There are things we should be looking for in connection with the fulfillment of end-time prophecies, but they are not ordinary and predictable eclipses. I'll plan to discuss what some of them are in a future article.

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