

Remnant Life Church
April 7, 2024
For Signs and Seasons
(April 8 Solar Eclipse)
Genesis 1:14-19

An unusual event is set to take place tomorrow afternoon.

- In our area, beginning at a little after 2:00, a solar eclipse will be visible
- At about 3:20 it will peak with about 85 to 90% coverage
- The event will conclude with the sun resuming its full brightness at about 4:30
- The northwestern corner of the Commonwealth, passing directly over Erie, will experience a total eclipse, which is visible along a 110-mile wide path.

This is only the 2nd time in the last 100 years that a total solar eclipse has traversed the entire continental United States, either coast to coast or bordering country to border country.

- The first one was 7 years ago when the shadow of a total eclipse started in Oregon and ended in South Carolina
- The next one is tomorrow
 - The shadow will enter the United States in Texas
 - And it will exit through the northern points of Maine
- It is a unique opportunity to observe the wonder of God's creation as the next one will not occur for another 21 years in 2045

What is even more unique regarding this event, and the reason we are talking about it this morning, is the amount of attention it is generating with regard to the prophetic and biblical application.

- As you might suspect, what is being said runs the gamut from, "Its-the-end-of-the-world-Jesus-is-returning-tomorrow," to "All of that is nonsense; just enjoy the celestial show."
 - I will tell you now I fall somewhere in the middle of that range.
- I say that because the world is not going to end tomorrow because of an eclipse
- I also do not believe that Jesus is returning tomorrow, and you will remember it was Jesus who said that no one knows the day or the hour (**Matt 24:36**)
 - But that is not to say what is happening does not have spiritual implications
 - And I think we, as His church, should be aware of what those are or may be.

The first thing I want to address is what is an eclipse.

- Very simply put, it involves the positioning of the Earth, the sun, and the moon
 - When the orbital paths of the earth and moon line up together with the sun, an eclipse occurs
 - When the moon passes directly in line between the sun and the earth, a solar eclipse occurs as the light of the sun is temporarily obscured from our view by the moon
 - When the earth passes directly between the sun and moon, a lunar eclipse takes place as the earth temporarily blocks the light of the sun from reflecting off the moon

- Now, that's the natural science of astronomy explanation
 - Note I did not say astrology
 - Astronomy is the study of the heavens, God's creation
 - Astrology is a type of divination, something the Bible forbids (**Lev 19:26**), that says the life of a person can be guided by the positioning of the stars and planets.
 - Like many of those things that twist the truth, it focuses on the creation rather than the Creator
- But what does the Bible say, if anything, regarding what we see in the sky?

The Bible does speak of these things because God created them

- God also does not do anything without purpose
- That is true regarding the celestial bodies, as His purpose is always regarding His relationship with us

READ – Genesis 1:14-19

In this early passage, we are in the middle of the account of creation

- God was putting everything in place, and it was good
- So, how does this relate to what we will be seeing tomorrow?

First, look again at what verse 14 says (**PIC 1**)

- **Gen 1:14** - *And God said, "Let there be lights in the firmaments of the heavens to divide the day from the night and let them be for signs and for seasons, and days and for years. (NKJV)*
 - It is vitally important that we understand why God made the sun, moon, and stars in the first place
 - You may say that it was to provide light
 - But that was completed on day 1; we are now on day 4
 - The sun obviously provides light, but that is secondary to its primary purpose as ascribed by God in this verse
 - The two most important words in this verse are 'signs' and 'seasons'
 - The word signs in the original language is 'oath'
 - It translates to mean a signal, distinguishing mark, or indicator
 - Most of us are familiar with that meaning
 - But it is the word 'seasons' that is most applicable to what we are talking about this morning
 - There is a general misunderstanding for many of the meaning of the word seasons
 - That word in the original Hebrew is 'moe-AIDE'
 - But it does not refer to the seasons of fall, winter, spring, and summer
 - The meaning of the word is an appointed time, a meeting or gathering, a set feast
 - The seasons we read of here are, in fact, the Holy feasts established by God for His people

- There are 7 – 4 in the spring and 3 in the fall
- In the spring
 - Passover
 - Unleavened bread
 - First Fruits
 - Pentecost
- In the fall
 - Feast of Trumpets
 - Day of atonement
 - Feast of Tabernacles
- The *lights in the expanse of the sky*, as verse 14 says, were put in place to indicate when we are to meet with Him
 - God used the times of harvest on earth as the sign that the time had come for them to gather and give thanks
 - But He also used His creation, the celestial bodies, to help guide His people
 - And that can still happen today
- There is only one true word spoken – that is the Word of God
 - But there are a multitude of voices declaring that word
 - One of those voices is found in the heavens of His creation
 - **Psalm 19:1-4** - *The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day, they pour forth speech; night after night, they reveal knowledge. They have no speech; they use no words; no sound is heard from them. Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.*
 - God’s voice is not only heard through the written Word; it is spoken by and seen in His creation
- And how is it that we become or are aware of what He is saying?
 - By being a watcher – looking and listening
 - **Rom 1:20** - *For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.*
 - What has been made is His creation
 - We have no excuse!
- In one of Jesus’ final teachings to His disciples regarding the end times, He said this...
 - **Luke 21:25a** – *There will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars*
 - Then, in **Luke 21:28** – *When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads because your redemption is drawing near.*
- God has used His creation throughout the Bible to accomplish His will – all of it miraculous and contrary to the natural

- In **Joshua 10**, God made the sun stand still in order to give the Israelites the victory against the Amorites
 - It held in place for a full day (**Josh 10:13**)
- During the crucifixion of Jesus, the sun went dark for 3 hours (**Mark 15:33**)
 - I have heard it said that there was no eclipse involved in this event
 - But there is nothing that says it was not
 - Either way, God's power was displayed
- John writes that in the last days, when the 6th seal is opened, the sun will turn black and the moon blood red (**Rev 6:12**)
 - We have seen both of these take place in our time
 - They are the results of a total solar and blood moon lunar eclipse
- **Zech 14:6** – *On that day, there will be no light, no cold or frost*
 - That word 'light' can translate to mean sun, moon, and stars
 - An eclipse would fulfill that word
- And then, as we spoke of a few weeks back, the prophet Joel recounts the same type of occurrence
 - *Before them, the earth shakes, the sky trembles, the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars no longer shine (Joel 2:10)*
 - This is in reference to the coming of a great and mighty army
 - It could be natural if this is in reference to a great swarm of locusts reappearing
 - But if it is an earthly army, it refers to the sun and moon darkening likely through an eclipse
- What about the stars?
 - Of course, we all know that God used a star to guide the wise men to the stable where Jesus was born in Bethlehem
 - **Matthew 2:2**

Having seen how God uses His creation to accomplish His will, we then must see how it relates to the calendar of God

- What is the calendar of God?
- It is more commonly known as the Jewish calendar
 - It is called that because they are the only ones who follow it
 - But it is more accurately God's calendar
 - His calendar is not the same as ours
 - His holy days do not line up with, nor are they the same as the ones that we have turned into holidays
 - Much of them are now steeped in paganism as we see each year at the time of Christmas and Easter
 - It is when these celestial events, such as an eclipse, line up closely with the holy days of God's calendar that we need to see and hear with spiritual eyes and ears
- Understand this – His feast days are centered on giving thanks for and His love and provision for us
 - This is most powerfully seen in the sending of His Son, Jesus to die in our place
 - Those holy days of God have the power to be transformative

- But they are also a call for us to be introspective of how we live and seek repentance
 - I believe this is the most important aspect of how we should view these heavenly events
- We should be aware, however, when there is a coming together of the feast days and the events in the heavens
 - This year alone, 2 eclipses will occur during feast times according to God's calendar
 - Of course, tomorrow is the total solar eclipse
 - April 22nd is Passover
 - On Sept 18 of this year, there will be a partial eclipse of the moon
 - Sept. 19 begins the Feast of Tabernacle
 - I am not suggesting that cataclysmic events will take place, but I do believe God is desiring for us to sharpen our radar (iyw) and become more attentive to the signs and seasons

I have spent many hours listening to a wide variety of prophetic voices, teachers, and an assortment of others trying to convince me that their view of what is taking place tomorrow is correct

- I do believe there is meaning in what is taking place tomorrow afternoon
- But I also think it is very easy to head down paths that take it out of the realm of the biblical and into the arena of the sensational
 - I have listened to several who are making a great deal of the fact that the path of the 2017 eclipse took it over 7 cities in the US with the name Salem
 - Salem is the original or ancient name of Jerusalem
 - **Hebrews 7:1-2** tells us Abraham encountered Melchizedek who was the king of Salem, meaning king of peace
 - Salem means peace and jeru means city
 - Jerusalem = City of Peace
 - Tomorrow's eclipse is scheduled to do something similar
 - The path of the eclipse is said to be going over 6 cities by the name of Nineveh
 - While 2 of the cities will be in the total eclipse the others will be on the fringes of the path
 - This is all interesting, but it is dangerous to take things like that as a basis for enforcing a biblical concept
- One thing I do find of interest and worth noting, however, are the paths of the 2 eclipses
 - (PIC 2) The 2017 eclipse traveled from Oregon to South Carolina, moving west to east
 - (PIC 3) Tomorrow's path will travel from south to north from Texas to Maine
 - If we take those two paths and lay them over one another, it forms an X (PIC 4)
 - No, I don't think this is some sort of celestial treasure map, and we should all go and start digging in Paducah, Kentucky, the town at the point of intersection

- But it is interesting to note that in the Hebrew alphabet, the final letter is Tav and is often represented by the letter X
 - Let me read for you an explanation of that last letter of the Hebrew alphabet and its meaning
 - *Tav (ת) has been symbolically associated with covenant and salvation in Hebrew. It is a mark, a sign of the divine covenant between God and His people. In the Old Testament, prophecies about Christ are intricately woven, and Tav, with its symbolic associations, points forward to fulfilling these prophecies in Christ.*

What does the covenant and salvation through Jesus have to do with the United States?

- I think there are several things for us to consider
 - First, it should not come as a surprise for me to say that this nation is headed in the wrong direction
 - That would apply to many areas, but it is especially true in the spiritual sense
 - Every day, there are more and more ways that the government of this nation is stifling and restricting the freedom of Christians and Christianity
 - And I believe it will not only continue, it will get worse
 - God is patient, longsuffering and loving
 - But there will come a time when He will say enough
 - There will come a time when His judgment will fall on this nation just as it did throughout both biblical and secular history
 - God will not be mocked!
 - That brings us to a second consideration
 - These signs and activities in God's created heaven should be seen as a call for this nation, our churches, and every Christian to reflect and repent
 - The formula for the salvation of this nation has already been given
 - It was written over 2,500 years ago by the prophet Ezra (PIC 5)
 - **2 Chron 7:14** – *If my people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*
 - Humble, pray, seek Him, and turn
 - That turning is the third consideration
 - We must repent
 - All throughout the Scripture, those who repent were forgiven
 - The children of Israel spent a large amount of time through their history repenting for falling away from God and worshipping idols
 - Yet God forgave them
 - We mentioned Nineveh earlier
 - Nineveh was the capital of Assyria the people who came and laid siege to Judah in 701 BC
 - Jonah went and preached there about 50 years prior to that time; they repented and were spared

- The people of Sodom and Gomorrah were unrepentant
 - They suffered the wrath of God
 - To this day, a cold heart unwilling to repent is likened to that of those two cities

Let me add just one more thing for you to consider:

- In 2023, there was a partial eclipse of the sun that traversed through a portion of this country beginning in Oregon and exiting through Texas
 - Oregon was where the 2017 eclipse started
 - Texas is where the eclipse tomorrow begins
- But if we take the path of these three celestial events and lay them out together, this is what we see (PIC 6)
 - The path of the 2 total eclipses form an X – the symbol for the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet *Tav*
 - What we see here is the letter A – the symbol used for the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet *Alef*
 - Jesus is called the first and the last
 - In the Greek, He is the alpha and the omega

I believe that God spoke and continues to speak to those who have ears to hear and eyes to see

- Is there a crystal clear message in these things?
 - You would be hard-pressed to say that, as there are many possible interpretations
 - Evidenced by all that you can hear being said by so many
 - I believe that it is first and foremost a reassurance by God the Father that He is in full control of not only the future of this country but of all the world
 - It is as if the name of Jesus has been spelled out or signed by God using the pen of His creation
- There can be no doubt that God uses His creation in the heavens to speak to us today just as He did to His people throughout the Bible
- And He will continue speaking in that way through to the very end of time, just as John wrote in the book of the revelation
- The question is, are you willing to accept and believe that God operates outside of what the world considers acceptable?
 - The answer to that question will determine if you have ears to hear and eyes to see
 - How much faith do you really have when it comes to things that are outside what the world calls truth?
 - My prayer this morning is that it is very present, always growing, and you are willing to stand firm in that faith.

Here is what I am offering regarding the eclipse of 2024

1. God's awesome greatness is far beyond our ability to fully understand, and He will use all of His creation, in any way He chooses, to accomplish His will.
 - a. But we must be watching and ever-vigilant

- b. Like the bride and her attendants waiting for the groom to arrive at the Galilean wedding
 - c. She must keep her lamps filled with oil and her wicks trimmed ready for his arrival – always watching
 - d. If she is not ready she will miss him – if we are not watching we will miss what God is saying
2. Allow the splendor of this event to remind you of His power and majesty.
- a. In a spirit of humility, reflect on your life and repent of those areas that are present under the protection of your pride
3. Third, do not be afraid.
- a. In Paul's second letter to Timothy, he wrote – *For God did not give us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, of love, and self-discipline (2 Tim 1:7)*
4. Finally, enjoy the show!