

NOON TO NOON MADNESS

(Part Seven)

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We are living at a time when there are a myriad of wannabes trying to impress everyone with their professed immense, exalted insight. In fact, they are usually unscholarly, unenlightened, puffed-up with pride, self-aggrandized would-be luminaries with aspirations far beyond their capability, and they work overtime to promote their flawed postulations. They twist their subject-matter so far beyond reason that it would make the supervisor of a pretzel factory blush with envy. The so-called "noon to noon biblical day" theory is one of these hocus-pocus shell-game schemes being advanced. The leading architect to this one (and backed by Pete Peters) seems to be one Gene Heck and his publication *The Weekly Sabbath*: Part I: "From When to When?", Part II: "Which Day of the Week?", Part III: "Yes, But What About...?" Heck dubs himself: Bible Research Institute, 11755 Bunco Road, Athol, Idaho 83801, Phone (208) 683-2147.

If you're not aware of Gene Heck's postulation, he believes that the Hebrews of old started their day at high noon, and that that day then continued until the next day at high noon when another day started. He swears that they observed the change of one day to another by watching the eastern gate, and when the shadow changed from the west side of the gate to the east side of the gate it was a signal to the priests that a new day had started. We have discussed the impossibilities of such a hypothesis in the first six parts of this series. We will now lay bare some other nitwit ideas.

To give you an example of what all these so-called "Bible experts" have little knowledge of, I will cite a case where nearly every bandstand would-be-adept on Scripture fumbles the ball. That is the story of Ruth. They will erroneously claim that Ruth was a "gentile Moabite" who became an ancestor of Yahshua Christ. Anyone who makes this declaration has little-to-no conception of what the Bible is saying.

This is not at all what the Bible teaches. Under the Joshua period, the Israelites killed and displaced the occupants of the land of Moab north of the river Arnon, and then occupied that land themselves for 300 years. Please check the following scriptures: Num. 21:25, **29**, 31; 33-35; Deut. 2:32-34; Deut. 3:12-16; 23:**3**; Judg. 11:12-**26**; Zeph. 2:9; Isa. 25:10. If at first you don't understand the connection, reread these until you do understand. Ruth was merely an Israelite who dwelt in the land of Moab. Ruth was a Moabite only by geographic area rather than by genetics. Christ was of a pure bloodline all the way back to Adam. Rahab was also an Israelite.

Ruth never told Naomi "Your God will be my God", regardless of the claims of the translators. The term "God" is from the Hebrew elohim, and means mighty one/s. It can mean heathen gods as well as our Almighty. It can also be rendered "angels" or

“judges”, and Ruth lived during the Judges period. Ruth, in essence, was saying to Naomi, “I will leave the jurisdiction of my judge, and your judge will become my judge.”

As for Rahab the harlot, we can know she was an Israelite because she let down a “cord” with a “scarlet thread” over the wall for the spies of Israel, Josh. 2:15, 18. The “scarlet thread” became the standard for Zarah-Judah from his birth at Genesis 38:28-30. The British navy, to this day, has a red thread running throughout all the rope they use.

Whether or not Rahab was a harlot is a topic for debate. I would recommend that anyone seriously interested in the subject check with Adam Clarke at Josh. 2 in his original six-volume *A Commentary And Critical Notes* published by the Methodist Book Concern (rather than a later abridged edition). Clarke was rather a dull boy and had failing grades. Upon being shamed by his instructor to the category of a beggar, Clarke suddenly came to life, never to look back again. He mastered several languages along with history as well as the Classics. Clarke, citing history and several Classics, didn't believe that Rahab was a sexual harlot, nor do I. Had Rahab been an immoral harlot she should have been destroyed along with the Canaanites (see Lev. 18:3-30). I may cite Clarke's comments on Rahab and how he believed she was simply an innkeeper in a future article or brochure.

The wannabe, pretzel-twister, so-called Bible experts create all kinds of new calendars, claiming that “we should not keep time as the Jews do”. But Yahshua Christ Himself said in red letters at Matt. 23:3 (speaking of the scribes and Pharisees): “**All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.**” By this irrefutable statement, we can know beyond all doubt which weekly day the Sabbath should be kept as well as when to observe the annual Feast days. Yahshua was not endorsing the scribes and Pharisees here, but Moses. Nor were these days changed after the Crucifixion. Many cite 1 Cor. 16:2 to support their argument, which says: “**Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.**”

One must consider here the phrase “lay by him in store”. To “lay in store” for Israelites meant to go out to the barn and shovel grain from one bin to another or into grain sacks, or as often used in ancient times, placed in large earthen jars to protect from all the predators such as rats. They didn't have Decon in those days. To “lay ... in store” requires work, and thus could not have been done until the start of a new work week. Another form of tithing was with cattle, which also required a roundup and then passing them under the rod, and as any farmer or rancher can attest, takes great effort. The word “*day*” is in italics, so it is not advocating Rome's Mithraic Sunday. The so-called “Sunday Sabbath” came into the picture when Constantine merged Christianity with Mithraism, which was a political maneuver on his part.

Gene Heck uses the usual non-biblical line of reasoning when he writes, page 21: “**WARNINGS FOR CHRISTIANS ... BEWARE OF ... The Doctrine of Men And Jewish Fables:** *It is a good thing that Christ, Paul, and the other apostles warned us about wolves in sheep's clothing: false teachers that would come into our midst, some of whom would spring up from our own church bodies to lead people away from the truth. There is, in fact today, a group of people who follow the 'doctrine': or 'teachings*

of men': people who practice the teachings of ancient Phariseeism, the same Phariseeism that Christ accused the Scribes and Pharisees of practicing in His time."

Heck continues on page 22: "*These people who call themselves 'God's chosen people' but do lie, begin their day at sundown and have deceived millions and millions of people in Christendom to follow their traditions and commandments of men."*

Heck continues on page 59: "*Christ warned you; Paul warned you; and this humble author warns you: 'When you go to the Jews or Jewish writings for anything, you will get nothing but Jewish fables that will turn you from the truth.'* Where you spend eternity may lie in the balance." Here Gene Heck is infected with a serious case of god-syndrome by prejudging and assigning people who don't agree with him to their future afterlife. My, what pride and gall.

With these statements, Heck has completely overlooked Matthew 23:3 where Yahshua Christ said: "**All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that observe and do ...***" This passage proves beyond all doubt that Heck didn't research his subject before writing it, nor did "Bob Skaggs ... Pete Peters ... James Bruggeman ... Dan and Carrie, [whoever they are] ... my [Heck's] wife Barbara ... Charles Wiseman [sic Weisman]" and all the rest of the wrecking crew whom Heck mentions as supporters. Matthew 23:3 has made all these people named by Heck liars, and they all are part and parcel of Heck's subterfuge. At this point, the reader can either believe Heck or Christ, and the reader can't have it both ways! So all of you who have accepted Heck's lie have rejected Christ and His Holy Word!

HECK'S MISCONCEPTIONS OF BOTH THE TEMPLE'S WALLS AND GATES

Evidently, Gene Heck has observed a lot of fences and gates in Idaho where he lives, where ranchers enclose specific areas to restrict their livestock from straying away. Had Heck ever done any "research", he would have discovered that the walls and gates surrounding the Temple at Jerusalem could not serve as a time-keeping device, and there is not a single scriptural reference to indicate the walls or gates ever were. I will point out again that Heck dubs himself "Bible Research Institute", which surely has to be a misnomer in his case.

The walls and gates at Jerusalem were far different than the fences and gates of Heck's farm- and ranch-endowed Idaho. The city and Temple complex of Jerusalem had three different walls to consider. First were the walls around the city itself; second, the walls around the Temple court area; and third, the walls of the Temple itself. Additionally, one must also consider the inner court area, as well as the outer court area plus the Antonia area. The foundations of these walls had to be built to prevent undermining during a time of siege. Therefore it required that these foundations had to be dug very deep into the ground and built up from there with substantially large solid rocks up to considerable heights, with walls better than 20 ft. thick to prevent tunneling-through. Further, these walls had to be wide enough at the top so defenders could gather and maneuver to stave off an enemy. In addition to this, the gates in these walls would be completely enclosed at the sides and over the top, and the gates would be made of brass or iron, taking many men to open and close. Sometimes there were several gates, so that if an enemy broke one down, he would be blocked by another, or maybe a third or fourth. The gates had to be as strong as the walls, or one didn't live very long! Not only that, but they had to be anchored to the wall in sockets in such a

way that it would be next to impossible for the enemy to displace them. They were fortified walls, with towers at the top for the watchmen to keep a lookout for an enemy. With all of these gates recessed into these thick walls, they surely couldn't be used as a sundial! Yet Heck **insists** we believe these **massive enclosed gates (within 20+ ft. thick walls)**, built to withstand battering rams, were used to determine when one day ended and another day began!

That the walls surrounding the city of Jerusalem were very high and many feet in thickness with very deep foundations, there is little disagreement. But were the walls surrounding the Temple complex built in like manner? All we need do is go to the *Apocrypha* at 1 Macc. 6:18, 26, 51-55 to see (and for all those who demand the *KJV* only, try the 1611 edition):

“ 18 About this time they that were in the tower shut up the Israelites round about the sanctuary, and sought always their hurt, and the strengthening of the heathen. ... 26 And, behold, this day are they besieging the tower at Jerusalem, to take it: the sanctuary also and Bethsura have they fortified. ... 51 As for the sanctuary, he besieged it many days: and set there artillery with engines and instruments to cast fire and stones, and pieces to cast darts and slings. ... 52 Whereupon they also made engines against their engines, and held them battle a long season. ... 53 Yet at the last, their vessels being without victuals, (for that it was the seventh year, and they in Judea, that were delivered from the Gentiles [sic heathen], had eaten up the residue of the store;) ... 54 There were but a few left in the sanctuary, because the famine did so prevail against them, that they were fain to disperse themselves, every man to his own place.” This passage is referring to the attack of Antiochus. At 1 Macc. 13:52, we are told that the Temple defense complex was “made even stronger”.

The Temple was a haven of refuge and needed to be built for safety. Not only was the Temple at Jerusalem well fortified, but in ancient times all temples (pagan or otherwise) were well fortified. *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, 1985, by P. J. Achtemeier, page 1030 has this:

“ In addition to the prominence of their location, temples can often be identified as residences for deities by some architectural divergence from the secular monumental buildings of their time. Size alone is not a criterion since, as we have noted, palaces might exceed temples in size. However, the thickness of a temple's walls matched or even surpassed that of the walls of adjacent palaces. The temple was in a sense like a fortress, protecting the sanctity of the god, the lavish furnishings of the god's dwelling, and also the precious commodities brought into and stored in the temple storerooms.” If all temple walls were that thick, how much more so the walls around the Temple complex at Jerusalem?

Now consulting a passage in Josephus' *Wars* which has a heading “A Description Of The Temple”. To show you that the original Temple built by Solomon had surrounding walls around the Temple complex, I will take excerpts of descriptions and dimensions from Josephus' *Wars* 5:5:1-4:

“ Now this temple, as I have already said, was built upon a strong hill. At first the plain at the top was hardly sufficient for the holy house and the altar, for the ground about it was very uneven, and like a precipice; but when king Solomon, who was the person that built the temple, had built a wall to it on its east side, there was then added one cloister founded on a bank cast up for it, and on the other parts the holy house

stood naked; but in future ages the people added new banks, and the hill became a larger plain. ... The lowest part of this was erected to the height of three hundred cubits, and in some places more; yet did not the entire depth of the foundations appear, for they brought earth, and filled up the valleys, as being desirous to make them on a level with the narrow streets of the city; wherein they made use of stones of forty cubits in magnitude;... Now, for the works that were above those foundations, these were not unworthy of such foundations;... The cloisters [of the outmost court] were in breadth thirty cubits, while the entire compass of it was, by measure, six furlongs, including the tower of Antonia; ... Now nine of these gates were on every side covered over with gold and silver ... Each gate had two doors, whose height was severally thirty cubits, and their breadth fifteen ... Now the magnitudes of the other gates were equal one to another; but that over the Corinthian gate, which opened on the east over against the gate of the holy house itself, was much larger; for its height was fifty cubits; and its doors were forty cubits; and it was adorned after a most costly manner, as having much richer and thicker plates of silver and gold upon them than the other ... Its first gate was seventy cubits high, and twenty-five cubits broad ... Its height extended all along to ninety cubits in height, and its length was fifty cubits ... but then this house, as it was divided into two parts, the inner part was lower than the appearance of the outer, and had golden doors of fifty-five cubits altitude, and sixteen in breadth ...”

Consulting now the 9th edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. 23, p. 184 for further aspects concerning the Temple's construction and dimensions of its surroundings:

“*The Temple of Herod.*— In the eighteenth year of his reign (20-19 B.C.) Herod the Great began to rebuild the temple and its precincts from the foundation, doubling the old area (*Ant.*, xv. 11; *Bell. Jud.*, i. 21). The works included the reconstruction, on the old site, of the Baris, which now received the name of Antonia, and is generally reckoned by Josephus as forming part of the temple precincts. Apart from the Antonia, the temple area formed a quadrangular plateau supported by retaining walls of great height and strength, and surrounded by porticos. Three of the porticos were double walks, 30 cubits broad, with monolith pillars 25 cubits high, and cedar roofs; the fourth or southern portico (the Stoa Basilica) had four rows of Corinthian pillars and three walks, respectively 30, 45, and 30 cubits in breadth. The middle walk was twice the height of the aisles, and the latter were 50 feet high. As regards the size of this enclosure, we are told by Josephus that the Stoa Basilica was a stadium or 600 feet long (*Ant.*, xv. 11, §5) ; and in *Ant.*, xx. 9, §7, the same length is assigned to the eastern colonnade, which was known as Solomon's Porch (comp. John x. 23; Acts iii. 11 and v. 12), because it, and it alone, rested on an ancient substructure held to be the work of Solomon. The whole circuit of the porticos was therefore 4 stadia, or with the Antonia 6 stadia (*B. J.*, v. 5, §2). The Antonia lay on the north side (*Ant.*, xv. 11, §4) and communicated by stairs with the north and west porticos at the northwest angle of the enclosure.” [Note: 3 courts: inner, great & outer]

From the 1910, 11th edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. 26, pp. 606, 608 we read under the topic “Temple”:

“*The Temple Court, Altar and other Apparatus of the Cult.*— The temple stood within the western half of ‘the court of the house of the Lord,’ also known as ‘the inner court’ to distinguish it from ‘the other court’ round the adjoining palace and from ‘the

great court' which surrounded the whole complex of Solomon's buildings. All three had walls in which three courses of hewn stone alternated with a course of cedar beams ... To the 'court of the house' laymen as well as priests had access (Jer. xxxv. 1 ff., xxxvi. 10). Several gates gave entrance to it, but their precise position is uncertain. The principal entrance from 'the great court' was doubtless in the east wall. Another was in the south wall and communicated with 'the other court' and the royal palace. There were also one or more gates on the north side of the court ...

"The Outer Court, its Gates and Colonnades.— The outer court of Zerubbabel's temple (500x500 cubits) was doubled in area according to Josephus (*Bell. Jud.* I. xxi. i). The extension was principally on the south, which involved enormous substructions on both sides of the hill, in order to secure the necessary level surface. There can be little doubt that this part of the present Haram area with its containing walls is essentially the work of Herod. The northern boundary of this great court, termed 'the mountain of the house' in the Mishnah, and now generally known as 'the court of the Gentiles,' remained as before, and is represented by a line of scarp immediately to the north of the present inner platform of the Haram. This line of scarp, when prolonged east and west for about 1000 ft. in all, meets the east wall of the Haram a little to the north of the Golden Gate, at a point 390 yds. (800 cubits) from the S.E. angle, and the west wall at the same distance from the S.W. angle."

Here we have gone the long way around to demonstrate that a "gate" cannot be used as a sundial, especially at the Temple complex at Jerusalem during the time it was in operation. The best two arguments I know that refute a "noon to noon" day are (1) At John 20:1, where Mary Magdalene went to the sepulchre while it was still dark "The first *day* of the week", and then at v. 19 it says: "Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week ..." If a new day started at noon, why doesn't it say "the next day"? (2) If a new day started at noon, why didn't they take Christ down off the cross and bury Him just before noon? Be ready to deal with this irrational drivel when confronted.