

The Magi Almost Caused a War

 sightedmoon.com/the-magi-almost-caused-a-war/

By Joseph F. Dumond

September 12, 2018



News Letter 5854-026

The 2nd Year of the 4th Sabbatical Cycle
The 23rd year of the 120th Jubilee Cycle
The 4th day of the 7th month 5854 years after the creation of Adam
The 7th Month in the Second year of the Fourth Sabbatical Cycle
The 4th Sabbatical Cycle after the 119th Jubilee Cycle
The Sabbatical Cycle of Sword, Famines, and Pestilence

September 15, 2018

Shabbat Shalom to the Royal Family of Yehovah,

May your Name be found in the Book of Life.

Our World in Crisis

As you read this two monsters are hitting the East Coast of the USA and the Northern Philippines.

Jeremiah 4:5 Declare in Judah, and proclaim in Jerusalem, and say,
“Blow the trumpet through the
land; cry aloud and say, Assemble,
and let us go into the fortified
cities!’ Raise a standard toward
Zion, flee for safety, stay not, for I
bring disaster from the north, and
great destruction.

A lion has gone up from his
thicket, a destroyer of nations has
set out; he has gone out from his
place to make your land a waste;
your cities will be ruins without
inhabitant. For this put on
sackcloth, lament and wail, for the
fierce anger of the Lord has not
turned back from us.”

“In that day, declares the Lord, courage shall fail both king and officials. The priests shall be appalled and the prophets astounded.” Then I said, “Ah, Lord God, surely you have utterly deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, ‘It shall be well with you,’ whereas the sword has reached their very life.”

At that time it will be said to this people and to Jerusalem, “A hot wind from the bare heights in the desert toward the daughter of my people, not to winnow or cleanse, a wind too full for this comes for me. Now it is I who speak in judgment upon them.” Behold, he comes up like clouds; his chariots like the whirlwind; his horses are swifter than eagles— woe to us, for we are ruined!

O Jerusalem, wash your heart from evil,
that you may be saved.

How long shall your wicked thoughts
lodge within you?

For a voice declares from Dan and
proclaims trouble from Mount Ephraim.

Warn the nations that he is coming; announce to Jerusalem, “Besiegers come from a distant land; they shout against the cities of Judah. Like keepers of a field are they against her all around, because she has rebelled against me, declares the Lord. Your ways and your deeds have brought this upon you. This is your doom, and it is bitter; it has reached your very heart.”

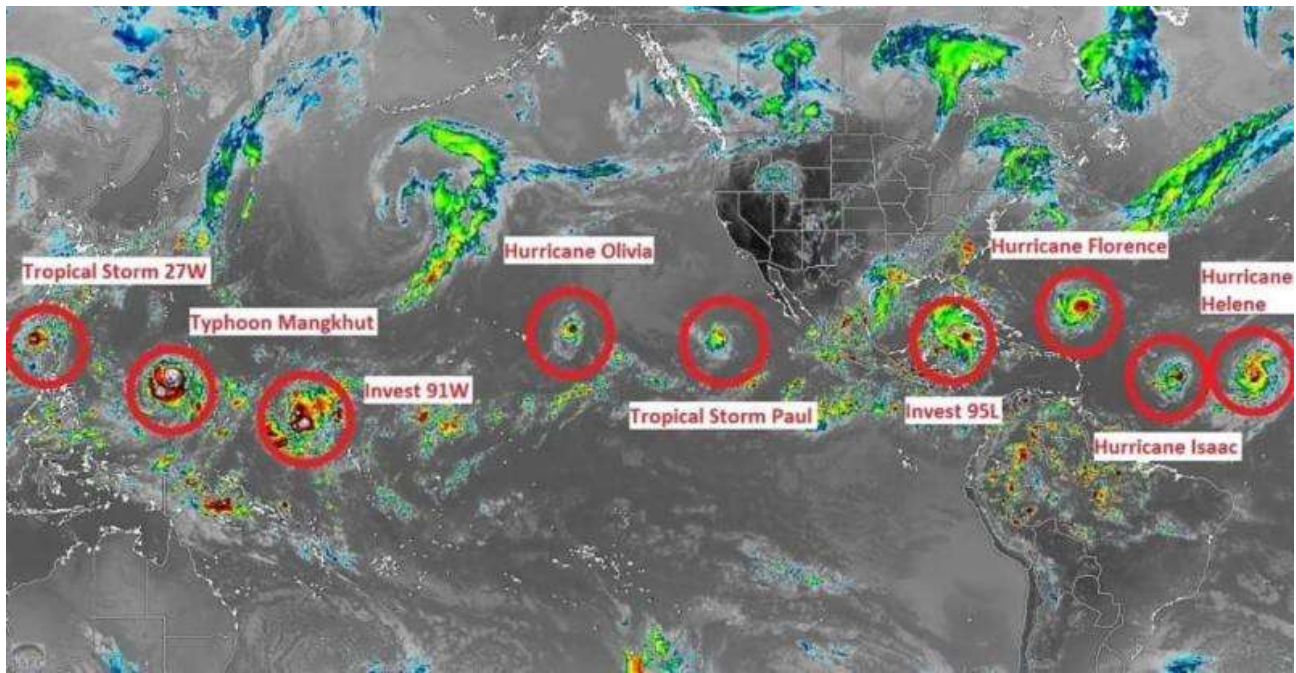
My anguish, my anguish! I writhe in pain!

Oh the walls of my heart!

My heart is beating wildly; I cannot keep silent, for I hear the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.

Destruction follows hard on destruction; the whole land is laid waste. Suddenly my tents are laid waste, my curtains in a moment. How long must I see the standard and hear the sound of the trumpet? “For my people are foolish; they know me not; they are stupid children; they have no understanding. They are ‘wise’—in doing evil!

But how to do good they know not.”

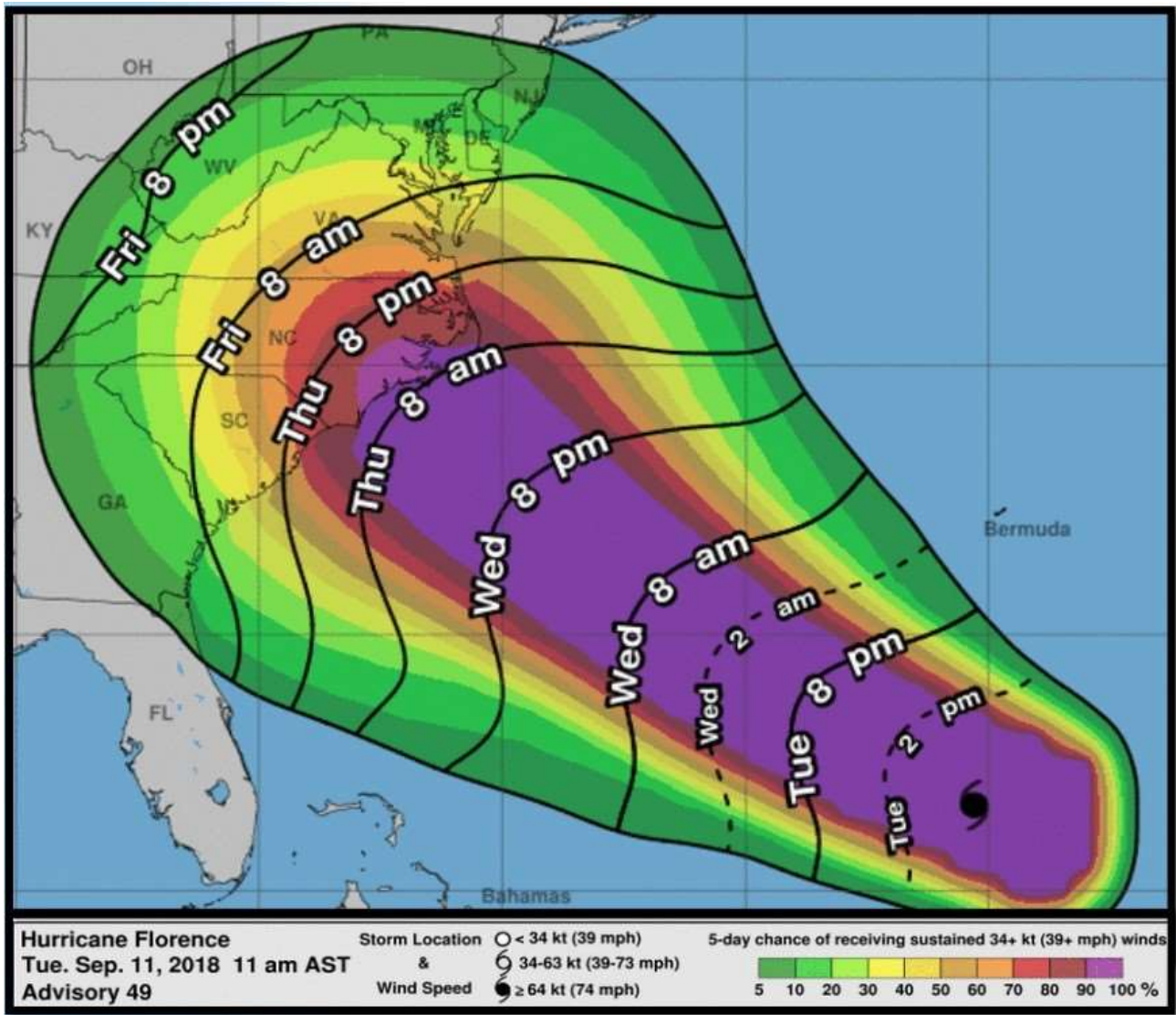


As of Sept 11, 2018, the national weather recorded this picture of all the Hurricanes and Typhoons going across the globe.

Lev 26:18 And if in spite of this you will not listen to me, then I will discipline you again sevenfold for your sins, and I will break the pride of your power, and I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze. And your strength shall be spent in vain, for your land shall not yield its increase, and the trees of the land shall not yield their fruit.

Right now the West coast of the USA is rebuilding the houses and businesses of thousands of people who lost them all in the recent wildfires on the west coast. Their strength is being spent in vain. You will next be hearing about mudslides from rains that are going to come on that now barren land where the trees used to be.

By the time you read this News Letter many of you will be evacuated out of the East Coast due to the fact that Hurricane Florence is now landed in the Carolinas of the USA.



UPDATE: Sept 11, 2018: With winds hitting up to 130 mph, Hurricane Florence has officially been upgraded to a Category 4. It is currently moving west-northwest at a pace of 15 mph as it heads for its predicted landfall in North Carolina.

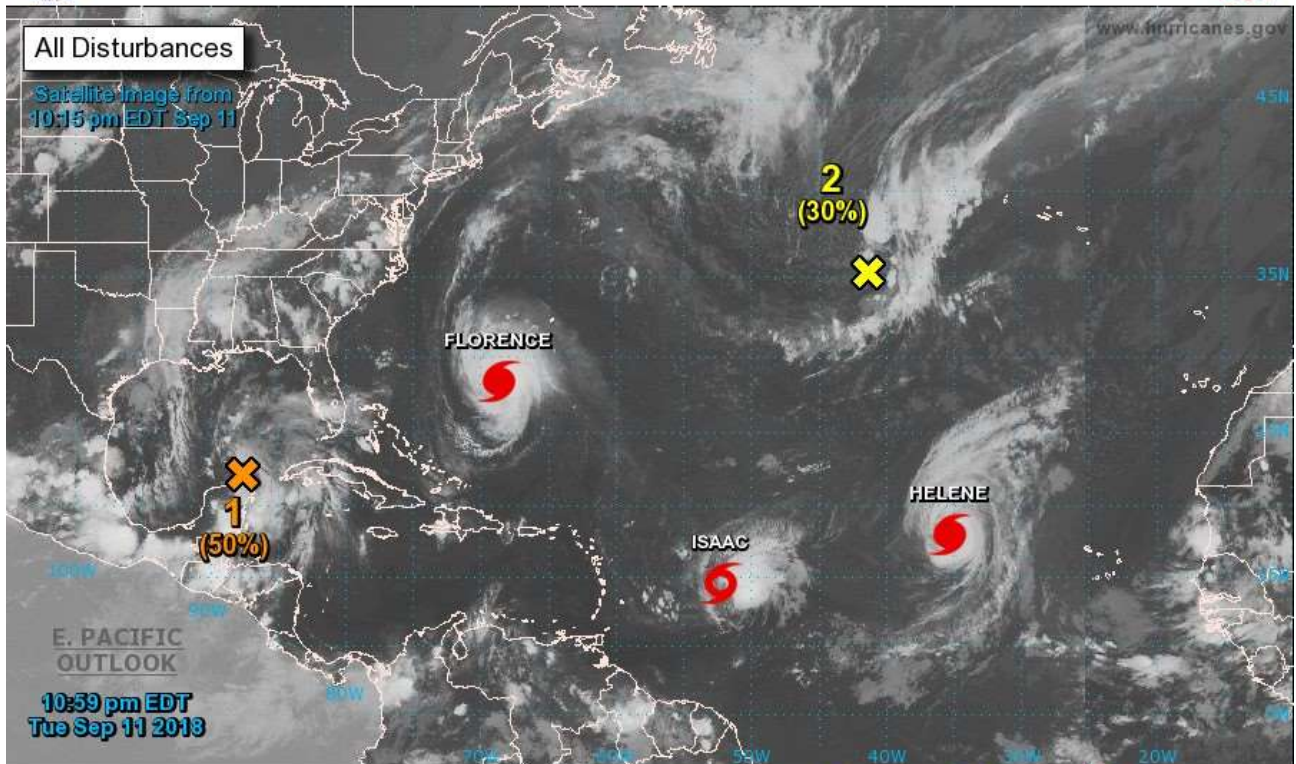
The National Hurricane Center (NHC), whose predictions about Florence have been accurate so far, now says that the storm will build in size, strength, and speed before it reaches land on Friday.

And on the heels of Florence comes Hurricane Isaac to the Caribbean Islands

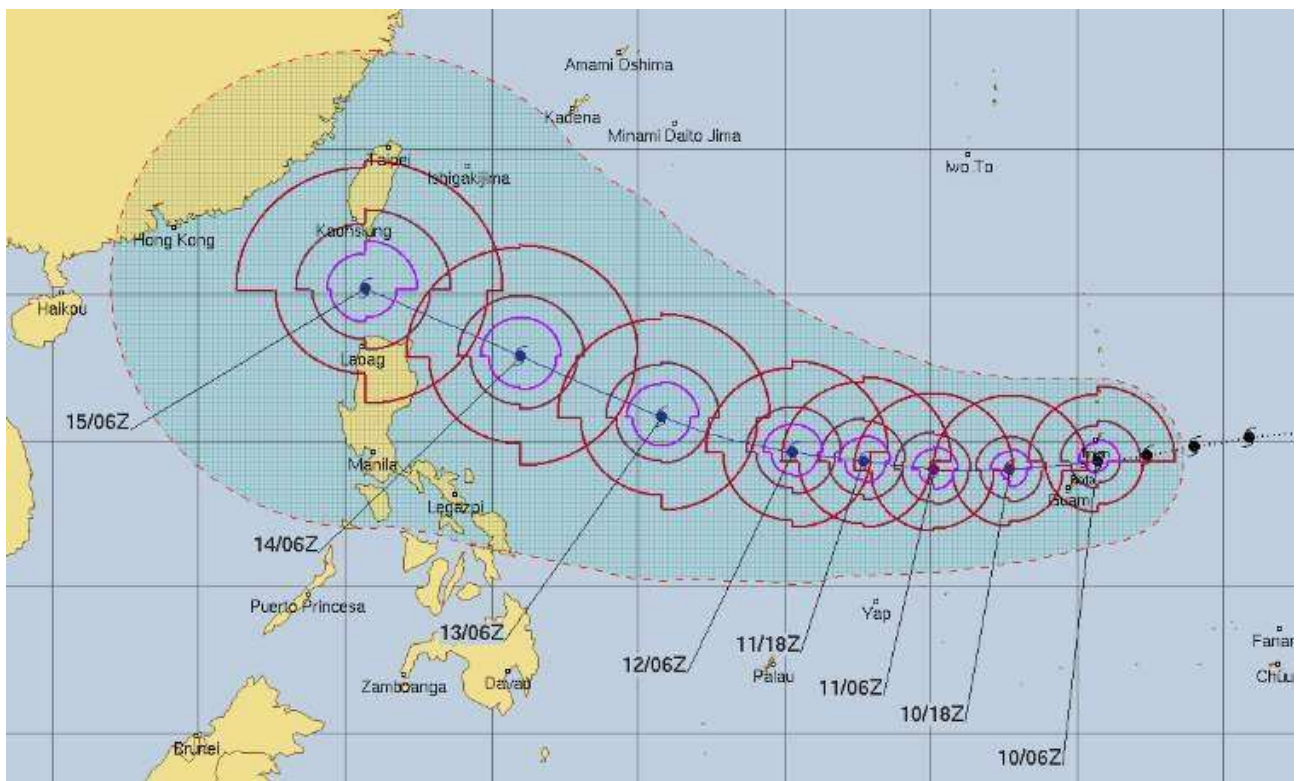


Two-Day Graphical Tropical Weather Outlook

National Hurricane Center Miami, Florida



We also have Hurricane Mangkhut also going across the Northern end of the Philippines. And while many in the USA can flee inland to escape the Hurricane, those in the Philippines cannot flee anywhere and have to ride it out. The same goes for Taiwan.



Manila, Philippines – The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) clarifies that “Mangkhut” is classified as a ‘typhoon’ although it still has a possibility to become a “super typhoon”.

As per PAGASA latest severe weather disturbance advisory issued at 3:00 PM today, Mangkhut further intensifies its strength. It carries a maximum sustained winds of up to 150 km/h and gustiness of up to 185 km/h. The eye of Typhoon Mangkhut is still outside the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) and spotted, based on all available data, at 2,255 km East of Southern Luzon. Once it enters PAR, it shall be called Typhoon Ompong.

Mangkhut moves on westward direction at a speed of 35 km/h and may enter PAR this Wednesday, September 12. According to its previous advisory, PAGASA said that the severe weather disturbance may further intensify at 205 km/h before PAR entry. It would make a landfall Cagayan-Batanes area around Saturday, September 16. It is forecast to exit PAR between Saturday and Sunday.

The state weather bureau on advised residents in certain parts of Luzon to prepare for the strong typhoon. Government agencies involved in disaster risk reduction are also alerted for the possible severe effects of the typhoon, which is anticipated to be felt by Thursday or Friday in Northern and Central Luzon.

The weather situation is going to get much worse. I would like each of you to click on this link and watch the [temperatures for the world since 1881](#).

Seventeen of the 18 warmest years in the 136-year record all have occurred since 2001, with the exception of 1998. The year 2016 ranks as the warmest on record. Global News said it was 18 of the past 19 years have been the hottest on record. Is this not the very thing we have been telling [you in our curses video](#)? It might be time to watch it again. It might be time to share it with all those you love. Why keep it a secret?

I want to remind people of what Yehovah tells us is going to happen. And as you read this remember the wildfires and how many people fled for their lives with just moments notice and some had to drive through the wildfire, and also think of the millions now who have fled and are fleeing these monster Hurricanes and Typhoons.



Ezekiel 20:33 “As I live, declares the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out I will be king over you. I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face. As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you, declares the Lord God. I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant. I will purge out the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against me. I will bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord.



Yehovah is going to force you out of your homes, out of the land you dwell in and bring you into the wilderness and talk with you face to face. The passing under the rod is what was done for counting the sheep in order to determine the tithe. Every tenth one was given as a tithe. But

in this case that Rod is, Germany and everyone is going to pass under that rod of Germany and a tenth part is going to be saved.

Are you now preparing to be in that tenth part? Are you keeping the Sabbath that is the sign of Yehovah? Are you keeping the Holy Days which show you the plan of Yehovah and mark you as His? Are you studying the Bible? Not just quoting a few verses here and there with an amen at the end. But are you reading it to learn about Yehovah?

Time is running out.

In the Mail this Week

This following note I was sent and it was a blessing to read. Some will not agree and others will say I am being vain by posting it here. I do get many who speak evil of me and I would like to now share one that does not.

Joseph Dumond of SightedMoon.com,

You are calling forth A people with a Shema-ing Heart To Engage in a Shemar-ing, Asah-ing Mission

Shema is one who listens to, hears, and responds to Yehovah. To move when He moves. Just as Yeshua only did what His Father spoke. He sensed “YHVH’s movement” and set His own heart to Shema....

(The serpent “hacks” into us with this other voice that we so easily Shema to such as listening to false shepherds who have corrupted Paul’s letters and ignore THE Scriptures which the people searched through as Paul taught to confirm his word as truth.)

Shemar is to guard, cherish, and protect

Asah is to do something; to build, to create, to form. i.e. To build a house that stands and not one that collapses in the storm

We are to hear His rulings, guard His rulings, and respond to and co-labor with Yehovah’s mission for us. NOT our own mission.

Deu 4:5 “See, I have taught (lamad; just like the lamad is the rod the shepherd uses to guide the sheep) you laws (choq, which includes appointed laws as in the Moadim) and right-rulings (mishpat, as in righteous judgments), as YHVH my Elohim commanded me, to do thus in the land which you go to possess.

Deu 4:6 “And you shall GUARD (SHEMAR) and DO (ASAH) them, for this is your wisdom (chokmah...see the basis of the word choq in here?) and your understanding before the eyes of the peoples who hear all these laws, and they shall say, ‘Only a wise and understanding people is this great nation!’

NOW...back to SHEMAH, SHEMAR and ASAH

SHEMAR [shin, mem, resh], means to treasure, cherish, to guard or to be a watchman concerning, something extremely valuable.

THIS IS YOU JOE as the watchman as well as excellent Torah teacher. We are all to SHEMAR the CHUKIM.

ASAH (ayin, shin, hey). Means to fashion something useful from a lump of clay or a bunch of 2×4's on the ground.

To asah the mitzvot and mishpatim of Torah means to take them from just words on paper into the practical.

It means to conform our thoughts, priorities, words, and conduct to the shape of the Torah as a home builder takes the blueprint and builds a house. To be successful, he must understand the "blueprint" and see it in his mind and bring it to reality using all the laws / tools / knowledge and understanding he has. He cannot build a house if he only knows how to install a door frame.

One cannot understand and bring forth Yehovah's plan for us if we only understand the 10 commandments from a Christian point of view without the details that Yehovah provides us. We must SHEMA all His rulings and SHEMAR them so we can ASAH them into HIS form for a house that stands on rock and doesn't collapse in the storm.

The mitzvot (commands) and mishpatim (righteous judgments) of Torah are not just "TO DO's"...a bunch of commands on paper....but the way to build the house.....to conform our lives to Him. It takes TIME just as building a house doesn't happen overnight.

Psalms 119:18-22

Open my eyes, that I might see Wonders from Your Torah.

I am a sojourner in the earth; Do not hide Your commands from me.

My being is crushed with longing For Your right-rulings at all times.

You rebuked the proud, cursed ones, Who are straying from Your commands.

Remove from me reproach and scorn, For I have observed Your witnesses.

I responded to this posting by saying the following.

Thank you, Jan for your kind words. But I am not worthy of any praise. I am as a filthy menstrual rag. It is Yehovah who is calling each of you and it is Yehovah who has opened your minds to understand His truths. I am the same as all of you, just learning to obey and failing and trying again. All the glory belongs to Yehovah for working all these things out so each of you and me can understand now at the end of this age.

Joseph Dumond – Yehovah asked you if you were willing to fill in the gap that exists in our nations today and be a watchmen and you said yes. If He had given you a vision of it at that time, you would have said no. You alone studied out through thick and thin to unlock the prophecies bringing all of us the wisdom to see, hear, and obey. Only Yah knows the number of people keeping the Sabbatical Year because you were obedient. 3,000 years or so since House of Israel did this. You brought many of us the SY, the New Moon and Abiv Barley, the time line which opens up prophecy, and seeing the Curses present in our nations today and how that was part of the covenant. I know it is Yah who works in each of us, but even so, it still takes faith, courage, obedience, and perseverance to do what each of us do. You take that to another whole extreme. How you put up with all the grief, death threats, anger from within your own family, anger from Messianics and Christians, and the strain of doing all of this while working a full time job is simply unfathomable. Yah gives you strength and kept you going all these years. The work Yah is doing in and through you now through the Philippines and Burundi...just WOW.

But, I know the pressure you put on yourself because of all you've been given. That too, isn't easy. We all need encouragement and recognition too, just to keep going. This is a hard, challenging walk and as long as we know it is Yah who does the work in us...that is something to glorify Him in. We all need to feel useful and not like a total piece of sh**...that we're doing a work for Him. Encouragement is food for you. It's food for all of us. Not letting it go to your head is the reason for the thorn. I give thanks to Yehovah at least weekly if not more, for bringing me to your website. I ask Him to continue to bring you Truth and only Truth. I know you are the closest to a Priest that we have today. You may not be 100% right in everything, but you search it out to your best and teach us....leaving it up to us to then confirm or not for ourselves. Your ability to search things out and bring it all together is truly a gift I don't see in many others.

Yehovah bless you and keep you as HE began a good work in you and is not about to stop now. The only thing that will stop it is when you lift yourself up. Let us do the lifting and encouraging as was done for Moses.

PS...if not for you, I'd probably be among those building off grid homes in Kansas, lol. Everyone I know from the local groups in Iowa and I do mean everyone, has done this. Not a single one keeps SY or recognizes the curses coming upon us. They think there will be a hundred circles of protection around each of their homesteads keeping the drones, radiation, swords, rapes, at bay. Hope they don't run out of ammo. .

Jan Sytsma

The Ten Days of Awe

With this Shabbat we are now into what is known as Shabbat Shuva. Shabbat Shuva comes during the Ten Days of Awe.

Judaism 101 describes these ten days of Awe like this;

The ten days starting with Rosh Hashanah and ending with Yom Kippur are commonly known as the Days of Awe (Yamim Noraim) or the Days of Repentance. This is a time for serious introspection, a time to consider the sins of the previous year and repent before Yom Kippur.

One of the ongoing themes of the Days of Awe is the concept that G-d has “books” that he writes our names in, writing down who will live and who will die, who will have a good life and who will have a bad life, for the next year. These books are written in on Rosh Hashanah, but our actions during the Days of Awe can alter G-d’s decree. The actions that change the decree are “teshuvah, tefilah and tzedakah,” repentance, prayer, good deeds (usually, charity). These “books” are sealed on Yom Kippur. This concept of writing in books is the source of the common greeting during this time is “May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year.”

Among the customs of this time, it is common to seek reconciliation with people you may have wronged during the course of the year. The Talmud maintains that Yom Kippur atones only for sins between man and G-d. To atone for sins against another person, you must first seek reconciliation with that person, righting the wrongs you committed against them if possible.

The Shabbat that occurs in this period is known as Shabbat Shuvah (the Sabbath of Return). This is considered a rather important Shabbat.

Shabbat Shuvah literally means “Sabbath of Return,” but it is also a play on the phrase “Shabbat Teshuvah” (Sabbath of Repentance). It is the Shabbat that occurs between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur and is a time for reflection leading up to the atonement of Yom Kippur. Shabbat Shuvah has two special haftarah readings, one dealing with the importance of heartfelt repentance (Hosea 14:2-10) and one praising the Creator’s mercy (Micah 7:18-20).

Read carefully the two scriptures that are part of the Torah readings for this time of year. A Plea to Return to Yehovah!

We are to return and we are to bring the words, the Torah Scrolls with us.

Hosea 14:1 Return, O Israel, to the Lord your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity. Take with you words and return to the Lord; say to him,

“Take away all iniquity; accept what is good, and we will pay with bulls the vows of our lips. Assyria shall not save us; we will not ride on horses; and we will say no more, ‘Our God,’ to the work of our hands. In you the orphan finds mercy.”

I will heal their apostasy; I will love them freely, for my anger has turned from them. I will be like the dew to Israel; he shall blossom like the lily; he shall take root like the trees of Lebanon; his shoots shall spread out; his beauty shall be like the olive, and his fragrance like Lebanon. They shall return and dwell beneath my shadow; they shall flourish like the grain; they shall blossom like the vine; their fame shall be like the wine of Lebanon.

O Ephraim, what have I to do with idols?

It is I who answer and look after you. I am like an evergreen cypress; from me comes your fruit.

Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; whoever is discerning, let him know them; for the ways of the Lord are right, and the upright walk in them, but transgressors stumble in them.

Now read the other portion for this day and learn about Yehovah’s Steadfast Love and Compassion

Micah 7:18 Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love. He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities underfoot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. You will show faithfulness to Jacob and steadfast love to Abraham, as you have sworn to our fathers from the days of old.

It is the position of sightedmoon.com that these ten Days of Awe are going to be ten years of complete destruction. Let me explain.

The Ten Days of Awe are in fact ten years.

What reasons do we have for believing the prophetic “days” are actually literal “years”.

The standard texts used are

Numbers 14:34 And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years....after the number of the days in which you searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year.

and

Ezekiel 4:6”And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year.”

With this understanding then I did an experiment on the Fall Holy Days using this year for a day principle.

I said that the 8th Day was like the Jubilee year and it is in many of its understandings. The Jubilee year is 2045 in this 120th Jubilee cycle.

Then 7 days before that is the Feast of Sukkot which is the year 2038.

5 Days before Sukkot is The Day of Atonement and it is the year 2033 in our Jubilee cycle.

10 days before Atonement is the Feast of Trumpets which is the year 2024. See the blue areas in our chart below. The year 2045 is not shown in this chart.

Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle
2044	2037	2030	2023	2016	2009	2002
2043	2036	2029	2022	2015	2008	2001
2042	2035	2028	2021	2014	2007	2000
2041	2034	2027	2020	2013	2006	1999
2040	2033	2026	2019	2012	2005	1998
2039	2032	2025	2018	2011	2004	1997
2038	2031	2024	2017	2010	2003	1996

This is all fine but it does not prove anything. But let's look deeper.

We know that on the Day of Atonement Satan is to be locked away.

Lev 16:7 Then he shall take the two goats and set them before the Lord at the entrance of the tent of meeting. And Aaron shall cast lots over the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for Azazel. And Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot fell for the Lord and use it as a sin offering, but the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before the Lord to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel.

17 "Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering that is for the people and bring its blood inside the veil and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, sprinkling it over the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat. Thus he shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel and because of their transgressions, all their sins. And so he shall do for the tent of meeting, which dwells with them in the midst of their uncleannesses.

To make sure you see this.

one lot for Jehovah, and the other lot for Azazel. ASV

The one Goat represents YEHOVAH and the other goat represents Satan. Yehovah is the one who dies for us to cleanse us of our sins as shown in verse 17.

The events being described in Lev 16 about the two goats symbolized a real event that would take place in the future. The first part of the event took place when Yehovah died on the Tree for as our Passover Lamb. That 2nd event is shown to us in Revelation and is to take place at the end of the 6th millennium which is our time now.

Rev 20:1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

Ok but none of this proves anything yet.

It was not until I began to ponder the words of Yehshua that the dots began to be connected.

Luke 17:26 And as it came to pass in the days of Noah, even so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise even as it came to pass in the days of Lot; they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but in the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all: after the same manner shall it be in the day that the Son of man is revealed.

I then looked at the years in which the flood came and the years in which Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. This can only be done when you have an accurate chronology which we do based on the Jubilee cycle.

We could rephrase the saying instead of the days of Lot or the days of Noah to the Years of Lot and to the years of Noah using the day for the year principle again.

So I took a look at the year of the Flood

	Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle
	1666	1659	1652	1645	1638	1631	1624
	1665	1658	1651	1644	1637	1630	1623
	1664	1657	1650	1643	1636	1629	1622
	1663	1656	1649	1642	1635	1628	1621
	1662	1655	1648	1641	1634	1627	1620
	1661	1654	1647	1640	1633	1626	1619
	1660	1653	1646	1639	1632	1625	1618

When you do the chronology in the book of Genesis the flood took place in the year of 1656 after the creation of Adam. In this Chart, I have also show that there were blood moons on the High Holy Days in the year preceding the flood. But take special notice of when the flood took place. It was in the 6th Sabbatical cycle of the Jubilee cycle and it took place at the start of the 4th year of that cycle.

Then I looked at the year of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Isaac was born to Abraham one year to the day after the destruction of Sodom which took place in the year 1790 B.C. To learn how to prove these things for yourself I strongly urge you all to get the book Remembering the Sabbatical year of 2016 from [Xlibris](#) or [Amazon](#). Do read the comments at Amazon and learn what others think of our books.

Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle
-1779	-1786	-1793	-1800	-1807	-1814	-1821
-1780	-1787	-1794	-1801	-1808	-1815	-1822
-1781	-1788	-1795	-1802	-1809	-1816	-1823
-1782	-1789	-1796	-1803	-1810	-1817	-1824
-1783	-1790	-1797	-1804	-1811	-1818	-1825
-1784	-1791	-1798	-1805	-1812	-1819	-1826
-1785	-1792	-1799	-1806	-1813	-1820	-1827

Again take special note of when Sodom is destroyed. It is at Passover in the 3rd year of the 6th Sabbatical cycle. The Flood took place at Passover in the 4th year of the 6th Sabbatical cycle. And when I look at the chart for our times now I see the year for Satan to be locked away using the Year for a day for the fall Holy Days is the year 2033 which is the 3rd year of the 6th Sabbatical Cycle.

Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle
2044	2037	2030	2023	2016	2009	2002
2043	2036	2029	2022	2015	2008	2001
2042	2035	2028	2021	2014	2007	2000
2041	2034	2027	2020	2013	2006	1999
2040	2033	2026	2019	2012	2005	1998
2039	2032	2025	2018	2011	2004	1997
2038	2031	2024	2017	2010	2003	1996

Now the dots are beginning to connect and I think I am on to something of a prophetic nature. so now I begin to look at the other charts in this chronology from Adam to our time based on the Jubilee cycles and I see the 7 years of plenty and the 7 years of famine.

Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle
-1583	-1590	-1597	-1604	-1611	-1618	-1625
-1584	-1591	-1598	-1605	-1612	-1619	-1626
-1585	-1592	-1599	-1606	-1613	-1620	-1627
-1586	-1593	-1600	-1607	-1614	-1621	-1628
-1587	-1594	-1601	-1608	-1615	-1622	-1629
-1588	-1595	-1602	-1609	-1616	-1623	-1630
-1589	-1596	-1603	-1610	-1617	-1624	-1631

The seven years of Plenty are for Egypt. Egypt represents modern day Babylon. Those 7 years of plenty begin in the year 1607 BC in our chart above and go to the year 1601 BC. Then the 7 years of famine begin in the year 1600 and go to the year 1594 B.C in our charts.

The first thing I noticed was that the year the famine ends matches with the 3rd year of the 6th Sabbatical cycle. The same as the Flood and the Sodom and the same year as the year 2033 when Satan would be locked away on the day of Atonement. the other thing I see jumping off the page is the start of the 7 years of Plenty matches the year of 2020 in our Jubilee cycle.

2020 is the middle of the 70th week of Daniel 9:24-27.

70 Weeks are 70 Feast of Weeks and that is not 70 X 7 as Christians have assumed but 70 X 49. 49 is the 49 days for the Feast of Weeks. so this 70 X 49 is 3430 year.

	Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle	
								-1337
								51
7th Year	-1338	-1345	-1352	-1359	-1366	-1373	-1380	
6th Year	-1339	-1346	-1353	-1360	-1367	-1374	-1381	
5th Year	-1340	-1347	-1354	-1361	-1368	-1375	-1382	
4th Year	-1341	-1348	-1355	-1362	-1369	-1376	-1383	
3rd Year	-1342	-1349	-1356	-1363	-1370	-1377	-1384	
2nd Year	-1343	-1350	-1357	-1364	-1371	-1378	-1385	
1st Year	-1344	-1351	-1358	-1365	-1372	-1379	-1386	
								-1386
								50

The Exodus takes place in the year 1379 B.C. and you will notice the years marked in red before the exodus also show us that there were blood moons on the High Holy Days leading up to this special event of the Exodus. The Exodus took place after the 50th Jubilee cycle which I have shown in yellow with the number 50 in it.

Daniel 9:25 Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times. And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off,

The command was to Moses to go and get the people. So from that time, there are to be 70 Jubilee cycles or 70 weeks of 49 days for the Feast of Shavuot. Again 70 X 49 is 3430 years. But it is broken down for us. First, it says 7 weeks until the prince comes. 7 X 49 is 343 years. Moses is called in the 51st Jubilee cycle and now we must count 7 more to see the Prince.

This brings you to the time of King David. he was born in the year 1040 B.C. and became King over Judah in the year 1010 BC and over all of Israel in the year 1003 B.C.

	Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle	
								-994
								58
7th Year	-995	-1002	-1009	-1016	-1023	-1030	-1037	
6th Year	-996	-1003	-1010	-1017	-1024	-1031	-1038	
5th Year	-997	-1004	-1011	-1018	-1025	-1032	-1039	
4th Year	-998	-1005	-1012	-1019	-1026	-1033	-1040	
3rd Year	-999	-1006	-1013	-1020	-1027	-1034	-1041	
2nd Year	-1000	-1007	-1014	-1021	-1028	-1035	-1042	
1st Year	-1001	-1008	-1015	-1022	-1029	-1036	-1043	
								-1043
								57

Just as the Prophecy of Daniel shows us the Prince, King David came after 7 Jubilee cycles from the time Yehovah told Moses to go and get the people.

But there is more. This same prophecy of Daniel tells us that after those 7 Jubilee cycle would be another 62 weeks. 62 X 49 is 3332 Years and when you add all of this up, the 7 weeks which is 343 and the 62 weeks which is 3332, you get a total of 69 weeks which is 3384 years.

From the time Moses was given the command to go and get the people until the end of the 69th week is the year 1996 C.E.

Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle
2044	2037	2030	2023	2016	2009	2002
2043	2036	2029	2022	2015	2008	2001
2042	2035	2028	2021	2014	2007	2000
2041	2034	2027	2020	2013	2006	1999
2040	2033	2026	2019	2012	2005	1998
2039	2032	2025	2018	2011	2004	1997
2038	2031	2024	2017	2010	2003	1996

This is the 120th Jubilee cycle. It is also the 70th Week of Daniel 9. And Daniel 9 then goes on to say;

Dan 9:26 And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined. And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate.

After the 69th week, after the year 1996, the anointed which is now speaking of the Saints will be cut off and the city and the Saints, not the sanctuary would be cut off and trampled underfoot. And in the middle of this week, the middle of this Jubilee cycle shall sacrifice and oblation cease. The dead can't pray.

That middle is the year 2020 and is just 1 1/2 years away.

The next thing I noticed was that the year 2020 matches up with the start of the 7 years of Plenty for the end time Babylon system.

Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle
-1583	-1590	-1597	-1604	-1611	-1618	-1625
-1584	-1591	-1598	-1605	-1612	-1619	-1626
-1585	-1592	-1599	-1606	-1613	-1620	-1627
-1586	-1593	-1600	-1607	-1614	-1621	-1628
-1587	-1594	-1601	-1608	-1615	-1622	-1629
-1588	-1595	-1602	-1609	-1616	-1623	-1630
-1589	-1596	-1603	-1610	-1617	-1624	-1631

And then I read again Daniel 8.

Daniel 8:13 Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said unto that certain one who spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the continual burnt-offering, and the transgression that maketh desolate, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.

Again look up the word sanctuary and know that it can also mean the Saints. It is the Saints who are going to be trodden under foot and slaughtered as sheep for the slaughter. And if I count those 2300 Days from the time this is supposed to take place at Shavuot which is the middle of the year in the middle of this 70th Jubilee cycle then the end of the 2300 days brings us to the Feast of Trumpets in the year 2026.

The covenant made with many began at the Feast of Shavuot in 1972 and was called the UEP, the United Nations Environmental Plan and today is called the Paris Climate Change Accord.

That is when I realized that the two witnesses will be working for 3 1/2 years and then killed at Passover which is the beginning of the Great Tribulation. 3 1/2 year from the feast of Trumpets in 2026 brings you to Passover in 2030.

Rev 11:1 And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and one said, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. And the court which is without the temple leave without, and measure it not; for it hath been given unto the nations: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks, standing before the Lord of the earth. And if any man desireth to hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies; and if any man shall desire to hurt them, in this manner must he be killed. These have the power to shut the heaven, that it rain not during the days of their prophecy: and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they shall desire.

And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that cometh up out of the abyss shall make war with them, and overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified.

And from among the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations do men look upon their dead bodies three days and a half, and suffer not their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. And they that dwell on the earth rejoice over them, and make merry; and they shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth.

And after the three days and a half the breath of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them that beheld them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they went up into heaven in the cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell; and there were killed in the earthquake seven thousand persons: and the rest were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

The second Woe is past: behold, the third Woe cometh quickly.

The two witnesses have a job to do besides calling down plaques upon the whole earth. They do this for a specific reason. To learn that job we must now go to Revelation and the 4 horsemen.

Rev 6:1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, Come. And I saw, and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon had a bow; and there was given unto him a crown: and he came forth conquering, and to conquer.



Jer 16:16 “Behold, I will send for many fishermen,” says the Lord, “and they shall fish them; and afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

This white horse is not the Messiah. It is false religion as it goes out to conquer. The bow indicates the religion that is doing the conquering. See our article The Hunters Cometh. There is one religion on the earth today that is going out to conquer all the nations in front of it and that is Islam and with this white horse come the other 3 and tell me if this does not ring a bell for the events taking place in our day now.

Rev 6:3 And when he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, Come. And another horse came forth, a red horse: and to him that sat thereon it was given to take peace from the earth, and that they should slay one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.



What religion have ongoing wars that are fought in order to conquer?

Rev 6:5 And when he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, Come. And I saw, and behold, a black horse; and he that sat thereon had a balance in his hand. And I heard as it were a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, A measure of wheat for a shilling, and three measures of barley for a shilling; and the oil and the wine hurt thou not.



Yehovah has been warning us for some time of these things. We are currently in the 4th Sabbatical cycle of war the 4th curse of Lev 26.

Lev 26:23 And if by these things ye will not be reformed unto me, but will walk contrary unto me; then will I also walk contrary unto you; and I will smite you, even I, seven times for your sins. And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall execute the vengeance of the covenant; and ye shall be gathered together within your cities: and I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. When I break your staff of bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver your bread again by weight: and ye shall eat, and not be satisfied. And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me; then I will walk contrary unto you in wrath; and I also will chastise you seven times for your sins.

And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat.

The famine that is about to come is so bad, that some will resort to eating their own children. We are somewhere between the white and the red horse, but this dark horse is coming soon after these other two go full force.

Consider this prophecy about Damascus.

Isaiah 17:1 The burden of Damascus. Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap. The cities of Aroer are forsaken; they shall be for flocks, which shall lie down, and none shall make them afraid. And the fortress shall cease from Ephraim, and the kingdom from Damascus, and the remnant of Syria; they shall be as the glory of the children of Israel, saith Jehovah of hosts. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the glory of Jacob shall be made thin, and the fatness of his flesh shall wax lean. And it shall be as when the harvestman gathereth the standing grain, and his arm reapeth the ears; yea, it shall be as when one gleaneth ears in the valley of Rephaim.

Yet there shall be left therein gleanings, as the shaking of an olive-tree, two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost branches of a fruitful tree, saith Jehovah, the God of Israel.

Damascus now is a ruinous heap. the whole nation of Syria is in ruins. Can the leanness of Jacob be far off?

Rev 6:7 And when he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, Come. And I saw, and behold, a pale horse: and he that sat upon him, his name was Death; and Hades followed with him. And there was given unto them authority over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the wild beasts of the earth.



All of this I believe is about to begin over 1/4 of the earth starting Shavuot 2020. It is from this point onwards that the Saints will be hunted and slaughtered and killed. When I say the Saints

I am speaking of the DNA descendants of the 12 tribes of Israel, whether they believe in Yehovah or not. Whether they keep Torah or not. The descendants will be hunted and killed. And some of those who keep Torah as well.

This then brings us to the 5th seal.

Rev 6:9 And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a great voice, saying, How long, O Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And there was given them to each one a white robe; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little time, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, who should be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course.

The ones who will avenge those saints killed at this time is going to be the Two Witnesses who bring judgments which are plaques on the whole earth. These will avenge the death of the saints. But it is the famine caused by the stoppage of rain upon the whole earth for 3 1/2 years that causes the people of the earth to allow all the surviving saints to return to Jerusalem for Passover in 2030.

It is here that Satan gathers them all in the notion of killing all that remain in one place. Read what is said in Revelation again.

Rev 12:13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman that brought forth the man child. And there were given to the woman the two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness unto her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth after the woman water as a river, that he might cause her to be carried away by the stream. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the river which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon waxed wroth with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her seed, that keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus:

Luke 21:20 Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate beforehand how to answer: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to withstand or to gainsay. But ye shall be delivered up even by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. And not a hair of your head shall perish. In your patience ye shall win your souls. But when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that her desolation is at hand. Then let them that are in Judaea flee unto the mountains; and let them that are in the midst of her depart out; and let not them that are in the country enter therein. For these are days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. Woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days! for there shall be great distress upon the land, and wrath unto this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all the nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

In the time of the 7 years of famine, it was the second year that the Brothers of Joseph recognized Joseph. In our time now that will be 2029 near the end of the famine and drought by the Two Witnesses. But also know this. That is when the women flees but not all the brethren go at the same time. Because you are told that after the woman escapes the Beast makes war on those left behind who keep the commandments.

Again I ask you why is this?

It is because of the two calendars and one escapes and the other does not. One will keep the Passover 30 days after the first group.

Now coming back to the point about Shabbat Shuva.
Hosea 14 says Return, O Israel, to the Lord your God,
for you have stumbled because of your iniquity. Take
with you words and return to the Lord;

And it is during these ten days of Awe that we seek, no, we beg for mercy and forgiveness from Yehovah so that we can survive the horrors that are coming all around us. We should be fasting and praying for our families and loved ones. This is the importance of Shabbat Shuva. The fact that we return in that Sabbatical year to the land of Israel, which is represented by the Sabbath during the Ten Days of Awe. This return is a result of the world caving in to the demands of the two witnesses to free the remaining people of Israel and to stop killing them.

When you seriously think about the days these ten Days of Awe represent you will be humbled beyond words by the magnitude of those events that you are about to witness. It is a time to fast and to be humbled.

Mat 24:20 But woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days! And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on a sabbath: for then shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days had been shortened, no flesh would have been saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

The Fall Holy Days take place in the winter season. The word used here for Sabbath is Sabbaton which means on a High Holy Day. Pray your flight not have to be on The High Days of Winter. Which means that for some it will be. In Israel they have often been attacked on the Sabbath or the High Days. Take a lesson from the 6-day war which began on the Day of Atonement.

The Magi Almost Caused a War

The Magi Almost Caused a War

It is with great pleasure that this week I am able to share with you a teaching that is most appropriate for this time of the year. Far too often we hear the pagan teachings of the birth of Yahshua at the winter Saturnalia. And we all sometimes get these pagan teachings mixed in with the truth from the scriptures and do not go back and study these subjects.

Recently I did reread the birth of Yahshua. I was stunned at how much I had ignored or forgotten. Yahweh willing I hope to cover some of these things for the Day of Atonement.

This week I want to share with you a part of the book Parthia by Steven Collins. He is also a reader of this News Letter and I am so grateful he has allowed me to copy his article here for you to read about the birth of Yahshua. As Harvey Kirk used to say 'Now You know the rest of the Story.'

The four-book set that Steven Collins has written about the Lost Tribes of Israel is an invaluable collection to have. If you do not know who Israel is in the end times then you will not and cannot know who the prophecies of the Bible are talking about. It is impossible!

Each and every person must have these books which can be purchased at <http://www.bibleblessings.net/index.html> I do not make any money off these sales. I tell you to buy these books for your understanding of where Israel went and where they now are. When you know this then you will understand why the Roman Empire was attacking certain nations throughout history. It was the Beast Power attacking Israel. Just by knowing this you will then know who is going to attack whom in the very near future.

Also, Mr. Collins has some things in this article which I state differently in the article Conjunction or Sighted which? Which talks about the star at the birth of Yahshua and the year of his birth. Study both opinions and you decide. You can learn more from his site at <http://www.stevenmcollins.com/>

EXCERPT from the book, PARTHIA, by Steven M. Collins, Chapter 3, Pages 123-151

HIS CHILDHOOD YEARS (BIRTH TO AGE 12)

Much has been written about the life of Jesus Christ, the historical person whose name is attached to the many different denominations of Christianity that exist today. In fact, so much has been written that one might wonder whether anything truly new could be written about this one life. As the reader will see, new facts about the life of Jesus Christ can be ascertained by combining the accounts of the Bible with secular historical accounts and traditions about the time in which He lived. This chapter is not intended to be a complete history of the life of Jesus Christ. It will cover those aspects of His life and times which have not been generally known.

The prior chapter dealing with the Parthian Empire discussed historical events shaping the world into which Jesus Christ was born. When some surprising information about His life is added to the history contained in the previous chapter, it can be seen that Jesus Christ actually played a role in the great power politics which occurred between the empires of Parthia and Rome. The Bible hints that He could have played a much larger role in the political affairs of that era if He had chosen to do so.

Did Jesus Really Live?

There is no doubt that the person, Jesus Christ, actually lived in Palestine at the beginning of the first century A. D. While some skeptics doubt this fact, this chapter will begin by offering firm evidence that Jesus Christ was a real, historical person.

Josephus, a Jewish historian of the first century A. D., regarded the life of Jesus Christ as an established fact. In *Antiquities of the Jews*, Josephus wrote:

“there was about this time, Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for He was a doer of wonderful works, — a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was Christ; and when Pilate [Pontius Pilate, Roman Procurator of Judea], at the suggestion of the principle men among us, had condemned him to the cross...He appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him; and the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day.”¹

In this account, written shortly after Christ died, Josephus not only gave us a powerful witness that Jesus Christ truly lived, but also provided an independent corroboration of many of the biblically-discussed events of His life. Josephus refers to him as “a wise man,” and wonders whether He was more than a mere man because of the “wonderful works” He did. That a non-Christian, Jewish historian of the apostolic era writes of the miracles of Jesus as actual facts offers contemporary support to the Bible’s accounts about them. Josephus agrees with the testamental writings that Jesus was sentenced to be crucified by Pontius Pilate at the behest of the Jewish Sanhedrin, “the principle men among us.” Josephus also acknowledged that Jesus Christ fulfilled many prophecies of the Hebrew prophets about the Messiah, and even refers to His resurrection as an historical fact!

Josephus’ reference to Jesus as “the Christ” acknowledges that Jesus was the Messiah, “the anointed.” Since a non-Christian source so close to the actual time of Christ has confirmed these facts of His life, the musings of modern skeptics questioning Christ’s existence are without merit. Josephus could speak with eyewitnesses of Jesus’ life; modern skeptics are almost two millennia removed from the events, and their writings are merely speculative. Jesus Christ did live, and the writings of Josephus substantiate the Bible’s claims of His performance of supernatural deeds as well as His being raised from the dead.

Roman secular sources agree with Josephus. Celsus, an anti-Christian writer of the Roman Empire in the second century A.D., wrote:

“It was by magic that He [Jesus] was able to do the miracles which He appeared to have done.”²

Here a Roman opponent of Christianity grudgingly acknowledges the reality of Christ’s “miracles,” which he labels as “magic.” However, Quadratus, writing in approximately 117-134 A.D.,

“urged people to believe in Jesus because the effect of His miracles continued up to the present — people had been cured and raised from the dead, and ‘some of them...have survived even to our own day.’”³

Tacitus, the famous Roman historian, writing about the Christians just decades after the death of Christ, stated:

“Nero fabricated scapegoats — and punished...the notoriously depraved Christians (as they were popularly called). Their originator, Christ, had been executed in Tiberius’ reign by the governor of Judea, Pontius Pilate.”⁴

Tacitus’ comment about Christ appears as a mere aside in an overall account of events in the reign of Nero. It is particularly compelling evidence that Jesus Christ really did live! Tacitus was no fan of Christ or Christianity, and he had no “axe to grind.” His account that “Christ” was a real person crucified by Pontius Pilate is highly credible as Tacitus refers to it as an official act of Pontius Pilate within His overall accounting of Rome’s activities.

Clearly, Roman accounts confirm that Jesus Christ lived, and that He was executed in Judea during the administration of Pontius Pilate. Even His detractors acknowledged that He performed supernatural deeds. Whatever your views about Jesus Christ, we begin with the fact that He, indeed, lived and died when the Bible states that He lived and died, that He performed marvelous deeds, and that He made a major impression on the civilization of His day.

Let us now review the historical setting into which Jesus Christ was born. The Roman and Parthian Empires were both powerful, well-established “superpower” rivals at the time Jesus was born. Rome ruled the Mediterranean region, and Parthia ruled Asian lands from modern Syria to the Indus River. Palestine was located within the Roman Empire, but was close to the Euphrates River constituting the Parthian border.

Five decades before the birth of Jesus, Rome and Parthia fought several battles with one being fought near Antioch of Syria (very close to Palestine).⁵ In about 40 B.C., the Parthians launched a major assault which drove the Romans out of Asia! For three years, 40-37 B.C., Palestine was within the Parthian Empire and was ruled by a Jewish vassal king of the Parthians named Antigonus. At that time King Herod, the Roman king of Judea, fled from the Parthians in fear of his life. While the Parthian-sponsored rule of Antigonus was brief, it was apparently popular with the Jews. When the Parthians withdrew across the Euphrates, Antigonus, with Jewish support, attempted to maintain himself as king of the Jews, but was defeated by Herod. Mark Antony, the Roman leader famous for his dalliance with Cleopatra, ordered Antigonus beheaded, and Josephus records that this was done to compel the Jews to accept the hated Herod as their king.⁶ Mark Antony afterward led a massive invasion of Parthia in 37-36 B.C., but his army was utterly defeated by the Parthians.⁷

To help modern readers gain a frame of reference for these ancient events, these Roman Parthian wars were more recent events for the people at the time Jesus was born than World War II and the Korean War are to modern readers. Parthian rule over Palestine was, therefore, vividly remembered by many in Jewish society as being preferable to Roman rule.

Parthia's victory over Mark Antony led to a long period of peace between Rome and Parthia, with the Euphrates River serving as the border between their two vast empires. This prolonged period of peaceful relations lasted from 36 B.C. until 58 A.D.,⁸ including not only all of Jesus Christ's life, but also the early period of the Apostolic Church as well. Rawlinson records that it was an established Roman policy not to provoke a Parthian war during that period of time so long as both empires agreed to coexist on separate banks of the Euphrates River. Rawlinson comments on this peaceful interlude as follows:

“It is a well-known fact that Augustus left it as a principle of policy to his successors that the Roman Empire had reached its proper limits, and could not with advantage be extended further. This principle, followed with the utmost strictness by Tiberius, was accepted as a rule by all the earlier Caesars...”⁹

As long as the Caesars wanted peace with Parthia, Roman officials along Parthia's border, such as King Herod and Pontius Pilate, knew they risked their positions and lives if they entangled Rome in an unwanted war with Parthia.

Without this period of Parthian-Roman detente, it would have been impossible for some of the events of Jesus Christ's life to have occurred, as we shall see. The first such event was the coming of the Magi, or “Wise Men” to pay homage to Jesus. We read of this event in Matthew 2:1-12, which becomes more important when considered in the overall context of Roman Parthian relations.

Parthia's Magi Visit Jesus (and Frighten Jerusalem)

As discussed in the previous chapter, the Magi were powerful members of the Parthian bicameral body that elected Parthian monarchs and wielded great influence within the empire. One assembly was composed of members of the royal family (the Arsacids), and the other consisted of the priests (the “Magi”) and influential Parthians of non-royal blood (the “Wise Men”). The Magi and Wise Men were jointly known as the Megistanes.¹⁰

Matthew 2:1 states that “wise men from the east” came to worship Jesus. The term “Wise Men,” which appears in Matthew 2:1, is not a generic description of these visitors, but was the proper title of Parthian Megistanes. The Greek word translated “wise men” is “magian,” literally meaning “Persian astronomer or priest,”¹¹ from which we derive the word “Magi.” Parthia governed Persia at the time of Christ, so the “Wise Men” cited in the Bible were Parthian nobles and/or priests. While traditional Christian accounts of this episode celebrate the coming of “the three wise men,” the Bible does not limit the number of visiting Magi-Wise Men to three men. Indeed, biblical events and the realities of that time argue for a much larger contingent of Parthian Magi.

Since we saw in previous chapters that the Parthians were descended from the ten tribes of Israel and that their priests were likely descended from the tribe of Levi, it is likely that this delegation of Magi consisted of leading members of the ten tribes of Israel. Because there were numerous Jews of the tribe of Judah in Parthia's empire, they may have been

represented as well. Consequently, the delegation of Magi could easily have consisted of at least ten or twelve men representing the various tribes of Israel.

Also, the Bible confirms that the Magi did not visit the young Jesus in the manger at Bethlehem as most nativity scenes depict, but rather visited Jesus in a house somewhat after His birth. Matthew 2:11 states that this visit of the Magi took place in a house (not at the manger) when Jesus was old enough to be called “a young child.” Luke’s version of Christ’s birth (Luke 2:8-40) mentions the shepherds’ arrival at the manger, but makes no mention of any Magi visiting Christ while He was “in the manger.”

Matthew 2:8 adds that Herod sent the Magi “to Bethlehem” after conferring with the Jewish hierarchy about the prophesied location of the Messiah’s birth. They cited Micah 5:2 that the Messiah would originate in Bethlehem, and they were likely familiar with Daniel 9:25-26 which predicted that the arrival of the Messiah was due at that time. Herod privately met with the Parthian delegation, and enquired when “the star” which they followed had first appeared. He apparently learned that this period of time was almost two years because he killed all male children in Bethlehem under two years of age in an attempt to kill the Messiah, whom he regarded as a competitor for his position as king of the Jews.

Although the Bible tells us that “the star” appeared to the Wise Men almost two years prior to His birth, this offers inexact information in determining how old Jesus was when the Wise Men came to him. The Wise Men were prominent people in Parthia when “the star” appeared, and they had to make a very time-consuming journey to reach Judea. It took time to prepare the costly gifts to present to the Messiah, set their affairs in order for a long absence, organize and equip a caravan, obtain an armed escort for protection and make the slow, lengthy journey to Judea in a caravan of pack animals. Since the “star’s” appearance was not necessarily timed to coincide exactly with the time Jesus was born, He may have been a few months (or up to two years) old at the time of the Magi’s arrival.

Consider also that Matthew 2:1-3 states:

“Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem. Saying, where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.” (KJV)

The arrival of the Magi’s caravan in Jerusalem was a very public affair because “all Jerusalem” was “troubled” by their arrival. What was it about the Magi’s caravan that scared the Roman leaders and the whole city of Jerusalem? The Magi, a delegation of high Parthian officials, came to Jerusalem in a caravan loaded with costly treasures and escorted by a strong force of armed Parthian soldiers! Since the Magi were high officials of the Parthian government, they would routinely travel with a substantial escort of Parthian soldiers to guarantee their protection. Since they were travelling with many costly treasures to present to the newborn Messiah, their escort may have been unusually large.

The Magi's caravan would have included large numbers of servants, animal-handlers, cooks, etc. for such a long journey. These people alone would have constituted many hundreds of people! Given the fact that many high Parthian officials and very expensive treasures were in the caravan, there may have been many thousands of Parthian soldiers escorting the caravan! This is not an overstatement.

Josephus records that treasure caravans bringing expensive offerings to Jerusalem from Jews living in Parthian territory did so with "many ten thousand men" as escorts.¹² In ancient times, travelling with expensive items was dangerous. There was danger not only from brigands, but also from local satraps who might use their armies to conquer a treasure train passing through their territories. If Jewish commoners from Parthia were allowed to travel to Jerusalem with the equivalent of several infantry divisions as escorts, would an important delegation of Parthia's ruling class and a treasure train of gifts have been accompanied by any fewer armed escorts? If the Parthian column had included "many ten thousands" of soldiers, it would have justified the widespread fear in Jerusalem caused by their arrival. In the previous chapter, we learned that ancient Chinese historical accounts recorded that the Parthians sent 20,000 cavalry just to escort a Chinese ambassador into Parthian territory.

Plutarch records that Surenas — a Parthian military commander and, no doubt, a member of the Megistanes — travelled on routine business in a caravan of cavalry, servants, and attendants the size of "a baggage train of 1,000 camels...at least ten thousand men."¹³ If one Parthian leader travelled with so large a caravan on routine business within Parthia, how large was the caravan of the Magi — a whole delegation of Parthian nobles carrying great treasures to worship a "new-born king?" It was large enough to frighten the whole city of Jerusalem!

The Wise Men coming to Jesus were not bringing just a few samples of gold and other precious things that they carried in their personal saddlebags. They were coming to worship a royal-born child, so they likely had a whole train of pack animals loaded with "gold, frankincense and myrrh!"

Their caravan was so huge that it was a "cause celebre" in Jerusalem. The whole city was in an uproar over their arrival, and that argues for a very visible and impressive Parthian caravan arriving in Jerusalem. The sheer size of the caravan, its treasures and its escorts awed King Herod and the whole city to the point they were all "troubled." This indicates that the Parthian caravan had so many armed escorts that many feared it was an invasion force coming to besiege Jerusalem and start a new Roman-Parthian war. However, their reason — coming to visit a royal-born Messiah — could have electrified a city of Jews who intensely wanted the Messiah to come and free them from Roman rule! The Jewish hierarchy understood the Parthians were looking for the Messiah as they quickly looked for Messianic prophecies to locate the city of His birth.

After their consultations with Herod and high Jewish officials, the Parthian delegation travelled to Bethlehem to worship Jesus and present their gifts to him. By this time, Matthew 2:11 states Jesus and Mary were living in "a house," so they were no longer staying at the manger. The Magi's journey to Bethlehem would have been closely followed by Herod's spies.

Joseph was then warned by an angel to flee quickly into Egypt (Matthew 2:13) to avoid Herod's impending slaughter of Bethlehem's young male children. Since Herod's edict applied only to Bethlehem, there would have been no need for Joseph, Mary and Jesus to flee unless they were still in Bethlehem. Since Joseph and Mary actually lived in Galilee (Luke 2:4), the fact that they were in a house in Bethlehem indicates that this must have been weeks after Jesus' birth while Mary was regaining the strength to make an overland trip back to Nazareth. Their flight to Egypt took them completely out of Herod's area of jurisdiction.

Herod made the mistake of assuming the Messiah would be born to a family native to the Bethlehem area. Since Luke 2:39 states that Joseph, Mary and Jesus returned to Galilee not long after Jesus was born, it seems apparent that the stay of Joseph, Mary and Jesus in Egypt was very brief. Historical sources disagree on the year of King Herod's death, but there is persuasive evidence that Herod died soon after giving his cruel order to murder the boy babies of Bethlehem. Matthew 2:14-19 states that Jesus and His parents returned from Egypt as soon as Herod was dead, and the account implies their stay in Egypt was brief.

(Yehshua was born on the Feast of trumpets Sept 11, 3 B.C. Herod died after an eclipse which occurred in 1 B.C. Two years after the birth of Yehshua)

This author acknowledges that there are differing scholarly and historical viewpoints concerning the year of Jesus Christ's birth. While many people assume that Jesus Christ was born in a theoretical "year zero," scholarly options for the year of Jesus' birth focus on the time frame of 5 B.C. to 2 B.C.

It is significant that Jesus' parents were faithful to God's law requiring circumcision on the eighth day (Leviticus 12:2-3), and to Jewish custom by making an offering to God at the Temple in Jerusalem to consecrate their firstborn male child. (Luke 2:21-24) This is an important observation as it shows Jesus was raised by a Jewish family that devoutly obeyed God's laws.

When the Parthian column arrived at Jerusalem, the Parthian Magi came directly to King Herod, quite open about their reasons for being in Roman-occupied Palestine. They informed Herod that they had come to worship "He that is born king of the Jews."

It is a tribute to the power of Caesar's policy that the Roman-Parthian peace be maintained that war did not result from this statement, for Herod could easily have taken it as an insult. He could have flown into a rage, and yelled "How dare you ask to see another 'king of the Jews' besides me; I am king of the Jews!" That Herod swallowed his gargantuan pride, and meekly answered the Parthians is quite noteworthy. This is a tribute not only to Caesar's policy to maintain the peace, but also to recognition that a sizeable Parthian army had come to Jerusalem as escorts of the Magi. Herod's meek response to the highly provocative question of the Parthian officials does imply that he was intimidated by the many Parthian soldiers who accompanied the Magi.

Because the whole city was "troubled" by the Parthians' arrival, the presence of so many Parthian soldiers surely sparked rumors in Jerusalem that a new Parthian-Roman war was imminent. Herod may even have suspected that the Parthians' question was designed to

provoke an incident, which would lead to an outbreak of hostilities and his removal from the throne. Herod and all Jerusalem was surprised, but relieved to learn that the Parthian Magi and soldiers had arrived with peaceful intent. Herod may have been expecting to hear an ultimatum for the surrender of Jerusalem to Parthia when the Magi were ushered into his presence.

Some observations must be made about the “star” which led the Magi to Jesus. Some have proposed that this star was a comet or a celestial phenomenon although the biblical accounts indicate that this was not the case. The biblically-described “star” moved, leading the Magi over a long east-to-west route from Parthia to Judea, and Matthew 2:9 states that it finally “stood over where the young child was.” Simple logic confirms that no comet or celestial phenomenon in the sky could possibly pinpoint a single city, much less “stand over” an individual child on the earth’s surface! Nevertheless, that is what the biblical “star” did.

The Bible periodically uses the word “star” to represent angels (Job 38:7, Revelation 1:20), and there is good reason to believe that the “star” which led the Parthian nobles to a specific child in a specific house in Judea was an angel of God. Nothing else makes sense. Only an angel, a spirit being, could literally “stand over” the baby Jesus to designate one specific child to the Parthian nobles.

Also, nothing in the biblical account indicates that this “star” was visible to anyone other than the Magi-Wise Men! Matthew 2:2 states that the Magi saw “the star,” but the context argues no one else ever saw it. Verse 7 relates that Herod asked the Magi when “the star” appeared to them, indicating no one in Judea was aware of any such “star.” If a striking celestial object had appeared in the sky, Herod and his astrologers would already have known the exact date and hour on which it had appeared.

After leading the Parthians to Judea, the “star” disappeared, forcing the Parthians to ask Herod for directions. After the Magi left Herod, the “star” again appeared to them, led them directly to Bethlehem (Luke 2:9), and finally “stood over” one specific child, Jesus. Verse 10 states the Magi rejoiced that the “star” had again appeared to show them where to go! Obviously, a “star” which appeared, disappeared and reappeared for the Magi (but which was apparently not seen by any other humans) had to be an angel. Supporting this fact is that Luke 2:8-15 records that the birth of Jesus was announced to shepherds by angels speaking to them out of a heavenly light which accompanied their appearance. God also used an angel to warn Joseph to flee to Egypt. Since God used angels to direct the movements of persons in the events surrounding Christ’s birth, it would have been completely consistent for God to also send an angel to guide the Magi’s movements.

Having found Jesus, the Magi worshipped him, offering costly gifts of gold, myrrh and frankincense. They were then warned by God in a dream (Matthew 2:12) not to return to Herod, resulting in the prompt exit of the Magi and their many escorts from Judea. When Herod realized that he had been fooled, he wrathfully killed all the young male children of Bethlehem in a vain effort to kill the Messiah. However, there is no indication that Herod made any attempt to overtake or punish the Magi. As high Parthian nobles, they had “diplomatic

immunity,” and Herod dared not anger Caesar by provoking the Parthians. Also, Herod’s garrison troops could have been vastly outnumbered by the size of the Magi’s military escorts.

There is another important aspect of this remarkable episode. While it is not surprising that Jewish leaders during Herod’s reign were sufficiently familiar with the prophetic writings to pinpoint for Herod exactly where the Messiah would be born, it is surprising that God was working so closely with members of the Parthian ruling class! This makes no biblical sense unless: (A) the Parthians were descended from the ten tribes of Israel and (B) the Magi (Parthian priests) included some Levites. During His ministry, Jesus Christ asserted that He had not been sent to the gentiles, but only to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel.” Matthew 15:24-28 shows the reluctance of Jesus to assist a gentile.

Throughout the Old Testament God worked almost exclusively with the House of Israel and the House of Judah. It was not until after the death of Christ that gentiles were given equal access to the God of Israel. The fact that God was working intimately with the Parthian nobility — sending them angelic messages, giving them divine messages in dreams — confirms that the Parthians had to be descended from the ten tribes of Israel which had migrated into Asia.

The fact that some of the Parthian ruling classes were apparently worshippers of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is most revealing. God obviously considered these Parthians to be “righteous” men under the terms of His laws or He would not have been dealing with them so personally. That educated Parthians were ready to visit and worship the Messiah at the time of Christ’s birth indicates they were also familiar with the prophecies of the Old Testament. Who but transplanted Israelites would have been looking for the Messiah at that time?

Although we are jumping ahead in the narrative, consider the events of Acts 2:9 which states Parthians were among those who made pilgrimages to Jerusalem for the Feast of Weeks, known to Christians as Pentecost Sunday. Verse 9 also mentions “Medes, Elamites, and dwellers in Mesopotamia” as being present at this feast, and all these regions were provinces of the Parthian Empire. We know that portions of the ten tribes had been relocated to “the cities of the Medes,” so the presence of devout visitors from Media most likely designates people from the ten tribes of Israel who still lived in Media. Interestingly, verse 9 also mentions “dwellers...in Asia” were present. The word “Asia” has clouded origins, but the Encyclopedia Britannica states, “It is probable that it [“Asia”] has an Assyrian or Hebrew root, and was used first...with a specific or restricted local application, a more extended signification having eventually been given it...”¹⁴

As briefly mentioned in chapter two, one of the Scythian tribes was called the “Asii” (or “Asiani”).¹⁵ Since the “Asiani” were one of the Scythian tribes bearing the name of Isaac, the Sacae or Saka, the Bible’s reference to “Asians” attending the Feast of Weeks could indicate that Scythians were also present in Jerusalem at that time. This further indicates that the Parthians and Scythians were the displaced members of the “lost ten tribes of Israel.” The non-Israelite populations of Asia had no cultural interest in the worship of the God of Israel; only the ten tribes of Israel would retain such a custom.

It was not unusual for large pilgrimages originating in Parthia to travel to Jerusalem to worship the God of Israel. Josephus' statement that caravans from Parthia arrived in Jerusalem under the protection of "many ten thousand men"¹⁶ was noted earlier. These must have been magnificent treasure trains to have warranted the protection of a sizeable army. Such huge protection of a sizeable army. Such huge "offerings" going to Jerusalem from Parthia indicates that significant numbers of people within the Parthian Empire worshipped the God of Israel. This meant that, at the time of Jesus and Herod, there was a great deal of travel and trade between the Parthian Empire and the Roman province of Judea. It also shows that there was a strong sense of community between Judea and many regions of the Parthian Empire. If a caravan of Parthian commoners could be escorted by "many ten thousand men," how many escorts would accompany a caravan of Parthia's nobility?

The Parthian nobility did not "travel light." Plutarch records that Surenas, a high Parthian noble, had an entourage of ten thousand men when he travelled "on his own affairs" on routine business. Just one Parthian noble was accompanied by such a huge and imposing caravan when he travelled on routine business! Think how much larger would have been the caravan of a group of perhaps ten or twelve Parthian nobles, the Magi, travelling, not on routine business within Parthia, but through dangerous terrain with rich treasures and into Roman territory! Parthians believed in large numbers of armed escorts for VIPs. When an ambassador came to Parthia from China, an escort of 20,000 armed Parthian cavalymen greeted him!¹⁸

Now you can understand why the whole city of Jerusalem was frightened when the Parthian Magi arrived to look for the young child of royal birth. They were accompanied by a gigantic caravan from Parthia moving toward Jerusalem. This column was escorted by many thousands of Parthia's military cavalry. Many in Jerusalem feared the Parthians had come to start a war and besiege the city.

The Royal Lineages of Jesus Christ

In an earlier chapter, it was shown that the Magi were loyal to one dynasty, the Arsacids, whose members continuously ruled Parthia. It was shown that many rulers of Parthian and Saka kingdoms had names incorporating the word "Phares" (PH-R-S). This indicates that the Arsacids were descended from the seed of David, who was the first king of the Phares family. (Matthew 1:2-6) The kings of Judah of the Phares dynasty are listed in I Chronicles 3:9-17, but verses 18-24 reveals that the royal lineage continued to flourish after Judah's captivity. Indeed, David's dynasty was given high status in the Babylonian Empire. (II Kings 25:27-30) This postexilic elevation of the Davidic dynasty in Asia likely led to their serving as vassal kings over captive Israelites under Babylonian and Persian masters. Their later elevation to the throne of Parthia fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah 33:17 that David's descendants would always rule over the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel. This may explain the unshakable loyalty of the Parthians to the Arsacids. With the Parthians being Israelites, and the Arsacids being descended from King David, the Arsacids were the only dynasty in Asia that was racially, historically and culturally related to the Parthian people.

Since Matthew 1:3-17 tells us that Jesus Christ was a descendant of Phares and King David, Jesus was a distant relative of the Parthian ruling dynasty, which also descended from Phares and David. The bloodline relationship of Jesus to the Parthian Arsacids serves as a further explanation for the homage paid to Jesus by the Parthian nobility. It was customary for the Parthian Magi and Wise Men to keep track of male Arsacids in foreign nations. In some cases they sent to foreign nations, Scythia and Rome, to summon male relatives of the Arsacids to come to Parthia to serve as king. As mentioned in the previous chapter, some Parthian rulers killed every male relative they could find in an effort to eliminate potential rivals to their throne. This compelled the Magi to look for distant individuals who had the same bloodline as the Arsacids, the lineage of Phares and King David. At the time of the birth of Jesus, the recent Parthian emperor, Phraates IV, who reigned 37-2 B.C., had killed many male relatives, including his own father and almost thirty brothers.¹⁹ Male Arsacids at the time of Jesus' birth were in very short supply.

When the Magi were led by God to pay homage to the young Jesus, they doubtless learned that Joseph, Mary and Jesus were all related to the Parthian dynasty! Indeed, they may already have known that Jesus was an Arsacid, related to Parthia's kings.

When the Magi came to Herod, they said:

“Where is He that is born king of the Jews?” (Matthew 2:2, KJV)

This statement confirms that the Magi arriving in Jerusalem already knew that Jesus was “royal-born,” and it implies that they knew He was related to Parthia's kings. If they did not know that fact prior to their arrival, they learned it during their visit with Joseph, Mary and the young Jesus. Indeed, because Phraates IV, the emperor of Parthia, had killed so many of his male relatives, the Magi were surely to find surviving males of the Davidic bloodline.

Consider some important information. When the Babylonians conquered Judah, they brought King Jehoiachin of Judah and many of his royal family to Babylon. (II Kings 24:15) After languishing in prison for years, King Jehoiachin was exalted into the position of a favored vassal king in the Babylonian empire. I Chronicles 3:17 reveals that Jeconiah had many sons and grandsons, who very likely also became vassal kings in Asia after Jehoiachin died. One of Jeconiah's sons was “Salathiel” (I Chronicles 3:17), who lived in Asia, not Judea. Salathiel, later spelled “Shealtiel,”²⁰ was the father of Zerubbabel. (Ezra 3:2) Matthew 1:12 and Luke 3:27 confirm this as well.

Zerubbabel's name includes the root word “babel,” indicating he was born in Babylon. Zerubbabel was one of the leaders of the group of Jews who left Asia and returned to Jerusalem during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah under the auspices of Persian kings. Zerubbabel had a prominent role in the rebuilding of a Jewish presence in Jerusalem and Judea, and he is mentioned frequently in the books of Ezra and Haggai and once in the book of Nehemiah. Joseph, the human “father” of Jesus Christ was a descendant of Zerubbabel. (Matthew 1:12-16) So Jesus Christ was born into a very prominent and famous family in Judea, one known to be descended from the Kings of Judah. Since His royal progenitors

formerly lived in Asia and had included vassal kings of the Babylonians, the Parthian Magi may have been very well aware that they were coming to visit a family of Arsacids! Babylon was then ruled by Parthia, so its records were available to the Magi. Because Phraates IV had killed so many males of the royal Parthian dynasty at that time, the Magi were compelled to look outside Parthia's borders for male Arsacids who were eligible for the throne of Parthia.

Now consider this: Because Jesus was eligible for the throne of Parthia, so was His human father "Joseph." Christian mythology tends to personify Joseph as an obscure, poor "carpenter" struggling "to make ends meet." But the possibility exists that he was, in fact, well-to-do. The account in Mark 6:3, for instance, indicates that Jesus himself was a "carpenter," but in that day someone in the building trades business was often more of a "building contractor," involving all aspects of construction. This could possibly have been a very responsible position.

The concept of Joseph and Mary being "poor" partly comes from the "manger scene" of them staying in a lowly manger when Jesus was born. However, they did not stay there for lack of financial resources. When they arrived in Jerusalem, they tried to stay in a lodging house, but everything was "booked solid" in the city. (Luke 2:7) As soon as the crowds thinned out, they promptly relocated to a rented "house" in Jerusalem. (Matthew 2:11) Also, it takes financial resources to travel. When God warned Joseph to flee to Egypt quickly, he obviously had the financial resources on hand to afford a hastily arranged, indefinite stay in a foreign nation. (Matthew 2:13-15) Either Joseph was not a "poor carpenter," or these funds came from the gifts of the Magi at Jesus' birth.

Jesus was descended from the kings of Judah through both His father and mother! While Matthew 1 gives Joseph's descent from Judah's dynastic line, Luke 3:23-33 gives Mary's descent from king David. Both Joseph and Mary were direct descendants of King David, the kings of Judah, related to the Davidic kings in Asia and had Salathiel and Zerubbabel as common ancestors. However, Joseph and Mary's immediate ancestors were descended from two different sons of Zerubbabel. (Matthew 1:13-16, Luke 3:23-27) Some confusion exists on this point, as it is easy to not grasp that Luke 3's account gives Mary's lineage. Henry Halley explains this point as follows:

"The commonly accepted view is that Matthew gives Joseph's line, showing Jesus to be the Legal Heir to the Promises given Abraham and David; and that Luke gives Mary's line, showing Jesus' blood descent, 'Son of David according to the flesh' (Romans 1:3). Mary's genealogy, in accord with Jewish usage, was in her husband's name. Joseph was the 'son of Heli' (Luke 3:23), that is,

'son-in-law' of Heli. Jacob was Joseph's father (Matthew 1:16)."²¹

Jesus was a "blue-blooded" son of parents descended from royalty. This remarkable relationship meant both Joseph and Jesus were distant relatives of Parthia's kings. Because Parthia could offer the kingship to any relative of the Parthian king line, not just the oldest son or closest relative of the previous king, both Joseph and Jesus Christ were potential claimants to the throne of the Parthian Empire! While the Bible does record Jesus' royal lineage of the

seed of David, it does not specifically mention His relationship to Parthia's dynasty. However, as we shall see later in this chapter, the Bible implies that this relationship existed.

Since the Magi who worshipped Jesus were members of the body which selected the kings of Parthia and kept track of male Arsacids, they must have been ecstatic to find living descendants of King David. The Magi no doubt discussed the possibility that this child Jesus, born under such unusual circumstances, might one day take the throne of Parthia. While the Bible is silent on their future contacts, this delegation of Parthian Magi likely would have stayed in contact with Jesus in future years and monitored the events of His life. If the Parthians had a Messianic understanding, Jesus would have been seen as an acceptable ruler because He was a son of David.

Did the Magi Almost Cause a Roman-Parthian War?

Let us consider that the visit of the Magi to Jesus may have been a factor in a political crisis that almost led to a new Roman-Parthian war. Recall that from 40-37 B.C., Parthia had ruled Palestine and Syria before the Romans drove them back across the Euphrates River. That war ushered in a long period of Parthian-Roman *détente* which included the entire lifetime of Jesus Christ. However, a great Parthian-Roman war was barely averted in 1 A.D. when a "summit conference" was held between the Parthian emperor, Phraataces, and Caius Caesar, the grandson of Augustus Caesar on an island in the Euphrates River (i.e. neutral territory). Roman sources recorded that:

"The armies of the two chiefs were drawn up on the opposite banks of the river [the Euphrates], facing one another; and the chiefs themselves, accompanied by an equal number of attendants, proceeded to deliberate in the sight of both hosts."²²

This "summit conference" averted war, but how could the Magi's visit have had a role in this crisis?

(Let me just insert who this Caius Caesar is.

Gaius Caesar (Latin: Gaius Julius Caesar; 20 BC – 21 February AD 4) was consul in AD 1 and the grandson of Augustus, the first emperor of the Roman Empire. Although he was born to Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa and Julia the Elder, Augustus' only daughter, Gaius and his younger brother, Lucius Caesar were raised by their grandfather as his adopted sons and joint-heirs to the empire. He would experience an accelerated political career befitting a member of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, with the Roman Senate allowing him to advance his career without first holding a questorship or praetorship, offices that ordinary senators were required to hold as part of the *cursus honorum*.^[1]

In 1 BC Gaius was given command of the eastern provinces, after which he concluded a peace treaty with King Phraates V of Parthia on an island in the Euphrates. Shortly afterward, he was appointed to the office of consul the following year in AD 1. The year after Gaius' consulship, Lucius died at Massilia in the month of August. Approximately eighteen months later, Gaius died of an illness in Lycia. Although he married his second cousin Livilla prior to his death, they did not have children. Following the deaths of Gaius and Lucius, Augustus adopted his stepson as well as his sole-surviving grandson – Tiberius and Agrippa Postumus, respectively – in AD 4.)

The Bible's account of the Magi visiting Jesus ceases when the Magi left Judea and returned to Parthia, leaving the impression that the issue was concluded. However, if we consider the geopolitical realities of that time, there is no way that the Magi's exit from Judea ended the matter.

Matthew 2:3 records that Herod and "all Jerusalem" were troubled by the arrival of the Magi. Jerusalem was a commercial city at the nexus of major trade routes, and it commonly received caravans of thousands of people. Three tired Magi arriving from the east would not have made a ripple in the city's calm. For that matter, caravans from Parthian territory could arrive in Jerusalem with many thousands of armed escorts, and such events did not trouble the city. However, the arrival of Parthian Magi — Parthia's nobles and priests — in Jerusalem escorted by a large army of Parthian soldiers was unprecedented and unrepeated in the history of the city of Jerusalem. This occurred at a time when Parthia and Rome had a peace treaty, and no major Roman or Parthian military forces had crossed the Euphrates River in over three decades. The arrival of a large Parthian military force in Jerusalem escorting high Parthian officials was militarily provocative and could justifiably be seen by King Herod and the Romans as a treaty violation.

When Parthia had occupied Palestine, it had crowned its own vassal king, Antigonus, as ruler of Judea. When the Magi, Parthia's official king-makers, came to Jerusalem looking for "a new king of the Jews," it must have sounded to Herod and the Romans that the Parthians were trying to reassert their claim to Judea and dethrone Herod. Their speaking directly to Herod, who was Rome's "king of the Jews," about wanting to find a "new king of the Jews" could be seen by the Romans as very close to a declaration of war, given the region's history. The fact that King Herod "bit his tongue" and made no rash statement to the Magi and treated them with deference argues that the Parthians must have had an intimidating number of troops at

Jerusalem to compel Herod to be so uncharacteristically meek. Since a major Roman-Parthian treaty had been in effect for over three decades, Rome felt unthreatened in the region, and would, consequently, have had only a small garrison in Jerusalem.

Caesar's decree that no Parthian war be provoked also put Herod in an awkward position. While the Magi and Parthians were in Judea with no harmful intent, there is no way the Romans could be sure this "visit" was benign in nature. After the Parthians left, Herod "blew his stack" (Matthew 2:16) and vented his pent-up rage by murdering all male children in Bethlehem under age two. Official reports surely had to be filed with Augustus Caesar in Rome about this highly unusual event.

Herod was justifiably fearful of Parthian intentions in the area. Hadn't they come to anoint a replacement for him as "king of the Jews?" Hadn't they also deceived him by leaving the area without his knowledge? Herod's murderous act in Bethlehem would also have inflamed Jewish residents, and rumors of revolt against the hated Romans would have intensified. Faced with a possible Parthian invasion and/or a Jewish revolt, Herod needed more Roman soldiers in the region. In his reports to Caesar, Herod surely cast himself in a favorable light, warning Caesar that the Parthians had crossed the Euphrates, made a military reconnaissance to Jerusalem to spy out the city's weakness and were openly talking about crowning a "new king of the Jews." Because the Parthians' arrival in Jerusalem had scared the whole city, news of this extraordinary event would have spread quickly along the trade routes. Roman honor had been slighted, and Rome usually responded to such an insult.

However, the Romans could not respond immediately. Rome had been sapped by the costly civil wars between Brutus and Octavian and also Octavian against Mark Antony and Cleopatra. These wars were fought in the eastern half of the Roman Empire, so Rome's military forces in the east had been depleted and disorganized. Augustus Caesar could not be entirely sure whom to trust with an army, lest another civil war break out in the east. Herod the Great was a firm ally of Augustus, but Herod was soon to die, leaving Augustus with no close ally in the East to whom he could entrust an army. Also, Rome and Parthia were facing a possible conflict in Armenia over succession to the throne of Armenia. In both Armenia and Judea, the issue was whether Rome or Parthia would choose the kings of those nations. Also, Rome had to finance, train and equip an army to fight the Parthians. Rome's armies under Crassus and Mark Antony had been "clobbered" by the Parthians, so Rome would need extra time to assemble an army to challenge Parthia. Rome's leadership crisis is described by George Rawlinson as follows:

"Augustus [formerly "Octavian"], from the time that he heard of the Armenian troubles, and of the support given them by Parthia, seems never to have wavered in his determination to vindicate the claims of Rome...[but] hesitated as to the person whose services he should employ...He would have been glad to employ Tiberius; but that morose prince had deserted him and...was living in self-chosen retirement. Caius, the eldest of his grandsons, was, in B.C. 2, only 18 years of age...the extreme youth of the prince caused him to hesitate...and the consequence was that Caius did not start for the East until late in B.C. 1."23

In other words, Rome's political situation compelled a delay in responding to Parthia's real provocation in Judea and apparent provocation in Armenia. The situation was further muddled by the death of Phraates IV, Parthia's emperor when the Magi visited Jerusalem.²⁴ Since Phraates IV and Herod the Great had died by the time Rome's army was ready, all the major principals had a fresh viewpoint by the time Rome and Parthia had their "summit conference" at the Euphrates River in 1 A.D.

Although historical accounts mention only the Armenian dispute, it is significant that the Parthian and Roman armies did not confront each other in Armenia. Their confrontation was along the Euphrates River, which had been crossed by the Parthian armed column led by the Magi. Everyone in the region breathed a huge sigh of relief when war was averted. As we shall soon see, if a war had been fought ending the Parthian-Roman detente, much of Jesus Christ's ministry in Judea could not have occurred.

If the armed Parthian column led by the Magi provoked the Roman-Parthian confrontation in 1 A.D. during which war was averted, a date of 2 B.C. for Christ's birth is more logical. If He had been born in 4 B.C., there would be too great a gap between that year and the Roman response in 1 A.D. However, a gap from 2 B.C. to 1 A.D. would be understandable given the political realities of that time. (He was born Sept 11, 3 BC.)

The Bible says little else concerning the early years of Jesus Christ. Luke 2:40 states that Jesus "waxed strong," and was filled with wisdom and favored by God. Luke 2:41-50 tells us that Jesus, at age twelve, amazed the teachers in the Temple with His wisdom. This passage confirms that Jesus was being raised by His parents according to the Laws of God, as His family annually attended the Passover in Jerusalem, the location of the Temple. Jesus would have been seen by others as a devout, brilliant son of a prominent Jewish family.

ENDNOTES:

1. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XVIII, III, 3
2. Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*, p. 98
3. *Ibid*, pp. 99-100 (citing Eusebius, *The History of the Church*, 4.3.2)
4. Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, Part II, "The Burning of Rome," circa XV.42-47
5. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 178-181
6. Josephus, *Antiquities*, XV, I, 2
7. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 199-205
8. *Ibid*, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, p. 216
9. *Ibid*, p. 210
10. *Ibid*, p. 85
11. Young's *Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, see word "Wise," subhead 8, p. 1060
12. Josephus, *Antiquities*, XVIII, IX, 1
13. Plutarch, *Crassus*, 21
14. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Heading entitled "Asia," Vol. 2, p. 512
15. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, p. 118
16. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XVIII, IX, 1

17.Plutarch, Crassus, 21

18.website: www.parthia.com, see links: "Geography," "Parthian Stations," and "Parallel Passages from the Chinese Annals" (citing Friedrich Hirth's China and the Roman Orient)

19.Rawlinson, George, The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy, pp. 195-198, 215

20.Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible, see "Salathiel, Shealtiel," p. 831

21.Halley, Henry, Halley's Bible Handbook, see "Matthew," p. 415

22.Rawlinson, The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy, pp. 218-219

23.Rawlinson, The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy, pp. 213-214