

# **The Stones Cry Out Part 2**

**The Honour of Kings Is to  
Search Out a Matter**

**By  
Joseph F. Dumond**

**The Sabbatical and Jubilee  
Years are the Key to  
understanding all end-time  
prophecy.**

**Why is no one paying more  
attention to them?**

**The Stones are Crying Out  
Just Before Our Redeemer  
Comes:**

**Our King Is Coming!  
Our Messiah Is Coming!**

28 And saying these things, He went in front, going up to Jerusalem.  
29 And it happened as He drew near Bethphage and Bethany,  
toward the mount called Mount of Olives, He sent two of the  
disciples, 30 saying, Go into the village across from you, and having  
entered, you will find a colt tied up, on which no one of men has yet  
sat. Untie it and bring it. 31 And if anyone asks you, Why are you  
untying it? You will say this to him, Because the Lord has need of it.  
32 And going, those who were sent found as He had said to them.  
33 And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, Why  
are you untying the colt? 34 And they said, The Lord has need of  
him. 35 And they brought him to Jesus. And they threw their  
garments on the colt. And they set Jesus on it. 36 And as He went,  
they spread their clothes in the way. 37 And when He had come  
near, even now at the descent of the Mount of Olives, all the  
multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a  
loud voice for all the mighty works which they had seen, 38 saying,  
Blessed is the King coming in the name of the Lord! Peace in  
Heaven and glory in the highest! 39 And some of the Pharisees from  
the crowd said to Him, Teacher, rebuke your disciples. 40 And He  
answered and said to them,

***I tell you that if these should be silent, the stones  
would cry out. (Luke 19:28-40)***

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## Dedication

As I have done in all my books; I will dedicate this work to God, the Creator of all things whose name is Yehovah. His true name has been removed from the Bible 6,827 times. I will be using His great and awesome name, and I will not apologize for using it.

It is only by His grace and His mercy that I have come to understand all the things I have been able to share in all my books. This book along with **The Stones Cry Out Part 1** should have been the first book I wrote as it explains each of the Sabbatical years and how they all align with one another, but I did not have all of this information until just recently. Originally, I had 10 Sabbatical years and one Jubilee year to go by.

From the time Yehovah began to call me in 1981, He has led me into an ever-deepening understanding of His truths. This understanding began to snowball between 2004-2005 and has gained unprecedented traction since. The more I have read, meditated upon, and obediently put into practice what He has shown me, the more faithfully He has revealed to me profound insights from His Holy Word. Because of this, I consider myself especially blessed.

I would also like to make a special point to once again, thank my wife, my children, and my grandchildren who have not understood my passion for history and to understand this most misunderstood book. At great personal cost, I have made every effort to be able to prove beyond all doubt—and in the face of all objections—the veracity of the truths to be gleaned from this book. That much I have been able to do. But most importantly, I never once stopped loving all of you through it all and sincerely hope that one day, you too, will pick up Yehovah's Word, read it from cover to cover, and then take all the time that is needed to understand these other points as well.

## Acknowledgments

I would like to now take the time to thank the following individuals, in no particular order, for their invaluable assistance—both individually and as a team effort—in not only making this book possible, but also, in making all key precepts in this book come to life:

- In the summer of 2023, I discovered a footnote in one of the tombstone articles which told me about still more tombstones. At that time, I was busy trying to complete ***The 10 Days of Awe*** book, and a number of people were asking me how they could help.

So, I asked Ella Morgan, along with Adam Parker, Janet Chappell, and Eileen Espinosa to look for this manuscript and see if they could find any more tombstone dates that we did not already know about.

Within three weeks, Ella wrote back to say they had 100 tombstones and out of them there are about 16 we did not currently know about. I was ecstatic. This second book in this two-book series, in part, is a result of their research. I want to have all the proofs in one place so everyone in the future can find them for their own research and to add any new discoveries yet to be discovered.

- I want to thank Adam Parker who has sorted out and documented all the tombstones in the manuscript.
- Once again, Pauline Reardon has designed and produced another beautiful cover for this book as well as many of our other books. First impressions are what the cover is all about and Pauline does great work in this regard, drawing the eyes in to the subject at hand. We are indebted to her once again.
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discoveries in this book. We are indebted to her for her valued assistance in digging up so many gems.

- This work is going to quote at length a number of other authors in both the subject matter and via footnotes. I am doing this to present you with the most accurate information about the calendar and the Sabbatical and Jubilee years all in one place. I must thank [Qadesh La Yahweh Press of Yahweh.org](http://QadeshLaYahwehPressofYahweh.org), for all their research, much of which we will be sharing with you. Their work was the first one I read that made complete sense. It is upon their shoulders that my work stands.
- James Relf is yet another vitally important member of our team who oversees the technology side of our organization by making everything work smoothly and seamlessly online so we can continue to share, without interruption, what we have with all of you. In addition to all the technology support he provides, he has also become a good friend and confidant, allowing me to vent and debrief with him whenever I need to.
- I also want to thank those who faithfully help to sustain and support this work on a monthly basis, allowing me to travel around the world presenting these truths to small groups who could not otherwise afford to have me come. Thank you so very much.
- Finally, I want to individually thank you, the reader. You have, undertaken the monumental task of (and a genuine interest in) setting out to gain a thorough understanding of the Sabbatical and Jubilee Years and everything they represent and reveal. You are, for what may be the very first time, discovering these most precious pearls of knowledge, applying them to your lives, and then sharing these revelations with others. And for that, I cannot thank you enough and am forever in your debt. You now know: the Sabbatical and Jubilee Years are the KEY to understanding End-Times Prophecy and with these two books, you can now prove when they are overwhelmingly. So AGAIN, thank YOU!



*2 The glory of God is to hide a thing; but the honor of kings is to search out a matter. (Proverbs 25:2)*

## Foreword

THE STONES CRY OUT PART 2 is a monumental research project requiring an immense intellectual effort on the part of any professional researcher. The author's goal was to establish an accurate record of Biblical Chronology going right back to Adam 'proving' every Shmita and Jubilee year all along to our day.

To give some idea of the intricate complexity of this project, it may well be compared to the work of attempting to complete a one-million-piece puzzle with few illustrative markers to build on. Some might even call it an act of madness, or a fool's errand. Add to this: the journey to establish the absolute proof, covering close to 6,000 years of Biblical and world history, is littered with traps, false trails, and hundreds of dead ends, with the "Author of Confusion" doing his utmost to lead you astray at every turn.

Now, one would expect anyone undertaking a research project of this awesome magnitude to be some erudite Professor of theology, or at the very least a man with a Cum Laude Doctorate in Biblical Chronology. Yet Joseph F. Dumond falls far short of such elevated educational excellence in that he merely graduated from the 13<sup>th</sup> Grade in High School in Ontario, Canada. He self-deprecatingly refers to being a "ditch digger," as he was a contract worker, who ran his own gang working on the construction of pipelines in northern Canada. What is also most remarkable: he never even went to a Bible College! Instead, he learned to love God's Word after a spell at the Worldwide Church of God, and through his own dedicated study.

The author explains that the science of Biblical Chronological research is divided into four schools or systems, e.g. system A, B, C, and D. However, he favours system A, as throughout this epic work the author absolutely proves the veracity of his system A, by highlighting at every turn where B, C, and D fall short. The main problem with the other schools of thought lies with the chosen start date of their Hebrew calendar, as influenced by the Talmud; they have opted for Rosh Hashanah in the fall. By contrast, the Bible clearly affirms that the Hebrew new year starts in the spring on the first of Nisan. As we progress from the time of Adam to the moment of Israel crossing the River Jordan, the author invites the reader to check his figures at every turn. What makes this chronological journey so

fascinating is that we learn lots of interesting facts along the way. For instance, Abram was born in 1948 A.C., likewise the State of Israel was born in 1948 A.D. Coincidence? I think not!

We learn about the time when Jerusalem was besieged by the mightiest army in the world, when some 185,000 Assyrian warriors surrounded the gates of Jerusalem in the reign of King Hezekiah. The king sought deliverance from Yehovah, the King of the Universe; and early the next morning 185,000 soldiers lay dead outside the walls of Jerusalem. It was an outstanding miracle; it was also a Jubilee Year, as confirmed by a second witness in the Assyrian Records held at Nineveh. Furthermore, we learn this miracle occurred on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan on Passover night; just as the death angel killed the first born of Egypt on this very same night, so it killed those 185,000 Assyrian warriors.

Another fascinating historical anecdote concerns the history behind Alexander the Great's visit to Jerusalem, where he commanded his invincible army to lower their weapons, as he saw the High Priest of Israel in his full ceremonial regalia approach him with an army of Levites all dressed in white robes following behind. As the High Priest welcomed him to Jerusalem, King Alexander was greatly moved, as he recounted the prophetic dream he had several years previously when he was greeted by a man dressed in the same way as the High Priest, accompanied by the same company of men in white robes. This man wearing the golden crown bearing the letters Yod, Hey, Vav, Hey, exhorted him to go and conquer Asia. Alexander showed great favour to Judah, and he even exempted them from paying taxes in their Sabbatical (Shmita) years.

The reader will also be surprised to learn that King Herod the Great was a remarkably caring and generous man, as during a time of dearth and famine he fed and provided for his subjects from his own resources until the crisis had abated. Another remarkable feature of his reign was the minting of special coins to commemorate each Shmita year.

In reading this book, you will uncover many amazing historical high points, as you follow the narrative of the chronology of Israel and Judah. All of this and I have not even mentioned the "Tombstones of Zoar," as these fascinating finds are better explained by Mr. Joseph Dumond.

Personally, I am hugely impressed by this monumental work and have no hesitation in recommending it to all truth seekers in the world. Finally, I would like to say that no man on our planet could possibly have solved this impossible problem of Israel's chronology. Those foolish enough to try have all floundered and got lost in this web of confusion. In short, it can only be done by one who is led by the Hand of our Creator.

Yes, this book is a MIRACLE!

Stephen J Spykerman, Author & Minister  
Founder: Mount Ephraim Publishing

## Preface

Shalom and welcome back once again.

This is ***The Stones Cry Out Part 2***. If you have not yet read **Part 1**, then I urge you to do so first. I am not planning to repeat all of those calendric errors in this book, which you may need to know, in order to understand some of the things we are going to explain.

Many of you will have already read many of our other books and by now, you should completely understand just how much the Jubilee cycles reveal about end-time prophecy. You should now know “The Key to Understanding ALL Prophecy Is the Jubilee Cycles.” It is only through the Jubilee cycles—combined with a deep intimate understanding of each of the Holy Days found in Leviticus 23—that you can truly understand end-time prophecy. You are no longer taking shots in the dark but are, like me, able to connect the dots and inerrantly string together the clues given to us in prophecy.

On our website you can find our book with all 120 Jubilee cycles from the creation of Adam up to our time now in 2024, but also every Sabbatical and Jubilee year going to the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium as well. Yes, we will soon have a new chart and it will be available at our site soon.

You will have a record for the entire 7<sup>th</sup> millennium of when the Sabbatical and Jubilee years are, and historical proofs from history to know exactly when they are.

We have explained in **The Stones Cry Out Part 1**, the two calendar systems in use, when they developed and how they were implemented in order to understand some of the tombstone dates that we are going to present to you. The lack of understanding about the calendars is why many of the Jubilee experts dismissed so many of the historical artefacts that were available to them.

This book, ***The Stones Cry Out Part 2***, is not going to be just a dry read as we list each historical fact that contributes to the overall understanding of exactly when the Sabbatical and Jubilee years are. I will also explain what or how each date leads to our deeper understandings.

Some proofs will be undeniable, while others will be weak if they have to stand on their own.

It is with a great sense of pride that I share with you what I have been able to document and what we now currently know about the Sabbatical and Jubilee proofs in our possession.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this book should have actually been the first book I presented. When I began to understand the Sabbatical and Jubilee years in 2005, at that time I only had 11 Sabbatical years as a reference. From just these 11, I was able to prove a second Jubilee year. Considering we only knew about one Jubilee year prior to this discovery and proof, I was excited. With just these 12 proofs, I have come to understand all the prophecies I have shared with you over the years in all of our books.

***The Prophecies of Abraham***, written in 2010, was my first attempt at explaining the deep meanings hidden in the Jubilee cycles. So many people could not understand what I was saying at that time as no one was teaching this, so they had no basis upon which to build. It was difficult for them to understand or compare one Jubilee cycle with another and see how they revealed prophecy. This required me to then write ***Remembering the Sabbatical Year of 2016***, published in 2013.

I wrote this book as simply as possible, answering every question being raised about the Sabbatical and Jubilee years and how to prove when they are and the curses that were already happening when you do not keep the Sabbatical years and let the land rest.

To explain the rest of what people could not understand in ***The Prophecies of Abraham***, I then wrote ***The 2300 Days of Hell***, published in 2014, which dealt with the 70 weeks of Daniel. The 70 weeks are 70 Jubilee cycles which you can prove with the Jubilee charts and once you do, end-time prophecy jumps off the page at you.

I was not trying to set any dates, but once you understand the Jubilee cycles, the evidence contained in the patterns revealed is undeniable. The tsunami of people yelling *no man can know the day or the hour* grew, until finally James Relf and Pauline Reardon, part of the Sightedmoon.com team, told me I had to write another book to explain this Hebrew expression no one understood. After writing ***The 2300 Days of Hell***, I did not want to write another book. After all, the cost to publish these three books already had cost me almost \$40,000 US, and my books sales at that time certainly did not cover the cost or justify writing any more books. But the voices of opposition grew until 2019 when I then addressed this Hebrew idiom and wrote ***It Was***

***A Riddle Not A Command***, explaining the thief in the night as well as what Yehshua spoke, how no man could know the day or the hour. He was actually telling those who obey and keep the laws, those who understood the Holy Days, exactly when He was going to come back, as well as when the judgment on the world would begin. That judgment was to begin in 2024.

This book then caused still more people to think about the Rapture. Because so many did not grasp this, I then set about explaining how the Rapture was a Jewish ideology found in the scriptures of Leviticus 23, but not fully explained until Yehshua came out of the grave in 31 A.D. ***The Mystery of the Jewish Rapture 2033*** was then published in 2021.

Again, all of these books, all of this understanding was only possible because of the understanding gained from the knowledge revealed through the Sabbatical and Jubilee cycles. It truly is the foundation or KEY to understanding all end-time prophecy.

Even as I wrote ***The Mystery of the Jewish Rapture 2033***, the seed of our next three books had already germinated in my mind. As I explained these books each week in my weekly newsletter, again I discovered how little people understood these points. I began to write one book, and I soon realized it had to be at least three—and should have been four. But we managed to squeeze the three books into ***The Elijah Trilogy***, beginning with ***The Restoration of All Things*** published in 2022.

This book explained all those things that had been lost since Yehshua walked the earth, and the very same things Elijah would be restoring at the end of this age. Everyone is looking for Jesus and no one is looking for Elijah who must come first.

The revelations that we explained in ***The 2300 Days of Hell*** warned us that something big was about to happen in 2020. We knew this in 2005. What we did not know was that the curse coming in 2020 was the plague of COVID. The curse for this cycle was war, plague and famine. And I had focused on the war aspect. I had assumed the word for sword meant *war*. In 2022, I was told to look at that word by my friend Judith Dennis and was blown away to see it actually meant *dry place or parched lands*—exactly the very thing happening around the world since 2018. But the “sword” aspect of the 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle reared its ugly head in the Shmitah year of 2023, once again showing our understanding for the 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle was in fact

correct. We now stand on the cusp of WW III at the end of 2024, with the USA and Europe helping Ukraine fight off Russian aggression. The fear of a nuclear war is now 90 seconds to midnight.

Even as I wrote these books, an evil had taken hold of the Messianic brethren as well as most of the world. In ***The Restoration of All Things***, I had explained how Simon Magus had syncretised the truth he had gained from the Apostles with the ancient Babylonian religion and magic, forming what became known as The Universal Church, now called the Catholic Church, from which all these other modern churches have descended from. As I wrote ***The Abomination That Makes Desolate***, I kept this syncretism in mind showing the brethren how they, at the end of this age, were also syncretising the truth of the Torah with pagan ideas and false teachings. The brethren were now making the false teachings their main teaching points and they had relegated the Torah to the back burners of the pulpit. Many do not like to be told they are sinning, and they grew angry with me over this book.

As Elijah said to the people in his day, I say to you now: If the conspiracy teachings are true and from God, then worship them. But if not, then return to the Torah and begin anew to worship Yehovah using the Torah only.

Our third book in ***The Elijah Trilogy*** was ***The 10 Days of Awe***, which is a deep look at the time from the Feast of Trumpets to the Day of Atonement. More specifically, they are the concluding 10 days of the 40 Days of Repentance, which begin on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the 6<sup>th</sup> month. Instead of days, this 10-day period is actually 10 years of judgment beginning in 2024 and extending until the time Satan would be locked away on the Day of Atonement in 2033.

The date for the Abomination has now come and gone. Although ***The Abomination That Makes Desolate*** told you when it was to happen, it was not until afterwards that we then realized there were going to be potentially three more. We then added one more chapter to our Abomination book and retitled it ***The Abomination That Makes Desolate, the Epilogue***, detailing exactly what happened and why on October 6, 2023, the abomination was set up followed by the invasion of Hamas, fulfilling the 1290 prophecy of Daniel 12. The 1335 day prophecy was fulfilled with the hostage agreement on November 21, 2023, leading to the release of over 80 hostages at that time.



Those having read our first two books in *The Elijah Trilogy*, now have a firm grasp on exactly where we are in these very last days of the 120 Jubilee cycles. If you have not already done so, you also need to read *The 2300 Days Of Hell; It Was A Riddle, Not A Command*; and *The Mystery of the Jewish Rapture 2033*.

Each book individually—and all aforementioned books collectively—explain how each of the Holy Days reveals a clear understanding of the major events Yehovah is about to set in motion or has already brought to pass in His plan of salvation. These Holy Days are found in Leviticus 23 and are explained throughout the Bible.

Yehovah, the God of Israel, is directly involved in the affairs of His chosen and the world as we speak—and in a manner the nightly news can clearly attest to.

Yeshua spoke of the Parable of the 10 Virgins in Matthew 25, and how sadly mistaken the five foolish were in assuming they were ready for the great Wedding Feast. Five of them were shocked to learn they were not ready at all upon arriving late, only to be turned away. They even went to buy more oil on what they should have known was a Holy Day, the Feast of Trumpets, which is the day the Bridegroom is going to come on. This act alone demonstrates how they did not know the One they called their Groom. In the pages of this book and all our books, you will learn how to discern between the foolish and the wise ones.

The Feast of Trumpets requires you to be ready for a future day and hour that no one can know. The good news being, Paul assures us we will at least know the precise season. Therefore, there is a sense in which we actually do know. The wise virgins knew. They knew because they understood the meaning of each Holy Day and the meaning of the Jubilee cycles. The Jubilee cycles reveal the end-time prophetic patterns. The foolish virgins never bothered to learn of such things and only at the very last moment, when they realized they were not ready, did they then seek the oil that they so unequivocally needed—albeit in vain—to be welcomed by the King and enter therein.

As we enter this time of judging, which we state has begun in 2024, there are more and more who blatantly copy those things we have written in our books, claiming that they are the ones who discovered these truths. They then urge you not to buy our books or

learn the truth here, but rather go and buy their books which are filled with all the conspiracies you can think of. They have syncretised what we have taught with every conspiracy out there, polluting Yehovah's truths once again. I will leave it up to you to judge which ones are from Yehovah, and which ones are spun off from Satan.

We are now going to list every known Sabbatical and Jubilee year chronologically for you so that they are all in one place. We will also list all the sources in our footnotes along the way so everyone can have all this information here in one place.

Once you know when the Sabbatical and Jubilee years are and can easily prove them, then we can begin to keep the Shmitah in worship of Yehovah. Everyone around the world would be able to worship Him at the proper times all together. We must keep the Appointed Times at the right time, all the time. Once you have plotted them out, then you will realize there is only one way to count them.

We are going to quote large sections of Qadesh La Yahweh Press and their excellent research. They were the original ones I discovered who had correctly identified the first 11 Sabbatical years, which we then began to build upon. Since 2005 when I first learned these truths from Qadesh La Yahweh Press, I have now accumulated 65 Sabbatical and 5 Jubilee years in total, from 83 scriptural references, historical mentions and a series of artefacts.

I am now excited to share with you all the proofs I have found and set them alongside Qadesh La Yahweh Press's discoveries so you, the researcher, now have a complete reference to them all in one place.

Let me share one more little bit of information with those of you who are historically challenged, that my editor shared with me. The Jubilee cycles you are about to learn about take the mass amount of history that is all lumped into a large block of time and separates it out for you over 120 blocks of time.

*And let me tell you: that's what I love so much about the Jubilee calendar: it organizes history within 120 neat chunks of time. Otherwise, history is just an infinite abyss of information that is difficult to place in time. But the chronology you've placed within the timeline helps immensely. Now the difficulty is just knowing the details and understanding causation. That's the hard part, which you bring out in this book! (Eileen Espinosa)*

## Introduction

As we stated in *The Stones Cry Out Part 1*, this work necessitated explaining the history leading up to the time when the errors in calendric understanding were redacted as truth and written down for the rest of history.

We began with the Hasmonaeans and then followed the history all the way to Rambam. In doing this I wanted you, the reader, to understand how, when and why times and seasons were changed by the Jews in plain sight. Although Constantine created the Sunday law, I did not want to focus on that as the primary plot spoken of in Daniel:

*25 And he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and plot to change times and laws. And they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and one-half time. (Daniel 7:25)*

I have quoted 2 Thessalonians many times, explaining over and over how Yehovah will give people over to the lie they are entertaining if they do not return to obeying Him. Yes, you heard me correctly. Yehovah will send people strong delusional thinking, until they get their fill of the false teachings because they are more excited about these silly ideas than they are about learning the Torah and studying His words.

*11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, 12 so that all those who do not believe the truth, but delight in unrighteousness, might be condemned. (2 Thessalonians 2:11-12)*

Allow me to recap what we have now published in *The Stones Cry Out Part 1*.

The confusion about when the Sabbatical or Jubilee years are, began in the second century or around 180 C.E., with the writing of the Mishnah. The Temple had been destroyed in 70 C.E. and after the Bar Kokhba Revolt, the Jews were being driven out of the land of Israel. They wanted to record all the services of the Temple before they were forgotten and began to collect the information after their devastating loss in 135 C.E. At about the time Rabbi Judah was redacting the Mishnah in 180 C.E., there was a debate as to whether

or not to count the 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee year as the first year of the next count. Was the cycle counted 48, 49, 50, 1, 2, 3; or 48, 49, 50, 2, 3, with the 50<sup>th</sup> year also being the first year?

During the Bar Kokhba Revolt, they knew the Jubilee year was 134 C.E. and the next Sabbatical year was in 140 C.E. This is attested to by a number of contracts we will introduce to you later in the book. After the defeat and expulsion of the Jews by Hadrian, the Sabbatical and Jubilee years were being forgotten.

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, the sages calculating the Jubilee year, took the year 134 C.E. and subtracted 50 to arrive at the year 84 C.E. as the previous Jubilee year. They then counted the 49<sup>th</sup> year as the year 83 C.E., subtracted seven to get the year 76 C.E., and then subtracted seven again to get the year 69 C.E. as the year the Temple was destroyed. By subtracting 50 years instead of 49, they now arrived at the year 69 C.E. instead of 70 C.E.

This is the time in history when the Sabbatical year confusion begins. Before we begin to show each date and its proof, we must understand how things became confused. Before the first, second and even the third revolt, they knew when the Sabbatical and Jubilee years were. But after these revolts, things changed.

It would come to pass during the Byzantine period, from the fourth to the seventh centuries, that synagogue inscriptions and tombstones began to record dates as so many years after the destruction of the Temple.

The First Jewish Revolt against Rome began in 66 C.E. and ended with the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. We demonstrate this decisively when we get to that chapter.

During each of those years, they minted coins dated to the first, second, third, fourth and, more rarely, even fifth year of the revolt. In other words, dating began with the beginning of the Jewish revolt. Many of the coins also bore legends like “Jerusalem the Holy” or “Freedom of Zion.”

After the first revolt, there arose the Kitos War of 115–117 C.E. Hadrian became Emperor in 117 C.E., inheriting the situation in Jerusalem from his predecessors Vespasian and Trajan. When Hadrian left Jerusalem in 132 C.E., the Jews revolted again because they believed the Messiah would come during the Jubilee year of 134 C.E. Simon Bar Kokhba, along with Rabbi Akiva calling Simon bar Kokhba “the morning star” believing he was the Messiah, managed to

raise a very large army. His real name was Bar Kozeba, but Rabbi Akiva famously nicknamed him Bar Kokhba—"son of the star"—based on Numbers 24:17 and declared him to be the Messiah. This no doubt contributed to some believing him to be the Messiah, which in turn spurred religious fervour and confidence of victory. After the failure of the revolt, the Talmud refers to Bar Kokhba as "Ben Koziva" meaning "Son of Deception", a derogatory term asserting that he was a false Messiah.

This revolt was called the Bar-Kokhba Revolt (133–135 C.E.), also known as the Second Jewish Revolt.<sup>1</sup>

As in the First Jewish Revolt, they minted coins dated with the start of the revolt. An example is a coin inscribed "Year 1 of the Redemption of Israel," or another inscribed "Year 2 of the Freedom of Israel." Rarely, a coin bears the legend "Year 3 of the Redemption of Israel."

At one point, the Jews even succeeded in expelling the Romans from Jerusalem, briefly establishing an independent state. But Hadrian sent more armies from other areas, including Britannia and Egypt, bringing the total number of legions in Judea to 12. Hadrian also forbade all Jewish religious practice within the Empire. The failure of the revolt is considered by many to be the start of the Jewish diaspora. There would be no more Jewish state until the founding of Israel in 1948—a total of 34 Jubilee cycles.

As we mentioned above, Judah ha Nasi then begins to redact the Mishnah in 180 C.E., recording all the ceremonies of the Temple and the conversations of the Sages which explained them. Jose ben Halafta had written the Seder Olam in 160 C.E., which he collected from his work with Rabbi Akiva, promoting Simon as the Messiah just 30 years before. When Rabbi Judah came against Rabbi Jose on any doctrinal dispute, out of respect for the sage, Rabbi Judah would yield.

*Judah felt especial reverence for Jose Ben Halafta, the student of Akiva's who had the closest relations with Simon ben Gamaliel. When, in later years, Judah raised objections to*

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<sup>1</sup> A New Document Dated to Four Years After the Second Jewish Revolt by Biblical Archaeology Society Staff, January 09, 2016  
<https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/ancient-cultures/ancient-israel/a-new-document-dated-to-four-years-after-the-second-jewish-revolt/>

*Jose's opinions, he would say: "We poor ones undertake to attack Jose, though our time compares with his as the profane with the holy!"<sup>2</sup>*

There is a quote in which Rabbi Judah and another Rabbi state the year they entered the Promised Land under Joshua was a Jubilee year, but when the majority objected, they yielded to the majority's decision. Rambam is going to state the majority's position which he shares in the Mishneh Torah written in 1177 C.E., almost 1000 years later.

In this next quote, I am going to include all the footnotes with it so you too can read them. There are some gems in here for you to discover. I will pull them out later in the book. For now, I am showing you where and how the confusion began and why we have such a hard time figuring out what should be a very simple understanding of Leviticus 25.

### *Chapter 10<sup>3</sup>*

*It is a positive commandment to count sets of seven years<sup>4</sup> and to sanctify the fiftieth year,<sup>5</sup> as [Leviticus 25:8-10] states: "And you shall count seven years for yourselves... and you shall sanctify the fiftieth year." These two mitzvot are entrusted to the High Court<sup>6</sup> alone.<sup>7</sup>*

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<sup>2</sup> Yerushalmi Gittin 48b

<sup>3</sup> Sefaria, Mishneh Torah, Sabbatical Year and the Jubilee Chapter 10

Trans. by Eliyahu Touger, Moznaim Publishing

[https://www.sefaria.org/Mishneh\\_Torah%2C\\_Sabbatical\\_Year\\_and\\_the\\_Jubilee.10.3?lang=bi&with=all&lang2=en](https://www.sefaria.org/Mishneh_Torah%2C_Sabbatical_Year_and_the_Jubilee.10.3?lang=bi&with=all&lang2=en)

<sup>4</sup> *Sefer HaMitzvot* (positive commandment 140) and *Sefer HaChinuch* (mitzvah 330) includes the commandment to count the sets of years among the 613 mitzvot of the Torah. As the Rambam states in *Sefer HaMitzvot* the mitzvah is not to count a 50-year cycle, but rather to count seven sets of seven year cycles.

<sup>5</sup> *Sefer HaMitzvot* (positive commandment 136) and *Sefer HaChinuch* (mitzvah 332) includes the commandment to sanctify the fiftieth year among the 613 mitzvot of the Torah. In *Sefer HaMitzvot*, the Rambam explains that the sanctification of the year is reflected in considering the produce of that year ownerless.

<sup>6</sup> *The Sanhedrin*, the court of 71 judges which served as Judaism's supreme Rabbinic authority.

<sup>7</sup> I.e., their fulfillment is not incumbent on each person individually, but on the people as a whole, and hence, on the High Court, who acts as their agent.

*When did the counting begin? After the fourteen years following the entry into Eretz [Yisrael]. [This is derived from Leviticus 25:3]: "Six years shall you sow your field and six years shall you trim your vineyard." [Implied is that] each person must recognize his [portion of the] land. [The people] took seven years to conquer the land and seven years to divide it.<sup>8</sup> Thus the counting began after the 2503rd year after the creation, from Rosh HaShanah,<sup>9</sup> after the conjunction [of the sun and the moon before the creation] of Adam, which was in the second year of the creation.<sup>10</sup> They declared the [two thousand,] five hundred, and tenth year after the creation which was the 21st year after the entry into Eretz Yisrael as the Sabbatical year. They counted seven Sabbatical years and then sanctified the fiftieth year which was the 64th year after they entered Eretz [Yisrael].*

*The Jewish people counted 17 Jubilee years<sup>11</sup> from the time they entered [Eretz Yisrael] until they departed.<sup>12</sup> The year they*

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<sup>8</sup> Zevachim 118b derives the fact that it took the Jews seven years to conquer Eretz Yisrael from the statements of Caleb quoted in Joshua 14:7 and it postulates that the division also took seven years.

<sup>9</sup> Avodah Zarah 9a states that the Torah was given in the year 2448, when the forty years the Jews wandered in the desert and the fourteen years that the land was conquered and divided are added, a total of 2502 are reached. Thus the counting began in the 2503rd year.

<sup>10</sup> I.e., our counting begins from the creation of Adam, which was on Rosh HaShanah, for Adam's creation superseded the creation that preceded his to the extent that Rosh HaShanah is considered the anniversary of creation and the beginning of the year and not the 25th of Elul even though that date was the first day of creation.

Adam's creation is mentioned as occurring in the second year after creation, because any portion of a year is considered as a year. Thus the five days from the 25th of Elul until Rosh HaShanah are the first year referred to here. Hence, there is a theoretical conjunction of the sun and the moon for that year. See Hilchot Kiddush HaChodesh 6:8 and notes which mention the day and time of the first conjunction.

<sup>11</sup> I.e., they were in the midst of counting the seventeenth Jubilee as explained in the following note.

<sup>12</sup> I Kings 6:1 relates that the first Temple was built 480 years after the exodus from Egypt. When the 40 years of wandering in the desert and the 14 years when Eretz Yisrael was conquered and divided is subtracted from that figure, 426 years remain. When the 410 years that the First Temple stood (as stated in Yoma 9a) are added, a total of 836 is reached. 836 divided by 50 equals 16. Thus, the Jews were exiled in the 36th year of the seventeenth Jubilee cycle. Note the discussion of the Rambam's wording "17 Jubilees" by the Ra'avad, Radbaz, Kessef Mishneh and others based on Rosh HaShanah 9a.

*departed, when the Temple was destroyed the first time, was the year following the Sabbatical year and the 36th year in the Jubilee cycle. For the First Temple stood for 410 years. When it was destroyed, this reckoning ceased.*

*“After it ceased, the land remained desolate for seventy years.<sup>13</sup> Then the Second Temple was built and it stood for 420 years. In the seventh year after it was built, Ezra ascended [to Eretz Yisrael]. This is referred to as the second entry.<sup>14</sup> From this year, they began another reckoning. They designated the thirteenth year of the Second Temple as the Sabbatical year<sup>15</sup> and counted seven Sabbatical years and sanctified the fiftieth year. Although the Jubilee year was not observed in [the era of] the Second Temple,<sup>16</sup> they would count it in order to sanctify the Sabbatical years.*

*It follows that the year in which the [Second] Temple was destroyed, [more precisely, the year] beginning from Tishrei that was approximately two months after the destruction<sup>17</sup> - for the reckoning of Sabbatical and Jubilee years begins in Tishrei - was the year following the Sabbatical year. It was the fifteenth year of the ninth Jubilee cycle.<sup>18</sup>*

***According to this reckoning, this year, which is the 1107 year after the destruction, which is the 1487th year according to the reckoning of legal documents,<sup>19</sup> which is 4936th year after the***

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<sup>13</sup> And for the 70 years of the Babylonian exile, the Jubilee year cycle was not followed. See Halachah 5.

<sup>14</sup> See also Chapter 12, Halachah 15.

<sup>15</sup> For they began counting from Ezra's arrival.

<sup>16</sup> See Halachah 8. The Rambam's intent is that the mitzvot of the Jubilee year were not observed.

<sup>17</sup> For the destruction took place on the ninth of Av.

<sup>18</sup> The Second Temple stood for 420 years (Yoma, loc. cit.). Thus if the reckoning of the Sabbatical and Jubilee years began in its seventh year, there is a total of 414. Eight Jubilee cycles produce a total of 400 years. Thus the year following the destruction was the 415th year and it was the year following the Sabbatical year.

<sup>19</sup> In the Talmudic era, it was customary to date legal documents from the time of Alexander the Great's ascent to the throne. See Hilchot Gerushin 1:27.



creation,<sup>20</sup> is a Sabbatical year and it is the 21st year of the Jubilee cycle.<sup>21</sup>

Nevertheless, all of the Geonim have said that they have received a tradition, transferred from teacher to student that in the seventy years between the destruction of the First Temple and the building of the Second Temple, they counted only Sabbatical years, not the Jubilee year. Similarly, after the destruction of the Second Temple, they did not count the fiftieth year. Instead, they counted only sets of seven from the beginning of the year of the destruction. [This interpretation] is also apparent from the Talmud in Avodah Zarah.<sup>22</sup> This reckoning is a received tradition.

[The reckoning of] the Sabbatical year is well-known and renowned among the Geonim and the people of Eretz Yisrael. None of them make any reckoning except according to the years of the destruction.<sup>23</sup> According to this reckoning, this year, which is the 1107th year after the destruction is the year following the Sabbatical year.<sup>24</sup>

We rely on this tradition and we rule according to it<sup>25</sup> with regard to the tithes,<sup>26</sup> the Sabbatical year, and the nullification of debts, for the received tradition and deed<sup>27</sup> are great pillars in establishing [Halachic] rulings and it is appropriate to rely on them.

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<sup>20</sup> This corresponds to 1176 C.E. This date is interesting in another context, for it gives us some insight into the Rambam's writing and editing of the Mishneh Torah. In his Introduction to the Mishneh Torah, the Rambam mentions the date of the composition of the work as 4937, and in Hilchot Kiddush HaChodesh 11:16, he speaks of the date 4938. Thus it is apparent that he worked on the text for several years, wrote the Introduction in 4937, and then edited and added to the work in 4938.

<sup>21</sup> I.e., that date is 1121 years after the last Jubilee observed before the destruction of the Second Temple. Thus if that figure is divided by fifty, 21 years are left over. Hence, it is a Sabbatical year.

<sup>22</sup> See Avodah Zarah 9b.

<sup>23</sup> For it is accepted that the year following the destruction was the beginning of a Sabbatical cycle, as stated in Halachah 4.

<sup>24</sup> I.e., when 1107 is divided by 7, there is a remainder of 1.

<sup>25</sup> The Radbaz states that this was the practice in his day and this is the present practice in Eretz Yisrael and throughout the world, for the Rambam's ruling is accepted by both the Beit Yosef and Rama (Choshen Mishpat 67:1). See Sefer Meirat Einayim 66:5.

<sup>26</sup> For the obligations of the second tithe and the tithe for the poor depend on the years of the Sabbatical cycle.

<sup>27</sup> I.e., the way the law has actually been observed.

*The Jubilee year is not counted in the set of Sabbatical years.<sup>28</sup> Instead, the 49th year is a Sabbatical year and the fiftieth year is a Jubilee year. Then the 51st year is the first of the six years of the [next] Sabbatical cycle. This is true of every Jubilee year.*

*From the time the tribes of Reuven and Gad and half the tribe of Menasheh were exiled,<sup>29</sup> [the observance] of the Jubilee year ceased, as [implied by Leviticus 25:10]: "You shall proclaim freedom throughout the land to all of its inhabitants." [One can infer that this commandment applies only] when all of its inhabitants are dwelling within it. [Moreover,] they may not be intermingled, one tribe with another, but rather each tribe is dwelling in its appropriate place.<sup>30</sup>*

*When the Jubilee is observed in Eretz [Yisrael], it should also be observed in the Diaspora,<sup>31</sup> as [implied by the phrase used in the above verse:] "It is the Jubilee," [i.e.,] in every place. [This applies] whether the Temple is standing or whether the Temple is not standing.<sup>32</sup>*

## What Year Is It?

Before we get into the dates for the Sabbatical and Jubilee years, I have one more bit of information for you all to understand.

Throughout history we have time recorded from an epoch. Merriam-Webster dictionary online defines epoch as *an event, or a time marked by an event that begins a new period or development or a memorable event or date*. We have eponym<sup>33</sup> and Limmu lists of

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<sup>28</sup> This applies whether the Jubilee year was observed in its full sense, as in most of the First Temple era, or it was merely counted as throughout the Second Temple era.

<sup>29</sup> The tribes of Reuven and Gad and half of the tribe of Menashe were exiled approximately 18 years before the remaining seven and a half tribes. They in turn were exiled approximately 130 years before the destruction of the Temple and exile of the tribe of Judah.

<sup>30</sup> For each tribe was given an ancestral heritage of its own.

<sup>31</sup> With regard to the freeing of Hebrew servants.

<sup>32</sup> I.e., it is the presence of the Jewish people in the land and not the existence of the Temple which determines the land's sanctity.

<sup>33</sup> Eponym dating system

In the history of Assyria, the eponym dating system was a calendar system for Assyria, for a period of over one thousand years. Every year was

kings that counted from a leading figure in an Assyrian governor's tenure in office to mark time during that empire. We currently use the believed birth of Christ as an epoch.

This birth began the use of Anno Domini (A.D.) and Christian Era (C.E.).

*The terms anno Domini (AD) and before Christ (BC) are used when designating years in the Julian and Gregorian calendars. The term anno Domini is Medieval Latin and means "in the year of the Lord" but is often presented using "our Lord" instead of "the Lord", taken from the full original phrase "anno Domini nostri Jesu Christi", which translates to "in the year of our Lord Jesus Christ". The form "BC" is specific to English, and equivalent abbreviations are used in other languages: the Latin form, rarely used in English, is ante Christum natum (ACN) or ante Christum (AC).*

*This calendar era is based on the traditionally reckoned year of the conception or birth of Jesus, AD counting years from the start of this epoch and BC denoting years before the start of the era. There is no year zero in this scheme; thus the year AD 1 immediately follows the year 1 BC. This dating system was devised in 525 by Dionysius Exiguus but was not widely used until the 9th century. Terminology that is viewed by some as being more neutral and inclusive of non-Christian people is to call this the Common Era (abbreviated as CE), with the preceding years referred to as Before the Common Era (BCE).*

## *History*

*The anno Domini dating system was devised in 525 by Dionysius Exiguus to enumerate years in his Easter table. His system was to replace the Diocletian era that had been used in older Easter tables,*

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associated with the name, an eponym, of the Limmu, the official who led that year's New Year festival.

The dating system is thought to have originated in the ancient city of Assur, and remained the official dating system in Assyria until the end of the Assyrian Empire in the seventh century BC. The names of the limmu who became eponyms were originally chosen by lot sortition, until the first millennium it became a fixed rotation of officers headed by the king who constituted the limmu. The earliest known attestations of a year eponyms are at Karum-Kanesh, and became used in other Assyrian colonies in Anatolia. Its spread was due to Shamshi-Adad I's unification of northern Mesopotamia.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eponym\\_dating\\_system](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eponym_dating_system)

as he did not wish to continue the memory of a tyrant who persecuted Christians. The last year of the old table, Diocletian Anno Martyrium 247, was immediately followed by the first year of his table, anno Domini 532. When Dionysius devised his table, Julian calendar years were identified by naming the consuls who held office that year—Dionysius himself stated that the "present year" was "the consulship of Probus Junior", which was 525 years "since the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ". Thus, Dionysius implied that Jesus' incarnation occurred 525 years earlier, without stating the specific year during which his birth or conception occurred. "However, nowhere in his exposition of his table does Dionysius relate his epoch to any other dating system, whether consulate, Olympiad, year of the world, or regnal year of Augustus; much less does he explain or justify the underlying date."

It is not known how Dionysius established the year of Jesus's birth. One major theory is that Dionysius based his calculation on the Gospel of Luke, which states that Jesus was "about thirty years old" shortly after "the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar", and hence subtracted thirty years from that date, or that Dionysius counted back 532 years from the first year of his new table. This method was probably the one used by ancient historians such as Tertullian, Eusebius or Epiphanius, all of whom agree that Jesus was born in 2 BC, probably following this statement of Jesus' age (i.e. subtracting thirty years from AD 29).

It has also been speculated by Georges Declercq that Dionysius' desire to replace Diocletian years with a calendar based on the incarnation of Christ was intended to prevent people from believing the imminent end of the world. At the time, it was believed by some that the resurrection of the dead and end of the world would occur 500 years after the birth of Jesus. The old Anno Mundi calendar theoretically commenced with the creation of the world based on information in the Old Testament. It was believed that, based on the Anno Mundi calendar, Jesus was born in the year 5500 (5500 years after the world was created) with the year 6000 of the Anno Mundi calendar marking the end of the world. Anno Mundi 6000 (approximately AD 500) was thus equated with the end of the world but this date had already passed in the time of Dionysius. The "Historia Brittonum" attributed to Nennius written in the 9th century makes extensive use of the Anno Passionis (AP) dating system which was in common use as well as the newer AD dating system. The AP dating system took its start from 'The Year of The

*Passion'. It is generally accepted by experts there is a 27-year difference between AP and AD reference.*

### *Popularization*

*The Anglo-Saxon historian Bede, who was familiar with the work of Dionysius Exiguus, used anno Domini dating in his Ecclesiastical History of the English People, which he completed in AD 731. In the History he also used the Latin phrase ante [...] incarnationis dominicae tempus anno sexagesimo ("in the sixtieth year before the time of the Lord's incarnation"), which is equivalent to the English "before Christ", to identify years before the first year of this era. Both Dionysius and Bede regarded anno Domini as beginning at the incarnation of Jesus Christ, but "the distinction between Incarnation and Nativity was not drawn until the late 9th century, when in some places the Incarnation epoch was identified with Christ's conception, i. e., the Annunciation on March 25" ("Annunciation style" dating).*

*On the continent of Europe, anno Domini was introduced as the era of choice of the Carolingian Renaissance by the English cleric and scholar Alcuin in the late eighth century. Its endorsement by Emperor Charlemagne and his successors popularizing the use of the epoch and spreading it throughout the Carolingian Empire ultimately lies at the core of the system's prevalence. According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, popes continued to date documents according to regnal years for some time, but usage of AD gradually became more common in Catholic countries from the 11th to the 14th centuries. In 1422, Portugal became the last Western European country to switch to the system begun by Dionysius. Eastern Orthodox countries only began to adopt AD instead of the Byzantine calendar in 1700 when Russia did so, with others adopting it in the 19th and 20th centuries.*

*Although anno Domini was in widespread use by the 9th century, the term "Before Christ" (or its equivalent) did not become common until much later. Bede used the expression "anno [...] ante incarnationem Dominicam" (in the year before the incarnation of the Lord) twice. "Anno ante Christi nativitatem" (in the year before the birth of Christ) is found in 1474 in a work by a German monk. In 1627, the French Jesuit theologian Denis Pétau (Dionysius Petavius in Latin), with his work De doctrina temporum,*

*popularized the usage ante Christum (Latin for "Before Christ") to mark years prior to AD.<sup>34</sup>*

## **When Did the Jews Begin to Count from Creation?**

There is a misconception that the current Jewish system of counting years has always been as it is today. For example, this year, 2024 C.E., was the Jewish year 5784 and at Tishri 1 became 5785, from creation. They have used a variety of systems over their history with the current one being relatively recent.

Allow me to share some of what Rabbi Zivotofsky has to say about this subject:

*Any system<sup>35</sup> of tracking years requires a starting point, known as an epoch. For example, the Islamic calendar (Hijri) starts with Muhammad's arrival at the city of Medina in 622 C.E. The widespread method in the Western world today, which ostensibly<sup>36</sup> starts with the year Yeshu was born, was introduced in 525 C.E. This replaced the prior system in which the year count was based upon the reigning consul, a system not dissimilar to what the Jews used for centuries. A convention used in ancient Rome was abbreviated as the AUC system, which stood for "ab urbe condita—meaning from the founding of the city" or "anno urbis conditæ—in the year since the city's founding." The assumption was that the city*

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<sup>34</sup> Anno Domini [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anno\\_Domini](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anno_Domini)

<sup>35</sup> What's the Truth About . . . Jews Counting Years Starting from Creation? By Rabbi Dr. Ari Z. Zivotofsky <https://jewishaction.com/religion/jewish-law/whats-the-truth-about-jews-counting-years-starting-from-creation/>

<sup>36</sup> *Factually, it appears to be off by four to eight years. Because of the stated starting date, some posekim are averse to using this system (which was adopted as the epoch of the Gregorian calendar). The Chatam Sofer wrote that counting from Creation reminds us that the world is renewed [by God], that the Land of Israel is for us and that it is wrong to use the Gregorian count (Derashot, derush 10, 7 Av 5570, vol. 5, p. 114 [5775 edition]). He felt that Jews should be ashamed that some today count from the birth of the Christian savior (derush 18, 8 Tevet 5593, vol. 2, p. 374-5 [5775 edition]). His student Maharam Schick (YD 171) ruled that it is a Biblical prohibition to write the Gregorian year on a tombstone. For comprehensive discussions of this topic, including possible reasons to be lenient, see Yabia Omer 3:YD:9 (which takes into consideration the historical dating error and the many earlier rabbis who used the Gregorian year) and Tzitz Eliezer 8:8. To remove the religious significance from this system, scholars use BCE (Before the Common Era) instead of BC, and CE (Common Era) instead of AD.*

*of Rome was founded in 753 BCE and that was taken as AUC 1. The Roman Empire was founded in 27 BCE, (i.e. AUC 727).*

*The earliest year-counting system used by the Jewish people, found in Tanach, counted from Yetziat Mitzrayim. For example, Sefer Bamidbar opens by declaring that the events described occurred “on the first day of the second month in the second year after the Exodus” (1:1). This system continued for hundreds of years up until the building of the First Temple, 480 years after the Exodus (I Kings 6:1). Following the building of the Beit Hamikdash, events were also dated from the commencement of the construction of the First Temple (e.g., I Kings 9:10). In addition, events were dated in relation to the reign of a monarch (e.g., I Kings 15:28 and II Kings 18:1).<sup>37</sup>*

*A summary of the methods used to count years until the Talmudic period is given in the Mechilta (on Parashat Yitro 19:1) and in the Yerushalmi (Rosh Hashanah 1:1 [1b]),<sup>38</sup> where it states that initially counting was from the Exodus, then from the building of the First Temple. After the destruction of the First Temple, the Jews counted from the start of the exile (i.e., Ezekiel 40:1),<sup>39</sup> and finally they began counting from non-Jewish monarchs (i.e., Chaggai 1:1), a practice criticized by the Tzedukim (Sadducees)*

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<sup>37</sup> The system of dating from kings is convenient on a short-term scale but has a major drawback in calculating longer time periods. It is much easier to calculate how many years passed between 5704 [1944] and 5744 [1984] than from year twelve of the FDR presidency to year four of the Reagan administration.

<sup>38</sup> The Torah Temimah (to Bamidbar 9:1, one of the verses cited by the Yerushalmi) cites the Yerushalmi and then concludes: “and now [i.e., late nineteenth century] we count from the Creation of the world.”

<sup>39</sup> Although not exactly “dating from the Churban,” to this day Yemenite Jews conclude the kinot on Tishah B’Av evening with a moving declaration of how many years it has been since the destruction of the Second Temple, as well as how many years since the destruction of the First Temple and the subsequent exile of the Jews to Yemen (see Rabbi Yaakov Sapir, Even Sapir 65a; Rabbi Yosef Kapach, Halichot Teiman [1987 edition], p. 45). Similarly, the Spanish-Portuguese community in New York uses a 1965 edition of Isaac Leeser’s siddur, which, just before the last kinah on Tishah B’Av night, includes the announcement (in Hebrew [p. 137]): “Brethren of the House of Israel, it is owing to our iniquities and the iniquities of our fathers, that we number this day (x years) since the destruction of our sanctuary and the burning of our Temple. . . .” (Note that they [erroneously—see note 19] count from 68 C.E.)

(Yadayim 4:8).<sup>40</sup> *It is noteworthy that in these sources there is no mention of a system of counting from Creation.*

*Post-Churban Bayit Sheni (Destruction of the Temple), some Jews counted from the second Churban. An amazing collection of tombstones dating from 351 to 577 C.E. were discovered in Zoar, southeast of the Dead Sea. The inscriptions on the Christian tombstones use the calendar of the Roman province of Arabia, which began in 106 C.E. The inscriptions on the Jewish tombstones, which are in Aramaic, used a Jewish lunar calendar that counted from the second Churban, and noted the year number in the seven-year shemittah cycle, as in the Book of Jubilees.*<sup>41</sup>

*During the late Second Temple period and shortly thereafter, several short-lived year counting systems were adopted. For example, a get written in Masada is dated “year six” and scholars contend it was written in 111 C.E., the starting point being 106 C.E., the year the provinces of Arabia and Bostra were incorporated into the Roman Empire (era of the Provincial Arabia).<sup>42</sup> Coins minted during the Bar Kochba Revolt (132-135 C.E.) were dated from the beginning of the revolt. The coins include inscriptions such as “year one of the redemption of Israel” or “year two of the freedom of Israel,” similar to the way some people today write on a wedding invitation, “seventy-one years since Israel’s independence” or “fifty-two years since the liberation of Jerusalem.”*

*In addition to the short-lived year counting systems, one more system developed in the mid-Second Temple period, known as Minyan Shetarot (“accounting of documents”) or l’malchut*

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<sup>40</sup> *The Mishnah (Gittin 8:5) includes counting dates from the building of the Bayit Rishon or from the destruction of Bayit Sheni as unacceptable dating systems for a get. But that implies that those systems were still extant and that one may have thought to use them.*

<sup>41</sup> *See Sacha Stern, “The Jewish Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar,” Journal of Jewish Studies 68, no. 1 (spring 2017): 158-179.*

<sup>42</sup> *P. Beniot, J. T. Milik and R. de Vaux, Discoveries in the Judean Desert II: Les grottes de Murabba’at (Oxford, 1961), 104-109. Yigael Yadin, the famed Israeli archeologist, disagreed and dated it, based on a counting of the Great Revolt, to 71 C.E. It seems exceedingly unlikely that there were any Jews in the vicinity of Masada as late as 111 C.E., although the Roman garrison was still stationed there until then. See Eshel, et al, “Four Murabba’at Papyri and the Alleged Capture of Jerusalem by Bar Kokhba,” in Law in the Documents of the Judean Desert, ed. Katzoff and Schaps (The Netherlands, 2005), 48-9.*



Alexandrus, known in the secular world as the Seleucid era (SE), which lasted for many centuries.<sup>43</sup>

The starting point for this system relates to the founding of the Seleucid monarchy in Syria, the year that Seleucus I Nicator (Alexander the Great's general) returned to his then-capital Babylon after solidifying his claim to a piece of the now-deceased Alexander the Great's empire. Seleucus' son, Antiochus I, rather than begin counting anew as was customary for rulers, continued the year count from his father's reign, thus initiating the Seleucid era. Jewish tradition also calls the system "l'malchut Alexandrus" and some sources erroneously attribute the starting date to Alexander the Great, although he actually died in 323 BCE or -11 SE.

During the Talmudic period (third to fifth centuries C.E.) the method of dating documents seems to have differed between the Land of Israel and the Diaspora. Rashi (Avodah Zarah 9a, s.v. tzeh), commenting on a baraita which reflects practices in the post-Temple Land of Israel, implies that the standard method of reckoning years in Eretz Yisrael was counting from the destruction of the Second Temple. Outside of Eretz Yisrael, the Gemara (Avodah Zarah 10a) records, in the name of Rav Nachman, that one should count years from [the beginning of the era of] the Greek kings (i.e., Minyan Shetarot). However, the Talmud (Avodah Zarah 9a) recognized that during the Talmudic period Jews were using a variety of counting methods and therefore it provides the conversion factors between the Seleucid system, the count from Creation and the count from the Second Temple's destruction.

In the immediate post-Talmudic era, Minyan Shetarot continued to be used, as did dating from the second Churban. At some point Jews also started counting from Creation and thus, in the early Medieval period, all three systems were in use. **When Rambam wanted to make clear which year was a shemittah year, he used all three systems. He wrote (Hilchot Shemittah v'Yovel 10:4): "According to this calculation, this year, which is 1107 from the [second] Churban, which is 1487 according to Minyan Shetarot, which is 4936 [1176 C.E.] to Creation, is a shemittah year and is**

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<sup>43</sup> There are actually three possible starting dates for year 1 se: Immediately after the Battle of Gaza, with year two beginning a few months later in autumn 312 bce; autumn 312 bce (the SE generally used by the Jews); or autumn 311 bce. It seems that the author of I Maccabees used the first possibility while the author of II Maccabees used the standard, second version (Edgar Frank, Talmudic and Rabbinical Chronology [New York, 1956], 32).

*year twenty-one in the yovel cycle.” It seems that in twelfth-century Egypt, all three of those systems were in use.*

*For most Jews, dating from Churban Bayit Sheni went out of style long ago; however, Romaniotes (descendants of the original Greek Jewish community) used this system until recently. A poignant example is a ketubah from Corfu<sup>44</sup> dated “Friday, the fourth of Sivan, 5704 to Creation, and 1876 to the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash, may it be built speedily in our days and the days of all of Israel, Amen, according to the dating system we are accustomed to use here, the city of Corfu.” That date corresponds to May 26, 1944, just two weeks before the Nazi’s order to round up all the Jews of Corfu for deportation on June 9, 1944.*

Stop here and do the math quickly before moving on:

$$1944-1876=68$$

What you are being told from this information is that the date of the destruction of the Temple has now been moved to 68 from 69 which we saw earlier. Rabbi Zivotofsky has already stated this is a false date in footnote 39 of this article. We will spend some time on the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. because there so much ambiguity over this date.

Continuing with Rabbi Zivotofsky’s article:

*Minyan Shetarot continued to be used by Jews in some Sephardic countries, particularly in Egypt, until several hundred years ago. Rambam says (Hilchot Gerushin 1:25) that in twelfth-century Egypt when writing a get, all Jews counted either from Creation or from Minyan Shetarot, and thus he gives the option of using either (Hilchot Gerushin 4:12). As is the case today, Jews often also used the local secular calendar,<sup>45</sup> and thus one can find documents in the Cairo Genizah that used the Islamic calendar alongside the dominant Minyan Shetarot.*

*Rabbi Chaim Yosef David Azulai (the Chida, 1724-1807) wrote that one of the accomplishments of the great sixteenth-century halachic authority Rabbi David ben Shelomo ibn Zimra (Radbaz, 1479-1573), in addition to writing more than 3,000 responsa, was that he*

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<sup>44</sup> See the ketubah in the Jewish Theological Seminary online digital collection. The URL is broken.

<sup>45</sup> Note that in Israel, one may date legal documents using the Jewish calendar instead of the Gregorian calendar.

*abolished the use of Minyan Shetarot in Egypt (Shem Hagedolim, vol. 1, dalet:16, p. 19a).<sup>46</sup>*

*A significant exception to the abolition of Minyan Shetarot was in Yemen, where it continued to be the exclusive system used until modern times. Rabbi Yosef Kapach proudly proclaimed<sup>47</sup> that Yemenite Jews adhered to tradition and continued to use it in ketubot, gittin, legal documents and personal correspondence until the twentieth century. Rabbi Yaakov Sapir (Even Sapir 62b) in 1864 described that Yemenite Jews (and Cochins Jews, who were in close contact with the Jews of Yemen) exclusively used Minyan Shetarot on all their legal and personal documents, and with the exception of scholars and scribes, most people did not even know the count from Creation. He was so intrigued by this that he devoted the entirety of chapter twenty-nine of Even Sapir to analyzing the SE system's three possible starting dates and what can be learned from the Yemenite tradition.*

*At some point in history, most of the Jewish world moved over to counting from Creation. Rabbi Azariah dei Rossi (1511-1578) in his controversial Me'or Enayim (p. 254-255), says many people erroneously believe that counting from Creation is an ancient custom, but he demonstrates (p. 256-257) that it clearly was not used in the time of the Mishnah and Gemara and is of relatively recent vintage.<sup>48</sup> He surmises (p. 257) that it started to be used after the time of Rav Sherira Gaon (d. 1006) who used SE extensively in his famous epistle. Rabbi Azariah postulates that this switch coincided with the disintegration of the Greek Empire, and thus the transition to using a counting system based upon Creation, i.e., the*

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<sup>46</sup> An example of its use in thirteenth-century Egypt, is the pruzbul from Fustat, Egypt, dated "Thursday, 27 Elul, 1535 in Minyan Shetarot, as normally counted in Fustat, Egypt on the Nile River" (N. H. Tozzyner, et al., Sefer Klausner [Tel Aviv, 1937], 231-232).

<sup>47</sup> See his comment no. 49 to Rambam, Hilchot Gerushin 1:25.

<sup>48</sup> A possible early use of dating from Creation is in the ancient synagogue in Susya. There are several broken inscriptions found there, and one of them seems to date its founding to the fifth millennium from Creation, i.e., between 240 and 1240 ce (the piece with the prat gadol is broken off). Scholars say the shul was built in the Byzantine era, sometime between the fourth to seventh century ce and was used until the ninth century ce. [Link given is broken.](#)

*Kingdom of Heaven, a system to which local rulers would be willing to defer.*<sup>49</sup>

*Rabbeinu Tam in twelfth-century France (Tosafot, Gittin 80b, s.v. zu), the Tur in early fourteenth-century Cologne and Toledo (EH 127, last line), and the RaN in mid-fourteenth-century Catalonia (Gittin 42a in Rif pages) all record that in their time the universal practice was to date a get from Creation. The Shulchan Aruch in the sixteenth century assumes (EH 127:10) that in dating a get the Creation system would be used, and further assumes that that year-counting system was so accepted that if the sofer leaves out the words l'briat olam, the get is still kosher. This indicates that at some point there was a move to (near) universal use of the Creation system, a system that had certainly been in use but was not the dominant method.*

*Counting from Creation is referred to by scholars as AM—anno mundi, meaning “in the year of the world.” To use the AM system as a standard, there needs to be an agreed-upon starting date. The Bible states a few chronologies, but no absolute dating from Creation. The oldest systematic Jewish chronicle is Seder Olam Rabbah (presumably edited by the Tanna Yose ben Chalafta [d. about 160 ce]). The system it employs gives such famous dates as Avraham Avinu being born in 1948 am iii. But it is not the only system. There are actually three common variants of the AM system, based on the epoch used.<sup>50</sup> In AM I, the currently used system, year one started one year before Adam’s creation. In AM II, the system*

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<sup>49</sup> Rabbi Yaakov Sapir seems to have believed that counting from Creation was an ancient Jewish tradition. He records (Even Sapir 63b) that Josephus wrote that at the famous meeting between the Kohen Gadol Shimon HaTzaddik and Alexander the Great, Shimon HaTzaddik promised that in exchange for Alexander not putting a statue in the Temple, the Jews would name all boys born that year Alexander and would switch from counting from Creation to counting from Alexander (i.e., the SE system). Unfortunately, while both the Gemara (Yoma 69a) and Josephus discuss this meeting, neither mentions the promises. The tenth-century Josippon (ch. 5 [17b]) does mention the promise about the name, but not about the calendar. I have been unable to find the source for the Even Sapir.

<sup>50</sup> There are actually many other AM systems based on various readings of the Biblical text! Using the dates cited in Seder Olam, one arrives at a Creation date of Oct. 7, 3760 bce. Christian scholars often use the year 4004 bce. The calendar used in the Byzantine Empire and many Orthodox churches is based on the Septuagint text and has an epoch equivalent to 1 September 5509 bce.

used in the Talmud,<sup>51</sup> year one started on the day of Adam's creation.<sup>52</sup> In AM III, the system of Seder Olam, year one commenced one year after Adam's creation. In different locations, time periods and classical documents, all three of these methods have been used, and this has led to considerable confusion.<sup>53</sup> It is not clear why AM I became the accepted system, but one advantage is that shemittah years occur when the year number divided by seven has a remainder of zero. Thus, in the currently used system Avraham was born in 1950 am i.

*Pitchei Teshuvah* (EH 127:16) explains that in order to avoid confusion between AM I and AM II, the phrase "In the year so and so to the Creation of the world according to the counting in this city . . ." <sup>54</sup> is included. That phrase is also used in general to disambiguate which counting system is being used, since a variant of the phrase is found in gittin that use Minyan Shetarot.

It is certainly peculiar that the SE system, of all the systems, should be the one that lasted so long. It seems odd that the Jews would latch on to a system that counts from a long-gone Greek ruler. The answer

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<sup>51</sup> In *Hilchot Shemittah v'Yovel* (10:2), Rambam uses only AM, but gives both AM I and AM II. The *Kesef Mishnah* on Rambam's *Shemittah v'Yovel* states that the AM II is used. See Rabbi S.Y. Zevin, *HaMoadim B'Halachah* (seventh edition), p. 35-36 (section on Rosh Hashanah).

<sup>52</sup> See *ArtScroll Arachin* 13a, note 12, where it explains that AM I counts from the Creation of the world, considers the five days before the creation of man as a full year (referred to as "shnat tohu"), was used in the West (Land of Israel) and has become the standard system. AM II was used in the East (Bavel) and thus by the Talmud and subsequently, by the Rishonim. It starts with the creation of man and thus differs by one from the standard system (AM I).

<sup>53</sup> **There is a widespread belief in both the Jewish community and the academic historical community that the Talmud, Seder Olam and Rambam all place the destruction of the Second Temple in 68 or 69 ce in contradiction to the overwhelming historical evidence that it occurred in 70 ce.** Edgar Frank, in his important book on the calendar, *Talmudic and Rabbinical Chronology*, convincingly demonstrated that all of the sources accurately placed the destruction in 70 ce. This misconception arose due to misunderstanding that there are various AM systems with differing epochs. In other words, according to AM I, the current year is 5780 and the Churban Bayit Sheni was in 3830, exactly 1,950 years ago, placing the destruction in 70 ce. According to AM III, the Seder Olam system, the Churban was in 3828. But in that system we are in 5778. See *Tashbetz* (3:301) who addresses several seeming calendrical contradictions in the traditional sources. See also *Chazon Ish Hilchot Shevi'it* 3:33.

<sup>54</sup> Regarding a get written in 1204 in southern Italy that was dated only using AM (4964), Rabbi Isaiah di Trani (*Shu't Rid* 23) explained the purpose of this phrase.

*to this puzzle may lie in a point noted in the Gemara (Avodah Zarah 10a): that the SE system started exactly 1,000 years after the Exodus. In 5603 (1843), Rabbi Shlomo Yehuda Leib haKohen Rapoport (1786-1867) postulated that the SE system of counting was really just a continuation of the counting from the Exodus, as they share the prat gadol. Rabbi Yaakov Medan, rosh yeshivah at Yeshivat Har Etzion, points out that the count from the Exodus is thus actually a count from the start of a royal reign—not a human reign, rather the reign of the King of Kings.*

I do hope you were reading all those footnotes as you went along. They are priceless. If your head is not spinning with so much information already, you should be able to see just how confusing all of this is. Rest assured I am not going to tie any of our “proofs” to anything we have covered thus far. We are going to look at just the facts and then plot them out and let the evidence show us the truth. The truth is always so much easier!

There is not going to be any trying to figure out how Rabbi Yose got any of his dates other than what we have already explained. The facts, and the facts alone, will determine whether you count by 49s or 50s. The facts alone will line up with scriptures without having to beat them together. As Dragnet's Sgt. Joe Friday frequently implored female informants to provide “Just the facts, ma'am. Just the facts.”

## **You Can't Change the Calendar Without a Beth Din**

One of the constant comments I get from people who hear us explain about the calendar and the Jubilee cycles is that since the last Beth Din took place, with Hillel creating the *Hebrew calculated calendar*, I have no right to try and change it back to the way it was before. We must wait until they set up another Beth Din with a counsel of 71 elders, and only they can change these things. Until that happens, we must all follow the majority even if they are wrong.

This line of thinking is totally without merit. Historical facts do not support their argument not to change. In fact, I am now going to present you with facts proving that the calendar Hillel published in 358 C.E. is not the same as the current Hebrew calendar. The current version was not solidified until 1178 C.E., when Rambam did it in the Mishneh Torah by his own authority. He did not have a Beth Din.

## The Fixing of the Calendar

*See also: Hillel II § Fixing of the calendar*

*Between<sup>55</sup> 70 and 1178 CE, the observation-based calendar was gradually replaced by a mathematically calculated one.<sup>56</sup>*

*The Talmuds indicate at least the beginnings of a transition from a purely empirical to a computed calendar. Samuel of Nehardea (c. 165–254) stated that he could determine the dates of the holidays by calculation rather than observation.<sup>57</sup> According to a statement attributed to Yose (late 3rd century), Purim could not fall on a Sabbath nor a Monday, lest Yom Kippur fall on a Friday or a Sunday.<sup>58</sup> This indicates that, by the time of the redaction of the Jerusalem Talmud (c. 400 CE), there were a fixed number of days in all months from Adar to Elul, also implying that the extra month was already a second Adar added before the regular Adar. Elsewhere, Shimon ben Pazi is reported to have counseled "those who make the computations" not to set Rosh Hashana or Hoshana Rabbah on Shabbat.<sup>59</sup> This indicates that there was a group who "made computations" and controlled, to some extent, the day of the week on which Rosh Hashana would fall.*

*There is a tradition, first mentioned by Hai Gaon (died 1038 C.E.), that Hillel II was responsible for the new calculated calendar with a fixed intercalation cycle "in the year 670 of the Seleucid era" (i.e., 358–359 C.E.). Later writers, such as Nachmanides, explained Hai Gaon's words to mean that the entire computed calendar was due to Hillel II in response to persecution of Jews. Maimonides (12th century) stated that the Mishnaic calendar was used "until the days of Abaye and Rava" (c. 320–350 C.E.), and that the change came when "the land of Israel was destroyed, and no permanent court was left." Taken together, these two traditions suggest that Hillel II (whom they identify with the mid-4th-century Jewish patriarch*

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<sup>55</sup> The Hebrew Calendar [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew\\_calendar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew_calendar)

<sup>56</sup> Stern, Sacha (2001). *Calendar and Community: A History of the Jewish Calendar 2nd Century BCE to 10th Century CE*. Oxford University Press. [ISBN 978-0198270348](#).

<sup>57</sup> Rosh Hashanah 20b

<sup>58</sup> Yerushalmi Megillah 1:2, pp. 70b. Text: א"ר יוסה לית כאן חל להיות בשני ולית כאן חל להיות בשבת, חל להיות בשני צומא רבא בחד בשווא, חל להיות בשבת צומא רבא בערובתא

<sup>59</sup> Yerushalmi Sukkah 54b. Text: ר' סימון מפקד לאילין דמחשבין יהבון דעתכון דלא תעבדין :לא תקיעתה בשבת ולא ערבתא בשבתא. ואין אדחקון עבדון תקיעתה ולא תעבדון ערבתא:

*Ioulos, attested in a letter of the Emperor Julian,<sup>60</sup> and the Jewish patriarch Ellel, mentioned by Epiphanius)<sup>61</sup> instituted the computed Hebrew calendar because of persecution. H. Graetz<sup>62</sup> linked the introduction of the computed calendar to a sharp repression following a failed Jewish insurrection that occurred during the rule of the Christian emperor Constantius and Gallus. Saul Lieberman argued instead that the introduction of the fixed calendar was due to measures taken by Christian Roman authorities to prevent the Jewish patriarch from sending calendrical messengers.<sup>63</sup>*

As we present these historical facts to you via the tombstones of Zoar, you will be able to see that they did in fact change how they recorded calendric events. Beginning around 434 C.E., they began to use Tishri as the start of the year, and about 455 C.E., they began to use the Hillel calculated calendar to begin each month, according to our findings with the tombstones of Zoar.

*Both the tradition that Hillel II instituted the complete computed calendar, and the theory that the computed calendar was introduced due to repression or persecution, have been questioned.<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, two Jewish dates during post-Talmudic times (specifically in 506 and 776) are impossible under the rules of the modern calendar, indicating that some of its arithmetic rules were established in Babylonia during the times of the Geonim (7th to 8th*

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<sup>60</sup> Julian, Letter 25, in John Duncombe, Select Works of the Emperor Julian and some Pieces of the Sophist Libanius, Vol. 2, Cadell, London, 1784, pp. 57–62.

<sup>61</sup> Epiphanius, Adversus Haereses 30.4.1, in Frank Williams, trans., The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis Book I (Sections 1–46), Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1987, p. 122.

<sup>62</sup> H. Graetz, Popular History of the Jews, (A. B. Rhine, trans.) Hebrew Publishing Company, New York, 1919, Vol. II, pp. 410–411. Quoted in [Stern 2001](#), p. 216

<sup>63</sup> Lieberman, S. (1946). "Palestine in the Third and Fourth Centuries". Jewish Quarterly Review. 36 (4): 329–370.

[doi:10.2307/1452134](#). [JSTOR 1452134](#). Quoted in [Stern 2001](#), pp. 216–217.

<sup>64</sup> [Stern 2001](#), In particular section 5.1.1, discussion of the "Persecution theory". [Poznanski, Samuel](#), "Ben Meir and the Origin of the Jewish Calendar", Jewish Quarterly Review, Original Series, Vol. 10, pp. 152–161 (1898). [JSTOR 1450611](#). [doi:10.2307/1450611](#).

"While it is not unreasonable to attribute to Hillel II the fixing of the regular order of intercalations, his full share in the present fixed calendar is doubtful." Entry "Calendar", Encyclopaedia Judaica, Keter, Jerusalem, 1971.



centuries).<sup>65</sup> Most likely, the procedure established in 359 involved a fixed molad interval slightly different from the current one,<sup>66</sup> Rosh Hashana postponement rules similar but not identical to current rules,<sup>67</sup> and leap months were added based on when Passover preceded a fixed cutoff date rather than through a repeated 19-year cycle.<sup>68</sup> The Rosh Hashana rules apparently reached their modern form between 629 and 648, the modern molad interval was likely fixed in 776, while the fixed 19-year cycle also likely dates to the late 8th century.<sup>69</sup>

Notice the dates being shown to you as to when certain aspects of the Hebrew calendar began to be used—hundreds of years after 358 C.E., when the last Beth Din was supposed to have ratified the calculated calendar. According to the argument we presented at the beginning of this section, how on earth can they make changes to the calendar without a Beth Din? This demonstrates the fallacy of their argument. It has no basis of facts upon which to build. The current Hebrew calendar did not reach its current form until the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

*Except for the epoch year number (the fixed reference point at the beginning of year 1, which at that time was one year later than the epoch of the modern calendar), the calendar rules reached their current form by the beginning of the 9th century, as described by the Persian Muslim astronomer Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi in 823.<sup>70</sup> Al-Khwarizmi's study of the Jewish calendar describes the 19-year intercalation cycle,<sup>71</sup> the rules for determining on what day of the week the first day of the*

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<sup>65</sup> [Samuel Poznanski](#), "Calendar (Jewish)", [Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics](#), vol. 3, p. 118.

<sup>66</sup> An interval of 29 days/12 hours/792 halakim, as opposed to the current interval of 29/12/793.

<sup>67</sup> Unlike in the current calendar, the first day of Rosh Hashana was permitted to fall on Sunday; otherwise the rules were about the same.

<sup>68</sup> [A Short History of the Jewish Fixed Calendar: The Origin of the Molad](#)

<sup>69</sup> Dito.

<sup>70</sup> E. S. Kennedy, "Al-Khwarizmi on the Jewish calendar", *Scripta Mathematica* 27 (1964) 55–59.

"al-Khwarizmi", *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, VII: 362, 365.

<sup>71</sup> [Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi](#) (823). *Risāla fī istikhraj ta'rikh al-yahūd* ([Arabic](#): رسالة في استخراج تأريخ اليهود, "Extraction of the Jewish Era"). (date uncertain)

*month Tishrei shall fall, the interval between the Jewish era (creation of Adam) and the Seleucid era, and the rules for determining the mean longitude of the sun and the moon using the Jewish calendar.*<sup>72</sup> Not all the rules were in place by 835.<sup>73</sup>

*In 921, Aaron ben Meir proposed changes to the calendar. Though the proposals were rejected, they indicate that all of the rules of the modern calendar (except for the epoch) were in place before that date. In 1000, the Muslim chronologist al-Biruni described all of the modern rules of the Hebrew calendar, except that he specified three different epochs used by various Jewish communities being one, two, or three years later than the modern epoch.*<sup>74</sup>

The rules for the Hebrew calendar were not set in 358 C.E. by Hillel at the last Beth Din. Additions and adjustments were made without a Beth Din in 835 C.E., and another attempt was made in 921 C.E. but was rejected, without a Beth Din. It was not until the creation of the Mishneh Torah in 1178 C.E., that the current version of the Hebrew calendar was decided upon by one person, Maimonides. There was no Beth Din.

*In 1178, Maimonides included all the rules for the calculated calendar and their scriptural basis, including the modern epochal year, in his work Mishneh Torah. He wrote<sup>75</sup> that he had chosen the epoch from which calculations of all dates should be as "the third day of Nisan in this present year ... which is the year 4938 of the creation of the world" (22 March 1178).<sup>76</sup> Today, these rules are generally used by Jewish communities throughout the world.*

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<sup>72</sup> E. S. Kennedy, "Al-Khwarizmi on the Jewish calendar", *Scripta Mathematica* 27 (1964) 55–59. "al-Khwarizmi", *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, VII: 362, 365.

<sup>73</sup> Stern, Sacha (2001). *Calendar and Community: A History of the Jewish Calendar 2nd Century BCE to 10th Century CE*. Oxford University Press. [ISBN 978-0198270348](#).

<sup>74</sup> al-Biruni (1879) [1000], [The Chronology of Ancient Nations](#), translated by Sachau, C. Edward.

<sup>75</sup> [Mishneh Torah](#), Sanctification of the Moon, 11:16.

<sup>76</sup> [Solomon Gandz](#) (1947–1948). "Date of the Composition of Maimonides' Code". *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*, Vol. 17, pp. 1–7. [doi:10.2307/3622160](#). [JSTOR 3622160](#). Retrieved March 14, 2013.

These historical facts show you that it is not necessary to have a Beth Din in order to return to the proper calendric observance of the Holy Days and Sabbatical and Jubilee years. What is needed is the will power of one person to stand up and obey Yehovah and keep His appointed times when He said to keep them. Each of us can be that one person.

## Why Does Any of This Matter?

Why are we doing this? Why is it so important?

In our book *The 2300 Days of Hell*,<sup>77</sup> we explained how Julius Africanus was the first to create and use what is today known as the Gap Theory. He was the first to use the 70 weeks prophecy from Daniel 9 about counting from Artaxerxes to the death of Christ as the completion of the 483 years, with the remaining seven years coming at some mysterious time in the future. At what time no one knew.

Julius Africanus, like many of his time, believed the end of this 6<sup>th</sup> millennium was in the year 500 C.E. We have quoted earlier how the Anno Mundi dating had believed the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> millennium was about the year 500 C.E.

*It has also been speculated by Georges Declercq that Dionysius' desire to replace Diocletian years with a calendar based on the incarnation of Christ was intended to prevent people from believing the imminent end of the world. At the time, it was believed by some that the resurrection of the dead and end of the world would occur 500 years after the birth of Jesus. The old Anno Mundi calendar theoretically commenced with the creation of the world based on information in the Old Testament. It was believed that, based on the Anno Mundi calendar, Jesus was born in the year 5500 (5500 years after the world was created) with the year 6000 of the Anno Mundi calendar marking the end of the world. Anno Mundi 6000 (approximately AD 500) was thus equated with the end of the world, but this date had already passed in the time of Dionysius.<sup>78</sup>*

How did the early church fathers arrive at such a conclusion as to believe the end of the world would be the year 500 C.E.?


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<sup>77</sup> We explain this in our book *The 2300 Days of Hell* about the development of the Gap theory by Julius Africanus using Artaxerxes as the start date of 483 years, starting in Chapter 4, pgs. 281-310

<sup>78</sup> Anno Domini [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anno\\_Domini](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anno_Domini)

## The Septuagint

During the Hasmonaean period, the Hebrew Bible was not understandable by most people who at that time spoke Greek. Greek was the world's language, much like English is today around the world. To make the Hebrew Bible more understandable to most of the population, it was translated into Greek.

*The term "Septuagint" is derived from the Latin phrase *Vetus Testamentum ex versione Septuaginta Interpretum* ("The Old Testament from the version of the Seventy Translators"). This phrase in turn was derived from the Ancient Greek: Ἡ μετάφρασις τῶν ἑβδομήκοντα, romanized: *hē metáphrasis tōn hebdomēkonta*, lit. 'The Translation of the Seventy'. It was not until the time of Augustine of Hippo (354–430 CE) that the Greek translation of the Jewish scriptures was called by the Latin term *Septuaginta*. The Roman numeral *LXX* (seventy) is commonly used as an abbreviation, in addition to  or *G*.*

We have a legend as to how the Septuagint was first created, which I will share:

*According to tradition, Ptolemy II Philadelphus (the Greek Pharaoh of Egypt) sent seventy-two Hebrew translators—six from each of the Twelve Tribes of Israel—from Jerusalem to Alexandria to translate the Tanakh from Biblical Hebrew into Koine Greek, for inclusion in his library. This narrative is found in the possibly pseudepigraphic Letter of Aristeas to his brother Philocrates, and is repeated by Philo of Alexandria, Josephus (in *Antiquities of the Jews*), and by later sources (including Augustine of Hippo). It is also found in the Tractate Megillah of the Babylonian Talmud:*

*King Ptolemy once gathered 72 Elders. He placed them in 72 chambers, each of them in a separate one, without revealing to them why they were summoned. He entered each one's room and said: "Write for me the Torah of Moshe, your teacher". God put it in the heart of each one to translate identically as all the others did."<sup>79</sup>*

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<sup>79</sup> Septuagint, Jewish Legend <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Septuagint>

After the death of Yeshua in 31 C.E., the early church fathers using the Septuagint began to calculate when the end of this age would be. Then some began to use the 70 weeks prophecy erroneously to figure out when the Messiah would return, but it was Julius Africanus who developed the Gap Theory. The Septuagint was used in the Eastern Roman Empire, which would later become known as the Byzantine Empire.

*The calendar was based on the Julian calendar, except that the year started on 1 September and the year number used an Anno Mundi epoch derived from the Septuagint version of the Bible. It placed the date of creation at 5509 years before the incarnation of Jesus, and was characterized by a certain tendency that had already been a tradition among Jews and early Christians to number the years from the calculated foundation of the world (Latin: Annus Mundi or Ab Origine Mundi— "AM").<sup>80</sup> Its Year One, marking the assumed date of creation, was September 1, 5509 BC, to August 31, 5508 BC. This would make the current year (AD 2024) 7533 (7532 before September 1; and 7533 after September 1).<sup>81</sup>*

*The earliest extant Christian writings on the age of the world according to the biblical chronology are by Theophilus (AD 115–181) in his apologetic work To Autolycus, and by Julius Africanus (AD 200–245) in his Five Books of Chronology. Both of these early Christian writers, following the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, determined the age of the world to have been about 5,530 years at the birth of Christ.*

*Ben Zion Wacholder points out that the writings of the Church Fathers on this subject are of vital significance (even though he disagrees with their chronological system based on the authenticity of the Septuagint, as compared to that of the Masoretic Text), in that through the Christian chronographers a window to the earlier Hellenistic biblical chronographers is preserved:*

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<sup>80</sup> Significantly, this same phrase – "from the foundation of the world", or "since the dawn of time", (Greek: από καταβολής κόσμου, Apo Kataboles Kosmou) – occurs repeatedly in the New Testament, in Matthew 25:34, Luke 11:50, Hebrews 4:3, 9:26, and Revelation 13:8, 17:8. Anno Mundi eras may reflect a desire to use a convenient starting point for historical computation based on the Scriptures.

<sup>81</sup> Byzantine calendar [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine\\_calendar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine_calendar)

*An immense intellectual effort was expended during the Hellenistic period by both Jews and pagan to date creation, the flood, exodus, building of the Temple... In the course of their studies, men such as Tatian of Antioch (flourished in 180), Clement of Alexandria (died before 215), Hippolytus of Rome (died in 235), Julius Africanus of Jerusalem (died after 240), Eusebius of Caesarea in Palestine (260–340), and Pseudo-Justin frequently quoted their predecessors, the Graeco-Jewish biblical chronographers of the Hellenistic period, thereby allowing discernment of more distant scholarship.*

*The Hellenistic Jewish writer Demetrius the Chronographer (flourishing 221–204 BC) wrote On the Kings of Judea which dealt with biblical exegesis, mainly chronology; he computed the date of the flood and the birth of Abraham exactly as in the Septuagint, and first established the Annus Adami (Era of Adam), the antecedent of the Hebrew World Era, and of the Alexandrian and Byzantine Creation Eras.*

#### *Alexandrian Era*

*The Alexandrian Era (Greek: Κόσμου ἔτη κατ' Ἀλεξανδρεῖς, Kósmou étē kat'Alexandreîs) developed in AD 412, was the precursor to the Byzantine Era. After the initial attempts by Hippolytus, Clement of Alexandria and others, the Alexandrian computation of the date of creation was worked out to be 25 March 5493 BC.*

*The Alexandrine monk Panodorus reckoned 5904 years from Adam to the year AD 412. His years began with August 29, corresponding to the First of Thoth, the Egyptian new year. Annianos of Alexandria however, preferred the Annunciation style as New Year's Day, 25 March, and shifted the Panodorus era by about six months, to begin on 25 March. This created the Alexandrian Era, whose first day was the first day of the proleptic Alexandrian civil year in progress, 29 August 5493 BC, with the ecclesiastical year beginning on 25 March 5493 BC.*

*This system presents in a masterly sort of way the mystical coincidence of the three main dates of the world's history: the beginning of Creation, the incarnation, and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. All these events happened, according to the Alexandrian chronology, on 25 March; furthermore, the first two events were separated by the period of exactly 5500 years; the first and the third one occurred on Sunday—the sacred day of the beginning of the Creation and its renovation through Christ.*

*Dionysius of Alexandria had earlier emphatically quoted mystical justifications for the choice of March 25 as the start of the year: March 25 was considered to be the anniversary of Creation itself. It was the first day of the year in the medieval Julian calendar and the nominal vernal equinox (it had been the actual equinox at the time when the Julian calendar was originally designed). Considering that Christ was conceived at that date turned March 25 into the Feast of the Annunciation which had to be followed, nine months later, by the celebration of the birth of Christ, Christmas, on December 25.*

*The Alexandrian Era of March 25, 5493 BC was adopted by church fathers such as Maximus the Confessor and Theophanes the Confessor, as well as chroniclers such as George Syncellus. Its striking mysticism made it popular in Byzantium, especially in monastic circles. However, this masterpiece of Christian symbolism had two serious weak points: historical inaccuracy surrounding the date of the resurrection of Jesus as determined by its Easter computus, and its contradiction to the chronology of the Gospel of St John regarding the date of the crucifixion of Jesus on Friday after the Passover.*

*(Note Yehshua was killed on Wednesday the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan and came out of the grave after the weekly Sabbath Nisan the 17<sup>th</sup> day.)*

*A new variant of the World Era was suggested in the Chronicon Paschale, a valuable Byzantine universal chronicle of the world, composed about the year 630 AD by some representative of the Antiochian scholarly tradition. It had for its basis a chronological list of events extending from the creation of Adam to the year AD 627. The chronology of the writer is based on the figures of the Bible and begins with 21 March, 5507.*

*For its influence on Greek Christian chronology, and also because of its wide scope, the Chronicon Paschale takes its place beside Eusebius, and the chronicle of the monk Georgius Syncellus which was so important in the Middle Ages; but in respect of form it is inferior to these works.*

*By the late 10th century, the Byzantine Era, which had become fixed at September 1, 5509 BC since at least the mid-7th century (differing by 16 years from the Alexandrian date, and 2 years from the Chronicon Paschale), had become the widely accepted calendar of choice par excellence for Chalcedonian Orthodoxy.*

The early church fathers had based their chronologies upon the dates found in the Greek Septuagint, which computed the time they



were then living in as approximately 5500 years since the creation. This explains why Julius Africanus believed the end of the age was to be about 500 C.E. The church fathers were assuming the days of mankind to be 6000 years. This is based upon 120 Jubilee cycles of 50 years each. It is the compilation of all of these errors that led them to their conclusions.

## **The Masoretic Text**

When the end of the world did not happen in 500 C.E. as many expected, they had to relook at their data. During the same period of time when the Septuagint was being copied from some original text, versions of what we call the Masoretic Text were also known to be around. We have documented evidence of this from fragments found in the Dead Sea Scrolls:

*The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran, dating from c. 150 BCE – 75 CE, shows that in this period there was no uniform text. According to Menachem Cohen, the Dead Sea scrolls showed that "there was indeed a Hebrew text-type on which the Septuagint-translation was based and which differed substantially from the received MT." The scrolls show numerous small variations in orthography, both as against the later Masoretic Text, and between each other. It is also evident from the notings of corrections and of variant alternatives that scribes felt free to choose according to their personal taste and discretion between different readings.*

*The text of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Peshitta read somewhat in-between the Masoretic Text and the old Greek.*

*However, despite these variations, most of the Qumran fragments can be classified as being closer to the Masoretic Text than to any other text group that has survived. According to Lawrence Schiffman, 60% can be classed as being of proto-Masoretic type, and a further 20% Qumran style with a basis in proto-Masoretic texts, compared to 5% proto-Samaritan type, 5% Septuagintal type, and 10% non-aligned. Joseph Fitzmyer noted the following regarding the findings at Qumran Cave 4 in particular: "Such ancient recensional forms of Old Testament books bear witness to an unsuspected textual diversity that once existed; these texts merit far greater study and attention than they have been accorded till now. Thus, the differences in the Septuagint are no longer considered the result of a poor or tendentious attempt to translate the Hebrew into the Greek; rather they testify to a different pre-*



*Christian form of the Hebrew text". On the other hand, some of the fragments conforming most accurately to the Masoretic Text were found in Cave 4.<sup>82</sup>*

Hebrew	Meaning	Masoretic & Septuagint					Babylonian Peshitta					Syriac (LXX)				
		Heb	Grk	Heb	Grk	Heb	Heb	Grk	Heb	Grk	Heb	Heb	Grk	Heb	Grk	Heb
Abraham	father of many	10	100	100	100	100	10	100	100	100	100	10	100	100	100	100
Isaac	laughter	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Jacob	supplanter	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Joseph	increase	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
Moses	drawn out of water	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400
David	beloved	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
Samuel	heard of God	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600
Jerusalem	city of peace	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	700
Jeremiah	Yahweh has seen	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800
Ezekiel	God will strengthen me	900	900	900	900	900	900	900	900	900	900	900	900	900	900	900
Malachi	my messenger	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000
Isaiah	Yahweh has seen	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100
Psalm 117	praise Yahweh	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200
Exodus 1	Yahweh	1300	1300	1300	1300	1300	1300	1300	1300	1300	1300	1300	1300	1300	1300	1300
Amos 1	Yahweh has seen	1400	1400	1400	1400	1400	1400	1400	1400	1400	1400	1400	1400	1400	1400	1400
Ezekiel 1	Yahweh has seen	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	1600	1600	1600	1600	1600	1600	1600	1600	1600	1600	1600	1600	1600	1600	1600
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	2200	2200	2200	2200	2200	2200	2200	2200	2200	2200	2200	2200	2200	2200	2200
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	2300	2300	2300	2300	2300	2300	2300	2300	2300	2300	2300	2300	2300	2300	2300
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	2400	2400	2400	2400	2400	2400	2400	2400	2400	2400	2400	2400	2400	2400	2400
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	2600	2600	2600	2600	2600	2600	2600	2600	2600	2600	2600	2600	2600	2600	2600
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	2700	2700	2700	2700	2700	2700	2700	2700	2700	2700	2700	2700	2700	2700	2700
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	2800	2800	2800	2800	2800	2800	2800	2800	2800	2800	2800	2800	2800	2800	2800
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	2900	2900	2900	2900	2900	2900	2900	2900	2900	2900	2900	2900	2900	2900	2900
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	3100	3100	3100	3100	3100	3100	3100	3100	3100	3100	3100	3100	3100	3100	3100
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	3200	3200	3200	3200	3200	3200	3200	3200	3200	3200	3200	3200	3200	3200	3200
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	3300	3300	3300	3300	3300	3300	3300	3300	3300	3300	3300	3300	3300	3300	3300
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	3400	3400	3400	3400	3400	3400	3400	3400	3400	3400	3400	3400	3400	3400	3400
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	3500	3500	3500	3500	3500	3500	3500	3500	3500	3500	3500	3500	3500	3500	3500
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	3600	3600	3600	3600	3600	3600	3600	3600	3600	3600	3600	3600	3600	3600	3600
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	3700	3700	3700	3700	3700	3700	3700	3700	3700	3700	3700	3700	3700	3700	3700
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	3800	3800	3800	3800	3800	3800	3800	3800	3800	3800	3800	3800	3800	3800	3800
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	3900	3900	3900	3900	3900	3900	3900	3900	3900	3900	3900	3900	3900	3900	3900
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	4100	4100	4100	4100	4100	4100	4100	4100	4100	4100	4100	4100	4100	4100	4100
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	4200	4200	4200	4200	4200	4200	4200	4200	4200	4200	4200	4200	4200	4200	4200
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	4300	4300	4300	4300	4300	4300	4300	4300	4300	4300	4300	4300	4300	4300	4300
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	4400	4400	4400	4400	4400	4400	4400	4400	4400	4400	4400	4400	4400	4400	4400
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	4500	4500	4500	4500	4500	4500	4500	4500	4500	4500	4500	4500	4500	4500	4500
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	4600	4600	4600	4600	4600	4600	4600	4600	4600	4600	4600	4600	4600	4600	4600
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	4700	4700	4700	4700	4700	4700	4700	4700	4700	4700	4700	4700	4700	4700	4700
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800	4800
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	4900	4900	4900	4900	4900	4900	4900	4900	4900	4900	4900	4900	4900	4900	4900
Isaiah 1	Yahweh has seen	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000

(Note: the numbers in green are consistent across all versions, while the numbers in yellow are contradicted in one other version and

<sup>82</sup> Masoretic Text [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masoretic\\_Text](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masoretic_Text)

the numbers in red are contradicted by more than one of the other versions.)<sup>83</sup>

Please make special note of what you just read. More than 60% of the fragments in Cave 4 of the Dead Sea Scrolls were proto-Masoretic and a further 20% were of the Qumran style with a basis in proto-Masoretic texts, as compared to only 5% of the fragments being Septuagintal. Less than 5% were of the Septuagint style.

If we then compare the chronologies of these ancient scrolls, we glean what is displayed in the previous chart.

Using this information, we see in the Masoretic and Vulgate versions the birth of Abraham was in the year 1948 after the Creation of Adam (A.C.). The Septuagint has the birth of Abraham at 3414 A.C.

This brings us to the problem we have today. According to the Septuagint chronology, we are already near the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium.

Once we have the correct chronology, once we can eliminate all of this confusion about how to count time, then and only then can we tune in to what we are told in the book of Hebrews:

*I For the Law which has a shadow of good things to come, not the very image of the things, appearing year by year with the same sacrifices, which they offer continually, they are never able to perfect those drawing near. (Hebrews 10:1)*

“The Law” to which Hebrews is speaking of is the Torah, the first five books of the Bible. Paul tells the Colossians not to let others outside the faith judge them for keeping these commandments, because they are a shadow picture to us of things that are yet to come. They are prophetic images of future events shown to those who keep those laws, and this includes the chronology as well.

*16 Therefore let no one judge you in food or in drink, or in respect of a feast, or of the new moon, or of the sabbaths. 17 For these are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ. (Colossians 2:16-17)*

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<sup>83</sup> Genealogies of Genesis [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genealogies\\_of\\_Genesis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genealogies_of_Genesis)

If you remove all the filler text as I have shaded above, then what Paul is saying is quite clear: “Let no one judge you but the body of Christ” —those peers who know the law.

Paul also spoke to the Corinthians saying that when one matures in the faith, one’s understanding also is supposed to mature. The shadow pictures we see in the Torah, when we first read them, are as though we are looking through a glass darkly as the old King James Version says:

*9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. 11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. (1 Corinthians 13:9-12 KJV)*

*9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10 But when the perfect thing comes, then that which is in part will be caused to cease. 11 When I was an infant, I spoke as an infant, I thought as an infant, I reasoned as an infant. But when I became a man, I did away with the things of an infant. 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall fully know even as I also am fully known. (1 Corinthians 13:9-12 MKJV)*

The Sabbath, the Holy Days, the Sabbatical and Jubilee years, and all the sacrifices that were done at the Tabernacle were all shadow pictures showing us prophetic understandings of future events, some of which have been fulfilled in full or in part in the past, and others which we expect to be fulfilled in our time right now. This is why this is so important. This is why it is crucial we understand and get the chronology correct.

With this in mind, let us now read Hebrews 3:7-4:13 with a clear understanding:

## **A Rest for the People of God**

*7 For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. Today if you will hear His voice, 8 harden not your heart, as in the day of strife, as in the day of testing in the wilderness; 9 when your fathers tempted Me, tested Me, and saw My*

*work. 10 For forty years I was grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people who go astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways; 11 to whom I swore in My wrath that they should not enter into My rest. (Psalm 95:7-11)*

*7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, "Today if you will hear His voice, 8 do not harden your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness, 9 when your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My works forty years. 10 Therefore I was grieved with that generation and said, They always err in their heart, and they have not known My ways. 11 So I swore in My wrath, They shall not enter into My rest." 12 Take heed, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. 13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, 15 while it is said, "Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation." 16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke; however, not all who came out of Egypt by Moses. 17 But with whom was He grieved forty years? Was it not with those who had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did He swear that they should not enter into His rest, but to those who did not believe? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. (Hebrews 3:7-19)*

*1 Therefore, a promise being left to enter into His rest, let us fear lest any of you should seem to come short of it. 2 For also we have had the gospel preached, as well as them. But the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. 3 For we who have believed do enter into the rest, as He said, "I have sworn in My wrath that they should not enter into My rest;" although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. 4 For He spoke in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested the seventh day from all His works." 5 And in this place again, "They shall not enter into My rest." 6 Since then it remains that some must enter into it, and since they to whom it was first preached did not enter in because of unbelief, 7 He again marks out a certain day, saying in David, "Today," (after so long a time). Even as it is said, "Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." 8 For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day.*

*9 So then there remains a rest to the people of God. 10 For he who has entered into his rest, he also has ceased from his own works, as God did from His. 11 Therefore let us labor to enter into that rest, lest anyone fall after the same example of unbelief. 12 For the Word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing apart of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight, but all things are naked and opened to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. (Hebrews 4:1-13)*

Yehovah is telling those of us who will hear His voice, who will obey Him to learn a lesson. Those who would not obey, Yehovah said *"They shall not enter into My rest."*

What is the rest He is speaking of?

*4 For He spoke in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested the seventh day from all His works." (Hebrews 4:4)*

Yehovah is speaking plainly of the 7<sup>th</sup> day Sabbath. The Saturday Sabbath from sunset Friday until sunset Saturday is exactly what Yehovah is talking about. Those who do not obey will not enter the Sabbath Rest.

*2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made. And He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. 3 And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He had rested from all His work which God created to make. (Genesis 2:2-3)*

Understand that when Yehovah told Adam that he would die the day he ate of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, Adam did not die that very day.

*15 And Jehovah God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. 16 And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, You may freely eat of every tree in the garden, 17 but you shall not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. For in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die. (Genesis 2:15-16)*

Adam lived long after he ate of the tree. He lived a total of 930 years. Adam died 50 years before the first millennium expired.

*3 And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years and fathered a son in his own likeness, after his own image. And he called his name Seth. 4 And the days of Adam after he had fathered Seth were eight hundred years. And he fathered sons and daughters. 5 And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years. And he died. (Genesis 5:3-5)*

Yehovah was saying to Adam that in the same millennial day that you eat of the tree you will die, and he did in the 930<sup>th</sup> year after being created.

So, if a day can be as one millennium, then the Sabbath Rest Yehovah is speaking about in the Book of Hebrews is talking about the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium of rest the time when Satan is locked away.

There is a rest for those who obey to enter into in the same way we rest on the weekly Sabbath when we cease all work. We are to strive to enter into that 7<sup>th</sup> millennium of rest.

Although I never set out to set dates, once you understand the Sabbatical and Jubilee years and can prove them, you like me, will know when the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium of rest is to begin. Do not harden your hearts as Hebrews warns us. *Now* is the time to begin to obey.

Let us now exit this proverbial swamp of chronological confusion and remove all the various methods men have used to count time, all the errors they have made in their additions, and all the false assumptions these errors have caused. Let us now begin with a clear sheet of paper and ask Yehovah to help us understand and to see. And by that I do mean for each of you to pray right now for clarity and understanding of this subject.

We are now ready to begin.

## Chapter 1 | Jubilee Year 1337 B.C.

For our first year we are going to look at, we did not initially know the year. We are told in Leviticus 25 that the year Israel enters the promised Land the land would have a rest, but what year was it?

*2 Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, When you come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath to Jehovah. 3 You shall sow your field six years, and you shall prune your vineyard six years, and gather in the fruit of it. 4 But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest to the land, a sabbath for Jehovah. You shall neither sow your field, nor prune your vineyard. (Leviticus 25:2-4)*

How do we figure this out? How do we know if this is talking about the 50<sup>th</sup> year Jubilee or one of the seven Sabbatical years in a Jubilee cycle?

There is a disagreement between the sages and Rabbi Yehuda in the Talmud (Nedarim 61a and in Sefaria Arakhin 12b) whether the Yovel year was considered the first year of the new cycle of Shmitah or whether the new cycle began in year 51.

*A dilemma was raised before the Sages: If one said: Any wine that I taste for a Jubilee is hereby forbidden to me, what is the halakha? Is the fiftieth year considered as before fifty, i.e., is it included in the vow, or is it considered as after fifty, in which case it is not included in the vow?*

*The Gemara answers: Come and hear, as it is taught in a baraita that there is a dispute between Rabbi Yehuda and the Rabbis: The verse states: "And you shall sanctify the fiftieth year" (Leviticus 25:10), from which it is derived: You count it as the fiftieth year, i.e., the Jubilee Year, but you do not count it as both the fiftieth year and the first year of the next Sabbatical and Jubilee cycles. From here they stated: The Jubilee Year is not included in the counting of the seven-year cycle of the Sabbatical Year. Rather, the year following the Jubilee Year is considered the first year of the next seven-year cycle. Rabbi Yehuda says: The Jubilee Year is included in the counting of the following seven-year cycle of the Sabbatical Year. The Rabbis said to Rabbi Yehuda: Doesn't the verse state: "Six years you shall sow your field" (Leviticus 25:3)? But according to your opinion there are only five years here, in the Sabbatical cycle*



*following the Jubilee Year, as the first year would be the Jubilee Year, when it is forbidden to sow one's field.*

*Rabbi Yehuda said to them: There is a difficulty according to your statement as well. Doesn't the verse state: "And it shall bring forth produce for the three years" (Leviticus 25:21)? The Torah promises the Jewish people that in the year preceding the Sabbatical Year, the land will bring forth enough produce to last for the duration of that year, for the Sabbatical Year, and for part of the following year, until the new produce grows. However, in the case of the Jubilee, there are four years to account for, as agricultural labor is prohibited in the forty-ninth year, which is a Sabbatical Year, and in the following year, which is the Jubilee Year.*

*Rather, you must say that it is possible to establish the verse as referring to the other years of seven-year cycles, i.e., other Sabbatical Years apart from the Sabbatical Year right before the Jubilee Year. With regard to my opinion also, it is possible to establish the verse you presented as a difficulty as referring to the other years of seven-year cycles, i.e., other Sabbatical cycles apart from the cycle immediately following the Jubilee. With regard to the dilemma cited previously, according to the Rabbis, just as the Jubilee Year does not count as part of the ensuing Jubilee cycle because it is considered the end of the previous Jubilee cycle, if one takes a vow and states that it applies for the Jubilee cycle, the Jubilee Year is included in the vow. According to Rabbi Yehuda, the Jubilee Year itself actually begins the next Jubilee cycle, and therefore if one takes a vow for the current Jubilee cycle, the Jubilee Year itself is not included.<sup>84</sup>*

The first thing you should notice is that about the year 180 C.E. when this midrash was taking place, the Rabbis still were not sure about whether the 50<sup>th</sup> year Jubilee was also the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the next Jubilee cycle. If they all agreed, then this would not have been a discussion—but they did not agree. The majority would rule that it was to be intercalated, which means it was counted as 48, 49, 50, 1, 2, 3.

I also have a quote from Judah ha-Nasi stating the year Israel entered the Promised Land was a Jubilee, but I am not able to find it to quote it to you. From the Jewish Encyclopedia quoted below, we

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<sup>84</sup> Sefaria, Nedarim 61a, <https://www.sefaria.org/Nedarim.61a.3-7?lang=bi&with=all&lang2=en>



do have the Samaritans stating the year Joshua entered the land was a Jubilee year and matching what we are told in Leviticus 25:2.

*The majority of rabbis hold that the jubilee year was an intercalation, and followed the seventh Sabbatical year, making two fallow years in succession. After both had passed, the next cycle began.*

*Judah ha-Nasi, however, contends that the jubilee year was identical with the seventh Sabbatical year (R. H. 9a; Giṭ. 36a; comp. Rashi ad loc.). The opinion of the Geonim and of later authorities generally prevails, that the jubilee, when in force during the period of the First Temple, was intercalated, but that in the time of the Second Temple, when the jubilee was observed only "nominally," it coincided with the seventh Sabbatical year. In post-exilic times the jubilee was entirely ignored, though the strict observance of the shemiṭṭah was steadily insisted upon. This, however, is only according to a rabbinical enactment (Tos. to Giṭ. 36a, s.v. "Bizeman"), as by the Mosaic law, according to R. Judah, shemiṭṭah is dependent on the jubilee and ceases to exist when there is no jubilee (Giṭ. l.c. and Rashi ad loc.).*

***The exact year of the shemiṭṭah is in dispute, and different dates are given.*** According to Talmudic calculations the entrance of the Israelites into Palestine occurred in the year of Creation 2489, and 850 years, or seventeen jubilees, passed between that date and the destruction of the First Temple. The first cycle commenced after the conquest of the land and its distribution among the tribes, which, occupied fourteen years, and the last jubilee occurred on the "tenth day of the month [Tishri], in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten" (Ezek. xl. 1), which was the New-Year's Day of the jubilee ('Ab. Zarah 9b; 'Ar. 11b-12b). Joshua celebrated the first jubilee, and died just before the second (Seder 'Olam R., ed. Ratner, xi. 24b-25b, xxx. 69b, Wilna, 1895).

***The Samaritans in their "Book of Joshua" date the first month of the first Sabbatical cycle and of the first jubilee cycle as beginning with the crossing of the Jordan and the entrance of the Israelites into their possession; and they insist that the date was 2794 of Creation, according to the chronology of the Torah "and the true reckoning known to the sages since the Flood" ("Karme Shomeron," ed. Raphael Kirchheim, § 15, p. 63, Frankfurt-on-the-Main, 1851).***<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Sabbatical Year and Jubilee <https://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/8943-jubilee>

# Adam to Lamech

If we do the chronology from the creation of Adam until the year Joshua entered the Promised Land, then we should be able to determine if in fact Leviticus 25:2 is speaking about a Jubilee year.

The creation of Adam to the birth of Abram will be the first section I elaborate on to lay a sound foundation biblically and historically and to ensure you get off to the right start. The numbers from Genesis that should be of the greatest interest to you are the ages of the patriarchs at the time the next generation came to be.

For example, Adam was 130 years old when Seth was born, so we record 130 years from the onset of creation to the birth of Seth. We do this all the way to the birth of Abram. Do your own homework and double-check it against the table that follows below. I will provide you with a running total so you can crosscheck as well.

The Chronology From Adam until Israel Crosses the Jordan		
Patriarchs	Age of Patriarchs at birth Son	The Year From the Creation of Adam up to that Time in Total
Adam	130 Years	130
Seth	105 Years	235
Enosh	90 Years	325
Cainan	70 Years	395
Mahala'i'el	65 Years	460
Jared	162 Years	622
Enoch	65 Years	687
Methuselah	187 Years	874
Lamech	182 Years	1,056

When Noah was born, the year was 1,056 years *after* the creation of Adam (A.C.). Double-check your math and compare. Most people do not get this part wrong.

I am also going to supply you with the Jubilee cycles starting with the creation of Adam. And I am going to count each Jubilee cycle as 49 years with the 50<sup>th</sup> year as the first year in the next count. I want you to go through each number starting in the bottom right corner and count them to make sure I have not made any mistakes sequentially.

I have shaded in yellow the year of our first date given to us. This is the birth of Seth when Adam was 130 years of age.

3 And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years and fathered a son in his own likeness, after his own image. And he called his name Seth. (Genesis 5:3)

8							246
	Subbirth	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	1st Cycle
	245	238	231	224	217	210	203
	244	237	230	223	216	209	202
	243	236	229	222	215	208	201
	242	235	228	221	214	207	200
	241	234	227	220	213	206	199
	240	233	226	219	212	205	198
	239	232	225	218	211	204	197
4							187
	Subbirth	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	1st Cycle
	186	189	182	175	168	161	154
	193	188	181	174	167	160	153
	194	187	180	173	166	159	152
	195	186	179	172	165	158	151
	192	185	178	171	164	157	150
	191	184	177	170	163	156	149
	190	183	176	169	162	155	148
3							125
	Subbirth	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	1st Cycle
	124	128	133	138	143	148	153
	146	139	132	125	118	111	104
	145	138	131	124	117	110	103
	144	137	130	123	116	109	102
	143	136	129	122	115	108	101
	142	135	128	121	114	107	100
	141	134	127	120	113	106	99
2							55
	Subbirth	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	1st Cycle
	54	51	48	45	42	39	36
	57	50	43	36	29	22	15
	56	49	42	35	28	21	14
	55	48	41	34	27	20	13
	54	47	40	33	26	19	12
	53	46	39	32	25	18	11
	52	45	38	31	24	17	10
1							25
	Subbirth	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	1st Cycle
	24	21	18	15	12	9	6
	48	41	34	27	20	13	6
	47	40	33	26	19	12	5
	46	39	32	25	18	11	4
	45	38	31	24	17	10	3
	44	37	30	23	16	9	2
	43	36	29	22	15	8	1

When Seth was 105 years old, he gave birth to Enos.

$$130 + 105 = 235$$

6 And Seth lived one hundred and five years and fathered Enos. (Genesis 5:6)

Enos is shaded in yellow in the year 235 after the creation of Adam (A.C.) in the previous chart.

Next is the birth of Cainan when Enosh was 90 years old.

$$235 + 90 = 325$$

*9 And Enosh lived ninety years and fathered Cainan. (Genesis 5:9)*

Cainan is found on the next chart with the year 325 coloured in yellow. When Cainan is 70, he fathers Mahalaleel. Again, you can see I coloured in the year 395 in yellow on the chart for the year Mahalaleel is born.

$$325 + 70 = 395$$

*12 And Cainan lived seventy years and fathered Mahalaleel. (Genesis 5:12)*

Mahalaleel lived 65 years and then fathered Jared.

$$395 + 65 = 460$$

Again, you can see I coloured in the year 460 in yellow on the chart.

*15 And Mahalaleel lived sixty-five years and fathered Jared. (Genesis 5:15)*

Let me explain some more features about the charts below and above. The green area on the left is counting each Jubilee. The year Adam was born, year one, is zero Jubilee. When Seth was born in the year 130 A.C. it was also in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Jubilee cycle. Seth was also born in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 5<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle.

Every 7<sup>th</sup> year is a Sabbatical year. I have all the Sabbatical years highlighted in a dark orange. You can see them in the first Jubilee cycle above numbered 7, 14, 21, 28, 35, 42, and 49.

10							491
	Subbirth	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	489	483	476	469	462	455	448
	489	482	475	468	461	454	447
	488	481	474	467	460	453	446
	487	480	473	466	459	452	445
	486	479	472	465	458	451	444
	485	478	471	464	457	450	443
	484	477	470	463	456	449	442
9							482
	Subbirth	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	481	475	467	459	451	444	437
	480	473	466	459	451	443	436
	479	472	465	458	451	444	437
	478	471	464	457	450	443	436
	477	470	463	456	449	442	435
	476	469	462	455	448	441	434
	475	468	461	454	447	440	433
8							473
	Subbirth	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	471	465	457	449	441	434	427
	470	463	456	449	441	434	427
	469	462	455	448	441	434	427
	468	461	454	447	440	433	426
	467	460	453	446	439	432	425
	466	459	452	445	438	431	424
	465	458	451	444	437	430	423
7							464
	Subbirth	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	461	455	447	439	431	424	417
	460	453	446	439	431	424	417
	459	452	445	438	431	424	417
	458	451	444	437	430	423	416
	457	450	443	436	429	422	415
	456	449	442	435	428	421	414
	455	448	441	434	427	420	413
6							455
	Subbirth	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	451	445	437	429	421	414	407
	450	443	436	429	421	414	407
	449	442	435	428	421	414	407
	448	441	434	427	420	413	406
	447	440	433	426	419	412	405
	446	439	432	425	418	411	404
	445	438	431	424	417	410	403
5							446
	Subbirth	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	441	435	427	419	411	404	397
	440	433	426	419	411	404	397
	439	432	425	418	411	404	397
	438	431	424	417	410	403	396
	437	430	423	416	409	402	395
	436	429	422	415	408	401	394
	435	428	421	414	407	400	393
4							437
	Subbirth	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	431	425	417	409	401	394	387
	430	423	416	409	401	394	387
	429	422	415	408	401	394	387
	428	421	414	407	400	393	386
	427	420	413	406	399	392	385
	426	419	412	405	398	391	384
	425	418	411	404	397	390	383
3							428
	Subbirth	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	421	415	407	399	391	384	377
	420	413	406	399	391	384	377
	419	412	405	398	391	384	377
	418	411	404	397	390	383	376
	417	410	403	396	389	382	375
	416	409	402	395	388	381	374
	415	408	401	394	387	380	373
2							419
	Subbirth	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	411	405	397	389	381	374	367
	410	403	396	389	381	374	367
	409	402	395	388	381	374	367
	408	401	394	387	380	373	366
	407	400	393	386	379	372	365
	406	399	392	385	378	371	364
	405	398	391	384	377	370	363
1							410
	Subbirth	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	401	395	387	379	371	364	357
	400	393	386	379	371	364	357
	399	392	385	378	371	364	357
	398	391	384	377	370	363	356
	397	390	383	376	369	362	355
	396	389	382	375	368	361	354
	395	388	381	374	367	360	353
0							410

Jared was 162 when he gave birth to Enoch.

$$460 + 162 = 622$$

18 And Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years and fathered Enoch. (Genesis 5:18)

18								726
	Sabbath	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	
	723	728	733	738	743	748	753	
	734	737	726	733	746	759	772	
	733	726	719	712	705	698	691	
	732	725	718	711	704	697	690	
	731	724	717	710	703	696	689	
	730	723	716	709	702	695	688	
	729	722	715	708	701	694	687	
14								687
	Sabbath	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	
	688	679	672	665	658	651	644	
	685	678	671	664	657	650	643	
	684	677	670	663	656	649	642	
	683	676	669	662	655	648	641	
	682	675	668	661	654	647	640	
	681	674	667	660	653	646	639	
	680	673	666	659	652	645	638	
13								638
	Sabbath	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	
	637	636	623	616	609	602	595	
	636	629	622	615	608	601	594	
	635	628	621	614	607	600	593	
	634	627	620	613	606	599	592	
	633	626	619	612	605	598	591	
	632	625	618	611	604	597	590	
	631	624	617	610	603	596	589	
12								589
	Sabbath	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	
	588	581	574	567	560	553	546	
	587	580	573	566	559	552	545	
	586	579	572	565	558	551	544	
	585	578	571	564	557	550	543	
	584	577	570	563	556	549	542	
	583	576	569	562	555	548	541	
	582	575	568	561	554	547	540	
11								540
	Sabbath	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	
	539	532	525	518	511	504	497	
	538	531	524	517	510	503	496	
	537	530	523	516	509	502	495	
	536	529	522	515	508	501	494	
	535	528	521	514	507	500	493	
	534	527	520	513	506	499	492	
	533	526	519	512	505	498	491	
10								491

I have Enoch born in the year 622, the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the 5<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle. It is also during the 13<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

Enoch then gave birth to Methuselah when Enoch was 65 years old.

$$622 + 65 = 687$$

*21 And Enoch lived sixty-five years and fathered Methuselah.*  
(Genesis 5:21)

If you look at the previous chart and at the year 687 A.C., you will see that Methuselah, who was the longest living man, was born in the Jubilee year of 687 A.C. That is the first year of the first Sabbatical cycle in the 15<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

16								983
1st Sabbath Day Symbol	Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	
	988	973	966	959	952	945	938	
	979	972	965	958	951	944	937	
	976	971	964	957	950	943	936	
	977	970	963	956	949	942	935	
	974	969	962	955	948	941	934	
	975	968	961	954	947	940	933	
	974	967	960	953	946	939	932	
15								933
	Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	
	933	924	917	910	903	896	889	
	930	923	916	909	902	895	888	
	929	922	915	908	901	894	887	
	928	921	914	907	900	893	886	
	927	920	913	906	899	892	885	
	926	919	912	905	898	891	884	
	925	918	911	904	897	890	883	
14								883
	Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	
	883	875	868	861	854	847	840	
	881	874	867	860	853	846	839	
	880	873	866	859	852	845	838	
	879	872	865	858	851	844	837	
	878	871	864	857	850	843	836	
	877	870	863	856	849	842	835	
	876	869	862	855	848	841	834	
13								833
	Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	
	833	824	817	810	803	796	789	
	832	825	818	811	804	797	790	
	831	824	817	810	803	796	789	
	830	823	816	809	802	795	788	
	829	822	815	808	801	794	787	
	828	821	814	807	800	793	786	
	827	820	813	806	799	792	785	
12								783
	Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	
	784	777	770	763	756	749	742	
	783	776	769	762	755	748	741	
	782	775	768	761	754	747	740	
	781	774	767	760	753	746	739	
	780	773	766	759	752	745	738	
	779	772	765	758	751	744	737	
	778	771	764	757	750	743	736	
11								733

I am giving you all of this information to train you how to count and how to recognize the years.

Methuselah then lived 187 years and fathered Lamech.



$$687 + 187 = 874$$

*25 And Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years and fathered Lamech. (Genesis 5:25)*

On the previous chart you will see I have coloured yellow in the year 874 A.C., which is when Lamech was born. Lamech was born in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the 6<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle in the 18<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

You will also notice I have coloured in the two years before 930 A.C., which were blood moons on the High Holy Days at Passover and Sukkot in those years.

Here you can clearly see what we spoke about earlier, that the day Adam ate of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was a millennial day. Adam died 50 years before the end of this 1<sup>st</sup> millennial day, which was 980. Adam also died in the 19<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

The second millennial day begins with the Jubilee year, 981 A.C. The column on the left hand will now be blue to represent the second millennial day.

## Noah to Abraham

We are told that Lamech lived 182 years and then gave birth to Noah.

$$874 + 182 = 1056$$

*28 And Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years and fathered a son. 29 And he called his name Noah, saying, This one shall comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which Jehovah has cursed. (Genesis 5:28-29)*

I have the birth of Noah coloured in red. He was born in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Jubilee cycle.

In our booklet *Timeline Since the Creation of Adam*,<sup>86</sup> I have the same charts all listed there. Below each chart are notes explaining what all the other coloured-in boxes represent. In this chart we have the death of Enoch in 987 A.C., the death of Seth in 1042 A.C., and the death of Enosh in 1140 A.C.

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<sup>86</sup> Timeline Since the Creation of Adam by Joseph F Dumond  
<https://sightedmoon.com/sabbatical-chart-lp/>



I am not going to explain all of these other things as we go forward. I am going to focus on the chronology so that you can duplicate what I have done here.

18							1229
	Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle
	1229	1238	1247	1254	1297	1190	1183
	1224	1237	1248	1283	1196	1189	1182
	1223	1236	1289	1282	1195	1188	1181
	1222	1235	1288	1281	1194	1187	1180
	1221	1234	1287	1286	1193	1186	1179
	1220	1233	1286	1199	1192	1185	1178
	1219	1232	1288	1198	1191	1184	1177
19							1230
	Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle
	1276	1289	1182	1185	1288	1181	1239
	1175	1168	1161	1194	1147	1140	1133
	1174	1167	1188	1193	1146	1139	1132
	1173	1166	1189	1182	1145	1138	1131
	1172	1165	1198	1191	1144	1137	1130
	1171	1164	1187	1190	1143	1136	1129
	1170	1163	1196	1189	1142	1135	1128
20							1231
	Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle
	1127	1120	1113	1186	1099	1092	1085
	1126	1119	1112	1185	1098	1091	1084
	1125	1118	1111	1184	1097	1090	1083
	1124	1117	1110	1183	1096	1089	1082
	1123	1116	1109	1182	1095	1088	1081
	1122	1115	1108	1181	1094	1087	1080
	1121	1114	1107	1180	1093	1086	1079
21							1232
	Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle
	1078	1071	1064	1057	1050	1043	1036
	1077	1070	1063	1056	1049	1042	1035
	1076	1069	1062	1055	1048	1041	1034
	1075	1068	1061	1054	1047	1040	1033
	1074	1067	1060	1053	1046	1039	1032
	1073	1066	1059	1052	1045	1038	1031
	1072	1065	1058	1051	1044	1037	1030
22							1233
2nd Millennium Day Events	Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle
	1029	1022	1015	1008	1001	994	987
	1028	1021	1014	1007	1000	993	986
	1027	1020	1013	1006	999	992	985
	1026	1019	1012	1005	998	991	984
	1025	1018	1011	1004	997	990	983
	1024	1017	1010	1003	996	989	982
	1023	1016	1009	1002	995	988	981
23							988

The next chart contains just the dates when various patriarchs died. Cainan died in 1235 A.C., Mahalaleel died in 1290 A.C., and Jared died in 1422 A.C.

36								1421	
	Subbirth	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
	1470	1463	1456	1449	1442	1435	1428		
	1469	1462	1455	1448	1441	1434	1427		
	1468	1461	1454	1447	1440	1433	1426		
	1467	1460	1453	1446	1439	1432	1425		
	1466	1459	1452	1445	1438	1431	1424		
	1465	1458	1451	1444	1437	1430	1423		
	1464	1457	1450	1443	1436	1429	1422		
29								1421	
	Subbirth	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
	1421	1414	1407	1400	1393	1386	1379		
	1420	1413	1406	1399	1392	1385	1378		
	1419	1412	1405	1398	1391	1384	1377		
	1418	1411	1404	1397	1390	1383	1376		
	1417	1410	1403	1396	1389	1382	1375		
	1416	1409	1402	1395	1388	1381	1374		
	1415	1408	1401	1394	1387	1380	1373		
28								1375	
	Subbirth	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
	1375	1368	1361	1354	1347	1340	1333		
	1374	1367	1360	1353	1346	1339	1332		
	1373	1366	1359	1352	1345	1338	1331		
	1372	1365	1358	1351	1344	1337	1330		
	1371	1364	1357	1350	1343	1336	1329		
	1370	1363	1356	1349	1342	1335	1328		
	1369	1362	1355	1348	1341	1334	1327		
	1368	1361	1354	1347	1340	1333	1326		
	1367	1360	1353	1346	1339	1332	1325		
	1366	1359	1352	1345	1338	1331	1324		
	27								1328
		Subbirth	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle	
		1328	1321	1314	1307	1299	1292	1284	
		1327	1320	1313	1306	1298	1291	1283	
		1326	1319	1312	1305	1297	1290	1279	
1325		1318	1311	1304	1296	1289	1278		
1324		1317	1310	1303	1295	1288	1277		
1323		1316	1309	1302	1294	1287	1276		
1322		1315	1308	1301	1293	1286	1275		
	1321	1314	1307	1300	1292	1285	1274		
	1320	1313	1306	1299	1291	1284	1277		
	1319	1312	1305	1298	1290	1283	1276		
	1318	1311	1304	1297	1289	1282	1275		
	1317	1310	1303	1296	1288	1281	1274		
	1316	1309	1302	1295	1287	1280	1273		
	1315	1308	1301	1294	1286	1279	1272		
	1314	1307	1300	1293	1285	1278	1271		
26								1276	
	Subbirth	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
	1276	1269	1262	1255	1247	1240	1232		
	1275	1268	1261	1254	1246	1239	1231		
	1274	1267	1260	1253	1245	1238	1230		
	1273	1266	1259	1252	1244	1237	1229		
	1272	1265	1258	1251	1243	1236	1228		
	1271	1264	1257	1250	1242	1235	1227		
	1270	1263	1256	1249	1241	1234	1226		
	1269	1262	1255	1248	1240	1233	1225		
	1268	1261	1254	1247	1239	1232	1224		
	1267	1260	1253	1246	1238	1231	1223		
	1266	1259	1252	1245	1237	1230	1222		
	1265	1258	1251	1244	1236	1229	1221		
	1264	1257	1250	1243	1235	1228	1220		
	1263	1256	1249	1242	1234	1227	1219		
	1262	1255	1248	1241	1233	1226	1218		
25								1226	

Double-check your math and compare. Most people do not get wrong any part of what we have now covered. Next, we read that Noah was 600 years old when The Great Flood came.

$$1056 + 600 = 1656$$

39							2786
	Salmon	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	2nd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle
	1713	1708	1701	1694	1687	1680	1672
	1714	1707	1700	1693	1686	1679	1672
	1713	1706	1699	1692	1685	1678	1671
	1712	1705	1698	1691	1684	1677	1670
	1711	1704	1697	1690	1683	1676	1669
	1710	1703	1696	1689	1682	1675	1668
	1709	1702	1695	1688	1681	1674	1667
34							1667
	Salmon	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	2nd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle
	1664	1658	1652	1645	1638	1631	1624
	1665	1658	1651	1644	1637	1630	1623
	1666	1657	1650	1643	1636	1629	1622
	1667	1656	1649	1642	1635	1628	1621
	1668	1655	1648	1641	1634	1627	1620
	1669	1654	1647	1640	1633	1626	1619
	1670	1653	1646	1639	1632	1625	1618
32							1618
	Salmon	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	2nd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle
	1617	1610	1603	1596	1589	1582	1575
	1616	1609	1602	1595	1588	1581	1574
	1615	1608	1601	1594	1587	1580	1573
	1614	1607	1600	1593	1586	1579	1572
	1613	1606	1599	1592	1585	1578	1571
	1612	1605	1598	1591	1584	1577	1570
	1611	1604	1597	1590	1583	1576	1569
31							1569
	Salmon	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	2nd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle
	1568	1561	1554	1547	1540	1533	1526
	1567	1560	1553	1546	1539	1532	1525
	1566	1559	1552	1545	1538	1531	1524
	1565	1558	1551	1544	1537	1530	1523
	1564	1557	1550	1543	1536	1529	1522
	1563	1556	1549	1542	1535	1528	1521
	1562	1555	1548	1541	1534	1527	1520
33							1520
	Salmon	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	2nd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle
	1519	1512	1505	1498	1491	1484	1477
	1518	1511	1504	1497	1490	1483	1476
	1517	1510	1503	1496	1489	1482	1475
	1516	1509	1502	1495	1488	1481	1474
	1515	1508	1501	1494	1487	1480	1473
	1514	1507	1500	1493	1486	1479	1472
	1513	1506	1499	1492	1485	1478	1471
36							1471

6 And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth. (Genesis 7:6)

Having now summed up the years in Genesis and arriving at 1,656 years for The Flood, some people then jump to the passage in Genesis below and conclude that Shem was born when Noah was 500 years old.

32 And Noah was five-hundred years old. And Noah fathered Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Genesis 5:32)

Is this correct? Let's read on in Genesis to find out. What most people neglect or do not consider is what we are told in Genesis 11:

*10 These are the generations of Shem. Shem was a hundred years old and fathered Arpachshad two years after the flood. (Genesis 11:10)*

This verse in Genesis 11 is important because it states that Shem was 100 years old when Arpachshad was born and Arpachshad was born two years after The Flood. I have just done the math for you. If you have double-checked it, you now know The Flood took place 1,656 years after the creation of Adam (A.C.). You also should now know The Flood only lasted five months.

*1 And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle which were with him in the ark. And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. 2 Also the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and rain from heaven was restrained. 3 And the waters returned from off the earth continually. And after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters had gone down. 4 And in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat. 5 And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month. And the tops of the mountains were seen in the tenth month on the first day of the month. (Genesis 8:1-5)*

*13 And it happened in the six hundred and first year, at the beginning, on the first of the month, that the waters were dried up from off the earth. And Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked. And, behold, the face of the earth was dried! 14 And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry. (Genesis 8:13-14)*

What this means is that Shem was not born when Noah was 500 years old as we are told in general terms in Genesis 5:32, but more specifically, that Noah was 502 years old when Shem was born. Genesis 10:21 shows us Japheth was the elder. We now have 1,056 years to the birth of Noah. The following table is a continuation of the previous table.

Let me add this information here. Methuselah died when he was 969 years old. He was born in the year 687 A.C.

$$687 + 969 = 1656$$

This was the year of the Flood. The flood took place on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of 2<sup>nd</sup> month (Genesis 7:11). Why would Yehovah send such a devastating event which does not match any of the Holy Day events? It is *my theory* that Yehovah does match it according to His Holy Days.

We know Methuselah died in the year of the Flood. We do not know when. In my theory, he dies before Passover in the 1<sup>st</sup> month. Noah would have been obligated to bury him. There is a law Yehovah gave to Moses contained in Numbers:

*4 And Moses spoke to the sons of Israel to prepare the Passover. 5 And they prepared the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month between the evenings, in the wilderness of Sinai. According to all that Jehovah commanded Moses, so all the sons of Israel did. 6 And there were certain men who were defiled by the dead body of a man, so that they could not prepare the Passover on that day. And they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day. 7 And those men said to him, We are defiled by the dead body of a man. Why are we kept back that we may not offer an offering of Jehovah in its appointed time among the sons of Israel? 8 And Moses said to them, You wait, and I will hear what Jehovah will command about you. 9 And Jehovah spoke to Moses saying, 10 Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your generations shall be unclean because of a dead body, or in a journey afar off, he shall still keep the Passover to Jehovah. 11 They shall keep it the fourteenth day of the second month at evening, eating it with unleavened cakes and bitter herbs. 12 They shall leave none of it until the morning, nor break any bone of it. According to all the ordinances of the Passover they shall keep it. (Numbers 9:4-12)*

If Noah did bury his grandfather just before Passover, he had a very strict method described by Yehovah that he was to go through to become clean. Even if he did not touch the body but was in the same tent as the dead body, he was unclean and was to be cleansed using the ashes of the Red Heifer.



*11 He who touches the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days. 12 He shall purify himself with it on the third day, and on the seventh day he shall be clean. But if he does not purify himself the third day, then the seventh day he shall not be clean. 13 Whoever touches the dead body of any man that is dead, and does not purify himself, defiles the tabernacle of Jehovah. And that soul shall be cut off from Israel. Because the water of separation was not sprinkled upon him, he shall be unclean. His uncleanness is still upon him. 14 This is the law when a man dies in a tent. All that come into the tent, and all in the tent, shall be unclean seven days. 15 And every open vessel which has no covering bound upon it, it is unclean. 16 And whoever touches one that is killed with a sword in the open fields, or a dead body, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days. 17 And for the unclean they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of cleansing for sin, and running water shall be put to it in a vessel. 18 And a clean person shall take hyssop and dip in the water, and sprinkle upon the tent and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one killed, or one dead, or a grave. 19 And the clean person shall sprinkle on the unclean on the third day, and on the seventh day. And on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water. And he shall be clean at evening. 20 But the man that shall be unclean, and shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from among the congregation, because he has defiled the sanctuary of Jehovah. The water of separation has not been sprinkled upon him. He is unclean. 21 And it shall be a perpetual law to them, that he who sprinkles the water of separation shall wash his clothes. And he that touches the water of separation shall be unclean until evening. 22 And whatever the unclean touches shall be unclean. And the soul who touches shall be unclean until evening.* (Numbers 19:11-22)

Again, this is my theory and can't be proven, but we do know Yehovah does not change nor have His laws changed, but I digress.

Go back to the chart with Noah's flood on it. You will see that Ham and Japheth are marked down as being born when Noah was 500. This was the year 1556 A.C., marked in yellow on the previous chart.

Shem was born when Noah was 502, which is the year 1558 A.C., again marked in yellow on the previous chart. This was the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 6<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle in the 32<sup>nd</sup> Jubilee cycle.

As noted previously, Arpachshad was born two years after the flood which is the year 1658 A.C. Arpachshad then fathered Salah when he was 35.

$$1658 + 35 = 1693$$

*12 And Arpachshad lived thirty-five years and fathered Salah. (Genesis 11:12)*

On the previous chart we have Salah born in the year 1693, which is coloured in yellow. It is in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle in the 35<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

Then Salah fathered Eber when he was 30 years old.

$$1693 + 30 = 1723$$

*14 And Salah lived thirty years and fathered Eber. (Genesis 11:14)*

The Chronology From Adam until Israel Crosses the Jordan		
Patriarches	Age of Patriarchs at birth	The Year From the Creation of Adam up to that Time in Total
Noah	502 Years	1,056 + 502 = 1,558
Shem	100 Years	1658
Arpachshad	35 Years	1693
Salah	30 Years	1723
Eber	34 Years	1757
Peleg	30 Years	1787
Ram	32 Years	1819
Serug	30 Years	1849
Nahor	29 Years	1878
Terah	70 Years	1948

I have shaded in the year 1723 in yellow for you on the chart on the next page.

Eber then fathers Peleg when he was 34 years old. We have marked 1757 in yellow. It was the 6<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year in the 36<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

$$1723 + 34 = 1757$$

*16 And Eber lived thirty-four years and fathered Peleg. (Genesis 11:16)*

36								1861
Millennial Key Epoch	Sabbath	1st Cycle	2nd Cycle	3rd Cycle	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle
	1860	1863	1866	1869	1872	1875	1878	
	1869	1872	1875	1878	1881	1884	1887	
	1878	1881	1884	1887	1890	1893	1896	
	1887	1890	1893	1896	1899	1902	1905	
	1896	1899	1902	1905	1908	1911	1914	
	1905	1908	1911	1914	1917	1920	1923	
37								1812
	Sabbath	1st Cycle	2nd Cycle	3rd Cycle	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle
	1811	1814	1817	1820	1823	1826	1829	
	1810	1813	1816	1819	1822	1825	1828	
	1809	1812	1815	1818	1821	1824	1827	
	1808	1811	1814	1817	1820	1823	1826	
	1807	1810	1813	1816	1819	1822	1825	
	1806	1809	1812	1815	1818	1821	1824	
38								1863
	Sabbath	1st Cycle	2nd Cycle	3rd Cycle	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle
	1862	1865	1868	1871	1874	1877	1880	
	1861	1864	1867	1870	1873	1876	1879	
	1860	1863	1866	1869	1872	1875	1878	
	1859	1862	1865	1868	1871	1874	1877	
	1858	1861	1864	1867	1870	1873	1876	
	1857	1860	1863	1866	1869	1872	1875	
39								1814
	Sabbath	1st Cycle	2nd Cycle	3rd Cycle	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle
	1813	1816	1819	1822	1825	1828	1831	
	1812	1815	1818	1821	1824	1827	1830	
	1811	1814	1817	1820	1823	1826	1829	
	1810	1813	1816	1819	1822	1825	1828	
	1809	1812	1815	1818	1821	1824	1827	
	1808	1811	1814	1817	1820	1823	1826	
40								1765
	Sabbath	1st Cycle	2nd Cycle	3rd Cycle	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle
	1764	1767	1770	1773	1776	1779	1782	
	1763	1766	1769	1772	1775	1778	1781	
	1762	1765	1768	1771	1774	1777	1780	
	1761	1764	1767	1770	1773	1776	1779	
	1760	1763	1766	1769	1772	1775	1778	
	1759	1762	1765	1768	1771	1774	1777	
41								1716

Peleg then fathers Reu when he was 30 years old. We have marked 1787 in yellow on the chart above. It was the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle in the 37<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

$$1757 + 30 = 1787$$

*18 And Peleg lived thirty years and fathered Reu. (Genesis 11:18)*

Reu then fathers Serug when he was 32 years old. We have marked 1819 in yellow on the chart above. It was the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the 1<sup>st</sup> Sabbatical cycle in the 38<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.



$$1787 + 32 = 1819$$

*20 And Reu lived thirty-two years and fathered Serug. (Genesis 11:20)*

Serug then fathers Nahor when he was 30 years old. We have marked 1849 in yellow on the previous page. It was the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 6<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle in the 38<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

$$1819 + 30 = 1849$$

*22 And Serug lived thirty years and fathered Nahor. (Genesis 11:22)*

Nahor then gives birth to Terah when he was 29 years old. We have marked 1878 in yellow on the previous page. It was the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sabbatical cycle in the 39<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

$$1849 + 29 = 1878$$

*24 And Nahor lived twenty-nine years and fathered Terah. (Genesis 11:24)*

Terah then gives birth to Abram when he was 70 years old. We have marked 1948 in yellow on the previous page. It was the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the 6<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle in the 40<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

$$1878 + 70 = 1948$$

*26 And Terah lived seventy years and fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran. (Genesis 11:26)*

Everyone, or almost everyone, is able to come to the same conclusion as we have just proven, with Abram's birth year being 1948 years from the creation of Adam. We have now plotted them out for you using 49-year Jubilee cycles to count by. Abram is born near the end of the 40<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle. The year 1960 A.C. is the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennial day since the creation of Adam. The Jubilee year of 1961 A.C. is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennial day.

## **The Year Yehovah Makes a Covenant with Abraham**

There is a dispute as to whether Abram was born when Terah was 70 or 130. We explain all of this in our book *Remembering the*

***Sabbatical Year of 2016.***<sup>87</sup> I am not going to muddy the waters by rehashing it here, but if you want to check out our research on this, then please go to that book.

Our next clue is a difficult one to figure out and the mystery it holds will take some doing to unravel.

In Genesis 12:4, we are told that Abram was 75 when he left Haran. This is marked in yellow in the following chart (2023 A.C.). It was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sabbatical year in the 42<sup>nd</sup> Jubilee cycle.

We then read about the events after this date in Genesis 13, where Abram goes down to Egypt and Sarah was taken to be the wife of Pharaoh. Then they left Egypt, and the sheep grew and multiplied. Abram and Lot had to part ways because there was not enough room for the both of them. All of this transpired over the course of a number of years.

In Genesis 14, we read how Lot was taken prisoner and how Abram then went and rescued Lot out of captivity. This event developed over a period of one year and then came to a close with Abram's appointment with Melchizedek, the King of Salem.

In chapter 15, we read of the covenant Yehovah made with Abram.

Next, we read about Abram going into Hagar in Genesis 16, and how Hagar conceives and gives birth to Ishmael.

In Genesis 17, we read about Abram turning 99, Yehovah changing his name from Abram to Abraham, and also Ishmael turning 13 and how they both were to be circumcised. We have marked Abraham's 99<sup>th</sup> year in purple on the following chart; it is the year 2047 A.C., the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the 6<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle in the 42<sup>nd</sup> Jubilee cycle.

*I And when Abram was ninety-nine years old, Jehovah appeared to Abram and said to him, I am the Almighty God! Walk before Me and be perfect. (Genesis 17:1)*

*5 Neither shall your name any more be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham. For I have made you a father of many nations. (Genesis 17:5)*

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<sup>87</sup> Remembering the Sabbatical Year of 2016 by Joseph F Dumond  
<https://sightedmoon.com/2016-sabbatical-year-lp/>

24 And Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 25 And his son Ishmael was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. (Genesis 17:24-25)

44							2137
	Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	2136	2140	2142	2139	2129	2121	2114
	2135	2138	2141	2134	2127	2120	2113
	2134	2147	2146	2133	2126	2119	2112
	2133	2146	2139	2132	2125	2118	2111
	2132	2145	2138	2131	2124	2117	2110
	2131	2144	2137	2130	2123	2116	2109
	2130	2143	2136	2129	2122	2115	2108
43							2108
	Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	2107	2100	2093	2086	2079	2072	2065
	2106	2099	2092	2085	2078	2071	2064
	2105	2098	2091	2084	2077	2070	2063
	2104	2097	2090	2083	2076	2069	2062
	2103	2096	2089	2082	2075	2068	2061
	2102	2095	2088	2081	2074	2067	2060
	2101	2094	2087	2080	2073	2066	2059
42							2059
	Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	2058	2051	2044	2037	2030	2023	2016
	2057	2050	2043	2036	2029	2022	2015
	2056	2049	2042	2035	2028	2021	2014
	2055	2048	2041	2034	2027	2020	2013
	2054	2047	2040	2033	2026	2019	2012
	2053	2046	2039	2032	2025	2018	2011
	2052	2045	2038	2031	2024	2017	2010
41							2010
	Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	2009	2002	1995	1988	1981	1974	1967
	2008	2001	1994	1987	1980	1973	1966
	2007	2000	1993	1986	1979	1972	1965
	2006	1999	1992	1985	1978	1971	1964
	2005	1998	1991	1984	1977	1970	1963
	2004	1997	1990	1983	1976	1969	1962
	2003	1996	1989	1982	1975	1968	1961
40							1961

Based on these Biblical accounts, we can correctly conclude the birth of Ishmael 13 years before, when Abraham was 86. The year before the birth of Ishmael, when he went into Hagar, he was 85, allowing for the nine months of Hagar being pregnant.

Abraham at 99 – 13 years for the birth of Ishmael – 1 year for Hagar's pregnancy = 85. This is the year 2033 A.C., marked in green on the chart.

We now have two fixed ages for Abraham. We now know that somewhere between age 75 (2023 A.C.) and age 85 (2033 A.C.),

Yehovah made a covenant with Abraham. Within the construct of that 10-year span, we have our next set of clues to work with.

We are also given another clue in Genesis 15. The descendants of Abraham will be mistreated 400 years in a country not their own:

*13 And He said to Abram, You must surely know that your seed shall be a stranger in a land not theirs, and shall serve them. And they shall afflict them four hundred years. (Genesis 15:13)*

When does this 400-year prophetic count begin? Isaac was the first of his promised descendants and he was born when Abraham was 100 years old. This was 2,048 years after creation (A.C.). We have this marked in green as the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 6<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle in the 42<sup>nd</sup> Jubilee cycle. But Isaac did not become a man until his bar mitzvah at the age of 10. When Isaac was 10 in the year 2058 A.C., it was the 30<sup>th</sup> year since Yehovah made the Covenant with Abraham.

*8 And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned. 9 And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. (Genesis 21:8-9)*

Whether you agree with my belief that Isaac was 10 or not when the 400-year count begins does not matter. We do not need to use this information for our count. The 430 years from Yehovah forging a covenant with Abraham ends at the same time the 400 years of affliction on Abraham's descendants ends—in the year of the Exodus.

*39 And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought out of Egypt, for it was not leavened, because they were thrust out of Egypt and could not stay, neither had they prepared any food for a journey for themselves. 40 And the time that the sons of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. 41 And it happened at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even it was on this very day, all the armies of Jehovah went out from the land of Egypt.<sup>88</sup> 42 It is a night to be much kept to Jehovah for bringing them out from the land of Egypt. This is that night of Jehovah to be*

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<sup>88</sup> 18 In the same day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, I have given this land to your seed, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, (Genesis 15:18)

*kept by all the sons of Israel in their generations. (Exodus 12:39-42)*

*15 Brothers, I speak according to man, a covenant having been ratified, even among mankind, no one sets aside or adds to it. 16 And to Abraham and to his Seed the promises were spoken. It does not say, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, "And to your Seed," which is Christ. 17 And I say this, A covenant having been ratified by God in Christ, the Law (coming into being four hundred and thirty years after) does not annul the promise, so as to abolish it.<sup>89</sup> (Galatians 3:15-17)*

To determine the year the covenant was made, we must try each of the 10-year intervals between the time Abraham was 75 up to the time when we know he went into Hagar when he was 85.

Remember why we are doing all of this chronology. Leviticus 25:2 says that the year they entered the Promised Land it would be a Jubilee year. Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi and I both agree on this point. To determine if this is true, we must add up all the years until the Israelites cross the Jordan River.

This then means we will have multiple lists to check. So let me do all the work for you here below so you can check and see which one works. The variable in each equation is the age of Abraham, which we have italicized for you.

#### List I

- 1948 to Abram's birth
- 75: *Abram's age when the Covenant is made*
- 430 years to the Exodus
- 2,453 years total

#### List II

- 1948 to Abram's birth
- 76: *Abram's age when the Covenant is made*
- 430 years to the Exodus
- 2,454 years total

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<sup>89</sup> 7 And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your seed after you in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to you and to your seed after you. (Genesis 17:7)

### List III

- 1948 to Abram's birth
- *77: Abram's age when the Covenant is made*
- 430 years to the Exodus
- 2,455 years total

### List IV

- 1948 to Abram's birth
- *78: Abram's age when the Covenant is made*
- 430 years to the Exodus
- 2,456 years total

### List V

- 1948 to Abram's birth
- *79: Abram's age when the Covenant is made*
- 430 years to the Exodus
- 2,457 years total

### List VI

- **1948 to Abram's birth**
- ***80: Abram's age when the Covenant is made***
- **430 years to the Exodus**
- **2,458 years total**

### List VII

- 1948 to Abram's birth
- *81: Abram's age when the Covenant is made*
- 430 years to the Exodus
- 2,459 years total

### List VIII

- 1948 to Abram's birth
- *82: Abram's age when the Covenant is made*
- 430 years to the Exodus
- 2,460 years total

### List IX

- 1948 to Abram's birth
- *83: Abram's age when the Covenant is made*
- 430 years to the Exodus
- 2,461 years total

#### List X

- 1948 to Abram's birth
- 84: *Abram's age when the Covenant is made*
- 430 years to the Exodus
- 2,462 years total

#### List XI

- 1948 to Abram's birth
- 85: *Abram's age when the Covenant is made*
- 430 years to the Exodus
- 2,463 years total

### **Determining the Year of the Exodus**

The preceding list has all the possible years using Terah being 70. To use the birth date of Terah being 130 as some claim (we did not include this discussion here as we have proven it false in our book ***Remembering the Sabbatical Year of 2016***), all you have to do is tack on 60 more years to any of the totals you wish to investigate further.

You now have the age of Abram when the Covenant with Yehovah was made using the age of Terah being 70 years old when Abram was born. This now provides you with all 10 potential years as to when the Covenant was made. You then add on the 430 years to arrive at the year of the Exodus. I will come back to the 400 years with you in a moment, but for now, let me finish this line of thinking with you before you get too confused.

Most people will now just tack on the 40 years the Israelites wandered in the wilderness to arrive at the year they entered the Promised Land. But far too many people fail to factor in the following verse:

*11 And on the twentieth of the second month, in the second year, the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle of the testimony. 12 And the sons of Israel pulled up stakes in their journeyings out of the wilderness of Sinai. And the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran. 13 And at the mouth of Jehovah they first pulled up stakes, by the hand of Moses. (Numbers 10:11-13)*

It was the second year after the Exodus in 2459 A.C., that the Israelites left Mount Sinai for the very first time. And then, in the fifth month on the ninth day of that month, Israel rebelled against Yehovah

and would not be allowed entry into the Promised Land. It would be from the first of the next year, at Aviv, that the 40-year curse in Numbers 14:33 would begin:

*32 But as for you, your bodies shall fall in this wilderness. 33 And your sons shall feed in the wilderness forty years and bear your fornications, until your dead bodies have wasted in the wilderness. 34 According to the number of the days in which you searched the land, forty days, each day for a year you shall bear your iniquities, forty years; and you shall know My alienation. 35 I Jehovah have spoken; I will surely do it to all this evil congregation who are gathered together against Me. They shall be destroyed in this wilderness, and there they shall die. (Numbers 14:32-35)*

We now must attach two years plus another 40 years on to each of the lists on the previous page to see where we end up—keeping in mind, as always, that we must end up at a Jubilee year. Of all the lists I previously presented you with, List VI is the only one that adds up to a Jubilee year when you add the two years the Israelites were at Mount Sinai and the 40 years they wandered in the wilderness.

#### List VI

- 1948 to Abram's birth
- 80: Abram's age when the Covenant is made
- 430 years to the Exodus
- 2,458 years total
  
- 2 years at Mount Sinai
- 40 years in the Wilderness
- 2500 Years total

You can now begin to count 430 years from the year 2028 A.C., marked in red, when Abraham was 80 two previous charts back. The coloured squares on this previous chart are not relevant for this discussion. But you can continue to count from the preceding chart to this next one adding the 430 years, plus the 2 years, plus the 40 years, to arrive at the year 2500 A.C.



46								2393
	Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle	
	2392	2399	2408	2417	2426	2435	2444	
	2393	2394	2397	2398	2403	2406	2409	
	2396	2393	2396	2399	2402	2405	2408	
	2399	2392	2395	2398	2401	2404	2407	
	2402	2391	2394	2397	2400	2403	2406	
	2405	2390	2393	2396	2399	2402	2405	
47								2394
	Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle	
	2393	2396	2405	2414	2423	2432	2441	
	2392	2395	2398	2401	2404	2407	2410	
	2395	2394	2397	2396	2401	2404	2407	
	2398	2393	2396	2399	2402	2405	2408	
	2399	2392	2395	2398	2401	2404	2407	
	2408	2391	2394	2397	2400	2403	2406	
2407	2390	2393	2396	2399	2402	2405		
48								2395
	Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle	
	2394	2397	2406	2415	2424	2433	2442	
	2393	2396	2399	2402	2405	2408	2411	
	2396	2393	2396	2399	2402	2405	2408	
	2399	2392	2395	2398	2401	2404	2407	
	2402	2391	2394	2397	2400	2403	2406	
	2405	2390	2393	2396	2399	2402	2405	
49								2396
	Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle	
	2395	2398	2407	2416	2425	2434	2443	
	2394	2397	2400	2403	2406	2409	2412	
	2397	2394	2397	2400	2403	2406	2409	
	2400	2393	2396	2399	2402	2405	2408	
	2403	2392	2395	2398	2401	2404	2407	
	2406	2391	2394	2397	2400	2403	2406	
50								2397
	Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle	
	2396	2399	2408	2417	2426	2435	2444	
	2395	2398	2401	2404	2407	2410	2413	
	2398	2395	2398	2401	2404	2407	2410	
	2401	2394	2397	2400	2403	2406	2409	
	2404	2393	2396	2399	2402	2405	2408	
	2407	2392	2395	2398	2401	2404	2407	
51								2398
	Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle	
	2397	2400	2409	2418	2427	2436	2445	
	2396	2399	2402	2405	2408	2411	2414	
	2399	2396	2399	2402	2405	2408	2411	
	2402	2395	2398	2401	2404	2407	2410	
	2405	2394	2397	2400	2403	2406	2409	
	2408	2393	2396	2399	2402	2405	2408	
52								2399
	Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle	
	2398	2401	2410	2419	2428	2437	2446	
	2397	2400	2403	2406	2409	2412	2415	
	2400	2397	2396	2401	2404	2407	2410	
	2403	2394	2397	2400	2403	2406	2409	
	2406	2393	2396	2399	2402	2405	2408	
	2409	2392	2395	2398	2401	2404	2407	

The 430 years brings you to the year 2458 A.C., which is marked in red, and is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sabbatical cycle in the 51<sup>st</sup> Jubilee cycle.

They left Mount Sinai two years after the Exodus, which is the year 2459. I have marked in yellow the start of the 40-year curse, 2460 A.C., on the previous chart.

They wandered in the wilderness for 40 years until they entered the Promised Land under Joshua in the year 2500 A.C., marked in both purple and yellow. It was the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the start of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Jubilee cycle.

93							2390
	Subsum	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	2397	2398	2399	2376	2369	2362	2355
	2396	2399	2382	2375	2368	2361	2354
	2395	2388	2381	2374	2367	2360	2353
	2394	2387	2380	2373	2366	2359	2352
	2393	2386	2379	2372	2365	2358	2351
	2392	2385	2378	2371	2364	2357	2350
	2391	2384	2377	2370	2363	2356	2349
92							2349
	Subsum	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	2348	2341	2334	2327	2320	2313	2306
	2347	2340	2333	2326	2319	2312	2305
	2346	2339	2332	2325	2318	2311	2304
	2345	2338	2331	2324	2317	2310	2303
	2344	2337	2330	2323	2316	2309	2302
	2343	2336	2329	2322	2315	2308	2301
	2342	2335	2328	2321	2314	2307	2300
91							2300
	Subsum	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	2299	2292	2285	2278	2271	2264	2257
	2298	2291	2284	2277	2270	2263	2256
	2297	2290	2283	2276	2269	2262	2255
	2296	2289	2282	2275	2268	2261	2254
	2295	2288	2281	2274	2267	2260	2253
	2294	2287	2280	2273	2266	2259	2252
	2293	2286	2279	2272	2265	2258	2251
90							2251
	Subsum	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	2250	2243	2236	2229	2222	2215	2208
	2249	2242	2235	2228	2221	2214	2207
	2248	2241	2234	2227	2220	2213	2206
	2247	2240	2233	2226	2219	2212	2205
	2246	2239	2232	2225	2218	2211	2204
	2245	2238	2231	2224	2217	2210	2203
	2244	2237	2230	2223	2216	2209	2202
49							2202
	Subsum	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle
	2201	2194	2187	2180	2173	2166	2159
	2200	2193	2186	2179	2172	2165	2158
	2199	2192	2185	2178	2171	2164	2157
	2198	2191	2184	2177	2170	2163	2156
	2197	2190	2183	2176	2169	2162	2155
	2196	2189	2182	2175	2168	2161	2154
	2195	2188	2181	2174	2167	2160	2153
48							2153

## Problems

Having completed all of this we are left with one problem. We can count 51 Jubilee cycles by 49 and end up in the year 2499 A.C., with the 50<sup>th</sup> year being 2500 A.C., while others will argue that counting 50 Jubilee cycles by 50 will also end up in the year 2500 A.C.

I agree this does not prove which way we are to count the Jubilee cycles, but we have proven the year Joshua entered the Promised Land was 2500 years After Creation (A.C.).

Another problem we have is that we do not know, with just this information how this year 2500 A.C. is related to our Gregorian chronology. I have titled this *Chapter 1 | Jubilee Year 1337 B.C.* How did I figure that out? I will explain this as we continue to examine each Sabbatical and Jubilee year going forward.

## 120 Shanah

In Genesis 6, Yehovah gives us directions about how to figure out how this chronology of Genesis can fit into our modern Gregorian chronology. Basically, it is a simple mathematical formula, which we have been employing already, in our adding up of years to learn when the next date in the chronology is:

$$A + B = C$$

We have just proven the first 2500 years were until they entered the Promised Land under Joshua. This is our “A,” so we can insert this into our equation. “B” is the all the time remaining, and “C” is the total amount of time Yehovah has given us:

$$2500 + B = C$$

Most Christians will say without thinking that we have 6000 years and then the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium will begin. They get this from three places of understanding. The first is Hebrews:

*14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, 15 while it is said, "Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation." 16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke; however, not all who came out of Egypt by Moses. 17 But with whom was He grieved forty years? Was it not with those who had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did He swear that they should not enter into His rest, but to those who did not believe? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. (Hebrews 3:14-19)*

*1 Therefore, a promise being left to enter into His rest, let us fear lest any of you should seem to come short of it. 2 For also we have had the gospel preached, as well as them. But the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in*

those who heard it. 3 For we who have believed do enter into the rest, as He said, "I have sworn in My wrath that they should not enter into My rest;" although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. 4 For He spoke in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested the seventh day from all His works." 5 And in this place again, "They shall not enter into My rest." 6 Since then it remains that some must enter into it, and since they to whom it was first preached did not enter in because of unbelief,<sup>90</sup> 7 He again marks out a certain day, saying in David, "Today," (after so long a time). Even as it is said, "Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." 8 For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. 9 So then there remains a rest to the people of God. 10 For he who has entered into his rest, he also has ceased from his own works, as God did from His. 11 Therefore let us labor to enter into that rest, lest anyone fall after the same example of unbelief. 12 For the Word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing apart of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight, but all things are naked and opened to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. (Hebrews 4:1-13)

They understand the millennial week to be seven days and just like our regular week, the 7<sup>th</sup> day Sabbath is represented by the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium. Although they recognise this, they still will not keep the Saturday Sabbath. They are uncompliant, rebellious and disobedient as the word "unbelief" means when you look it up.

The second set of scriptures they use in this understanding comes from 2 Peter:

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<sup>90</sup> And this "unbelief" is rebellious disobedience:

G543 (Mounce) ἀπειθεια *apeitheia*

7x: an uncompliant disposition; obstinacy, disobedience, unbelief, Rom 11:30; Rom 11:32; Eph 2:2; Eph 5:6; Heb 4:6; Heb 4:11; Col 3:6.

G543 (Strong) ἀπειθεια *apeitheia* ap-i'-thi-ah

From G545: disbelief (obstinate and rebellious): - disobedience, unbelief.

G543 (Thayer) ἀπειθεια *apeitheia*

Thayer Definition:

1) obstinacy, obstinate opposition to the divine will

*8 But, beloved, let not this one thing be hidden from you, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. (2 Peter 3:8)*

The word “as,” or the other English word used “like,” is translated from the Greek word “hos” meaning an approximation of time.

*4.<sup>91</sup> hos (ὥς, 5613) usually means “as.” Used with numerals it signifies “about,” (e.g., Mark 5:13, 8:9; John 1:40, 6:19, 11:18; Acts 1:15; Revelation 8:1).*

*5. hosei (ὥσει, 5616), “as if,” before numerals, denotes “about, nearly, something like,” with perhaps an indication of greater indefiniteness than No. 4*

If we look at all the other passages where this word was used with numerals, it was translated as “about.”

*13 And immediately Jesus allowed them. And the unclean spirits went out and entered into the pigs. And the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea (they were about (hos) two thousand), and were choked in the sea. (Mark 5:13)*

*9 And they who had eaten were about (hos) four thousand. And He sent them away. (Mark 8:9)*

*19 Then having rowed about (hos) twenty-five or thirty furlongs, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the ship. And they were afraid. (John 6:19)*

*18 And Bethany was near Jerusalem, (hos) fifteen stadia away. (John 11:18)*

This Greek word *hos* is an approximation.

They then combine these two sets of scriptures with the third one in Genesis:

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<sup>91</sup> Remembering the Sabbatical Year of 2016, by Joseph F Dumond Chapter 20. <https://www.setapartpeople.com/day-thousand-years-prophetic-significance-2>  
Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W. (1996). Vol. 2: Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (4). Nashville, TN: T. Nelson.

*3 And Jehovah said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, in his erring; he is flesh. Yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years. (Genesis 6:3)*

They have assumed that there are 20 Jubilee cycles of 50 years in length in one millennial day. Using Genesis 6:3, they then multiply 50 Jubilee cycles by 120 to get 6000 years. Voilà, eazy peazy.

$$120 \times 50 = 6000$$

But is it correct and again how are we going to prove it? We have already done all the investigating for you. I am stating the proper formula is:

$$120 \times 49 = 5880$$

In Genesis 6:3, the English word translated *years* also means a *revolution of time*. Yehovah is giving mankind 120 revolutions of time to learn how to obey Him—120 Jubilee cycles.

*H8141 (Strong) שָׁנָה שָׁנָה shāneh shānāh shaw-neh', shaw-naw' (The first form being in plural only, the second form being feminine); from H8138; a year (as **a revolution of time**): - whole age, X long, + old, year (X -ly).*

We now have two mathematical formulas to work through: one that deals with  $120 \times 49 = 5880$  and the other  $120 \times 50 = 6000$ . Initially we said  $2500 + B = C$ . Now we know that “C” must equal either 5880 or 6000:

$$2500 + B = 5880$$

or

$$2500 + B = 6000$$

## **Another Problem is 1 Kings 6:1**

Once most chronologers get to the Exodus date by doing the math in Genesis and Exodus, the next date they want to include into their calculations is 1 Kings 6 and they immediately walk into a trap of which they have no understanding about.

*1 And it happened in the four hundred and eightieth year after the sons of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, he began to build the house of Jehovah. (1 Kings 6:1)*

It is only after you have added up all the years in history correctly that you will be able to declare what year we are in since the creation of Adam. I have already summed up the years for you in this book from Adam to the Exodus and on into the entrance of the Israelites into the Promised Land. The time frame spanning from Adam up to the Exodus and from Adam up to the entrance of the Israelites entering into the Promised Land is 2,458 years and 2,500 years, respectively.

So from the year 2458 after creation (A.C.) when the Exodus took place, until the fourth year of Solomon, was 480 years according to 1 Kings 6:1. You now count the 4th year from the year 970 B.C., when Solomon began his reign, and you can then accurately conclude King Solomon's 4th year after he came to the throne was in 967 B.C. Now, all you need to do is simple addition to know where we are in the history of the world.

$2458 + 480 + 967 + 2024 \text{ (current year)} = 5,929 \text{ Grand Total}$

Now many will look at this and exclaim we have just 71 more years to go until the year 6000, which is the start of the 7th millennium. But they would be wrong.

The Jewish calendar claims this year of 2024 is the year 5784/5785, with it changing to 5785 in the fall after Yom Teruah. If we go by their calendar, we have 215 years until the year 6000.

Respected Bishop James Ussher published in the 1650's his chronology of history, which was widely accepted by the Western world until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He claimed the world and Adam were created in 4004 B.C.E. It is now 2024 and if we add this up, then according to his chronology we are in the year 6028 since creation, or in other words, we are right now in the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium.

I have already shown you how Julius Africanus and the early church fathers thought we were about to begin the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium in 500 C.E. using the Septuagint, but they were wrong.

There are still others who take Solomon's 4<sup>th</sup> year of 1 Kings 6:1, as 967 B.C., and add 480 to that to get the Exodus at 1447 B.C. Others speculate the Exodus was 1250 B.C.

Once again, we have entered into the cesspool or swamp of chronological errors which will boggle the mind. Bear with me as we must look at yet more confusion.

In the beginning of this book, I explained to you how there were many versions of what is today called the Masoretic Text (MT), and



they all did not read the same. Keep this in mind as you now read Adam Clarke's commentary on 1 Kings 6:1:

*In the four hundred and eightieth year - The Septuagint has the four hundred and fortieth year. It need scarcely be noticed, that among chronologists there is a great difference of opinion concerning this epocha. Glycas has 330 years; Melchior Canus, 590 years; Josephus, 592 years; Sulpicius Severus, 588; Clemens Alexandrinus, 570; Cedrenus, 672; Codomanus, 598; Vossius and Capellus, 580; Serarius, 680; Nicholas Abraham, 527; Maestlinus, 592; Petavius and Valtherus, 520. There are more than a dozen different opinions; and after all, that in the common Hebrew text is as likely to be the true one as any of the others.*

Adam Clarke is telling us that no one knows, and any one of the 14 views could be right when compared to the others. He just does not know and neither do we.

Given the fact I am calling into question a scriptural passage in the Bible that many people will be up in arms over me having done so, allow me to explain. Far too many have a tendency to quote the famous and all too liberally applied Scripture in 2 Timothy:

*16 All Scripture is God-breathed, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be perfected, thoroughly furnished to every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)*

But again, you would do well to be reminded of Clarke's Commentary on this verse:

*II Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God—This sentence is not well translated; the original *πασα γραφη θεοκνευστος ωφελιμος προς διδασκαλιαν, κ. τ. λ.* should be rendered: Every writing Divinely inspired is profitable for doctrine, etc. The particle *και*, and, is omitted by almost all the versions and many of the fathers, and certainly does not agree well with the text. The apostle is here, beyond all controversy, speaking of the writings of the Old Testament, which, because they came by Divine inspiration, he terms the Holy Scriptures, II Timothy 3:15; and it is of them alone that this passage is to be understood; and although all the New Testament came by as direct an inspiration as the Old (Testament),*



*yet, as it was not collected at that time, not indeed complete, the apostle could have no reference to it.*

Even Yehshua tells us precisely which Scriptures these are in the Gospel of Luke. They are the Torah (the first five books), the Prophets, and the Psalms. They are not—and were not—what is today called the New Testament, nor does this include the historical books of 1 and 2 Kings or 1 and 2 Chronicles.

*44 And He said to them, These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms about Me. 45 And He opened their mind to understand the Scriptures. (Luke 24:44-45)*

Knowing this, we can then look at both books of Kings simply as historical documents, of which all renowned chronologists agree there are some existing contextual errors regarding chronology. Another error is found in 2 Kings 17 and 18. That being said, let us now reconsider how we look at the 480-year block of time that is in question. We have just one witness, or one version amongst 14, that could have been chosen. There is no other verse in the Bible to support this particular verse.

So, leave the 480 as unknown because like Adam Clarke, we just don't know. In our mathematical equation, we have the year of the Exodus being 2458 from the Creation of Adam. Then there are the 480 years from the Exodus to the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Solomon, which we are now going to leave as X. We have the 967 years from Solomon's 4<sup>th</sup> year to the year zero on the Gregorian calendar. There is no year zero, as it goes from -1 B.C. to 1 C.E., and finally we have our current year as 2024 at the time of this writing.

$2458 + 480 + 967 - 1 + 2024$  (current year) = 5,928 Grand Total

But we are now going to leave 480 as "X", which now makes our Grand Total "Y" because we do not know "X".

$2458 + X + 966 - 1 + 2024$  (current year) = Y Grand Total

We had previously stated we are working with one of two equations. So "Y" is going to be either 5880 or 6000, which we have yet to prove:

$$2500 + B = 5880$$

or

$$2500 + B = 6000$$

And right now, at this point we cannot prove which one is correct. The only way we can solve this equation is when we have another Jubilee year that we can positively identify in the Gregorian calendar. Once we do that, then we can match it with the year 2500 which we have now proven is a Jubilee year.

## Chapter 2 | Sabbatical Year 701 B.C. & Jubilee Year 700 B.C.

I am now going to share with you the four other Jubilee years that are dated according to the Gregorian calendar.

I have an overwhelming need to organize things in order, and to list each year chronologically. My apologies for my personal obsessive-compulsive personality disorder (OCPD). Doing these four dates out of order bothers me, just so you know.

The first Jubilee cycle proof (1337 B.C./ 2500 A.C.) was listed as *Chapter 1 | Jubilee Year 1337 B.C.* because it is the oldest one we can identify at this point.

The second Jubilee year proof will be shown to you in *Chapter 2 | Sabbatical Year 701 B.C. & Jubilee Year 700 B.C.* This chapter proves there are two Sabbatical years back-to-back, identifying one as a Jubilee year.

In *Chapter 3 | 12 Contracts of Wadi Murabba'at & The Bar Kochba Revolt*, I will show you another Jubilee year during the Bar Kochba Revolt. These 12 individual contracts all point to our third Jubilee year proof. It is our third witness identifying how to count the Jubilee cycles.

Then in *Chapter 4 | 362—432 C.E Tombstone of Mehirshah, Daughter of Marsah—Jubilee—Earliest Hillel Calendar Use*, a fourth Jubilee year is shown to us from this tombstone of Zoar. I also have a fifth Jubilee recorded in the tombstones of Zoar but will let you read about it in the section titled *407—477 C.E. Unknown, Son/Daughter of Nikodemos—Jubilee Year—Hillel Calendar*, which is later in this book.

When all five of these Jubilee years, along with all 65 of the Sabbatical years are plotted out in an excel program as we have done, then there is only one way to count them.

By doing this in this order, I will then be able to show you how to connect the Jubilee year found in Leviticus 25:2 to these other four Jubilee years and thereby solve the mathematics equation we left undone in the last chapter. By doing it this way, I will show you how to prove which method you are to count by, whether 49 years per Jubilee cycle, with the 50<sup>th</sup> year being the first year in the next count (49, 50, 2, 3...), or by counting 50 years, with the first beginning after the 50<sup>th</sup> year (49, 50, 1, 2, 3...).

## Edwin R. Thiele

We must begin our research with respected chronologist Edwin R. Thiele, who wrote the book *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*.<sup>92</sup> The book was originally his doctoral dissertation and is widely regarded as the definitive work on the chronology of Hebrew kings. The book is considered the classic and comprehensive work in reckoning the accession of kings, calendars, and co-regencies, based on biblical and extra-biblical sources. Allow me to share what academia are saying about Thiele's work:

*This enabled him to date their reigns precisely, for Ahab is mentioned in the Kurk Stele which records the Assyrian advance into Syria/Israel at the Battle of Qarqar in 853 BC, and Jehu is mentioned on the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III paying tribute in 841 BC. As these two events are dated by Assyrian chronology as being 12 years apart, Ahab must have fought the Assyrians in his last year and Jehu paid tribute in his first year.*

*Thiele was able to reconcile the Biblical chronological data from the books of Kings and Chronicles with the exception of synchronisms between Hoshea of Israel and Hezekiah of Judah towards the end of the kingdom of Israel and reluctantly concluded that at that point the ancient authors had made a mistake. Oddly, it is at that precise point that he himself makes a mistake, by failing to realize that Hezekiah had a coregency with his father Ahaz, which explains the Hoshea/Hezekiah synchronisms. This correction has been supplied by subsequent writers who built on Thiele's work, including Thiele's colleague Siegfried Horn, T. C. Mitchell and Kenneth Kitchen, and Leslie McFall.*

*Thiele's chronological reconstruction has not been accepted by all scholars, nor has any other scholar's work in this field. Yet the work of Thiele and those who followed in his steps has achieved acceptance across a wider spectrum than that of any*

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<sup>92</sup> Edwin Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, (1st ed.; New York: Macmillan, 1951; 2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965; 3rd ed.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan/Kregel, 1983). [ISBN 0-8254-3825-X](https://www.amazon.com/Mysterious-Numbers-Hebrew-Kings/dp/082543825X), 9780825438257  
<http://www.amazon.com/Mysterious-Numbers-Hebrew-Kings/dp/082543825X> 7

*comparable chronology, so that Assyriologist DJ Wiseman wrote "The chronology most widely accepted today is one based on the meticulous study by Thiele," and, more recently, Leslie McFall: "Thiele's chronology is fast becoming the consensus view among Old Testament scholars, if it has not already reached that point." Although criticism has been leveled at numerous specific points in his chronology, his work has won considerable praise even from those who disagree with his final conclusions. Nevertheless, even scholars sharing Thiele's religious convictions have maintained that there are weaknesses in his argument such as unfounded assumptions and assumed circular reasoning.*

*In his desire to resolve the discrepancies between the data in the Book of Kings, Thiele was forced to make improbable suppositions... There is no basis for Thiele's statement that his conjectures are correct because he succeeded in reconciling most of the data in the Book of Kings, since his assumptions... are derived from the chronological data themselves..."*

*This citation, from a critic of Thiele's system, demonstrates the difference mentioned above between the deductive approach based on presuppositions and an inductive approach based on data, not a priori assumptions. Thiele is criticized here for basing his theories on data or evidence, not on presuppositions.*

*Despite these criticisms Thiele's methodological treatment remains the typical starting point of scholarly treatments of the subject, and his work is considered to have established the date of the division of the Israelite kingdom. This has found independent support in the work of J. Liver, Frank M. Cross, and others studying the chronology of the kings of Tyre. Thiele's work has found widespread recognition and use across various related scholarly disciplines. His date of 931 BCE, in conjunction with the synchronism between Rehoboam and Pharaoh Shishak in 1 Kings 14:25, is used by Egyptologists to give absolute dates to Egypt's 22nd Dynasty, and his work has also been used by scholars in other disciplines to establish Assyrian and Babylonian dates. Criticism of Thiele's reconstruction led to further research*

*which has refined or even departed from his synthesis. Notable studies of this type include work by Tadmor and McFall. Scholarly attitudes towards the Biblical record of the Israelite monarchies from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century were largely disparaging, treating the records as essentially fictional and dismissing the value of the regnal synchronisms. In contrast, modern scholarly attitudes to the monarchical chronology and synchronisms in 1 and 2 Kings has been far more positive subsequent to the work of Thiele and those who have developed his thesis further, a change in attitude to which recent archaeology has contributed.*<sup>93</sup>

Thiele states how there are only two dates in all of Hebrew chronology that can be confirmed by outside sources. Thiele published this in 1951.<sup>94</sup> Since then, Leslie McFall has published in 1983, a number of absolute dates by which you can place the Hebrew kings in chronology based upon Thiele's original work.

*The absolute dates the modern chronologist works with are:*

- (1) 853 bc, when the Battle of Qarqar was fought (possibly in July/August of that year (Thiele, 1983:95 n. 13)), which was the sixth year of Shalmaneser III—the year in which Ahab died;*
- (2) 841 bc, the eighteenth of Shalmaneser III when Jehu paid tribute to him at the commencement of his reign;*
- (3) 723 bc, the last year of Shalmaneser V and Hoshea when Samaria fell;*
- (4) 701 bc, the fourteenth year of Hezekiah when Sennacherib came against Judah (1983:122);*

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<sup>93</sup>[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Mysterious\\_Numbers\\_of\\_the\\_Hebrew\\_Kings](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Mysterious_Numbers_of_the_Hebrew_Kings)

<sup>94</sup> Thiele's chronology is accepted in several recent study Bibles, and is the chronology used for the Hebrew monarchs in the Cambridge Ancient History (T. C. Mitchell, "Israel and Judah until the Revolt of Jehu (931-841 B.C.)" CAH 3, Part 1, p. 445). Thiele's chronology with the slight modifications of Leslie McFall, ("A Translation Guide to the Chronological Data in Kings and Chronicles," Bibliotheca Sacra 148 [1991], pp. 3-45) is accepted in Jack Finegan's influential Handbook of Biblical Chronology, rev. ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998), p. 249. See also, in the notes below, the list of scholars who accept his date for the beginning of the divided kingdom.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Mysterious\\_Numbers\\_of\\_the\\_Hebrew\\_Kings#cite\\_note-2](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Mysterious_Numbers_of_the_Hebrew_Kings#cite_note-2)

(5) 2 Adar (15/16 March), 597 bc, when Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem and took Jehoiachin prisoner to Babylon (1983:173);  
(6) 9 Tammuz (18 July), 586 bc, the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar when Jerusalem fell (1983:189).<sup>95</sup>

*Without these external synchronisms it would have been impossible to reconcile the reigns and synchronisms of the MT, as a perusal of commentaries from the seventeenth and twentieth centuries would demonstrate. It was the existence of these fixed points that enabled scholars to work out the principles that lay behind the Hebrew system of synchronisms.*

*Thiele obtained his date of 931/30 bc for the division of the kingdom by calculating backwards from the six absolute dates given above (but especially no. 1).<sup>96</sup>*

Thiele explains to us why it is so important to connect a Hebrew king to an existing chronology that has been proven accurate:

*In the Old Testament, no absolute dates are given for the Hebrew kings and it becomes a true Berean's task to establish, an absolute date in the history of Israel that can be used as a starting place to establish other dates in the desired chronological scheme. One's only hope of doing this in the instances where there are existing historical gaps which cannot be accounted for, is to isolate an intersecting principal point of contact where Hebrew history correlates with certainty to the history of another nation whose chronology, for a given space and time, is more well-known.*

*In the early history of the Hebrew monarchies, the two most well documented examples of this were the Assyrians first and the Babylonians second. Fortunately for us, the chronologies of these two nations as they pertain to the time periods, we will be concerning ourselves with the most have been very thoroughly established.<sup>97</sup>*

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<sup>95</sup> A number of scholars date the fall of Jerusalem in 587 bc. Zedekiah's 11th and last year ran from Sept. 587 to Sept. 586 bc. Cf. H. Cazelles, '587 ou 586?', in C.L. Meyers and M. O'Connor (eds.), *The Word of the Lord shall go forth* (Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1983), pp. 427–435.

<sup>96</sup> Has the chronology of the Hebrew kings been finally settled?

By Leslie McFall <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/article/has-the-chronology-of-the-hebrew-kings-been-finally-settled/>

<sup>97</sup> *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, Edwin R. Thiele, p.67

One is the battle of Qarqar in 853 B.C., in which King Ahab died. This story is found in I Kings 22. The reason this date is important is because of who Ahab is fighting against. He and his regiment were fighting against Shalmaneser III of Assyria. This was the 6<sup>th</sup> year of Shalmaneser III—the year in which Ahab died.

## **The office of Eponym, or Limmu List**

*Assyrian chronology dating back to the beginning of the 9th century B.C. rests on a highly dependable and exceptionally solid foundation. All the essentials for a sound chronology are present. Therefore, scholars have been able to come up with a sound chronological system for the nation of Assyria.*<sup>98</sup>

*Another date that ties into other chronologies is 701 B.C. when King Sennacherib attacks Judah in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah's reign.*

*A solid synchronism between Judah and Assyria in which our pattern of Hebrew dates could begin is 701 B.C. is a definitely fixed date in Assyrian history and is the year in which King Sennacherib, in his third campaign, "went against the Hittite-land" (Aram), and shut up King Hezekiah the Jew... like a caged bird in Jerusalem, his royal city. This took place in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah's reign (II Kings 18:13), that is, in the year 701 B.C.*<sup>99</sup>

*The Assyrians adhered to a practice of appointing to the office of Eponym, or Limmu, some high official of the court such as the governor of a province or the king himself. The Limmu held office for a calendar year and to that year was given the name of the individual then occupying the position of Limmu.*<sup>100</sup>

From the ruins of Nineveh, we have four Assyrian chronologies called Eponym with which we can date from 911 B.C.–701 B.C., each of which overlap the others.

We also have seven Assyrian chronologies called Limmu Lists which cover the years from 891 B.C.–648 B.C. They too have

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<sup>98</sup> Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*; p.67

<sup>99</sup> Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*; p.78

<sup>100</sup> Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*; p.68



astronomical events that can be used to pinpoint the exact time in history that an event itself took place and the King that existed at that time.

There are also two other documents known as the Khorsabad King List from Sargon and the SDAS King List, which are not only in agreement with each other, but are also in agreement with the Eponym and Limmu Lists previously mentioned.

And if the above isn't enough, to all of this we can then add Ptolemy's Canon, which is a chronology of Babylonian, Persian and Grecian kings dating from 747 B.C.–161 C.E. But even this is not the end of it. Ptolemy also authored over 80 astronomical recordings (aka, observations)—including their dates and their relationship to the rulers at that time. These astronomical recordings can then be cross-referenced with NASA to double-check the accuracy of the list of Kings and confirm when they ruled in human history.

It is only with these lists of chronologies, recovered from the ruins of Nineveh, that we are able to have a reliable chronological record of any of the Hebrew Kings.

Having the lists of Assyrian rulers at our disposal only matters, however, when we can connect one or more Israelite kings to it and, remarkably, this has been done with the Battle of Qarqar and the Assyrian attack on King Hezekiah. If it was not for these two events tying directly into the known Assyrian chronology, we would have no date by which to reckon the Kings of Israel to, for they left no records to us. The dates for all the Hebrew kings could only be developed once these two dates could be established.

Why, you may ask, is any of this important?

For one, the reference above with regard to King Sennacherib's attack on King Hezekiah is recorded in the Assyrian chronologies. This recording is an absolute benchmark year, and from that year we can determine when all the other kings of Israel reigned. We could also use the Battle of Qarqar, in which King Ahab died fighting against Shalmaneser III of Assyria in 853 B.C., but the event mentioned by King Sennacherib attacking Judah in 701 B.C., the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah's reign, is much more important to use in the context of the Sabbatical and Jubilee years.

In this well-documented account of which I cited earlier, King Sennacherib, in his third campaign, "went against the Hittite-land Aram, and shut up Hezekiah the Jew ... like a caged bird in Jerusalem,

his royal city.” This took place in the 14<sup>th</sup> year of King Hezekiah’s reign (2 Kings 18:13). The siege began in the winter of 702 B.C., but the miracle from Yehovah took place during Passover of that same winter in 701 B.C.

## **This Shall Be a Sign to You**

The year 701 B.C. is such an absolute chronological benchmark date in history that I am going to share with you the full story. It is extremely important, irrefutable and provable beyond scrutiny. Knowing this, let us now read about the events that led up to this dramatic event:

*1 And it happened in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. 2 He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abi, the daughter of Zachariah. 3 And he did the right in the sight of Jehovah, according to all that David his father did. 4 He removed the high places, and broke the pillars, and cut down the Asherah. And he broke in pieces the bronze serpent which Moses had made; for until those days the sons of Israel burned incense to it. And he called it Nehushtan. 5 He trusted in Jehovah, the God of Israel, and after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor who were before him. 6 For he clung to Jehovah. He did not depart from following Him, but kept His commandments, which Jehovah commanded Moses. 7 And Jehovah was with him. He was blessed wherever he went. And he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and did not serve him. 8 He struck the Philistines to Gaza and its borders, from the Watch Tower to the fortified city. (2 Kings 18:1-8)*

*9 And it happened in the fourth year of King Hezekiah, the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it. 10 And at the end of three years they took it, in the sixth year of Hezekiah, it was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken. 11 And the king of Assyria carried away Israel to Assyria, and put them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes, 12 because they did not obey the voice of Jehovah their God, but transgressed His covenant, and all that Moses the servant of Jehovah commanded, and would not listen to them, nor do them. (2 Kings 18:9-12)*

13 And in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them. 14 And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; turn back from me. Whatever you put on me I will bear. And the king of Assyria appointed to Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold. 15 And Hezekiah gave him all the silver which was found in the house of Jehovah and in the treasures of the king's house. 16 At that time Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of Jehovah, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid. And he gave them to the king of Assyria. 17 And the king of Assyria sent Tartan, and the chief of the eunuchs, and the chief of the cupbearers from Lachish, to King Hezekiah with a great army against Jerusalem. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they had come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the highway of the Fuller's Field. (2 Kings 18:13-17)

18 And they called to the king. And Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the house, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, went out to them. 19 And the chief of the cupbearers said to them, Speak now to Hezekiah, So says the great king, the king of Assyria, What hope is this in which you trust? 20 Do you say that a mere word of the lips is wisdom and strength for the war? Now on whom do you trust that you rebel against me? 21 Now, behold, you trust on the staff of this bruised reed, on Egypt, on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who trust on him. 22 But if you say to me, We trust in Jehovah our God, is He not the one whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has taken away, and has said to Judah and Jerusalem, You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem? 23 And now, please give pledges to my lord the king of Assyria, and I will deliver two thousand horses to you if you are able to set riders on them. (2 Kings 18:18-23)

24 And how will you turn away the face of one commander of the least of my master's servants, and put your trust in Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? 25 Have I now come up against this place to destroy it without Jehovah? Jehovah said to me, Go up against this land and destroy it. 26 Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah said to the chief of the cupbearers, Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand. And do not talk with us in Jewish, in the ears of the people who are on the wall. 27 And the chief of the cupbearers said to them, Has my master sent

*me to your master and to you, to speak these words, and not to the men who sit on the wall, to eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you? (2 Kings 18:24-27)*

*28 And the chief of the cupbearers stood and cried with a loud voice in Jewish, and spoke, saying, Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria: 29 so says the king, Do not let Hezekiah deceive you. For he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand. 30 And do not let Hezekiah make you trust in Jehovah, saying, Jehovah will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be delivered into the hands of the king of Assyria. 31 Do not listen to Hezekiah. For so says the king of Assyria, Make with me a blessing, and come out to me, and you each shall eat of his vine, and each of his fig tree, and you each shall drink of the waters of his own cistern, 32 until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive oil and of honey, and live, and not die. And do not listen to Hezekiah when he deceives you, saying, Jehovah will deliver us. 33 Has any of the gods of the nations at all delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? (2 Kings 18:28-33)*

*34 Where are the gods of Hamath and of Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah? Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? 35 Who among all the gods of the lands have delivered their land out of my hand, that Jehovah should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand? 36 But the people kept silent and did not answer him a word. For the king's command was, saying, Do not answer him. 37 And Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn. And they told him the words of the chief of the cupbearers. (2 Kings 18:34-37)*

Hezekiah had witnessed the defeat and deportation of the northern tribes of Israel just a few years before and now he too faced this fearsome enemy demanding he surrender. Continuing with chapter 19:

*1 And it happened when King Hezekiah heard, he tore his clothes and covered himself with sackcloth. And he went into the house of Jehovah. 2 And he sent Eliakim who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz. 3 And they said to him, So says Hezekiah, This is a day of trouble and of rebuke and contempt. For the sons have come to the birth, and there is no*

*strength to bring forth. 4 It may be Jehovah your God will hear all the words of the chief cupbearer with which his master the king of Assyria has sent to reproach the living God, and will rebuke the words which Jehovah your God has heard. And you shall lift up prayer for the rest who are left. (2 Kings 19:1-4)*

*5 And the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah. 6 And Isaiah said to them, You shall say to your master, So says Jehovah, Do not be afraid of the words which you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. 7 Behold, I will send a blast on him, and he shall hear a rumor and shall return to his own land. And I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land. 8 And the chief cupbearer returned and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah, for he had heard that he had departed from Lachish. 9 And when he heard it said of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he has come out to fight against you, he sent messengers again to Hezekiah, saying, 10 So you shall speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you, saying, Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. (2 Kings 19:5-10)*

*11 Behold, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by completely destroying them. And shall you be delivered? 12 Have the gods of the nations delivered them, nations which my fathers have destroyed, Gozan, and Haran, and Rezep, and the sons of Eden in Telassar? 13 Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and of Ivah? 14 And Hezekiah received the letters from the hand of the messengers, and read it. And Hezekiah went up into the house of Jehovah, and spread it before Jehovah. 15 And Hezekiah prayed before Jehovah and said, O Jehovah, the God of Israel, who dwells between the cherubs, You are God Himself, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made the heavens and the earth. 16 Jehovah, bow down Your ear and hear. O Jehovah, open Your eyes and see, and hear the words of Sennacherib, who has sent him to taunt the living God. 17 Truly, Jehovah, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands, 18 and have thrown their gods into the fire; for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone, and they have destroyed them. 19 And now, O, Jehovah our God, I beseech You, save us out of his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are Jehovah God, and You only. (2 Kings 19:11-19)*

This story continues in the book of Isaiah:

21 And Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, So says Jehovah, the God of Israel, Because you have prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, 22 this is the word which Jehovah has spoken concerning him: The virgin, the daughter of Zion, has despised you and laughed you to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem has shaken her head behind you. 23 Whom have you mocked and blasphemed? And against whom have you raised your voice and lifted up your eyes on high? Even against the Holy One of Israel. 24 By your servants you have mocked Jehovah and have said, by my many chariots I have come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon; and I will cut down the tall cedars of it, and its choice fir trees; and I will go to its greatest height, the forest of its Carmel. 25 I have dug and drunk water; and with the sole of my feet I have dried up all the streams of Egypt. 26 Have you not heard from afar? I made it from days of old, even I have formed it. Now I have caused it to come, and you are to cause fortified cities to crash into heaps, ruins. (Isaiah 37:21-26)

27 And their inhabitants were short of hand; dismayed and ashamed. They were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the housetops, even grain blasted before it has risen. 28 But I know your sitting down, and your going out, and your coming in, and your rage against Me. 29 Because of your raging against Me, and your arrogance has come up into My ears, therefore I will put My hook in your nose, and My bridle in your lips, and I will turn you back by the way which you came. **30 And this shall be a sign to you: You shall eat self-sown grain this year; and the second year that which springs of the same; and in the third year you shall sow, and reap, and plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them.** 31 The remnant that has escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward and bear fruit upward; 32 for out of Jerusalem shall go out a remnant, and those who escape out of Mount Zion; the zeal of Jehovah of Hosts shall do this. 33 So Jehovah says this to the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it. 34 By the way that he came, by the same he shall return, and shall not come into this city, says Jehovah. 35 For I will defend this city to save it, for My own sake and for My servant David's sake. 36 Then the angel of Jehovah went out and struck a hundred and eighty-five thousand in the camp of Assyria. And they rose early in the morning, and behold! They were all dead corpses.

*37 And Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and lived at Nineveh. (Isaiah 37:27-37)*

What Isaiah has just told us in verse 30 above, which I have boldened, is repeated and confirmed in 2 Kings 19:

***29 And this shall be a sign to you: you shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and in the second year that which springs up of the same. And in the third year, sow and reap and plant vineyards and eat the fruits of them.** (2 Kings 19:29)*

Yehovah has just given Hezekiah a sign that he is not going to die this year or next—or even the year after that. Yehovah has just told Hezekiah something they all understood, the Shmita and Yovel years.

When Yehovah said: **“you shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves,”** He was telling Hezekiah and us today that this year, this Sabbatical year, this 49<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year, you will eat what grows of itself because you are commanded not to plant in a Sabbatical year. It is a year when the land lies fallow.

*2 Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, When you come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath to Jehovah. 3 You shall sow your field six years, and you shall prune your vineyard six years, and gather in the fruit of it. 4 But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest to the land, a sabbath for Jehovah. You shall neither sow your field, nor prune your vineyard. 5 You shall not reap that which grows of its own accord of your harvest, neither gather the grapes of your undressed vine. It is a year of rest to the land. 6 And the sabbath of the land shall be food for you, for you and for your servant, and for your slave woman and for your hired servant, and for your stranger who stays with you, 7 and for your cattle, and for the beast that is in your land, shall all the increase of it be for food. (Leviticus 25:2-7)*

We know it is a 49<sup>th</sup> year because of the very next line: **“and in the second year that which springs up of the same.”** The 49<sup>th</sup> year is followed by the 50<sup>th</sup> year, and this is the only time in a Jubilee cycle when there are two Sabbatical or Holy years back-to-back.

*8 And you shall number seven sabbaths of years to you, seven times seven years. And the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be*

*forty-nine years to you. 9 Then you shall cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth of the seventh month; in the day of atonement, the trumpet shall sound throughout all your land. 10 And you shall make the fiftieth year holy, one year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee to you, and you shall return each man to his possession, and you shall return each man to his family. 11 That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee to you. You shall not sow, neither reap that which grows of itself in it, nor gather in it of your undressed vine. 12 For it is the jubilee. It shall be holy to you. You shall eat the increase of it out of the field. 13 In the year of this jubilee you shall return each man to his possession. (Leviticus 25:8-13)*

Hezekiah is also told that in the 3rd year he could plant and harvest: “***And in the third year, sow and reap and plant vineyards and eat the fruits of them.***” Yehovah is giving us a huge clue as to when the Sabbatical and Jubilee years are, and He is doing it at a very specific time in history when Sennacherib comes against Hezekiah and then is defeated by Yehovah. Now all we have to do is figure out when these events took place to determine the years.

## **Others Also Confirm They Were Sabbatical and Jubilee Years**

*That this observance of the Sabbath and Jubilee laws was the intent of this sign is further supported by the Targums of Jonathan ben Uzziel (1st century B.C.E.). In his version of 2 Kings, 19:29–31, we read:<sup>101</sup>*

*And this will be the sign for you: Eat in the 1st year that which is sown of itself, and in the 2nd year the 3rd crop, and in the 3rd year sow and reap and plant vineyards and eat their fruit. And the survivors of the house of Judah who will be left will continue like a tree that sends forth its roots below and raises up its branch above. Because from Jerusalem the remnant of the just ones will go forth and the survival of those upholding the Torah from Mount Zion.<sup>102</sup>*

*Josephus, likewise, understood the sign in this same way. He wrote:*

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<sup>101</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press, Chapter 3, Events in Hezekiah’s Reign  
<https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-03Chap.pdf>

<sup>102</sup> Targ. Jon., 2 Kings, 19:29–31; cf. Targ. Jon., Isa., 37:30–33.



*And, when he (Hezekiah) offered a second prayer to the deity on behalf of the city and the safety of all, the prophet Isaiah told him that he (Yahweh) had hearkened to his prayer, and that at the present time he (Hezekiah) would not be besieged by the Assyrian, while in the future his subjects, relieved of all apprehension, would till their land in peace and look after their own possessions without fear of anything.<sup>103</sup>*

*William Whiston, in his translation of Josephus, comments regarding the passages found in 2 Kings, 19:29, and Isaiah, 37:30, that these words “seem to me plainly to design a Sabbatic year, a year of Jubilee next after it, and the succeeding usual labours and fruits of them on the third and following years.”<sup>104</sup> In another place, Whiston gives the following interpretation to Isaiah, 37:30.*

*You shall be so far from being disturbed by Sennacherib, of whom you are now so terribly afraid, that you shall be able to keep your two years of rest, which are already begun, your ordinary sabbatic year, and your extraordinary year of jubilee, without any molestation from Sennacherib, till you fall to your ordinary occupations the third year, as you were wont to do in times of the greatest peace and quietness.<sup>105</sup>*

## **Hezekiah’s 15th Year**

*It is the common opinion of many present-day biblical scholars that the destruction of Sennacherib’s army outside the walls of Jerusalem occurred during the 14th year of Hezekiah.<sup>106</sup> This theory rests solely upon the statement, as cited above, that “in the 14th year of Hezekiah” the Assyrian king invaded the land of Judah. Yet the records do not claim that Sennacherib’s army was destroyed during the same year as his initial invasion. This idea is merely an assumption. Close examination of the evidence, on the contrary, reveals that the army of Sennacherib was actually destroyed shortly after the beginning of Hezekiah’s 15th year—after, at minimum, a couple of months or more of war. It is Hezekiah’s 15th year that represents the Sabbath year; his 16th year was a Jubilee. Proof of*

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<sup>103</sup> Jos., Antiq., 10:1:4 §16.

<sup>104</sup> Whiston, Jos., p. 213, n.\*

<sup>105</sup> Whiston, Jos., p. 701, #41.

<sup>106</sup> E.g., NBD, p. 1159.

*this chronology is found in the length of the conflict. The details are as follows:*

- *The Assyrian records prove that Sennacherib first attacked the cities along the Phoenician and then Palestim coasts.*
- *When Sennacherib turned against Judah, he camped “against all the fortified cities of Judah,” “commanded to break them open,” and “captured them.”<sup>107</sup>*
- *While Sennacherib was besieging other cities in Judah, Hezekiah had enough time to fortify the walls of Jerusalem and build defense towers.<sup>108</sup>*
- *Sennacherib was laying siege to Lachish when Hezekiah sent him tribute. Ignoring the tribute that was already sent to him and the agreement of peace, Sennacherib sent an army against Jerusalem to begin a blockade of that city.<sup>109</sup>*
- *After taking Lachish, Sennacherib moved against the city of Libnah and then confronted an Egyptian and Ethiopian army (whom he defeated).<sup>110</sup>*
- *Subsequently, the greater part of the Assyrian army was sent to build siege works against the Egyptian city of Pelusium. According to Josephus, Sennacherib’s army “spent a great deal of time on the siege of Pelusium.”<sup>111</sup>*
- *The Assyrian invasion against Judah had broader geopolitical goals than merely a conquest of that state. King Hezekiah had allied himself with the Egyptians (who in turn were dominated by the Ethiopians). In changing his allegiance, Hezekiah rebelled against the Assyrians and discontinued tribute payments to them.<sup>112</sup> Josephus and Herodotus, in turn, prove that the invasion was primarily directed against “the Egyptians and Ethiopians,” not only to recover Judah and the rebel Palestim (Philistine) states but to subdue Egypt.<sup>113</sup>*
- *According to the historical records, while laying siege to Pelusium, the Assyrian army was suddenly struck by a plague. This disaster was followed by the surprise appearance of a powerful Ethiopian army under King Tirhaqah. As a result, Sennacherib*

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<sup>107</sup> 2 Kings, 18:13; 2 Chron., 32:1; Isa., 36:1. 28 2 Chron., 32:1–8.

<sup>108</sup> 2 Chron., 32:1–8.

<sup>109</sup> 2 Kings, 18:14–32; 2 Chron., 32:9–19; Isa., 36:2–22; Jos., Antiq., 10:1:1–2.

<sup>110</sup> 2 Kings, 19:8; Jos., Antiq., 10:1:1; AS, pp. 31f, ∞. 2:73–3:5, p. 69, ∞. 22–25.

<sup>111</sup> Jos., Antiq., 10:1:4.

<sup>112</sup> 2 Kings, 18:19–21; Isa., 36:4–6; Jos., Antiq., 10:1:2.

<sup>113</sup> Jos., Antiq., 10:1:1, 3–5; Herodotus 2:141.

*pulled back to Jerusalem,<sup>114</sup> hoping to take that city and hold off the upcoming onslaught from the Ethiopian army. While at Jerusalem, Sennacherib's Assyrian army was decimated by another outbreak of the plague.<sup>115</sup> The Assyrian king, perforce, retreated back home to Nineveh.*

*This data proves that the third campaign of Sennacherib was not of short duration. Numerous Phoenician, Palestim, and Judahite cities had been put under siege and the Assyrians had been building siege works at the Egyptian city of Pelusium for "a great deal of time." The evidence indicates that, at minimum, 2 or more months had transpired from the time Sennacherib actually invaded Judah until his army was destroyed by a plague before the walls of Jerusalem. Part of this timeline consisted of (1) at least 41 days for Sennacherib to march his army approximately 817 miles by road from Nineveh in Assyria to the region of Judah, (2) at least a 10 days' march from the city of Eltekeh—where he defeated the Egyptian and Ethiopian forces that were sent to give assistance to their allies in Palestia and Judah—to Pelusium on the border of Egypt, and (3), after spending "a great deal of time on the siege of Pelusium," it would take another 10 days' march in order to return from Pelusium back to Jerusalem.<sup>116</sup> In addition, the Assyrian king invaded and conquered regions in Phoenicia and Palestia, which also took time.*

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<sup>114</sup> 2 Kings, 19:9, 35–37; Isa., 37:9, 36–38; Jos., Antiq., 10:1:4f.

<sup>115</sup> 2 Kings, 19:35; Isa., 37:36; Jos., Antiq., 10:1:4f. The angel Yahweh smiting the Assyrians with a plague implies being struck with a pestilence (cf. 2 Sam., 24:14–17; Acts, 12:23; Exod., 12:21ff). It is supported by the story in Herodotus (2:141; cf. Jos., Antiq., 10:1:4), which connects the plague at Pelusium with mice (rats and mice being known carriers of bubonic plague).

<sup>116</sup> A day's march varied depending upon the terrain, mode of transportation, numbers of military personnel, and other factors. Yet an approximation of travel time for a military expedition during this early period can be determined by the following facts: Ezra and his Jewish companions took about 3½ months to make the journey from Babylonia to Judaea in the 5th century B.C.E. (Ezra, 7:6–9, 8:31). A military expedition on a forced march, of course, would be quicker, but these figures set the outside limits for the journey from Assyria to Judaea, since the distance from Babylonia to Judaea is nearly the same as that from Assyria. Next, Pharaoh Thutmose III records his forced march from Tzru (modern El-Qantara) to Gaza, a trip of about 160 miles, in 10 days (ARE, 2, §409). This march resulted in an average of 16 miles per day. During the 5th century B.C.E.,

*More evidence that the third campaign of Sennacherib was of considerable length is also found in the Assyrian records. Our study will present the evidence from these documents in our next chapter, within the subsection entitled Length of Sennacherib's Third Campaign. For now, the evidence is sufficient enough to prove that the Assyrian king could not have accomplished all the deeds attributed to him against Judah in the matter of only 2 or 3 weeks. It was a campaign that lasted at least 2 months.*

## **Yehovah Time Stamps This Date with the Illness of Hezekiah**

Yehovah, having recorded for us this huge clue in 2 Kings 19:29 with both a 49<sup>th</sup> year and a 50<sup>th</sup> year Jubilee in chapter 20, is going to put another stamp on this date. Not only did Yehovah destroy 185,000 Assyrians, saving Jerusalem, King Hezekiah, and the nation of Judah from annihilation, but now He is about to stop the world from turning and then make it go in the opposite direction in front of Hezekiah's eyes:

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*the Greeks retreating from the Persians, as reported by Xenophon, took their march through Assyria, northwards along the Tigris River. Xenophon states that they marched 4 stages for 20 parasangs (about 70 miles), 6 stages for 30 parasangs (about 105 miles), and then 4 stages for another 20 parasangs (about 70 miles) (Xenophon, Anab., 2:4). The total was 14 stages (or 14 days of marching) to achieve 70 parasangs, about 245 miles. The average march per day was 17½ miles. Similarly, we are told that Alexander the Great made the journey from Gaza to Pelusium, Egypt, a distance of about 145 miles, in 7 days (Arrian, 3:1:1; Curtius, 4:7). These numbers give us an average day's march of about 20½ miles. As our final example, we have the history from Josephus recording the forced march of the Roman army under Titus from Pelusium to Rhinocorura (El-Arish), a distance of about 80 miles. Titus accomplished his mission in 3 days, an average of 26½ miles per day (Jos., Wars, 4:11:5). Therefore, if the huge Assyrian army under Sennacherib made the excellent time of about 20 miles a day, and without considering their campaigns against the Phoenicians, they would have arrived in Judah in approximately 41 days after leaving Assyria. If we add to our equation the fact that Sennacherib first dealt with the Phoenicians, then moved against Palestia and the dozens of fortified cities of Judah, it may have taken his army as much as an additional month to 6 weeks more before he could actually send his soldiers against Jerusalem itself.*

*1 In those days Hezekiah was sick to death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him and said to him, So says Jehovah, Set your house in order, for you shall die and not live. 2 And he turned his face to the wall and prayed to Jehovah, saying, O Jehovah, 3 I pray, O Jehovah, remember now how I have walked before You in truth and with a sincere heart, and have done good in Your sight. And Hezekiah wept with a great weeping. 4 And it happened, Isaiah had gone out into the middle of the court, the Word of Jehovah came to him saying, 5 Return again and tell Hezekiah the leader of My people, So says Jehovah, the God of David your father, I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears. Behold, I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of Jehovah. 6 And I will add fifteen years to your days. And I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria. And I will defend this city for My own sake, and for My servant David's sake. (2 Kings 20:1-6) 7 And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered. 8 And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, What shall be the sign that Jehovah will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of Jehovah the third day? 9 And Isaiah said, This will be the sign from Jehovah, that Jehovah will do the thing which He has spoken. Shall the shadow go forward ten steps, or go back ten steps? 10 And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten steps. No, but let the shadow go backward ten steps. 11 And Isaiah the prophet cried to Jehovah. And He brought the shadow ten steps backward, by which it had gone down on the sundial of Ahaz. (2 Kings 20:7-11)*

*We are told<sup>117</sup> that before the defeat of the Assyrian army at the gates of Jerusalem, King Hezekiah of Judah became very ill and was near death.<sup>118</sup> After praying to Yahweh, Yahweh responded to Hezekiah by saying that he would heal him “on the 3rd day” and he would be able to go up to the Temple.<sup>119</sup> Josephus translates this verse by stating that the king was informed that, “(meta triten hemeran; within the 3rd day after), he should be*

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<sup>117</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press, Chapter 3, Events in Hezekiah’s Reign  
<https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-03Chap.pdf>

<sup>118</sup> The illness suffered by Hezekiah most likely was not connected with the plague that infected the Assyrian army. No one in Jerusalem, for example, besides Hezekiah himself, appears to have been taken ill.

<sup>119</sup> 2 Kings, 20:5.

rid of his illness.”<sup>120</sup> Yahweh continued by saying, “And I have added to your days 15 years.”<sup>121</sup>

As a sign that this prophecy was true, Yahweh made the sun recline so that the shadow on the sundial at the house of Ahaz returned by 10 steps (hours).<sup>122</sup> Targum Jonathan, for example, states that Yahweh “turned back the shadow on the stone figure of the hours, on which the sun went down on the stairs of Ahaz, backward 10 hours.”<sup>123</sup> Josephus notes that this sundial was part of the house that had belonged to Ahaz, the father of Hezekiah.<sup>124</sup>

This movement of the sun happened on the 3rd day after the prophecy was given, the same day in which Hezekiah recovered from his illness. Josephus writes:

*And when the prophet exhorted the deity to show this sign to the king, he saw what he wished and was at once freed from his illness, then he went up to the Temple and did obeisance to the deity and offered prayers to him.*

*Since Hezekiah went up to the Temple the same day that he was both healed and visually saw the sun moving backwards,<sup>125</sup> the evidence*

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<sup>120</sup> Jos., Antiq., 10:2:1 §27. The Greek word *meta*; (*meta*) means, “prop. denoting accompaniment; ‘amid’ (local or causal); modified variously according to the case (gen. association, or acc. succession) with which it is joined” (SEC, Gk. #3326); “of Time, after, next to” (GEL, p. 501). Therefore *meta*; (*meta*) carries with it not only the idea of being “after” but to be “in association,” “amid,” and “to accompany.” Accordingly, Hezekiah would be cured “within the 3rd day after” the present day. This understanding is also that of the *Seder Olam* (S.O., 23).

<sup>121</sup> 2 Kings, 20:6, cf. Isa., 38:5f.

<sup>122</sup> 2 Kings, 20:1–11; 2 Chron., 32:24–26; Isa., 38:1–8, 22; Jos., Antiq., 10:2:1.

<sup>123</sup> Targ. Jon., 2 Kings, 20:11. Cf. Targ. Jon., Isa., 38:8, where it is said that the sun “turned back 10 hours by the marking of the stone hours where it had declined.”

<sup>124</sup> Jos., Antiq., 10:2:1.

<sup>125</sup> This visual regarding the movement of the sun, as seen from the surface of the earth, of course, was not the sun moving out of its place or the earth stopping and going backwards. Rather, simply explained, the surface (crust) of the earth merely slid out of its place, the hard surface (crust), juxtapositioned by the mantle, moving across the earth’s liquid outer core (which continued spinning in its original direction). From the surface of the earth, the resulting visual gave the impression that the sun had moved out of its place and was now rising on the opposite horizon. This rollover of the earth, i.e., the crust turning over the liquid basalt interior, a concept supported by Albert Einstein (see his *Forward to ESC*), is not as rare as one might think. As a result of this phenomena, there were numerous statements from ancient writers that the sun and the stars had changed their course on at least four occasions since the time of King Menes, the first king of a united Egypt, down

*shows that both events had to occur on the 3rd day after the prophecy. Importantly, the fact that Hezekiah was granted another 15 years of life at a point when he was about to die proves that the prophecy had to be given either very late in Hezekiah's 14th or very early in his 15th year of reign. This detail is confirmed because Hezekiah reigned only 29 years,<sup>126</sup> and the Assyrians had invaded in his 14th year of rule. If the prophecy would have been given earlier in his 14th year, the time left to Hezekiah would have been much more than 15 years.*

*William Whiston (in another edition of his translation of Josephus) concludes:*

*Nor will the fifteen years' prolongation of his life after his sickness allow that sickness to have been later than the former part of the fifteenth year of his reign, since chronology does not allow him in all above twenty-nine years and a few months.<sup>127</sup>*

*The prophecy that Hezekiah would be healed in 3 days carried with it yet another important revelation. Not only had Yahweh added, as of this date, another 15 years to the life of Hezekiah but he also told him, "And from the hand of the king of Assyria I shall deliver you and the city. And I shall defend over this city for my own sake, and for the sake of David, my servant."<sup>128</sup> Accordingly, after Hezekiah was to be healed, punishment was to be inflicted upon the Assyrian army of Sennacherib.*

*The Talmudic writers also connect the episode of the sun returning 10 steps (hours), which occurred on the day when Hezekiah recovered from his illness, with the time that the Assyrians heard the*

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*until the reign of Sennacherib, the king of Assyria (which event took place in 701 B.C.E.) (see below Parallel Corpora A, n. 60). Herodotus, for example, reports, "Four times in this period, so they (the Egyptians) told me, the sun rose contrary to his wont; twice he rose where he now sets, and twice he sets where now he rises" (Herodotus, 2:141–142). Also see Mela, 1:9 §59; Solinus, Poly., 32:39; Plato, States., 268e–270d; Sophocles, frag. 738; and many others. The last reversal took place in 701 B.C.E., during the reign of King Hezekiah of Judah, and another in the year that his father, King Ahaz, died (e.g., 2 Kings, 20:8–11; Isa., 38:7f; Jos., Antiq., 10:2:1; B. Sanh., 46b, 47a, 95a–96a; Hippolytus, On Isa., 1, 3; S.O., 23; Targ. Jon., Isa., 38:8; and many more). The sun also gave the appearance of standing still in the days of Yahushua the son of Nun (Josh., 10:13).*

<sup>126</sup> 2 Kings, 18:2, 2 Chron., 29:1; Jos., Antiq., 10:3:1.

<sup>127</sup> Whiston, Flav. Jos., p. 301, n. †.

<sup>128</sup> 2 Kings, 20:6; cf. Isa. 38:6.

*“song of the celestials” and were as a result destroyed.<sup>129</sup> This information is in accord with the fact that during the daylight hours, just before the “night” that the Assyrians were afflicted, Hezekiah was found praying in the Temple,<sup>130</sup> having just that day recovered from his illness.*

*The Seder Olam, composed during the mid-2nd century C.E., makes the same conclusion:*

*Hezekiah became ill 3 days before Sennacherib’s downfall. Rabbi Yose says: the 3rd day of Hezekiah’s illness was (the time of) Sennacherib’s downfall. The sun, which had descended for Ahaz his father, stood still for him, as it says, “Behold, I will turn back 10 steps the shadow.”<sup>131</sup>*

*That we had reached the 15th year of Hezekiah when he was cured of his illness is further supported by the book entitled Ascension of Isaiah (composed at about the end of the 1st century C.E.). It reports:*

*. . . the words (i.e., promises) concerning the trust in the beloved one (Yahu) which he (Hezekiah) himself had witnessed IN THE 15TH YEAR OF HIS REIGN DURING HIS SICKNESS.<sup>132</sup>*

*Since Hezekiah did not recover from his illness until just prior to the destruction of the army of Sennacherib outside the walls of Jerusalem, it is clear that the destruction of the Assyrian forces occurred during the 15th year of Hezekiah, spring reckoning.<sup>133</sup>*

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<sup>129</sup> LJ, 4, pp. 269, 272–275, and ns. 58, 81. The “song of the celestials” is either (1) a reference to the sounds heard in the air as the earth’s crust moved or, more probably, (2) was due to some astronomical phenomenon, such as a large asteroid or some other type of large object passing near the earth. In this regard, a large astronomical object could easily serve as the source for the gravitational disruption which caused the earth’s crust to move during this nearby passing.

<sup>130</sup> 2 Kings 19:14–37; Isa., 37:14–35.

<sup>131</sup> S.O., 23.

<sup>132</sup> Ascen. Isa., 1:4.

<sup>133</sup> The reigns of the kings of Judah, even according to the rabbinic Jews, were always counted from the spring month of Abib/Nisan (e.g., see R.Sh., 1:1; B. A.Zar., 10a; Philo, Spec., 1:35 §181).

This is Qadesh La Yahweh Press’s opinion. Thiele and McFall claim it is from Tishri to Tishri. I have not proven it for myself either way.



## Just After the Beginning of the Year

*In a prophecy given by Isaiah to King Hezekiah just prior to the night of the destruction of the Assyrian army, Isaiah reports that a sign provided by Yahweh would be that in “this year” the Judahites would eat that which is sown (grows) of itself, i.e., it was a Sabbath year.<sup>134</sup> “That night” the angel Yahweh struck the Assyrians.<sup>135</sup> The prophetic nature of this “sign,” indicating an event that was yet to occur, implies that the eating of grain sown of itself was something that was about to happen, not something that had already been in practice. This detail points to the early spring of a new year.*

*According to scriptural law, the Israelites were forbidden to eat from any crop of the new year (whether newly harvested or eaten directly from the field) until after the wave sheaf offering from that first crop had been accomplished. This particular offering took place on the day after the weekly Sabbath day that fell during the 7 days of the Festival of Unleavened Bread.<sup>136</sup> The people of Jerusalem, therefore, would not have partaken of crops of “this year” until the 1st day of the week after the Passover, and Passover began on Abib 14. This fact brings the words of Isaiah into complete harmony with a destruction of the Assyrian army shortly after the beginning of the new year.*

*In this regard, ancient Jewish writers recorded that the destruction of the Assyrian army took place on the night of Passover. According to the Seder Olam and later Talmudic writers, for example, Sennacherib’s army was destroyed 2 weeks into the new year, on the 1st day of Passover (Hebrew “Phasekh”), i.e., on the 14th of Abib (the 1st month of the year). The Midrash Exodus Rabbah reports:*

*Israel and Hezekiah sat that night and recited the Hallel, for it was Passover, yet were in terror lest at any moment Jerusalem would fall in his (Sennacherib’s) hand. When they arose early in the morning to recite the shema’ and pray, they found their enemies’ dead corpses.<sup>137</sup>*

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<sup>134</sup> Cf. Lev., 25:2–13, esp. v. 12. *The key is that you cannot harvest (reap, gather), i.e., cut down, gather, and place in storage, that which grows of itself, but you can eat directly out of the field from that which grows of itself.*

<sup>135</sup> 2 Kings, 19:20–37; Isa., 37:21–38.

<sup>136</sup> Lev., 23:9–14. FSDY, 1, pp. 155–167, 245–258, 339–351.

<sup>137</sup> Exod. Rab., 18:5.

*In another place, paralleling the story with the destruction of the firstborn of Egypt at Passover, the Midrash Song Rabbah adds: Rabbi Judan said: While Hezekiah and his followers were still eating their Passover lambs in Jerusalem, eloahim had already wrought (their deliverance) in that night, as it says, And it came to pass that night, that the angel Yahweh went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians.<sup>138</sup>*

*The Targum on 2 Chronicles, 32:21, similar states:*

*And the word of Yahweh sent Gabriel, an angel, and he destroyed them in the night of Passover with fire pouring out. And he burnt the vital breath within their midst and destroyed all the valiant warriors, and officers, and princes in the camp of the king of Assyria.*

*The Seder Olam states, “because (the Assyrians) came up (against Jerusalem) in the time before Passover, they were not able to plant and so they ate what grows of itself.”<sup>139</sup> The 14th of Abib as the date for the destruction of the Assyrian army also explains why the Judahites had, as of the time of Isaiah’s prophecy to Hezekiah, not eaten that which grows of itself, even though it was already “this year.” The wave sheaf had not yet been offered.*

*An edition of the Seder Olam Rabbah,<sup>140</sup> on the basis of Isaiah 37:30, also reports that Sennacherib’s disaster occurred during a Sabbath year.<sup>141</sup> This tradition supports the conclusion that the 14th year of Hezekiah, when Sennacherib first struck the kingdom of Judah, had just passed and that the destruction of the Assyrian army took place in the 1st month of Hezekiah’s 15th year, during a Sabbath year.*

*The sequence of events occurred as follows (also see Parallel Corpora A):*

- *Abib 10. King Hezekiah was severely ill and dying. Yahweh answers Hezekiah’s prayer and tells him that on the 3rd day from now the king would (1) see the sun move backwards, (2) recover from his illness, and (3) go up to the Temple. The Ascension of*

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<sup>138</sup> Song Rab., 1:12:3.

<sup>139</sup> S.O., 23. Also see App. A.

<sup>140</sup> Ratner, S.O., 23, p. 53a-b; and see below HUCA, 46, p. 211, n. 30.

<sup>141</sup> HUCA, 46, p. 211, n. 30.

*Isaiah, in accord with these details, reports that Hezekiah's sickness occurred during "the 15th year of his reign."<sup>142</sup>*

- *Abib 13 . . . Daytime.<sup>143</sup> The sun moves back 10 steps (hours) on the sundial. Hezekiah recovers from his illness. On this day a letter arrives from King Sennacherib notifying Hezekiah that the Assyrians fully expect to take Jerusalem. Hezekiah goes up to the Temple, where he presents the letter and begins to pray. Then, the prophet Isaiah came to him with Yahweh's guarantee that the city would not be taken. A sign was also foretold to the king that "this year" the Judahites would (1) eat that which grows of itself, (2) repeat the same in the 2nd year, and (3) would plant and harvest again in the 3rd year.*

- *Abib 14, the 1st day of Passover . . . Nighttime.<sup>144</sup> The Assyrian army is encamped outside the city of Jerusalem and is struck down by the angel Yahweh. A total of 185,000 Assyrian soldiers are killed.*

## Conclusion

*All of the above evidence points to the fact that, although Sennacherib invaded the kingdom of Judah during Hezekiah's 14th year, (702 B.C.) the war continued for about 3 to 4 months until the 14th day of Abib (the 1st month on the Israelite calendar), in the 15th year (701 B.C.) of Hezekiah—a detail that is supported by the Assyrian records.<sup>145</sup> It would have been impossible for Sennacherib to have accomplished all of the feats attributed to him in only 2 short weeks and still have his army destroyed on Passover night in Hezekiah's 15th year (i.e., on the 14th day of the new year). On the 14th of Abib, Hezekiah was told that the sign for the deliverance of Jerusalem from the hand of the Assyrian king was (1.) that the people of Judah would still be found "this year" observing a Sabbath year, and (2.) that "the 2nd year" they would still be in their land observing a Jubilee. Accordingly, Hezekiah's 15th year was a Sabbath and his 16th year (700 B.C.) was a Jubilee.<sup>146</sup>*

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<sup>142</sup> Ascen. Isa., 1:4.

<sup>143</sup> The first half of the Hebrew day began at sunset and the second half with sunrise (EBD, p. 266; DB, p. 140).

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 42 *It is a night to be much kept to Jehovah for bringing them out from the land of Egypt. This is that night of Jehovah to be kept by all the sons of Israel in their generations.* (Exodus 12:42)

<sup>145</sup> See below "Proving 701 B.C. by the Assyrian Eponym"

<sup>146</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press, Chapter 3, Events in Hezekiah's Reign  
<https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-03Chap.pdf>

## Proving 701 B.C. by the Assyrian Eponym

We have now confirmed the Assyrians attacked Judah and were defeated on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Aviv, in Hezekiah's 15<sup>th</sup> year. We have proven it was a 49<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year followed by a 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee year.

We also have shown that chronologists such as Leslie McFall have proven the year Hezekiah died as 686 B.C.<sup>147</sup> Hezekiah began to rule at his father's death in 716/715 B.C. Sennacherib came in his 14<sup>th</sup> year before Aviv, which is 702 B.C. Hezekiah's 15<sup>th</sup> year was at Passover 701 B.C., and he died 15 years later in 686 B.C.

But what we have not yet proven is: how do we know Sennacherib came with the Assyrian army in 702 B.C. and he fled home in 701 B.C.?

I am going to turn things over once again to Qadesh La Yahweh Press<sup>148</sup> to explain:

*The precise dating of the Sabbath and Jubilee of Hezekiah's 15th and 16th years is uncovered in the records of the Assyrian king Sennacherib. Sennacherib reports the conquest of the cities in Judah and the reception of tribute from King Hezekiah during his third campaign.*

## Dating the Third Campaign

*Sennacherib's third campaign can be dated by the following information. To begin with, this study is in complete agreement with the accepted dating of the Ninevehite dynasty of Assyria, from Tiglath-pileser III (745/744–727/726 B.C.E.) until the end of that*

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<sup>147</sup> Among the numerous scholars who have recognized the coregency between Ahaz and Hezekiah are Kenneth Kitchen in his various writings,<sup>[101]</sup> Leslie McFall,<sup>[102]</sup> and Jack Finegan.<sup>[103]</sup> McFall, in his 1991 article, argues that if 729 BCE, that is, the Judean regnal year beginning in Tishri of 729, is taken as the start of the Ahaz/Hezekiah coregency, and 716/715 BCE as the date of the death of Ahaz, then all the extensive chronological data for Hezekiah and his contemporaries in the late eighth century BCE are in harmony. Further, McFall found that no textual emendations are required among the numerous dates, reign lengths, and synchronisms given in the Hebrew Testament for this period.<sup>[104]</sup>  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hezekiah> Leslie McFall, "Translation Guide" pp. 4–45 <https://web.archive.org/web/20030807124024/http://www.btinternet.com/~lmf12/TransGuide.pdf>

<sup>148</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press, Chapter 4, The Assyrian Version  
<https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-03Chap.pdf>

line under *Sin-sarra-ishkun* (622/621–613/612 B.C.E.).<sup>149</sup> The Assyrians, like the ancient Israelites, reckoned their year from *Nisānu* (March/April) in the spring.<sup>150</sup> Their records prove that Sennacherib ascended to the throne upon the death of his father, Sargon, on *Abu* (July/Aug.) 12 of Sargon's 17th year (705/704 B.C.E.).<sup>151</sup> His 1st regnal year (accession-year system),<sup>152</sup> therefore, began in March/April of 704 B.C.E., being the 1st month of the year. This same month is called “*Abib*” and, later, “*Nisan*” in Hebrew. Sennacherib reigned 23 regnal years and died at the hands of one of his rebellious sons on *Tebet* (Dec./Jan.) 20, 681 B.C.E.<sup>153</sup>

The *Bellino* Cylinder inscription is dated to the eponymy (year-name) of *Nabuli* (*limmu Nabuli* of *Arbailu*)—being the 3rd regnal year of Sennacherib.<sup>154</sup> That Assyrian year began with the month of *Nisānu* (March/April) of what today is defined as the Julian year 702 B.C.E. It is the earliest record of Sennacherib's first two campaigns. In this document only the first and second campaigns are discussed.<sup>155</sup>

The earliest mention of the third campaign, wherein the expedition against King Hezekiah is given, comes on the *Rassam* Cylinder. It is dated in the eponymy of *Metunu* (*limmu Metunu* of *Isana*)—being the 5th regnal year of Sennacherib,<sup>156</sup> which began with *Nisānu* 1 of 700 B.C.E.

The *Babylonian Chronicles* report that in the 3rd year of the Babylonian king *Belibni*, Sennacherib invaded *Akkad* and set his own son *Assur-nadin-shumi* on the Babylonian throne.<sup>157</sup> According to the *limmu-chronicle*, this event took place in the *limmu* of

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<sup>149</sup> CAW, pp. 7f; and see our forthcoming text GAE.

<sup>150</sup> ARAB, 2, p. 499; HBC, p. 30.

<sup>151</sup> JCS, 12.3, p. 97.

<sup>152</sup> The accession-year system (AY) counts that portion of the year in which a king ends his reign as his last year. The period of the new king during that same year is reckoned as his accession year. The 1st year of the new king is counted from the arrival of the next New Year's day. The non-accession-year system (NY), on the other hand, counts that portion of the calendar belonging to a king's last year as his last full year, while the remaining portion of that same year served by the new king becomes the new king's 1st year.

<sup>153</sup> ANET, p. 302.

<sup>154</sup> ARAB, 2, p. 438.

<sup>155</sup> AS, pp. 55–60; ARAB, 2, §§268–282.

<sup>156</sup> ARAB, 2, §§283–284a, and p. 438.

<sup>157</sup> ABC, p. 77, ∞. 26–32.

*Metunu—beginning with Nisânu 1, 700 B.C.E.<sup>158</sup> Sennacherib's own records make this event his "fourth campaign."<sup>159</sup>*

*Sennacherib's first campaign began on the 20th of Shabatu (Hebrew "Shebat," Jan./Feb.).<sup>160</sup> The Babylonian Chronicles also state that in the 1st year of Belibni (i.e., the year beginning Nisânu 1, 702 B.C.E.) Sennacherib destroyed the cities of Hirimma and Hararatum.<sup>161</sup> Sennacherib's own records make this destruction part of his first campaign and part of the same expedition wherein he placed Belibni over the throne of Akkad.<sup>162</sup> Yet the Babylonian kings were not officially recognized with a regnal year until the 1st of Nisânu (March/April), when they took "the hand of Bel."<sup>163</sup>*

*It is clear from these records that Sennacherib's first campaign extended from the month of Shabatu, near the end of his 2nd regnal year (703/702 B.C.E.), and continued beyond the 1st of Nisânu, 702 B.C.E., the beginning of Sennacherib's 3rd regnal year. His 3rd regnal year, therefore, equals the 1st regnal year of Belibni, who Sennacherib placed upon the throne of Akkad in Babylonia during his first campaign.*

*Since the second campaign of Sennacherib had to be accomplished after his first (which took place in the first few months of 702 B.C.E.), yet before the Bellino Cylinder, which reported the second campaign, was composed (dated to the limmu of 702/701 B.C.E.), it is clear that the second campaign was also completed in the year 702 B.C.E, in Sennacherib's 3rd regnal year. Neither was this a short-lived expedition. Sennacherib not only invaded the land of the Kassites, east of Babylonia, but marched further east into the distant lands of the Ellipi and then into the lands of the distant Medes (regions lying in what is today called Iran), where he received heavy tribute.<sup>164</sup> Considering 25 miles per day as an average march (a liberal figure), and counting in time for sieges, battles, and rest periods, a campaign lasting 3 to 4 months is indicated.*

*This evidence proves that Sennacherib's third campaign, which included his expedition against King Hezekiah, must have taken place in the period AFTER the Bellino Cylinder was published,*

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<sup>158</sup> CAW, p. 43.

<sup>159</sup> AS, pp. 34f, 71; ARAB, 2, §§241–243.

<sup>160</sup> ARAB, 2, §§255–258; AS, p. 50, ∞. 20.

<sup>161</sup> ANET, p. 301; ABC, p. 77, ∞. 24–28.

<sup>162</sup> ARAB, 2, §§232–238, 270–282.

<sup>163</sup> CAW, p. 7; MBA, p. 480; cf. HBC, pp. 85f. 16 ARAB, 2, §§236–238, 277–282.

<sup>164</sup> ARAB, 2, §§236–238, 277–282.

sometime in the year 702/701 B.C.E., Nisânu (Abib/Nisan) reckoning, yet BEFORE the composition of the Rassam Cylinder inscription, published sometime in the year 700/699 B.C.E.—and still before his fourth campaign mentioned in that same inscription and falling within the 3rd regnal year of Belibni of Akkad.<sup>165</sup>

Sennacherib's first campaign started in the month of Shabatu and continued until at least the beginning of Nisânu of 702 B.C.E. Therefore, his second campaign must have been 3 to 4 months long during 702 B.C.E., with a reasonable period between each event to allow his army to recoup and prepare for the next expedition. Allowing a minimum of 6 weeks for repose between each expedition, the earliest possible chronology would be as follows:

- After April, 702 B.C.E., Sennacherib returns from his first campaign.
- The month of May, 702 B.C.E., Sennacherib rests and prepares for his second campaign.
- June to September (or possibly until as late as October), 702 B.C.E., Sennacherib conducts his second campaign.
- The month of October (or possibly as late as November), 702 B.C.E., Sennacherib rests and prepares for his third campaign.

These limitations mean that Sennacherib, at the earliest, could not possibly have begun his campaign against Judah before late October or late November of his 3rd regnal year. At the same time—since his army was destroyed on Passover, shortly after the beginning of spring—Sennacherib's great defeat must have occurred in the beginning of his 4th regnal year.

These details mean that Sennacherib's third campaign got under way sometime between late autumn of 702 to the early winter of 702/701 B.C.E., an overall period consisting of about 3 months.

These details determine that Sennacherib's third campaign must have began shortly after his second, and therefore continued mainly during the winter, failing in the early spring of the next year. Indeed, even though Hezekiah had revolted from his Assyrian overlord and had not paid tribute, he was nonetheless surprised at Sennacherib's invasion. This fact is indicated when Hezekiah had to hastily build fortifications after hearing of Sennacherib's drive into the region, and even then he conceded in his own mind that it would now be

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<sup>165</sup> Also see the discussion in CIOT, 1, pp. 307–310; SIP, pp. 2–4.

fruitless to continue the revolt.<sup>166</sup> This detail would imply that a strike by Sennacherib would not have been expected until at least the spring, the usual time for military expeditions because of weather considerations.<sup>167</sup>

In mid-702 B.C.E. Sennacherib was on his second campaign against the Kassites, Ellipi, and distant Medes far to the east. Hezekiah and the Judahites saw no reason for alarm. They had already been successful in their revolt for several years and in the present year other states in the West were joining them.<sup>168</sup> They felt secure

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<sup>166</sup> 2 Chron., 32:2–8; 2 Kings, 18:13–16; Jos., Antiq., 10:1:1; cf. CIOT, 1, p. 299; CAH, 3, pp. 72f.

<sup>167</sup> 1 Chron., 20:1; 2 Sam., 11:1; Jos., Antiq., 7:6:3; LXX 2 Kings, 11:1; LXX 1 Chron., 20:1.

<sup>168</sup> The assumption is often made that the nations of Phoenicia, Palestia, and Judah all revolted from Assyria upon the death of Sargon in Abu (July/Aug.) of 705 B.C.E. (e.g., AATB, p. 69; HI, p. 265). This conjecture, however, has no substance. Sargon's records report that it was during his reign that "the lands of the Palestim, Yahudahi (Judahites), Edomites, and Moabites" revolted and sent presents to pharaoh of Egypt to become his ally (ARAB, 2, §195). In response, the Assyrian king crossed the Euphrates at the time of the spring floods (ibid.). This expedition took place in Sargon's 11th year (711/710 B.C.E.), see ARAB, 2, §§29f. Since his response to the revolt was in the spring, i.e., at the beginning of his 11th regnal year, the revolt took place sometime before this regnal year began, and most probably in conjunction with the revolt of Israel in 712/711 B.C.E. (2 Kings, 18:9). Sargon only mentions the overthrow of Iamani, king of Ashdod, the northernmost coastal city of Palestia, and two nearby cities, Gimtu and Asdudimmu (ARAB, 2, §§29f, 195). [Gi-im-tu certainly is not Gath, as Luckenbill and others speculate. The Judahites held Gath at this time (see below). B. Mazar-Maisler connects this name with Gittaim of 2 Sam., 4:3, (JCS, 12.3, p. 83, n. 242); but *wtbg* (G-b-t-u-n; m = b) of Josh., 19:44, 21:23, located northeast of Ashdod, is phonetically much more suited.] Both the Assyrian accounts and the record in Isa., 20:1, report that Sargon's chief military officer or *turtā nu* (turtan, tartan) overthrew Ashdod. Nothing is mentioned of the recovery of Judah, Edom, Moab, or the other Palestia city-states. This data agrees with the ancient evidence that Hezekiah revolted from Assyria early in his reign (2 Kings, 18:1–9; Jos., Antiq., 9:13:3). As part of this revolt, Hezekiah seized control of the Palestia (Philistia) states from Gath to Gaza (2 Kings, 18:8; Jos., Antiq., 9:13:3, cf. 9:8:4, & 2 Kings, 12:17). For the time being, Judah and the rest of Palestia remained free and their recovery was not undertaken until Sennacherib made the attempt. It was Sennacherib who stripped Judah's control away from the Palestim city-states (AS, p. 33, 3:27–36, p. 70, ∞. 27–30). A previous revolt of Phoenicia occurred in 707/706 B.C.E. and lasted for 5 years, until 703/702 B.C.E. (Jos., Antiq., 9:14:2; and see below n. 38). This evidence



*because of their alliance with the Egyptians and Ethiopians and because they believed Sennacherib's involvement in his eastern wars would, at least for the time being, distract the attention of the Assyrians. Nevertheless, Sennacherib did the unexpected. Upon returning to Assyria from his eastern campaign and hearing of the failure of other western vassals to pay tribute, he did not wait for spring. Instead, he immediately prepared to deliver a massive, surprise winter offensive.*

*We also know that Sennacherib was willing to commit his forces during the heart of winter, rarely done by other Assyrian kings.<sup>169</sup>*

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*reveals that Phoenicia revolted again in 702 B.C.E. Ashdod would also have joined at this time. The revolt of Phoenicia and Ashdod were seen as far more of a concern for Assyria, who up until this time still retained control over them and through them held the Mediterranean Sea and kept Egypt in check. The fact that Ashdod submitted to the Assyrians immediately after the fall of Phoenicia, while the remaining Palestim (Philistine) states held out with Judah, demonstrates that the other Palestim states were in alliance with Judah. The revolt of Phoenicia and Ashdod best fits the description of Leo L. Honor, who admits, "If we assume that the plans for revolt were not made in 705 but in 702–701, it is possible to surmise that Sennacherib learned of the conspiracy that was being planned against him before it was fully hatched; that Sennacherib advanced into Palestine with remarkable speed and surprised his foes before they were fully ready" (SIP, p. 65). Luckenbill calculates that trouble doubtlessly began in the West as soon as the reports of Sargon's violent death reached these regions. Yet it is also true that, because Sennacherib had been "kept occupied for some time after his accession by events in Babylonia," by the year 701 we find "respect for the Assyrian authority rapidly disappearing" (AS, p. 10). The fact that Sargon died would not, in itself, serve as an impetus strong enough to convince the petty western states to defect from such a powerful overlord as the Assyrian Empire, whose military might during this period was immense. The evidence better suggests that it was only after the revolt of the eastern countries in Babylonia, Merodach-Baladan of Babylon (who formed an alliance with the Elamite Empire), and some tribes east of the Tigris (the Kassi, Iasubigallai, and Ellipi) in late 703 B.C.E. (the nations toward which the first and second campaigns of Sennacherib were directed) that Phoenicia and Ashdod saw a chance. Their opportunity came while Sennacherib was consumed with his second campaign in mid-702 B.C.E.*

<sup>169</sup> *There is an Assyrian inscription which tells of an expedition by Adad-nirari II against the province of Dûr-Kurigalzu in Babylonia during the month of Shabatu (Jan./Feb.) (ARAB, I, §390). The region of Babylonia laid in the low country south of Assyria. Therefore, neither distance nor severe climate would have served as too great an obstacle for this isolated event. Otherwise, until we arrive at the time of Sennacherib and his own invasion of Babylonia, which*

*His first campaign, for example, began in Shabatu (Shebat; i.e., Jan./Feb.) of 702 B.C.E. It was against the districts of Babylonia lying south of Assyria.<sup>170</sup> Based upon the records left by both Sennacherib and the Jewish sources, the indication is that Sennacherib's third campaign began no sooner than late autumn, but more probably near the beginning of the winter of 702/701 B.C.E., during the latter part of his 3rd regnal year (i.e., in the months before Abib 1 of 701 B.C.E.).*

***The year 702/701 B.C.E., therefore, is equivalent to the 14th year of Hezekiah, being the 3rd regnal year of Sennacherib. The year 701/700 B.C.E., spring reckoning, the 4th regnal year of Sennacherib, as a result, is equivalent to the 15th year of Hezekiah. Sennacherib's army was destroyed in the 1st month of Sennacherib's 4th regnal year, in the month of Abib (Nisan), on the 14th day, being the 1st day of Passover, sometime during the first part of that day, i.e., during the nighttime (which starts with sunset). This year was a Sabbath. The next year, 700/699 B.C.E., the 16th year of Hezekiah and the 5th year of Sennacherib, was a Jubilee year.***

*We also must conclude that after Sennacherib's humiliating defeat before the walls of Jerusalem (where he lost 185,000 men) he would need an extended period of time to recoup from his losses in order to commit new troops to his fourth campaign in 700 B.C.E. It is not unreasonable to allow for approximately 9 months to a year to accomplish this task.<sup>171</sup> Interestingly, it was during this post-Jerusalem period that Sennacherib suffered from a major revolt of his Babylonian vassals, i.e., Belibni and the other subkings. This revolt was temporarily successful because of the large military setback suffered by the Assyrian king during the end of his third*

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*began on the 20th of Shabatu during his first campaign, expeditions at this time of year are practically unknown. Before Sennacherib, no expeditions are reported either for the month of Tebetu (Dec./Jan.) or Addaru (Feb./March). Further, when Sennacherib attempted a march against Babylonia in the month of Tebetu during his seventh campaign, he was turned back by a severe rain and snowstorm (ARAB, 2, §351). His attempt, nevertheless, demonstrates the willingness of Sennacherib to campaign during the heart of winter.*

<sup>170</sup> ARAB, 2, §§255–267.

<sup>171</sup> E.g., after Nebuchadnezzar II took heavy losses in his campaign against Egypt during his 4th year, he was forced to stay home for the entire part of Year 5 to refit "his numerous horses and chariotry" (ABC, p. 101, ∞. 5–9).

*campaign. Sennacherib's fourth campaign in 700 B.C.E. was, in part, against Belibni to recover Akkad for the Assyrians.*<sup>172</sup>

## **Length of Sennacherib's Third Campaign**

*Another item of evidence that substantiates the fact that Sennacherib's third campaign was of no short duration, and therefore extended from the latter part of his 3rd regnal year into the early part of his 4th, comes from this Assyrian king's own records on this expedition. These inscriptions show that it was not just Judah that had revolted but almost the whole of the Phoenician Palestim region (Parallel Corpora A).*

*Sennacherib was forced by strategic considerations to first invade Khattiland (Syria-Phoenicia), going against King Luli of Sidon and capturing all the fortified cities of his country.<sup>173</sup> Coming to Ushû (mainland Tyre), he received heavy tribute from the Phoenician city-states of Shamsimuruni, Sidoni, Arvadi, the Gubli (Byblos), then from the Palestim (Philistine) people of Ashdod, and the Trans-Jordan states of the Ammoni (Beth-Ammoni), the Moabi, and the Edomi (these last three tribes residing just east of Judah).<sup>174</sup>*

*Most of the Palestim people living in Palestia (Philistia) and their overlords of Judah, which ruled Palestia at the time,<sup>175</sup> still refused to submit. So Sennacherib next marched south along the coast and went to war against the king of Ashkelon. Along the way, he besieged and conquered Ashkelon's tributary cities of Beth-Dagon, Joppa, Banaibarka, and Asuru, carrying off their spoils.<sup>176</sup> With the submission of Ashkelon or in conjunction with it, the Assyrians were now striking across the borders of Judah.*

*Sennacherib's attack on Judah was especially violent. The ferocity of his onslaught was no doubt brought on because King Hezekiah of Judah was considered the ringleader of the revolt.<sup>177</sup> This fact is*

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<sup>172</sup> CAW, p. 43.

<sup>173</sup> ARAB, 2, §§239, 309, 326, 347.

<sup>174</sup> ARAB, 2, §§239, 310; AS, pp. 30, 69.

<sup>175</sup> 2 Kings, 18:7–8, reveals that Hezekiah conquered the Palestim country "as far as Gaza and its borders" shortly after he had revolted from the Assyrians. Josephus states that Hezekiah seized all the Palestim cities "from Gaza to Gitta (Gath)" (Jos., Antiq., 9:13:3). In the Assyrian records, Hezekiah is the ringleader of the revolt. Padi the king of Ekron, Palestia, to demonstrate, was thrown into iron fetters and given to Hezekiah to keep in confinement at Jerusalem (AS, pp. 31f, ∞. 2:73–77, 3:14–17, pp. 69f, ∞. 22–27).

<sup>176</sup> ARAB, 2, §§239, 310; AS, pp. 30f, 69.

<sup>177</sup> AHI, p. 283; HI, p. 265. Also see above n. 27 and Chap. V, pp. 71f, n. 37.

revealed when Sennacherib reports that the nobles and people of Ekron in Palestia had delivered up their own king, named Padi, a loyalist to the Assyrians, in iron fetters to Hezekiah to keep in confinement.<sup>178</sup>

When the soldiers of the Assyrian king came against the land of Judah they captured 46 of its walled cities and innumerable smaller cities.<sup>179</sup> Among these overthrown fortified cities were Lachish and Libnah.<sup>180</sup> Sennacherib then claimed to have shut up Hezekiah in Jerusalem “like a caged bird.”<sup>181</sup>

Hezekiah, of course, had already submitted to Sennacherib before the blockade began. Furthermore, he had already paid the Assyrians a substantial amount of tribute and was forced to release King Padi of Ekron. Some Judahite territory was also taken away and given to the kings of Palestia.<sup>182</sup> Nevertheless, Sennacherib reneged on the treaty he had made with King Hezekiah. Instead, he blockaded Jerusalem in hopes of deporting its entire population into another distant country and with an eye towards sacking the treasures of this wealthy city.

When the rebellious people of Ekron had heard that Sennacherib was coming, they called for military assistance from the Egyptians and Ethiopians. It was at this moment that these forces arrived. Sennacherib, therefore, was obliged to meet this “countless host” in battle. He defeated them on the plain of Altakû (Eltekeh)—a claim obviously referring to an initial victory over the Egyptians and Ethiopians, well before his attack on Pelusium, the plague, and the arrival of the army of Tirhaqah, the king of Kush (Ethiopia,

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<sup>178</sup> ARAB, 2, §§240, 311; AS, p. 31, 2:73–77, p. 69, ∞. 22f.

<sup>179</sup> ARAB, 2, §§240, 312, 327, 347; AS, pp. 32f, 3:18–27, p. 70, ∞. 27f, p. 77, ∞. 20f, p. 86, ∞. 15.

<sup>180</sup> Lachish and Libnah are specifically mentioned in 2 Kings, 18:14, 17, 19:8; Isa., 36:2, 37:8; and 2 Chron., 32:9. In place of the discussion of these battles, Josephus only reports that the Assyrian king “took the field against the Egyptians and Ethiopians” while leaving behind Rabshakeh and his forces to sack the city of Jerusalem (Jos., Antiq., 10:1:1). This information reflects the fact that the Assyrian king heard of the coming of the Egyptian and Ethiopian troops as he was taking Lachish and in response sent his troops to Libnah to prepare the region for the upcoming conflict (Libnah being very near Eltekeh and the site of the battle).

<sup>181</sup> ARAB, 2, §§240, 312; AS, p. 33, 3:27f, p. 70, ∞. 28f.

<sup>182</sup> ARAB, 2, §§240, 312, 327, 248, 284a.

Nubia).<sup>183</sup> Sennacherib next besieged the cities of Altakû (Eltekeh) and Timnah (Tamnah, Tamnâ), capturing them. He also took the city of Ekron, placing Padi back on the throne.<sup>184</sup> At this point, Sennacherib's records finish, unwilling to discuss the humiliating defeats he suffered at Pelusium in Egypt and then at Jerusalem. The list of conquests and battles itemized in the records of Sennacherib compels us to conclude that his third campaign could not have been of short duration. When we compare his records with those from ancient scriptural, Jewish, and Christian accounts,<sup>185</sup> it is clear that the expedition lasted at least 2 to 3 months. Since Sennacherib's first and second expeditions took up most of the year 702 B.C.E., we are forced to look for Sennacherib's third campaign as beginning in the latter part of the king's 3rd regnal year, possibly beginning his march to the west as early as late autumn (Oct./Nov.). It certainly began well before the month of Shebat (Jan./Feb.) during the winter of 702/701 B.C.E., during the same time of the year in which he had previously and successfully attacked the Babylonians. Once again we are led to the conclusion that Sennacherib's army at Jerusalem was destroyed during the 1st month of the new year (Abib) of 701 B.C.E., being the 15th year of Hezekiah.<sup>186</sup>

## Conclusion

*The weight of the evidence strongly indicates that Sennacherib's expedition got underway in the winter months of 702/701 B.C.E., in the latter part of the 14th year of Hezekiah. The Sabbath year, in turn, began in the spring, in the opening month of Hezekiah's 15th year, which began on the 1st of Abib (March/April) of 701 B.C.E.*

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<sup>183</sup> AS, pp. 31f, 2:73–1:7; p. 69, ∞. 22–25; ARAB, 2, §§240, 311. A formidable response from the king of Kush came later, when the army led by Tirhaqah came out to fight against the Assyrians (2 Kings, 19:9; Isa., 37:9; Jos., Antiq., 10:1:4).

<sup>184</sup> AS, p. 32, 3:6–17, p. 70, ∞. 25–27; ARAB, 2, §§240, 312.

<sup>185</sup> See below *Parallel Corpora A* and above Chap. III, pp. 43–45.

<sup>186</sup> Support for this arrangement is also found in the reconstruction of the reign of Shalmaneser III, the real conqueror of the house of Israel (2 Kings, 17:3, 18:9), not Shalmaneser V. (This reconstruction shall be demonstrated in our forthcoming book entitled *The Golden Age of Empires [GAE]*.) These findings show that the 5-year blockade of Tyre and their king Eluli (Luli), which Shalmaneser III began in 707/706 B.C.E., his 21st year, ended the year prior to Judah's revolt and its war with Sennacherib (see Jos., Antiq., 9:14:1f; and cf. Shalmaneser III's records for his 21st year with those of Sennacherib's third campaign in ARAB, 1, §§578, 614, 2, §§239, 309, 326, 347, etc.). Also cf. above n. 20.

*As a result, the year 700/699 B.C.E., Abib reckoning, Hezekiah's 16th year, was a Jubilee.*

							-700	69
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle		
-698	-692	-689	-686	-683	-680	-677		
-696	-693	-690	-687	-684	-681	-678		
-697	-694	-691	-688	-685	-682	-679		
-698	-695	-692	-689	-686	-683	-680		
-699	-696	-693	-690	-687	-684	-681		
-700	-697	-694	-691	-688	-685	-682		
-701	-698	-695	-692	-689	-686	-683		
							-699	67
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle		
-694	-691	-688	-685	-682	-679	-676		
-695	-692	-689	-686	-683	-680	-677		
-696	-693	-690	-687	-684	-681	-678		
-697	-694	-691	-688	-685	-682	-679		
-698	-695	-692	-689	-686	-683	-680		
-699	-696	-693	-690	-687	-684	-681		
-700	-697	-694	-691	-688	-685	-682		
							-697	66
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle		
-693	-690	-687	-684	-681	-678	-675		
-694	-691	-688	-685	-682	-679	-676		
-695	-692	-689	-686	-683	-680	-677		
-696	-693	-690	-687	-684	-681	-678		
-697	-694	-691	-688	-685	-682	-679		
-698	-695	-692	-689	-686	-683	-680		
-699	-696	-693	-690	-687	-684	-681		
							-695	65
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle		
-693	-690	-687	-684	-681	-678	-675		
-694	-691	-688	-685	-682	-679	-676		
-695	-692	-689	-686	-683	-680	-677		
-696	-693	-690	-687	-684	-681	-678		
-697	-694	-691	-688	-685	-682	-679		
-698	-695	-692	-689	-686	-683	-680		
-699	-696	-693	-690	-687	-684	-681		
							-700	64
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle		
-701	-704	-710	-712	-719	-726	-733		
-702	-709	-716	-720	-728	-737	-744		
-703	-710	-717	-724	-731	-738	-745		
-704	-711	-718	-725	-732	-739	-746		
-705	-712	-719	-726	-733	-740	-747		
-706	-713	-720	-727	-734	-741	-748		
-707	-714	-721	-728	-735	-742	-749		
							-703	63

We now have a rock-solid date of 701 B.C. for the 49<sup>th</sup> year and 700 B.C. as the Jubilee year. I will even acknowledge that some chronologists have differing years.

Understanding that 701 B.C. is a Sabbatical year, we should be able to count by seven and land on every single Sabbatical year in history going forward and backward. With this same understanding,

we should now be able to count by 49s from 700 B.C. and land on every Jubilee year going forward and backward.

If this theory is indeed correct, then every Sabbatical and Jubilee year that are known to history will line up with these two dates.

If, as some presume, the Jubilee years are to be counted by 50, then that too will be evident once we amass all the known data from history.

In the preceding chart, the year 701 B.C. is marked in yellow and is the 7<sup>th</sup> Sabbath, as well as the 49<sup>th</sup> year. It is in the 7<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle of the 64<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle. The year 700 B.C. is also marked in yellow and is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 1<sup>st</sup> Sabbatical cycle. It is also the beginning of the 65<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

Yes, I am counting each Jubilee cycle by 49s as I have already proven how to count them, and I am using those charts to show you. We have not yet proven which system of counting works, but we will in due time.

## Chapter 3 | 12 Contracts of Wadi Murabba'at and the Bar Kochba Revolt

We now have two provable Jubilee years and another 49<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year. From our second set of proofs about the years 701 B.C. and 700 B.C., during which the Assyrians attacked Hezekiah, we can now connect to the first Jubilee found in the year 2500 A.C., shown to us in Leviticus 25:2. We proved this year to be 2500 A.C. by doing the chronology from Adam to the year Joshua entered the Promised Land.

We do have one problem to solve. With the years 701 B.C. and 700 B.C., and the year 2500 A.C., we are using two different methods by which to count. I will show you how to solve this with our mathematical equation later.

We now have all the information we need to solve the equation we left you with at the end of Chapter 1 | Jubilee Year 1337 B.C.

$$2500 + B = 5880$$

or

$$2500 + B = 6000$$

We can now figure out what “B” is and once we do, then we will solve whether you count by 49s or 50s. But before we solve this equation for you, I am going to present to you yet another Jubilee year—another well-documented Jubilee year attested to by no less than 12 witnesses. These 12 witnesses are businessmen from the time of the Bar Kochba Revolt. They are not Priests or Kings. They are only doing their businesses in order to secure an income.

Another reason these 12 contracts are important to understand is because they predate the confusion that begins once Rabbi Jose writes his Seder Olam with the errors he penned. As we explained in **The Stones Cry Out Part 1**, this book then becomes accepted as fact and incorporated into the Mishnah from which the Jewish dating system in use today has derived. These contracts were written about 30 years before the Seder Olam was written.

We are also about to learn how the Jews at this time counted the years. This is very important to understand, as it is also the same method of counting used in the Tombstones of Zoar, which we will shortly get to.



I will once again let Qadesh La Yahweh Press<sup>187</sup> explain this with all the facts:

*The last pre-Seder Olam records presently in our possession that can date a Sabbath year are rental contracts composed during the Bar Kochba revolt (133 to 135 C.E.). These contracts, found among the papers of the archives in the caves of Wadi Murabba'at near Bethlehem, are dated to the 20th day of Shebat (Jan./Feb.) in the 2nd year of the revolt. They speak of the next Sabbath year as 5 years hence. Wacholder makes the claim that these rental agreements substantiate his System "C" Sabbath cycle.<sup>188</sup> Wacholder also writes: Since each of these twelve contracts, written in Hebrew, apparently contained both the same date of issuance and the clause relating to the Sabbatical year, they are crucial for this study.<sup>189</sup> Wacholder then reproduces the document labeled "Mur 24E," partly but plausibly restored on the basis of the parallel fragments of papyri, as transcribed by J. T. Milik in his book entitled Discoveries in the Judaean Desert.<sup>190</sup> This study agrees with the overall translation offered by Milik and Wacholder (the small differences are minor points which have no bearing on the conclusions).<sup>191</sup> Our translation is as follows:*

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<sup>187</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press, Chapter 29, Dating the Contracts, <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-29Chap.pdf>

<sup>188</sup> HUCA, 44, pp. 176–179.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., pp. 176f.

<sup>190</sup> DTJD, no. 24, pp. 122–134, esp. p. 131, D, and 2, pt. 2, Plate XXXVI. Also see Fig. 3.

<sup>191</sup> Wacholder's translation is as follows:

1. [On the twentieth of She]vat of the year tw[o] of the Redemption of
2. [I]srael by Shimeon ben K[os]ba, the prince of
3. [Is]rael. In the camp which is located in Herodium,
4. [Ye]hudah ben Raba' said to Hillel ben Gryz:
5. "I of my free will have [re]nted from you today the
6. land which is my re[n]tal in 'Ir
7. Nahash which I hold as a tenant from Shimeon, the Prince of Israel,
8. This land I have rented from you today
9. until the end of the eve of Shemitah, which are years
10. full, [fi]scal years, five, of tenancy;
11. [that I wi]ll deliver to you in [Her]odium: wheat,
12. [of good and pure quality,] th[ree kor]s and a lethekh,
13. [of which a tenth part of the tithe] of these

1. *[On the 20th of She]bat of Year Tw[o] for the Redemption of*
2. *[I]srael by Simeon ben K[osi]ba, (Bar Kochba) the Nasia of*
3. *[Is]rael. In the camp which is located in Herodium.*
4. *[Ya]hudah ben Rabah said to Hillel ben Geryis:*
5. *"I of my own free will have [re]nted from you this day*
6. *the field which is my re[n]tal in Ayr*
7. *Nakhash which I hold as a tenant from Simeon, the Nasia of*
8. *Israel.*
9. *This field I have rented from you this day*
10. *until the end of this side of the Shemitah, producing years*
11. *complete, years of evaluation, five of tenancy;*
12. *[that I wi]ll deliver to you in [Her]odium: wheat,*
13. *[of good and pure quality.] th[ree kor]s and a lethekeh,*
14. *[from which a 10th part of the tithe] of these*
15. *[you will deliver to the silo of the treasury.] And [I am obli]gated*
16. *[in regard of this matter thusly . . . .]."*
17. *[Yahudah ben Rabah, in person.]*
18. *[Simeon ben Kosiba, by dictation.]*

*Lines 8–10 can more flowingly be translated as, "This field I have rented from you this day until this side of the Shemitah (year of release, i.e., the seventh year, the Sabbath year),<sup>192</sup> an evaluation of 5 complete producing years of tenancy." Combined with this statement is the opening remark that the document was published, "On the 20th of Shebat (Jan./Feb.) in Year 2 of the Redemption of Israel by Simeon ben Kosiba."*

*Wacholder calculates that, contrary to what is stated, these documents point to "five years, six months, and ten days" and not to "five full years."<sup>193</sup> Wacholder arrives at this conclusion because he has presumed that the Sabbath year started with the 1st of Tishri. His conclusion is inaccurate for several reasons.*

*To begin with, the contract clearly spells out the fact that the rental was to last only "five complete producing years of tenancy," not 5½ years. Also, coins from this period prove that during the Bar Kochba*

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14. *[you will deliver to the silo of the treasury.] And [I am obli]gated*
  15. *[in regard of this matter thusly ]*
  16. *[Yehudah ben Raba', in person]*
  17. *[Shim'on ben Kosba', by dictation.]*

<sup>192</sup> See above Chap. XIV, ns. 2 and 3.

<sup>193</sup> HUCA, 44, p. 179.

*revolt the Jews used the 1st of Nisan as the beginning of their year, not Tishri.*<sup>194</sup>

*The Bar Kochba revolt was predicated upon the hope of bringing back lost Jewish glory. Not only had the Jews intended on rebuilding the Temple, but they brought back into use the ancient paleo-Hebrew alphabet, the 1st of Nisan as the beginning of their year, and the practice of keeping the Sabbath years—all apparently stripped away from them by the Romans upon the collapse of the First Revolt in 70 C.E.*

*The leader of this Judaeen revolt against the Roman Empire was a man called Simeon ben Kosiba (Kosibah, Koziba, etc.), also known as Simeon bar Kochba (Kokhbah, Kokhba, Kochebas, etc.). It makes little sense that those involved in the rental contracts, including Simeon ben Kosiba himself, certainly were—whose effort was to bring back lost Jewish glory—would determine their contracts by anything less than a 1st of Abib (Nisan) year as commanded by the Torah.*

*The contract can only be understood in one of two ways: (1) it either began on the 20th of Shebat in the 2nd year of the redemption of Israel and was to continue until the 20th of Shebat 5 years later; or (2) it was understood that the 1st of the year was at hand and that the contract, concluded on the 20th of Shebat, was to take effect on the 1st of Nisan and end 5 years later on the eve of that same date.*<sup>195</sup>

*Regardless of which way one understands the 5 complete years, the contract points to Nisan 1 as the beginning of the year. The date Shebat 20, which would occur 5 years later, would also lay just “on this side” of (or about 40 days away from) the beginning of the next Sabbath year. What is important for our study is the fact that the beginning of the next Sabbath year in these contracts was just 5 complete years after “Year 2 of the Redemption of Israel.” The key to dating the Sabbath year of these contracts is to correctly pinpoint which year represents “Year 2 of the Redemption of Israel.” To accomplish this task we must closely examine the chronology of the Second Revolt.*

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<sup>194</sup> IEJ, 21.1, pp. 39–46.

<sup>195</sup> *Since the 20th of Shebat was only about 40 days away from the first day of the new year, a 1st of Nisan understanding for the year system is the most probable. All that could have been accomplished before the end of the present year, anyway, was some late planting, which would have been of little significance for a wheat crop. As we shall later show, the present year was in fact a Jubilee (Chap. XXX, pp. 398–401).*

## The Second Revolt

*Those who adhere to System “B” give two different views about when the Bar Kochba revolt started. Milik, who correctly reads the document but tries to make it conform to a Tishri (Sept./Oct.) year, starts the revolt in the year 131/132 C.E., Tishri reckoning.<sup>196</sup> Yet Milik’s view is now generally set aside. Those after Milik, like Baruch Kanael, recognized that the year during the Second Revolt actually began with the 1st of Nisan (April). They date the 1st year to 132/133 C.E., Nisan reckoning, yet insist on a Tishri beginning for the Sabbath year itself.<sup>197</sup> Those holding to System “B,” as a result, conclude that the year 133/134 C.E., Nisan (March/April) reckoning, was the 2nd year of the revolt of all Judaea. Yet the upcoming Sabbath year mentioned by these documents from Wadi Murabba‘at are made to belong to 138/139 C.E., Tishri (Sept./Oct.) reckoning, as found on Zuckermann’s chart.<sup>198</sup>*

*Wacholder, who professes System “C,” also makes the 1st year of the revolt 132/133 C.E., Nisan reckoning, and as with the others begins the Sabbath year with Tishri.<sup>199</sup> Yet unlike those of System “B,” Wacholder makes Shebat 20 fall at the end of the Nisan year 133/134 C.E. (i.e., in Feb. of 134). He concludes that the 5-year period mentioned in the contract points to Tishri 1, 139 C.E. as the beginning of the next expected Sabbath year.*

*System “D” makes Year 2 of the redemption equal 133/134 C.E. and the next Sabbath year 139/140 C.E., Nisan reckoning.*

*System “A” demands that the upcoming Sabbath year mentioned in these contracts begins on the 1st of Nisan in 140 C.E. Therefore, the 2nd year of the redemption of Israel would equal 134/135 C.E., Nisan reckoning.*

*We must next examine the two most important historical notices of this war (during which time the contracts in question were composed): those from Eusebius and Dio. Eusebius reports the war and its conclusion as follows:*

*The rebellion of the Jews once more progressed in character and extent, and Rufus, the governor of Judaea, when military aid had been sent him by the Emperor, moved out against them, treating their madness without mercy. He destroyed in heaps thousands of*

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<sup>196</sup> DTJD, p. 125.

<sup>197</sup> IEJ, 21.1, pp. 39–46.

<sup>198</sup> TSCJ, p. 61.

<sup>199</sup> HUCA, 44, pp. 176–179.

men, women, and children, and, under the law of war, enslaved their land. The Jews were at that time led by a certain Bar Kochebas, which means “star,” a man who was murderous and a bandit, but relied on his name, as if dealing with slaves, and claimed to be a luminary who had come down to them from heaven and was magically enlightening those who were in misery. The war reached its height in the 18TH YEAR of the reign of Hadrian in Beth Thera, which was a strong citadel not very far from Jerusalem; the siege lasted a long time before the rebels were driven to final destruction by famine and thirst and the instigator of their madness paid the penalty he deserved. Hadrian then commanded that by a legal decree and ordinances the whole nation should be absolutely prevented from entering from thenceforth even the district round Jerusalem, so that not even from a distance could it see its ancestral home. Ariston of Pella tells the story. Thus when the city came to be bereft of the nation of the Jews, and its ancient inhabitants had completely perished, it was colonized by foreigners, and the Roman city which afterwards arose changed its name, and in honor of the reigning emperor Aelius Hadrian was called Aelia.<sup>200</sup>

*Dio’s Roman History tells this story as follows:*

*At Jerusalem he (Hadrian) founded a city in place of the one which had been razed to the ground (i.e., in 70 C.E.), naming it Aelia Capitolina, and on the site of the Temple of the deity (Yahweh) he raised a new temple to Dios (Jupiter/Zeus).<sup>201</sup> This brought on a war of no slight importance nor of brief duration, for the Jews deemed it intolerable that alien nations should be settled in their city and alien religious rites planted there. So long, indeed, as Hadrian was close by in Egypt and again in Syria, they remained quiet, save in so far as they purposely made of poor quality such weapons as they were called upon to furnish, in order that the Romans would reject them and they themselves could thus have the use of them; but WHEN HE WENT AWAY, THEY OPENLY REVOLTED. To be sure, they did not dare try conclusions with the Romans in the open field, but they occupied the advantageous positions in the country and*

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<sup>200</sup> Eusebius, H.E., 4:6.

<sup>201</sup> That Hadrian began to build the city of Aelia Capitolina prior to the outbreak of the Bar Kochba revolt is demonstrated by an Aelia Capitolina coin of Hadrian’s found among a hoard of Bar Kochba coins from the northern region of the Judaeian desert (JCST, pp. 92f).

*strengthened them with mines and walls, in order that they should be hard pressed, and might meet together unobserved underground; and they pierced these subterranean passages from above at intervals to let in air and light. AT FIRST, THE ROMANS TOOK NO ACCOUNT OF THEM. SOON, HOWEVER, ALL JUDAEA HAD BEEN STIRRED UP, AND THE JEWS EVERYWHERE WERE SHOWING SIGNS OF DISTURBANCE, WERE GATHERING TOGETHER, AND GIVING EVIDENCE OF GREAT HOSTILITY TO THE ROMANS, partly by secret and partly by overt acts; many outside nations, too, were joining them through eagerness for gain, and the whole earth, one could almost say, was being stirred up over the matter. Then, indeed, Hadrian sent against them his best generals. First of these was Julius Severus, who was dispatched from Britain, where he was governor, against the Jews. Severus did not venture to attack his opponents in the open at any one point, in view of their numbers and their desperation, but by intercepting small groups, thanks to the number of his soldiers and his under-officers, and by depriving them of food and shutting them up, he was able, RATHER SLOWLY, to be sure, but with comparatively little danger, to crush, exhaust and exterminate them. Very few of them in fact survived. 50 of their most important outposts and 985 of their most famous villages were razed to the ground. 580,000 men were slain in the various raids and battles, and the number of those that perished by famine, disease and fire was past finding out. Thus nearly the whole of Judaea was made desolate, a result of which people had forewarning before the war. For the tomb of Solomon, which the Jews regard as an object of veneration, fell to pieces of itself and collapsed, and many wolves and hyenas rushed howling into their cities. Many Romans, moreover, perished in this war. Therefore, Hadrian in writing to the senate did not employ the opening phrase commonly affected by the emperors, "If you and your children are in health, it is well; I and the legions are in health."<sup>202</sup>*

## Dating the Second Revolt

*When did the first year of the revolt by "all Judaea" actually begin? Only by this date would the Jews begin publishing coins by the revolt. For Systems "B," "C," or "D" to work, the revolt by all Judaea must have begun in the spring of 132 C.E.; but System "A"*

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<sup>202</sup> Dio, 69:12–14.

*demands its commencement with the spring of 133 C.E. To solve this dispute, the records for the Second Revolt must be closely examined. The beginning and ending years for the Second Jewish Revolt are found in the works of Eusebius. In Jerome's version of the *Chronicorum Canonum* of Eusebius, the beginning of the revolt is dated to the 16th year of Hadrian.<sup>203</sup> He further dates the end of the revolt to the 18th year of Hadrian.<sup>204</sup> In his *Ecclesiastical History*, Eusebius writes that "up to the siege of the Jews by Hadrian the successions of the bishops (of Jerusalem) were 15 in number." After naming these 15 bishops, he adds that, "The war reached its height in the 18th year of the reign of Hadrian in Beth Thera, which is a strong citadel not very far from Jerusalem."<sup>205</sup>*

*Hadrian came to power on August 10, 117 C.E.<sup>206</sup> Yet we do not know which year system was utilized by Ariston of Pella, the source used by Eusebius. Pella was a Jewish region located in Peraea, on the east side of the Jordan, opposite Beth-Shean. Yet just before the fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., thousands of Jewish Christians left Jerusalem and settled in Pella.<sup>207</sup> That Eusebius, a devout Christian born in Palestine, would have used a Jewish Christian source would be quite in keeping with his methods. If that were the case, it is very likely that Hadrian's year was judged by the ancient Judaeen method, i.e., using Nisan 1 reckoning.*

*Only three possible dating systems are applicable for dating Hadrian's 16th and 18th years if any of our four possible Sabbath-cycle systems are to work.*

- *If the Roman dies imperii was used, then Hadrian's 1st year would extend from August 10, 117 until August 10, 118 C.E. The 16th year would extend from August 10, 132 until August 10, 133 C.E. The 18th year would run from August 10, 134 until August 10, 135 C.E.*
- *If the Macedonian-Seleucid year system was used then Hadrian's 1st year would run from October, 117 until October, 118 C.E. The 16th year would extend from October, 132 until October, 133 C.E. The 18th year would run from October, 134 until October, 135 C.E.*

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<sup>203</sup> Helm, *Chronik*, p. 200, 282F:17–24.

<sup>204</sup> Helm, *Chronik*, p. 201, 283F:9–14.

<sup>205</sup> Eusebius, *H.E.*, 4:5–6.

<sup>206</sup> Spartianus, *Hadr.*, 4:6–7; cf. Ptolemy, *Can.*, the last year being the 460th of the Greek Era.

<sup>207</sup> Eusebius, *H.E.*, 3:5.

• If Ariston of Pella was a Judaeen or Judaeen Christian and used the old Judaeen system, then Hadrian's 1st year was from Nisan of 118 until Nisan of 119 C.E.

The 16th year of Hadrian would be Nisan, 133 until Nisan, 134 C.E. The 18th year, therefore, would be from Nisan, 135 until Nisan, 136 C.E.

Our next source of evidence for dating the Bar Kochba revolt comes from the *Seder Olam*. This text, written only a few decades after the revolt, gives us the following information:

*From the conflict with Asvarus (Varus) until the conflict with Vespasian: 80 years, while the Temple existed. From the conflict with Vespasian until . . . the conflict with Quietus: 52 years. From the conflict with Quietus until the war of Ben Kozibah (Kochba): 16 years.*<sup>208</sup>

The Judaeen conflict, which caused the Roman general Vespasian to become involved, began with the First Revolt of the Jews against Rome. This conflict flared up during the month of Artemisius (Iyyar; i.e., April/May), in the 12th year of Nero, being the spring of 66 C.E.<sup>209</sup> Technically, Vespasian did not actually invade Judaea until the spring of the following year, i.e., 67 C.E.<sup>210</sup> Yet it is clear that the *Seder Olam* refers to the war itself.

From the beginning of the conflict which came to involve Vespasian until the end of the conflict with Quietus was 52 years, i.e., the years 66/67 to 117/118 C.E., Nisan reckoning. This date is correct. Towards the end of the reign of Trajan, the Emperor suspected that the Jews in Mesopotamia would attack the inhabitants there and ordered Lusius Quietus to clean them out of the province. Quietus organized a force and murdered a great multitude of the Jews, and "for this reform was appointed governor of Judaea."<sup>211</sup> These events are said by Eusebius to have taken place in the 18th year of Trajan (116 C.E.).<sup>212</sup> In turn, his appointment as governor of Judaea brought about unrest in Judaea. Spartianus, the biographer of

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<sup>208</sup> S.O., 30; and see App. N. Also see the Hebrew text of the  $\mu\lambda\omega$  rds (*Seder Olam*) in MJC, 2, p. 66; SORC, 2, p. 547, 3, pp. 441f; also given in HJP, 1, p. 534, n. 92.

<sup>209</sup> Jos., Wars, 2:14:4.

<sup>210</sup> See Chap. XXVII, pp. 361–364.

<sup>211</sup> Eusebius, H.E., 4:2.

<sup>212</sup> Helm, Chronik, p. 196, 278F:18–23.



*emperor Hadrian, points out that upon Hadrian's succession to the Roman throne (Aug., 117 C.E.) the Jews of Palestine were in a state of revolt.*<sup>213</sup>

*The trouble in Palestine, therefore, occurred after the calamity which took place in Mesopotamia. As the result of the oppression of the Jews in Judaea by Quietus, emperor Hadrian recalled Quietus and later executed him.*<sup>214</sup> *The conflict with Quietus, accordingly, ended shortly after Hadrian came to the throne in August of the Jewish year 117/118 C.E., Nisan reckoning.*

*From the end of the conflict with Quietus until the beginning of the Bar Kochba war was 16 years: i.e., from the year 118/119 C.E. to the year 133/134 C.E., Nisan reckoning. It is of no little consequence that the 16 years mentioned in the Seder Olam would equal the 16th year of Hadrian, which thereby confirms the date given by Ariston of Pella, as recorded by Eusebius, for the beginning of the Bar Kochba revolt. Once again, the year 133/134 C.E., Nisan reckoning, is indicated as the beginning of the Second Revolt. Finally, in all the best manuscripts of the Seder Olam "the war of Ben Kozibah (Bar Kochba) was 2½ years" in length.*<sup>215</sup> *Since the war began within the 16th year after the conflict with Quietus, 2½ years more brings us to the 18th year. The dates reported by Eusebius (from Ariston of Pella), which begins the war in the 16th year of Hadrian and ends it in his 18th year, are thereby confirmed.*

*The Bar Kochba war began in the spring of the year. This fact is proven by a document from this period dated: "On the 1st of Iyyar, Year 1 of the Redemption of Israel by Simeon Bar Kosiba, נשיא (Nashia; Prince)"*<sup>216</sup> *of Israel."*<sup>217</sup> *Since Iyyar (April/May) is only the 2nd month of the Jewish year, it is clear that this document was composed very shortly after, if not immediately after, the formal beginning of hostilities for all Judaea.*

*Evidence also exists for the month in which the rebel fortress at Beth Thera and the city of Jerusalem fell to the Romans, which marks the end of the 2½ years of conflict. The Mishnah informs us that "Beth*

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<sup>213</sup> Spartianus, Hadr., 5:2.

<sup>214</sup> Spartianus, Hadr., 5:8, 7:2.

<sup>215</sup> SORC, 2, p. 547, 30:81.

<sup>216</sup> There are two forms of this title, נשיא (Nashia) and נטיא (Nasia), see SEC, Heb. #5387, "an exalted one, i.e. a king or sheik"; HEL, p. 174, "chief . . . chief of a tribe among the Israelites . . . prince."

<sup>217</sup> IEJ, 12.3/4, p. 249; IEJ, 21.1, p. 39, n. 6, p. 41, n. 15.

*Thor (Beth Thera) was captured and the City (Jerusalem) was plowed up” on the 9th of Ab (July/Aug.).*<sup>218</sup>

*It is now known that Emperor Hadrian’s second acclamation as imperator took place sometime between April and December of 135 C.E.*<sup>219</sup> *This acclamation was as a direct result of his victory in Judaea.*<sup>220</sup> *This detail fits very well with the Mishnah’s report that Beth Thera was overthrown in the month of Ab, the 5th month of the Jewish year. This information confirms that, regardless of which year system is used, the fall of Beth Thera and Jerusalem occurred in the month of Ab in the year 135 C.E. On this point all can agree. Since the war ended near the middle of the year of 135/136 C.E., the beginning of the war, 2½ years earlier, must be dated on or very near the beginning of the year 133/134 C.E., Nisan 1 reckoning.*

## Conclusion

*Based upon all the possible ways of dating the reign of Hadrian, the beginning of the revolt, which took place in the 16th year of Hadrian, could not have occurred before August 10 of 132 C.E., the Roman dies imperii for his 16th year.*

*Further, the war did not officially start for all of Judaea until the spring, confirmed by a document mentioning the 1st of Iyyar (April/May) in “Year 1 of the Redemption of Israel.” Therefore the 1st year of the revolt of all Judaea was 133/134 C.E., Nisan reckoning.*<sup>221</sup> *As shall be demonstrated as we proceed in this examination of the Bar Kochba war, there was an earlier local conflict that had begun in late 131/132 C.E. but it did not spread to all Judaea until the beginning of the Sabbath year of 133/134 C.E., Nisan reckoning. The evidence will also leave little room for doubt that Bar Kochba was officially recognized and the war was officially declared for all Judaea against Rome on, or very shortly after, Nisan (March/April) 1, 133 C.E.*

*The Judaeans would not consider it Hadrian’s 16th year until Nisan 1 of 133 C.E., which further supports this year as the beginning of the revolt. Even if we use the Roman system and date the years of Hadrian’s reign from August to August, the 1st of Iyyar—which represents roughly the beginning of the revolt, in the 1st year of the*

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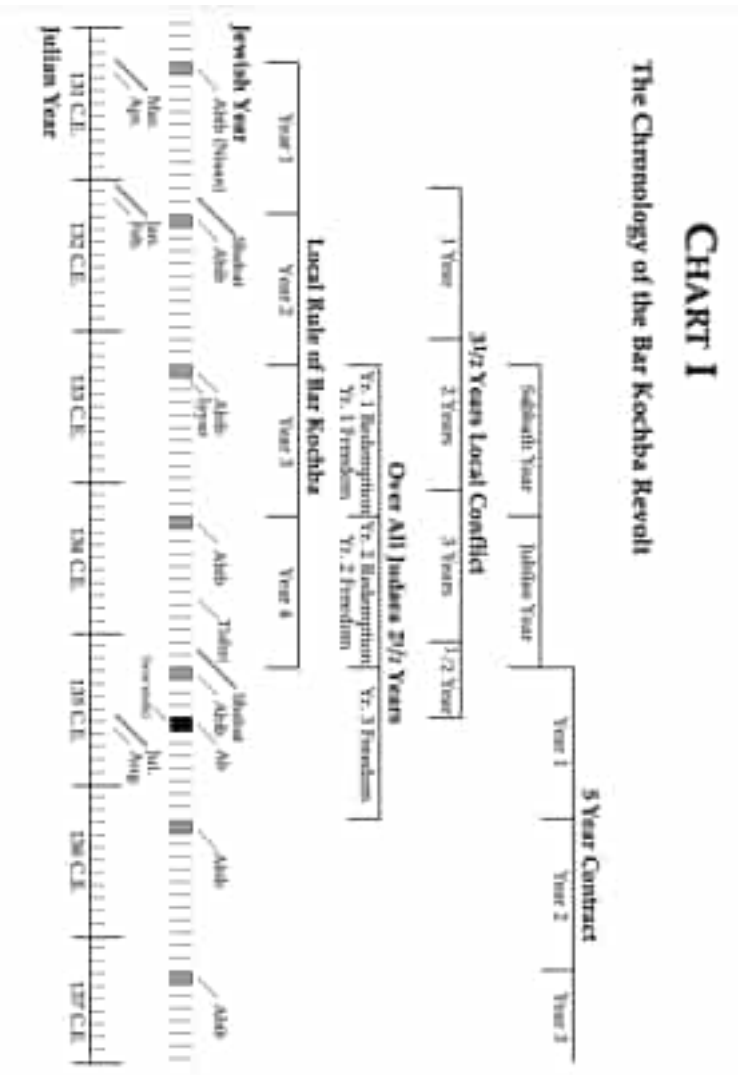
<sup>218</sup> Taan., 4:6.

<sup>219</sup> JQR, 34.1, pp. 61–63.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> Joseph Jacobs correctly regards the year 133 C.E. as the official beginning of the revolt and 135 C.E. as the fall of Beth Thera (Bethar) (JE, 4, p. 71).

era of the Redemption of Israel—still must fall in the spring of 133 C.E. Since the Jews used a Nisan year at that time, there is no other conclusion except that the year 133/134 C.E. was for them the beginning of the war (Chart I).



Based upon this data, it is clear that the year 134/135 C.E., Nisan reckoning, would be the 2nd year of the revolt by all Judaea. That being the case, the 20th day of the month of Shebat, on which day

*the rental contracts mentioning the Sabbath year were composed, would belong to the latter part of that year (Feb., 135 C.E.).*

*The “5 complete producing years of tenancy,” therefore, could not end before Shebat 20 of the year 139/140 C.E., Nisan reckoning, or about February, 140 C.E. The Sabbath year which followed only 40 days hence, as a result, would start with the 1st of Nisan in 140 C.E. A Sabbath year for 140/141 C.E., Nisan reckoning, conforms perfectly with the System “A” cycle (see Chart C). We therefore have one more confirmation that System “A” is the true and correct Sabbath cycle.*

With this information now explained, the 12 contracts were renting the land in this first Sabbatical cycle, which only consisted of five years in which they could grow a crop. They were renting the land for those years of production between the Jubilee year and the Sabbatical year. These are the years 135 C.E., 136 C.E., 137 C.E., 138 C.E. and 139 C.E.

The reason they did this was because the year 133 C.E. was the 49th year, making 134 C.E. the Jubilee year. The next Sabbatical year was 140 C.E., leaving five years for growing crops.

It is important to note that they counted 135 C.E. as year one of the production, while at the same time counting it as the second year in this Sabbatical cycle. The year 136 C.E. would be the 2nd year of production while it was still the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of this Sabbatical cycle. The year 137 C.E. would be the 3<sup>rd</sup> year while at the same time it was the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle. The year 138 C.E. is the 4<sup>th</sup> year of production while at the same time it is the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle. The year 139 is the 5<sup>th</sup> year of production and at the same time it is the 6<sup>th</sup> year of this Sabbatical cycle. The year 140 C.E. is the Shmita year when the land is to rest.

	133	82
2nd Cycle	1st Cycle	
147	140	
146	139	5
145	138	4
144	137	3
143	136	2
142	135	1
141	134	
	133	81

I have numbered the years of production one through five alongside the first Sabbatical cycle. This is the cycle of the Bar Kochba revolt (133 C.E.-135 C.E.). These are the five years the 12 contracts were for—135 C.E.-139 C.E.

							137	83
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle	14th Cycle	
131	224	217	210	203	196	189		
130	223	216	209	202	195	188		
129	222	215	208	201	194	187		
128	221	214	207	200	193	186		
127	220	213	206	199	192	185		
126	219	212	205	198	191	184		
125	218	211	204	197	190	183		
							135	82
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle	14th Cycle	
182	175	168	161	154	147	140		
181	174	167	160	153	146	139		
180	173	166	159	152	145	138		
179	172	165	158	151	144	137		
178	171	164	157	150	143	136		
177	170	163	156	149	142	135		
176	169	162	155	148	141	134		
							133	81
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle	14th Cycle	5th Millennial Day Years
131	124	119	112	105	98	91		
132	125	118	111	104	97	90		
131	124	117	110	103	96	89		
130	123	116	109	102	95	88		
129	122	115	108	101	94	87		
128	121	114	107	100	93	86		
127	120	113	106	99	92	85		
							93	80
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle	14th Cycle	4th Millennial Day Years
84	77	70	63	56	49	42		
83	76	69	62	55	48	41		
82	75	68	61	54	47	40		
81	74	67	60	53	46	39		
80	73	66	59	52	45	38		
79	72	65	58	51	44	37		
78	71	64	57	50	43	36		
							36	79
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle	14th Cycle	
39	32	25	18	11	4	-3	-10	
38	31	24	17	10	3	-2	-9	
37	30	23	16	9	2	-1	-8	
36	29	22	15	8	1	0	-7	
35	28	21	14	7	0	-1	-6	
34	27	20	13	6	-1	-2	-5	
33	26	19	12	5	-2	-3	-4	
32	25	18	11	4	-3	-4	-3	
31	24	17	10	3	-4	-5	-2	
30	23	16	9	2	-5	-6	-1	
29	22	15	8	1	-6	-7	0	
B.C.E. corrected for an even year.							13	78

In this chart we have the 49<sup>th</sup> year, 133 C.E., marked in yellow. It is the 7<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year in the 7<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle of the 81<sup>st</sup> Jubilee cycle. We have the 50<sup>th</sup> year Jubilee in 134 C.E., which is also the 1<sup>st</sup>

year of the 1<sup>st</sup> Sabbatical cycle, the year of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Jubilee cycle, again marked in yellow. The 7<sup>th</sup>-year shmita year of the 1<sup>st</sup> Sabbatical cycle, 140 C.E., is also marked in yellow.

## **Chapter 4 | 362—432 C.E Tombstone of Mehirshah, Daughter of Marsah—Jubilee—Earliest Hillel Calendar Use**

Having now explained how the 12 contracts from the caves of Wadi Murabba'at near Bethlehem counted the years of production, by the years they could actually grow and harvest food, I am going to jump to one of our Tombstones, which has caused many of the experts to think it was done in error.

I will forego explaining the history of the Tombstones until we get to that section. My personal obsessive-compulsive personality disorder (OCPD) is kicking in big time as I once again go away from doing this chronologically in order, but this placement is a natural fit as I am sure you will soon see.

I will admit the explanation I am about to give works in understanding the counting of this one tombstone. Others we have that come after this year in the first Sabbatical cycle are not numbered the same as this one, but seem to not recognize the Jubilee in their counting.

Before I do that, I must share this fact. I had recorded this tombstone from Joseph Naveh's list, tombstone # 10, who recorded it as follows:

*This tombstone belongs to Mahirshah daughter of Mersah the Haver who died on the fifth day (Thursday), 17th day of the month of Elul (6th month) in the fourth year of the Shemitah year 3 hundred to the destruction of the temple. May he enter in peace and rest in his resting place  
Shalom Shalom Shalom Shalom*

I had also recorded this stone on the list I was not able to reconcile and stated the following:

*Commentary: The Year 370 ( $300 + 70 = 370$ ) is the 6th year of the 6<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle and this Tombstone claims it is the 4<sup>th</sup> year, therefore we are not able to claim this stone as a witness for the Sabbatical years.*

*The 17<sup>th</sup> day of the 6<sup>th</sup> month does line up with the 5<sup>th</sup> day (Thursday) in the year 370 C.E., using the crescent moon to*

*begin the year, but it is not the 4<sup>th</sup> year; it is the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle.*

*At this time, we do not have an explanation as to why there is a two-year discrepancy.*

But then as I completed this book, I noticed these two were the same except the date was rewritten by these other authors as 362 years after the destruction instead of the 300 recorded by Naveh. And with this year being 362 instead of 300 we can now explain it.

The tombstone is recorded in Hebrew. Here is the English translation of the stone:

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis in London in November 1998, inv. no. Z-315. It is now kept at the Reuben and Edith Hecht Museum of the University of Haifa, inv. no. H-2955.*

*Bibl.: Naveh 1995, pp. 490-491, no. 10 (with drawing and photo); Naveh 2001, pp. 5-7, no. 10, fig. 1 on p. 6; Beyer 2004, p. 304, no. \*yyZO 10. For the date see Stern 2001, p. 89; p. 90, table 2.2; p. 91; p. 147, table 3.3 and n. h on p. 148; p. 150, table 3.4 and n. d.*

*This is the grave of Mehirshah daughter of Marsah, the fellow who died on Thursday, the 17th day of the month Elul, in the fourth year of the Sabbatical cycle, the year 3 hundred sixty 2 after the destruction of the Temple. May there come peace and may it rest on her resting place. Peace Peace<sup>222</sup>*

These tombstones give a lot of information about the Sabbatical and Jubilee years. All we have to do is determine when the Temple was destroyed, which we will do with you when we get to the 70 C.E. date. But because we also have the month and the day of the week, we can also learn much, much more about the dating.

If we take the year 362 years after the destruction and add that to the year 70 C.E., when the Temple was destroyed, then we have a total of 432 years:

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<sup>222</sup> INSCRIPTIONS FROM PALAESTINA TERTIA, VOL. Ic, THE JEWISH ARAMAIC INSCRIPTIONS FROM GHOR ES-SAFI (BYZANTINE ZOORA) Yiannis E. Meimaris Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou In collaboration with Sebastian P. Brock 54-55 n. 21. <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Inscriptions-Palaestina-Tertia-Vol-Byzantine/dp/9609538460>



$$362 + 70 = 432$$

We are also told that this year of her death is the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle.

But when we look at the chart below, the year 432 C.E. is the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle. What we have just learned from the 12 contracts from the caves of Wadi Murabba'at near Bethlehem, is that they listed only those years they were able to harvest a crop. These contracts began to count from the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the first Sabbatical cycle. If this understanding is indeed correct, then this would explain why this tombstone is stating that Mehirshah died in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of harvestable crops.

							427	48
Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
476	469	462	455	448	441	434		
475	468	461	454	447	440	433		5
474	467	460	453	446	439	432		4
473	466	459	452	445	438	431		3
472	465	458	451	444	437	430		2
471	464	457	450	443	436	429		1
470	463	456	449	442	435	428	Jubilee	
							428	87

In the chart above, the Jubilee year is 428 C.E. The 1<sup>st</sup> year of harvestable crops is 429 C.E., the 2<sup>nd</sup> year is 430 C.E., the 3<sup>rd</sup> year is 431 C.E., the 4<sup>th</sup> year is 432 C.E., as the tombstone declares, and the 5<sup>th</sup> year is 433 C.E. Again, they would only do this in the 1<sup>st</sup> Sabbatical cycle.

If in fact this is correct, then this tombstone is telling us of another Jubilee year being in the year 428 C.E., without saying it.

I concede that later tombstones I have discovered do not follow this pattern, but instead count the Jubilee year as the first year.

Although this tombstone has presented me with a bit of a challenge, I have not removed it from our list because I do think I have a very plausible explanation.

This tombstone also gives us the day of the week to compare to Torahcalendar.com. To determine what calendar they were using, we just look for the 17<sup>th</sup> of the month of Elul (6<sup>th</sup> month) to be on a Thursday. In almost every tombstone with a weekday to check, we found Torahcalendar.com was one month—and sometimes two months—later than the tombstone date.

Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 432 C.E., and the 6<sup>th</sup> month. Click: view calendar. Check to see if 17<sup>th</sup> day is a Thursday. It is not. Repeat these steps only now enter 5<sup>th</sup> month. Again the 17<sup>th</sup> is not on Thursday because Torahcalendar.com uses the crescent moon to begin each month.

Using the Conjunction moon charts from NASA, <https://astropixels.com/ephemeris/phasescat/phases0401.html>, find the year 432 C.E. Check when conjunction was in August. On August 12 the conjunction was 00:22 after midnight. Now count from August 12 and you will get the 17<sup>th</sup> day of this month on the Thursday as the Tombstone declares. You have now matched this tombstone to the calendar thus proving they were using the conjunction to begin each month, and in this case one month before what Torahcalendar.com claims. Torahcalendar.com uses the equinox to determine the start of the year.

This tombstone of Mehirshah, daughter of Marsah, could only be aligned with Torahcalendar.com by going to the 5<sup>th</sup> month using the conjunction moon from NASA of August 12, 432 C.E. This means they would have kept Passover on March 4, 432 C.E., which is before the equinox date, demonstrating that the equinox was not a factor in determining the calendar.

## **Counting by 49 From One Jubilee to the Next**

Now, we have not one, but four Jubilee years from which we can solve our mathematical equation I left you with earlier.

We have the year 2500 A.C., After Creation, counting from the creation of Adam until the year Joshua entered the Promised Land as Leviticus 25:2 states.

We have the year Sennacherib came against Hezekiah as recorded in 2 Kings 19:29 as 701 B.C., which is the 49<sup>th</sup> year, and 700 B.C. as the Jubilee year.

We have the Bar Kochba Revolt, with the 12 contracts found in the caves of Wadi Murabba'at near Bethlehem, detailing the harvestable years after the Jubilee year of 134 C.E.

And finally, we have the Jubilee year of 428 C.E., which we were able to determine from the dating of the tombstone of Mehirshah who died in the year 432 C.E.

I also have a fifth date on another tombstone which I am not going to show you in this section, because it needs to be proven with the year

before it. So I will mention it and you can go to that section and check it out. It is titled *407—477 C.E. Unknown, Son/Daughter of Nikodemos—Jubilee Year—Hillel Calendar*. You can find it in the index. This tombstone is proof of another Jubilee year. We now have five for you to use and align together.

You can dismiss any one of these four Gregorian-dated Jubilee years, if you are so inclined. But if you count from one of the remaining Jubilee years to the next, you will discover you must count by 49s. When you do, they all line up. If you count by sevens from the 49<sup>th</sup> year, you will land on every Sabbatical year in history, as well as the ones we are about to show you. Each of the Jubilee year dates, as well as the 49<sup>th</sup> year dates, each matches one another, and they also match all the rest of the evidence we are about to present to you.

As you do your counting, remember you must subtract one when you cross the C.E. to B.C. dates because there is no year zero. I will now count from 428 C.E., which is the Jubilee year identified by the tombstone of Mehirshah, daughter of Marsah, back to the Jubilee year found in 2 Kings 19:29 of 700 B.C. I will count by 49-year blocks of time:

428 C.E. – 49 = 379 – 49 = 330 – 49 = 281 – 49 = 232 – 49 = 183  
 And 183 – 49 = 134 C.E., our Jubilee year for the contracts.  
 134 C.E. – 49 = 85 – 49 = 36 – 49 = -13 - 1 for no year zero = -14  
 -14 – 49 = -63 – 49 = -112 – 49 = -161 – 49 = -210 – 49 = -259  
 -259 – 49 = -308 – 49 = -357 – 49 = -406 – 49 = -455 – 49 = -504  
 -504 – 49 = -553 – 49 = -602 – 49 = -651 – 49 = -700 B.C.

In doing this counting by 49s, we also landed on the Jubilee year of the Bar Kochba Revolt of 134 C.E. If we counted forward from 428 C.E., we would land on the next Jubilee year we have just mentioned of 477 C.E., the tombstone of *Unknown, son/daughter of Nikodemos*. You have now proven which method you are to count from one Jubilee to the next—you count by 49s.

## **Connecting Genesis to the Gregorian Calendar by Solving the Equation**

In Chapter 1, we showed you Adam Clarke's commentary on 1 Kings 6:1. Allow me to remind you what he said:

*In the four hundred and eightieth year - The Septuagint has the four hundred and fortieth year. It need scarcely be noticed, that among*

*chronologists there is a great difference of opinion concerning this epocha. Glycas has 330 years; Melchior Canus, 590 years; Josephus, 592 years; Sulpicius Severus, 588; Clemens Alexandrinus, 570; Cedrenus, 672; Codomanus, 598; Vossius and Capellus, 580; Serarius, 680; Nicholas Abraham, 527; Maestlinus, 592; Petavius and Valtherus, 520. There are more than a dozen different opinions; and after all, that in the common Hebrew text is as likely to be the true one as any of the others.*

Adam Clarke is telling us that no one knows, and any one of the 14 views could be right when compared to the others. Rather than spend countless hours trying to figure this number out, I decided to leave it as X in our equation.

2500 years are from Adam until they enter the land with Joshua.

X represents the years from the Exodus in 2458 A.C., until Solomon's 4<sup>th</sup> year when he began to build the Temple in 967 B.C. We are trying to figure out how to connect the A.C. (After Creation) years with the B.C. (Before Christ) years. This is what X will show us.

967 B.C. is when Solomon began to build the Temple, now that we can align the Israelite kings with the Assyrian chronology.

-1 because there is no year zero from 1 B.C. to 1 C.E.

2045 is the next Jubilee year. We know this because we have been able to count by 49s from any of the four Jubilee years we have just shown you. But we want to count to the 49<sup>th</sup> year, so our number is 2044 as the final 49<sup>th</sup> year in the Jubilee cycle.

We also know that you must count by 49s and not 50s, so our Genesis 6:3 verse is talking about 120 shanah, or revolutions of time. This is now  $120 \times 49 = 5880$  years. Now our equation looks like the following:

$$2458 + X + 967 - 1 + 2044 = 5880$$

To solve for X, we do the following:

$$2458 + X + 967 - 1 = 5880 - 2044 = 3836$$

$$2458 + X + 967 = 5880 - 2044 + 1 = 3837$$

$$2458 + X = 5880 - 2044 + 1 - 967 = 2870$$

$$X = 5880 - 2044 + 1 - 967 - 2458 = 412$$

X = 412 years, not the 480 years nor any of the other numbers which Adam Clark has quoted from all the various chronologists.

You have now completed the math equation. We have done this as simply as possible.

We have proven from one Jubilee to the next—from 700 B.C. to 134 C.E.—you must count by 49s in order for them to match. If you count by 50s, they will not align. The same goes for the 4<sup>th</sup> Jubilee proof we presented of the tombstone in the year 428 C.E., and the 5<sup>th</sup> Jubilee proof of 477 C.E. All of these years are syncretized only when you count by 49s.

Knowing we count by 49s, then we can go back to when Adam was created. Using Genesis 6:3 where Yehovah says He is giving mankind 120 Shanah or cycles of time, we can then count out 120 Jubilee cycles of 49 years each. This shows us that every seven years is a Sabbatical year counting from when Adam was created. We can now plot this out until we have 120 Jubilee cycles and/or 5880 years. I have done this for you which you can order from Amazon.<sup>223</sup>

Now when you count from the Exodus in the year 2458 A.C. and add the 412 years which was our X from the math equation, you will have the year 2870 A.C. as Solomon's 4<sup>th</sup> year. It is by doing this, that you can now match the A.C. years—counting from Adam's creation year—to the known Gregorian year counting system.

Some people believe Abram was born when Terah was 130 instead of 70. If you are going to use the date for Terah being 130 instead of 70 when Abram was born, then you must add on 60 more years to our total. When you do this, you will discover how this would then give too many years. It would mean that we are now, in 2024, already in the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium and the Messiah would have returned. His Second Coming has not happened yet, so this is obviously incorrect. That being said, one must conclude Terah was indeed 70 years old and not 130 years old when Abram was born.

Our current year of 2024 on the left-hand side, as the 1<sup>st</sup> year in the 5<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle, is equivalent to the year 5860 A.C. in the same position on the right-hand side. The chart on the left is in Gregorian years. The chart on the right is in After Creation years. They are showing you the same information but use two different methods of counting.

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<sup>223</sup> The Timeline Since Creation of Adam: The Sabbatical and Jubilee Year Calendar  
<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09KN64QYX/>

If you add 60 years to our current year of 2024 C.E., which is 5860 A.C., we are at the year 5920 right now and 40 years into the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium already. Where is the peace, where is the Messiah?

Looking at the chart above, we are now just 20 years away from the start of the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium.

In conclusion then, each Jubilee cycle consists of 49 years. 120 Jubilee cycles is then 5880 years. The year 2024 C.E. is equal to the year 5860 After Creation. This means we have 20 years until the 120<sup>th</sup> Jubilee in 2045. The year 2045 will be the 5881<sup>st</sup> year since the creation of Adam and the start of the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium.

We have now shown you the Jubilee year of 2500 A.C., which is equivalent to the year to 1337 B.C., the 49<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year of 701 B.C., the Jubilee year of 700 B.C., the 49<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year of 133 C.E., the Jubilee year of 134 C.E., the Sabbatical year of 140 C.E., the Jubilee year of 428 C.E., the Sabbatical year of 434 C.E., and finally the Jubilee year of 477 C.E. and how they all align with one another.

We have been able to do this by doing the chronology of Genesis correctly from the creation of Adam; by examining and understanding 2 Kings 19:29, Isaiah 37:30, 2 Chronicles 32, and the Assyrian Eponym lists; and by correctly dating the Bar Kochba Revolt and understanding the 12 contracts, found in the caves of Wadi Murabba'at near Bethlehem as well as the two tombstones of Zoar depicting Jubilee years.

We have shown you five Jubilee years and four Sabbatical years from history and provided you with 14 historical pieces of evidence to prove them by. We now have 100% confidence in how to count from one Jubilee year to the next.

## Chapter 5 | Sabbatical Year 869 B.C. Jehoshaphat

I have mentioned how there are two key dates in history by which we can know when the Israelite kings reigned. One was recorded by Sennacherib when he came against Hezekiah, which we have just shown you in Chapter 2.

The oldest one, recording an interaction with the Israelite kings, was created by Shalmaneser III who came and fought against Ahab at the battle of Qarqar in 853 B.C. I have mentioned this many times and thought I would share more details about the record here:

*The Kurkh Monoliths<sup>224</sup> are two Assyrian stelae of c. 852 BC & 879 BC that contain a description of the reigns of Ashurnasirpal II and his son Shalmaneser III. The Monoliths were discovered in 1861 by a British archaeologist John George Taylor, who was the British Consul-General stationed in the Ottoman Eyalet of Kurdistan, at a site called Kurkh, which is now known Üçtepe Höyük, in the district of Bismil, in the province of Diyarbakir of Turkey. Both stelae were donated by Taylor to the British Museum in 1863.*

*The Shalmaneser III monolith contains a description of the Battle of Qarqar at the end. This description contains the name "A-ha-ab-bu Sir-ila-a-a" which is generally accepted to be a reference to Ahab, king of Israel; although this is the only reference to the term "Israel" in Assyrian and Babylonian records, which usually refer to the Northern Kingdom as the "House of Omri" in reference to its ruling dynasty—a fact brought up by some scholars who dispute the proposed translation. It is also one of four known contemporary inscriptions containing the name of Israel, the others being the Merneptah Stele, the Tel Dan Stele, and the Mesha Stele. This description is also the oldest document that mentions the Arabs.*

*The inscription on the Shalmaneser III Stela deals with campaigns Shalmaneser made in western Mesopotamia and Syria, fighting extensively with the countries of Bit Adini and Carchemish. At the end of the Monolith comes the account of the Battle of Qarqar, where an alliance of twelve kings fought against Shalmaneser at the Syrian city of Qarqar. This alliance, comprising eleven kings, was led by Irhuleni of Hamath and Hadadezer of Damascus, describing also a large force led by King Ahab of Israel.*

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<sup>224</sup> Kurkh Monoliths [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kurkh\\_Monoliths](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kurkh_Monoliths)

*The English translation of the end of the Shalmaneser III monolith is as follows:*

**Year 6 (Col. II, 78-102)**

610. *In the year of Dâian-Assur, in the month of Airu, the fourteenth day, I departed from Nineveh, crossed the Tigris, and drew near to the cities of Giammu, (near) the Balih(?) River. At the fearfulness of my sovereignty, the terror of my frightful weapons, they became afraid; with their own weapons his nobles killed Giammu. Into Kitlala and Til-sha-mâr-ahi, I entered. I had my gods brought into his palaces. In his palaces I spread a banquet. His treasury I opened. I saw his wealth. His goods, his property, I carried off and brought to my city Assur. From Kitlala I departed. To Kâr-Shalmaneser I drew near. In (goat)-skin boats I crossed the Euphrates the second time, at its flood. The tribute of the kings on that side of the Euphrates,---of Sangara of Carchemish, of Kundashpi of Kumuhu (Commagene), of Arame son of Gûzi, of Lalli the Milidean, of Haiani son of Gahari, of Kalparoda of Hattina, of Kalparuda of Gurgum, - silver, gold, lead, copper, vessels of copper, at Ina-Assur-uttir-asbat, on that side of the Euphrates, on the river Sagur, which the people of Hatti call Pitru, there I received (it). From the Euphrates I departed; I drew near to Halman (Aleppo). They were afraid to fight with (me), they seized my feet. Silver, gold, as their tribute I received. I offered sacrifices before the god Adad of Halman. From Halman I departed. To the cities of Irhulêni, the Hamathite, I drew near. The cities of Adennu, Bargâ, Arganâ, his royal cities, I captured. His spoil, his property, the goods of his palaces, I brought out. I set fire to his palaces. From Argana I departed. To Karkar I drew near.*

611. *Karkar, his royal city, I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire. 1,200 chariots, 1,200 cavalry, 20,000 soldiers, of Hadad-ezer, of Aram (? Damascus); 700 chariots, 700 cavalry, 10,000\* soldiers of Irhulêni of Hamath, 2,000 chariots, 10,000 soldiers of Ahab, the Israelite, 500 soldiers of the Gueans, 1,000 soldiers of the Musreans, 10 chariots, 10,000 soldiers of the Irkanateans, 200 soldiers of Matinuba'il, the Arvadite, 200 soldiers of the Usanateans, 30 chariots, [ ],000 soldiers of Adunu-ba'il, the Shianean, 1,000 camels of Gindibu', the Arabian, [ ],000 soldiers [of] Ba'sa, son of Ruhubi, the Ammonite, - these twelve kings he brought to his support; to offer battle and fight, they came against me. (Trusting) in the exalted might which Assur, the lord, had given (me), in the mighty weapons, which Nergal, who goes before me, had presented (to me), I battled with them. From Karkar, as far as*



*the city of Gilzau, I routed them. 14,000 of their warriors I slew with the sword. Like Adad, I rained destruction upon them. I scattered their corpses far and wide, (and) covered (lit., filled) the face of the desolate plain with their widespreading armies. With (my) weapons I made their blood to flow down the valleys(?) of the land. The plain was too small to let their bodies fall, the wide countryside was used up in burying them. With their bodies I spanned the Arantu) as with a bridge(?). In that battle I took from them their chariots, their cavalry, their horses, broken to the yoke. (\*Possibly 20,000).*

1 Kings 16 tells us that Ahab reigned for 22 years:

*29 And in the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab the son of Omri began to reign over Israel. And Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. (1 Kings 16:29)*

We are also told how Ahab died, matching what we are told in the Kurkh Monolith about this major battle:

#### ***Ahab Killed in Battle***

*29 And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth in Gilead. 30 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself and enter into the battle. But you put on your robes. And the king of Israel disguised himself and went into the battle. 31 But the king of Syria commanded his thirty-two commanders of the chariots, saying, Do not fight with small nor great, but with the king of Israel. 32 And it happened when the commanders of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, Surely it is the king of Israel. And they turned aside to fight against him. And Jehoshaphat cried out. 33 And it happened when the commanders of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him. 34 And a man drew a bow in his simplicity and struck the king of Israel between the joints and the breastplate. And he said to the driver of his chariot, Turn your hand and carry me out of the army, for I am wounded. 35 And the battle increased that day. And the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at evening. And the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot. 36 And there went a cry throughout the army when the sun went, saying, Each to his city, and each to his land. 37 And the king died and came to Samaria. And they buried the king in Samaria. 38 And one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood, and they washed his*

*armor, according to the Word of Jehovah which He spoke. 39 And the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house which he built, and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the Book of the Matters of the Days of the Kings of Israel? 40 And Ahab lay with his fathers. And his son Ahaziah reigned in his place. (1 Kings 22:29-40)*

Ahab died in 853 at the battle of Qarqar, which is recorded as Shalmaneser III's 6<sup>th</sup> year as king.<sup>225</sup> This is how we know this date—from the Assyrian Eponym list.

We read that Jehoshaphat became king in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Ahab's reign:

*41 And Jehoshaphat, the son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. 42 Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he began to reign. And he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. (1 Kings 22:41-42)*

Adding 22 years to 853 B.C. when Ahab died brings us to 875 B.C. Jehoshaphat began to reign in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Ahab making that year 871 B.C.

Using these benchmark years to establish the chronologies of the Hebrew kings, both Thiele and Mcfall date King Jehoshaphat's coregent year with his father Asa's 39th year, 873 B.C., the year Asa was infected with a severe disease in his feet. Jehoshaphat shared the throne with his father for three years until 871 B.C. (873, 872, 871), and then became sole regent when Asa died of the disease in 871.

*1 And Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his place. And he made himself strong against Israel. 2 And he placed troops in all the fortified cities of Judah, and set troops in the land of Judah and in the cities of Ephraim which Asa his father had taken. 3 And Jehovah was with Jehoshaphat because he walked in the first ways of his*

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<sup>225</sup> 853 bc, when the Battle of Qarqar was fought (possibly in July/August of that year (Thiele, 1983:95 n. 13)), which was the sixth year of Shalmaneser III—the year in which Ahab died; Has the chronology of the Hebrew kings been finally settled? By Leslie McFall <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/article/has-the-chronology-of-the-hebrew-kings-been-finally-settled/>

father David and did not seek to Baals. 4 But he looked to the God of his father, and walked in His commandments, and not after the doings of Israel. 5 And Jehovah made the kingdom sure in his hand. And all Judah brought presents to Jehoshaphat. And he had great riches and honor. 6 And his heart was lifted up in the ways of Jehovah. And he took away the high places and Asherahs out of Judah. 7 **And in the third year of his reign he sent to his rulers, to Benhail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Michaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah.** 8 And with them he sent Levites, Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah, Levites. And with them he sent Elishama and Jehoram the priests. 9 And they taught in Judah and had the book of the Law of Jehovah with them, and went around throughout all the cities of Judah and taught the people. 10 And the fear of Jehovah fell on all the kingdoms of the lands around Judah, so that they did not make war against Jehoshaphat. 11 And from the Philistines they brought Jehoshaphat presents and silver for tribute. Also the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he-goats. 12 And Jehoshaphat became exceedingly great. And he built fortresses in Judah, and store cities. (2 Chronicles 17:1-12)

Jehoshaphat's 3<sup>rd</sup> year was 869 B.C. (871, 870, 869). In the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of his reign, Jehoshaphat sent out priests and Levites over the land to instruct the people in the Law, an activity that was commanded to be done in a Sabbatical year.

9 And Moses wrote this Law and delivered it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and to all the elders of Israel. 10 And Moses commanded them, saying: At the end of seven years, at the set time of the year of release, in the Feast of Tabernacles, 11 when all Israel has come to appear before Jehovah your God in the place which He shall choose, you shall read this Law before all Israel in their hearing. 12 Gather the people, men and women and the little ones, and your stranger who is within your gates, so that they may hear and that they may learn and fear Jehovah your God, and be careful to do all the words of this Law, 13 and that their sons who have not known may hear and learn to fear Jehovah your God, as long as you live in the land where you go over Jordan to possess it. (Deuteronomy 31:9-13)

							-722	43
Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle		
-756	-757	-764	-771	-778	-785	-792		
-791	-798	-769	-772	-779	-786	-793		
-792	-789	-766	-773	-780	-787	-794		
-793	-768	-767	-774	-781	-788	-795		
-794	-761	-768	-776	-782	-789	-796		
-795	-762	-769	-776	-783	-790	-797		
-796	-763	-770	-777	-784	-791	-798		
							-799	42
Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle		
-799	-806	-813	-820	-827	-834	-841		
-800	-807	-814	-821	-828	-835	-842		
-801	-808	-815	-822	-829	-836	-843		
-802	-809	-816	-823	-830	-837	-844		
-803	-810	-817	-824	-831	-838	-845		
-804	-811	-818	-825	-832	-839	-846		
-805	-812	-819	-826	-833	-840	-847		
							-847	41
Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle	41b Jehoshaphat Day Starts	
-848	-855	-862	-869	-876	-883	-890		
-849	-856	-863	-870	-877	-884	-891		
-850	-857	-864	-871	-878	-885	-892		
-851	-858	-865	-872	-879	-886	-893		
-852	-859	-866	-873	-880	-887	-894		
-853	-860	-867	-874	-881	-888	-895		
-854	-861	-868	-875	-882	-889	-896		
							-896	40
Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle	40b Jehoshaphat Ends	
-897	-904	-911	-918	-925	-932	-939		
-898	-905	-912	-919	-926	-933	-940		
-899	-906	-913	-920	-927	-934	-941		
-900	-907	-914	-921	-928	-935	-942		
-901	-908	-915	-922	-929	-936	-943		
-902	-909	-916	-923	-930	-937	-944		
-903	-910	-917	-924	-931	-938	-945		
							-945	39
Sabbath	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	1st Cycle		
-946	-953	-960	-967	-974	-981	-988		
-947	-954	-961	-968	-975	-982	-989		
-948	-955	-962	-969	-976	-983	-990		
-949	-956	-963	-970	-977	-984	-991		
-950	-957	-964	-971	-978	-985	-992		
-951	-958	-965	-972	-979	-986	-993		
-952	-959	-966	-973	-980	-987	-994		
							-994	38

Because Jehoshaphat obeyed Yehovah, he was blessed abundantly and had peace on all sides.

Now that we have established the Jubilee cycles as 49 years each, or seven Sabbatical years with the 50<sup>th</sup> year being the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the next count just as we do for Shavuot each year, we can accurately lay out the charts in Excel and discover Jehoshaphat's 3<sup>rd</sup> year was indeed a Sabbatical year just as the scriptures tell us.

In the preceding chart you can see the Sabbatical year of 869 B.C. marked in yellow. It is the 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year in the 61<sup>st</sup> Jubilee cycle. This cycle is also the start of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennial day.

## Chapter 6 | Sabbatical year 624 B.C. Josiah

I am going to share with you a chronology of the Old Testament kings<sup>226</sup> so you can better understand which kings we are talking about.

The following table provides a summary of the characteristics of the range of loans available following the negative finding after business death.

Category/Status	Organization/Entity	Project/Topic	Location/Region	Activity/Event	Notes/Remarks
Infrastructure	Government	Highway A	Mountain	Construction	Completed
		Highway B	Mountain	Planning	On Hold
		Highway C	Mountain	Design	On Hold
Health	Government	Healthcare	City	Initiative	Successful
Education	Government	Education	Mountain	Program	On Hold
Environment	Government	Environment	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Industry	Government	Industry	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Transport	Government	Transport	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Energy	Government	Energy	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Water	Government	Water	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Telecom	Government	Telecom	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Defense	Government	Defense	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Science	Government	Science	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Arts	Government	Arts	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Religion	Government	Religion	Mountain	Project	On Hold
History	Government	History	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Geography	Government	Geography	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Demographics	Government	Demographics	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Politics	Government	Politics	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Law	Government	Law	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Medicine	Government	Medicine	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Technology	Government	Technology	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Business	Government	Business	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Finance	Government	Finance	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Insurance	Government	Insurance	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Real Estate	Government	Real Estate	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Construction	Government	Construction	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Manufacturing	Government	Manufacturing	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Retail	Government	Retail	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Food	Government	Food	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Drugs	Government	Drugs	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Alcohol	Government	Alcohol	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Tobacco	Government	Tobacco	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Gambling	Government	Gambling	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Prostitution	Government	Prostitution	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Sex Work	Government	Sex Work	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Human Trafficking	Government	Human Trafficking	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Organ Trafficking	Government	Organ Trafficking	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Child Trafficking	Government	Child Trafficking	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Sex Trafficking	Government	Sex Trafficking	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Human Rights	Government	Human Rights	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Gender Equality	Government	Gender Equality	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Disability Rights	Government	Disability Rights	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Immigration	Government	Immigration	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Refugees	Government	Refugees	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Asylum	Government	Asylum	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Border Control	Government	Border Control	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Customs	Government	Customs	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Immigration Services	Government	Immigration Services	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Border Patrol	Government	Border Patrol	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Customs and Border Protection	Government	Customs and Border Protection	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Immigration and Customs Enforcement	Government	Immigration and Customs Enforcement	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Border Security	Government	Border Security	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Customs Security	Government	Customs Security	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Immigration Security	Government	Immigration Security	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Border Security and Customs	Government	Border Security and Customs	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Customs and Border Security	Government	Customs and Border Security	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Immigration and Border Security	Government	Immigration and Border Security	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Border Security and Immigration	Government	Border Security and Immigration	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Customs and Immigration	Government	Customs and Immigration	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Immigration and Customs	Government	Immigration and Customs	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Border Security and Customs and Immigration	Government	Border Security and Customs and Immigration	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Customs and Border Security and Immigration	Government	Customs and Border Security and Immigration	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Immigration and Border Security and Customs	Government	Immigration and Border Security and Customs	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Border Security and Immigration and Customs	Government	Border Security and Immigration and Customs	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Customs and Immigration and Border Security	Government	Customs and Immigration and Border Security	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Immigration and Customs and Border Security	Government	Immigration and Customs and Border Security	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Border Security and Customs and Immigration and	Government	Border Security and Customs and Immigration and	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Customs and Border Security and Immigration and	Government	Customs and Border Security and Immigration and	Mountain	Project	On Hold
Immigration and Border Security and Customs and					

The table is composed from column 4, from row 21 to the previous function of the previous row and from row 21.

## 226 Chronology of the Old Testament Kings

<https://www.understandchristianity.com/timelines/chronology-old-testament-kings/>

In 2 Kings we are told about an event that King Josiah did:

*1 And the king sent. And they gathered to him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem. 2 And the king went up into the house of Jehovah. And all the men of Judah and all the people of Jerusalem with him, and the priests and the prophets, and all the people, from the small even to the great. And he read all the Words of the Book of the covenant which was found in the house of Jehovah in their ears. 3 And the king stood by a pillar and made a covenant before Jehovah, to walk after Jehovah and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the Words of this covenant which was written in this Book. And all the people stood to the covenant. 4 And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the doorkeepers, to bring forth out of the temple of Jehovah all the vessels which were made for Baal, and for the Asherah, and for all the host of heaven. And he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them to Bethel. (2 Kings 23:1-4)*

Josiah was doing exactly what Moses told Israel to do in that they must read the Torah every 7<sup>th</sup> year so that everyone could hear what the Torah said.

*9 And Moses wrote this Law and delivered it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and to all the elders of Israel. 10 And Moses commanded them, saying: At the end of seven years, at the set time of the year of release, in the Feast of Tabernacles, 11 when all Israel has come to appear before Jehovah your God in the place which He shall choose, you shall read this Law before all Israel in their hearing. 12 Gather the people, men and women and the little ones, and your stranger who is within your gates, so that they may hear and that they may learn and fear Jehovah your God, and be careful to do all the words of this Law, 13 and that their sons who have not known may hear and learn to fear Jehovah your God, as long as you live in the land where you go over Jordan to possess it. (Deuteronomy 31:9-13)*

To discover when Josiah conducted this event, we must read the chapter before.

*3 And it happened in the eighteenth year of Josiah, the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam the scribe, to the house of Jehovah, saying, 4 Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, so that he may count the silver which is brought into the house of Jehovah, which the doorkeepers have gathered from the people. 5 And let them deliver it into the hand of the workers who have the oversight of the house of Jehovah. And let them give it to the workers who are in the house of Jehovah, in order to repair the breaks of the house, 6 to carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and cut stone to repair the house. 7 Only, the silver that is given into their hand shall not be reckoned with them, for they are dealing in faithfulness. (2 Kings 22:3-7)*

Then while Hilkiah was at the Temple they discovered the Book of the Law; Josiah is told, and he then took action to tell the people about the law:

*8 And Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the Book of the Law in the house of Jehovah. And Hilkiah gave the Book to Shaphan, and he read it. 9 And Shaphan the scribe came to the king and brought the king word again, and said, Your servants have gathered the silver that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of the workers, who have the oversight of the house of Jehovah. 10 And Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest has delivered me a Book. And Shaphan read it before the king. 11 And it happened when the king had heard the Words of the Book of the Law, he tore his clothes. 12 And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah a servant of the king, saying, 13 Go inquire of Jehovah for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the Words of this Book which is found. For great is the wrath of Jehovah which is kindled against us, because our fathers have not listened to the Words of this Book, to do according to all which is written concerning us. 14 And Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asahiah, went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe. And she lived in Jerusalem in the second part. And they talked with her. 15 And she said to them, So says Jehovah, the God of Israel, Tell the man who sent you to me, 16 So says Jehovah, Behold, I will bring evil on this place and on the people of it, all the Words of the Book which the king of Judah has read; 17 because*



*they have forsaken Me, and have burned incense to other gods, so that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands, therefore My wrath shall be kindled against this place, and it shall not be quenched. 18 But to the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of Jehovah, so you shall say to him, So says Jehovah, the God of Israel, The Words which you have heard, 19 because your heart was tender and you have humbled yourself before Jehovah, when you heard what I spoke against this place, and against its people (that they should become a waste and a curse, and have torn your clothes and wept before Me), I have heard you, says Jehovah. 20 Behold, even so I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace. And your eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring on this place. And they brought the king this word again. (2 Kings 22:8-20)*

According to Thiele,<sup>227</sup> Josiah became king of Judah at the age of eight, after the assassination of his father, King Amon, and reigned for 31 years from 641/640 to 610/609 BCE.

By counting those 18 years spoken of in 2 Kings 22:3, including 641 B.C., you arrive at 624 B.C. as a Sabbatical year. King Josiah was doing exactly as the Law commanded. He was reading the Torah out loud before all of Israel in the 7<sup>th</sup> month.

I have highlighted the year 624 B.C. in yellow. It is the 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year in the 66<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

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<sup>227</sup> Edwin Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, (1st ed.; New York: Macmillan, 1951; 2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965; 3rd ed.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan/Kregel, 1983). ISBN 0-8254-3825-X, 9780825438257, 217.

							-586	66
Subhash	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-585	-512	-519	-526	-533	-540	-547		
-586	-513	-520	-527	-534	-541	-548		
-587	-514	-521	-528	-535	-542	-549		
-588	-515	-522	-529	-536	-543	-550		
-589	-516	-523	-530	-537	-544	-551		
-590	-517	-524	-531	-538	-545	-552		
-591	-518	-525	-532	-539	-546	-553		
							-592	67
Subhash	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-594	-541	-548	-575	-582	-589	-596		
-595	-542	-549	-576	-583	-590	-597		
-596	-543	-550	-577	-584	-591	-598		
-597	-544	-551	-578	-585	-592	-599		
-598	-545	-552	-579	-586	-593	-600		
-599	-546	-553	-580	-587	-594	-601		
-600	-547	-554	-581	-588	-595	-602		
							-603	68
Subhash	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-603	-610	-617	-624	-631	-638	-645		
-604	-611	-618	-625	-632	-639	-646		
-605	-612	-619	-626	-633	-640	-647		
-606	-613	-620	-627	-634	-641	-648		
-607	-614	-621	-628	-635	-642	-649		
-608	-615	-622	-629	-636	-643	-650		
-609	-616	-623	-630	-637	-644	-651		
							-652	69
Subhash	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-652	-659	-666	-673	-680	-687	-694		
-653	-660	-667	-674	-681	-688	-695		
-654	-661	-668	-675	-682	-689	-696		
-655	-662	-669	-676	-683	-690	-697		
-656	-663	-670	-677	-684	-691	-698		
-657	-664	-671	-678	-685	-692	-699		
-658	-665	-672	-679	-686	-693	-700		
							-701	70
Subhash	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-701	-708	-715	-722	-729	-736	-743		
-702	-709	-716	-723	-730	-737	-744		
-703	-710	-717	-724	-731	-738	-745		
-704	-711	-718	-725	-732	-739	-746		
-705	-712	-719	-726	-733	-740	-747		
-706	-713	-720	-727	-734	-741	-748		
-707	-714	-721	-728	-735	-742	-749		
							-750	71

## Chapter 7 | Sabbatical Year 589 B.C. Zedekiah

### The Chronology of Jeremiah

I have found the Book of Jeremiah difficult to study due to it not being written chronologically. Yes, my personal obsessive-compulsive personality disorder is kicking in once again. I have found the following chronology<sup>228</sup> that helped me in following the order of events:

1. Jehoiakim's 9<sup>th</sup> year? Jeremiah 13:1-5; Thus says the Lord to me. Hide a loincloth near Euphrates.
2. Jehoiakim (near end of reign); Jeremiah 22:13-23; No introduction. Jehoiakim will have the burial of a donkey, dragged out of the gates of Jerusalem and thrown out.
3. Jehoiachin? Jeremiah 13:6-27; The Lord said to me. Collects ruined loincloth. Say to king and queen mother (Jeremiah 13:18) (see Jeremiah 22:26 and Jeremiah 29:2).
4. Jehoiachin; Jeremiah 22:24-30; As the Lord lives, Coniah will be given into the hands of those seeking his life: Nebuchadnezzar. Childless: will not prosper, none of his seed will sit on throne of David and rule any more in Judah.
5. Jehoiachin? Jeremiah 23:1-40; No introduction, so it probably follows on from Jeremiah 22:30. Regathering, good shepherd, David. Prophets, priests evil. God will forsake them.
6. Jehoiachin's 3<sup>rd</sup> month; Jeremiah 52:28; 3,023 Jews into captivity (probably including Ezekiel). Note that 2 Kings 24:14-16 refers to 10,000. The 3,023 may have been men taken from outside the city and sent to Babylon separately.

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<sup>228</sup> *The Book of Jeremiah in Chronological Order*

*The book of Jeremiah includes dates which show us that the text is not in chronological order, as is discussed in the article "Why is Jeremiah out of order?". While writing the series "Terror on Every Side!" I found it necessary to decide what the chronological order was, as far as possible. Although we can't have much confidence in the conclusions for some parts, others we can be very sure of. The table below shows a possible chronological order for the book. In a while I hope to make the Book of Jeremiah available in this order – using the text of the World English Bible (or see the article in Wikipedia) which is available in the public domain. <https://www.bibletales.online/chronological-order-of-jeremiah/>*

7. Zedekiah's 1<sup>st</sup> year; Jeremiah 52:1-3; 21 when he became king.
8. Zedekiah: start of reign; Jeremiah 52:1-3; The Lord made me see good figs (those in captivity); bad figs (Zedekiah and those remaining).
9. After Jeconiah taken away, Jeremiah 29:1-32; Jeremiah sent a letter (with Gemariah and Elasah the son of Shaphan) to the exiles saying there would be 70 years of exile, then people would be brought back. Includes "Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel." Messages to false prophets and bad priest/prophet. Mentions "vile figs" (Jeremiah 29:17) but uses a different word from "bad figs" in Jeremiah 24:8.
10. Continuing after Jeconiah was taken away? Jeremiah 30:1-31:40; The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah. Write all the words I have spoken to you in a book. God will punish and revive. Regather. New covenant. City will be built. Refers to yoke being broken.
11. Early in the reign of Zedekiah; Jeremiah 49:34-39; The word of the Lord to Jeremiah. Punishment of Elam, but God will restore.
12. Zedekiah's 4<sup>th</sup> year; Jeremiah 49:34-39; The word which Jeremiah commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah the son of Maaseiah when he went with Zedekiah to Babylon. Jeremiah sends letter/scroll to Babylon.
13. Zedekiah's 4<sup>th</sup> year? Jeremiah 52:3; Zedekiah rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon.
14. Beginning of reign of Zedekiah – 4<sup>th</sup> year before 5<sup>th</sup> month; Jeremiah 27:12-22; Same year as Jeremiah 28:12. Spoke same message (as Jeremiah 27:1-11) to Zedekiah. Submit to king of Babylon's yoke. Ignore false prophets. Vessels of the temple will go to Babylon until God calls for them.
15. Zedekiah's 4<sup>th</sup> year, 5<sup>th</sup> month (spoken of as the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah – same year as 27:12); Jeremiah 28:1-16; False prophet Hananiah prophesied in the name of the Lord that Babylon would be broken in 2 years. God said he would die that year.
16. Zedekiah's 4<sup>th</sup> year, 7<sup>th</sup> month; Jeremiah 28:17; False prophet Hananiah dies in 7<sup>th</sup> month.

17. Zedekiah's 6<sup>th</sup> year, 6<sup>th</sup> month or later; Jeremiah 12:1-17; No introduction. Starts with the words of Jeremiah. Jeremiah 12:6 "even your brothers and the house of your father" More than one brother and father dead? Assume Hilkiah died in 20<sup>th</sup> year of Josiah (620 B.C.). I have forsaken my house. Ezekiel 8-11 (Zedekiah, 6<sup>th</sup> year, 6<sup>th</sup> month). The whole land is a desolation (Jeremiah 12:11). Neighbours attacking (Jeremiah 12:14).
18. Zedekiah's 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> year? Jeremiah 34:1-10; The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord. Nebuchadnezzar attacking. Rich people make a covenant to free Hebrew slaves.
19. Zedekiah's 8<sup>th</sup> or early 9<sup>th</sup> year: some time before 10<sup>th</sup> month of 9<sup>th</sup> year; Jeremiah 37:1-16; The word of the Lord told Jeremiah to tell Zedekiah that Pharaoh's army which had come to help would return to Egypt. Jeremiah then tried to leave Jerusalem to receive inheritance. Arrested, beaten, imprisoned.
20. Zedekiah's 9<sup>th</sup> year? Jeremiah 34:11-22; The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah. People had gone back on their covenant and God condemns them for this.
21. Zedekiah 9<sup>th</sup> year, 10<sup>th</sup> month (10<sup>th</sup> day); Jeremiah 39:1; Nebuchadnezzar returns and lays siege to Jerusalem.
22. Zedekiah 9<sup>th</sup> year, 10<sup>th</sup> month (10<sup>th</sup> day); Jeremiah 52:4; Nebuchadnezzar lays siege to Jerusalem.
23. Zedekiah's 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> year; Jeremiah 37:17-21; Zedekiah sends for Jeremiah and asks if there is any message from the Lord. Jeremiah gives him God's message that he will be handed over to the king of Babylon. Jeremiah pleads not to be sent back to the house of Jonathan and King Zedekiah commits him to the court of the guard. Fed a loaf of bread daily until all of the bread in the city was gone.
24. Zedekiah's 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> year; Jeremiah 21:1-14; The word of the Lord to Jeremiah when Pashhur son of Malchiah (Jer 38:1) and Zephaniah the priest were sent to Jeremiah by Zedekiah to ask about the results of Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem. God's answer is that he is against them and that punishment and death are coming.
25. Zedekiah's 10<sup>th</sup> year (Nebuchadnezzar's 18<sup>th</sup> year); Jeremiah 32:1-44; The word of the Lord to Jeremiah when Pashhur son

of Malchiah (Jeremiah 38:1) and Zephaniah the priest were sent to Jeremiah by Zedekiah to ask about the results of Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem. God's answer is that he is against them and that punishment and death are coming. The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah. Nebuchadnezzar besieging Jerusalem. Jeremiah in the court of the guard (Jeremiah 32:2). Jeremiah bought land in Anathoth from Hanamel, son of Shallum. He then asks God to explain why. Final answer is that buying and selling will again take place.

26. Zedekiah's 10<sup>th</sup> year (Nebuchadnezzar's 18<sup>th</sup> year); Jeremiah 52:29; 832 more Jews taken into captivity.
27. Zedekiah's 10<sup>th</sup> year? Jeremiah 10:1-25; Hear the word of the Lord. Idols are useless. You who live under siege (Jeremiah 10:17).
28. Zedekiah's 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> year; Jeremiah 33:1-26; The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah a second time while he was still shut up in the court of the guard (Jeremiah 33:1).
29. Zedekiah's 11<sup>th</sup> year? Jeremiah 38:1-28; Jeremiah thrown into the mire by Shephatiah the son of Mattan, Gedaliah the son of Pashhur, Jucal the son of Shelemiah (see Jehucal in Jeremiah 37:3) and Pashhur the son of Malchijah (Jeremiah 21:1). Taken out of the mire by Ebed-melech. Speaks to Zedekiah. No more bread in the city (Jeremiah 38:9). Stayed in court of the guard until the city was taken (Jeremiah 38:28).
30. Zedekiah's 11<sup>th</sup> year; Jeremiah 39:15-18; The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah in court of the guard. Message to Ebed-melech.
31. Zedekiah's 11<sup>th</sup> year, 4<sup>th</sup> month, 9<sup>th</sup> day; Jeremiah 39:2-14; Zedekiah captured, Jerusalem captured. Jeremiah taken out of the court of the guard.
32. Zedekiah's 11<sup>th</sup> year, 4<sup>th</sup> month, 9<sup>th</sup> day; Jeremiah 52:5-8; Jerusalem captured, Zedekiah runs away but is captured near Jericho.
33. After end of Zedekiah's reign; Jeremiah 39:14; Jeremiah handed over to Gedaliah. Free to go in and out.
34. After Zedekiah's 11<sup>th</sup> year, 4<sup>th</sup> month, 9<sup>th</sup> day; Jeremiah 52:9-11; Zedekiah taken to Riblah where his sons were killed in front of him, then he was blinded and taken to Babylon.

35. Zedekiah's 11<sup>th</sup> year, 5<sup>th</sup> month, 10<sup>th</sup> day; Jeremiah 52:12-27; Temple and every important building in Jerusalem destroyed. Temple equipment, furnishing and decorations taken away. All rulers, chief priests (Seraiah and Zephaniah), other leaders killed (as prophesied).
36. After end of Zedekiah's reign; Jeremiah 40:1-5; Jeremiah was taken in chains to Ramah among the exiles being taken to Babylon, but was then freed by Nebuzaradan, given food and a reward, and allowed to choose where he wanted to go.
37. After end of Zedekiah's reign; Jeremiah 40:1-5; The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah (probably the content of Jeremiah 15, since there is no message in Jeremiah 40:1-5).
38. After capture of Jerusalem (see 40:5-6) or maybe just before? Jeremiah 15:1-21; The Lord said to me. Where shall we go? To death, sword, famine, captivity. Jeremiah 15:7 God had sifted with a fork in the gates of land (Riblah). Jeremiah 15:8 widows numerous. Jeremiah 15:11 Jeremiah freed for good (by Babylonians). Jeremiah 15:14 fire is kindled ("is" like Jeremiah 17:4 not "will be" as in Jeremiah 17:27; 21:14; 43:12; 49:27; 50:32) Jeremiah 15:19-20 Jeremiah to be restored as a prophet.
39. After end of Zedekiah's reign; Jeremiah 40:6-16; Gedaliah sets up government in Mizpah. Army leaders warn Gedaliah about Ishmael the son of Nethaniah. He does not believe them.
40. Zedekiah's 11<sup>th</sup> year, 7<sup>th</sup> month; Jeremiah 41:1-18; Gedaliah and Chaldean soldiers and various others assassinated by Ishmael who then runs away to the Ammonites. People want to go to Egypt for fear of the Babylonians, but wait at the inn of Chimham (Jeremiah 41:17) near Bethlehem.
41. After destruction of Jerusalem; Jeremiah 50:1-5:58; The word that the Lord spoke. Destruction to Babylon. Speaks of the destruction of Judah as having happened already (Jeremiah 50:7, 11).
42. After 7<sup>th</sup> month, take it as 1<sup>st</sup> month of next year because it suits me that way for Jeremiah's birthday. Jeremiah 42:1-43:13; Leaders ask for direction from God, but then ignore it. They go to Egypt and take Jeremiah and others with them.

43. After end of Zedekiah's reign; Jeremiah 44:1-30; The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah. Messages to the Israelites in Egypt.
44. After end of Zedekiah's reign; Jeremiah 46:13-26; The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah. Nebuchadnezzar will come to Egypt. Then Egypt will be inhabited as in the past.
45. After end of Zedekiah's reign; Jeremiah 46:27-28; Judah/Israel will return but not unpunished.
46. Nebuchadnezzar's 23<sup>rd</sup> year (5 years after Jerusalem destroyed); Jeremiah 52:30; 745 more Jews taken into captivity.
47. Jehoiachin's exile, 37<sup>th</sup> year (26 years after Jerusalem destroyed); Jeremiah 52:31-34; Jehoiachin freed from prison.

## **History of Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Zedekiah & Nebuchadnezzar**

Babylon had successfully defeated the Assyrian Empire at Ninevah in 612 B.C., whereupon Assyria then moved its capital to Harran. Judah was one of the vassal states of Assyria at this time. Harran was then captured by Babylon in 609 B.C. The remnant Assyrian army joined forces with the advancing Egyptian army under the leadership of Necho II in an effort to retake Harran. King Josiah tried to delay the Egyptian army at the Battle of Megiddo where he lost his life. Jehoahaz succeeded his father Josiah as King of Judah.

Necho II along with the Assyrians laid siege to Harran now controlled by the Babylonians and failed to retake it.

As Necho II retreated, he deposed Jehoahaz, who had been king of Judah for only three months, and replaced him with Jehoahaz's older brother, Jehoiakim. All of this took place in the year 609 B.C. This is the time when Judah became a vassal state of Babylon and the 70 years prophecy began.

*29 In his days Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates. And King Josiah went against him. And he killed him at Megiddo, when he saw him. 30 And his servants made him ride dead in a chariot from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own tomb. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's place. 31 Jehoahaz was twenty-three years*



*old when he began to reign. And he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 32 And he did the evil in the sight of Jehovah, according to all that his fathers had done. 33 And Pharaoh-necho put him in bonds at Riblah in the land of Hamath, so that he might not reign in Jerusalem. And he put the land to a tax of a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. 34 And Pharaoh-necho made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in place of Josiah his father. And he changed his name to Jehoiakim, and took Jehoahaz away. And he came to Egypt and died there. (2 Kings 23:29-34)*

Necho then took Jehoahaz back to Egypt as his prisoner where he died.<sup>229</sup>

The Battle of Carchemish took place while Nebuchadnezzar II was commander-in-chief and Nabopolassar was still king of Babylon in the year 605 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar became king a few weeks after this battle. Nebuchadnezzar II destroyed both armies, vanquishing the Assyrian Empire to the history books. Egypt retreated and was no longer a significant force in the Ancient Near East.<sup>230</sup>

Jeremiah then recorded the 70 years prophecy in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim which would be the year 605 B.C.

*1 The Word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah. It was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; 2 the Word which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the people of Jerusalem, saying, 3 From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even to this day, that is the twenty-third year, the Word of Jehovah has come to me, and I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking. But you have not listened. 4 And Jehovah has sent to you all His servants the prophets, rising early and sending them; but you have not listened nor bowed down your ear to hear. 5 They said, Turn again now, each one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that Jehovah has given to you and to your fathers forever and ever. 6 And do not go after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands; and I will do you no harm. 7 Yet you have not listened*

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<sup>229</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josiah>

<sup>230</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Carchemish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Carchemish)

*to Me, says Jehovah, so that you might provoke Me with the works of your hands, for harm to you. 8 Therefore so says Jehovah of Hosts, Because you have not heard My Words, 9 behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, says Jehovah, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant; and will bring them against this land, and against its people, and against all these nations all around. And I will completely destroy them, and make them a waste, and a hissing, and everlasting ruins. 10 And I will take from them the voice of rejoicing and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the candle. 11 And this whole land shall be a ruin and a waste. And these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 12 And it shall be, when seventy years are fulfilled I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, and the land of the Chaldeans, says Jehovah, for their iniquity, and I will make it an everlasting ruin. 13 And I will bring on that land all My Words which I have spoken against it, all that is written in this book which Jeremiah has prophesied against all the nations. 14 For many nations and great kings shall lay service on them also. And I will repay them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands. (Jeremiah 25:1-14)*

In 601 B.C., during the 4th year of Nebuchadnezzar II's reign, he unsuccessfully attempted to invade Egypt and was repulsed with heavy losses. The failure led to numerous rebellions among the Kingdoms of the Levant which had pledged allegiance to Babylon, including the Kingdom of Judah, where King Jehoiakim stopped paying tribute to Nebuchadnezzar II and took a pro-Egyptian position. He did this despite the strong remonstrances of the prophet Jeremiah. Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem at the end of the year 598 B.C.

Jehoiakim died during the siege and was succeeded by his son Jeconiah (Jehoiachin, and/or Coniah). The city fell about three months later, on 2 Adar (March 16) 597 B.C.

Nebuchadnezzar pillaged Jerusalem and deported Jeconiah and about 10,000 other prominent citizens to Babylon, including the soon-to-be prophet, Ezekiel. Jeconiah's uncle, Zedekiah, was installed as king. Later, encouraged by the Egyptians, Zedekiah launched a second revolt, and a Babylonian army was sent to retake Jerusalem.

Nebuchadnezzar returned and began a siege of Jerusalem in January 589 B.C. Jeremiah describes the city as enduring horrible

deprivation during the siege.<sup>231</sup> The city fell after the siege, which lasted 30 months.

Let me share with you Thiele's chronology of these events:

*The last event in the checkered history of the southern kingdom was the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. This siege began on the tenth day of the tenth month of Zedekiah's ninth year (2 Kings 25:1; Jer. 39:1; 52:4; cf. Ezek. 24:1-2), 15 January 588. The next year, in the midst of the siege, Jeremiah was imprisoned, this being the tenth year of Zedekiah and synchronizing with the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 32:1), 587. Famine prevailed, the city was broken, and the king fled, on the ninth day of the fourth month of Zedekiah's eleventh year (2 Kings 25:2-3; Jer. 39:2; 52:5-7), 18 July 586. On the seventh day of the fifth month the final destruction of the city began (2 Kings 25:8-10), 14 August 586. This was the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25:8; Jer. 52:12), which was from Nisan 586 to Nisan 585, Babylonian reckoning, or Tishri 587 to Tishri 586, Judean years. Gedaliah, who had been appointed by Nebuchadnezzar as governor of the land, was slain in the seventh month (2 Kings 25:22-25; Jer. 41:1-2). The month of Tishri began on 7 October 586. It must have been shortly after that, that the remnant left by Nebuzaradan with Gedaliah took Jeremiah and forced him to accompany them to Egypt (Jer. 43:2-7). Word of the fall of Jerusalem reached the captives in Babylon on the fifth day of the tenth month of the twelfth year of their captivity (Ezek. 33:21), 8 January 585. Zedekiah's reign thus was from 597 to 586.<sup>232</sup>*

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<sup>231</sup> 3 on the ninth of the fourth month, when famine was severe in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land. (2 Kings 25:3)

4 The suckling's tongue cleaves to his palate in thirst; the young children ask bread; there is no breaking to them. 5 Those who ate delicacies are desolate in the streets; those reared in scarlet embrace dunghills. 6 And the iniquity of the daughter of my people is heaped more than the sin of Sodom, overthrown as in a moment, and no hands spun on her. 7 Her Nazarites were purer than snow, whiter than milk; they were redder of bone than corals; their cuttings as lapis lazuli, azure blue. 8 Their appearance is blacker than soot; they are not recognized in the streets; their skin has shriveled on their bones; it is dried up; it has become like wood. 9 Better are the ones slain by the sword than the ones slain by hunger; those who pine away, pierced because the fruits of my fields failed. (Lamentations 4:4-9)

<sup>232</sup> Thiele's Chronology

<https://www.jhalsey.com/jerusalem-book/judean/solutions/thiele.html>

On Tisha B'Av, July 586 B.C., the Babylonians took Jerusalem, destroyed the First Temple and burned down the city. Zedekiah attempted to escape but was captured near Jericho.

In the eleventh year of Zedekiah's reign (2 Kings 25:2, Jeremiah 39:2), Nebuchadnezzar broke through Jerusalem's walls, conquering the city.

He was forced to watch the execution of his sons in Riblah; then Zedekiah had his eyes gouged out and was taken captive to Babylon where he remained a prisoner until his death.<sup>233</sup>

## **Zedekiah's Shmita Year 589 B.C.**

Now that we have all the information before us, it is time to zero in on the timing of Zedekiah and the Shmita year.

*10 At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. 11 And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants besieged it. 12 And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he and his mother, and his servants, and his leaders, and his eunuchs. And the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign. (2 Kings 24:10-12)*

This is the 8<sup>th</sup> year of Nebuchadnezzar, who began to reign in the year 605 B.C. as noted earlier, making this year 598 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar removes Jehoiakim, taking him to Babylon, and places Zedekiah on the throne. Zedekiah's 1<sup>st</sup> year begins 597 B.C.

*1 The Word which came to Jeremiah from Jehovah when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and all his army, and all the kingdoms of the earth (because his hand rules) and all the peoples, fought against Jerusalem and against all its cities; saying, 2 So says Jehovah, the God of Israel: Go and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah and tell him, So says Jehovah, Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire. 3 And you shall not escape out of his hand, but shall surely be captured and delivered into his hand. And your eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he shall speak with you mouth to mouth, and you shall go to Babylon. 4 Yet hear the Word of Jehovah, O Zedekiah king of Judah: So says Jehovah of you, You shall not die*

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<sup>233</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege\\_of\\_Jerusalem\\_\(587\\_BC\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Jerusalem_(587_BC))

*by the sword. 5 You shall die in peace; and as the burnings of spices for your fathers, the former kings which were before you, so they shall burn spices for you. And they will mourn you, saying, Ah, lord! For I have spoken the Word, says Jehovah. 6 Then Jeremiah the prophet spoke all these words to Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem, 7 when the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem and against all the remaining cities of Judah; against Lachish, and against Azekah; for these fortified cities remained of the cities of Judah. 8 The Word that came to Jeremiah from Jehovah, after King Zedekiah had cut a covenant with all the people at Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty to them, 9 that each man should let his male slave, and each man his female slave, if a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, to go free, that none should enslave a Jew, his brother among them. 10 And all the rulers obeyed, and all the people who had entered into the covenant allowed them to go free, each man his male slave, and each man his female slave, so that not any should enslave among them any more; and they obeyed and let them go. 11 But afterward they turned and caused the slaves and slave women whom they had let go free, to return! And they subjected them for slaves and slave women. (Jeremiah 34:1-11)*

Jeremiah begins this prophecy when Nebuchadnezzar was already besieging Jerusalem, which he began in January of 588 B.C.

Zedekiah had made a covenant by walking between the pieces of animals cut in half, signifying that if he did not obey this covenant he would die as the animals had been slain.

*2 If you buy a Hebrew servant, he shall serve six years. And in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. 3 If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself. If he was married, then his wife shall go out with him. (Exodus 21:2-3)*

January 588 B.C. is at the very end of the Sabbatical year. The slaves should have been freed in that year of 589 B.C. at Sukkot,<sup>234</sup> but they were all brought back as we are told. And note, we are told

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<sup>234</sup> The slaves would've been freed in the seventh month in 589 at Sukkot:  
*10 And Moses commanded them, saying: At the end of seven years, at the set time of the year of release, in the Feast of Tabernacles, (Deuteronomy 31:10)*

the penalty for making this covenant before Yehovah and then not keeping it.

*12 So the Word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying, 13 So says Jehovah, the God of Israel: I cut a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, saying, 14 At the end of seven years each man should let go his brother, a Hebrew, and who has been sold to him. And when he has served you six years, you shall let him go free from you. But your fathers did not listen to me, nor bow down their ears. 15 And you had turned today, and had done right in My sight to call for liberty, each man to his neighbor. And you had cut a covenant before Me in the house which is called by My name. 16 But you turned and defiled My name, and each man caused his slave, and each man caused his slave woman, whom you had set free to do as they pleased, to return. And you brought them into service to be slaves and slave women to you. 17 So Jehovah says this: You have not listened to Me to proclaim liberty each man to his brother, and each man to his neighbor! Behold, I call for freedom<sup>235</sup> for you, says Jehovah, to the sword, to the plague, and to the famine. And I will cause you to be a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. 18 And I will give the men who have sinned against My covenant, who have not done the words of the covenant which they cut before Me when they cut the calf in two and passed between its parts; 19 the rulers of Judah, and the rulers of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf; 20 I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those who seek their life. And their dead bodies shall be*

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<sup>235</sup> The English word Liberty and Freedom are the Hebrew word Deror.

*This is a play on words: since they didn't free their brothers, Jehovah will free them from His protection!*

*Nehemia: So I'll read to you from the Hebrew, it says, "Therefore, thus says Jehovah," "lachen," "Therefore, thus says Jehovah: 'You did not listen to me to call liberty,'" to call dror, "'each man to his brother and each man to his fellow. Behold, I will call for you liberty,' says Jehovah, 'to the sword and to plague and to famine. And I will give you for a terror for all the kingdoms of the earth.'" This is kind of like this play on words – you won't give liberty to your brothers? I'm going to set free the sword and the pestilence, this plague, disease, and famine. I'm going to set that free. I'm going to give that liberty, because you wouldn't give liberty to your brothers. There will be liberty, and it won't be a liberty that you like. It'll be liberty for these things that I've held back, the sword, and the plague, and the famine. <https://www.nehemiaswall.com/prophet-pearls-mishpatim>*

*for food to the birds of the heavens and to the beasts of the earth. 21 And I will give Zedekiah king of Judah, and his rulers, into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those who seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, who have withdrawn from you. 22 Behold, I will command, says Jehovah, and cause them to return to this city. And they shall fight against it and capture it, and burn it with fire. And I will make the cities of Judah a desert without a soul to live in it. (Jeremiah 34:12-22)*

I have marked the year 589 B.C. in yellow on the chart at the end of this chapter. It is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sabbatical year in the 67<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

### **The Sabbath Year of 589/588 B.C.**

*Our next datable Sabbath year occurred in the post-Hezekiah period.<sup>236</sup> It happened during the 9th year of the reign of Zedekiah (589/588 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning), the last king of Judah. In Jeremiah, 34:8–22, we read about the year in which King Zedekiah and the people of Jerusalem made a covenant to observe the scriptural law to release all Hebrew slaves, an act performed during the Sabbath year.<sup>237</sup> Unfortunately, the goodwill they created with Yahweh was shattered when, after freeing these slaves, they shortly thereafter reneged on their commitment and forcibly returned these slaves to their owners. The backsliding on this covenant is said to have taken place at the time when the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar II, had “withdrawn” his Chaldaean army from their siege against Jerusalem.<sup>238</sup> In another passage, the book of Jeremiah defines this pause in the siege by saying that it was prompted by the approach of an Egyptian army sent to assist King Zedekiah:*

*And Jeremiah came in and went out among the people, for they had not put him in a prison house. And Pharaoh’s army had come out of Egypt. And when the Chaldeans who were besieging Jerusalem heard the news about them, they departed from Jerusalem.<sup>239</sup>*

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<sup>236</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press, Chapter XIII The Sabbath Year of 589/588 B.C.E., <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-13Chap.pdf>

<sup>237</sup> Exod., 21:2–6; Deut., 15:12–18.

<sup>238</sup> Jer., 34:21, “the army of the king of Babylon that has withdrawn from you”; LXX Jer., 41:21, “the host of the king of Babylon, them who ran away from them (the Judahites at Jerusalem)”; cf. Jer., 34:8f, 15f.

<sup>239</sup> Jer., 37:4f; LXX Jer., 44:4f.

*In still another place, we are told:*

*And it happened, when the army of the Chaldaeans departed from Jerusalem because of Pharaoh's army, then Jeremiah went out from Jerusalem to go into the land of Benjamin to receive a portion from there in the midst of the people.<sup>240</sup>*

*Accordingly, there is a direct connection between the release of the Hebrew slaves during a Sabbath year and the withdrawal of the Chaldaean army during their siege against Jerusalem in the reign of King Zedekiah. At the same time, this repose from the siege against Jerusalem and King Zedekiah was only temporary, for Yahweh told Jeremiah:*

*Behold, Yahweh states, I will command and bring them (the Chaldaeans) back to this city, and they will fight against it, and capture it, and burn it with fire. And I will give the cities of Judah a desolation without inhabitants.<sup>241</sup>*

*In another passage, we similarly read:*

*Behold, Pharaoh's army, which has come out to help you (King Zedekiah), shall return to his own land of Egypt. And the Chaldaeans shall return and fight against this city and take it, and burn it with fire.<sup>242</sup>*

*The scenario thus admits that, after Nebuchadnezzar II's army dealt with the Egyptian threat, they would return to lay siege against Jerusalem and, this time, would continue to besiege that city until it was destroyed by fire.*

## **Year of Withdrawal**

*Josephus and Severus date the beginning of the Chaldaean siege against King Zedekiah of Judah, the withdrawal of that siege, and then*

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<sup>240</sup> Jer., 37:11f; LXX Jer., 44:11, "when the host of the Chaldaeans had gone up from Jerusalem for fear of the host of Pharaoh."

<sup>241</sup> Jer., 34:22; LXX Jer., 41:22.

<sup>242</sup> Jer., 37:7f; LXX Jer., 44:7f.



*its renewal to Zedekiah's 9th year.<sup>243</sup> We begin to date this 9th year by observing that, during the last month (Addaru) of the 7th year of Nebuchadnezzar II, the Chaldean king of Babylon—whose records are reckoned by the accession-year system (AY)—the Babylonians carried King Jehoiachin of Judah captive.<sup>244</sup> They then replaced him on the throne at Jerusalem with his uncle, Mattaniah, whom Nebuchadnezzar II renamed Zedekiah.<sup>245</sup> In this regard, we are in full agreement with the well-established dates now given for the kings of the neoBabylonian Empire (625–539 B.C.E.). These dates have been fully vetted, being firmly calculated by means of astronomical events and cross-references to contemporary kings. As such, the chronology for these kings is now agreed upon by all reputable scholars of ancient history.<sup>246</sup>*

*According to the Babylonian records, Nebuchadnezzar II's father, Nabopolassar, died in his 21st year of reign, on Abu 8 (August 13/14, sunset reckoning), 605 B.C.E., and his son, Nebuchadnezzar II, ascended to the throne of Babylon on Ululu 1 (Sept. 5/6, sunset*

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<sup>243</sup> The renewal of the siege was dated to the 10th day of the 10th month of the 9th year of Zedekiah (AY), see 2 Kings, 25:1; Jer., 39:1, 52:4; Ezek., 24:1; Jos., Antiq., 10:7:4. The S.O., 26, dates the Sabbath year for this event to the 7th year of Zedekiah, a position made untenable for several reasons. First, it dates King Zedekiah far too late in history, based upon a total corruption of the chronology by the compilers of the S.O. (see Chaps. I <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-01Chap.pdf> & 2 <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-02Chap.pdf>). Then, after creating this false chronology, the rabbis merely cycled back their contrived dates for the Sabbath year until it lined up with their incorrect dates for King Zedekiah. As we shall prove as we proceed, the scriptural evidence demonstrates that this Sabbath year was the 9th year of King Zedekiah of Judah. The calculation in the S.O., on the other hand, is untenable and has no value.

<sup>244</sup> The Nebuchadnezzar Chronicle 5 (ABC, pp. 99f, obverse, ∞. 12) specifically identifies the year that Nebuchadnezzar II acquired the throne as his “accession year.” Under the “accession-year system (AY),” also called the “post-dating” system, the year in which the new king came to the throne is designated as his “accession year.” The new king’s “Year 1” did not begin until the 1st day of the following year.

<sup>245</sup> 2 Kings, 24:15–18; 2 Chron., 36:8–11; Jos., Antiq., 10:7:1f.

<sup>246</sup> E.g., MNHK, pp. 179f, 227; BC, pp. 3–46; CCK, pp. 1–96; CAW, pp. 42f; cf. Ptolemy, Can.; Babylonian Chronicles (see BC); and other ancient texts (e.g., see texts in ABC).

reckoning), 605 B.C.E.<sup>247</sup> Nebuchadnezzar II's "1st" regnal year (AY) began on the following New Year's day, Nisânu (Nisan) 1 (March 31/April 1) of 604 B.C.E., when he "took the hand of Bel and the son of Bel," his gods, and "celebrated the Akitu festival."<sup>248</sup> As a result, the 7th year of Nebuchadnezzar II (AY) extended from Nisânu 1 (March 25/26) 598 B.C.E. to Addaru 29 (April 11/12) 597 B.C.E. During the "7th year" of Nebuchadnezzar II, the Nebuchadnezzar Chronicle 5 reports:

*He (Nebuchadnezzar II) encamped against the city of Judah and on the 2nd day of the month of Addaru he captured the city (and) SEIZED (ITS) KING. A king of his own choice he appointed in the city. Taking a vast tribute, he brought it into Babylon.*<sup>249</sup>

Addaru (Hebrew "Adar") is the last month of the Chaldaean and Hebrew year (Chart B). Clement of Alexandria states that the exile of these Jews began in the 7th year of Nebuchadnezzar II,<sup>250</sup> although, as 2 Kings, 24:12, notes, Jehoiachin did not actually arrive in Babylon until after the 1st day of the new year, i.e., during Nebuchadnezzar II's 8th year. Jeremiah also reports that the exile of the Jews at this time began in the 7th year of Nebuchadnezzar II:

*This is (the number of) the people who Nebuchadnezzar exiled: in the 7th year: 3,023 Jews.*<sup>251</sup>

According to the accession-year system (AY), Zedekiah held the throne of Judah for 11 years.<sup>252</sup> If one uses the non-accession-year

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<sup>247</sup> ABC, pp 99f, ∞. 9–11; cf. Jos., Antiq., 10:11:1. For a slightly different view on the dates represented by Abu 8 and Ululu 1 of 605 B.C.E., see BC, pp. 24f, which respectfully gives Aug. 15th and Sept. 7th, midnight reckoning. Our calculations show that the actual dates were one day earlier. In either case, nothing will change with regards to our conclusions.

<sup>248</sup> ABC, p. 100, ∞. 14f.

<sup>249</sup> ABC, p. 102, ∞. 12f.

<sup>250</sup> Clement, Strom., 1:21:127:1.

<sup>251</sup> Jer., 52:28.

<sup>252</sup> 2 Kings, 24:18; 2 Chron., 36:11; Jer., 3:1, 52:1; Jos., Antiq., 10:8:5.

system (NY),<sup>253</sup> it is 12 years.<sup>254</sup> The city of Jerusalem was destroyed and the reign of Zedekiah brought to an end during the 5th month of the 11th year of Zedekiah (AY), being the 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar II (AY).<sup>255</sup>

The New Year date for Zedekiah's reign began with Nisan 1 (April 12/13, sunset reckoning) of 597 B.C.E. As a result, the 1st year of Zedekiah (AY) agrees with the 8th year of Nebuchadnezzar II (AY), i.e., 597/596 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning. In turn, his 11th year agrees with the 18th of Nebuchadnezzar II (587/586 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning).<sup>256</sup> Using the NY method, on the other hand, Zedekiah's 1st year would be counted with his accession to the throne in the last month of the 7th year of Nebuchadnezzar II (598/597 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning), while his 12th year would be equivalent to the 19th (NY), i.e., 18th (AY) of Nebuchadnezzar II (587/586 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning).<sup>257</sup>

Zedekiah continued to serve Nebuchadnezzar II as a vassal for a number of years before he decided to revolt. To demonstrate, Josephus, using the AY system, gave Zedekiah 11 years as king and made it equivalent to the 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar II.<sup>258</sup> He then writes:

*AFTER maintaining his alliance with the Babylonians FOR 8 YEARS, Zedekiah (Greek "Sacchias") broke his treaty with them and went over to the Egyptians, hoping to overthrow the Babylonians if he joined the other side. And, when the Babylonian king heard of this, he marched against him and, after ravaging his country and taking his fortresses, he came against the city of Jerusalem itself to besiege it. Yet when the Egyptian king (Wahibre Haaibre) heard of the plight of his ally Zedekiah, he raised a large force and came to Judaea to end the siege. THEREUPON, THE BABYLONIAN KING LEFT JERUSALEM AND WENT TO MEET*

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<sup>253</sup> In the "non-accession-year system (NY)," also called "ante-dating," the actual year that the new king comes to the throne is counted as his "year 1" of reign, even though it may consist of only a partial year.

<sup>254</sup> E.g., Clement, Strom., 1:21:122:1; Severus, 1:54; Sec. Hier. Cod., p. 37.

<sup>255</sup> 2 Kings, 25:8–11; Jer., 1:3, 52:12–15, 28; Jos., Antiq., 10:8:2, 5.

<sup>256</sup> Cf. Jer., 52:29; Jos., Antiq., 10:8:5.

<sup>257</sup> Cf. 2 Kings, 25:8; Jer., 52:12, cf. 32:1; both sources using the NY system.

<sup>258</sup> Jos., Antiq., 10:7:4, 10:8:1, 2, 5.

*THE EGYPTIANS and, encountering them in battle, defeated and put them to flight and drove them out of the whole of Syria.*<sup>259</sup>

*Josephus continues by saying that the prophet Jeremiah told the people the truth, informing them that the Babylonian king would defeat the Egyptians and, among other things, “would lead an army against Jerusalem and besiege it and destroy the people by famine.”*<sup>260</sup> *The Seder Olam points out that, at this precise time, “the army of Pharaoh swept away Gaza and returned to Egypt.”*<sup>261</sup> *Since Josephus reports that the battle took place in Judah, yet the Seder Olam states that before returning to Egypt, Pharaoh “swept away Gaza,” it indicates that the battle between the Egyptians and Babylonians occurred in the territory of Judah but near the northern border of Gaza. It was here that the Chaldaeans stopped the Egyptian advance coming through Gaza and turned Pharaoh back. In the same way, Severus, who gives Zedekiah 12 years of rule, thus using the NY system, makes the following comment about King Zedekiah’s revolt:*

*Accordingly, AFTER A PERIOD OF 9 YEARS, Nabuchodonosor made war against him (Zedekiah), and having forced him to flee within the walls, BESIEGED HIM FOR 3 YEARS.*<sup>262</sup>

*Severus, by counting the short period in Zedekiah’s accession year as Year 1, makes the 9th year of Zedekiah equivalent to his 8th year as argued by Josephus. Accordingly, it was not until “AFTER” the 8th year (AY) in Josephus, which equals “AFTER” the 9th year (NY) in Severus, that Zedekiah revolted from the Babylonian king and made an alliance with the Egyptian pharaoh. This makes Zedekiah’s 9th year (AY), i.e., his 10th year (NY), a Sabbath year, the year in which the Israelites set all their Hebrew slaves free, albeit, later breaking their covenant by returning the slaves to their owners. Severus does not speak of the temporary withdrawal from the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonian king due to the appearance of the Egyptian army. Instead, he simply reckons that the siege occurred*

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<sup>259</sup> Jos., Antiq., 10:7:3. Haaibre is also called Hophra (Jer., 44:30) and Apries (Herodotus, 2:161; Diodorus, 1:68).

<sup>260</sup> Jos., Antiq., 10:7:3.

<sup>261</sup> S.O., 26.

<sup>262</sup> Severus, 1:54. For the 12-year figure, also see above n. 18.

during the last 3 years of the reign of Zedekiah (years 10 through 12). In both cases, the 9th year (AY), or 10th year (NY), is 589/588 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning.

## Renewing the Siege

Our chronological arrangement is further enhanced by the exact date for the Chaldaean renewal of the siege against the city of Jerusalem. Various ancient sources all date the renewing of the siege to “the 10th day of the 10th month of the 9th year (AY)” of King Zedekiah, continuing until the 9th day of the 4th month of the 11th year,<sup>263</sup> a period of 18 months by Israelite reckoning, i.e., from January 14/15 of 588 B.C.E. until July 27/28 of 587 B.C.E. That “the 10th day of the 10th month of the 9th year (AY)” began the continual siege that lasted until the walls of the city of Jerusalem were breached, 2 Kings informs us:

*And it happened, in the 9th year of his (Zedekiah's) reign, in the 10th month, on the 10th (day) of the month, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and camped against it and built against it a siege-mound all around it. And the city entered into the siege UNTIL THE 11TH YEAR OF KING ZEDEKIAH, ON THE 9TH (DAY) OF THE MONTH, when the famine was severe in the city and there was no food for the people of the land. Then the city was broken into.<sup>264</sup>*

Notice that the siege continued from the 10th day of the 10th month of the 9th year “until” the 9th day of the month (i.e., the 4th month) of the 11th year of King Zedekiah. Jeremiah is even more specific. He writes:

*In the 9th year of Zedekiah, king of Judah, in the 10th month, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and all his army came against Jerusalem, and they besieged it. In the 11th year of Zedekiah, in the 4th month, the 9th (day) of the month, the city was breached.<sup>265</sup>*

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<sup>263</sup> 2 Kings, 25:1–4; Jer., 39:1f, 52:4–6; Ezek., 24:1f; Jos., Antiq., 10:7:4; S.O., 26; etc.

<sup>264</sup> 2 Kings, 25:1–4; cf. LXX 4 Kings, 25:1–4, “And the city was besieged UNTIL the 11th year of King Sedekias on the 9th day of the month.”

<sup>265</sup> Jer., 39:1f; LXX Jer., 46:1f.

*We read in Josephus that, after the Chaldaeans left Jerusalem to do battle with the Egyptians, they returned:*

*In the 9th year of the reign of Zedekiah, on the 10th day of the 10th moon, the king of Babylon MARCHED A SECOND TIME against Jerusalem and, encamping before it, besieged it with the utmost energy for 18 months.<sup>266</sup>*

*And again, Josephus writes:*

*Now the Babylonian king applied himself very strenuously and zealously to the siege of Jerusalem. . . . And thus they (the Judahites) held out for 18 months until they were exhausted by the famine and by the missiles which the enemy hurled at them from the towers. The city was taken in the 11th year of the reign of Zedekiah, on the 9th day of the 4th moon.<sup>267</sup>*

*According to this evidence, the withdrawal from the siege had to take place not many days prior to the 10th day of the 10th month (Shebat), i.e., January 14/15, of the 9th year (588 B.C.E.), the date that Nebuchadnezzar II renewed the siege and continued until the city was breached in the 4th month of the 11th year. This pause in the siege allowed the people within the walls of Jerusalem to leave that city in order to attend to other concerns.<sup>268</sup> It was just long enough to allow false prophets to deceive King Zedekiah into believing that the Babylonian king would be defeated by Pharaoh and not return to make war on the people of Jerusalem.<sup>269</sup> As we shall see below, this reprieve in the siege would last no more than a month and probably much less.*

## **First Nine Months of 589 B.C.E.**

*It is clear that the remaining chronological issues regarding this Sabbath year must fall prior to the 10th day of the 10th month of the 9th year of Zedekiah, i.e., prior to January 14/15 of 588 B.C.E., yet*

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<sup>266</sup> Jos., Antiq., 10:7:4.

<sup>267</sup> Jos., Antiq., 10:8:1.

<sup>268</sup> E.g., Jer., 37:4, 11f; Jos., Antiq., 10:7:3 §111.

<sup>269</sup> Jer., 37:6–11; Jos., Antiq., 10:7:3.

*must also follow after Nisan 1 (March 15/16) of 589 B.C.E., at which time Zedekiah revolted from the Babylonians. It would have taken no more than 5 days for Nebuchadnezzar II to pack up and march his forces from Jerusalem to the border between nearby Gaza and Judaea (about 66 to 70 miles),<sup>270</sup> where he did battle with the Egyptian army. Even if the subsequent conflict took as long as 3 weeks to accomplish (although only a single battle is actually mentioned),<sup>271</sup> plus the addition of another 5 days for his army to return to Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar II would have taken no more than approximately 5 weeks to accomplish the entire task, if not much less. That moves our date for the withdrawal of the siege of Jerusalem back no further than about the beginning of the 9th month (Tebeth 1, i.e., December 6/7) of the 9th year of King Zedekiah (589 B.C.E.).*

*We are also told that, when Pharaoh heard of the attack upon Judah, “he raised a large force and came to Judaea to end the siege.”<sup>272</sup> The Egyptian capitals were in Memphis and Sais during this period.<sup>273</sup> So, it would take no more than a few weeks for Pharaoh to receive the report from the people of Judah or his scouts, gather his forces, and march through Gaza and to the border of Judah. The march from the border of Egypt at Pelusium to Gaza took no more than 10 days.<sup>274</sup> To this figure we need to add the time that it took*

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<sup>270</sup> See below n. 38.

<sup>271</sup> Jos., Antiq., 10:7:3. Nebuchadnezzar II may have chased the Egyptians all the way back to Pelusium on the northeast border of Egypt, for Josephus adds, “Thereupon the Babylonian king left Jerusalem and went to meet the Egyptians and, encountering them in battle, defeated and put them to flight and drove them out of the whole of Syria” (Jos., Antiq., 10:7:2).

<sup>272</sup> Jos., Antiq., 10:7:3.

<sup>273</sup> Although the main capital of Egypt was at Memphis, during Dynasty XXVI, to whom the pharaohs of this period belonged (e.g., Herodotus, 3:10, 13), residency was also held at Sais (e.g., Manetho, frags. 68 & 69; Herodotus, 2:154, 163, 169, 172).

<sup>274</sup> For example, Thutmose III of Egypt marched from Sile to the city of Gaza, a trip of about 145 miles, in 10 days (ARE, 2, §409), i.e., about 14.5 miles per day. Xenophon speaks of a Greek army marching through Assyria over 70 parasangs (about 245 miles), in 14 days, averaging about 17.5 miles per day (Xenophon, Anab., 2:4). It took Alexander the Great 7 days to march from Gaza, which was located in Palestine, to Pelusium in Egypt, a distance of about 134 Roman miles (123.11 English miles), averaging about 17.5 miles per day (Arrian, 3:1:1; Curtius, 4:7). Titus of Rome made a march from Pelusium to Rhinocorura (El-Arish), a

*Pharaoh to raise his army, gather supplies, and march from Sais or Memphis to the border of Egypt, no more than 2 to 3 weeks. Again the total time expended would be about a month. There also would be little doubt that Pharaoh would not hesitate in making these arrangements, seeing that his newly-won ally in Judah was in imminent danger.*

*Placing the arrival time of the Egyptians on the border of Judah, where the two forces met, at approximately the 1st day of the 9th month of the 9th year, another month back brings us to about the 1st day of the 8th month of the 9th year as the time for the arrival of the Chaldaean army in Judah (Khisleu 1, or November 7/8 of 589 B.C.E.). This time gave Nebuchadnezzar II at least a month to ravage the kingdom of Judah, which was now a mere shadow of its former self,<sup>275</sup> before Pharaoh could arrive. In turn, that leaves seven full months for Nebuchadnezzar II to receive word of the Judahite revolt, prepare his army for the conflict, and march from Babylon to Jerusalem. Indeed, the Chaldaean king may well have had additional military forces already positioned in Damascus, Syria, or at Carchemish on the Euphrates, as well as at other cities in the west which he could have also utilized.*

*The longest scenario requires Nebuchadnezzar II to march his army from Babylon to Jerusalem. If that were the case, the Babylonians would have recognized the revolt only after its ambassadors were locked out of the city and the tribute due Nebuchadnezzar II was not paid. This event would have taken place at the beginning of the 1st month of the 9th year of Zedekiah. Using signal fires,<sup>276</sup> as the Jews themselves later did,<sup>277</sup> the message could reach Babylon in only a few hours and certainly within a couple of*

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distance of about 90 Roman miles (82.68 English miles), in 3 days (Jos., Wars, 4:11:5), averaging about 27.5 miles per day.

<sup>275</sup> For the massive depopulation of the kingdom of Judah, reducing its population to those who found safety in the city of Jerusalem, during the days of the Assyrian Sennacherib, see the records provided above in Parallel Corpora A. In addition, Nebuchadnezzar II, the Babylonian king, had already deported and killed thousands of the people of Judah prior to this final attack on Jerusalem (e.g., Dan., 1:1–4; 2 Kings, 24:8–16; 2 Chron., 36:5–10; Jer., 24:1, 27:20–22, 52:29; Jos., Antiq., 10:6:3, 10:7:1).

<sup>276</sup> Cf. RA, 35.3/4, pp. 174–186.

<sup>277</sup> The Jews of Jerusalem regularly used fire signals to inform the Jews of Babylon when to celebrate the new moon (R.Sh., 2:1–4; J. R.Sh., 2:intro:1; cf. 2:1:1f; Maimonides, Code, 3:8:3:8). This effort was accomplished in only a matter of hours.



days. Yet even if military couriers were sent,<sup>278</sup> they could easily travel 30 miles or more a day, changing horses along the road (pony express style). In that event, it would take no longer than a month to reach Babylon. As an example, the news of the death of Nabopolassar in Babylon on Abu 8 (August 13/14) of 605 B.C.E. not only reached Nebuchadnezzar II in the city of Riblah, in the Hamath district of Syria,<sup>279</sup> but he was able to return to his capital by Ululu 1 (September 5/6) of 605 B.C.E. and sit upon the royal throne of Babylon in only 23 days.<sup>280</sup> A one-way courier trip from the region of Jerusalem to Babylon during the springtime would not take much longer.

In addition, the Babylonians required time to muster an army (2 or 3 weeks at most). A military march from Babylon to Jerusalem, traveling at a rather conservative rate of 14 miles a day,<sup>281</sup> over the approximate 817 walking miles that are required, would take no more than 2 months. If we add in a month for preparation, there was plenty of time during the 7 intervening months from the beginning of the year until the Babylonian army appeared in front of Jerusalem on or about the 1st day of the 8th month (Khisleu 1, or November 7/8 of 589 B.C.E.) of the 9th year. These data clearly conform with the 9th year of King Zedekiah being a Sabbath year.

## Conclusion

The evidence demonstrates that during the 9th year of King Zedekiah of Judah, the people of Judah not only revolted from their overlord, the king of Babylon, but, initially, kept the commandment to release their Hebrew slaves, a duty required during the Sabbath year. In the autumn of that same year, while the Babylonian army had broken off their siege of the city of Jerusalem, this action was

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<sup>278</sup> Cf. CCK, p. 26.

<sup>279</sup> Cf. Jer., 39:4–6, 52:8–10, 26f; 2 Kings, 25:8–21; Jos., Antiq., 10:8:2, 5, which shows that Nebuchadnezzar II also made his residence at Riblah (Arablatha) of Hamath during the siege of Jerusalem in the time of King Zedekiah. It is called Arbela and Deblatha in the LXX version.

<sup>280</sup> ABC, pp. 99f, obverse, ∞. 9–11; CCK, p. 26; cf. RA, 35.3/4, pp. 174–186.

<sup>281</sup> See above n. 38. Even casual Jewish travelers, observing the weekly Sabbath, could reach Jerusalem from Babylon in 4 months (Ezra, 7:8f), traveling at the extremely slow average rate of 7 miles per day. A military force, on the other hand, is well-trained and deliberate in their marching. They could attain a much higher rate of travel.

*reversed, and the owners of these slaves enslaved them once more. The data clearly proves that the 9th year of King Zedekiah, i.e., the year 589/588 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning, was a Sabbath year.*

							-588	66
Subbatch	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-585	-512	-519	-526	-533	-540	-547		
-586	-513	-520	-527	-534	-541	-548		
-587	-514	-521	-528	-535	-542	-549		
-588	-515	-522	-529	-536	-543	-550		
-589	-516	-523	-530	-537	-544	-551		
-518	-517	-524	-531	-538	-545	-552		
-511	-518	-525	-532	-539	-546	-553		
							-593	67
Subbatch	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-594	-541	-548	-555	-562	-569	-576		
-595	-542	-549	-556	-563	-570	-577		
-596	-543	-550	-557	-564	-571	-578		
-597	-544	-551	-558	-565	-572	-579		
-598	-545	-552	-559	-566	-573	-580		
-599	-546	-553	-560	-567	-574	-581		
-546	-547	-554	-561	-568	-575	-582		
							-602	68
Subbatch	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-603	-619	-627	-634	-641	-648	-655		
-604	-611	-619	-626	-633	-640	-646		
-605	-612	-619	-626	-633	-640	-647		
-606	-613	-620	-627	-634	-641	-648		
-607	-614	-621	-628	-635	-642	-649		
-608	-615	-622	-629	-636	-643	-650		
-609	-616	-623	-630	-637	-644	-651		
							-653	69
Subbatch	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-652	-669	-664	-673	-680	-687	-694		
-653	-668	-667	-674	-681	-688	-695		
-654	-661	-668	-675	-682	-689	-696		
-655	-662	-669	-676	-683	-690	-697		
-656	-663	-670	-677	-684	-691	-698		
-657	-664	-671	-678	-685	-692	-699		
-658	-665	-672	-679	-686	-693	-700		
							-706	70
Subbatch	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-701	-708	-715	-722	-729	-736	-743		
-702	-709	-716	-723	-730	-737	-744		
-703	-710	-717	-724	-731	-738	-745		
-704	-711	-718	-725	-732	-739	-746		
-705	-712	-719	-726	-733	-740	-747		
-706	-713	-720	-727	-734	-741	-748		
-707	-714	-721	-728	-735	-742	-749		
							-759	71

## Chapter 8 | Sabbatical Year 561 B.C. Jehoiachin

Having established the year of Jehoiachin's captivity in the last chapter, I will just briefly repeat it here to refresh your memory.

*10 At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. 11 And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants besieged it. 12 And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he and his mother, and his servants, and his leaders, and his eunuchs. And the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign. (2 Kings 24:10-12)*

This is the 8<sup>th</sup> year of Nebuchadnezzar who began to reign in the year 605 B.C. as noted earlier, making this year when Jehoiachin is taken into captivity the year 598 B.C.

As we continue to read 2 Kings, we come upon this very interesting section:

*27 And it happened in the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh of the month, Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, lifted up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison. 28 And he spoke kindly to him and set his throne above the throne of the kings who were with him in Babylon. 29 And he changed his prison clothes. And he always ate bread before him all the days of his life. 30 And his allowance was a regular allowance given him from the king, a daily ration for every day, all the days of his life. (2 Kings 25:27-30)*

### Ptolemy's Canon

Babylonian records state that Amel-Marduk (the Biblical Evil-Merodach) began to reign in October 562 B.C., and 2 Kings 25:27 says that it was in the twelfth month of this accession year (Adar 561 B.C.) and in Jehoiachin's 37th year of captivity that Jehoiachin was released from prison. 598 B.C. – 37 years = 561 B.C., which was a Sabbatical year—the year of release.

I have marked the year 561 B.C. in yellow on the previous chart. It is the 6<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year in the 67<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

Amel-Marduk's name, along with the length of his reign, are recorded in the 'Uruk King List' and the Canon of Ptolemy;<sup>282</sup>

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<sup>282</sup> *Canon of Kings*

*The Canon of Kings was a dated list of kings used by ancient astronomers as a convenient means to date astronomical phenomena, such as eclipses. The Canon was preserved by the astronomer Claudius Ptolemy, and is thus known sometimes as Ptolemy's Canon. It is one of the most important bases for our knowledge of ancient chronology.*

*The Canon derives originally from Babylonian sources. Thus, it lists Kings of Babylon from 747 BC until the conquest of Babylon by the Persians in 539 BC, and then Persian kings from 538 to 332 BC. At this point, the Canon was continued by Greek astronomers in Alexandria, and lists the Macedonian kings from 331 to 305 BC, the Ptolemies from 304 BC to 30 BC, and the Roman and Byzantine Emperors, although they are not kings; in some manuscripts the list is continued down to the fall of Constantinople in 1453.<sup>[1]</sup>*

*The Canon only increments by whole years, specifically the ancient Egyptian year of 365 days. This has two consequences. The first is that the dates for when monarchs began and ended their reigns are simplified to the beginning and the ending of the ancient Egyptian year, which moves one day every four years against the Julian calendar.<sup>[2]</sup> The second is that this list of monarchs is oversimplified. Monarchs who reigned for less than one year are not listed, and only one monarch is listed in any year with multiple monarchs. Usually, the overlapping year is assigned to the monarch who died in that year, but not always. Note that the two periods in the Babylonian section where no king is listed the first represents two pretenders who legitimacy the compiler did not recognize, and the second extends from the year Babylon was sacked by Sennacherib, King of Assyria to the restoration of Esarhaddon.<sup>[2]</sup>*

***The Canon is generally considered by historians to be accurate, and forms part of the backbone of the commonly accepted chronology from 747 BC forward that all other datings are synchronized to.<sup>[1]</sup> It is not, however, the ultimate source for this chronology; most of the names and lengths of reigns can be independently verified from archaeological material (coinage, annals, inscriptions in stone etc) and extant works of history from the historical ages concerned.***

*Babylonian Kings, 747–539 BC.*

- *Nabonassar (Nabonassáros): 747–734 BC*
- *Nabu-nadin-zeri (Nadíos): 733–732 BC*
- *Nabu-mukin-zeri (Khinzêr) and Pulu (Póros): 731–727 BC*
- *Ululas (Iloulaíos): 726–722 BC*
- *Marduk-apla-iddina II (Mardokempádos): 721–710 BC*
- *Sargon II (Arkeanós): 709–705 BC*
- *no kings: 704–703 BC*
- *Bel-ibni (Bilíbos): 702–700 BC*
- *Ashur-nadin-shumi (Aparanadíós): 699–694 BC*

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- *Nergal-ushezib (Rhegebélos)*: 693 BC
  - *Mushezib-Marduk (Mesésimordákos)*: 692–689 BC
  - *no kings*: 688–681 BC
  - *Esarhaddon (Asaradínos)*: 680–668 BC
  - *Shamash-shum-ukin (Saosdoukhínos)*: 667–648 BC
  - *Kandalanu (Kinêladános)*: 647–626 BC
  - *Nabopolassar (Nabopolassáros)*: 625–605 BC
  - *Nebuchadrezzar II (Nabokolassáros)*: 604–562 BC
  - *Amel-Marduk (Illoaroudámos)*: 561–560 BC
  - *Neriglissar (Nêrigasolassáros)*: 559–556 BC
  - *Nabonidus (Nabonadíós)*: 555–539 BC

*Persian Kings, 538–332 BC*

- *Cyrus*: 538–530 BC
- *Cambyses*: 529–522 BC
- *Darius I*: 521–486 BC
- *Xerxes I*: 485–465 BC
- *Artaxerxes I*: 464–424 BC
- *Darius II*: 423–405 BC
- *Artaxerxes II*: 404–359 BC
- *Artaxerxes III (Ochus)*: 358–338 BC
- *Arses (Arogus)*: 337–336 BC
- *Darius III*: 335–332 BC

*Macedonian Kings, 331–305 BC*

- *Alexander the Great*: 331–324 BC
- *Philip III*: 323–317 BC
- *Alexander IV*:<sup>[n 1]</sup> 316–305 BC

*Ptolemies of Egypt, 304–30 BC*

- *Ptolemy I Soter (Ptolemy, son of Lagus)*: 304–285 BC
- *Ptolemy II Philadelphus*: 284–247 BC
- *Ptolemy III Euergetes*: 246–222 BC
- *Ptolemy IV Philopator*: 221–205 BC
- *Ptolemy V Epiphanes*: 204–181 BC
- *Ptolemy VI Philometor*: 180–146 BC
- *Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II*: 145–117 BC
- *Ptolemy IX Soter II*: 116–81 BC
- *Ptolemy XII Neos Dionysus*: 80–52 BC
- *Cleopatra Thea Philopator*: 51–30 BC

*Roman Emperors, 29 BC–160 AD*

- *Augustus*: 29 BC–14 AD
- *Tiberius*: 15–36
- *Gaius*: 37–40
- *Claudius*: 41–54

however, no surviving cuneiform document records anything concerning his life or deeds. I include this King List here for you to see and use.

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- *Nero: 55–68*
  - *Vespasian: 69–78*
  - *Titus: 79–81*
  - *Domitian: 82–96*
  - *Nerva: 97*
  - *Trajan: 98–116*
  - *Hadrian: 117–137*
  - *Aelius Antoninus: 138–160*
- [https://ipfs.io/ipfs/QmXoyvizjW3WknFiJnKLwHCnL72vedxjQkDDP1mXW06uco/wiki/Canon\\_of\\_Ptolemy.html](https://ipfs.io/ipfs/QmXoyvizjW3WknFiJnKLwHCnL72vedxjQkDDP1mXW06uco/wiki/Canon_of_Ptolemy.html)

## Chapter 9 | Sabbatical Year 456 B.C. Nehemiah

I am once again going to turn this chapter over to Qadesh La Yahweh Press to explain the Sabbatical year of 456 B.C.

*The next datable Sabbath<sup>283</sup> year is overlooked by almost everyone dealing with the subject. In Nehemiah, 7:73–8:18, we find the story of how Ezra, the priest and scribe of Yahweh, during the Festival of Tabernacles in the 7th Israelite month, “day by day, from the 1st day until the last day, he read aloud in the book of the laws of the eloahim; and they kept the festival 7 days, and on the 8th (day) was the assembly, as from the judgment.”<sup>284</sup> This passage takes on important significance once we consider it in context with the commandment recorded in Deuteronomy:*

*In the last part of the 7 years, in the appointed time of the YEAR OF שמיטה (Shemitah; RELEASE),<sup>285</sup> in the Festival of Tabernacles, WHEN ALL ISRAEL COMES IN to see the face of Yahweh your eloahi in the place which he chooses, you shall proclaim this Torah before all Israel in their ears. Assemble the people, men and women and the little ones, and the aliens who are within your gates, so that they may hear and so that they may learn, and may respect Yahweh your eloahi, and be careful to do all the words of this Torah.<sup>286</sup>*

*Ezra and the Levitical priests performed this duty just as prescribed by the judgment given in the Torah (Law). The book of Nehemiah informs us that the people of Judah began by gathering “themselves together as one man before the Water Gate” and requested that Ezra “bring the book of the laws of Moses.” Ezra then read the Torah “before the assembly, from men and to women, and all having sense for the hearing, on the 1st day of the 7th month,” that is, when the Jews “come in” and are gathered together in Jerusalem*

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<sup>283</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press, Chapter XIV, The Sabbath Year of 456/455 B.C.E.  
<https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-14Chap.pdf>

<sup>284</sup> Neh., 8:18.

<sup>285</sup> The Hebrew term שמיטה (Shemitah) means, “remission (of debt) or suspension of (labor),” “release, acquittal” (SEC, Heb. #8059; CHAL, p. 374; HEL, p. 270). This release is ordained in the 7th year of the Sabbath cycle and is, thereby, equated with a Sabbath year itself (see below n. 3).

<sup>286</sup> Deut., 31:10–13; cf. Jos., Antiq., 4:8:12; Deut., 15:1–9.

to observe the festivals of the 7th month. He “read aloud” the Torah from a pulpit in the street.<sup>287</sup>

Afterwards, the Levitical priests continued the teaching, “and they gave the sense and caused (them) to understand the reading.”<sup>288</sup> The next day Ezra taught the chief of the fathers of all the people and the Levites so that they also could correctly “understand the words of the Torah.”<sup>289</sup> Ezra’s teaching was continued “day by day” throughout the entire Festival of Tabernacles,<sup>290</sup> as prescribed by the Law for the “year of release” (i.e., the Sabbath year).

Dating this particular Sabbath year is a bit tricky, which is probably the main reason no one has yet dared to accomplish the task. Nevertheless, it is datable (and easily so once all the available data is considered). We begin to piece the evidence together when we compare the different ancient accounts reporting Ezra’s arrival and subsequent reading of the Torah to the people. This reading took place during the reign of the Persian monarch (Arthkhshastha), called by the Greeks “Artaxerxes (I) Longimanus.”<sup>291</sup> Our main sources are the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Josephus, and 1 Esdras.

## The Versions of Josephus and 1 Esdras

The key to these events is found with Josephus and 1 Esdras. According to Josephus and 1 Esdras, Ezra set out from the Euphrates River in the land of Babylonia to go to Jerusalem “on the 12th day of the 1st month in the 7th year of the reign of Xerxes (Artaxerxes I) and arrived at Jerusalem in the 5th month of the same year.”<sup>292</sup>

A little while after arriving at the city, the issue of the numerous marriages between Jewish men and alien (i.e., pagan) women was

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<sup>287</sup> Neh., 8:2–4.

<sup>288</sup> Neh., 8:8.

<sup>289</sup> Neh., 8:13.

<sup>290</sup> Neh., 8:18

<sup>291</sup> That Arthkhshastha is Artaxerxes I Longimanus is confirmed by the Greek text of the LXX, which translates the Heb. name Arthkhshastha as Artaxerxes in Neh., Ezra, and 1 Esdras. Eusebius comments under the heading, “Artaxerxes, who is also called Longimanus,” that it was during his reign that Ezra and Nehemiah brought out the Hebrews (Eusebius, Chron., p. 69; also see Jerome’s version in Helm, Chronik, pp. 110f). For a discussion, see DECJ; also see NBD, p. 89.

<sup>292</sup> Jos., Antiq., 11:5:2; cf. 1 Esdras, 8:6, 61. Josephus uses the short form “Xerxes” for Artaxerxes I but clearly distinguishes him from Artaxerxes II Mnemon (404–359 B.C.E.), see Jos., Antiq., 11:7:1.



brought to Ezra's attention. After praying about this situation, Ezra called a meeting of the elders, which was held "on the 20th day of the 9th month (December)." <sup>293</sup>

Upon hearing Ezra's condemnation of these marriages, the elders agreed to solve the problem. They needed time, however, for the numbers of these marriages were great "and it was the wintry season of the year." <sup>294</sup> They resolved that they would begin to search and examine all such marriages "on the new moon of the 10th month" and that they would continue their inquiry until the new moon of a month to follow. <sup>295</sup> According to Ezra's own account, and that of 1 Esdras, this following month was the "1st day of the 1st month" of the next year. <sup>296</sup> Therefore, we have now reached the 8th year of Artaxerxes I. After this problem was rectified, Josephus continues:

*In the 7th month they celebrated the Festival of Tabernacles and, when almost all the people had gathered for it, they went up to the open court of the Temple near the gate, which faced east, and asked Ezra to read to them the laws of Moses. So he stood in the midst of the multitude and read them, talking from early morning until noon.* <sup>297</sup>

The book of 1 Esdras gives the same sequence of events as Josephus. After mentioning the removal of foreign wives on "the 1st day of the 10th month," <sup>298</sup> 1 Esdras adds:

*And the priests and Levites, and they that were of Israel, dwelt in Jerusalem, and in the country, on the 1st day of the 7th month: so the children of Israel were in their habitations.* <sup>299</sup>

The text then continues by noting that it was at this time that Ezra began to read the Torah to the multitude from the broad court before the sacred porch. <sup>300</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> Jos., Antiq., 11:5:2-4; 1 Esdras, 9:5. Also see Chap. XXI, p. 294, n. 13.

<sup>294</sup> Jos., Antiq., 11:5:4; 1 Esdras, 9:6-13.

<sup>295</sup> Jos., Antiq., 11:5:4; cf. 1 Esdras, 9:16f.

<sup>296</sup> Ezra, 10:16-17; 1 Esdras, 9:17.

<sup>297</sup> Jos., Antiq., 11:5:5.

<sup>298</sup> 1 Esdras, 9:16-36.

<sup>299</sup> 1 Esdras, 9:37.

<sup>300</sup> 1 Esdras, 9:38-53.

*Josephus and 1 Esdras make it clear that Ezra arrived in the 5th month of the 7th year of Xerxes (Artaxerxes I) and that the events of the 9th month and following were themselves succeeded by the reading of the Law in the 7th month of the next year, being the 8th year of Artaxerxes I.*

## **Ezra's Version**

*The book of Ezra reports much the same thing as Josephus. It states that Ezra left Babylon "in the 7th year of Artaxerxes the king. And he came to Jerusalem in the 5th month, which was in the 7th year of the king. For on the 1st (day) of the 1st month he began to go up from Babylon, and on the 1st of the 5th month he came to Jerusalem."*<sup>301</sup> After discussing details about who came with Ezra and what items they brought, Ezra adds:

*And we departed from the river of Ahaua on the 12th of the 1st month to go (to) Jerusalem.*<sup>302</sup>

*Josephus and 1 Esdras, as already noted, agree with this date of departure from Babylon.*<sup>303</sup> When Ezra arrived in Jerusalem, he offered sacrifices and turned over various items for the Temple. "And at the end of these things, the leaders came near" and advised Ezra of the problem with the numerous marriages between Jews and foreign women (i.e., those of pagan religions).<sup>304</sup> Ezra then prayed about the matter, after which he requested a meeting of the council of the elders in 3 days.<sup>305</sup> On the 9th month, the 20th day, during a "heavy rain," the elders met and agreed with Ezra, resolving to rectify this problem.<sup>306</sup>

*These people sat down and began judging these cases "on the 1st day of the 10th month" and finished their workload "by the 1st day of the 1st month."*<sup>307</sup> When we arrive at the 1st month, the new year had begun, being the 8th year of King Artaxerxes I.

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<sup>301</sup> Ezra, 7:7–9.

<sup>302</sup> Ezra, 8:31.

<sup>303</sup> Jos., Antiq., 11:5:2; 1 Esdras, 8:6.

<sup>304</sup> Ezra, 9:1–15.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid., 10:8.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid., 10:9–15.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid., 10:16–17.

*At this point the account in Ezra leaves off. Yet as Josephus and I Esdras show us, this new year was the one in which Ezra publicly read the Law at the Festival of Tabernacles, indicating that this year was a year of release. One of the motives of Ezra and the Jewish elders would seem to be, therefore, the resolution of the problem of wives practicing pagan religions BEFORE the beginning of a sacred Sabbath year. Indeed, based upon the Jubilee of Hezekiah's 16th year (700/699 B.C.E.), the 9th year of Artaxerxes I (455/454 B.C.E.) would also be a Jubilee year. The arrival of this Jubilee year would have raised even more concerns over religious issues for the devout Jews who were returning to Jerusalem.*

## **Nehemiah's Version**

*We pick up the story of Ezra in the book of Nehemiah. The book of Nehemiah compliments Ezra, Josephus, and I Esdras by beginning where the book of Ezra leaves off. What has puzzled historians about this version is that Nehemiah places the events surrounding Ezra's reading of the Law in the 20th year of Artaxerxes I rather than his 8th. This puzzle shall be solved as we proceed.*

*In this version of the story, Nehemiah, the cup bearer of King Artaxerxes I, hears of the desperate need for repair of the walls of Jerusalem. The news came to him in the month of Khisleu (Nov./Dec.),<sup>308</sup> the 9th month. Later on, Nehemiah writes, "in the month of Nisan, in the 20th year of Artaxerxes the king," he, for the first time, appeared sad before the king while serving the wine.<sup>309</sup> When questioned why Nehemiah was so troubled, Nehemiah told Artaxerxes I of the need for the repairs to Jerusalem. As a result, the king gave letters to Nehemiah ordering the neighboring regions to assist in this rebuilding effort and sent Nehemiah to the sacred city of Jerusalem.<sup>310</sup>*

*At this time, Nehemiah was also made governor of Judaea, as he confirms when he writes:*

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<sup>308</sup> Neh., 1:1–11. See Chart B.

<sup>309</sup> Neh., 2:1.

<sup>310</sup> Neh., 2:2–8.

*And from the time I was chosen to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the 20th year and until the 32nd year of Artaxerxes—12 years—I and my brothers did not eat the bread of the governor.<sup>311</sup>*

*Josephus notes that Nehemiah was sent on his expedition to Judaea by the Persian monarch on the very next day.<sup>312</sup> This detail accords with the other known facts, since it took 4 full months to make the journey from nearby Babylon to Jerusalem,<sup>313</sup> and according to Nehemiah, the walls were subsequently repaired in 52 days, being finished on the 25th of Elul (Aug./Sept.), the 6th month of that year.<sup>314</sup>*

*Important to our investigation is what is said to have happened next. After the wall was built, the doors set up, the gatekeepers and singers and Levites chosen, and Nehemiah's brother, Hanani, was placed as ruler over the palace at Jerusalem, Nehemiah found the registry of genealogy of those who had returned from the Babylonian exile and who had resettled in Jerusalem. From this registry he counted the people.<sup>315</sup> At this time contributions were made by the Jews to support the Temple.<sup>316</sup>*

*So the priests, and the Levites, and the gatekeepers, and the singers, and (some) of the people, and the temple-servants, and all the Israelites (Jews of Judaea) lived in their cities. AND WHEN THE 7TH MONTH CAME, THE SONS OF ISRAEL WERE IN THEIR CITIES.<sup>317</sup>*

*As a result, we have now arrived at the 7th month of the 20th year of Artaxerxes I. It was at this moment, we are told, when all the people had gathered themselves together, that Ezra read aloud to them the Law, “day by day (of the Festival of Tabernacles), from the 1st day until the last day, he read in the book of the Law of the eloahim.”<sup>318</sup> This evidence conclusively shows that Ezra read the Law in the 7th month of the 20th year of Artaxerxes I.*

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<sup>311</sup> Neh., 5:14.

<sup>312</sup> Jos., Antiq., 11:5:7.

<sup>313</sup> Ezra, 7:8f, cf. 8:31.

<sup>314</sup> Neh., 6:15. See Chart B.

<sup>315</sup> Neh., 7:1–69.

<sup>316</sup> Neh., 7:70–72.

<sup>317</sup> Neh., 7:73. 35 Neh., 8:18.

<sup>318</sup> Neh., 8:18

*The book of Nehemiah has caused much consternation and confusion because it dates Ezra's reading of the Law to the 20th year of King Artaxerxes I (amenable to System "B" if the accession-year method is used). Yet according to Josephus and 1 Esdras (cf. Ezra), Ezra's reading should have taken place in Artaxerxes I's 8th year, not his 20th. Seeing no way out of the dilemma, historians throw their hands into the air and forget the entire proposition. Yet there is no contradiction. The 8th year of Artaxerxes I was simply the same as his 20th year. The entire problem is easily rectified once we take into consideration the particular details and the history of this period. In doing so we must deal with the accounts of Ezra and Nehemiah separately, each man within his own context.*

## **The Reckoning of Ezra**

*To understand the reckoning of Ezra we must first consider his circumstance. Ezra was a Jew among the exiles living in Babylon.<sup>319</sup> The Babylonians used the regnal year (or accession-year) system, i.e., the 1st year was counted not from the time the king came to the throne but from the 1st day of the 1st month of Nisânu (= Jewish "Nisan," March/April) after he began ruling.<sup>320</sup> The period from when the king mounted the throne until the 1st of Nisan was the king's "accession year." That time was not officially accredited to the new king because it was already allotted to the king who preceded him.*

*Xerxes the Great, the father of Artaxerxes I, was murdered on December 16, 465 B.C.E. by a usurper named Artabanus.<sup>321</sup> In this insurrection Artaxerxes I barely escaped with his life. Artabanus, we are told, subsequently enjoyed the throne of Persia for 7 months.<sup>322</sup> This detail means that Artabanus ruled from December 17, 465 to about June, 464 B.C.E. This fact is confirmed by archaeological evidence which shows that Artaxerxes I began to reign on or about June 12, 464 B.C.E.<sup>323</sup> Therefore, Artabanus would be considered king of Babylon, then under the power of Persia, for the year 464*

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<sup>319</sup> Ezra, 7:1–10.

<sup>320</sup> HBC, pp. 85ff; MNHK, p. 43; CAW, p. 7.

<sup>321</sup> Diodorus, 11:69.

<sup>322</sup> E.g., Sec. Hier. Cod., pp. 28f; Manetho, frag. 70; etc.

<sup>323</sup> BC, p. 15. No record of an AY is found for Artaxerxes I in either Persia or Babylonia, only in south Egypt at Aswan (dated XI/18 = Jan. 3) where Artabanus was not recognized.

*B.C.E., having held the throne on the 1st of Nisan of that year. In June of 464 B.C.E., Artaxerxes I defeated Artabanus and regained the throne of the Persian Empire for himself. On the 1st of Nisan in the year 463 B.C.E., Artaxerxes I would have been officially recognized as king of Babylon.*

*This evidence shows that under the Babylonian reckoning, with which Ezra was familiar and had been living under, Artaxerxes I's 1st year began on the 1st of Nisan, 463 B.C.E. As such, his 7th year was 457 B.C.E., the year Ezra arrived at Jerusalem; the 8th year, the Sabbath year, began with Nisan 1, of 456 B.C.E. This date is correct and matches the cycle established in the records dealing with Hezekiah's 15th year.*

## **The Reckoning of Nehemiah**

*Nehemiah's situation was far different from that of Ezra. To begin with, Nehemiah was the cup bearer of King Artaxerxes I and lived, not in Babylon, but in Shushan (Susan, Susa), a capital city of Persia.<sup>324</sup> In calculating Artaxerxes I's reign, Nehemiah would have used an entirely different interpretation.*

*According to ancient records, Artaxerxes I ruled as co-regent with his father, Xerxes the Great, for a number of years. To demonstrate, in Greek histories we read about their famous general named Themistocles. During the Persian invasion of Greece by Xerxes the Great in 480 B.C.E., Themistocles forced the Greeks to make a stand at Salamis and fight it out with the Persian fleet. A few years later Themistocles fell into disrepute among his countrymen and was ostracized. In fear for his life, he fled to Asia Minor.<sup>325</sup> At that time, Themistocles made contact with the Persian king seeking political asylum.*

*What has confused later historians is the fact that there were two different versions of the story regarding Themistocles' contact with the Persian king. Plutarch writes:*

*Now Thucydides and Charon of Lampsacus relate that Xerxes was dead, and that it was his son Artaxerxes with whom Themistocles had his interview; but Ephorus and Dinon and Clitarchus and*

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<sup>324</sup> Neh., 1:1; Jos., Antiq., 11:5:6.

<sup>325</sup> Diodorus, 11:55–56.

*Heracleides and yet more besides have it that it was Xerxes to whom he came. With the chronological data Thucydides seems to me more in accord, although these are by no means securely established.*<sup>326</sup>

*Nepos, the 1st century B.C.E. Roman historian, supports Thucydides in this dispute, writing:*

*I know that most historians have related that Themistocles went over into Asia in the reign of Xerxes, but I give credence to Thucydides in preference to others, because he, of all who have left records of that period, was nearest in point of time to Themistocles, and was of the same city. Thucydides says that he went to Artaxerxes.*<sup>327</sup>

*This confusion is easily resolved once we recognize that both Xerxes the Great and his son Artaxerxes I shared the throne of Persia, or more precisely, Artaxerxes I was co-regent. When Themistocles made contact, he did so with both kings.*

*Themistocles arrived in Asia Minor in 473 B.C.E. Diodorus of Sicily, for example, who reports that Themistocles was granted an interview with Xerxes, refers to the death of this Greek general as part of his discussions about events of the year 471 B.C.E.<sup>328</sup> Prior to his death, Themistocles enjoyed a period of friendship with the Persian king. Yet before this friendship began, the Greek general had to face opposition among certain nobles in Persia. Faced with this opposition, the king of Persia granted Themistocles “1 year” to prepare for the trial, during which time Themistocles learned the Persian language in an effort to personally defend himself. At the trial, Themistocles was acquitted and became friends with the monarch.<sup>329</sup> He then “came to the king,” i.e., visited Persia, as an advisor.<sup>330</sup>*

*Adding to this information is a notation found in Jerome’s edition of the *Chronicorum Canonum* of Eusebius. Under the 1st year of the 77th Olympiad, being the 14th year of King Xerxes the Great (i.e., 472 B.C.E.), it states, “Themistocles in Persas fugit (Themistocles was a fugitive in Persia).”<sup>331</sup> Themistocles did not leave Asia Minor for his*

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<sup>326</sup> Plutarch, *Them.*, 27.

<sup>327</sup> Nepos, *Them.*, 9.

<sup>328</sup> Diodorus, 11:58, cf. 11:54–59.

<sup>329</sup> Diodorus, 11:57; Thucydides, 1:138; Plutarch, *Them.*, 29.

<sup>330</sup> Thucydides, 1:138.

<sup>331</sup> Helm, *Chronik*, p. 109 (191F:20).

visit to Persia until after his trial. Counting 1 year back for him to prepare for the trial brings us to 473 B.C.E., the year for his arrival in Asia Minor. Those writers who held records reporting that this contact was made with Artaxerxes I, therefore, have merely assumed that Xerxes the Great had died. In reality, Xerxes the Great did not die until 465 B.C.E.

Thucydides importantly notes that when Themistocles came to Asia Minor, "he sent a letter to King Artaxerxes, son of Xerxes, who had lately come to the throne."<sup>332</sup> This notice places Artaxerxes I on the throne of Persia not long before 473 B.C.E., which was already a full 9 years before he recovered the throne from the usurper Artabanus. Since his father Xerxes the Great was not slain until December, 465 B.C.E., the evidence concludes that Artaxerxes I had ruled as co-regent with his father for at least 11 years. Our arrangement would prove that his 1st regnal year as co-regent would have been in 475 B.C.E., which accords with the statement in Thucydides.

Confirmation of the date 475 B.C.E. for the 1st regnal year of Artaxerxes I on the Persian throne is also found in the records of Nehemiah. In Nehemiah we read the otherwise mystifying statement:

*The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in the month of Khisleu in the 20th year, and I was in the palace at Shushan . . .*<sup>333</sup>

The chapter goes on to explain how Nehemiah received the report of the desperate condition of the city of Jerusalem and how the Jews living in Judaea were under great afflictions. The question stands, "The 20th year of what?" It cannot mean the 20th regnal year of Artaxerxes I, for a little later on, AFTER Nehemiah had already received this dire report about the Jews, we read the following:

*And it happened, in the month of Nisan, in the 20th year of Artaxerxes, that wine was before him. And I took the wine and gave to the king. And I had never been sad in his presence. And the king said to me, "Why is your face so sad, since you are not sick."*<sup>334</sup>

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<sup>332</sup> Thucydides, 1:137.

<sup>333</sup> Neh., 1:1.

<sup>334</sup> Neh., 2:1.



*The story goes on to tell how Nehemiah related to the king the desperate conditions of the Jews in Judaea and how the king granted him leave to go to them. The Persians, like the Babylonians and Jews, counted their year from the month of Nisan. Therefore, the month of Khisleu (the 9th month of the year) in the 20th year, when Nehemiah first heard of the problems in Jerusalem, was not the same as the 20th year during which Artaxerxes I questioned Nehemiah in the month of Nisan (the 1st month).*

*Meanwhile, Nehemiah, following Persian custom, counted years by the accession-year system (see for example Nehemiah's statement about his own rule as governor over Judaea, "from the 20th year and until the 32nd year of Artaxerxes the king—12 years,"<sup>335</sup> where 13 years of rule are indicated but only 12 regnal years are claimed).*

*Therefore, when at the beginning of his book Nehemiah makes mention of "the month of Khisleu (the 9th month), in the 20th year," he was making reference not to the king's reign but his own service in the palace. A service beginning 20 years ago would be equal to Artaxerxes I's accession year. As a result, the subsequent events—which happened "in the month of Nisan (the 1st month), in the 20th year of Artaxerxes the king"—refer to the 20th regnal year of the king, that is counted from the year after his accession year.*

## **The Reckoning of Josephus**

*In the story of Nehemiah, as given by Josephus, we have yet another set of numbers. Specifically, Josephus makes Nehemiah leave Persia in the 25th year of Xerxes (Artaxerxes I).<sup>336</sup> As Ralph Marcus, in his translation of Josephus, correctly comments:*

*Josephus' account of Nehemiah's history differs in so many details from the Scriptures that most scholars assume, with some reason, that he had before him a text differing considerably from the extant Heb. and Gr. texts.<sup>337</sup>*

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<sup>335</sup> Neh., 5:14. That the Persians of this period used the accession-year method, see BC, pp. 6–17; JNES, 13.1, pp. 4–20.

<sup>336</sup> Jos., Antiq., 11:5:6f.

<sup>337</sup> Marcus, Jos., vi, p. 390, n. f, and also see pp. 400f, n. b.

*A different text, nevertheless, does not mean that the figures of Josephus are in error or corrupt. With our reconstruction of the chronology from Ezra and Nehemiah, we find that Josephus' source makes perfect sense. The 25th year of Artaxerxes I is indeed equivalent to his 20th year.*

*Counting back 5 years from 475 B.C.E., when Artaxerxes I began his official reign, we reach the year 480 B.C.E. This was the year that Xerxes the Great set out on his famous expedition against Greece. It would be quite natural for Xerxes the Great to associate his son with the throne at this important occasion. If Xerxes the Great would have been killed during his campaign, the association of his son with the throne would have assured a proper transfer of power. The usual procedure was to give the heir a realm of his own within the kingdom and to designate him as heir apparent. Later on, in 476 B.C.E., Artaxerxes I was made co-regent—476 B.C.E. also being the year of his accession.*

## **The Opposing Views**

*Though this investigation would seem to have correctly uncovered the dating systems used by Ezra and Nehemiah, those who adhere to systems "B," "C," and "D" will still assert exceptions. Systems "C" and "D" will simply claim that Ezra's dating for Artaxerxes I should begin, not with his 1st regnal year in 463 B.C.E., but with his accession year in 464 B.C.E. System "B" will insist that some of the evidence should be dismissed as errors or mistakes. They will accept only the evidence that dates Ezra's reading of the Torah to the 20th year of Artaxerxes I.*

*All three of these theories face severe difficulties. Systems "B" and "C," for example, have no contemporary evidence whatsoever which would demonstrate the use of a Tishri year by the Jews during this early period. Indeed, the relevant Jewish records from Judaea actually confirm a Nisan (Abib) year.<sup>338</sup> Furthermore, as we have previously shown, every source prior to the mid-2nd century C.E. declares only a Nisan (Abib) year reckoning in official use by the Jews of Judaea.*

*Systems "B" and "D," meanwhile, are also faced with the difficulty that their Sabbath-cycle calculations will not work for the*

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<sup>338</sup> E.g., Zech., 1:7, 7:1; Esther, 2:16, 3:7, 8:12; and see below n. 56; cf. Chart B.

*Sabbath year occurring at the time of Sennacherib's third campaign. If it will not work for that period how can it work in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah?*

*The view espoused by the advocates of Systems "C" and "D," that the records dealing with the dates for Artaxerxes I should be understood by the non-accession-year system, is also without support. In fact, it is much more plausible that Ezra, a Babylonian Jew, would have used the Babylonian accession-year system. In turn, use of the accession-year system for Artaxerxes I results in a precise fit for the calculations of the Sabbath and Jubilee cycle established in the records dealing with the destruction of Sennacherib's army at Jerusalem in 701 B.C.E. (Chart C).*

*System "B" has several other problems as well. It is true that—if we ignore any co-regency of the Persian monarchs, disregard the evidence that Ezra read the Torah in Artaxerxes I's 8th year, but use the accession-year system—the 20th year of Artaxerxes I (Abib reckoning) would overlap with the first part of a Sabbath year as determined by System "B" (i.e., 444/443 B.C.E., Tishri reckoning). Yet even if we did set aside the evidence, both for a co-regency of the Persian kings and for Ezra's reading of the Torah in Artaxerxes I's 8th year, we are still faced with the fact that all of our sources declare that Ezra publicly read the Torah during the Festival of Tabernacles in the 7th month.<sup>339</sup> Not one of these writers qualifies his statement by indicating that this 7th month was the beginning of any Jewish year system. The numbering of this month, therefore, proves that the year was determined by the Abib (Nisan) reckoning and not by a Tishri reckoning—as would be required if either System "B" or "C" are to work.*

## **Conclusion**

*Simply put, Nehemiah's reference point for King Artaxerxes I was seen from a Persian perspective. Nehemiah's term of office as the king's cup bearer started with Artaxerxes I's accession year, the year he began to reign as coregent with his father, King Xerxes the Great. The short interlude during the usurpation by Artabanus would not play any role in this calculation.*

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<sup>339</sup> Neh., 7:73–8:18; LXX Neh., 7:73–8:18; Jos., Antiq., 11:5:5; 1 Esdras, 9:37–53.

*Ezra, on the other hand, came from Babylon. At Babylon the accession year system was utilized and only one king at a time was recognized. At first, this honor belonged only to Xerxes the Great until his death in 465 B.C.E. It would go next to Artabanus, who was in control of the empire on Nisan 1, 464 B.C.E.; and finally to Artaxerxes I, who retook the throne in June of 464 B.C.E. Artaxerxes I would have been recognized on the 1st of Nisan, 463 B.C.E., when for the first time he actually “took the hand of Bel”<sup>340</sup> and ruled as sole monarch.*

*As a result, the book of Nehemiah placed Ezra’s public reading of the Torah (Law) during the Festival of Tabernacles in the 7th month of the 20th Persian year of Artaxerxes I, thereby signifying that his 20th year was a Sabbath year for the Jews. Meanwhile, Josephus, 1 Esdras, and the book of Ezra all place the event in Artaxerxes I’s 8th Babylonian year. Nevertheless, both dates represent the same year, 456/455 B.C.E. The next year, 455/454 B.C.E., was a Jubilee year. As we proceed with the evidence for subsequent Sabbath years, it will become quite apparent that these above dates are correct and represent the original Sabbath and Jubilee cycle.*

I have on the chart below marked in yellow the year 456 B.C. and 455 B.C. 456 B.C. is the 7<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year of the 69<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

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<sup>340</sup> CAW, p. 7; MBA, p. 480; cf. HBC, pp. 85f.

							-308	71
Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-260	-267	-274	-281	-288	-295	-302		
-261	-268	-275	-282	-289	-296	-303		
-262	-269	-276	-283	-290	-297	-304		
-263	-270	-277	-284	-291	-298	-305		
-264	-271	-278	-285	-292	-299	-306		
-265	-272	-279	-286	-293	-300	-307		
-266	-273	-280	-287	-294	-301	-308		
							-308	72
Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-309	-316	-323	-330	-337	-344	-351		
-310	-317	-324	-331	-338	-345	-352		
-311	-318	-325	-332	-339	-346	-353		
-312	-319	-326	-333	-340	-347	-354		
-313	-320	-327	-334	-341	-348	-355		
-314	-321	-328	-335	-342	-349	-356		
-315	-322	-329	-336	-343	-350	-357		
							-357	73
Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-358	-365	-372	-379	-386	-393	-400		
-359	-366	-373	-380	-387	-394	-401		
-360	-367	-374	-381	-388	-395	-402		
-361	-368	-375	-382	-389	-396	-403		
-362	-369	-376	-383	-390	-397	-404		
-363	-370	-377	-384	-391	-398	-405		
-364	-371	-378	-385	-392	-399	-406		
							-406	74
Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-407	-414	-421	-428	-435	-442	-449		
-408	-415	-422	-429	-436	-443	-450		
-409	-416	-423	-430	-437	-444	-451		
-410	-417	-424	-431	-438	-445	-452		
-411	-418	-425	-432	-439	-446	-453		
-412	-419	-426	-433	-440	-447	-454		
-413	-420	-427	-434	-441	-448	-455		
							-455	89
Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-456	-463	-470	-477	-484	-491	-498		
-457	-464	-471	-478	-485	-492	-499		
-458	-465	-472	-479	-486	-493	-500		
-459	-466	-473	-480	-487	-494	-501		
-460	-467	-474	-481	-488	-495	-502		
-461	-468	-475	-482	-489	-496	-503		
-462	-469	-476	-483	-490	-497	-504		
							-504	68

## Chapter 10 | Sabbatical Year 330 B.C. Alexander the Great

On the previous chart, you will see I have marked the year 330 B.C. in yellow. It is the 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year in the 72<sup>nd</sup> Jubilee cycle.

This year, when Alexander the Great gave a reprieve of taxes in the Sabbatical year of 330 C.E., is not provable from the information I have gathered. This is most likely why Qadesh La Yahweh Press did not address it in their publication, but Wacholder and Zuckermann both claimed it matched their own theories and helped to prove their position:

*Josephus records an account of Alexander the Great exempting the Jews from having to pay taxes during sabbatical years (Antiquities, bk. 11, ch. 8, sect. 4-5). Josephus is quite explicit regarding the date of this event. It was immediately after Alexander conquered Gaza:*

*. . . when the seven months of the siege of Tyre were over, and the two months of the siege of Gaza, Sanballat died. Now Alexander, when he had taken Gaza, made haste to go up to Jerusalem . . . . (sect. 4)*

*While Josephus does not specify when the sabbatical year occurred in relation to Alexander's exempting of the Jews from taxation, Wacholder's reasoning here is similar to that of the previous section. He feels that the two events occurred at about the same time. For Zuckermann, 332/331 BC was a sabbatical year. For Wacholder, 331/330 BC was a sabbatical year.*

*Since Alexander took Gaza in November 332 BC, connecting Alexander's grant to a sabbatical year suggests that 332/331 BC was a sabbatical year, a date that is again in harmony with Zuckermann.<sup>341</sup>*

*Wacholder acknowledges that either Zuckermann's sabbatical dates or his own could fit the historical record of this incident, but he considers his dating "preferable" (p. 160).*

*Though not explicitly stated in his paper, Wacholder assumes that Josephus's dating of Alexander's grant is incorrect. He postulates that the date of the grant was really in the spring or summer of 331*

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<sup>341</sup> <https://www.pickle-publishing.com/papers/sabbatical-years.htm#3>

*BC after Alexander had appointed a governor over Cole-Syria, while Josephus plainly put the date of the grant in the previous fall around 6 months earlier.*

*If we thus revise the source, at some point we can no longer use that source to support our position. If an unamended source is untrustworthy as far as the date goes, how can we use it to prove the date when a sabbatical year occurred?*

*Suppose for the sake of argument that Wacholder's hypothesis is correct, and that the grant occurred in the spring of 331 BC, not the fall of 332. This would have still been within a sabbatical year according to Zuckermann. Whether that year or the next was a sabbatical year, either way the Jews would have been concerned about paying taxes during sabbaticals, and would have requested an exemption from Alexander. Either they had no harvest that year with which to pay the new taxes, or they were anticipating not having anything to pay the taxes with the following year.*

*Thus even if Wacholder's hypothesis is correct, Zuckermann's dates can still fit.<sup>342</sup>*

Let us look at the facts and see if we can determine precisely in what year this event took place. Because we have already determined the Sabbatical and Jubilee years of 701 B.C. and 700 B.C. respectively, and then checked them against the Sabbatical and Jubilee years during the Bar Kochba Revolt of 133 C.E. (the 49<sup>th</sup> year) and 134 C.E. (the 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee year), and another Sabbatical year in 140 C.E., it is a simple step to count by 7's from one Sabbatical year to another. Once this is done, 330 C.E. is proven to be the Sabbatical year closest to the dates surrounding the conquest of Alexander.

We read of Alexander laying siege against Tyre beginning in January of the year 332 B.C. He did not defeat Tyre until July of that same year:

*After defeating Darius III at the battle of Issus in November 333 BCE, Alexander marched his army (about 35,000-40,000 strong) into Phoenicia, where he received the capitulation of Byblus and Sidon. Tyrian envoys met with Alexander whilst he was on the march, declaring their intent to honour his wishes.*

*With the siege finally over (it had started in January and ended in July), Alexander made his sacrifice to Heracles, and held a torch*

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<sup>342</sup> <https://www.pickle-publishing.com/papers/sabbatical-years-more.htm#2>

*race and triumphal procession through the streets of the city. With Tyre subjugated, Alexander could turn his attention to subduing Gaza and Egypt.*<sup>343</sup>

Alexander headed south to attack Gaza and defeated it in October of 332 B.C.:

*The siege of Gaza, as part of the Wars of Alexander the Great, took place in October of 332 BC. Resulting in a victory for Macedon, it ended the 31st Dynasty of Egypt, which functioned as a satrapy under the Achaemenid Persian Empire.*<sup>344</sup>

After defeating Gaza, Alexander went to take on Egypt and stayed there until 331 B.C. before heading off to fight the Persians:

*In the autumn of 332 bce Alexander the Great invaded Egypt with his mixed army of Macedonians and Greeks and found the Egyptians ready to throw off the oppressive control of the Persians. Alexander was welcomed by the Egyptians as a liberator and took the country without a battle.*

*Alexander left Egypt in the spring of 331 bce, having divided the military command between Balacrus, son of Amyntas, and Peucestas, son of Makartatos.*<sup>345</sup>

We must now examine Josephus to learn what took place right after Gaza was defeated. Josephus<sup>346</sup> records an account in his book of Antiquities of Alexander the Great exempting the Jews from having to pay taxes during Sabbatical years. Here is the account:

*4 But Sanballat thought he had now gotten a proper opportunity to make his attempt, so he renounced Darius, and taking with him seven thousand of his own subjects, he came to Alexander; and finding him beginning the siege of Tyre, he said to him, that he delivered up to him these men, who came out of places under his dominion, and did gladly accept of him for his lord instead of*

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<sup>343</sup> <https://www.worldhistory.org/article/107/alexanders-siege-of-tyre-332-bce/>

<sup>344</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege\\_of\\_Gaza\\_\(332\\_BC\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Gaza_(332_BC))

<sup>345</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/place/ancient-Egypt/Macedonian-and-Ptolemaic-Egypt-332-30-bce>

<sup>346</sup> Josephus, The Remission of taxes under Alexander the Great for Sabbatical years. *Antiquities*, bk. 11, ch. 8, sect. 4-6.



Darius. So when Alexander had received him kindly, Sanballat thereupon took courage, and spake to him about his present affair. He told him that he had a son-in-law, Manasseh, who was brother to the high priest Jaddua; and that there were many others of his own nation, now with him, that were desirous to have a temple in the places subject to him; that it would be for the king's advantage to have the strength of the Jews divided into two parts, lest when the nation is of one mind, and united, upon any attempt for innovation, it prove troublesome to kings, as it had formerly proved to the kings of Assyria. Whereupon Alexander gave Sanballat leave so to do, who used the utmost diligence, and built the temple, and made Manasseh the priest, and deemed it a great reward that his daughter's children should have that dignity; **but when the seven months of the siege of Tyre were over, and the two months of the siege of Gaza, Sanballat died. Now Alexander, when he had taken Gaza, made haste to go up to Jerusalem; and Jaddua the high priest, when he heard that, was in an agony, and under terror, as not knowing how he should meet the Macedonians, since the king was displeased at his foregoing disobedience.** He therefore ordained that the people should make supplications, and should join with him in offering sacrifice to God, whom he besought to protect that nation, and to deliver them from the perils that were coming upon them; whereupon God warned him in a dream, which came upon him after he had offered sacrifice, that he should take courage, and adorn the city, and open the gates; that the rest should appear in white garments, but that he and the priests should meet the king in the habits proper to their order, without the dread of any ill consequences, which the providence of God would prevent. Upon which, when he rose from his sleep, he greatly rejoiced, and declared to all the warning he had received from God. According to which dream he acted entirely, and so waited for the coming of the king.

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6 And when he understood that he was not far from the city, he went out in procession, with the priests and the multitude of the citizens. The procession was venerable, and the manner of it different from that of other nations. It reached to a place called Sapha, which name, translated into Greek, signifies a prospect, for you have thence a prospect both of Jerusalem and of the temple. And when the Phoenicians and the Chaldeans that followed him thought they should have liberty to plunder the city, and torment the high priest to death, which the king's displeasure fairly promised them, the very

reverse of it happened; for Alexander, when he saw the multitude at a distance, in white garments, while the priests stood clothed with fine linen, and the high priest in purple and scarlet clothing, with his mitre on his head, having the golden plate whereon the name of God was engraved, he approached by himself, and adored that name, and first saluted the high priest. The Jews also did all together, with one voice, salute Alexander, and encompass him about; whereupon the kings of Syria and the rest were surprised at what Alexander had done, and supposed him disordered in his mind. However, Parmenio alone went up to him, and asked him how it came to pass that, when all others adored him, he should adore the high priest of the Jews? To whom he replied, "I did not adore him, but that God who hath honored him with his high priesthood; for I saw this very person in a dream, in this very habit, when I was at Dios in Macedonia, who, when I was considering with myself how I might obtain the dominion of Asia, exhorted me to make no delay, but boldly to pass over the sea thither, for that he would conduct my army, and would give me the dominion over the Persians; whence it is that, having seen no other in that habit, and now seeing this person in it, and remembering that vision, and the exhortation which I had in my dream, I believe that I bring this army under the Divine conduct, and shall therewith conquer Darius, and destroy the power of the Persians, and that all things will succeed according to what is in my own mind." And when he had said this to Parmenio, and had given the high priest his right hand, the priests ran along by him, and he came into the city. And when he went up into the temple, he offered sacrifice to God, according to the high priest's direction, and magnificently treated both the high priest and the priests. And when the Book of Daniel was showed him wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended. And as he was then glad, he dismissed the multitude for the present; **but the next day he called them to him, and bid them ask what favors they pleased of him; whereupon the high priest desired that they might enjoy the laws of their forefathers, and might pay no tribute on the seventh year. He granted all they desired.** And when they entreated him that he would permit the Jews in Babylon and Media to enjoy their own laws also, he willingly promised to do hereafter what they desired. And when he said to the multitude, that if any of them would enlist themselves in his army, on this condition, that they should continue under the laws of their forefathers, and live according to them, he

*was willing to take them with him, many were ready to accompany him in his wars.*

In all of this we are not told when the Sabbatical year was. We are only told that Alexander granted them their desire to be exempt of having to pay taxes in the Sabbatical years. All of them. The only way to know that 330 B.C. was a Sabbatical year is by doing the chronology from the years 701 B.C. and 700 B.C.

## Chapter 11 | Sabbatical Year 162 B.C. The Siege of Bethzur—The Smoking Gun of Rosh Hashanah

I am going to rely on the diligent research of Qadesh La Yahweh Press here for a number of these early dates. I want to remind you that they are constantly comparing the four different chronological methodologies for dating the Sabbatical and Jubilee years to the hard facts.

This is an important chapter, and I will admit you may get confused reading it. In **The Stones Cry Out Part 1** we pointed out when all the calendric changes began and by whom. I have bolded some sections so you can pause and consider exactly what is being said. The bottom line is that the year begins with the month of Aviv. It is the month of Aviv even when they were in Babylon. The Sabbatical and Jubilee years all begin with the month of Aviv. They never began with the month of Tishri until after the Mishnah was published.

This chapter is the smoking gun about where Rosh Hashanah developed and how it came to be part of the Jewish fabric of today.

### The Seleucid Era in Judaea

*Our next datable Sabbath year<sup>347</sup> is revealed in the Maccabean books and the works of Josephus, with the story of the siege of Bethzura and Jerusalem by Antiochus Eupator (Antiochus V). According to these records, the 150th year of the Seleucid era was a Sabbath year (162/161 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning). This claim will not fit System “B,” which would make the 149th Seleucid year (Tishri, 164 until Tishri, 163 B.C.E.) a Sabbath year and must determine the first Seleucid year as beginning in October (Tishri 1), 312 B.C.E. Neither does it reconcile with System “C,” as proposed by Wacholder and others. They would also have the 149th Seleucid year be the Sabbath year but would instead begin the Seleucid calendar with October of the year 311 B.C.E., making the 149th year from October, 163 until October, 162 B.C.E.*

*The relevant ancient records are considered by present-day scholars to be confused and unreliable. The irony is that these records are among the most reliable and provide a solid foundation for the reconstruction of the Sabbath and Jubilee cycle. The problem is not with the evidence, which*

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<sup>347</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press, Chapter XV The Seleucid Era in Judaea Part I of the Sabbath Year of 162/161 B.C.E. <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-15Chap.pdf>

clearly sets forth the correct Sabbath cycle, but with the attempt by those interpreting these records to make them conform to System “B”—or, as in the case of Wacholder and those accepting his views, System “C.” Both cycles are based upon the false premise that the ancient Jewish year began with the month of Tishri (Sept./Oct.). In reality, as all the evidence demonstrates, the Jews of this early period began their year with the month of Abib (later called Nisan; i.e., March/April) 1, as commanded in the Torah.<sup>348</sup>

The conclusions of Systems “B” and “C,” therefore, entirely miss the mark, in that their proponents try to rearrange the evidence to fit their preconceived cycles. Evidence from the works of Josephus and 1 and 2 Maccabees proves that their authors calculated the Seleucid year based upon a Nisan 1 beginning. At no time do these records ever suggest that the Sabbath year began on the 1st day of Tishri.

## The Seleucid Era Used in Judaea

To understand the evidence from the Maccabean books and Josephus we must first grapple with the issue of the Seleucid era. Here we find two different reckonings anciently in use: one based upon the Babylonian calendar, which was dominant throughout the Middle East, and a second based upon the Macedonian calendar, which was in practice among the Greeks. When the Seleucid era was adopted within the Greek Empire in Asia, the Babylonian system was used. **Yet later on, when the Seleucid ruling house transferred its base of power to Syria, the Greeks of Syria adopted the Macedonian method. Thereafter, the choice of which method was used varied from place to place.**

The Seleucid era was named after Seleucus Nicator (321–281 B.C.E.), one of the generals of Alexander the Great, who after Alexander’s death was part of the Diadochi (successors). He ruled as the satrap of Babylon. The Seleucid era was not only one of the most widely used calendar systems in the ancient world, but it also was among those that remained in use the longest. It continued as a system with the exiled Jews for a long time, being called “the Greek era” and “the era of contracts” because legal documents were dated by it.<sup>349</sup>

In the long struggle for power that ensued, Seleucus fled to Egypt where he allied himself with Ptolemy Soter. Later, Seleucus and Ptolemy together defeated Demetrius Poliorcetes in a decisive battle at Gaza. Castor mentions the battle near Gaza between Ptolemy and Demetrius, stating that it “was

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<sup>348</sup> As Abib, see Exod., 12:1–20, 13:4, 23:15, 34:18; Deut., 16:1. As Nisan, see Esther, 3:7.

<sup>349</sup> HBC, p. 123.

*fought after 11 years (after the year) of Alexander's death, in the 117th Olympiad," Macedonian reckoning, Alexander having died "in the 114th Olympiad."*<sup>350</sup> *Alexander's death took place on June 13, 323 B.C.E., which indeed was in the 1st year of the 114th Olympiad (Oct., 324 to Oct., 323 B.C.E.). "After 11 years" brings us to the 1st year of the 117th Macedonian Olympiad (Oct., 312 to Oct., 311 B.C.E.), the war being fought early in the 12th year of that period.*

*Diodorus of Sicily comments that Demetrius had "summoned his soldiers to Old Gaza from their winter quarters on all sides" and "awaited the approach of his opponents."*<sup>351</sup> *In this battle Demetrius was defeated, "and Cassander, who had lost many soldiers," returned to Macedonia because he "saw that winter was at hand."*<sup>352</sup> *This major battle, therefore, took place in the wintertime and must be dated to the early half of the winter of 312/311 B.C.E.*

*After this battle, Seleucus "set out for Babylon."*<sup>353</sup> *In Jerome's translation of Eusebius' *Chronicorum Canonum*, the beginning of the reign of Seleucus is placed in the 1st year of the 117th Olympiad, a Greek era which began on July 1, 312 B.C.E. and continued to June 30, 311 B.C.E.*<sup>354</sup> *Jack Finegan writes:*

*The victory and triumphant return to Babylon were evidently considered to mark the real beginning of his reign; the first regnal year of Seleucus was dated accordingly as beginning with the ensuing New Year's day in Babylon, namely the following Nisanu 1, which was Apr. 3, 311 B.C.E.*<sup>355</sup>

*Later on, when Seleucid rule was centered in Syria, the Greek kings living there adopted the Macedonian calendar, which began with the month of Dios (equivalent to the Jewish month of Tishri in the earlier correlation; but becoming the Macedonian month of Hyperberetaeus in the later correlation).*<sup>356</sup> *Under this determination the 1st year of the Seleucid era began with Dios 1 (i.e., Oct. 7) of 312 B.C.E., the Macedonian year in which the battle at Gaza was won. Since both calendars were observed in the area*

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<sup>350</sup> Jos., Apion, 1:22, par. 184–186. For Castor and the Macedonian Oly., see JQR, 10.1, pp. 58f.

<sup>351</sup> Diodorus, 19:80:5.

<sup>352</sup> Ibid., 19:89:2.

<sup>353</sup> Ibid., 19:90:1.

<sup>354</sup> Helm, Chronik, p. 126 (208F:15–21); HBC, p. 123.

<sup>355</sup> HBC, p. 120.

<sup>356</sup> HBC, pp. 72–73. Also see Chart B.

around Judaea, the question arises, “Which one of these calendars was utilized by the authors of Maccabees and Josephus?”

## **The Year Begins with Abib (Nisan)**

*In an effort to force the records to accommodate a Sabbath year in the 149th Seleucid, chronologists—whether from the Zuckermann-Schürer school (System “B”) or the Marcus-Wacholder interpretation (System “C”)—boldly claim that the ancient post-exilic Sabbath years began on the 1st day of Tishri (the 7th month) of the 6th year in the scripturally designated cycle.*

*Yet they do so entirely on the basis of one comment made in one of the books of the Mishnah,<sup>357</sup> their earliest source, written at the end of the 2nd century C.E., centuries after the fact. Indeed, the Rosh ha-Shanah text is very weak evidence that the Sabbath year began with the month of Tishri before the 2nd century C.E. The Mishnah was part of the developing traditions that would form the Talmud and, as such, the most that anyone can infer is that its Tishri 1 New Year date had only been part of those more recent developments.*

*As we have already stated, there is not one shred of evidence before the end of the 2nd century C.E., when the Mishnah was composed, that suggests that the Sabbath year officially began with Tishri 1.<sup>358</sup> More important to our discussion, the evidence from the books of Maccabees and Josephus clearly proves that their authors calculated the Seleucid year by the so-called Babylonian method, which began the year in the month of Nisânu (Jewish “Nisan”). At no time do any of these texts even suggest an exception for the Sabbath year. If such an unusual starting date did exist these writers surely would have been compelled to say something. What we find is just the opposite. They clearly demonstrate that the Sabbath year began with the month of Abib (Nisan).*

## **First Two Books of Maccabees**

*The year system followed in the first two books of Maccabees (early- and mid-1st century B.C.E.) begins with Nisan 1. This fact is first indicated by the obvious: since the Exodus, the Israelites had practiced a Nisan (Abib) beginning for their year. Furthermore, the Judaeans of the post-exilic period were descendants of the exiles who had lived in Babylonia, a region where they also utilized the Nisan calendar. It was from the Babylonians that these Jews acquired their individual month names.<sup>359</sup> Furthermore, the Jews who*

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<sup>357</sup> R.Sh., 1:1.

<sup>358</sup> See above Chap. II.

<sup>359</sup> HBC, pp. 38ff.

*resettled Judaea were taught by such noted biblical scholars as Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah, as well as the scribe Ezra—all prophets of Yahweh who would have closely adhered to the sound scriptural teaching and doctrine which began the year with the month of Abib (later called Nisan from the Babylonian month-name “Nisānu”).*

*With the death of Alexander the Great, the Greek generals who served under him carved up the empire and set up monarchies of their own. Among these royal families, the Seleucid line was established in Syria and the Ptolemies laid hold of Egypt. At first, Judaea fell under Egyptian authority and remained an Egyptian vassal until 198 B.C.E. In that year control over Judaea was rent away by the Syrian Seleucid Empire.*

*Even more important for our concerns, the writers of the Maccabean books basked in the glory of the Judaeans victory over the Greek king of Syria, Antiochus (IV) Epiphanes (175–163 B.C.E.), and his ruling house. This victory was especially important to the Jews of this period because Antiochus Epiphanes tried to Hellenize Judaea by force. In this effort, Epiphanes was very brutal and vicious to the Jews, not only denying them their ancestral laws but enforcing the death penalty if any Jew dared practice them. He even defiled the Temple at Jerusalem. Subsequently, why these Jewish patriots would endear themselves to a native Greek form of the calendar, especially one rooted in Greek dominated Syria, the hated enemy of the Jews,<sup>360</sup> would be hard to reconcile.*

*Undeniable proof that the writers of the Maccabean books followed a Nisan Seleucid year comes from the internal data of the texts. In 1 and 2 Maccabees, for example, we have the following statements:<sup>361</sup>*

*Now on the 25th day of the 9th month, which is called Khasleu (Khisleu), in the 148th year (i.e., of the Seleucid era).<sup>362</sup>*

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<sup>360</sup> Josephus points out that in the time of the Jewish ruler Alexander Jannaeus (103/102–77/ 76 B.C.E.), the Jewish king did not allow Syrians into his mercenary army—even to help quell a revolt by the Jewish people against him. This prohibition was “on account of their (the Syrian Greeks) innate hatred of his nation” (Jos., Wars, 1:4:3). The Syrian-Greeks, therefore, hated the Jews as much as the Jews hated the Syrian-Greeks.

<sup>361</sup> Siwan is the 3rd month (Esther, 8:9); Khisleu is the 9th month (Zech., 7:1); Tebeth is the 10th month (Esther, 2:16); Shebat is the 11th month (Zech., 1:7); Adar is the 12th month (Esther, 3:7, 8:12). For a complete month equivalency list, see Chart B.

<sup>362</sup> 1 Macc., 4:52.



*So in the 7th month of the 160th year, at the Festival of Tabernacles, Jonathan put on the sacred robe.*<sup>363</sup>

*Now Simon was visiting the cities that were in the country, and taking care for the good ordering of them; at which time he came down himself to Jericho with his sons, Mattathias and Judas, in the 177th year, in the 11th month, called Shebat.*<sup>364</sup>

*And they ordained all with a common decree in no case to let the day pass without solemnity, but to celebrate the 13th day of the 12th month, which in the Syrian tongue is called Adar, the day before Mardocheus' day.*<sup>365</sup>

*These passages leave the chronologists in a quandary because they clearly spell out that the Seleucid year is reckoned by the Nisan or Babylonian system. Finegan, for example, concludes:*

*"Here in Maccabees, where both number and name are cited it is evident that the months are numbered from the spring and it may be supposed that the year references in the same verse are also reckoned from spring, i.e., are years of the Seleucid era according to the Babylonian-Jewish calendar."*<sup>366</sup>

*Wacholder (System "C") also admits the discrepancy:*

*A number of scholars have maintained that the festival now known as Rosh Hashanah, which falls on the first of Tishri (September-October) was regarded then as the beginning of the year. But the Maccabean books, like all other biblical sources, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, take it for granted that Nisan was the first month.*<sup>367</sup>

*Wacholder, like most other chronologists, then overrides all this evidence by citing (1) Leviticus, 25:9, which, as we have already shown, has nothing to do with the regular Sabbath year but only with the year of Jubilee (and then only with the 7th month of the 50th year itself) and (2) the early 3rd century C.E. text of the Mishnah called Rosh ha-Shanah,<sup>368</sup> the latter*

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<sup>363</sup> 1 Macc., 10:21.

<sup>364</sup> 1 Macc., 16:14.

<sup>365</sup> 2 Macc., 15:36.

<sup>366</sup> HBC, pp. 121f.

<sup>367</sup> HUCA, 44, pp. 161f.

<sup>368</sup> R. Sh., 1:1.

*being far removed from the events under consideration! With this illusion of evidence in hand, Wacholder makes the following non sequitur:*

*“There is no doubt, however, that the season of Shemitah the Sabbath year, commenced on the first of Tishri and ended on the last day of Elul.”<sup>369</sup>*

*In reality, there is no evidence at all that a Tishri reckoning was ever officially recognized until shortly before the mid-2nd century C.E. Indeed, the evidence only proves that their official year previously began with Abib (Nisan).*

*Chronologists, in a vain attempt to “interpret” the evidence in order to have some grounds for their proposed systems, then look for dates in the Maccabean books that can be construed as belonging to the Greek method of the Seleucid year (i.e., an Oct. until Oct. reckoning). Finegan’s Handbook of Biblical Chronology, as an example, presents this popular approach.<sup>370</sup> In the first class he gives a long list of various citations which clearly prove a Nisan reckoning in the book of 1 Maccabees (namely: 1:29, 54, 59; 2:70; 4:52; 9:3, 54; 10:21; 13:41, 51; 14:27; 16:14).*

*In the second class Finegan lists, “Dates which MAY come” from a source using the October year (i.e., 1:10; 3:37; 6:16; 7:1; 10:1, 57, 67; 11:19; 14:1; 15:10). A close examination of these citations proves there is no justification for such a conclusion. Not one citation even remotely demonstrates that it was based upon a Tishri beginning for the year. The fact that these verses by themselves lack definition and are inconclusive for any year system does not automatically mean that an October year “may” be justified, as Finegan and others conjecture. In fact, to suggest that these sources would indiscriminately jump back and forth between different year systems without explanation is not only illogical but mischaracterizes the high quality of the literary work they represent.*

*In the third class are four citations (namely: 1:20; 4:28; 6:20; 9:58) that Finegan claims “COULD fall in either class,” a meaningless statement and merely a duplicate of the second class; and finally, “one (6:20) is regarded as erroneous in either case.” 1 Maccabees, 6:20, is the passage which claims that the 150th Seleucid year was a Sabbath year! For Systems “B” and “C” to work the Sabbath year must be in the 149th Seleucid year. Therefore, based upon their own construction, they presume that the year 150 is an error and dismiss the historical record.*

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<sup>369</sup> HUCA, 44, p. 162.

<sup>370</sup> HBC, p. 122.

## The Book of Josephus

*In the book entitled Antiquities of the Jews by Josephus, in that section which discusses the events surrounding the siege of Bethzura and Jerusalem, we also find a Nisan reckoning for the Seleucid year.*

*To preface this data we should point out that Josephus was himself a Jewish “priest and of priestly ancestry,” who considered himself “well versed in the philosophy” of the “sacred books.”<sup>371</sup> His book, Antiquities of the Jews, was translated into Greek from an account that he had “previously composed” in his own “vernacular tongue (Jewish Aramaic) and sent to the barbarians in the interior.”<sup>372</sup> These barbarians are then defined as the “Parthians and Babylonians and the most remote tribes of Arabia with our countrymen beyond the Euphrates and the inhabitants of Adiabene.”<sup>373</sup> The people beyond the Euphrates, in Parthia, Babylon, Adiabene, etc., also utilized a Nisan year. Therefore, our initial indications are that Josephus would have based his original report on this same year system that all held in common.*

*Next, when one compares the account of the Syrian and Judaeen conflict as given by Josephus with that from the first book of Maccabees, it becomes apparent that, for the events surrounding the siege of Bethzura and Jerusalem in the 149th through 150th Seleucid years, Josephus used 1 Maccabees as his major source. It is also clear by amplifications and other details in the story that Josephus relied heavily upon other Jewish sources as well. The story is basically a Jewish one, told from a Jewish perspective.*

*It is not hard to conclude that a Jewish priest relying on Jewish sources would reflect a calendric system then popular among the Jews. As we have already seen, the Maccabean books adhere to a Nisan year. Josephus does likewise. Proof that Josephus used a Nisan-based calendar is demonstrated by the following citations (cf. Chart B).<sup>374</sup>*

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<sup>371</sup> Jos., Apion, 1:10.

<sup>372</sup> Jos., Wars, Pref.:1. The language of the Jews during this period was called “Hebrew” by both the Jews and many other writers of that time and afterwards, but it was actually a form of Aramaic that was brought back to Judaea from Babylonia by the Jews returning from their Babylonian exile.

<sup>373</sup> Jos., Wars, 1:2.

<sup>374</sup> Chart B can be found at <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-16bChap.pdf>

- *The month of Nisan is specifically called “the 1st month” of the year and Josephus says it “begins the year.” It is equated with the Macedonian Greek month of Xanthicus (March/April).*<sup>375</sup>
- *The month of Tishri is explicitly called “the 7th month,” the month in which the Festival of Tabernacles is held. Josephus equates Tishri with the equivalent month in the Macedonian calendar of Hyperberetaeus (Sept./Oct.).*<sup>376</sup> *At no time does Josephus ever state that Tishri or the 7th month began any official Jewish year (Sabbath or not).*
- *The month of Marheshuan (Oct./Nov.) is made equivalent to the Macedonian month of Dios (Dios), and Josephus specifically states that, when the Israelites lived in Egypt, it “was ONCE the 2nd month,” but this system was altered when Moses “appointed Nisan, that is to say Xanthicus, as the 1st month for the festivals,”*<sup>377</sup> *thereafter making Marheshuan the 8th month.*
- *The month of Adar (Feb./March) is referred to as “the 12th month” and the “last month of the year.” It is equated with the Macedonian month of Dystros (Feb./March).*<sup>378</sup>

*An important detail is that, even though Josephus uses Macedonian month-names, he clearly makes them equivalent to the Jewish lunar months. The days of the month are also the same. For example, the 1st of Xanthicus is the same as the 1st of Abib (Nisan).*<sup>379</sup> *The 10th and 14th of Xanthicus are the same as the 10th and 14th of Abib.*<sup>380</sup> *The 10th and 15th day of Hyperberetaeus are equivalent to the 10th and 15th day of Tishri.*<sup>381</sup> *These facts led Jack Finegan to conclude,*

*“In Josephus, therefore, the Macedonian months may be taken as fully and exactly equivalent to the Jewish months.”*<sup>382</sup>

*Josephus also dates years in the Seleucid era by Olympiads:*

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<sup>375</sup> Jos., Antiq., 1:3:3, 2:14:6, 3:8:4, 3:10:5, 11:4:8. (Josephus uses the “Later Correlation” of Macedonian and Hebrew months. (See HBC, pp. 59–68).

<sup>376</sup> Jos., Antiq., 3:10:2, 8:4:1.

<sup>377</sup> Ibid., 1:3:3.

<sup>378</sup> Ibid., 4:8:49, 11:4:7, 11:6:2, 12, 12:10:5.

<sup>379</sup> Jos., Antiq., 3:8:4; cf. Exod., 40:17.

<sup>380</sup> Jos., Antiq., 3:10:5, 2:14:6; cf. Exod., 12:1–6.

<sup>381</sup> Jos., Antiq., 3:10:2–4; cf. Lev., 23:26–36.

<sup>382</sup> HBC, p. 73.

- *Antiquities*, 12:5:4, states, “in the 145th year, on the 25th day of the month which by us is called Khasleu (Khisleu; Nov./Dec.), and by the Macedonians Apellaaios, in the 153rd Olympiad.”
- *Antiquities*, 12:7:6, reports, “it was in the 145th year that these things befell the Temple, on the 25th of the month of Apellaaios (Nov./Dec.), in the 153rd Olympiad. And the Temple was renovated on the same day, the 25th of the month Apellaaios, in the 148th year, in the 154th Olympiad.”

The Macedonian reckoning (Oct. year) for the 145th Seleucid year extended from the autumn of 168 to the autumn of 167 B.C.E. The Babylonian reckoning would have it extend from the spring of 167 to the spring of 166 B.C.E. Therefore, the 25th of Khasleu (Apellaaios; Nov./Dec.) would fall in the winter of 167 B.C.E. by the Macedonian reckoning, but in the winter of 166 B.C.E. by the Babylonian. The 153rd Attic Olympiad began with July of 168 B.C.E.

Yet a comparison of the various dates utilized by Josephus indicates that Josephus used what Solomon Zeitlin refers to as the “Olympian year of the Macedonian calendar.”<sup>383</sup> The Macedonian-Olympic year began in November. The 153rd year of this calendar would range from November, 168 to November, 167 B.C.E. If the Attic-Olympiad year was used, then either system might work. If, instead, the Macedonian-Olympiad year was used (which the records of Josephus clearly indicate),<sup>384</sup> then only the Babylonian reckoning will work for the Seleucid year that he named.

Our second date is quite another matter. The Seleucid year 148, by Macedonian reckoning, extended from the autumn of 165 to the autumn of 164 B.C.E., and by Babylonian reckoning, from the spring of 164 to the spring of 163 B.C.E. As a result, Khasleu (Khisleu) 25 in the Macedonian system is in December of 165 B.C.E., while in the Babylonian it is in December of 164 B.C.E.

The 154th Attic Olympiad did not begin until July of 164 B.C.E. and the Macedonian Olympiad started in November of 164 B.C.E. The December 165 B.C.E. date is thereby eliminated under both systems. Therefore, Josephus’ statement is only correct by using the Babylonian reckoning, and once we grant that he used such a reckoning, he is correct in both synchronisms.

There is yet one other proof that conclusively shows that the Sabbath year itself was determined to have begun on the 1st day of Nisan by

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<sup>383</sup> JQR, 10.1, pp. 58f.

<sup>384</sup> Our study will have more to say about the Macedonian-Olympian calendar of Josephus in Chap. XXII, pp. 309–311.

*Josephus. This evidence has to do with events in the 177th and 178th Seleucid years. In this story, Simon the Hasmonaean is murdered by his son-in-law, Ptolemy, “in the 11th month, which is called Shebat, of the 177th year.”<sup>385</sup> His son, John Hyrcanus, escaped the assassin’s hands and, as Josephus informs us, tried to avenge the crime. Soon after the assassination, John besieged Ptolemy who was in the fortress of Dagon (Dok). Shortly after the siege started, “there came round the year in which the Jews are wont to remain inactive, for they observe the custom every 7th year, just as on the 7th day.”<sup>386</sup>*

*This record shows that the Sabbath year, being the 178th Seleucid year, shortly followed the month of Shebat (Jan./Feb.), the 11th month of the year. There will be more said on this subject in the chapter dealing with this particular Sabbath year (Chapter XVII). For now, this detail is mentioned only to prove that both the writers of Maccabees and Josephus calculated the 1<sup>st</sup> of Nisan as the beginning of the Judaeen year (including the Sabbath year).*

## **Did They Count from Nisan, 312 B.C.E.?**

*Finally, we must ask ourselves, “Is it possible that the Jews used a non-accession-year method and counted the 1st year of the Seleucid era from Nisan 312 B.C.E., since the victory of Seleucus over Demetrius would have occurred within that year?” This theory conforms to the construction we have labeled System “D.”*

*The evidence strongly opposes this reconstruction. To begin with, old Jewish sources affirm that the destruction of the Second Temple, known from Josephus and other writings to have occurred in the 5th month, called Ab (July/Aug.) of 70 C.E., took place in the 381st Seleucid year.<sup>387</sup> Finegan correctly notes the 381st Seleucid year corresponds “to the year from the spring of A.D. 70, to the spring of A.D. 71 according to the Babylonian calendar.”<sup>388</sup>*

*Second, the Jewish priest and historian Josephus—who relied on important Jewish sources such as the Maccabean books, using their dates for the Seleucid era—informs us that the Hasmonaean priesthood “came to an end after 126 years” with the death of Antigonus. Antigonus died shortly after Herod conquered Jerusalem and became the Jewish king.<sup>389</sup> Josephus also informs us that there were 107 years from the year that Herod*

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<sup>385</sup> 1 Macc., 16:14.

<sup>386</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:8:1, Wars, 1:2:4.

<sup>387</sup> TSCJ, p. 48.

<sup>388</sup> HBC, p. 124.

<sup>389</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:16:4.

***captured Jerusalem and became king until the Roman general named Titus took the same city (70 C.E.).<sup>390</sup> Therefore, Herod became king in the year 37/36 B.C.E.***

Counting back 126 years from 37/36 B.C.E. brings us to 162/161 B.C.E. (inclusive). That year is equivalent to the 150th Seleucid year, Nisan reckoning. It was in that year that Antiochus Eupator besieged Judas Maccabaeus at Jerusalem, and after a long siege made peace with him, recognizing him as the legitimate ruler of Judaea.<sup>391</sup> The 150th Seleucid year, therefore, is indeed the 1st year of the fully recognized government of the Hasmonaeans. It was from Judas that the Hasmonaean line also came to be called the “Maccabees.”

Later on, Josephus reports that the Hasmonaeans ruled 125 years.<sup>392</sup> In this case, though, the dynasty is being compared with its successor Herod (37/36 B.C.E.). The 1 year’s difference from the 126-years figure, which we mentioned above, was allotted to Herod’s reign. Once again we are brought back to the year 162/161 B.C.E. As a result, these calculations confirm our construction of the Seleucid era as used both by Josephus and by the other Jews of the pre-2nd century C.E. period.

We also have evidence of the correct length of the Seleucid year from the Talmudic work entitled *Abodah Zarah*.<sup>393</sup> In this work we are told that for 206 years the Jews were under the dominion of the Romans. For 103 years of this period the Hasmonaeans ruled and for 103 years the house of Herod ruled. The house of Herod ended its authority over the Jews in 66 C.E., when the Jews revolted from Rome and discontinued the authority of Agrippa, son of Herod Agrippa. Counting 103 years back from 66 C.E. places the 1st year of the house of Herod in 37/36 B.C.E., which is correct. Therefore, another 103 years prior to Herod brings us to the date 140/139 B.C.E.

Meanwhile, in 1 Maccabees, 14:16–29, we read that in the Seleucid year 172, being the 3rd year of Simon the high priest, the Jews came into an alliance with the Romans. The equation between these two sets of figures proves that the year 140/139 B.C.E. (Nisan reckoning) is the same as the Seleucid year 172. In turn, the beginning of the Seleucid era would be 311 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning.

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<sup>390</sup> Jos., Antiq., 20:10:5.

<sup>391</sup> Jos., Antiq., 12:9:3–7; 1 Mac., 6:19–63.

<sup>392</sup> Jos., Antiq., 17:6:3.

<sup>393</sup> B. A.Zar., 8b–9a

## Conclusion

*The evidence that the authors of Maccabees and Josephus utilized the Abib (Nisan) year in calculating the Seleucid era is clear. Indeed, since these writers were Jewish, descendants from a people with a long history of observing a Nisan year, and offspring of Jewish exiles who sojourned in Babylon where the Nisan year was also observed, it would be far-fetched to claim otherwise.*

*Neither is there any evidence that the authors of Maccabees or Josephus used records which utilized the Macedonian (Oct.) or Tishri reckoning for the Seleucid era. Josephus reserved a Macedonian reckoning only for his choice of the Greek-Olympian calendar, and this particular reckoning began in November. Furthermore, he always notifies his reader when he is using this system. The “divergent calendar” theory, often presented to justify mixing Tishri Seleucid years with Nisan Seleucid years in these early records, has never been proven and is unwarranted by the evidence.*

*It is also an interesting leap in logic which concludes that because the Jews living in the days of the Rosh ha-Shanah text (i.e., at the end of the 2nd century C.E.) began the Sabbath year on the 1st of Tishri of the 6th year in the scriptural cycle, that every year from post-exilic times on (i.e., from 538 B.C.E.) should, therefore, also be calculated as beginning with Tishri. Yet this mindset is unfortunately still held by numerous chronologists.*

## The Siege of Bethzura and Jerusalem

*The<sup>394</sup> Seleucid year 150 will simply not fit the proposed Sabbath cycles offered by Systems “B” and “C.” As a result, the first effort of the advocates of these systems has been to claim that the records dealing with the events surrounding the siege of Bethzura and Jerusalem by Antiochus (V) Eupator and associated with the 150th Seleucid year are in conflict with one another, are misinformed, or are just plain wrong. Wacholder, for example, argues:*

*First and Second Maccabees differ, however, as to the date of Antiochus V’s march into Judaea. II Macc. 13:1 dates the march in the 149th year of the Seleucid era, I Macc. 6:20, repeated by Josephus, in the 150th year.<sup>395</sup>*

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<sup>394</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press, Chapter XVI The Siege of Bethzura and Jerusalem Part II of the Sabbath Year of 162/161 B.C.E

<https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-16aChap.pdf>

<sup>395</sup> HUCA, 44, p. 161.



*Wacholder then declares 1 Maccabees and Josephus to be in error and that the 149th Seleucid year was the real Sabbath year. Zuckermann goes as far as to retranslate 1 Maccabees, 6:53, so that it implies, "There had been a Sabbatical year in the preceding 149th Seleucian year" rather than in the stated 150th year.<sup>396</sup> North reads 1 Maccabees, 6:53, to mean "because the effects of the Sabbath year were then being felt,"<sup>397</sup> and concludes that the dates found in Josephus "are either palpably incommensurate or else insolubly obscure."<sup>398</sup>*

*Based upon the inability of these chronologists to make all the evidence fit their desired Sabbath-cycle systems, they extrapolate that the 149th Seleucid year is the correct figure and that the 150th year somehow must have been introduced as a mistake, is misunderstood, or simply reflects a poor form of Greek grammar used in the source texts (theorizing that the true intent of these authors was to express that the 149th Seleucid year was a Sabbath year).*

*Contrary to these opinions, close examination of these records proves that the relevant accounts found in 1 Maccabees, the Antiquities of the Jews by Josephus, and 2 Maccabees are all very much in harmony and that the Greek texts of these works are quite precise in their meaning. The belief that the sources are in conflict is a forced interpretation, based upon a spurious claim that the Jewish year in this early period began with the month of Tishri (Sept./Oct.). It is built upon a longing to have some justification to make the 149th Seleucid year encompass the Sabbath year intended by the story rather than the 150th year.*

## **Sources in Harmony**

*To demonstrate the accuracy of our three primary sources—1 and 2 Maccabees and Josephus, Antiquities—we have provided Parallel Corpora B at the end of this chapter,<sup>399</sup> which places the relevant passages in parallel columns. As a preface to reading these accounts, it must be pointed out that in the verses immediately preceding them we read that during the 9th month—specifically defined as Khasleu (Nov./Dec.) of the 148th Seleucid—the Temple and altar were renovated. These versions then go on to mention a long series of battles carried out by the Jews after this Temple*

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<sup>396</sup> TSCJ, pp. 47f.

<sup>397</sup> Biblica, 34.4, p. 507.

<sup>398</sup> Ibid., p. 511.

<sup>399</sup> Chart B can be found at <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-16bChap.pdf>

renovation.<sup>400</sup> *It is clear by these records that we are brought well within the 149th Seleucid year (Nisan reckoning).*

*The following is a summary of the parallel passages as laid out in Parallel Corpora B.<sup>401</sup> They follow in order the series of battles mentioned above and go on to discuss the events surrounding the siege of Bethzura and Jerusalem:*

- *After the Festival of Pentecost (which occurrence was in early June, and therefore brings us clearly within the 149th Seleucid year), a war between the Jews, led by Judas Maccabaeus, and Gorgias, the Syrian-Greek governor of Idumaea, was fought. The Jews invaded Hebron, Marisa, Azotus (Ashdod) in Palestia, and other places before they returned to Judaea.<sup>402</sup>*

- *“About that time” King Antiochus (IV) Epiphanes heard of the wealth of the Persian city named Elam and set about to invade Persia. He was defeated in this war and returned to Babylon, where he became despondent.<sup>403</sup>*

- *While at Babylon, Antiochus IV heard of the victories of the Jews in Judaea. In his continuing despondency, the king now became ill. As his illness lingered on for “many days,” and his suffering increased, Epiphanes perceived that he was about to die.<sup>404</sup>*

- *Antiochus Epiphanes made his friend Philip regent and designated his own son Antiochus (V) Eupator—who was at this time living in Syria under the guardianship of Lysias—as the next king. Epiphanes then died in the 149th Seleucid year.<sup>405</sup> The Seleucid King-list reports that Antiochus IV died in the Babylonian month of Kislimu (Nov./Dec.).<sup>406</sup>*

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<sup>400</sup> 1 Macc., 4:42–5:64; 2 Macc., 11:34–12:31; Jos., Antiq., 12:7:7–12:8:6, cf. 12:5:4.

<sup>401</sup> Chart B can be found at <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-16bChap.pdf>

<sup>402</sup> 1 Macc., 5:65–68; 2 Macc., 12:32–45; Jos., Antiq., 12:8:6.

<sup>403</sup> 1 Macc., 6:1–5; Jos., Antiq., 12:9:1.

<sup>404</sup> 1 Macc., 6:5–13; Jos., Antiq., 12:9:1.

<sup>405</sup> 1 Macc., 6:14–17; Jos., Antiq., 12:9:2, Wars, 1:1:4 §40.

<sup>406</sup> ANET, p. 567, “[149], month Kislimu: It was heard that K[ing] Antiochus [died].” Pritchard incorrectly writes “148” in the lacuna instead of “149.” His error results from the failure to consider that King Antiochus IV at first reigned jointly

• *Lysias, after receiving word of the king's death (most probably in or about early January), placed Antiochus V on the throne. "At this time" the Greek garrison at Jerusalem and some renegade Jews began doing much harm to the people who were coming to the Temple.<sup>407</sup> Also, according to 2 Maccabees, 13:1–2, "In the 149th year Judas and his colleagues received the news that Antiochus Eupator παραγενεσθαι (paragenesthai; was about to come) with a great multitude ἐπὶ (epi; against)<sup>408</sup> Judaea, and with him Lysias his protector."<sup>409</sup> This comment serves as the basis for the arguments offered by Systems "B" and "C."*

*The Greek term παραγενεσθαι (paragenesthai) is the aorist infinitive form of παραγιγνομαι (paragignomai), meaning "to be beside, by or near . . . to be at hand, accrue to one . . . arrive, come up" and "to come to, arrive at."<sup>410</sup> Eupator, therefore, was in some form of the act of being "near," or "coming to," or "at hand" against Judaea. As a general rule, the aorist infinitive παραγενεσθαι, in indirect discourse, refers to an event or action prior to the main verb.<sup>411</sup> Jonathan Goldstein's translation of 2 Maccabees, accordingly, renders the term in question to read that Eupator "had come" against Judaea.<sup>412</sup> Using this understanding,*

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with his brother's son, also called Antiochus, whom he adopted as his own. Antiochus IV had this son murdered in the 142 Sel. (Diodorus, 30:7:2–3; cf. CAH, 8, pp. 497, 503f, 713f). The king's own son, Antiochus V Eupator, succeeded as sole monarch in the 149 Sel. upon his father's death. The relevant part of the text reads as follows:

Year 137, month Elulu, 10th day: Seleucus (IV Philopator), the king, died. . . . In the same month, his son Antiochus (IV Epiphanes) ascended the throne. He ruled for 11 years. In the same year, month of Arahsamnu, Antiochus (IV Epiphanes) and his son Antiochus were kings.

[Year 1]42, month Abu: Antiochus, the king, was put to death upon the command of his father, King Antiochus (IV Epiphanes). [Year 14]3, Antiochus (V Eupator) became king.

[Year 149], month Kislimu: It was heard that the K[ing] Antiochus (IV Epiphanes) [died].

<sup>407</sup> 1 Macc., 6:18; Jos., Antiq., 12:9:3.

<sup>408</sup> GEL, 1968, pp. 621ff. The translation of ἐπὶ (epi) in 2 Macc., 13:1, as "upon or against" is better than "into," as some translations have rendered it. This point was confirmed by Professor Placid Cszimazia of the University of Dallas in a letter to the author dated 08–08–1991. See below n. 24.

<sup>409</sup> 2 Macc., 13:1.

<sup>410</sup> GEL, 1968, p. 1306; CGD, p. 520.

<sup>411</sup> See for example SMT, p. 42.

<sup>412</sup> Goldstein, II Macc., p. 452.

the above statement from 2 Maccabees, 13:1–2, is interpreted by those following Systems “B” and “C” to mean that Eupator marched against Judaea in the 149th year. The mentioning by 1 Maccabees and Josephus of the Sabbath year and the accompanying shortages, which took place at the time of this invasion (but dated by 2 Maccabees and Josephus to the 150th year), are in turn placed by the advocates of Systems “B” and “C” within the context of the 149th year.

Nevertheless, this particular translation of the word *παράγενεσθαι*, with regards to 2 Maccabees, 13:1–2, is out of context with the flow of the discussion. The passage in 2 Maccabees, 13:1–2, is followed in verse 9 with the statement that the king *ἤρχετο* (*e<sup>h</sup>rketo*; was coming)<sup>413</sup> on his campaign.<sup>414</sup> When Judas was informed of this movement, he and his followers spent the next 3 days in prayer, after which Judas devised a plan to attack King Antiochus Eupator *πριν* (*prin*; before)<sup>415</sup> the king’s host should enter into Judaea and take the city (Jerusalem).<sup>416</sup>

These statements show that Antiochus V had not yet departed on his Judaeian campaign when Judas had received the first mentioned report—where the term *παράγενεσθαι* is used—of the impending invasion. Furthermore, Eupator had not yet entered Judaea as late as 3 days after Judas heard the second report, notifying the Jews that, “Now the king *ἤρχετο* [was coming]” to attack Judaea. Therefore, we must look for a better understanding of the Greek term *παράγενεσθαι* when used in the context of 2 Maccabees, 13:1.

In this regard, there is yet another important way in which the term *παράγενεσθαι* should be understood. “The aorist infinitive, by itself, does not have a past time meaning, only the single event meaning.”<sup>417</sup> Indeed, there are several instances known where the aorist infinitive refers to a

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<sup>413</sup> The Greek term *ἤρχετο* (*ercheto*) is a form of the word *ἐρχομαι* (*erchomai*), meaning to “come or go.” GEL, 1968, pp. 694f. The context of its use in 2 Macc, 13:9, is determined by v. 12f, where it mentions that Judas heard the report that the king “*ἐρχομαι*” and then 3 days after this news he planned to strike this enemy force “before” it entered Judaea. This evidence proves that the Syrian king was in the process of coming and had not yet arrived in the country of the Jews. Confirmation that “was coming” is the proper translation of *ἤρχετο* in 2 Macc., 13:9, is provided by Professor Juan Gamez of East Texas State University in a taped interview with the author dated 09–01–91. For Professor Gamez, see Chap. XIX, n. 9.

<sup>414</sup> 2 Macc., 13:9; cf. Jos., Antiq., 12:9:4.

<sup>415</sup> GEL, 1968, pp. 1463f; SMT, pp. 240f.

<sup>416</sup> 2 Macc., 13:10–12.

<sup>417</sup> Letter to the author from Professor Csizmazia dated 08–08–91. Also see below n. 24.

“single future, intended event.”<sup>418</sup> Goodwin’s *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb* points out that examples of this anomaly are found “even in the best authors.”<sup>419</sup> The well-respected authority in Classical Greek, Professor Placid Csizmazia of the University of Dallas,<sup>420</sup> likewise, observed that, although such usage is exceptional, it is “not without precedents.”<sup>421</sup> If we apply this legitimate future usage of παραγενεσθαι to 2 Maccabees, 13:1—coordinating its meaning with the context and flow of the entire discussion of that text, as well as use 1 Maccabees and Josephus as further support—it would mean that Eupator “was near to coming” or “was about to come” against Judaea.

It is important to add that in none of our ancient sources does it actually say that Antiochus Eupator arrived in Judaea during the 149th Seleucid year. Even in 2 Maccabees, 13:1, where the term παραγενεσθαι is used, it is later stated that Judas decided to make a raid upon the forces of Antiochus V “BEFORE the king’s host should enter into Judaea.” Josephus, on the other hand, specifically states that Eupator “εφξωπηρησεν (exormesen; set out)”<sup>422</sup> from Antioch, his capital city, “in the 150th year of the Seleucid reign.”<sup>423</sup>

The verse in question from 2 Maccabees, therefore, should be translated to read, “In the 149th year Judas and his colleagues received the news that Antiochus Eupator was about to come with a great multitude against Judaea,” i.e., Eupator had not yet left on this expedition but was in the process of making final preparations for such a campaign. Professor Csizmazia confirms this translation as being “grammatically acceptable and fitting into the context.”<sup>424</sup> This explains why, later, when Judas heard the second report that “the king was coming,” he devised a plan to attack the Syrian king “before” Eupator entered the territory of Judaea.<sup>425</sup> As it turned out, Judas was unable to make his strike until just after the king

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<sup>418</sup> Letters to the author from Professor Csizmazia dated 08–08–91 and 08–31–91. See below n. 24.

<sup>419</sup> SMT, pp. 42f.

<sup>420</sup> Professor Placid Csizmazia received his degrees from the University of Budapest, Hungary. The Hungarian equivalency of an M.A. in Classics and German was received in 1940 and his Ph.D. in Classics in 1942. Before his passing in 1999, he taught at the University of Dallas in Irving, Texas. Professor Csizmazia has been of great assistance to the author on numerous occasions for which we extend to him much gratitude.

<sup>421</sup> Letter to the author from Professor Csizmazia dated 08–31–91.

<sup>422</sup> A form of ορμααω (ormaho), GEL, 1968, pp. 1252f.

<sup>423</sup> Jos., Antiq., 12:9:3f; cf. 1 Macc., 6:19–31.

<sup>424</sup> Letter to the author from Professor Csizmazia dated 08–31–91.

<sup>425</sup> 2 Macc., 13:9–13.

*crossed the border. His raid was executed upon Eupator's camp at Modin, located about 8 miles inside the boundary of Judaea and about 17 miles northwest of Jerusalem.*<sup>426</sup>

*This understanding of 2 Maccabees is supported by other details as well. In the 148th Seleucid (164/163 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning), Lysias, the general of Antiochus IV, led a large army into Judaea but was sorely defeated.*<sup>427</sup> *Finding his foe resolute and strong, Lysias took the remainder of his force and "returned to Antioch, where he remained to enlist mercenaries and make preparations to invade Judaea with a greater army."*<sup>428</sup> *This ongoing preparation, therefore, was underway during the 149th year.*

*Meanwhile, after learning of his father's death (which news he would have received by early January, 162 B.C.E.), the new king, Antiochus V, joined with Lysias in the planning, preparation, and execution of this new Judaeian campaign. The fact that the young king had picked up the cause of his deceased father appears to have been the news that reached Judas in the latter part of the 149th year. Furthermore, the words from 2 Maccabees show no sense of immediacy. The flow of the story merely expresses the idea that the new Greek king of Syria was finishing his preparations for an invasion force against Judaea during the 149th year (163/162 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning), an activity started earlier by his general Lysias after his defeat in the 148th year.*

*Actually, the new king delayed in his endeavor to attack Judaea. This point is amply demonstrated by the story of the men who escaped from the Akra ("the citadel" in Jerusalem where the Greeks were garrisoned) in the 150th Seleucid year. When they arrived in Antioch, these men made an impassioned plea to Antiochus Eupator to end his delay and to make quick intervention.*<sup>429</sup> *Furthermore, the most appropriate time after the death of Antiochus IV for an invasion would have been in the approaching spring,*<sup>430</sup> *at the very beginning of the 150th year, Abib/Nisan reckoning. Eupator, no doubt, waited until this more advantageous season.*

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<sup>426</sup> 2 Macc., 13:13–17. Modin, modern el-Medieh, is located about 7 miles southeast of Lydda and about 17 miles northwest of Jerusalem (Marcus, Jos., vii, p. 137, n. e).

<sup>427</sup> Jos., Antiq., 12:7:5.

<sup>428</sup> Ibid.

<sup>429</sup> 1 Macc., 6:21–27; Jos., Antiq., 12:9:3.

<sup>430</sup> E.g., "AFTER the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle" (2 Sam., 11:1), i.e., at the very beginning of the new year, with the arrival of the month of Abib/Nisan. Therefore, the armies of ancient kings usually left their winter quarters and would go to war in the springtime of the year.

- *In reaction to the attacks by the Greek garrison at Jerusalem upon the Jews going to the Temple—which assaults had been occurring since the death of Antiochus IV—Judas called the people together “in the 150th year” of the Seleucid era and began the siege of the Akra (the citadel), where the garrison was located.<sup>431</sup> The Jews also fortified Bethzura.<sup>432</sup> We have now arrived at the spring of the new year.*

- *Some of those besieged in the Akra (i.e., during the 150th Seleucid year) escaped and came to Antiochus to report the events occurring in Judaea.<sup>433</sup> That Antiochus was in Antioch, Syria when they arrived is confirmed by Josephus when he states that, after these renegades from the Akra met with Antiochus V, the king “set out from Antioch” to invade Judaea;<sup>434</sup> then later, after making peace with the Jews, the king “returned to Antioch,”<sup>435</sup> i.e., returned from whence he came.*

- *Antiochus Eupator, angered by the report from the Akra, “set out from Antioch” to go against Judaea.<sup>436</sup> We are told, “Now the king was coming with a barbarous and haughty mind to do far worse to the Jews than had been done in his father’s time.”<sup>437</sup> Judas, receiving the report of this approaching threat, commanded the multitude to call upon Yahweh.<sup>438</sup> After 3 days of prayer, Judas left off his attack on the Akra and made a foray against the Syrian army near Modin, located a few miles northwest of Jerusalem.<sup>439</sup>*

- *Antiochus Eupator then passed through Judaea and made an attack on the Jewish fortified city of Bethzura, located just northwest of Hebron.<sup>440</sup>*

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<sup>431</sup> 1 Macc., 6:19–24; Jos., Antiq., 12:9:3.

<sup>432</sup> 1 Macc., 6:26.

<sup>433</sup> 1 Macc., 6:19–27; Jos., Antiq., 12:9:3.

<sup>434</sup> Jos., Antiq., 12:9:4.

<sup>435</sup> Jos., Antiq., 12:9:7.

<sup>436</sup> Jos., Antiq., 12:9:4.

<sup>437</sup> 2 Macc., 13:9.

<sup>438</sup> 2 Macc., 13:10–12.

<sup>439</sup> Jos., Antiq., 12:9:4; 2 Macc., 13:13–17; 1 Macc., 6:32. Also see above n. 30.

<sup>440</sup> 1 Macc., 6:31; Jos., Antiq., 12:9:4, Wars, 1:1:5; 2 Macc., 13:18–21. Bethzura (Bethsura), modern Khirbet et-Tubeiqah, is located a few miles northwest of Hebron (Marcus, Jos., vii, pp. 162f, n. d).

- *Antiochus and Judas battled near the Jewish camp at Bethzacharias.*<sup>441</sup>

*This evidence proves that the sources are in harmony. Word of the impending invasion reached Judas during the latter part of the 149th year but the actual march of Antiochus (V) Eupator against Judaea did not start until after the beginning of the 150th Seleucid year, Nisan reckoning. When Judas heard in the second report that Antiochus was now coming, he prepared his people for the imminent conflict with 3 days of prayer and made plans to attack the enemy before they could enter the territory of Judaea.*

## **The Siege during the Sabbath Year**

*In the second part of the story of Antiochus V's invasion of Judaea, we are confronted with the evidence regarding which year was a Sabbath. We begin by noting that 2 Maccabees, in which the term “παράγνευσθαι (was about to come)” is coupled with the 149th Seleucid year, Nisan reckoning, there is no discussion at all of the Sabbath year or its shortages. This connection is only made by chronologists who support Systems “B” and “C.” The parallel stories found in Parallel Corpora B continue with the events of the 150th Seleucid year as follows:*

- *Judas retreated to Jerusalem. Antiochus Eupator besieged Bethzura. After a period of siege, he took the city and placed a garrison there. Antiochus V also laid siege to Jerusalem. This year was a Sabbath year.*<sup>442</sup>

*The book of 1 Maccabees informs us that Antiochus V was able to take Bethzura by making peace with its inhabitants, “for they came out of the city, because they had no victuals there to endure the siege, οἷτι σαββατον ηφον τη γη / (οτι σαββατον ηεν τε γε; BECAUSE IT WAS A SABBATH OF THE LAND).”<sup>443</sup> There is no suggestion by these Greek words that the Sabbath year had already passed, as Zuckermann and others conjecture by rephrasing the sentence. The Greek clearly states that a Sabbath year was presently in the land—it being the 150th Seleucid year, a year that began on the 1st day of Nisan (March/April) in 162 B.C.E.*

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<sup>441</sup> 1 Macc., 6:32–47; 2 Macc., 13:13–22; Jos., Antiq., 12:9:4. Bethzacharias, modern Beit Skaria, is located about 10 miles southwest of Jerusalem and 6 miles northeast of Bethzura (Marcus, Jos., vii, p. 191, n. c).

<sup>442</sup> 1 Macc., 6:48–54; Jos., Antiq., 12:9:5, Wars, 1:1:5; 2 Macc., 13:22.

<sup>443</sup> 1 Macc., 6:49.



*The Temple of Yahweh and Jerusalem, meanwhile, underwent a longer siege. Here we are told in 1 Maccabees that Antiochus besieged the Temple “many days” and that the Jews held the enemy in “battle a long season.”<sup>444</sup> Josephus likewise observed, “But the siege of the Temple in Jerusalem kept him (Antiochus V) there A LONG TIME, for those within stoutly resisted.”<sup>445</sup> This evidence shows that we have moved well into the 150th Seleucid year. As a result of this long siege, those at Jerusalem also suffered from the lack of food for the same reasons as the people at Bethzura.*

*Yet at the last, their vessels being without victuals—  
 διαπ το; ε{βδομον ε[το~ ει/ναι (δια το εβδομον ετοσ ειναι;  
 BY REASON OF IT BEING THE 7TH YEAR), and they in Judaea,  
 that were delivered from the nations, had eaten up the residue of the  
 store. There were but a few left in the sanctuary, because famine did  
 so prevail against them, that they fain to disperse themselves, every  
 man to his own place.<sup>446</sup>*

*Their supply of food, however, had begun to give out, for the  
 καρπου (‘karpou; stored produce)<sup>447</sup> had been consumed, and THE  
 GROUND HAD NOT BEEN TILLED THAT YEAR, BUT HAD  
 REMAINED UNSOWN*

*αλλα φ δια ; τοπ ει ; ναι το / ε; βδομον ε { το~ [ (αλλα δια το  
 ειναι το εβδομον ετοσ; BECAUSE IT WAS THE 7TH YEAR),  
 DURING WHICH OUR LAW OBLIGES US TO LET IT LIE  
 UNCULTIVATED. Many of the besieged, therefore, ran away  
 because of the lack of necessities, so that only a few were left in the  
 Temple.<sup>448</sup>*

*This data is unequivocal. The land had not been cultivated in that very  
 year of the siege, the 150th Seleucid year, because it was a year of rest.  
 Therefore, the 150th Seleucid year was THE 7TH YEAR, a Sabbath year.*

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<sup>444</sup> 1 Macc., 6:51, 52.

<sup>445</sup> Jos., Antiq., 12:9:5.

<sup>446</sup> 1 Macc., 6:53f.

<sup>447</sup> The Greek word καρπου (karpou) is sorely mistranslated by Marcus, Jos., vii, p. 195, as “present crop.” The word “present” does not appear in the Greek, and the word means, “profits,” “fruit,” and “produce,” by implication stored crops (GEL, p. 401). Whiston’s translation is much more appropriate, i.e., “what fruits of the ground they had laid up were spent” (Whiston, Jos., p. 263).

<sup>448</sup> Jos., Antiq., 12:9:5.

- “At that time,” i.e., after the many days of siege, word came that Philip—who had been appointed regent by Antiochus, the father of Antiochus Eupator—was coming from Persia and Media seeking to take sole control of the government. This political turn of events forced Antiochus to make peace, allowing the Jews to live after their own laws, as they had done before.<sup>449</sup>

- Peace was made with the Jews. At this point the Hasmonaean family was formally recognized as the ruling entity in Judaea. Antiochus, after staying in Jerusalem for only “a few days,”<sup>450</sup> then pulled down the city’s walls and returned to Antioch, finding that Philip had already seized the government there. During that period Antiochus sent Menelaus to Beroea in Syria and had him executed.<sup>451</sup> He next made war on Philip and killed him.<sup>452</sup>

The peace treaty between the Jews and Antiochus Eupator was made towards the end of the 150th Seleucid year. This point is verified by the Megillath Taanith, as the noted historians Zeitlin and Herzfeld both agree, when this text records, “On the 28th thereof (Shebat) Antiochus withdrew from Jerusalem.”<sup>453</sup> This comment reveals that the siege against Jerusalem ended in about February of 161 B.C.E. Therefore, this siege had lasted about 10 months during that Sabbath year. The time of year is supported by Josephus, who gives the cursory statement in his book on the Jewish Wars that Antiochus V withdrew his army from Jerusalem “to winter quarters in Syria.”<sup>454</sup>

- Our texts now bring us to the 151st Seleucid year, with the escape of Demetrius I Soter from Rome and his landing at Tripolis, Syria.

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<sup>449</sup> 1 Macc., 6:56–59; 2 Macc., 13:23; Jos., Antiq., 12:9:6.

<sup>450</sup> Jos., Wars, 1:1:5.

<sup>451</sup> The story of Menelaus, how he was brought to Antiochus V at Beroea in Syria and slain, which is found at this point in 2 Macc., 13:4–8, is a digression. As Josephus shows, this event actually took place after the siege of Jerusalem was over (Jos., Antiq., 12:9:7). The digression of 2 Macc., 13:4–8, therefore, has been placed in its proper time frame on Parallel Corpora B, see below pp. 252f.

<sup>452</sup> 1 Macc., 6:60–63; 2 Macc., 13:3–8, 23–26; Jos., Antiq., 12:9:7; 2 Macc., 13:9–12.

<sup>453</sup> Meg. Taan., 11; MTS, pp. 67, 80f; JQR, 10.2/3, pp. 252f; GVJV, 1, p. 280.

<sup>454</sup> Jos., Wars, 1:1:5.

*Josephus importantly observes that this event took place “about the same time” that Antiochus had battled with and killed Philip.<sup>455</sup>*

*This evidence further verifies that the Jewish-Seleucid year began in the spring. Antiochus V left Judaea with his fully equipped army near the end of the month of Shebat (Jan./Feb.), joined in battle with and killed Philip, and then placed his own troops in winter quarters. “About the same time,” described as the 151st Seleucid year, Demetrius I escaped from Rome and came to Tripolis. Since it is clear that Antiochus Eupator would have attacked Philip almost immediately (i.e., by March), this being the last month of winter, “about the same time” can only refer to the month of Nisan (March/April) as the beginning of the 151st year. Calculating 8 or more months later in order to accommodate a Tishri (Sept./Oct.) beginning of the year would be far too great a time for this expression to be relevant. The beginning of the 151st year with Nisan 1, therefore, ends the previous 150th Jewish-Seleucid year, which was counted in the records as a Sabbath year.*

## **Conclusion**

*A line by line analysis proves that 1 and 2 Maccabees and the book of Antiquities by Josephus are in perfect harmony. When 2 Maccabees, 13:1–2, takes notice of the fact that Judas was told during the 149th year “that Antiochus Eupator παραγενεσθαι (was about to come) with a great multitude against Judaea,” the statement must be understood within the context that, upon the death of Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) in December, 163 B.C.E., his son Antiochus V (Eupator) had taken charge of the army’s preparations for the impending war against Judaea. This undertaking had been in progress ever since the defeat of Lysias in the 148th year (164/163 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning). It was the news of this renewed effort by the new king, Antiochus V, that reached the ears of Judas and his men during the latter part of the 149th year (163/162 B.C.E.). The next year, the 150th Jewish-Seleucid year, was a Sabbath.*

*When the Jews laid siege to the Greek garrison in Jerusalem during the early part of the 150th year (spring of 162 B.C.E.), it was as a result of Greek harassment of the Jews, which had continued since the death of Eupator’s*

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<sup>455</sup> 1 Macc., 7:1–7; 2 Macc., 14:1–6; Jos., Antiq., 12:10:1. The statement in Josephus that the arrival of Demetrius I from Rome occurred “about the same time” as the defeat of Philip by Antiochus V further supports the date of Shebat 28 for the peace treaty between Antiochus V and the Jews. There remained only about 32 days from that treaty until the 1st of Nisan in the 151st Seleucid year. By the time that Antiochus V had concluded peace with the Jews, tore down the walls at Jerusalem, marched to Syria, and prepared for and did battle with Philip, it was well beyond the beginning of the year.

father in the latter part of the 149th Seleucid year (Dec. of 163 B.C.E.). It is also important to notice that the Jewish siege of this garrison occurred in the 150th Seleucid year, at the same time that the Jews “fortified Bethzura.”<sup>456</sup> The Jews fortified Bethzura in response to the first report received by Judas that Eupator “was about to come” against Judaea. Indeed, after hearing of the fortification of Bethzura, Antiochus V made this city the target of his attack.<sup>457</sup>

Further, when these initial events of the 150th Seleucid year took place, Antiochus V was still in Antioch, Syria—as demonstrated by the story of the men who fled from the besieged Greek garrison at Jerusalem in the 150th Seleucid year to come to Antioch to see the king, report their troubles in Judaea, and to urge his intervention. These details prove that Antiochus V did not strike at Judaea until sometime after the beginning of the 150th year.

At no time do any of our sources conflict. The claim that 1 Maccabees places the march and siege within the 150th year while 2 Maccabees dates it to the 149th is groundless. Judas only heard the news that Eupator “was about to come” against Judaea during the 149th Seleucid year. Not until later did Judas receive the second report that the march was actually underway. At word of this second report, Judas made plans to meet his foe “before” the enemy could enter Judaea.

The second major issue, which has caused a great deal of confusion, is the belief that the 150th Seleucid year conflicts with any possible Sabbath cycle and, as a result, our ancient sources must be reworked to make them agree with a cycle prejudged as correct. This hypothesis is the underlying force compelling chronologists to find alternative interpretations for the words of Josephus and the Maccabean books, and for their redating the Sabbath year of the 150th Seleucid—the year when Antiochus left Syria and came against Jerusalem—to the 149th Seleucid year.

There is no legitimate reason or justification for this assault on the original wording of these Greek texts. To begin with, 2 Maccabees never described the 149th Seleucid year as a Sabbath year. Furthermore, the 150th Seleucid year exactly fits the Sabbath cycle established by the 15th year of Hezekiah and the 8th year of Artaxerxes I (see Chart C). Next, the Greek words used are clear and concise. They positively state that the 150th year was the 7th year of the cycle, a Sabbath for the land, and a time when the fields remained uncultivated. Yet the Greek words only make sense if we allow the Maccabean books and Josephus to use a Nisan beginning for their Seleucid-year system as well as for the Sabbath years. Once we permit these

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<sup>456</sup> 1 Macc., 6:19–27; Jos., Antiq., 12:9:3.

<sup>457</sup> 1 Macc., 6:21–27; cf. 1 Macc., 6:28–31; Jos., Antiq., 12:9:3f.

source materials to use the very year system they themselves proclaim, all inconsistencies disappear.

What then of System “D”? System “D” is possible only if we alter the Seleucid-year system used by our sources so that the year begins with Nisan of the Julian year 312 B.C.E. But this scheme fails on two counts.

First, there is no evidence at all that any ancient nation using the Seleucid calendar, especially Judaea, never counted their Seleucid year in this fashion. **In fact, the Jews themselves pronounced that the 381st Seleucid year occurred with the year that the Second Temple was destroyed (i.e., in Ab [July/Aug.] of 70/71 C.E., Nisan reckoning).**<sup>458</sup> This and other details, as we have already demonstrated in our last chapter, prove that the Jews of this period counted the Seleucid era from 311/310 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning.<sup>459</sup>

Second, for this method to work the invasion of Judah by King Sennacherib and the Sabbath year which occurred in the 15th year of Hezekiah would have to be pushed back 1 year, i.e., to 702/701 B.C.E. As we have already demonstrated in Chapters III and IV, such a construct is impossible. One would have to conclude that the Israelites formally changed their Sabbath-year cycle sometime between the reign of King Hezekiah and that of the high priest Yahudah Maqabi (Judas Maccabaeus),<sup>460</sup> in whose time Antiochus Eupator laid siege to Jerusalem—an illogical proposal that can only be considered by cynics.

Finally, the data that shall be offered in the remainder of our work will further prove that the System “A” cycle is accurate and, as a result, the 150th Seleucid year in Judaea, being equivalent to 162/161 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning, was a Sabbath year.

I have marked in yellow the year 162 B.C. in the following chart. It is the 7<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year and concludes the 7<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle. It is in the 75<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle. As you can see, we will be referring to this chart a number of times.

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<sup>458</sup> TSCJ, p. 48; HBC, p. 124.

<sup>459</sup> See above Chap. XV, pp. 227f.

<sup>460</sup> The name Judas Maccabaeus was rendered in ancient Aramaic and Hebrew as יְהוּדָה מַכְבִּי (Yahudah Maqabi) and יְהוּדָה מַכְבִּי (Yahudah Makabi), e.g., see Meg. Matt., 28; Meg. Antio., 27; Scroll Antio., 27; Sefaria, Meg. Antio., 27 ([www.sefaria.org/Megillat\\_Antiochus?tab=contents](http://www.sefaria.org/Megillat_Antiochus?tab=contents)).

							-119	76
Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-119	-121	-128	-136	-143	-149	-157		
-116	-123	-130	-137	-144	-151	-158		
-117	-124	-131	-138	-145	-152	-159		
-118	-125	-132	-139	-146	-153	-160		
-119	-126	-133	-140	-147	-154	-161		
-120	-127	-134	-141	-148	-155	-162		
-121	-128	-135	-142	-149	-156	-163		
							-122	77
Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-122	-124	-131	-139	-146	-153	-160		
-119	-121	-128	-136	-143	-150	-157		
-116	-123	-130	-137	-144	-151	-158		
-117	-124	-131	-138	-145	-152	-159		
-118	-125	-132	-139	-146	-153	-160		
-119	-126	-133	-140	-147	-154	-161		
-120	-127	-134	-141	-148	-155	-162		
-121	-128	-135	-142	-149	-156	-163		
							-123	78
Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-123	-125	-132	-140	-147	-154	-161		
-120	-122	-129	-136	-143	-150	-157		
-117	-119	-126	-133	-140	-147	-154		
-114	-116	-123	-130	-137	-144	-151		
-111	-113	-120	-127	-134	-141	-148		
-108	-110	-117	-124	-131	-138	-145		
-105	-107	-114	-121	-128	-135	-142		
-102	-104	-111	-118	-125	-132	-139		
-99	-101	-108	-115	-122	-129	-136		
-96	-98	-105	-112	-119	-126	-133		
-93	-95	-102	-109	-116	-123	-130		
-90	-92	-99	-106	-113	-120	-127		
-87	-89	-96	-103	-110	-117	-124		
-84	-86	-93	-100	-107	-114	-121		
-81	-83	-90	-97	-104	-111	-118		
-78	-80	-87	-94	-101	-108	-115		
-75	-77	-84	-91	-98	-105	-112		
-72	-74	-81	-88	-95	-102	-109		
-69	-71	-78	-85	-92	-99	-106		
-66	-68	-75	-82	-89	-96	-103		
-63	-65	-72	-79	-86	-93	-100		
-60	-62	-69	-76	-83	-90	-97		
-57	-59	-66	-73	-80	-87	-94		
-54	-56	-63	-70	-77	-84	-91		
-51	-53	-60	-67	-74	-81	-88		
-48	-50	-57	-64	-71	-78	-85		
-45	-47	-54	-61	-68	-75	-82		
-42	-44	-51	-58	-65	-72	-79		
-39	-41	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76		
-36	-38	-45	-52	-59	-66	-73		
-33	-35	-42	-49	-56	-63	-70		
-30	-32	-39	-46	-53	-60	-67		
-27	-29	-36	-43	-50	-57	-64		
-24	-26	-33	-40	-47	-54			

## Chapter 12 | Sabbatical Year 134 B.C. John Hyrcanus

On the previous chart I have marked in yellow the year 134 B.C., which is the 4th Sabbatical year in the 76th Jubilee cycle. This is the year I am again going to have Qadesh La Yahweh Press describe to you:

*The Sabbath<sup>461</sup> year which extended from the 1st day of Abib, i.e., Nisan (March/April), Israelite reckoning, in the year 134 B.C.E. to the beginning of the month of Abib in 133 B.C.E. can also be dated from 1 Maccabees and the works of Josephus by a Seleucid year: the Seleucid year 178. Once again, the dating by 1 Maccabees and Josephus perfectly fits the Sabbath-year cycle already demonstrated by the 15th year of Hezekiah, the 8th year of Artaxerxes I, and the 150th Seleucid year. The evidence relating to the Sabbath year of 134/133 B.C.E. (Abib/Nisan reckoning) is built around the story of the murder of the high priest Simon and the subsequent rise to power of his son John Hyrcanus, who attempted to avenge his father's death.*

### The Chronology of Simon

*The high priest Simon came to power after the capture and death of his brother Jonathan at the hands of the Syrian-Greek Empire. Simon subsequently won freedom for the Judaeans in the 170th Seleucid year, Nisan reckoning.*

*Thus the yoke of the nations was taken away from Israel in the 170<sup>th</sup> year. Then the people of Israel began to write in their instruments and contracts, "In the 1st year of Simon the high priest, the governor and leader of the Jews."<sup>462</sup>*

*Having, further, posted numerous ambuscades in different parts of the hills, he (Simon) was successful in all the engagements, and after a brilliant victory was appointed high priest and liberated the Jews from the Macedonian supremacy which lasted for 170 years.<sup>463</sup>*

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<sup>461</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press, Chapter XVII, The Sabbath Year of 134/133 B.C.E. <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-17Chap.pdf>

<sup>462</sup> 1 Macc., 13:41f.

<sup>463</sup> Jos., Wars, 1:2:2

*This liberation and exemption from tribute came to the Jews in the 170<sup>th</sup> year of the Syrian kingdom, reckoned from the time when Seleucus, surnamed Nicator, occupied Syria.*<sup>464</sup>

*At the end of Simon's government, Simon and his two sons, Mattathias and Judas, were visiting Simon's son-in-law, Ptolemy, who was residing in Dok, near Jericho. Ptolemy then treacherously murdered Simon. The book of 1 Maccabees dates Simon's murder "in the 177<sup>th</sup> year, in the 11th month called Sebat (Shebat; i.e., Jan./Feb.)."*<sup>465</sup> *Josephus adds that Simon died having "ruled over the Jews for 8 years in all."*<sup>466</sup> *The year 177, therefore equals the 8th year of Simon. This fact is confirmed by other statements in these texts dating the regnal years of Simon.*

- *1 Maccabees, 13:41–42, states that the 170<sup>th</sup> year was dated in contracts as "the 1st year of Simon."*

- *Josephus, Antiquities, 13:6:7, reports that "in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of his high priesthood," Simon "liberated the people from servitude to the Macedonians," which Josephus then dates as "the 170<sup>th</sup> year of the Syrian kingdom."*

- *1 Maccabees, 14:27, makes the following statement: "The 18<sup>th</sup> day of Elul (Aug./Sept.), in the 172<sup>nd</sup> year, being the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Simon the high priest," etc. This comment equates the 172<sup>nd</sup> year with Simon's 3<sup>rd</sup> year, thereby agreeing with the fact that the 177<sup>th</sup> year would have been Simon's 8<sup>th</sup> year.*

## **John and the Approaching Sabbath Year**

*After killing Simon, Ptolemy imprisoned Simon's wife and two sons, Mattathias and Judas. He then sent men to kill his third son, John Hyrcanus. Fortunately for John, he escaped the assassins' hands.*<sup>467</sup> *Ptolemy next withdrew to the fortress of Dagon (Dok), located above Jericho, while John, assuming "the high-priestly office of his father, first propitiated the deity (Yahweh) with sacrifices, and then marched out against Ptolemy and attacked his stronghold."*<sup>468</sup>

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<sup>464</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:6:7.

<sup>465</sup> 1 Macc., 16:14. That Shebat is the 11th month, see Zech., 1:7, and Chart B.

<sup>466</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:7:4.

<sup>467</sup> 1 Macc., 16:18–23; Jos., Wars, 1:2:3, Antiq., 13:7:4.

<sup>468</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:8:1, cf. Wars, 1:2:3.



*Although the forces of John Hyrcanus were superior, he was at an emotional disadvantage, for Ptolemy had brought John's mother and brothers up to the city walls and tortured them in the sight of all. John, seeing his family treated in this way, "slackened his efforts to capture the place." Yet John's mother helped change his mind when she yelled to him that it would be pleasant for her to die in torment if the enemy paid the penalty. After hearing these words, "Hyrcanus was seized with a powerful desire to capture the fortress, but when he saw her being beaten and torn apart, he became unnerved and was overcome with compassion at the way in which his mother was being treated."*<sup>469</sup>

*These events occurred in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> months, i.e., Shebat and Adar, of the 177<sup>th</sup> Seleucid year (Nisan reckoning), since they immediately followed Simon's murder in the 11<sup>th</sup> month of that same year.<sup>470</sup> Abruptly, Hyrcanus was forced to withdraw his troops because the Sabbath year was arriving (i.e., the 178<sup>th</sup> Seleucid year, Nisan reckoning):*

*Yet while the siege was being protracted in this manner, there came around the year in which the Jews are wont to remain inactive, for they observe this custom every 7<sup>th</sup> year, just as on the 7<sup>th</sup> day. And Ptolemy, being relieved from the war for this reason, killed the brothers and mother of Hyrcanus, and after doing so, fled to Zenon, sur named Cotylas, who was tyrant of the city of Philadelphia.<sup>471</sup>*

*The siege consequently dragged on until the year of ἀργον;v (argon; not working the ground)<sup>472</sup> came round, which is kept septennially by the Jews as a period of inaction, like the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the week. Ptolemy, now relieved of the siege, put John's brethren and their mother to death and fled to Zenon, surnamed Cotylas, the tyrant of Philadelphia.<sup>473</sup>*

*It is extremely unlikely that anyone could have endured torture in this horrible manner for 7 months, which would have been required if the Sabbath year had begun with Tishri (Sept./Oct.) instead of Nisan. Neither does it seem plausible that Hyrcanus would have been unable to take the small fortress of Dagon within that amount of time, especially under these circumstances. The evidence, therefore, clearly indicates that the Sabbath*

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<sup>469</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:8:1, cf. Wars, 1:2:4. 9 1 Macc., 16:14.

<sup>470</sup> 1 Macc., 16:14.

<sup>471</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:8:1.

<sup>472</sup> The term ἀργον φ v; (argon) means, "not working the ground, living without labour," see GEL, p. 114.

<sup>473</sup> Jos., Wars, 1:2:4.

year almost immediately followed the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> months of the 177<sup>th</sup> Seleucid year (Nisan reckoning). That fact, in turn, demonstrates that the Sabbath year at that time began with the 1st day of Nisan of the 178<sup>th</sup> Seleucid year (Nisan reckoning), which was only about a month or so after the siege began.

## War and the Sabbath

*The practice of not waging war on the Sabbath (whether the Sabbath day or Sabbath year) was the law of the Jews during the days of John Hyrcanus. For example, the War Scroll states, “But in the year of release they shall mobilize no man to go into the army, for it is a Sabbath of rest for the sovereign (Yahweh).”*<sup>474</sup> *The words of Josephus, in this regard, are very important, for he points out that the army of Hyrcanus remained “inactive” during the Sabbath year, “the year of not working the ground,” because “they observe this custom every 7th year, JUST AS ON THE 7TH DAY.”*<sup>475</sup> *The book of Jubilees, composed about 100 B.C.E., argues that anyone “who makes war on the Sabbaths” is condemned.*<sup>476</sup> *Josephus remarks that the Jews were not even permitted to “march out” either “on the Sabbath or on a festival.”*<sup>477</sup> *In a letter sent by the Emperor Dolabella on January 24, 43 B.C.E. to the people of Ephesus, we read:*

*Alexander, son of Theodorous, the envoy of Hyrcanus, son of Alexander, the high priest and ethnarch of the Jews, has explained to me that his co-religionists cannot undertake military service because they cannot bear arms or march on the days of the Sabbath; nor can they obtain the native foods to which they are accustomed.*<sup>478</sup>

*Up until the invasion of Judaea by Antiochus Epiphanes, the Jews would neither go to war nor defend themselves on the Sabbath. Yet after the outrage committed by Antiochus Epiphanes against the Jews at Jerusalem in 167 B.C.E., after the Jews refused to defend themselves on the Sabbath day and, as a result, were needlessly slaughtered, a decree was issued by the priest Mattathias (Mathathياهو ben Yukhanan) and his friends.*<sup>479</sup> *It stated:*

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<sup>474</sup> 1QM, 2:6–10.

<sup>475</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:8:1.

<sup>476</sup> Jub., 50:12.

<sup>477</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:8:4.

<sup>478</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:10:12.

<sup>479</sup> 1 Macc., 2:27–41.

*Whosoever shall come to make battle with us on the Sabbath day, we will fight against him: neither will we all die, as our brethren that were murdered in the secret places.*<sup>480</sup>

*This decree clearly remained in effect well into the 1st century C.E. To demonstrate, Josephus refers back to the time when the Roman general Pompey took advantage of this custom in late 64 B.C.E. by building earthworks against the city of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day while the Jews rested. He then goes on to state:*

*Yet if it were not our national custom to rest on the 7th day, the earthworks would not have been finished, because the Jews would have prevented this; for the Law permits us TO DEFEND OURSELVES AGAINST THOSE WHO BEGIN A BATTLE AND STRIKE US, BUT IT DOES NOT ALLOW US TO FIGHT AGAINST AN ENEMY THAT DOES ANY THING ELSE.*<sup>481</sup>

*The words of Josephus are spoken in the present tense, thereby confirming that this same Law was still practiced by the Jews during the latter part of the 1st century C.E., at the time when Josephus wrote these words. Indeed, at the time of the First Revolt (66–70 C.E.) it was still the Jewish practice. Josephus writes that a Jewish citizen named John requested that the Roman general Titus have “deference to the Jewish law” and “allow them that day, being the 7th (i.e., Sabbath), on which they were forbidden alike to have resort to arms and to conclude a treaty of peace.”*<sup>482</sup>

*Josephus, who commanded a force of Jewish soldiers himself during this period, remarks that late on the 6th day of the week he was reluctant to recall his disbanded force, “because the day was already far spent; and even had they come, it would have been impossible for them to bear arms on the morrow (Sabbath), such action being forbidden by our laws, however urgent the apparent necessity.”*<sup>483</sup>

*The fact that the Jews of this period avoided military aggression during the Sabbath year, as they did on the Sabbath day, explains why Hyrcanus was unable to pursue his war against Ptolemy even though by doing so he might have saved the lives of his mother and brothers.*

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<sup>480</sup> 1 Macc., 2:41.

<sup>481</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:4:2; cf. Jos., Wars, 1:7:3.

<sup>482</sup> Jos., Wars, 4:2:3.

<sup>483</sup> Jos., Life, 32.

## “Year 1” of Hyrcanus, a Sabbath Year

*After Hyrcanus’ retreat from Dagon, “Antiochus Sidetes,” the Greek Syrian king, “being resentful of the injuries he had received from Simon, invaded Judaea in the 4th year of his reign and the 1st year of Hyrcanus’ rule, in the 16[1] Olympiad. And after ravaging the country, he shut Hyrcanus up in the city (Jerusalem) itself, which he surrounded with seven camps.”*<sup>484</sup> *Since Hyrcanus did not return to Jerusalem until the very beginning of the Sabbath year (the 178th Seleucid), this is our first indication that “Year 1” of Hyrcanus was calculated by the accession-year method (AY)—undoubtedly because the Jews of this period began to date contracts and public documents by the year of the high priest’s reign.*<sup>485</sup> *“Year 8” of Simon on these Jewish contracts represented the 177th Seleucid (Simon having died near the end of that year); “Year 1,” of Hyrcanus, therefore, would belong to the 178th Seleucid.*

*As the siege of Jerusalem in the 178th Seleucid year (Nisan reckoning) became protracted, there arose a lack of water. This drought was relieved by “a great downpour of rain which came with the setting of the Pleiades,” being the rains of Marheshuan (Oct./Nov.).*<sup>486</sup> *This detail once again confirms that the beginning of the Sabbath year could not have been Tishri 1. Only 1 month of siege would hardly have been long enough to affect the people of Jerusalem with a lack of water. Yet a siege lasting through the summer months until Marheshuan would. After the rains, the siege continued even further, until the next year (the 179th Seleucid), when at the Festival of Tabernacles (in the month of Tishri, i.e., Sept./Oct.) a treaty of peace was signed.*<sup>487</sup> *Next, as we have said above, Josephus dates the 4th year of Antiochus (VII) Sidetes, being the 1st year of Hyrcanus, as a Sabbath year. The book of 1 Maccabees, 15:10–11, reports that Antiochus VII came to Syria in the 174th year, at which time he went to war against King Tryphon in an effort to seize the Syrian kingdom. After besieging Tryphon at Dora, Tryphon fled. The question is, “Did Josephus determine the reign of Antiochus VII by the accession-year system (AY) or the non-accession-year system (NY)?”*

*George Syncellus, Jerome, Eusebius and Porphyry provide our first clue. They give Antiochus VII 9 years of reign.*<sup>488</sup> *Eusebius and Porphyry*

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<sup>484</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:8:2.

<sup>485</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:6:7.

<sup>486</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:8:2; cf. S.O., 4:12–15.

<sup>487</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:8:2.

<sup>488</sup> Syncellus, Chron., 1, p. 552, 2, p. 271; Eusebius, Chron., pp. 255, 263; Schoene, Evsebi, 1, app. 1, pp. 16, 56, 91f; Jerome, Euseb. Chron., 227F–228F; HJP, 1, p. 127.

date it from Olympiad 160, year 4 (i.e., 138/137 B.C.E., Oct. reckoning), until Olympiad 162, year 4 (i.e., 130/129 B.C.E., Oct. reckoning).<sup>489</sup> Diodorus of Sicily reports that Antiochus VII died during his eastern campaign just when spring began to melt the snow and the crops were appearing.<sup>490</sup> Justin adds that the army of Antiochus VII was still in winter quarters in Persia when the Parthians surprised him with the attack in which he lost his life.<sup>491</sup>

This evidence places the death of Antiochus VII in Persia during the early spring, not long after the beginning of the new year, 129/128 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning. His last year, using the Syrian-Seleucid system, was Seleucid 183, Macedonian (autumn) reckoning, a detail confirmed by his coins.<sup>492</sup> It proves that the first of his 9 years was the 175th Seleucid year (137/136 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning). “Year 4” of Antiochus VII, therefore, was the 178th Seleucid (134/133 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning) and his reign was determined by the AY system.

Next, a comparison of Seleucid coins with the works of Josephus demonstrates that Josephus used the AY method for determining the reigns of the Seleucid kings Antiochus VI and Tryphon, both men ruling just prior to Antiochus VII.<sup>493</sup> When we combine this data with the fact that ancient chronographers allowed only 9 years for Antiochus VII, it indicates that “Year 4” in Josephus for Antiochus VII, being “Year 1” of Hyrcanus, was the Seleucid year 178 (134/133 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning) and that this year was a Sabbath.

The mentioning of the 162nd Olympiad in the texts of Josephus, meanwhile, is clearly a scribal error. The original has to be the 161st. The 162nd Olympiad does not work with any possible Sabbath-cycle system. It did not begin until July, 132 B.C.E. (Attic reckoning) or November, 132 B.C.E. (Macedonian reckoning), far too removed to be considered. The 4 years of the 161st Olympiad, on the other hand, began in July, 136 B.C.E.

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<sup>489</sup> Eusebius, Chron., pp. 255, 263; HJP, 1, p. 132. See JQR, 10.1, pp. 58f, for the use of the Oct. or Macedonian-Olympiad system by Porphyry and Eusebius.

<sup>490</sup> Diodorus, 34/35:15–17.

<sup>491</sup> Justin, 38:10, 39:1, which reports that Antiochus VII and his army were cut off in Persia.

<sup>492</sup> Macedonian Seleucid 183 = Oct., 130 to Oct., 129. For the coins of Antiochus VII, see below n. 32.

<sup>493</sup> Josephus gives Antiochus VI 4 years of reign (Jos., Antiq., 13:7:1). Coins bear the dates for 5 Seleucid years: 167–171 (HJP, 1, p. 131). Josephus gives Tryphon a reign of 3 years (Jos., Antiq., 13:7:1). Tryphon’s coins bear the dates for 4 Seleucid years (HJP, 1, p. 131). Similarly, although the coins of Antiochus VII bear the Seleucid dates for 10 years, i.e., 174–183 of the Greek Era (HJP, 1, p. 132), Eusebius and Porphyry only allow him 9 years (see above ns. 27 & 28).

*(Attic reckoning) or November, 136 B.C.E. (Macedonian reckoning). The 178th Seleucid year extended from Nisan, 134 until Nisan, 133 B.C.E. Therefore, the 178th Seleucid year was in the 161st Olympiad, not the 162nd.*

*This error is also picked up in the works of Porphyry, who is cited by Eusebius.<sup>494</sup> He places the siege of Jerusalem by Antiochus in the 3rd year of the 162nd Olympiad (Attic reckoning). As our other records reveal, the 3rd year is correct, but not of the 162nd Olympiad; rather, it was the 3rd year of the 161st Olympiad. The 3rd year of the 161st Olympiad extends from July, 134 until July of 133 B.C.E. (Attic reckoning). As such, it stands in full agreement with the events of the 178th Seleucid year (Nisan reckoning).*

## **Conclusion**

*The records from Josephus and 1 Maccabees are clear. Simon was murdered in the 11th month of the 177th Seleucid year, Nisan reckoning. To avenge his father's death, John Hyrcanus tried to take Ptolemy at his fortress called Dagon before the arrival of the Sabbath year. He failed to do so, and due to the Jewish law forbidding military expeditions during the Sabbath year (as they were forbidden on a Sabbath day) John Hyrcanus had to retreat as the month of Nisan and the 178th year (the Sabbath year) arrived. Therefore, the 178th year (134/133 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning) was a Sabbath year.*

*The fact that Josephus dates the beginning of the Hasmonaean dynasty to 162/161 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning, making that year the 150th Seleucid year,<sup>495</sup> clearly demonstrates that System "B," which would have the Sabbath year in question equal the 177th Seleucid (Tishri of 136 until Tishri of 135 B.C.E.) is not workable. System "C" (Tishri, 135 until Tishri, 134 B.C.E.) is also untenable, since the Sabbath year clearly began with Nisan (March/April).*

*System "D" (Nisan, 135 until Nisan, 134 B.C.E.) alone has possible merit if it can be proven that the Seleucid system utilized by the Maccabean books and Josephus began 1 year earlier (i.e., 312 rather than 311 B.C.E.). Yet, as demonstrated in the last section of Chapter XV, the evidence from Josephus and even the later Talmudic writers prove that such was definitely not the case.*

*This much is also clear. There is no indication that the siege against Ptolemy by John Hyrcanus could have lasted 7 months, a figure required if the Sabbath year that was arriving at the time of the siege began in October.*

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<sup>494</sup> Eusebius, Chron., p. 255.

<sup>495</sup> See above Chap. XV, pp. 227f.

*With that much time, Hyrcanus could have easily taken Dagon. Indeed, if that arriving Sabbath year had to wait until Tishri of 133 B.C.E., it would be beyond any possible Sabbath-cycle system.*

*All things considered, System “A” is the only viable solution to the problem. Not only does it agree with the evidence that the 178th Seleucid year (Nisan reckoning) was a Sabbath but it is in complete harmony with the Sabbath years that fell in the 15th year of Hezekiah, the 8th year of Artaxerxes I, and the 150th Seleucid year.<sup>496</sup>*

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<sup>496</sup> See Chart C.

## Chapter 13 | Sabbatical Year 78 B.C. Alexander Jannaeus

In **The Stones Cry Out Part 1**, we wrote about Alexander Jannaeus who ruled Judah from 103 B.C. to 76 B.C. He had taken on the role as both King and High Priest, ignoring how the Sadducees and Pharisees felt about him holding both offices.

The title “King” was not allowed for Judean rulers since the days of Zerubbabel. Yet on coins issued early in his reign, he laid claim to both titles. After the Pharisees took serious issue with the arrogance of this Hasmonaean ruler, he overstruck most of those coins and, at the same time, minted additional coins with the more modest titles like his predecessors: “High Priest and (head of) the council of the Jews” (i.e., ethnarch).

This act did not satisfy the Pharisees. After six years of civil war (93–87 BCE) between Alexander Jannaeus with the Sadducees against the Pharisees, he finally and severely asserted his position as King. The Pharisees had invited the Greeks to come and take Jerusalem. For this act of “treason,” Alexander Jannaeus crucified 800 Pharisees in Jerusalem’s city centre. His self-proclamation of kingship was again signified by minting coins with the title “King Alexander” in Greek and “Yehonatan, the king” in Hebrew. Also, the symbol of the star encircled by a royal diadem (see below) provides two emblems of the priestly and royal Messiahs (cf. Balaam’s prophecy of the Scepter and the Star, popular symbols of the coming Messiahs during the first and second centuries B.C.).



Alexander Jannaeus Prutah with inscription between spokes of sun-wheel (Mesh1 Pl.5, Ca1)

*An interesting variety has the same Greek legend surrounding a small anchor; the reverse has a crude modern square Hebrew inscription around the sun-wheel, reading “King Alexander Year 25.” The date refers to the 25th year of Alexander’s reign,*



*corresponding to 78 B.C. This is the only ancient Judaeen coin with a modern square Hebrew inscription, and also the first dated Jewish coin.*<sup>497</sup>

On the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his rule, he minted dated coins on the Sabbatical year. These year 25 anniversary coins are called *prutot* and *leptas* known as “widow’s mites”—by far the most abundant Jewish coin in antiquity—and were minted during a Sabbatical year: 78 BCE. In this case, the star and the diadem are on opposite sides of the coin.

## **Widow’s Mite Coins**

*The story of the “Widow’s Mite” tells how, in 30 CE, “Jesus sat over against the (temple) treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury; and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites ... And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them ... that this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury. For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she did cast in all that she had, even all her living” (Mark 12:41-44). The most likely candidates for the “two mites” are the only small bronze Jewish coins that were available - the common prutahs issued by the Hasmoneans (c.130 - 40 BCE). Even though these were issued about 70 - 160 years before this event, it should be noted that coins often circulated for hundreds of years in ancient times.*<sup>498</sup>

*The bronze coins of this story were not described in any detail, leaving it to scholars and numismatists to try to discern what specific coins were offered by the widow. They are widely believed to be what are known as lepton (which means “small” or “thin”) coins minted by Alexander Jannaeus, King of Judea from 103 to 76 BCE and the great grand-nephew of King Judah Maccabee. Two lepta were worth a quadrans, the smallest Roman coin, and a lepton was the least valuable coin that circulated in Judea.*

*The term “mite”, which is used today, did not exist at the time the coins circulated. They only became known as mites many centuries later. “Mite” as used here means “small cut piece” in Old Dutch and only came into use in the 14th century in Flanders. It is also used in the King James Bible, which brought the term and the Widow Mite’s story to many millions of people beginning in 1611.*

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<sup>497</sup> <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/hasmonean-macabbean-coins>

<sup>498</sup> <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-widow-s-mite>

*Several types of small bronze pieces were issued during the rule of King Alexander Jannaeus, but the most common featured an anchor and a star. Anchors were often featured on coins of the time and for the next century because of the importance of the seacoast in the Holy Land. These coins were among the first struck after Jews were granted authority to issue their own coins by Syrian authorities. In addition, a lepton was equal to one-half of a prutah – a small bronze coin about the size of a small fingernail. Lepta<sup>499</sup> were about the same diameter as prutot (plural for prutah) but were thinner and weighed half as much.<sup>500</sup>*

*After reviewing the cycle of dated coins,<sup>501</sup> it became apparent that numerous bronze issues of coins that were produced by Jewish leaders happened to coincide with Sabbatical years. These tended to be small bronze coins, prutot and lepta (half prutot) and were produced in unusually large numbers. The emblems upon the coins tend to be connected with grains and fruits which were scarce or lacking, due to prohibitions on harvesting grains and fruit during those years.*

*Even for similar denominations of coins that did not bear dates, it became apparent that during the early years from the years of John Hyrcanus I until the early part of the reign of Archelaus the double cornucopia was used almost exclusively for the smaller bronze issues. From the last years of Archelaus' reign onward various grains and fruits connected with the various feasts, especially the feast of booths, were used. These coins may also have been produced in particular during sabbatical years.*

*Why were these coins prevalent during Sabbatical Years? One must first consider the nature of the economy during these years. Since the normal means of barter by kind, produce, was hampered, coinage became the primary means of commerce during these difficult years. Here, the ethnarch/king apparently flooded the*

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<sup>499</sup> 42 And a certain poor widow came, and she threw in two lepta, which is a kodrantes. (Mark 12:42)

<sup>500</sup> <https://coinweek.com/what-are-widows-mite-coins/>

<sup>501</sup> S. Pfann, 'Dated Bronze Coinage of the Sabbatical years of Release and the First Jewish City Coin'. *Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society* 24 (2006) 101-113. <https://aias.org.uk/volume-24/#>

This author goes on to state that other Sabbatical years during Jannaeus's reign were 85 B.C., 92 B.C., and then for some reason counts 101 B.C. as the next one, but give no proofs as to how he arrived at these dates. The year 78 B.C. is distinguishable because it is marked on the coin as the 25<sup>th</sup> year of Alexander Jannaeus's ascension and depicts the symbols of the Sabbatical year.

*economy with small denomination bronze coins in order to bolster the economy and alleviate the financial crisis brought on by shortages of produce during the Shmitta when bartering in kind proved difficult. To a certain extent the king was improving his image as a redeemer before his people by paying a debt to society during a year of severe hardships and potential financial reversals. During the revolts, when messianic expectation was a key rallying point, the coins used the more unusual term (גאולה instead of עמולה) for the sabbatical year which was used to bolster the messianic expectation of the period. The Messiah as the GOEL/Redeemer would arrive during a Sabbatical year or in a Jubilee year to redeem his people from debt, slavery and oppression and to atone for their sins before God. During other, non-sabbatical, years the term “freedom of Zion/Jerusalem” was used instead. During the first year of the second revolt, (133) a sabbatical year, the term גאולה was not limited to the bronze denominations but was added to silver coins as well.*

*There is evidence from dated coins that this practice of flooding the economy with small bronzes during the sabbatical years took place especially during the reigns of “kings” such as Alexander Jannaeus, Herod the Great, Agrippa I and during both Jewish Revolts (only “Geulat” issues) against Rome. This suggests that the case may be the same for many non-dated issues as well. The following list enumerates some of these coins whose dates (or dates with significant inscriptions) coincide with sabbatical years:*

*78 BCE: year 25 of Alexander Jannaeus*

*36 BCE: year 3 of Herod the Great*

*43 CE: year 6 of Agrippa I*

*70 CE: year 4 of the First Revolt, “geulat Tsion”*

*133 CE: year 1 of the Second Revolt, “geulat Yisrael”*

I have to point out to you that what you have just read, reveals to us that it was during the Hasmonaean period when the first seeds developed for the expectation of Messiah coming in a Jubilee year as the Redeemer of Israel. This misunderstanding came to a head with Simon Bar Kochba in 133 C.E.

I have the year 78 B.C. marked in yellow on the previous chart in Chapter 11. It is the 5<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year in the 77<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

## Chapter 14 | Sabbatical Year 43 B.C. Julius Caesar

*Confirmation that a Sabbath<sup>502</sup> year occurred in 43/42 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning, is found in a decree issued by Gaius Julius Caesar and published by Josephus in his work entitled, Antiquities of the Jews. The decree reads as follows:*

*Gaius Caesar, Consul for the fifth time, has decreed that these men shall receive and fortify the city of Jerusalem, and that Hyrcanus, son of Alexander, the high priest and ethnarch of the Jews, shall occupy it as he himself may choose. And that IN THE 2ND YEAR OF THE RENT-TERM one kor shall be deducted from the tax paid by the Jews, and no one shall make profit out of them, nor shall they pay the same tribute.<sup>503</sup>*

*This decree is dated to the 5th consul term of Gaius Caesar, i.e., the year 44 B.C.E.,<sup>504</sup> and is most assuredly to be associated with the Roman Senate decree of that same year, which is specifically dated “3 days before the Ides of April” (April 11, 44 B.C.E.).<sup>505</sup> The Senate decree also deals with privileges to be granted to the Jews in the empire and reads well within the context of the Roman recognition of Jewish rights under Caesar. During that same year, Caesar made a speech concerning the rights of the high priest Hyrcanus, the son of Alexander, expressing the thanks of the Roman government towards the Jews for their loyalty and benefits conferred on the Romans.<sup>506</sup>*

*The decrees of Caesar and the Senate, along with Caesar’s speech, all dated to 44 B.C.E., strongly indicate that all were part of one episode. They are explained as an effort on the part of the Roman government in the spring of 44 B.C.E. to solidify the alliance with their Judean vassal.*

*The reduction in taxes during the “2nd year of the rent-term,” as well as the statement that “no one shall make profit out of them, nor*

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<sup>502</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press, Chapter XVIII The Sabbath Year of 43/42 B.C.E. <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-18Chap.pdf>

<sup>503</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:10:5.

<sup>504</sup> Dio, 43:49; Senator, Chron., ∞. 535; MGH, 11, p. 134; and see the list of Roman Consuls in HBC, p. 96, and in CD, s.v. Consul.

<sup>505</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:10:10.

<sup>506</sup> Ibid., 14:10:7.

*shall they pay the same tribute,” is nothing less than a reference to the Jewish observance of the Sabbath year. This fact is made even clearer when we take into account the prior and formal recognition and consent of the Roman government, allowing the Jews to observe the Sabbath year. A decree from Gaius Caesar, dated to the year 47 B.C.E., for example, reveals this consent:*

*Gaius Caesar, Imperator for the second time, has ruled that they (the Jews) shall pay a tax for the city of Jerusalem, Joppa excluded, every year except in the 7th year, which they call the σαββατικο;v (sabbatikon; Sabbath) year, because in this time they neither take fruit from the trees nor do they sow. And that in the 2nd year they shall pay the tribute at Sidon, consisting of one fourth of the produce sown, and in addition, they shall also pay tithes to Hyrcanus and his sons, just as they paid to their forefathers. . . . It is also our pleasure that the city of Joppa, which the Jews had held from ancient times when they made a treaty of friendship with the Romans, shall belong to them as at first; and for this city Hyrcanus, son of Alexander, and his sons shall pay tribute, collected from those who inhabit the territory, as a tax on the land, the harbor and exports, payable at Sidon in the amount of 20,675 modii (grain baskets) every year EXCEPT IN THE 7TH YEAR, WHICH THEY CALL THE SABBATH YEAR, wherein they neither plow nor take fruit from the trees.<sup>507</sup>*

*The “2nd year of the rent-term” mentioned in the decree of Caesar and dated to his fifth consul term clearly spells out that during this period there would be a reduction in the tax paid by the Jews and that “no one should make a profit of them, nor shall they pay the same tribute.”<sup>508</sup>*

*Taken in context with Roman recognition of the Jewish observance of the Sabbath year, this decree serves as an important piece of evidence for the Sabbath-year cycle. The 1st year of the rent-term has to be the year of the decree: the year in which the rights and privileges were formally granted. In this year Caesar served as*

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<sup>507</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:10:6.

<sup>508</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:10:5.

*Consul for the 5th time. The Sabbath year, therefore, fell in the year that followed.*

*The evidence from the speech of Caesar and the Senate decree strongly indicates that these above arrangements were agreed upon in April of 44 B.C.E. As a result, the year 44/43 B.C.E. (Nisan reckoning) would be the 1st year of the rent-term, while 43/42 B.C.E. (Nisan reckoning) would represent the 2nd year, being the Sabbath year. Adding more force to this evidence, the year 43/42 B.C.E. exactly fits the cycle of Sabbaths thus far demonstrated: from the 15th year of King Hezekiah to the 178th Seleucid year.*

*Ralph Marcus (System "C"), in his translation of Josephus, recognized this connection between the words of Caesar's decree and the Sabbath year. He writes:*

*If the "second year of the rent-term" here coincides with a sabbatical year (as one naturally supposes), it confirms the dating of the document in 44 B.C., as the sabbatical year would be that which extended from Oct. 44 to Oct. 43.<sup>509</sup>*

*Though Marcus agrees that the 2nd year of the rent-term is a Sabbath, he erroneously concludes that the Jewish Sabbath year during this period should be counted from the 7th month, Tishri. As this study has already adequately demonstrated, this is simply not true. Since the Sabbath year was counted from Nisan (Abib), this Sabbath year, equated with the "2nd year of the rent-term," would not begin until the spring of 43 B.C.E., ending in the spring of 42 B.C.E. Furthermore, for the view of Marcus (who adheres to System "C") to be correct, Caesar and the Senate would have made their statements halfway through a year that began with Tishri. The 1st year of the rent-term, accordingly, would already have been half over. This circumstance would hardly make sense. A decree discussing the conditions of the "rent-term" would not be issued halfway through the first rent-term but, rather, at its beginning.*

*Those advocating System "B" also will find no support from Caesar's proclamation. According to that system, the Sabbath year must begin with Tishri 1 of 45 B.C.E. until the next Tishri 1 of 44 B.C.E. If such were the case, the Sabbath year of the 2nd rent-term*

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<sup>509</sup> Marcus, *Jos.*, vii, p. 555, n. d.

would have already been half over when the decree was issued. Since the normal time for Judaea to pay tribute was in Tishri,<sup>510</sup> the time for tribute had also already passed. Caesar would have been too late for his decree to have made any impact. These details dismiss System “B” as a viable possibility.

System “D” is also frustrated. Since Caesar was proclaiming Judaeans rights in April of 44 B.C.E., it is clear that the 1st year of this rent-term began in the spring in 44 B.C.E. It hardly makes sense that Caesar would proclaim the year of his decree as the 2nd year of the rent-term.

## Conclusion

When all the details are considered, the decree issued by Caesar in the spring of 44 B.C.E.—which limited his tax base but solidified a close alliance with the Jews—only makes legal and practical sense if the 2nd year of the rent-term, being the Sabbath year, was 43/42 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning. It, therefore, fully supports the System “A” arrangement (see Chart C).

I have the year 43 B.C. marked in yellow on the previous chart in Chapter 11. It is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sabbatical year in the 78<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

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<sup>510</sup> A Tishri year was retained “for selling and buying and other ordinary affairs” of Jewish life during this period (Jos., *Antiq.*, 1:3:3). Included among these ordinary or nonreligious affairs would be the payment of taxes to the Jewish state and Roman government.

## Chapter 15 | Sabbatical year 36 B.C. Herod's Siege

I am once again going to quote verbatim from Qadesh La Yahweh Press about the year of Herod's siege of Jerusalem—the year preceding the Sabbatical year. I want to say how sad I feel after reading this chapter once again and sharing it here with you. I have placed the fonts in bold of the sections detailing exactly when in history the changing of the Sabbatical year took place. It was at about this same time that the Jubilee years fell into disuse and were forgotten. As I read these things once again, understanding how important they are to revelation in prophecy and by which we could have been blessed, it truly saddens my heart.

Then in 70 C.E. the Temple is destroyed and people wonder why. Again, we wonder why the Jews were driven out of the Land of Israel after the Bar Kochba Revolt in 133 C.E.

If we count the number of land rest years from the time the Pharisees came to power about 78 B.C. until the Bar Kochba revolt, I count 35 land rest years including the Jubilee years.

In **The Stones Cry Out Part 1**, I shared with you the following quote about the time when the Pharisees came to power:

*Alexander Jannaeus saw the debacle he caused and called for a truce with the Pharisees. Through the efforts of his wife, Queen Salome, both sides came to compromise: Alexander Jannaeus would run the government, but the Pharisees would run the people. He would take care of secular matters and they would take care of religious matters.*

*Rabbi Simon, son of Shatah came out of hiding thanks to the urging of his sister, the Queen. He took over the Sanhedrin and promptly kicked out all the Sadducees. He also winnowed them out of the Priesthood. Most importantly, the educational system of the country returned to the hands of the Pharisees.*

*Though they would last for another 200 years, the Sadducees would never again reach the position of influence and power that they enjoyed under the early years of Alexander Jannaeus. He died in the year 76 B.C.*

*In the year 67 BCE, Queen Salome Alexendra (also known as Queen Shelomtzion) died.*



This was the end of the Hasmonaean dynasty. I am not able to say exactly when or with 100% certainty...but I am seeing a very similar event that took place with Jeremiah:

*1 The Word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah. It was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; 2 the Word which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the people of Jerusalem, saying, 3 From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even to this day, that is the twenty-third year, the Word of Jehovah has come to me, and I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking. But you have not listened. 4 And Jehovah has sent to you all His servants the prophets, rising early and sending them; but you have not listened nor bowed down your ear to hear. 5 They said, Turn again now, each one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that Jehovah has given to you and to your fathers forever and ever. 6 And do not go after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands; and I will do you no harm. 7 Yet you have not listened to Me, says Jehovah, so that you might provoke Me with the works of your hands, for harm to you. 8 Therefore so says Jehovah of Hosts, Because you have not heard My Words, 9 behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, says Jehovah, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant; and will bring them against this land, and against its people, and against all these nations all around. And I will completely destroy them, and make them a waste, and a hissing, and everlasting ruins. 10 And I will take from them the voice of rejoicing and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the candle. 11 **And this whole land shall be a ruin and a waste. And these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 12 And it shall be, when seventy years are fulfilled I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, and the land of the Chaldeans, says Jehovah, for their iniquity, and I will make it an everlasting ruin. 13 And I will bring on that land all My Words which I have spoken against it, all that is written in this book which Jeremiah has prophesied against all the nations. 14 For many nations and great kings shall lay service on them also. And I will repay them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands. (Jeremiah 25:1-14)***

To make sure we understand exactly why they were sent away for 70 years, we are told in 2 Chronicles:

*21 to fulfill the Word of Jehovah in the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of the desolation it kept the sabbath, to the full measure of seventy years. (2 Chronicles 36:21)*

When I count 70 land rest years including the Jubilee years, from the year 609 B.C. when Judah came under the authority of the Babylonians, I end up in the reign of King David. This means that David and Solomon did not keep the Sabbatical years of rest. If we assume they did, then there must be some years going back to the time before David. We just are not told exactly when, but Yehovah was counting them.

I am considering the same laws of judgment Yehovah gave to Judah then and apply them now to this time when they began to mess with the Sabbatical and Jubilee years, beginning with the Hasmonaeen period. This was when the Pharisees rose to power about the time I have just quoted above. Counting back each Sabbatical year and each Jubilee year missed or improperly kept starting from 135 C.E., until the year 85 B.C., I count 37 land rest years.

If I then multiply  $37 \times 49$ , the sum is 1813 years. Jeremiah gave the Jews one year of exile for every Sabbatical or Jubilee land rest they missed. I am saying that this time Yehovah is giving them a Jubilee cycle for every Sabbatical and/or Jubilee year missed. No, Yehovah has not spoken with me to write this or proclaim it in His name. I am merely thinking out loud and connecting the dots. It is a theory.

If I then add 1813 to the year the Bar Kochba revolt was defeated in 135 C.E., it adds up to the year 1948 C.E.

Encyclopaedia Britannica online has this to say about this event:

*Hadrian resolved to stamp the Jews and their religion out of existence. He sold all Jewish prisoners into slavery, forbade the teaching of the Torah, renamed the province Syria Palaestina, and changed Jerusalem's name to Aelia Capitolina (although scholars are divided over whether to place Jerusalem's name change before or after the revolt). Synagogues were replaced with Roman temples. More painful was his edict barring Jews from so much as looking*

*upon their fallen capital. Many prominent rabbis violated this edict and martyred themselves in the process. Hadrian's efforts had a lasting effect: the Jews would not regain control of their ancestral homeland for over 1,800 years.<sup>511</sup>*

Why were the Jews kicked out of the Land of Israel? I would say for the very same reason they were removed the first time—after all, Yehovah does not change. And exactly like the 70 Shmita years spoken of by Jeremiah that were not kept (we are not told which ones specifically), from the time they came back until this time now of 135 C.E., they did not keep 37 of them. Yes, this is pure speculation on my part, until you read what Qadesh La Yahweh Press is now going to present to you and you begin to understand exactly when the Pharisees began to change the Sabbatical and Jubilee years. Then what I am saying may not be so far-fetched.

*Now we come to the evidence<sup>512</sup> which, according to the advocates of Systems "B" and "D," is the heart of the matter. The entire case for Systems "B" and "D" rests upon the popular interpretation and translation of Josephus, Antiquities, 14:16:2, par. 475, which is part of his discussion about Herod's conquest of Jerusalem in the year 37/36 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning. As common translations would have it, Josephus writes:*

*And acting in desperation rather than with foresight, they (the people of Jerusalem) persevered in the war to the very end—this in spite of the fact that a great army surrounded them and that they were distressed by famine and the lack of necessities, for a εβδοματικόν (hebdomatikon; 7th) year happened to fall at that time.<sup>513</sup>*

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<sup>511</sup> Britannica, What was Hadrian's relationship with his Jewish subjects? <https://www.britannica.com/story/what-was-hadrians-relationship-with-his-jewish-subjects>

<sup>512</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press, Chapter XIX The Siege of Jerusalem Part I of the Sabbath Year of 36/35 B.C.E., <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-19Chap.pdf>

<sup>513</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:16:2.

*As observed by Professor Placid Csizmazia,<sup>514</sup> a noted expert in the ancient Greek language at the University of Dallas, the term εφβδοματικο (meaning “7th”), which is utilized in this passage, means more than “the 7th year” in the general sense. If simply the “7th” year was intended, the term εβδουμον would be used. Rather, it is “a formal, specific expression” denoting “the ritual, legal sense.”<sup>515</sup> Josephus’ use of the Greek term εφβδοματικο therefore, is a specific reference to a sabbatical year. This term, as a result, is often simply rendered “sabbatical” by most translators.<sup>516</sup>*

*The advocates of Systems “B” and “D,” arguing from this premise, then concluded that at the time of Herod’s siege of Jerusalem a Sabbath year was in progress. Since the capture of the city is variously dated by these chronologists anywhere from the summer to the early autumn of 37 B.C.E., this evidence, it is claimed, proves System “B,” which would date this Sabbath year from Tishri 1 of 38 until Tishri 1 of 37 B.C.E., or System “D,” from Nisan 1 of 37 until Nisan 1 of 36 B.C.E.*

## **A Contradiction?**

*All would seem well for the above interpretation except for the fact that shortly thereafter in Antiquities, 15:1:1–2, Josephus openly contradicts it. While discussing the time shortly AFTER Herod the Great had taken the city of Jerusalem, Josephus makes the following comment (as translated by Ralph Marcus):*

*And there was no end to their troubles, for on the one hand their greedy master (Herod), who was in need (of money), was plundering them, and on the other hand the seventh year, WHICH CAME AROUND AT THAT TIME, forced them to leave the land unworked, since we are forbidden to sow the earth in that year.<sup>517</sup>*

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<sup>514</sup> For Professor Placid Csizmazia, see above Chap. XVI, p. 232, n. 24.

<sup>515</sup> Letter to the author dated 09–08–87.

<sup>516</sup> E.g., Whiston, Jos., p. 313; Marcus, Jos., vii, p. 689; etc.

<sup>517</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15:1:2.

*Although Ben Zion Wacholder, who advocates System “C,”<sup>518</sup> and Don Blosser, who advocates System “B,”<sup>519</sup> disagree with each other as to which year represents the Shemitah (year of release, rest), both do agree that this above passage from Josephus presents historians with a contradiction.*

*The Greek phrase “ἐφνειστησκεὶ γὰρ τότε (eneistekei gar tote),” translated by Ralph Marcus to mean, “which came around at that time,” refers to the approach of a Sabbath year after Herod took the city. Wacholder writes that the sentence “seems to suggest that the Shemitah fell not during the siege but after it had ended, i.e., while Herod was master of Jerusalem.”<sup>520</sup>*

*In fact, a fairer translation of this passage from Josephus is confirmed by experts in ancient Greek. Professor Juan Gamez of East Texas State University,<sup>521</sup> after analyzing this verse, concluded that the meaning of the Greek phrase “ἐφνειστησκεὶ γὰρ τότε”, literally “for at hand then,”<sup>522</sup> is much stronger than what Marcus and others would lead us to believe. Gamez states that Josephus used “the imperfect and not the aorist” and that the intent of the passage is to say that the Jews were “forced” or “compelled” to leave their fields unworked because “the 7th year was coming” or “was approaching.” In his mind there is no doubt that Josephus was announcing the approach of a Sabbath year shortly “after” Herod had mastered Jerusalem.<sup>523</sup> Professor Csizmazia of the University of*

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<sup>518</sup> HUCA, 44, pp. 166f.

<sup>519</sup> HUCA, 52, p. 135.

<sup>520</sup> HUCA, 44, p. 166.

<sup>521</sup> Professor Gamez holds a Ph.D. in Spanish Language and Literature, with M.A.s in Theology and Philosophy, a second major in Latin and Greek, and B.A.s in English and Italian with minors in German and French. Professor Gamez is now retired from the University. He has been of great assistance to the author on a number of occasions for which we offer him our thanks.

<sup>522</sup> The Greek verb ejneisthvkei (eneistekei), 3 sing. pl. perf. act. indic. form of ejnisthmi (enistemi), means “(prop. as it were to stand in sight, stand near) to be upon, impend, threaten . . . close at hand” (AGEL, p. 216); “to stand near, i.e. to be at hand, to impend” (GELNT, p. 254); “to stand by, be present, near at hand” (GED, p. 205).

<sup>523</sup> Taped interview with Professor Gamez, dated 09–06–1987.

Dallas likewise concurred that this was the most obvious meaning of the phrase.<sup>524</sup>

## **Jerusalem Captured during a Non-Sabbath Year**

*If the popular view of Antiquities, 14:16:2, is correct, that a Sabbath year was in process BEFORE Herod took Jerusalem, then Josephus has contradicted himself on the subject within just a few pages: on the one hand saying that during the siege the Jews were observing a Sabbath year, while on the other saying that, at some time AFTER Herod took the city, a Sabbath year was approaching. Neither can there be two Sabbath years (i.e., a Sabbath followed by a Jubilee). Not only did the Jews abandon the observance of the Jubilee years by this date but the nearest Jubilee, based upon Hezekiah's observance of a Jubilee in his 16th year, occurred around 15 or 14 B.C.E., depending upon which Sabbath-cycle system one advocates.*

*The question is, "Does Josephus really contradict himself?" A close examination of the evidence proves that he did not. The error is actually made by the popular interpretation of Antiquities, 14:16:2, par. 475, not Josephus. What the chronologists have mistakenly assumed to have been a Sabbath year in progress was in truth only a statement that a Sabbath year was close at hand. In fact, the evidence from Josephus proves that a Sabbath year was not possible in the year that Herod captured Jerusalem.*

*First, the Jews in Jerusalem harvested crops in Judaea during the year of Herod's siege. This fact is expressly stated in Josephus, Antiquities, 14:16:2, shortly before the mentioning of the disputed "7th year":*

*And everything on the land outside the city had been carried off, so that nothing was left that could serve as food for men or beasts; and by secret raids also they caused a lack of provisions.*

*During a Sabbath year the Israelites are forbidden to plant or harvest their crops and those loyal to the Scriptures would not have done so under any circumstance. If it had been a matter of simply*

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<sup>524</sup> Letters to the author from Professor Csizmazia dated 09-26-1987 and 10-04-1987.

*denying the enemy a source of food, the Jews of Jerusalem would not have carried it off (presumably to the city) but would have burned or otherwise destroyed it. Yet the clear impression left by Josephus is that crops were being produced in the fields and raids had to be made to gather this food or otherwise it would be used by Herod's forces to continue the siege. That crops would be in the field in Judaea during a Sabbath year within this period of Judaeian history strains credulity.*

*Second, and most importantly, Josephus confirms the fact that there were many Jews in the army of Herod who were actively involved in the siege of Jerusalem—clearly an aggressive act and one that was forbidden under Jewish law during a Sabbath year.<sup>525</sup> Herod himself, although Edomite by family, had married several Jewish women and also belonged to the Jewish faith.<sup>526</sup> If this had been a Sabbath year, the Jews in Herod's army would not have participated in the siege. As the War Scroll confirms: "But in the year of release (Sabbath) they shall mobilize no man to go into the army, for it is a Sabbath of rest to the sovereign (Yahweh)."<sup>527</sup>*

*From the time that Herod arrived in Palestine in the spring of 39 B.C.E., after being rewarded with the kingship of Judaea by the Romans,<sup>528</sup> great numbers of Jews had joined his army. Josephus writes:*

*By this time Herod had sailed from Italy to Ptolemais and had collected a not inconsiderable force of both foreigners AND HIS COUNTRYMEN, and was marching through Galilee against Antigonus. . . . Nevertheless, Herod's strength increased day by day as he went forward, and all Galilee, except for a few of its inhabitants, came over to his side.<sup>529</sup>*

*After taking Masada, "the local inhabitants joined him."<sup>530</sup> When he marched against Jericho, he took "ten companies, five Roman and five Jewish, and a mixed mercenary force."<sup>531</sup> In 37 B.C.E., just*

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<sup>525</sup> See above Chap. XVII, pp. 257–259.

<sup>526</sup> See Chap. XXVIII, pp. 373–375, and p. 374, n. 60.

<sup>527</sup> IQM, 2:8–9.

<sup>528</sup> For the chronology of Herod, see below Chap. XX.

<sup>529</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:15:1.

<sup>530</sup> Ibid.

<sup>531</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:15:2.

*before Herod laid siege to Jerusalem, we are told that “many people streamed to him from Jericho and the rest of Judaea” and “multitudes of Jews now joined him daily from Jericho and elsewhere.”*<sup>532</sup>

*That the Jews in Herod’s army participated in the siege of Jerusalem is expressly stated by Josephus. He remarks that Herod took the city by storm and that, “soon every quarter was filled with the blood of the slain, for the Romans were furious at the length of the siege, while THE JEWS ON HEROD’S SIDE were anxious not to leave a single adversary alive.”*<sup>533</sup> *Their participation is simply unthinkable if this had been a Sabbath year.*<sup>534</sup> *Meanwhile, in the year following the siege, we hear of no aggressive military activity by Herod or his army—indicative of a Sabbath year.*

## **Another Factor**

*All of this evidence, plus the fact that the year 36/35 B.C.E. fits precisely in the Sabbath-cycle sequence established since the 15th year of Hezekiah, dismantles the popular interpretation of Josephus, Antiquities, 14:16:2, par. 475, which would have Herod’s siege occur during a Sabbath year. How, for example, can the two seemingly contradictory statements from Josephus (1) while Herod was attacking Jerusalem, “for the 7th was at hand then,” and (2) after Herod conquered the city, “the 7th (sabbatical) year WAS APPROACHING, forcing them to leave the land unworked,” both be true at the same time?*

*The solution to this apparent contradiction lies in the period of Jewish history when there was a gradual shifting of the beginning date for the Sabbath year from the 1st of Nisan—its original starting point—to the 1st of Tishri. Wacholder and others, for example, speak of “the gradual shifting of the New Year from Nisan to Tishri, which has been formalized into our Rosh Hashanah.”*<sup>535</sup> *Although the exact date in which this shift began remains obscure, the evidence indicates that it made its first appearance after the Hasmonaeans came into power.*

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<sup>532</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:15:12, Wars, 1:17:6.

<sup>533</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:16:2 §479, Wars, 1:18:2 §351.

<sup>534</sup> Cf. Chap. XVII, pp. 257–259.

<sup>535</sup> HUCA, 44, p. 155.



*The change crept in during the period of Greek dominance over Judaea, especially encouraged by the attempted Hellenization of the Jews by the Seleucids. The Mishnah (c.200 C.E.) explains this period of change when it comments regarding the Nisan and Tishri-year systems:*

*The one (Nisan) refers to Jewish kings, the other (Tishri) to kings of other nations—the year of other nations’ kings being counted from Tishri, and of Jewish kings from Nisan. Now, IN THE PRESENT TIME we count the years from Tishri; were we then to say that our Era is connected with the Exodus it is surely from Nisan that we ought to count. Does this not prove that our reckoning is based on the reign of the Greek kings (and not the Exodus)? That indeed proves it.<sup>536</sup>*

*The Seder Olam (c.160 C.E.), as another example, while speaking of those Jews who were in exile after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E., writes, “And in the Exile they write in documents according to the reckoning of the Greeks (i.e., the Seleucid era).”<sup>537</sup>*

*As we shall demonstrate later on in our investigation, the Tishri year was not officially adopted until the 2nd century C.E. Nevertheless, the roots for this change extend backwards for several centuries. To begin with, opinion was strongly divided. The priestly families, represented by such groups as the Sadducees, continued using the older system of starting the year with Nisan. Nevertheless, the acceptance of a Tishri year for the beginning of the civil year, which eventually spilled over into their calculations of the Sabbath and Jubilee years, was first adopted by the liberal Pharisees. The Pharisees (a spinoff of the early Hasidic Jews) came into prominence during the time of the Maccabean leader Jonathan (159/158–143/142 B.C.E.).<sup>538</sup> They then grew in power under Selena Alexandra (76/75–68/67 B.C.E.).<sup>539</sup>*

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<sup>536</sup> B. A.Zar., 10a.

<sup>537</sup> S.O., 30.

<sup>538</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:5:9 §171, in context with 13:5:1–8.

<sup>539</sup> Jos., Wars, 1:5:2 §§110–114.

*By the 1st century C.E., the Pharisees formed two powerful schools, one founded by Hillel the elder and another by Shammai. Josephus points out that during the 1st century C.E., the Pharisees, who followed the regulations passed down by “former generations,” became the dominant influence over Judaism, having gained “the support of the masses.”<sup>540</sup> Even the Sadducees were often forced to submit unwillingly to the formulas of the Pharisees (especially to those practices outside the Temple grounds where the Pharisees held sway) “since otherwise the masses would not tolerate them.”<sup>541</sup>*

*After the fall of the Temple in 70 C.E., for all practical purposes, the Sadducees and other more conservative Jewish religious institutions ceased to exist and the Pharisees (who formed the Rabbinic Jews) became the dominant element in Jewish religious life. As a result, although the calculations for the festival days were still counted by the Nisan year, the Tishri-year system was adopted for the civil year and, subsequently, for the Sabbath and Jubilee years.*

*Josephus, himself a Pharisee, for example, informs us that Nisan “was the 1st month for the festivals” and was reckoned “as the commencement of the year for everything relating to divine worship,”<sup>542</sup> which surely would include the sacred Sabbath year. Even as late as the time of the Rosh ha-Shanah (written near the start of the 3rd century C.E.), “the 1st of Nisan is the New Year for kings and festivals.”<sup>543</sup> Yet in the days of the Rosh ha-Shanah a change had been officially established. Now “the 1st of Tishri” was not only “the New Year” of foreign kings (i.e., the Greek or Seleucid era) but was extended to include the Jewish years “for שמיטה (Shemition; releases, i.e., Sabbaths) and for יובלות (Yubeluth; Jubilees).”<sup>544</sup>*

*Under the strained interpretations of the Pharisees, the Jubilee year only applies while “all the inhabitants” of Israel are living in the land of Kanaan. As a result, it was the opinion of the rabbis that after the fall of Samaria to the Assyrians the Jubilee year was no longer required.<sup>545</sup> As Wacholder points out, “since Lev., 25*

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<sup>540</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:10:6 §298.

<sup>541</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:1:4.

<sup>542</sup> Jos., Antiq., 1:3:3.

<sup>543</sup> R.Sh., 1:1.

<sup>544</sup> Ibid.

<sup>545</sup> B. Arak., 32b; HUCA, 44, p. 154, ns. 4 & 6.

*ordained the Jubilee and Shemitah as a unit, it follows, the Rabbis say, the Shemitah without the observance of the Jubilee falls under 'rabbinic' rather than 'biblical' ordinances."*<sup>546</sup> *Having given themselves this authority, after the collapse of the Bar Kochba revolt in 135 C.E., the rabbis not only permitted themselves complete exemption from the Jubilee year but shifted the beginning date for the Sabbath year back from Nisan 1 to the previous Tishri 1, being formalized in the Rosh ha-Shanah.*<sup>547</sup> *Finally, under pressure from the political and taxing authorities of the Roman government and others, the rabbis determined that the observance of the Sabbath year would only apply while the Jews controlled their land in Judaea. In time, the Sabbath years were either dismissed as not being relevant or were simply allowed to fall into disuse.*

*This late 2nd century C.E. Jewish Talmudic interpretation, nevertheless, is replete with errors. The rabbis of this late period misread Leviticus, 25:8–10, to mean that the trumpet of "liberty" was to be sounded in the 7th month of the 49th year in the Jubilee cycle, when in reality it was to be in the 7th month of the 50th year. The conclusion of this late rabbinic view naturally resulted in the interpretation that the 7th month of the 49th year was calculated to be the 1st month of the Jubilee celebration.*<sup>548</sup>

*To this initial error the rabbis added yet another. In an effort to "build a fence around the Torah (Law),"*<sup>549</sup> *they extended their interpretation for the Jubilee rituals to the regular Sabbath years as well, thereby making the 7th month of the 6th year in the Sabbath cycle the beginning of the Sabbath year. There is no authority in Scriptures for this rather strained understanding.*

*In effect, at the time this ever-expanding interpretation of building "a fence around the Torah" was first adhered to, the Sabbath-year ritual was extended so that it would last 1½ years: from the 7th month of the 6th year until the end of the 12th month of the 7th year. Much later, when the 1st of Tishri became the*

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<sup>546</sup> HUCA, 44, p. 154, n. 4.

<sup>547</sup> HUCA, 44, p. 155.

<sup>548</sup> See our comments in Chap. II.

<sup>549</sup> Ab., 1:1, "the men of the great assembly" said "make/build a fence round the Torah"; cf. B. Pes., 2b, "The Rabbis erected a safeguard for a Scriptural law"; B. Sanh., 46a, "not with the intention of disregarding the Torah but to make a fence around it"; B. Ab., 3:13, "tradition is a fence to the Torah."

***official New Year's day even for regular non-Sabbath years, the ritual was again altered, being reduced to only a year. Yet this time it began and ended with the 1st day of Tishri.***

*Important for our discussion is the fact that, prior to the 2nd century C.E., the first of every year, including the Sabbath year, began with the 1st of Nisan (a fact to which every Jewish document concerned with the subject prior to the 2nd century C.E. testifies). Another tradition existed, however, which might be germane to the issue of the Sabbath year in Herod's reign. The Mishnah, in that part called the Shebiith, written about 200 C.E., asked:*

*Until what time will a tree-planted field be plowed in the year before the 7th year? The School of Shammai says: So long as this benefits the produce (of the 6th year). The School of Hillel says: Until Pentecost. And the opinion of the one is not far from the opinion of the other.<sup>550</sup>*

*Until when will a white (unshadowed by trees)<sup>551</sup> field be plowed in the year before the 7th year? Until the ground has dried (about May or June), [or] such time as the ground is still plowed for planting out beds of cucumbers and gourds. Rabbi Simeon said: You put the law for each man into his own hand!—but, rather, a white field will be plowed until Passover and a tree-planted field until Pentecost. Beds of cucumbers or gourds will be dunged and hoed until New Year;<sup>552</sup> so, too, irrigated fields . . . (etc.).<sup>553</sup>*

*The school of Hillel existed in the 1st century C.E. at the time of Josephus and Philo. Therefore, we can conclude that, despite the fact that the 1st of Nisan was the beginning of the Sabbath year, the Jews had by this time established the custom of observing the Sabbath-year ritual of not sowing or harvesting their fields during the last half of the 6th year in order to “build a fence around the Torah.” The entire ritual of the Pharisaic groups, therefore, was actually 1½ years long!*

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<sup>550</sup> Shebi., 1:1.

<sup>551</sup> The expression “white fields” refers to fields unshaded by trees, see Danby, Mishnah, p. 40, n. 5.

<sup>552</sup> The R.Sh., 1:1, defines the New Year for vegetables (e.g., cucumbers) as beginning on the 1st of Tishri (Sept./Oct.).

<sup>553</sup> Shebi., 2:1.

*In time this lengthy period for the rituals associated with the Sabbath year would prove to be too heavy of a burden on the Jews and would eventually be modified. The important point is that when this new custom arose, the actual Sabbath year was still considered to extend from Nisan 1 to Nisan 1. It must also be remembered that when the Sabbath years were first implemented there was no requirement to stop planting and harvesting crops at any time before the first of Abib (Nisan). Yet from the latter part of the 2nd century B.C.E., the Pharisees built up interpretations around the Law that went far beyond scriptural commands.<sup>554</sup> These interpretations included added rules and regulations for both the Sabbath day and the Sabbath year. As Wacholder observes:*

*The Pharisaic halakha required that the observance of the seventh year, like that of the seventh day, begin during the sixth year, in order to build a fence around the law.<sup>555</sup>*

*In effect, they had “built a fence” around the Sabbath year by beginning the observance of not planting the fields during the several months prior to the commencement of the 7th year. The theory was that it was unnecessary to plant crops during the latter part of the 6th year which were intended to be harvested in the first part of the Sabbath year. The intent, no doubt, was to prevent someone from crossing the Sabbath-year line, something one might be tempted to do if they were allowed to plant and harvest right up until the eve of the Sabbath year.*

*An example of this theory is pronounced in the Babylonian Rosh ha-Shanah. It asked the question, “And how do we know (from the Scriptures) that we add from the profane on to the sacred,”<sup>556</sup> i.e., add from the last part of the ordinary 6th day of the week or from the last months of the 6th year of the Sabbath cycle on to the sacred Sabbath day or Sabbath year. It answers by stating:*

*As it has been taught: In plowing time and in harvest time you shall rest. Rabbi Akiba (early 2nd century C.E.) said: There*

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<sup>554</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:10:6.

<sup>555</sup> HUCA, 54, p. 128.

<sup>556</sup> B. R.Sh., 9a.

*was no need (for Scriptures) to specify the plowing and harvest of the Sabbatical year, since this has already been mentioned [in] “your field you shall not sow,” etc. What must be meant therefore is the plowing OF THE YEAR BEFORE THE 7TH which is passing into the 7th, and the harvest of the 7th year which is continuing into the period after the 7th year.*<sup>557</sup>

*This effort to readjust the starting point of the Sabbath year was in full harmony with their new interpretation for the observance of the Sabbath day. Jewish records extending from those found at Qumran up until those produced during the Talmudic era claim the rabbis altered the observance of the Sabbath day so as to include the latter part of the 6th day of the week. In the Damascus Document (sometime before 70 C.E.) for instance, which was found among the Dead Sea scrolls, we read:*

*Concerning the Sabbath, to observe it according to its ordinance: Let not a man do work on the 6th day (of the week) from the time when the sun’s disk is its full width away from the gate, for that is what it says: “Observe the Sabbath day to keep it sacred.”*<sup>558</sup>

*In short, just as one would discontinue work in the late afternoon of the day before the weekly Sabbath, the Pharisees—who were the dominant sect among the Jews and to whose formulas the others would submit<sup>559</sup>—established that one must also discontinue planting and harvesting crops of the field in the latter part of the 6th year before the Sabbath year actually began. Yet a year and a half of not planting placed a great burden on the people. So later, in the mid- to late 2nd century C.E., this interpretation was transformed into an official change of the New Year’s day for the Sabbath year, altering it from the 1st of Nisan back to the 1st of Tishri of the previous year. In this way, it allowed them to sow their crops after the 1st of Tishri during the 7th year in order to harvest them during the 1st year of the next Sabbath cycle.*

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<sup>557</sup> Ibid.

<sup>558</sup> DR, 13.

<sup>559</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:1:3f.

## Back to Antiquities, 14:16:2

Now these circumstances return us to the events of the year 37/36 B.C.E. when Herod captured Jerusalem. In *Antiquities*, 14:16:2, par. 475, Josephus discusses the period just before the capture of Jerusalem by Herod. It is true that the term *εβδοματικον* (7th), as used in this passage, is to be understood in a “ritual, legal sense” and implies a Sabbath year. Yet what has seemingly gone unnoticed is the fact that the term *κατά; ταν̄ τ̄* (*kata taut*), also used here, has been commonly translated to mean, “to fall at that time.” *Κατά; ταν̄ τ̄*, as Professor Csizmazia points out, is “a vague, approximative formula of time: ‘about the time of these events.’” So it can be rightly assumed that Josephus did not say explicitly that the year of the siege was the sabbatical year but it was ‘about’; and so the thought of its coming added to the misery and mad desperation of the citizens, namely that the hardships of the siege would be followed by the restrictions of the sabbatical year.”<sup>560</sup>

Ralph Marcus also allowed that Josephus could have been “referring, rather vaguely, to a sabbatical year that began soon after the fall of Jerusalem.”<sup>561</sup> Marcus, an advocate of System “C,” nevertheless, assumes that Jerusalem fell in the summer and that this approaching Sabbath year arrived with Tishri 1 of 37 B.C.E. In reality, Jerusalem actually fell into Herod’s hands well after October, as we shall see in Chapter XXII.<sup>562</sup> Nevertheless, Marcus makes the proper point that, “If the inhabitants of Jerusalem were distressed by famine” during the siege, “they would not be able to lay in an extra supply of provisions for the latter part of the sabbatical year.”<sup>563</sup>

Even more to the point, as this study shall demonstrate in Chapters XXII<sup>564</sup> and XXIII,<sup>565</sup> the inhabitants of Jerusalem were already suffering from shortages and famine in 37 B.C.E. due to the fact that Herod’s army had brought a long siege against the city. This siege began towards the end of the winter of 38/37 B.C.E. and continued until the winter of 37/36 B.C.E. First, the blockade kept the

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<sup>560</sup> Letter to the author dated 09–26–87.

<sup>561</sup> Marcus, Jos., vii, p. 695, n. a.

<sup>562</sup> <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-22Chap.pdf>

<sup>563</sup> Ibid.

<sup>564</sup> <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-22Chap.pdf>

<sup>565</sup> <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-23Chap.pdf>

*Jews within the city from either planting and harvesting their spring vegetables or their spring and summer barley and wheat crops. In addition, their plight was further aggravated by the fact that the Jews of the city were unable to plant any crops either during the year of the siege or after the war's close. Not only were they unable to plant because of the blockade but recent innovations in Jewish customs prevented them from planting, even inside the besieged city, during the last months of the 6th year of the Sabbath-year cycle. Their inability to raise new food added severely to their distress.*

*Our problem of chronology is solved **once we understand that Josephus was trying to convey the idea that the Jewish custom of not planting their fields in the latter part of the 6th year was now in effect** and the Sabbath year was close at hand. The Sabbath year, which fell “about the time of these events,” was to arrive in the next few months. Regardless of their inability to resupply themselves—even though a great army surrounded them and they were in distress because of the famine and lack of necessities created by the long siege—they persevered in the war. The passage in question, therefore, should actually be translated as follows:*

*And acting in desperation rather than with foresight, they persevered in the war to the very end—this in spite of the fact that a great army surrounded them and they were distressed by famine and lack of necessities, for there was a 7th (Sabbatical) year about the time of these events.<sup>566</sup>*

*Support for this interpretation is actually found in the other important passage of Antiquities, 15:1:2, par. 7, which discusses the plight of the Jews in a period AFTER Herod took the city.*

*And there was no end to their troubles, for on the one hand their greedy master, who was in need (of money), was plundering them, and on the other hand the 7th (sabbatical) year was approaching, forcing them to leave the land unworked, since we are forbidden to sow the earth in that year.*

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<sup>566</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:16:2.



*These two passages clearly demonstrate that the Jews who were defending the city of Jerusalem were already in desperate straits before the beginning of the Sabbath year of 36/35 B.C.E. Under siege by Herod, they had been prevented from either harvesting or planting any crops. Even if they had been free to plant, planting season for many crops, such as barley and wheat, in this region occurred during the months of Khisleu (Nov./Dec.) through Adar (Feb./March)<sup>567</sup> and Herod still had the city blockaded during that period. By the time the new year arrived, Herod had already conquered the city but the Sabbath year made it impossible to plant even vegetable gardens. Therefore, because of Jewish laws, the Jews at Jerusalem did not have the benefit of their crops before the Sabbath year began. They were (1) held within the city under siege, and (2) “forbidden to sow the earth” both in the last months of the year prior to the approaching Sabbath year, as well as during the Sabbath year that followed, when Herod held the city.*

## **Conclusion**

*When placed in historical context, we find that both passages from Josephus, dealing with the Sabbath year at the time of Herod’s conquest of Jerusalem, are true. The ritualistic practices of the Sabbath year that were associated with the latter part of the 6th year were in effect during Herod’s siege of Jerusalem (37/36 B.C.E.). As we shall see in Chapter XXII,<sup>568</sup> Herod actually conquered Jerusalem on the 10th of Tebeth (Jan. 2), 36 B.C.E. This detail speaks to the desperate fanaticism of the defenders of Jerusalem. They continued in spite of their inability to harvest their crops after the army of Herod arrived outside the walls of the city or to plant crops during the latter part of the siege.<sup>569</sup> Nevertheless, the Sabbath year of 36/35 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning, was still rapidly approaching after Herod took the city.*

*This conclusion is supported by the fact that the Jews were harvesting crops in the summer of 37/36 B.C.E. (before the month of Tishri [Sept./Oct.]) in the early stages of the siege against Jerusalem. The events of Herod’s 13th through 17th years will also verify that the*

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<sup>567</sup> HBC, pp. 33f.

<sup>568</sup> <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-22Chap.pdf>

<sup>569</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:16:2.

*year 36/35 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning, was a Sabbath year.<sup>570</sup> It is clear from this evidence that there is no contradiction between Antiquities, 14:16:2 and 15:1:2.<sup>571</sup> The year that Herod besieged Jerusalem was not a Sabbath year, but the 6th year in the Sabbath cycle. In the latter part of this 6th year, as part of an effort to build a fence around the Sabbath-year laws, the Jews observed the custom of not planting or harvesting any crops. Then, after Herod captured Jerusalem, the Sabbath year arrived. This Sabbath year began on the 1st of Nisan, 36 B.C.E., in full accord with the System “A” cycle established by our other documented Sabbath years (Chart C).*

I have the year 36 B.C. marked in yellow on the previous chart in Chapter 11. It is the 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year in the 78<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

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<sup>570</sup> See Chap. XXIV. <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-24Chap.pdf>

<sup>571</sup> See App. M.

## Chapter 16 | Shmita Coins 36 B.C. King Herod the Great

The 1<sup>st</sup> year of Herod's reign at Jerusalem is his 4<sup>th</sup> year since being crowned in Rome as King:

*Herod reigned 37 regnal years, Nisan reckoning, from the time that he obtained the Judaeen crown from the Roman Senate and 34 regnal years, Nisan reckoning, from the year he took Jerusalem and killed Antigonus.<sup>572</sup> This dating requires that Herod be given 3 years prior to the year that he took the Holy City.*

*This evidence proves that, when Herod arrived outside Jerusalem in or about early March of the year 37 B.C.E., it was the beginning of the 3rd year SINCE Herod had been appointed king of Judaea by the Romans, but it was towards the end of his 3rd year as king of Judaea based upon the Jewish Nisan (Abib) reckoning. The 4th year of Herod, being his 1st year at Jerusalem, based upon Judaeen reckoning, began with Nisan 1 of 37 B.C.E.:*

*Year 1 = 40/39 B.C.E. Reign recognized at Rome this year  
39/38 B.C.E. 1st year begins mid-Feb., 39 B.C.E.*

*Year 2 = 39/38 B.C.E. 2nd year recognized at Rome  
38/37 B.C.E. 2nd year begins mid-Feb., 38 B.C.E.*

*Year 3 = 38/37 B.C.E. 3rd year recognized at Rome  
37/36 B.C.E. 3rd year begins mid-Feb., 37 B.C.E.*

*Year 4 = 37/36 B.C.E. = Year 1 from Jerusalem (Nisan reckoning)*

*Beginning with Nisan 1 of the year 37/36 B.C.E., Herod entered into his 4th Jewish year of being appointed king by the Romans (see Chart G). In turn, "Year 4" from Rome equals "Year 1" at Jerusalem.<sup>573</sup>*

*The date 37/36 BCE therefore, is supposedly by the sequence of events. Herod had initially left Syria for Palestine at the*

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<sup>572</sup> Jos., Wars, 1:33:8, Antiq., 17:8:1.

<sup>573</sup> Qadesh La Yawheh Press, Chapter XXI The Year Herod Conquered Jerusalem Part III of the Sabbath Year of 36/35 B.C.E. Page 297,  
<https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-21Chap.pdf>

*beginning of winter (in or about early Dec., 38 B.C.E.). Nevertheless, the numerous events and conflicts which took place before he marched on Jerusalem must have taken several months to accomplish. These episodes would bring us at least into March of 37 B.C.E.*

*The siegeworks against Jerusalem were built by Herod and the Romans in the “summer.”<sup>574</sup> The actual siege of Jerusalem lasted 5 months before Herod’s army and the Romans were able to breach the first wall,<sup>575</sup> on the 40th day after making an attack.<sup>576</sup> The battle continued another 15 days before the second wall was breached,<sup>577</sup> in the 6th month of the siege.<sup>578</sup> Furthermore, in Antiquities, 14:16:4, Josephus tells us that the city of Jerusalem was conquered by Herod, “during the consulship of Rome of Marcus Agrippa and Caninius Gallus.” The consul date is for 37/36 B.C.E., March reckoning. This evidence proves that the siege and capture of Jerusalem lasted well into the year 37/36 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning, making that year the 1st year of Herod, as calculated from the time he conquered Jerusalem.*

Herod the Great was appointed King over Judea by Augustus in 40 B.C. However, it was not until 37 B.C. that he managed to take Jerusalem by siege and to oust Antigonus from his throne. As we have just shown you in the previous chapter along with Josephus, the siege and capture of the city of Jerusalem was just before a Sabbatical year approached.

I will now quote S. Pfann, from his article ‘Dated Bronze Coinage of the Sabbatical years of Release and the First Jewish City Coin’:

*His bronze coinage signified his victory but also would have been intended to alleviate the financial crisis that prevailed in the city. The Sabbatical Year coin set which covered nearly every denomination, 8 prutot, 4 prutot, 2 prutot, 1prutah. No dated version of the smallest denomination, the lepton, was produced*

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<sup>574</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:16:2.

<sup>575</sup> Jos., Wars, 1:18:1.

<sup>576</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:16:2.

<sup>577</sup> Ibid.

<sup>578</sup> Jos., Wars, 5:9:4.

*(perhaps due to the paucity of surface area on this coin for a date). However, one candidate for a non-dated version could be the eagle lepton (Hendin 501) which reflects a similar boldness in the use of non-Jewish iconography as the dated denominations, and a single cornucopia linked to the coins of his predecessors the Hasmoneans.*



Dated coins of Herod the Great

*Herod the Great may have minted coins throughout his reign. However, the major occasions to mint coins included commemoration of major events, including the completion of the harbor of Caesarea (Hendin p. 168 no. 502). However, the apparent abundance of coins whose dates coincide with sabbatical years would imply that sabbatical years were key occasions to produce coins, for reasons already mentioned.*

*As in the case of the Year 3 Sabbatical Year coin set which covered nearly every denomination, 8 prutot, 4 prutot, 2 prutot, 1 prutah, it appears that another set, the tripod series, may have been produced for Year ten, each with and “X” or “+” prominently displayed in the center of the verso within a royal diadem (suggested by Donald Ariel). This series included only the smaller denominations, 2 prutot, 1 prutah, 1 lepton. The motifs that unify this set is the diadem and the tripod. (A lesser number of the leptons of this tripod series were minted, without the diadem, but with a palm branch.)<sup>579</sup>*

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<sup>579</sup> S. Pfann, ‘Dated Bronze Coinage of the Sabbatical years of Release and the First Jewish City Coin’. *Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society* 24 (2006) 101-113. <https://aias.org.uk/volume-24/#>

This author is using the chronology of Wacholder to determine when the dates are. He has determined each set of coins we are examining are in the shmita years.

## Chapter 17 | Shmita Coins 29 B.C. King Herod the Great

This is the next Sabbatical year of 29 B.C. during Herod the Great's reign. These are the coins from his 2<sup>nd</sup> Sabbatical year.

*The Sabbatical Year 29 followed on the heels of a number of disastrous setbacks during the preceding years, each, in itself could lead to a difficult Sabbatical year. These were: 1) Anthony and Cleopatra were defeated at the Battle of Actium; 2) Herod was defeated by the Nabateans; and most importantly, 3) a devastating earthquake destroyed much of Judea and took the lives of thousands of its inhabitants.*<sup>580</sup>



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<sup>580</sup> As I post this, the link seems to have been hacked and I am not able to refer to anything from the UHL site. But here is where I gathered this information many years ago. wp.uhl.ac › sabbatical-year-coinage-herod-great The Sabbatical Year Coinage of Herod the Great | University (<https://wp.uhl.ac/sabbatical-year-coinage-herod-great/>)

## Chapter 18 | Sabbatical Year of 22 B.C. Herod-Discrediting Zuckerman, Wacholder and Others

Our next Sabbatical year proof is the year 22 B.C. during the reign of King Herod. I will let Qadesh La Yahweh press once again explain this to you:

*Our next item<sup>581</sup> of evidence strikes a fatal blow at sabbath cycle systems “B” and “D,” while remaining highly supportive of system “A.” It is by far one of the most important pieces of information for this entire subject. It has been consistently overlooked because of its ramifications. While on the one hand it completely disassembles the two other possible sabbath cycle systems, it firmly establishes the year 22/21 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning, as a sabbath year. This evidence comes from Josephus, Antiquities, 15:9:1–15:10:4, and it deals with the thirteenth through seventeenth years of King Herod the Great. Josephus tells us:*

*Now in this year, which was THE THIRTEENTH OF HEROD'S REIGN, the greatest hardships came upon the country, whether from the deity (Yahweh) being angry or because misfortune occurs in such cycles. For in the first place, there were continual droughts, and as a result the earth WAS UNPRODUCTIVE EVEN OF SUCH FRUITS AS IT USUALLY BROUGHT FORTH OF ITSELF. In the second place, because of the change of diet brought about by the lack of cereals, bodily illnesses and eventually the plague prevailed, and misfortunes continually assailed them.<sup>582</sup>*

*In this passage we are plainly told that the crops that had been planted by the Jews in the thirteenth year of Herod were destroyed by drought. Even fruits that normally grew of themselves were unproductive. This year, therefore, was not a sabbath year.*

*Josephus continues his report by showing that these bad conditions were carried over into the next year:*

*And since, too, the fruits of that year (year 13) were destroyed and those which had been stored up had been consumed, there was no hope of relief left, for their bad situation gradually became worse than they had expected. And it was not only for that year that they*

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<sup>581</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press, Chapter XXI The Sabbath Year of 22/21 B.C.E.  
<https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj21Chap.pdf>

<sup>582</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15:9:1.

*had nothing left, but THE SEED OF THE CROPS THAT SURVIVED WERE ALSO LOST WHEN THE EARTH YIELDED NOTHING THE SECOND YEAR. So their necessity made them find many new ways of sustaining themselves.*<sup>583</sup>

*This statement again confirms that there was a crop failure in “Year 13” of Herod, for not only were the fruits of that year destroyed but also the things stored up were consumed.*

*This passage adds that there was a crop failure the next year, i.e. “Year 14” of Herod, “when the earth yielded nothing the second year” as well. Therefore, “Year 14” of Herod could not be a sabbath year because the Jews were again planting crops and trying to produce a harvest.*

*The story continues with the observation that King Herod was in no better shape than the rest of the Jews, “for he was deprived of the revenue which he received from the (products of the) earth, and had used up his money in the lavish reconstruction of cities.”<sup>584</sup> Further, the neighboring peoples could not offer help by selling the Jews grain because they had “suffered no less themselves” and Herod did not have the money to buy the grain anyway.<sup>585</sup>*

*Herod, in order to obtain grain, cut up into coinage all the ornaments of gold and silver in his palace and bought grain from Egypt. Herod then distributed the grain to his people: . . .*

*to those who were able to provide food for themselves BY THEIR OWN LABOR he distributed grain in very exact proportions. Then, since there were many who because of old age or some other attendant infirmity were unable to prepare the grain for themselves, he provided for them by putting bakers to work and furnishing them food already prepared. He also took care that they should GO THROUGH THE WINTER without danger (to health).<sup>586</sup>*

*The first thing we notice is that during this year (the fourteenth of Herod) it was permissible for the Jews who were able to “provide food for themselves,” and to do so “by their own labor.” Since the subject is the distribution of grain, we have here yet another proof that crops were being sown and harvested during this year.*

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<sup>583</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15:9:1.

<sup>584</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15:9:1.

<sup>585</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15:9:2.

<sup>586</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15:9:2.



*Next, Herod made preparations for enduring the winter. That the crops failed in the first place shows that we have passed by the spring and summer harvest. Our story has now brought us to the throes of winter in the fourteenth year of Herod, which began in the middle of Marheshuan (Oct./Nov.).*

*But Josephus does not stop here. His next words are vitally important for our study of the sabbath year cycle. He writes:*

*And when these things had been provided for his subjects, he also applied himself to aiding the neighboring cities, and gave seeds to the inhabitants of Syria. And this brought him not a little profit, for his generosity was so well timed as to bring a good harvest, SO THAT ENOUGH FOOD WAS PRODUCED FOR THEM ALL. IN SUM, WHEN THE TIME DREW NEAR FOR HARVESTING THE LAND, HE SENT INTO THE COUNTRY NO FEWER THAN 50,000 MEN, WHO HE HIMSELF FED AND CARED FOR, AND IN THIS WAY, WHEN HE HAD HELPED HIS DAMAGED REALM RECOVER BY HIS UNFAILING MUNIFICENCE AND ZEAL, he also did not a little to relieve the neighboring peoples, who were in the same difficulties.<sup>587</sup>*

*In this passage Herod has already provided for the winter provisions of his own people before he attempts to come to the assistance of the neighboring lands. Since Herod had already made provisions for the winter, the grain that he was providing to the Syrians had to be for the winter and late planting (i.e. from Dec. through March).*

*The “good harvest” mentioned by Josephus as following upon Herod’s generosity to the neighboring countries refers to the harvest of both the Jews and their neighbors. Therefore, it is a reference to the next spring harvest of May and June. As a result, we have now come to the harvest of Herod’s fifteenth year!*

*Since we are now in Herod’s fifteenth year, it is all important for our study to notice that during this harvest period Herod sent “into the country (of Judaea) no fewer than 50,000 men” to help in the harvest, and that this assistance “helped his damaged realm recover.” In short, Herod’s fifteenth year, like his thirteenth and fourteenth, could not be a sabbath year because the Jews were harvesting crops! This fact proves that the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth years of Herod were not sabbath years.*

*No information is provided by Josephus for Herod’s sixteenth year that would indicate whether or not it was a sabbath. Nevertheless, this fact is in*

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<sup>587</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15:9:2.

*itself noteworthy since there is nothing that stands against this possibility and according to system “A,” Herod’s sixteenth year was a sabbath. Yet Josephus does give us evidence for Herod’s seventeenth year. Josephus writes that “after Herod had completed the seventeenth year of his reign, Caesar came to Syria.”<sup>588</sup> Josephus follows this statement with a discussion of Caesar’s visit with Herod, i.e. in Herod’s early eighteenth year.<sup>589</sup> He then adds:*

*It was at this time also that Herod remitted to the people of his kingdom a third part of their taxes, under the pretext of letting them recover from a period of LACK OF CROPS, but really for the more important purpose of getting back the goodwill of those who were disaffected.<sup>590</sup>*

*Tax collection was normally carried out in the seventh month of the year, Tishri, when the harvest was gathered in and people could afford to pay their taxes. But the crops for that period were planted in the last half of the previous year (i.e. beginning in December). The report given by Josephus demonstrates that crops had been planted but that once again there had been a bad harvest. This data shows that the Jews were sowing crops in the seventeenth year of Herod, proving that “Year 17” was not a sabbath year.*

## **Dating the Thirteenth through Seventeenth Years of Herod**

*As we have already demonstrated in our earlier chapters, Herod began his reign at Jerusalem in the year 37/36 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning. This represents his first year as ruler from Jerusalem and the year from which events in his reign were numbered.*

*• Herod’s seventh year was the same year that the battle of Actium was fought (Sept. 2, 31 B.C.E.).<sup>591</sup> Therefore, Herod’s seventh year was 31/30 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning. This date is in perfect agreement with “Year 1” of Herod being 37/36 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning.*

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<sup>588</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15:10:3.

<sup>589</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15:10:3–4, 15:11:1.

<sup>590</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15:10:4.

<sup>591</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15:5:1–2, Wars, 1:19:1–3; cf. Dio, 50:10–51:1.

• *The end of Herod's seventeenth year and the beginning of his eighteenth occurred when Augustus Caesar came to Syria.<sup>592</sup> According to Dio, Caesar arrived in Syria during the spring of the consul year of Marcus Apuleius and Publius Silius (i.e. 20 B.C.E.).<sup>593</sup> As a result, Herod's seventeenth year equals 21/20 B.C.E., and his eighteenth year represents 20/19 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning. These dates are also perfectly in tune with Herod's first year as 37/36 B.C.E. and his seventh year as 31/30 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning.*

*Based upon these firmly established dates for Herod's first, seventh, seventeenth, and eighteenth years, Herod's thirteenth through seventeenth years are easily dated as follows (all use a Nisan reckoning):*

*Year 13 = 25/24 B.C.E., crops planted.*

*Year 14 = 24/23 B.C.E., crops planted.*

*Year 15 = 23/22 B.C.E., crops planted.*

*Year 16 = 22/21 B.C.E., no information.*

*Year 17 = 21/20 B.C.E., crops planted.*

## **Comparing Sabbath Cycle Systems**

*Our effort now is to compare these above dates with the four possible sabbath cycle systems:*

*System "B" requires that there is a sabbath year from Tishri (Sept./Oct.) of 24 until Tishri of 23 B.C.E. This date falls within Herod's fourteenth and fifteenth years, when crops were being sown and harvested, and therefore must be eliminated from consideration. It simply will not work.*

*System "D" requires that there is a sabbath year from Nisan (March/ April) of 23 until Nisan of 22 B.C.E. Since this represents the fifteenth year of Herod, it too must be eliminated.*

*System "C" requires a sabbath year extending from Tishri, 23 until Tishri, 22 B.C.E. This system may escape the fact that the last-mentioned harvest of the fifteenth year of Herod (23/22 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning) is said to be the first harvest after winter (i.e. the spring*

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<sup>592</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15:10:3.

<sup>593</sup> Dio, 54:7.

harvest of May and June), but it fails the test when we compare the fifteenth year of Herod with his second year.

As demonstrated in Chapter XIX,<sup>594</sup> Herod conquered Jerusalem on the tenth of Tebeth, the tenth month of the Hebrew year. System “C” would have the sabbath of that period extend from Tishri of 37 until Tishri of 36 B.C.E. But this arrangement is impossible since after Herod conquered Jerusalem the sabbath year was still “approaching,” and therefore was arriving in the spring and not in the fall.

For system “C” to work, Herod would have had to conquer Jerusalem before the first of the Hebrew seventh month, Tishri, in 37 B.C.E. Contrary to this, the siege is described as one of great length, the result of which had made the Roman soldiers “furious.”<sup>595</sup> Not only had the siege taken six months from the time that the Romans had joined Herod,<sup>596</sup> but the siegeworks were not built until the summertime.<sup>597</sup> Therefore, the earliest that one can date the conquest of Jerusalem—even if we assume that the conquest did not happen after six months but five months and one day—would be on the first day of the Hebrew eighth month, the month of Marheshuan (Oct./Nov.). Since system “C” does not work for the beginning of the second year of Herod, it certainly will not work for the beginning of his sixteenth year either.

System “A,” on the other hand, meets every requirement. Not only does it ideally fit the description of a Nisan beginning for the year, fully demonstrated by such things as the oncoming sabbath year after Herod conquered Jerusalem, but its cycle makes the year 22/21 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning, the sixteenth year of Herod, a sabbath year. Therefore, it is not eliminated as a possibility by the events of Herod’s thirteenth through seventeenth years; yet it agrees with the cycle established by the records from the fifteenth year of Hezekiah (Chart B). System “A” remains the only viable option.

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<sup>594</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press Chapter XIX The Siege of Jerusalem Part I of the Sabbath Year of 36/35 B.C.E <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-19Chap.pdf>

<sup>595</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:6:2, Wars, 1:18:2.

<sup>596</sup> Jos., Wars, 1:18:2, 5:9:4.

<sup>597</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:16:2.

## Other Relevant Details

*Most historians accept the fact that Herod conquered Jerusalem within the year 37/36 B.C.E. But some then argue that events mentioned by Josephus, which they date to the year 43/42 B.C.E., preclude that year from being a sabbath, which in turn would eliminate the years 36/35 and 22/21 B.C.E. from being sabbaths as well. Supposedly, it was during this year that Herod was placed in charge of an army by Cassius and Murcus, that Antipater collected his own army, and because of the death of Antipater a civil war almost began (all unlikely possibilities during a sabbath year).*

*In response, the dating of these events to 43/42 B.C.E. is wholly without substance. To begin with, these events occurred in the year that Antipater, the father of Herod, was murdered. Josephus places the story of the death of Herod's father in the year that Cassius was preparing to fight Mark Antony, i.e. the first half of 42/41 B.C.E.<sup>598</sup>*

*The °optς (heorteus, i.e. feast) held "not long afterwards"<sup>599</sup> is hypothesized by some to be the Festival of Tabernacles which occurred in October of 43 B.C.E.*

*This conclusion is based solely on the merits that in some of the Rabbinic Hebrew literature the term חג (he-hag; the feast) was used to indicate the Feast of Tabernacles, the festival par excellence.<sup>600</sup>*

*This conclusion is discredited by the fact that Josephus often refers to the "Feast of Tabernacles" by name.<sup>601</sup> In the Ancient Table of Contents attached to Josephus' book of Jewish Antiquities, we find °opt\_ (feast) used by itself as a reference to the Feast of Passover.<sup>602</sup> Further, the Greek term °optς (feast) is also used for the Feast of Passover in the New Testament,<sup>603</sup> which is contemporaneous with the time of Josephus. In John, 7:2, the Feast of Tabernacles is called "the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles" and not simply "the feast." Josephus,*

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<sup>598</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:11:4.

<sup>599</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:11:5, Wars, 1:11:6.

<sup>600</sup> E.g. Marcus, Jos. vii, pp. 413, n. d, 601, n. c.

<sup>601</sup> E.g. Jos., Antiq., 13:2:3, 13:8:2, 13:13:5, 15:3:2, 15:3:3.

<sup>602</sup> Jos., Table, 17:15.

<sup>603</sup> E.g. Luke, 2:42 (cf. 2:41); Matt., 26:5 (cf. 26:2); Mark, 14:2 (cf. 14:1); Luke, 23:17 (cf. 22:1); John, 4:45, referring to John, 2:13–3:36; John, 5:1, where the Passover is defined as "the feast of the Jews." E.g. Luke, 2:42 (cf. 2:41); Matt., 26:5 (cf. 26:2); Mark, 14:2 (cf. 14:1); Luke, 23:17 (cf. 22:1); John, 4:45, referring to John, 2:13–3:36; John, 5:1, where the Passover is defined as "the feast of the Jews."

as another example, tells us of “the celebration of Pentecost, as it is called, which is a  $\text{ᾠopt|}$  (feast)” and “at the  $\text{ᾠopt}\{\nu$  (feast), which is called Pentecost.”<sup>604</sup> The expression, “the feast,” therefore, is an inexact one and can apply to any of the three major festivals practiced by the Jews in the period of Josephus: Passover, Pentecost, or Tabernacles.<sup>605</sup>

The “feast” referred to by Josephus in *Antiquities*, 14:11:5, is the Feast of Pentecost, for it is associated with the event of Cassius coming to Judaea and then marching against Antony.<sup>606</sup> Josephus thereby places it sometime after the first month of the Jewish year, when the Passover occurred, yet before the seventh month, at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, which was also the time when Cassius was defeated by Antony and Augustus Caesar.<sup>607</sup>

According to Dio, Cassius secured possession of Syria and then set out for Judaea, where he came into alliance with the Jews, in the consul year of 42 B.C.E. (Jan. reckoning).<sup>608</sup> The most likely time for Cassius to leave winter quarters and come to Judaea would be at the beginning of spring, i.e. around Abib of 42/41 B.C.E.

The appointment of Herod as governor of Coele-Syria, placing Herod in charge of an army, and the promise to make Herod the king of Judaea after the war—a war which Cassius had just begun with Antony and Caesar—therefore, occurred after the first part of the Jewish year of 42/41 B.C.E. (the promise being made while Cassius and Murcus were still in Judaea).<sup>609</sup> We should also comment that Herod was made ruler of Coele-Syria not Judaea. The army he commanded was most probably Syrian and not Jewish. Therefore, the whole issue of his being appointed over an army is probably moot to begin with, since the Syrians did not observe the sabbath year.

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<sup>604</sup> Jos. Antiq., 14:13:4, Wars, 6:5:3.

<sup>605</sup> Josephus mentions all three feasts as occurring in Judaea during this period: The Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread (e.g. Jos., Antiq., 17:9:3, 18:2:2, 18:4:3, 20:5:3, Wars, 2:1:3, 2:12:1, 7, 2:14:3), Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost (e.g. Jos., Antiq., 13:8:4, 14:13:4, 17:10:2, Wars, 2:3:1, 6:5:3), and the Feast of Tabernacles (e.g. Jos., Antiq., 13:2:3, 13:8:2, 13:13:5, 15:3:3, Wars, 1:3:2, 2:19:1, 6:5:3).

<sup>606</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:11:1–7.

<sup>607</sup> See below n. 25.

<sup>608</sup> Dio, 47:28; cf. 47:16.

<sup>609</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:11:4, Wars, 1:11:4.

*It was after Cassius had left Judaea that Malichus plotted against Antipater, the father of Herod.<sup>610</sup> Therefore, the statement that Antipater “moved across the Jordan and collected an army of Arabs as well as natives” shortly after Cassius left Judaea does not conflict with a sabbath year in 43/42 B.C.E.,<sup>611</sup> for it was done after the first of the Jewish year of 42/41 B.C.E. and shortly before Pentecost (early June).*

*Antipater’s death, Herod’s resolve to avoid a civil war, the Pentecost festival that followed “not long afterwards,” the murder of Malichus, Cassius leaving Syria to fight Antony in Macedonia, the disturbances which subsequently arose in Judaea, and Herod’s war with Antigonus all follow in order. “Meanwhile,” Cassius marched against Antony and Caesar and met his defeat in Macedonia during October of 42 B.C.E.<sup>612</sup>*

*What of the ninth year of Herod (29/28 B.C.E.), which according to system “A” is a sabbath year, or later dates in Herod’s reign? Josephus tells us that Herod was secure in his kingdom after his seventh year. Only building projects and other political, non-military subjects are mentioned after that point.<sup>613</sup> Except for the discussion of crops during Herod’s thirteenth through fifteenth and seventeenth years, there is nothing useful for us one way or the other with regard to the issue of a sabbath year.*

## **Conclusion**

*There is no evidence whatsoever for the years both before and after Herod’s conquest of Jerusalem that disqualifies the system “A” sabbath cycle. On the other hand, several valuable points of evidence demonstrate that the Jews did not celebrate a sabbath year during Herod’s thirteenth through fifteenth and his seventeenth years. These facts assure us that the years 36/35 and 22/21 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning, were sabbath years.*

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<sup>610</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:11:3.

<sup>611</sup> Ibid.

<sup>612</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:11:5–14:12:2, Wars, 1:11:4–1:12:4; Dio, 47:32–48:2; Marcus, Jos., vii, p. 609, n. g.

<sup>613</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15:5:1–15:11:1, Wars, 1:19:1–1:23:1.

## Chapter 19 | Shmita Coins of 22, 15, 8, 1 B.C. and 7 C.E.

King Herod The Great minted Shmita coins in each of the years he ruled over Jerusalem, 22, 15, and 8 B.C.<sup>614</sup> I will admit that if we use these coins by themselves, we will not be able to make a case for any Sabbatical year because none of the coins give you a stated year by which you can ascertain a Sabbatical year. Numismatists have determined that Herod did mint Shmita year coins in each of the Sabbatical years that he reigned, but then those same numismatists resort to the chronologies of either Zukermann or Wacholder, both of which we have shown to be in error, as demonstrated in the last chapter.



*The most abundant coinage of Herod's reign, likely numbering in the hundreds of thousands, was the light prutah bearing an anchor and double cornucopia with caduceus carries forward the motifs common on the Hasmonean coins and, though undated are likely candidates for Shmitta year coinage during the last 20 years of his reign. Since other sabbatical years produced prutot with different motifs, this prutah likely is associated with the three latest Sabbatical Years, including the years 22, 15 and 8 B.C. This is especially since on these later issues the anchor was prevalent*

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<sup>614</sup> As I post this, the link seems to have been hacked and I am not able to refer to anything from the UHL site. But here is where I gathered this information many years ago. wp.uhl.ac > sabbatical-year-coinage-herod-great The Sabbatical Year Coinage of Herod the Great | University (<https://wp.uhl.ac/sabbatical-year-coinage-herod-great/>)



during which time Herod was either planning or building his prize harbor at Caesarea (21-10 BCE).<sup>615</sup>

After King Herod the Great died, his son King Herod Archelaus also minted Sabbatical year coins in the years 1 B.C and 7 C.E. The coins are not dated but they were minted for the Sabbatical years and because of the chronology ascertained for King Herod in the previous chapters, we know the Sabbatical years for these coins. I agree that is not a solid proof.



*It has been suggested by Donald Ariel that the common “Table coins” with an ‘X’ might have been intended to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> year of the kingdom. If that be the case these would also have been minted during the Sabbatical Year. Concerning the coins of Herod’s son Archelaus (46 BCE) Sabbatical Years, 1 BCE, 7 C.E. only the 1 BCE and year 7 could have produced sabbatical year coins. Most coins designs featured galley ships (or their prows) and cornucopia, like that of his father, while the other was a heavier Roman prutah, minted with grape cluster and helmet. These forms, though undated, would be likely candidates for the two issues connected with the Sabbatical Years. Accordingly, the light prutah would have been produced during the Shmitah/sabbatical of 1 B.C. The heavy prutah would have been produced during the Shmitah 7 C.E. when after the heavier Roman prutah was introduced sometime between 3 and 6 BCE. It is also at this point that more simple presentations of the*

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<sup>615</sup> S. Pfann, ‘Dated Bronze Coinage of the Sabbatical years of Release and the First Jewish City Coin’. *Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society* 24 (2006) 101-113. <https://aias.org.uk/volume-24/#>

This author is using the chronology of Wacholder to determine when the dates are. He has determined each set of coins we are examining are in the shmita years.

tithed fruits are featured on minor bronze coinage instead of the more Hellenistic double cornucopia.<sup>616</sup>

							-19	78
Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-19	-21	-29	-36	-43	-50	-57		
-18	-23	-30	-37	-44	-51	-58		
-17	-24	-31	-38	-45	-52	-59		
-16	-25	-32	-39	-46	-53	-60		
-15	-26	-33	-40	-47	-54	-61		
-14	-27	-34	-41	-48	-55	-62		
-13	-28	-35	-42	-49	-56	-63		
							-64	77
Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-64	-71	-78	-85	-92	-99	-106		
-63	-72	-79	-86	-93	-100	-107		
-62	-73	-80	-87	-94	-101	-108		
-61	-74	-81	-88	-95	-102	-109		
-60	-75	-82	-89	-96	-103	-110		
-59	-76	-83	-90	-97	-104	-111		
-58	-77	-84	-91	-98	-105	-112		
							-113	76
Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-113	-120	-127	-134	-141	-148	-155		
-114	-121	-128	-135	-142	-149	-156		
-115	-122	-129	-136	-143	-150	-157		
-116	-123	-130	-137	-144	-151	-158		
-117	-124	-131	-138	-145	-152	-159		
-118	-125	-132	-139	-146	-153	-160		
-119	-126	-133	-140	-147	-154	-161		
							-162	75
Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-162	-169	-176	-183	-190	-197	-204		
-163	-170	-177	-184	-191	-198	-205		
-164	-171	-178	-185	-192	-199	-206		
-165	-172	-179	-186	-193	-200	-207		
-166	-173	-180	-187	-194	-201	-208		
-167	-174	-181	-188	-195	-202	-209		
-168	-175	-182	-189	-196	-203	-210		
							-211	74
Sabbath	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
-211	-218	-225	-232	-239	-246	-253		
-212	-219	-226	-233	-240	-247	-254		
-213	-220	-227	-234	-241	-248	-255		
-214	-221	-228	-235	-242	-249	-256		
-215	-222	-229	-236	-243	-250	-257		
-216	-223	-230	-237	-244	-251	-258		
-217	-224	-231	-238	-245	-252	-259		
							-260	73

I have marked the years of 29, 22, and 15 B.C. above in yellow. They are the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical years of the 78<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

<sup>616</sup> C.f. Meshorer, Y. (2001) A Treasury the Persian Period to Bar Kokhba. (Jerusalem) p.80.

							177	81
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
211	224	217	210	203	196	189		
230	223	216	209	202	195	188		
229	222	215	208	201	194	187		
228	221	214	207	200	193	186		
227	220	213	206	199	192	185		
226	219	212	205	198	191	184		
225	218	211	204	197	190	183		
							182	82
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
182	175	168	161	154	147	140		
181	174	167	160	153	146	139		
180	173	166	159	152	145	138		
179	172	165	158	151	144	137		
178	171	164	157	150	143	136		
177	170	163	156	149	142	135		
176	169	162	155	148	141	134		
							183	81
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
131	124	119	112	105	98	91		
132	125	118	111	104	97	90		
131	124	117	110	103	96	89		
130	123	116	109	102	95	88		
129	122	115	108	101	94	87		
128	121	114	107	100	93	86		
127	120	113	106	99	92	85		
							95	85
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
84	77	70	63	56	49	42		
83	76	69	62	55	48	41		
82	75	68	61	54	47	40		
81	74	67	60	53	46	39		
80	73	66	59	52	45	38		
79	72	65	58	51	44	37		
78	71	64	57	50	43	36		
							56	79
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
39	32	25	18	11	4	-3		
38	27	20	13	6	-1	-8		
37	26	19	12	5	-2	-10		
36	25	18	11	4	-4	-11		
35	24	17	10	3	-5	-12		
34	23	16	9	2	-6	-13		
33	22	15	8	1	-7	-14		
B.C.E. corrected for an even year.							-18	78

I have marked the years of 8 B.C., 1 B.C., and 7 C.E. above in yellow. They are the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sabbatical years of the 79<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

## Chapter 20 | Sabbatical Year 28 C.E. Yehshua

We are now at the year most people automatically assume to be a Jubilee year. When they are asked how they know it is a Jubilee year, the answer is because it says in Luke that it was an acceptable year, and Yehshua talked about setting the captives free, therefore it must be a Jubilee year. And that is the extent of their research.

Continuing with that logic they begin adding 50 years on to the year 28 C.E., until they arrive at 2028 C.E. as the next Jubilee year. Using this false understanding, if we then count back by 50, the last Jubilee year was 1978 C.E. and the one before that was 1928 C.E.

We then confront these same people with the other Jubilee-year teaching that used to be very prominent, called the *Daniel Timeline Teaching*. They began with the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and added 50 years to that date to get 1967 as the last Jubilee during the Israeli Six-Day War. Those same people added another 50 years to that to get 2017 as the time when Jesus was to arrive. Now that 2017 C.E. is past, we know this is a false teaching. If you understood the Sabbatical and Jubilee cycles as we have already proven them to you, then you would have known that neither of these two theories holds any water at all. Neither of them aligns with any of the Jubilee years we have shown you in the first few chapters of this book.

Sadly, when I confront people who hold to either of these two positions, they do not want to check the facts. They tend to get upset with me for exposing the fallacy of their beliefs.

Now that you know each of the Jubilee years as documented in this book, and you also know those Sabbatical years which we have also documented thus far, you can look at the chart on the previous page and know that the year Yehshua said this was in 28 C.E. Let's read Luke and see what he says:

*17 And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And unrolling the book, He found the place where it was written, 18 "The Spirit of the Lord is on Me; because of this He has anointed Me to proclaim the Gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim deliverance to the captives, and new sight to the blind, to set at liberty those having been crushed, 19 to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." 20 And rolling up the book, returning it to the attendant, He sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on Him. (Luke 4:17-20)*

In our book ***It Was a Riddle Not a Command***<sup>617</sup> I explained to you exactly how to determine that Yehshua was born on the Feast of Trumpets, September 11, 3 B.C. For our purposes here, I will focus only on demonstrating the year of His birth in order to know when He began His ministry. You can read the rest of the information in our book ***It Was a Riddle Not a Command***.

Here is how others determine when Yehshua was born:

*Two main approaches have been used to estimate the year of the birth of Jesus: one based on the accounts in the Gospels of his birth with reference to King Herod's reign, and the other by subtracting his stated age of "about 30 years" when he began preaching. Most scholars, on this basis, assume a date of birth between 6 and 4 BC.*<sup>618</sup>

I do not want to just assume a date of 6 to 4 B.C. Using a birth date of 6 B.C. and then adding 30 years later, gives you a start date of His ministry as 24 C.E.; a birth date of 4 B.C. 30 years later, gives you a start date of 26 C.E. Adding 3 ½ years to these gives you a death date of 28 or 30 C.E.

Luke tells us Yehshua was 30 years of age when He began His ministry:

*23 And Jesus Himself was beginning to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli, (Luke 3:23)*

This is the age when a man can begin to minister in the service of the Temple.<sup>619</sup>

*3 from thirty years old and upward even to fifty years, all that enter into the service, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation. (Numbers 4:3)*

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<sup>617</sup> It Was a Riddle Not a Command by Joseph F Dumond.

<https://www.amazon.com/Was-Riddle-Not-Command-Foolish/dp/1651089078/>

<sup>618</sup> Chronology of Jesus [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chronology\\_of\\_Jesus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chronology_of_Jesus)

<sup>619</sup> See also Numbers 4:23, 30, 35, 39, 43, and 47.

John who was 6 months older than Yehshua began to preach in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius:

*1 And in the fifteenth year of the government of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the Trachonitis country, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene— 2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests— the Word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. 3 And he came into all the country around Jordan, proclaiming the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, (Luke 3:1-3)*

Tiberius became Emperor when Augustus died in 14 C.E. This is known for sure as recorded by Roman historians and by the reckoning of the coins at this time. 100% of ancient Roman historians and 100% of the available double-dated coins agree that Tiberius' reign was reckoned from after the death of Augustus:

*The double-dated coins Silanus Antioch RPC 4270 and Silanus Selucia RPC 4330 show that Tiberius year 1 = Actium year 45 and Tiberius year 3 = Actium year 47, supporting the records of the Roman historians that, whether Tiberius was full co-regent with Augustus or not, his reign was not reckoned until after the death of Augustus.<sup>620</sup>*

You can then estimate which month Tiberius began his reign in three different ways:

- 1) Reckoning of his reign began at the death of Augustus in August of AD 14. This would mean year 15 ran from August 28 AD to August 29 AD.*
- 2) Reckoning of his reign began at his confirmation by the Roman senate in September of AD 14. This would mean year 15 ran from September 28 AD to September 29 AD.*
- 3) Reckoning of his reign used the accession year method and began with the first new year after he became emperor: the 1st of January, AD 15. This would mean year 15 was AD 29. This leaves options 1-3. We cannot be certain, but reckoning the*

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<sup>620</sup> <https://hermeneutics.stackexchange.com/questions/86877/does-luke-31-contradict-john-220-on-the-timing-of-jesus-ministry>

*reign of Tiberius from the time of his approval by the Senate appears to me the clearest interpretation of the data. But even if we are not sure on this matter, the difference of a few months among options 1, 2, and 3 will not alter our conclusion significantly.*

*Year 15 of Tiberius' reign would have begun no earlier than August of 28 C.E. and ended no later than December of 29 C.E.*

You now have an approximation of Tiberius' 15<sup>th</sup> year beginning in 28 C.E.

We also have another reference to use, found in the Gospel of John who stated this very early in the ministry of Yehshua:

*20 Then the Jews said, This temple was forty-six years building, and will you rear it up in three days? (John 2:20)*

Josephus tells us in three different places when the construction of the Temple began:

*And now Herod, in the eighteenth year of his reign, and after the acts already mentioned, undertook a very great work; that is to build of himself the temple of God.<sup>621</sup>*

*Accordingly, in the fifteenth year of his reign, Herod rebuilt the temple.<sup>622</sup>*

*He also tells us that the construction of the temple began after Augustus' visit to Syria, which came 10 years after the battle of Actium.<sup>623</sup> The battle of Actium took place in September 31 BC. Josephus records that Herod, in the eighteenth year of his reign (20–19 BC), gave a speech to the people in which he proposed to rebuild Zerubbabel's temple in gratitude for the fact that he had, "by the will of God, brought the Jewish nation to such a state of prosperity as it has never known before."<sup>624</sup>*

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<sup>621</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15.11.1.

<sup>622</sup> Wars 1.21.1.

<sup>623</sup> Wars 1.20.4.

<sup>624</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15.383.

*The temple proper was built in a year and a half and the surrounding porticos and courtyards in eight years.<sup>625</sup> However, construction on the whole complex continued for more than eighty years from the time it was begun and was only completed in AD 63;<sup>626</sup> (compare John 2:19).<sup>627</sup>*

We posted the following chronologies for Herod's first four years:

*Year 1 = 40/39 B.C.E. Reign recognized at Rome this year*

*39/38 B.C.E. 1st year begins mid-Feb., 39 B.C.E.*

*Year 2 = 39/38 B.C.E. 2nd year recognized at Rome*

*38/37 B.C.E. 2nd year begins mid-Feb., 38 B.C.E.*

*Year 3 = 38/37 B.C.E. 3rd year recognized at Rome*

*37/36 B.C.E. 3rd year begins mid-Feb., 37 B.C.E.*

*Year 4 = 37/36 B.C.E. = Year 1 from Jerusalem (Nisan reckoning)*

*Beginning with Nisan 1 of the year 37/36 B.C.E., Herod entered into his 4th Jewish year of being appointed king by the Romans (see Chart G). In turn, "Year 4" from Rome equals "Year 1" at Jerusalem.<sup>628</sup>*

• *Herod's seventh year was the same year that the battle of Actium was fought (Sept. 2, 31 B.C.E.).<sup>629</sup> Therefore, Herod's seventh year was 31/30 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning. This date is in perfect agreement with "Year 1" of Herod being 37/36 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning.*

If you take Herod's 18<sup>th</sup> year from 40/39 B.C., then you will end up in the year 22/21 B.C. Counting 46 years from this brings you to the year 25 C.E. (Remember there is no year zero, so you must add one more year). As you can see, none of this works.

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<sup>625</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15.420–21.

<sup>626</sup> Jos., Antiq., 20.219.

<sup>627</sup> <https://rsc.byu.edu/new-testament-history-culture-society/temple-herod>

<sup>628</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press, Chapter XXI The Year Herod Conquered Jerusalem Part III of the Sabbath Year of 36/35 B.C.E. Page 297, <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-21Chap.pdf>

<sup>629</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15:5:1–2, Wars, 1:19:1–3; cf. Dio, 50:10–51:1.



If we count the 18 years from Herod's fourth year, which is his first year in Jerusalem, then we end up in the year 19 B.C. (-37 B.C. + 18 = -19 B.C.) Now counting the 46 years brings you to 28 C.E. (-19 B.C. + 46 + 1 = 28 C.E. Again, you must add one year because there is no year zero.)

The year 28 C.E. is consistent with the narrative of Tiberius' 15<sup>th</sup> year when both John and Yehshua began their ministries. The year 28 C.E. is also consistent with Herod's chronology from the time he began to rule from Jerusalem, counting 18 years to the date he began to build the Temple, and then 46 years from that time until Yehshua was questioned about rebuilding the Temple in three days.

We have now determined the beginning of Yehshua's ministry as starting in 28 C.E. and going for 3 ½ years, but many assumed his birth date was 6-4 B.C., and this does not fit His being 30 years of age in 28 C.E.

*Some scholars support the traditional date of 1 BC for Herod's death. Filmer and Steinmann, for example, propose that Herod died in 1 BC, and that his heirs backdated their reigns to 4 or 3 BC to assert an overlapping with Herod's rule, and bolster their own legitimacy. In Josephus' account, Herod's death was preceded by a lunar eclipse and followed by Passover. An eclipse took place in 4 BC on 13 March, about 29 days before Passover, and this eclipse has been suggested as the one referred to by Josephus. There were however other eclipses during this period, and there are proponents of 5 BC and the two eclipses of 1 BC occurring 10 January and 29 December. Nevertheless, most scholars favour a birth year for Jesus between 6 and 4 BC.<sup>630</sup>*

To determine this, I am going to return to my book ***It Was a Riddle Not a Command***.

## **The Constellation Virgo**

As many of you did in the past or still do at present—when we first began to learn about the Holy Days—we all followed the Hebrew calendar to learn when the Holy Days fell on any given year. I was strongly challenged in my thinking with respect to this matter in the year 2004-2005. As a result, I arrived at the conclusion I should be

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<sup>630</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chronology\\_of\\_Jesus#cite\\_note-Rahner731-37](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chronology_of_Jesus#cite_note-Rahner731-37)

keeping the Sighted New Moon or the Crescent Moon and not the Conjunction Moon with regard to ushering in and proclaiming the beginning of any given month.

I based my conviction on the evidence that one cannot know when the Messiah is to return, despite the fact I do believe He is to return on the Feast of Trumpets. After keeping the Holy Days for 22 years (since 1982), I came to know the meaning of each of the Holy Days. The Feast of Trumpets is the only Holy Day teaching us when He is to return. The scripture that follows in the Gospel of Matthew only makes sense when you use the Crescent Moon to begin the month—which one most assuredly must do to accurately declare the Sabbath of the Feast of Trumpets:

*36 But of that day and hour no one knows, no, not the angels of Heaven, but only My Father. (Matthew 24:36)*

When we utilize the Hillel calendar, it informs us of exactly when the Feast of Trumpets will be many years in advance. By using the Hillel calendar, we can know when to keep the Feast of Trumpets and yet, Matthew 24:36 maintains we can't possibly know. So from this, I concluded that by using a New Sighted Moon—which can't be known until it is actually seen in Jerusalem on the day it appears—that we must use this method to determine the new month for any given month. It was simple and made perfect sense to me. But how do we qualitatively prove this?

## **So, What IS This Proof?**

When I first read Ernest Martin's book about the birth of Yeshua, I was—and still am—blown away by the things I discovered. In his book, *The Star That Astonished the World*,<sup>631</sup> Mr. Martin establishes for us, via astronomy, exactly the day and even the hour our Messiah was born—a feat of which I felt was 100% impossible until I read his book. Only then was I able to understand how he arrived at the conclusions he did.

In the process of proving his points, he touches on the subject of the New Moon, not to settle an argument as to when it was—whether

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<sup>631</sup> The Star That Astonished the World, by Ernest L Martin.  
<http://www.askelm.com/>.

Conjuncture or Sighted—but to illustrate to us the truth behind a prophecy we are all quite familiar with. In fact, I suspect we are all well acquainted with most, if not all the prophecies pertaining to the birth of the Messiah.

We are told of the birth of the Messiah in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. Did you know it was also recorded in the Book of Revelation?

But first, let me quote E. Raymond Capt who wrote, *The Glory of the Stars*. This is also an excellent, “must have” book to add to your library:

*1 The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. 2 Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge. 3 There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. 4 Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their words to the end of the world. In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun. (Psalms 19:1-4)*

*14 Then God said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs”<sup>632</sup>*

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<sup>632</sup> This is clearly something you can see (not a dark moon):

H226 (Ancient Hebrew)

H226 = AHLB# 1022-J (N)

1022) תִּשָּׁר (תִּשָּׁר AT) ac: Plow co: Mark ab: ? : The pictograph a is a picture of an ox. The t is a picture of two crossed sticks used to make a sign or mark. Combined these pictures represent "an ox moving toward a mark". When plowing a field with oxen, the plowman drives the oxen toward a distant mark in order to keep the furrow straight. A traveler arrives at his destination by following a mark. The traveling toward a mark, destination or person. The arrival of one to the mark. A "you" is an individual who has arrived to a "me". The coming toward a mark. A standard, or flag, with the family mark hangs as a sign. An agreement or covenant by two where a sign or mark of the agreement is made as a reminder to both parties. (eng: at - a moving at something)

J) תִּשָּׁר (תִּשָּׁר AWT) ac: ? co: Mark ab: Agree: The coming toward a mark. A standard, or flag, with the family mark hangs as a sign. An agreement or covenant by two where a sign or mark of the agreement is made as a reminder to both parties. Nf) תִּשָּׁר (תִּשָּׁר AWT) - Mark: The sign of an agreement between two parties.

[freq. 79] |kiv: sign, token, ensign, miracle, mark| {H226}

H226 (Brown-Driver-Briggs) אָדָּם 'ôth

BDB Definition:

1) sign, signal

*and seasons, and for days and years; 15 and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth;” and it was so. 16 Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. 17 God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, 18 and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 So, the evening and the morning were the fourth day. (Genesis 1:14-19)*

*31 “Can you bind the cluster of the Pleiades, or loose the belt of Orion? 32 Can you bring out Mazzaroth (Zodiac) in its season? Or can you guide the Great Bear with its cubs? 33 Do you know the ordinances of the heavens? Can you set their dominion over the earth?” (Job 38:31-33)*

*25 “To whom then will you liken Me, or to whom shall I be equal?” says the Holy One. 26 “Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these things, Who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, by the greatness of His might and the strength of His power; Not one is missing.” (Isaiah 40:25-26)*

*4 He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name. (Psalms 147:4)*

The stars were put there by Yehovah, and each one was named by Him. Remarkably, they have been given the same names in every language throughout the world. Although pronounced differently, they mean the very same thing in each language. The constellations were named by Adam, Seth, and Enoch, and then were passed down to us through Noah. They were given to them by Yehovah as prophetic

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*1a) a distinguishing mark*

*1b) banner*

*1c) remembrance*

*1d) miraculous sign*

*1e) omen*

*1f) warning*

*2) token, ensign, standard, miracle, proof*

*H226 (Strong) àĀĖú 'ôth oth*

*Probably from H225 (in the sense of appearing); a signal(literally or figuratively), as a flag, beacon, monument, omen, prodigy, evidence, etc.: - mark, miracle, (en-) sign, token.*

reminders each night of things still yet to come and can be read in any language around the world today.

## **Constellation of Virgo (the Virgin)**

*Virgo<sup>633</sup> is pictured as a woman with a branch in her right hand and some ears of corn (Barley) in her left hand. The name of this sign in Hebrew is "Bethulah," which means "a virgin." In Arabic, "Adarah," "the pure virgin;" in Greek "Parthenos," "the maid of virgin pureness." All the traditions, names and mythologies, connected with this sign, recognize and emphasize the virginity of the women.*

*In the Zodiac of Denderah, in Egypt, Virgo is also represented with a branch in her hand. To the Egyptians, the woman was represented as Isis, the wife of Osiris and was called "Aspolia," which means "ears of corn" or "the seed." The Greeks, likewise, ignorant of the Divine origin and teaching of this sign, represented Virgo as "Ceres" with ears of Corn in her hand.*

*The corn and the branch denote a two-fold nature of the Coming Seed. The first coming as the incarnate fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14*

*"Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Matthew 1:23 "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."*

*The bright star in the ear of corn in her left hand is called in Arabic, "Al Zimach," meaning "the branch."*

*Zechariah writes of this branch in: Zechariah 3:8 For behold, I am bringing forth My Servant the BRANCH.*

*It is significant that Christ referred to Himself as the corn, or seed of wheat, which needed to fall and die in order to attain its proper fruitfulness. John 12:23-24*

*One of the stars in the branch is called "Al Mureddin," which means, "who shall come down?" or, "who shall have dominion?" Psalms 72:8 states, "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea." The star is also known by the Chaldee word, "Vindermiatrix," which means "the son" or "branch who cometh." An emblem of Christ, much employed by the prophets, was the branch, root, bough or sprout of a plant. Thus, we find Christ described as the Rod from the stem of Jesse and a Branch out of his roots. (Isaiah 11:1) He is*

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<sup>633</sup> The Glory of the Stars by Raymond Capt. Chapter 1: Constellation Virgo, p.33  
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*the branch of Righteousness, the Branch of the Lord, God's servant the Branch. (Jeremiah 23:5; Isaiah 4:2; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12)*  
*It should be pointed out that Virgo, in a broader prophetic sense, represented "the Virgin, the daughter of Zion (Isaiah 37:22) which is another name for the nation of Israel (the entire 12 tribes). Throughout the Old and New Testament, Israel is often spoken of as the figures of a woman: the "wife" of Yehovah; the "virgin" of Zion. (Jeremiah 14:17; 18:13; Amos 5:2; 2 John 1:1)*

Mr. Capt goes on to prove how the entire Zodiac, in its properly interpreted form, is a *Love Letter* from our Creator to us and can be read each night if we would only take the time to do so. It opens the door to a deeper understanding of what He has been saying to mankind down through the ages.

I have, in the past, always wrongly assumed the Zodiac to be of a strictly pagan origin. But later, I came to realize that it is a message from Yehovah to us and was perverted via pagan worship and practices. The Good News is, Yehovah's message has not changed. But the way in which we have been taught to look at His message has. It became perverted, similar to the snake on the pole that Moses made. Yehovah told him to make it, but it was the people in King Hezekiah's day who were worshipping the snake and the pole—and not Yehovah. Therefore, King Hezekiah saw to it that it was destroyed.<sup>634</sup>

Now, let us read in the Book of Revelation how the Apostle John read these very same stars:

*1 And there appeared a great sign in the heavens, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon was under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars on her head, 2 and having a babe in womb, she cries, being in travail, having been distressed to bear. 3 And another sign was seen in the heavens. And behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads! 4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them onto the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman being about to bear, so that when she bears he might devour her child. 5 And she bore a son, a male, who is going to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her child was caught up to God and to His throne. 6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared by God, so that*

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<sup>634</sup> 2 Kings 18:4

*they might nourish her there a thousand, two hundred and sixty days. (Revelation 12:1-6)*

If we peer intently into the Zodiac, we can make out where Virgo the Virgin is adjacent to another constellation of Serpens the serpent, which just so happens to have its head juxtaposed right alongside the Virgin. Coincidence? No, prophetic! These two constellations are speaking to us about the birth of the Messiah and how King Herod tried to have Him killed as soon as He was born.

Revelation 12 also speaks of the Moon in a specific position. We are talking about the Moon in the constellation Virgo, at a moment in time—the day the Messiah was born. That day was the Feast of Trumpets. That year in history was the entire purpose behind the book Mr. Martin wrote.

Using the information in Revelation 12, as well as the Moon in Virgo, is how Ernest Martin determined the exact day and hour in which the Messiah was born. In doing so, he settled the argument as to how to decide by which Moon we should use to determine the beginning of the month. Ironically, he was not trying to prove anything about the Moon. The primary focus of his book was about the Messiah's birth. I am not sure he even realized what he said when he said it. But the proofs put forth in his book provide us with overwhelming evidence of—and set a precedent for—how we are to determine the New Moon.

## **The Moon Below Her Feet**

The Feast of Trumpets is on the 1st day of the 7th month. And the beginning of the Feast of Trumpets, or the 1st day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month, is determined by the New Moon. The argument is not whether or not to keep the Feast of Trumpets, but is instead, which New Moon we use in order to correctly determine the 1st day. Do we act in accordance with a Conjunction New Moon (the dark or invisible Moon that is in line with and between the Earth and the Sun to where it cannot be seen) as used in the Hillel calendar, or a Sighted New Moon Crescent (which reflects the first rays of the Sun after it has moved out of conjunction)?

I don't want to allow for anything getting lost in the translation, so I am going to quote what Mr. Martin says verbatim, starting on

page 82 of his book and finishing on page 90. Here is what he has to say:

*The<sup>635</sup> essential factor in interpreting the symbol of Revelation 12:1-5 is the identification of the woman. What is John signifying by mentioning her? This much is certain: The woman in the first three verses is featured as being in Heaven and both the Sun and the Moon are in association with her. After the dragon casts down a third of the stars of heaven (Revelation 12:4), the woman is then found on earth (verses 6 and 14). But the important factor is the birth of the man-child and the woman's relationship with the heavenly signs while she is symbolically in heaven (the first three verses of Revelation 12 shows the Sun clothing her, and the Moon under her feet and the twelve stars on her head.)*

*The "birth" of the Messiah is associated with this heavenly spectacle. Since some noted heavenly bodies are a part of the picture, it could well be that John intended the woman to represent a constellation that the two primary luminaries transverse, and that she was a part of the zodiacal system which gives headship to the signs (the Twelve Stars were a "crown" upon her head). Recall that interpreting astronomical signs dominated the thinking of most people in the first century, whether the people were Jews or Gentiles. Indeed, the word "sign" used by the author of the book of Revelation to describe this celestial display was the same one used by the ancients to denote zodiacal constellations. [Liddell and Scott., Lexicon, 1448.]*

*This is made clearer when one looks closely at the text. Since the Sun and Moon are amidst or in line with the body of this woman, she could be, in a symbolic way, a constellation located within the normal paths of the Sun and Moon. The only sign of a woman which exists along the ecliptic (the track of the Sun in its journey through the stars) is that of Virgo the Virgin. She occupies, in bodily form, a space of about 50 degrees along the ecliptic. The head of the woman actually bridges some 10 degrees into the previous sign of Leo and her feet overlap about 10 degrees into the following sign of Libra, the Scales. In the period of Jesus' birth, the Sun entered in its annual course through the heavens into the head position of the woman about August 13, and exited from her feet about October 2. But the Apostle John saw the scene when the sun was "clothing" or "adorning" the woman. This surely indicates that the position of the*

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<sup>635</sup> The Star That Astonished the World by Ernest Martin, pp. 82-90.



*Sun in the vision was located somewhere mid-bodied to the woman, between the neck and the knees. The Sun could hardly be said to clothe her if it were situated in her face or near her feet.*

*The only time in the year that the Sun could be in a position to “clothe” the celestial woman called Virgo (that is, to be mid-bodied to her, in the region where a pregnant woman carries a child) is when the Sun is located between about 150 and 170 degrees along the ecliptic. This “clothing” of the woman by the Sun occurs for a 20-day period each year. This 20-degree spread could indicate the general time when Jesus was born.*

*In 3 B.C., the Sun would have entered this celestial region about August 27 and exited from it about September 15. If John in the Book of Revelation is associating the birth of Jesus with the period when the Sun was mid-bodied to the woman called Virgo (and this is no doubt what he means), then Jesus would have to be born within that 20-day period. From the point of view of the Magi who were astrologers, this would have been the only logical sign under which the Jewish Messiah might have been born, especially if he were to be born of a virgin. Even today, astrologers recognize that the sign of Virgo is the one which has reference to a messianic world ruler to be born from a virgin. [Devore, Encyclopedia of Astrology, p. 366.]*

*This heavenly woman called Virgo is normally depicted as a virgin holding in her right hand a green branch and in her left hand a sprig of grain. In the Hebrew Zodiac, she at first (in the time of David) denoted Ruth who was gleaning in the fields of Boaz. She then later became the Virgin when the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 was given in the time of King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah. This virgin held in her left hand a sprig of grain. This was precisely where the bright star called Spica is found. Indeed, the chief star of the constellation Virgo is Spica. Bullinger, in his book, *The Witness Of the Star* (pp. 29-34), said that the word Spica has, through the Arabic, the meaning “the branch” and that it symbolically refers to Jesus who was prophetically called, “the Branch” in Zechariah 3:8 and 6:12. And Bullinger (and Seiss in his book, *The Gospel Of the Stars*) maintain that this sign of Virgo designates the heavenly witness for the birth of the Messiah (Jesus). They say that Virgo should actually begin the zodiacal signs that give the story of the Messiah. This may be. The Apostle John may have given the same indication as far as the first full sign of the zodiac is concerned. He depicted the woman of Revelation as having a crown of Twelve Stars on her head.*

*This could well show that the woman (Virgo) is the constellation of headship for all the twelve signs. The “head” position of Virgo is actually located within the last ten degrees of Leo. It was in this very region where the story of the career of the Messiah would begin that Bullinger and Seiss were referring to. Thus, the story of Jesus and His mission on earth, as related by these heavenly symbols, should logically begin with his birth from a virgin and conclude with him being crowned king in the final sign of Leo the Lion (with its chief star being Regulus-the King Star). This is no doubt what the apostle John was trying to show through the symbols found in Revelation Twelve.*

*The birth of this child in Revelation 12 (whom John identified with Jesus) should have occurred while the Sun was “clothing” the woman, when the Sun was mid-bodied to Virgo. This period of time in 3 B.C. covered 20 days (August 27 to September 15). If Jesus were born within that 20-day period, it would fit most remarkably with the testimony of Luke (relative to the birth of John the Baptist and the eighth Course of Abijah). Indeed, the chronological indications associated with this priestly course of Abijah place Jesus’ birth exactly within this period. But there is a way to arrive at a much closer time for Jesus’ birth than a simple 20-day period. The position of the Moon in John’s vision actually pinpoints the nativity to within a day—to within a period of an hour and a half (within 90 minutes) on that day. This may appear an absurd assessment on the surface, but it is quite possible.*

## **The Key is the Moon**

*The Apostle said it was located “under her feet.” What does the word “under” signify in this case? Does it mean the woman of the vision was standing on the Moon when John observed it or does it mean her feet were positioned slightly above the Moon? John does not tell us. This, however, is not of major consequence in using the location of the Moon to answer our question because it would only involve the difference of a degree or two. The Moon travels about 12 degrees a day in its course through the heavens. This motion of one or two degree by the Moon represents on earth only a period of two to four hours. This difference is no problem in determining the time of Jesus’ birth. What is vital, however is that this shows the Moon as a New Moon.*

*Now, note this point. Since the feet of Virgo, the Virgin represent the last 7 degrees of the constellation (in the time of Jesus this would have been between about 180 and 187 degrees along the ecliptic),*

*the Moon has to be positioned somewhere under that 7-degree arc to satisfy the description of Revelation 12. But the Moon also has to be in exact location when the Sun is midbodied to Virgo. In the year 3 B.C., these two factors came to precise agreement for about an hour and a half, as observed from Palestine or Patmos, in the twilight period of September 11. The relationship began about 6:15 p.m. (sunset), and lasted until 7:45 p.m. (moonset). This is the only day in the whole year that the astronomical phenomenon described in the twelfth chapter of Revelation could take place.*

*This also shows one other important point. The Moon was in crescent phase. It was a New Moon day, the start of a new lunar month. While ordinary people in modern times who are not professional astronomers have little knowledge of the solar, lunar, planetary and stellar motions, the people from the first century up to the Industrial Revolution were well accustomed to them. Even people of little education were generally knowledgeable of the main motions of the astronomical bodies—even more than most college educated people today. When anyone of early times read Revelation 12:1-3, an astronomical relationship was realized at once. There was no doubt that a New Moon display was being shown to them. And when the woman of the sign was interpreted as Virgo the Virgin, and with the Sun mid-bodied to the Virgin, they clearly saw a New Moon day occurring sometime in late summer.*

*The Apostle John said this heavenly relationship occurred at the time of Jesus' birth. And in 3 B.C. this exact combination of celestial factors happened just after sunset only on one day of the year. It was on September 11. It could not have occurred at any other time of the year. Indeed, even one day before on September 10—the Moon would have been located above the virgin's feet with the crescent not visible, while one day farther—September 12—the Moon had moved too far beyond the feet of the virgin, at least 25 diameters of the Moon east of her feet. Thus, only one day applies. That day was just after sunset on September 11. The Apostle John is actually presenting to his readers something of significance in a symbolic way. Revelation 12:1-3 certainly shows a New Moon day that could only be observed from earth just after sunset and the day was September 11. This matter fits well with Luke's description of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. Recall that, "There were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over the flocks by night." And the angel said "Unto you is born this day (which began at sundown) in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the*

*Lord.” (Luke 2:8-11) Jesus was born in early evening, and Revelation 12 shows it was a New Moon day.*

*What New Moon could this have been? The answer is most amazing. It is almost too amazing! September 11, 3 B.C. was Tishrei One on the Jewish calendar. To Jewish people this would have been a very profound occasion indeed. Tishrei One is none other than the Jewish New Year’s Day (Rosh ha-Shanah, or as the Bible calls it, The Day of Trumpets—Leviticus 23:23-26). It was an important annual holy day of the Jews (but not one of the three annual festivals that required all Palestinian Jews to be in Jerusalem).*

*What a significant day for the appearance of the Messiah to arrive on earth from the Jewish point of view. And remarkably, no other day of the year could astronomically fit Revelation 12:1-3. The Apostle John is certainly showing forth an astronomical sign which answers precisely with the Jewish New Year Day. John would have surely realized the significance of this astronomical scene that he was describing.*



The preceding 3½ pages were taken from pp. 82-90 of ***The Star That Astonished the World*** by Ernest L. Martin.

The computer image utilizes the Julian calendar which counts the year “zero” in its calculations. 3 B.C. is the year 2 B.C. in Julian years. So, this is the 11th of September, 3 B.C. The Sun has just set and is

mid-body of the constellation Virgo, and the Moon is now becoming visible to the naked eye. When I magnify this Moon above, we can see below that it is a Crescent Moon below her feet and again, this is the 1st day of the 7th month and the Feast of Trumpets.



To clarify Gregorian years and Julian years, you need to understand that there is no “year zero” when using the Gregorian counting going from Before Common Era (BCE) to Common Era (C.E.) But Julian years use a year zero, nonetheless. Look at the two systems below to better understand how they differ in their counting:

Gregorian Count: 3 C.E., 2 C.E., 1 C.E., 1 B.C., 2 B.C., 3 B.C.

Julian Count: 3 C.E., 2 C.E., 1 C.E., 0, 1 B.C., 2 B.C., 3 B.C.

As you go back in time before the year zero, the Julian system changes the year by one year—that is, compared to the Gregorian system—and uses the year zero in its counting.

I have now presented you with the facts concerning the birth of Messiah on the Feast of Trumpets in 3 B.C. I have also presented proof of a Crescent Moon as described by the Apostle John. I believe we can now substantiate—with sufficient, Biblical evidence to boot—that a New Crescent Moon is what begins each month, followed by the countdown to each of the Holy Days as outlined in Leviticus 23.

It is the Crescent Moon that is the variable in how the month begins. It can be seen on one of two nights. Each month is either 29 or 30 days in length as the Moon circumnavigates the Earth. It takes the Moon 29.5 days on average to travel around the Earth. Because there is no such thing as a  $\frac{1}{2}$  day, each month is either 29 or 30 days in length, adding or subtracting that  $\frac{1}{2}$  day each month. This is why

no man can know the exact day when the Crescent Moon will be sighted. Will they see it on the 29th or on the 30th? No one knows for certain in advance.

The exact time the Moon will be sighted after the Sun has set is the other variable. If the haze is not too thick and there are no clouds, then sometime between sunset and moonset the Crescent Moon can be seen by two witnesses. We just never know when, or at what time, exactly.

And this now proves the veracity of the Hebraism spoken of in Matthew:

*36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, no, not the angels of Heaven, but only My Father." (Matthew 24:36)*

Counting the 30 years to when Yehshua began His ministry and declaring the "*Acceptable Year*" from September 11, 3 B.C. brings you to the fall of 27 C.E. He read the scroll after Passover the following spring in 28 C.E., the acceptable year.

On the previous chart we have marked the year 28 C.E. in yellow. It is the 6<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year of the 79<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle in the 4<sup>th</sup> millennial day.

## Chapter 21 | Sabbatical Year 42 C.E. Herod Agrippa I

*Our next item of evidence<sup>636</sup> only indirectly points to the year 42/43 C.E., Nisan reckoning, as a Sabbath year. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this study, this information demonstrates that Systems “B” and “D” are wholly inadequate as an explanation for the Sabbath cycle. Our documentation has to do with the events surrounding the Jewish protest against the Roman emperor Gaius Caligula Caesar, when Caligula tried to place a statue of himself inside the Temple at Jerusalem. It proves that both harvesting and planting took place in the year 40/41 C.E., thereby confirming that the years 40/41 and 41/42 C.E. were not Sabbath years.*

### The Harvest of 40 C.E.

*As the result of civil strife in Alexandria between the Jewish and Greek inhabitants, delegates from each faction were selected to appear before Gaius Caligula Caesar at Rome. In that hearing, one of the Greek representatives, named Apion, harshly accused the Jews of being the only people in the empire who “scorned to honor” Caesar “with statues and to swear by his name.” Believing himself to be a god and indignant at being slighted by the Jews, Caligula “ordered a colossal statue to be set up within the inner sanctuary (of the Temple of Yahweh at Jerusalem) dedicated to himself under the name of Dios (Zeus).”<sup>637</sup>*

*Gaius Caligula next sent orders to Petronius, his legate in Syria, to bring a statue to Judaea under the conduct of half of his army quartered on the Euphrates River. Petronius was also instructed to kill anyone who opposed this action.<sup>638</sup>*

*After reading the letter, Petronius “was in great difficulties.” He knew that Gaius would have him executed if the orders were not obeyed; he also recognized that the Jews would not permit the pagan image to be placed in their Temple. On the one hand, he faced a danger by removing such a large number of troops from the eastern*

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<sup>636</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press, Chapter XXV The Sabbath Year of 42/43 C.E., <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-25Chap.pdf>

<sup>637</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:1f, Wars, 2:10:1; Philo, Gaius, 18–30; Tacitus, Hist., 5:9.

<sup>638</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:2, Wars, 2:10:1; Philo, Gaius, 31.

*front and, on the other, it was dangerous, as well, to “draw these myriads (of Jews) into war against him.”*<sup>639</sup>

*Following this line of reasoning, as Philo tells us, Petronius “was slow to set to work” and “shrank from action.”*<sup>640</sup> *He was also left with an excuse for delay by Caligula. Caesar had not sent a statue but had left its construction up to Petronius. Petronius knew that if he obtained a finished statue in Syria the speed by which he would then be forced to execute Caesar’s orders would lead “to a speedy outburst of war.” So the legate cunningly commissioned the construction of a statue at Sidon, Phoenicia.*<sup>641</sup>

*Petronius then sent for the magnates of the Jews, their priests, and magistrates so that he could explain to them Caesar’s orders and the dire consequences forthcoming if the Jews resisted them.*<sup>642</sup> *With these matters underway, Petronius left Antioch, Syria with a large army and marched towards Judaea. He next arrived at the Phoenician port city of Ptolemais, where he intended “to spend the winter” and engage in a war during the “spring.”*<sup>643</sup>

*“The army having already reached Ptolemais,” and upon hearing of the intentions of Petronius, tens of thousands of Jews, with their wives and children, left Judaea and Galilee and proceeded to the plain of Ptolemais. There they implored Petronius to have regard for their Law and for themselves and not to place the image in the holy Temple.*<sup>644</sup>

*Petronius, quite taken by such a sight, retired to deliberate the problem with his fellow councillors. He then promised the Jews that he would not press the craftsmen to finish their work but he would urge them to perfect the statue (which would take a “long time”). Petronius more importantly promised to send a letter to Caesar, giving him all of the circumstances, to see whether he might change his mind. He would then delay things until a response was received.*<sup>645</sup>

*In time Petronius wrote to Caesar. In his letter one of the major justifications Petronius gave to the emperor for stalling was his*

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<sup>639</sup> Philo, Gaius, 31.

<sup>640</sup> Ibid.

<sup>641</sup> Ibid.

<sup>642</sup> Ibid.

<sup>643</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:2, Wars, 2:10:1.

<sup>644</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:2, Wars, 2:10:1–3; Philo, Gaius, 31–33.

<sup>645</sup> Philo, Gaius, 33.



*concern that the crops in Judaea would not be harvested if there was an outbreak of trouble:*

*For the σιτου (sitou; grain) crop was just ripe and so were the other cereals, and he feared that the Jews in despair for their ancestral rites and in scorn of life would lay waste the arable land or set fire to the cornlands on the hills and the plain. He needed a guard to ensure more vigilance in gathering the fruits not only of the cornfields but also those provided by the orchards.<sup>646</sup>*

*The context of the ripe σιτου (sitou; grain), barley or wheat crop,<sup>647</sup> and the expected ingathering of fruits, shows that the winter had passed and we are now in late spring or early summer, between late Iyyar (April/May) and Tammuz (June/July).<sup>648</sup>*

*When Caesar received the letter from Petronius he was furious that Petronius had not carried out his orders. “After waiting a short time he gave one of his secretaries instructions about answering Petronius.” In this letter Caligula ordered Petronius to continue on his assignment, “since the harvest which he alleged as an excuse, whether truly or plausibly, could already have been carried out.”<sup>649</sup>*

*It took about 30 to 45 days in the summer for a letter to travel from Syria or Palestine to Rome, or vice versa.<sup>650</sup> Caesar’s response shows that by the time he decided to write to Petronius, and with the knowledge of how long it would take for the letter to arrive in Syria, the harvest should have already been accomplished.*

*Since Petronius must have written his letter to Caesar in or about June, Caesar would have received it in August. Caesar then waited “a short time” before making his response. By the time Petronius received a letter back from Caesar, it would have been the month of*

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<sup>646</sup> Philo, Gaius, 33.

<sup>647</sup> The Greek word σιτου (sitou) refers to “corn, grain,” and encompasses both barley and wheat (GEL, p. 730). Barley is harvested in the spring while wheat is harvested in late summer.

<sup>648</sup> HBC, pp. 33f.

<sup>649</sup> Philo, Gaius, 34.

<sup>650</sup> The 30- to 45-day period is based upon an average unimpeded voyage during the summer months. During the winter months, because of winds out of the N.W. and stormy sea, a fortunate journey took about 50 to 70 days (APA, 82, pp. 136–148; cf. Jos., Wars, 2:10:5; and cf. our comments below pp. 338f).

*Tishri (Sept./Oct.), when the Festival of Ingathering (Festival of Tabernacles) was held. Planting Time:*

## **Winter of 40 C.E.**

*After receiving his new orders to continue, Petronius left Ptolemais “and advanced into Galilee where he summoned the people, with all persons of distinction, to Tiberias.”<sup>651</sup> As before, he was met by tens of thousands of Jews. They again “besought him by no means to put them under such constraint nor to pollute the city by setting up a statue.”<sup>652</sup>*

*Petronius, meanwhile, tried to convince the Jews of the recklessness of their request. The Jews told Petronius that before he could put the statue in the Temple he would have to “first sacrifice the entire Jewish nation.” The Jews then presented themselves with their wives and children, “and falling on their faces and baring their throats, they declared that they were ready to be slain.”<sup>653</sup>*

*After hearing this, Petronius “for the time” dismissed them, nothing being decided.<sup>654</sup> “During the ensuing days, Petronius held crowded private conferences with the aristocracy, and public meetings with the people.”<sup>655</sup> The Jews were quite willing to die and, even worse in the eyes of Petronius, while the Jews were waiting on him for the last 40 to 50 days for an answer, they “had left their fields to sit protesting.”*

*They (the Jews) continued to make these supplications for 40 days. Furthermore, they neglected their fields, and that, too, though it was TIME TO SOW THE SEED. For they showed a stubborn determination and readiness to die rather than to see the image erected.<sup>656</sup>*

*Seeing this situation, Petronius called the Jews to him at Tiberias and told them that he was canceling the project and was returning to Antioch. He agreed to write a letter to Caesar telling him of his*

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<sup>651</sup> Jos., Wars, 2:10:3.

<sup>652</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:3.

<sup>653</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:3, Wars, 2:10:3f.

<sup>654</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:3, Wars, 2:10:3f.

<sup>655</sup> Jos., Wars, 2:10:5.

<sup>656</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:3.

*actions in the hope that Caesar would relent and not have him slain for disobeying his orders.*<sup>657</sup>

*As, however, none of these efforts would induce them (the Jews) to yield, and as he (Petronius) saw the country was in danger of remaining unsown—for IT WAS SEED-TIME and the people had spent 50 days idly waiting upon him—he finally called them together and said: “It is better that I should take the risk. Either, the deity aiding me, I shall prevail with Caesar and have the satisfaction of saving myself as well as you, or, if his indignation is roused, I am ready on behalf of the lives of so many to surrender my own.” With that he dismissed the multitude, who rained blessings on his head, and collecting his troops left Ptolemais and returned to Antioch.*<sup>658</sup>

*This evidence shows that we have arrived at the month of Khisleu (Nov./ Dec.), the regular planting time for grains in Judaea.*<sup>659</sup> *Petronius considered that, “since the land was unsown, there would be a harvest of banditry, because the requirement of tribute could not be met.”*<sup>660</sup>

*This second episode of Petronius writing a letter to Caesar, under the guise of his unwillingness to sacrifice the Judaeian food supply, has often been confused with the first letter.*<sup>661</sup> *Nevertheless, when we compare the records from Josephus and Philo, and lay those stories alongside one another, it is clear that the first letter was sent in the spring, during the early harvest, while the second letter was sent during planting time in the winter. Furthermore, the story in Philo shows that the first letter was received before Agrippa visited Gaius;*<sup>662</sup> *the second letter was received after Agrippa’s visit.*<sup>663</sup>

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<sup>657</sup> Jos., Wars, 2:10:5, Antiq., 18:8:6.

<sup>658</sup> Jos., Wars, 2:10:5.

<sup>659</sup> HBC, pp. 33f.

<sup>660</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:4.

<sup>661</sup> E.g., Blosser (HUCA, 52, pp. 136f); and Wacholder (HUCA, 44, pp. 167ff, HUCA, 54, pp. 128ff); and others. Two letters, one sent at planting season and one at harvest, eliminate the problem, voiced by Balsdon (JRS, 24, p. 20), that it would have taken the unreasonable time of one year from Gaius’ original order until a letter arrived from Petronius and Agrippa’s intervention.

<sup>662</sup> Philo, Gaius, 33–35, see esp. Philo’s comments in 35 §261

<sup>663</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:7–9.

*From Antioch, Syria, Petronius sent his second letter to Caesar telling him of all the things that had transpired, noting that the Jews would not give up without a war and that Caesar would further be deprived of his revenue. He also suggested that Caesar ought to respect the Law of the Jews and return order to the region.<sup>664</sup>*

*Meanwhile, Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the Great of Judaea, whom Caesar had made king of Philip's old tetrarchy, came to visit Caligula. On hearing of the events that had taken place, Agrippa petitioned Caesar to relent in his efforts and not to place a statue in the Temple at Judaea. Caesar agreed and ordered letters to be drawn up and sent to Petronius for that purpose.<sup>665</sup>*

*Unfortunately, after composing his orders to Petronius in response to his first letter, Caesar received the second letter from Petronius. Upon reading this second letter Caligula became angry, believing that what Petronius was reporting was a revolt by the Jews. Thereupon, Caligula, instead of sending the proposed orders to quit building the statue, sent another letter threatening Petronius with death for his tardiness in carrying out the original command.<sup>666</sup>*

*Shortly after Caesar wrote his response to Petronius' second letter, Caesar Caligula was murdered. Meanwhile, Caligula's letter was delayed in coming to Petronius. Petronius actually received word of Caligula's death before the orders to pursue the war with the Jews over the issue of the statue had arrived. Accordingly, Petronius ignored the letter from Caligula and did nothing against the Jews.<sup>667</sup>*

*However, it so happened that the bearers of this message were weather-bound for 3 months at sea, while others, who brought the news of the death of Gaius (Caligula), had a fortunate passage. So Petronius received the last information 27 days earlier than the letter conveying his own death-warrant.<sup>668</sup>*

*Yet Petronius did not receive it (the letter) while Gaius (Caligula) was alive since the voyage of those who brought the message was so*

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<sup>664</sup> Jos., Wars, 2:10:5, Antiq., 18:8:5f.

<sup>665</sup> Philo, Gaius, 35–47; Jos., Antiq., 18:6:10, 18:8:7f.

<sup>666</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:8, Wars, 2:10:5.

<sup>667</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:9, Wars, 2:10:5.

<sup>668</sup> Jos., Wars, 2:10:5.

*delayed that before it arrived Petronius had received a letter with news of the death of Gaius.*<sup>669</sup>

## **The Chronology**

*In this order of events an important chronology unfolds. Prefacing our entire account is the fact that from the time that Petronius received his initial orders to place the statue in the Temple of Yahweh at Jerusalem, he looked for opportunities to stall for time.*

- *Before his departure to Gaul and the Rhine in September, 39 C.E., Gaius sent orders to Petronius to place a statue of himself at Jerusalem.*

- *In late 39 C.E. Petronius took his army to Ptolemais to spend the winter.*<sup>670</sup> *Tens of thousands of Jews met Petronius at Ptolemais and protested the venture. Petronius retired for a time to deliberate the problem.*

- *The deliberations continued until it was time to consider harvesting the spring crops and summer fruits, bringing us to at least the late spring of 40 C.E. At that time Petronius sent a letter to Caesar begging him to reconsider.*<sup>671</sup>

- *About a month to 6 weeks later, Caesar, now back from Gaul, received the first letter from Petronius. He then waited “a short time” before drafting his response. The spring harvest season was now over. These events bring us to approximately mid-August. It took about a month to 6 weeks for the response from Caesar to travel between Rome and Ptolemais. Therefore, Petronius would have received Caesar’s negative response in about October of 40 C.E.*<sup>672</sup>

- *After receiving Caesar’s response, Petronius took part of his army and marched to Tiberias in Galilee. Here they were once more met by tens of thousands of Jews showing that they were willing to die rather than let Caesar put his image in the Temple. After hearing their adamant objections Petronius “for a time” did nothing.*<sup>673</sup>

- *During the period that followed, Petronius began to hold private and public meetings trying to resolve the matter. The Jews then sat in*

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<sup>669</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:9.

<sup>670</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:2, Wars, 2:10:1.

<sup>671</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:2, Wars, 2:10:1–3; Philo, Gaius, 31–33.

<sup>672</sup> Philo, Gaius, 34. Gaius returned to Rome by May 29 of 40 C.E. (JRS, 24, p. 21).

<sup>673</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:3, Wars, 2:10:3f.

*protest for 40 to 50 days awaiting a response from Petronius. As they were sitting, planting season arrived.<sup>674</sup> This detail brings us to the month of Khisleu (Nov./Dec.) in 40 C.E., the beginning of the Jewish planting season for grains.*

## **Dating the Planting Season**

*That the planting season mentioned by Josephus belongs to December of 40 C.E. is verified in yet another important way. We are told that Petronius received notice of Caligula's death 27 days before the second response from Caligula arrived in Syria ordering Petronius to continue the operation against the Jews. Caligula's second letter to Petronius was "bound for 3 months at sea" due to bad weather conditions.<sup>675</sup>*

*Caligula was assassinated "on the 9th day before the Kalends of February (i.e., Jan. 24)" in the year 41 C.E., after reigning 3 years and 10 months.<sup>676</sup> According to Josephus, Caligula "died not long after having written to Petronius this letter consigning him to death."<sup>677</sup> His statement indicates that the letter at question was composed in early to mid-January of 41 C.E.*

*Those who brought word of Caligula's death "had a fortunate passage" and as such would have arrived in Antioch about 30 to 45 days after his demise, i.e., roughly between March 1 and 15, 41 C.E. Those who were carrying the letter from Caesar Caligula, on the other hand, "were weather-bound for 3 months at sea." The severe weather is further indication that their travel took place during the winter months. Petronius received this letter "27 days" after obtaining notification of Caesar's death. Therefore, he received it approximately between March 27 and April 10, 41 C.E.*

*Caligula must have written his letter to Petronius shortly before the 3- month period at sea began. Therefore, 3 months prior to March 27 through April 10 brings us back to the time from about December 27, 40 C.E. to January 10, 41 C.E. This detail agrees well with the*

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<sup>674</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:3.

<sup>675</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:9, Wars, 2:10:5.

<sup>676</sup> Suetonius, 4:58–59; Dio, 49:29–30. Cf. Jos., Wars, 2:11:1, who counts Caligula's reign differently and makes him rule only 3 years and 8 months.

<sup>677</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:9.

*statement that the letter was written shortly before Caligula's death (i.e., Jan. 24, 41 C.E.).<sup>678</sup>*

*From this above mailing date we must subtract another 30 to 45 days of travel time to allow for the second letter from Petronius to Caligula, written while Petronius was at Antioch, to arrive at Rome. As a result, Petronius must have written his letter to Caesar in late November or early December, 40 C.E.; and it was at this very time that the Jews had refused to begin planting their crops. In the year 40 C.E. the month of Khisleu began on November 24. Therefore, our records are all in complete accord with one another.*

## **Conclusion**

*The ramifications of this evidence are very important for our study. It is clear from these records that the year 40/41 C.E., Nisan reckoning, was not a Sabbath year, for not only did the Jews harvest their crops in the spring and summer of that year, but they planted crops toward the end.*

*What has completely gone unnoticed is the fact that the only reason one would plant grain crops in December of 40 C.E. is so that these grains would be harvested in the spring of 41 C.E. Under Talmudic law sowing of crops was forbidden in the last months of the year prior to a Sabbath year.*

*That their intent was to harvest is further evidenced by Petronius' fear that the failure to plant these crops would deprive the empire of its revenue and tribute.<sup>679</sup> This revenue would come to fruition after the beginning of the next Hebrew year (i.e., after Nisan 1 of 41 C.E.). That fact, in turn, means that the year 41/42 C.E., Nisan reckoning, was NOT a Sabbath year.*

*When we compare these facts and details with the four possible Sabbath cycle systems, the following conclusions are reached:*

*System "B" is disqualified by this evidence since it would demand a Sabbath year for Tishri (Sept./Oct.), 40 to Tishri, 41 C.E., during which time the Jews were planting and harvesting crops.*

*System "C," as we have explained before, cannot work either, since the Sabbath year actually began with the month of Nisan*

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<sup>678</sup> Jos., Wars, 2:10:5.

<sup>679</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:8:4, 6.

*(March/April) and System “C” would require a Sabbath year from Tishri of 41 to Tishri of 42 C.E.*

*System “D” is also disqualified, since it would require a Sabbath year from Nisan, 41 to Nisan, 42 C.E. The Jews of this period avoided planting a winter crop that would have been harvested in the spring of a Sabbath year. For the year 40/41 C.E., Nisan reckoning, to be a Sabbath year, therefore, there would have been no crops planted after October of 40 C.E. Yet in the above story crops were planted in the winter of 40/41 C.E. There seems little doubt that the rabbinical interpretation which forbade the sowing of crops at least 6 months prior to the beginning of a Sabbath year was in force during the 1st century C.E. There is also no doubt that this practice was another impetus towards the rabbinical view of the 2nd century C.E. which formally started the Sabbath year with the 1st of Tishri.*

*System “A,” on the other hand, demands a Sabbath year from Nisan (Abib) 1, 42 to Nisan 1, 43 C.E. As a result it stands in perfect harmony with the evidence, both from this period and previous Sabbath years (See Chart C).*

On the previous chart in chapter 19 we have marked the year 42 C.E. in yellow. It is the 1st Sabbatical year of the 80<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle. This is the last Jubilee cycle in the 4<sup>th</sup> millennial day.



## Chapter 22 | Shmita Coins 42 C.E. Herod Agrippa I

We have just read about King Agrippa I (Herod II) going to Rome to speak to Caligula requesting he not set up the statue of the Emperor in the Temple.

Most of what we know about Agrippa I comes from what Josephus writes about him. Caligula made Agrippa ruler over several territories north of Judea in 38 C.E. Caligula, as we have just shown you, died in 41 C.E. The next Emperor of Rome, Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, was also a friend of Agrippa I who appointed him king of the Jews in 41 C.E.,<sup>680</sup> where he ruled until his death in 44 C.E.

*In Judaea, Agrippa<sup>681</sup> zealously pursued orthodox Jewish policies, earning the friendship of the Jews and vigorously repressing the Jewish Christians. According to the New Testament of the Bible (Acts of the Apostles, where he is called Herod), he imprisoned Peter the Apostle and executed James, son of Zebedee.*

We read in the Sefaria about King Agrippa I, pursuing those Jewish policies in an effort to endear himself to the Jews by reading the Torah scroll during the Shmita year.

*How is the portion of the Torah that is read by the king recited at the assembly, when all the Jewish people would assemble? At the conclusion of the first day of the festival of Sukkot, on the eighth, after the conclusion of the Sabbatical Year, they make a wooden platform for the king in the Temple courtyard, and he sits on it, as it is stated: “At the end of every seven years, in the Festival of the Sabbatical Year” (Deuteronomy 31:10). The synagogue attendant takes a Torah scroll and gives it to the head of the synagogue that stands on the Temple Mount. And the head of the synagogue gives it to the deputy High Priest, and the deputy High Priest gives it to the High Priest, and the High priest gives it to the king. And the king stands, and receives the Torah scroll, and reads from it while sitting. King Agrippa arose, and received the Torah scroll, and read from it while standing, and the Sages praised him for this. And when Agrippa arrived at the verse in the portion read by the king that*

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<sup>680</sup> Josephus, Ant. 18.143–309.

<sup>681</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Herod-Agrippa-I>

states: “You may not appoint a foreigner over you” (Deuteronomy 17:15), tears flowed from his eyes, because he was a descendant of the house of Herod and was not of Jewish origin. The entire nation said to him: Fear not, Agrippa. You are our brother, you are our brother. And the king reads from the beginning of Deuteronomy, from the verse that states: “And these are the words” (Deuteronomy 1:1), until the words: “Hear, O Israel” (Deuteronomy 6:4). And he then reads the sections beginning with: “Hear, O Israel” (Deuteronomy 6:4–9), “And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken” (Deuteronomy 11:13–21), “You shall tithe” (Deuteronomy 14:22–29), “When you have made an end of the tithing” (Deuteronomy 26:12–15), and the passage concerning the appointment of a king (Deuteronomy 17:14–20), and the blessings and curses (Deuteronomy 28), until he finishes the entire portion. The same blessings that the High Priest recites on Yom Kippur, the king recites at this ceremony, but he delivers a blessing concerning the Festivals in place of the blessing concerning forgiveness for iniquity.<sup>682</sup>

Consulting our numismatist account, it is reported that Agrippa I minted many coins during his seven years as ruler beginning in 38 C.E. Agrippa did not become king until 41 C.E after being appointed to the position by Claudius. It was during Agrippa’s 2<sup>nd</sup> year as king, 42 C.E., that he minted the Sabbatical year coins.



Herod Agrippa I, minted coins during several years during the years of his reign at the Paneas mint (year 2), the Tiberias mint (year 5) and at Caesarea (year 7 and year 8) all of which were minted with non-Jewish symbols (including human images of himself and the emperor; pagan images of gods and temples) and not during the sabbatical year. However, during the 2nd year

<sup>682</sup> Sefaria 7.8 [https://www.sefaria.org/Mishnah\\_Sotah.7.8?lang=bi](https://www.sefaria.org/Mishnah_Sotah.7.8?lang=bi)

of his reign, a sabbatical year, he minted myriads of bronze *prutot* with the parasol and ears of grain, non-offensive symbols to Jews, *at the Jerusalem mint*.<sup>683</sup>

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<sup>683</sup> S. Pfann, 'Dated Bronze Coinage of the Sabbatical years of Release and the First Jewish City Coin'. Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society 24 (2006) 101-113. <https://aias.org.uk/volume-24/#>

## Chapter 23 | Sabbatical Year 56 C.E. Nero—Note of Indebtedness

*Confirmation<sup>684</sup> that System “A” is the correct Sabbath cycle is also demonstrated by a Note of Indebtedness found in one of the caves of Wadi Murabba’at near Bethlehem in the Judaeen desert.<sup>685</sup> A copy of the Hebrew is also published by Ben Zion Wacholder.<sup>686</sup> Wacholder’s translation is basically correct, although we shall read the Hebrew with some minor differences, none of which shall affect the conclusions.<sup>687</sup> Our translation is as follows:*

1. .... [Ye]ar 2 of Nero Caesar ....
2. in Tzyah; declared by Abshalom bar Khanin of Tzyah,
3. in his presence, of my own free will, that I, Zachariah bar Yahukhanan bar H.....
4. dwelling in Keslon, silver money pieces tw[en]ty .....  
acquir[ing] ...
5. I .....[x] ..... not sell until the ti[me]
6. this, I will pay you in five and possibly in its enti[rety]
7. this year of Shemitah, and if not so, I will make a paym[ent]
8. to you from my properties, and those (things) that I will buy  
later will be pledged to you as mortgage.

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<sup>684</sup> Chapter XXVI A Note of Indebtedness in Nero’s Time Part I of the Sabbath Year of 56/57 C.E. <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-26Chap.pdf>

<sup>685</sup> DTJD, no. 18, pp. 100–104, and 2, pt. 2, Plate XXIX. Also see Fig. 2.

<sup>686</sup> HUCA, 44, pp. 169f.

<sup>687</sup> Wacholder’s translation is as follows:

1. [ of yea]r two of Nero Caesar [ ]
2. in Swya; declared by Abshalom bar H. anin, of Swyah.
3. in his presence, of my own accord, that I Zachariah bar Yehoh. anan bar H.  
[ ]
4. dwelling in Keslon, silver denars twen[t]y
5. I [ ] not sell until the ti[me]
6. of this, I will pay you in five and possibly in the enti[rety];
7. in this year of Release; and if not so, I will make a paym[ent]
8. to you from my properties, even those that I will buy later, will be pledged  
to you as mortgage.
9. [Zacha]riah bar Yeho[h. anan, i]n person
10. [writt]en (for) Yehosef ba[r ], by dictation
11. Yehonatan bar Yehoh. anna, witness
12. Yehosef ba[r Ye]hudan, witness.

*There can be little doubt that the phrase “Year 2 of Nero” in line 1 represents the year in which this contract was agreed. This study must concur with Milik and Wacholder that line 1 is also equivalent to the phrase, “this year of Shemitah,” found in line 7.<sup>688</sup> To firmly establish the year of this shemitah, or “year of release” (Sabbath year),<sup>689</sup> one must correctly date the 2nd year of Nero from the view of the Jews living in Judaea at the time.*

*The date that Nero began to rule the Roman Empire can be established beyond any doubt. According to Suetonius, emperor Claudius, who Nero followed on the throne, “died on the 3rd day before the Ides of October in the consulship of Asinius Marcellus and Acilius Aviola in the 64th year of his age and the 14th year of his reign.”<sup>690</sup> This consul year stands for 54 C.E. (Jan. reckoning). Since Nero immediately ascended to the throne upon the death of Claudius, his reign began on October 13, 54 C.E.*

*Suetonius published his work on the Caesars in 120 C.E. He is considered extremely reliable not only because of his nearness in time but because he was the private secretary to Emperor Hadrian and had access to all the official Roman records.<sup>691</sup>*

## **Chronology of the Early Roman Emperors**

*That Suetonius provides us with the correct date for the death of Claudius and the accession to the throne of Nero is verified by a great number of ancient writers. It is fully supported, for example, by the length of the reign for each Roman king and by the correlation of those reigns with other established dates. The following is a demonstration of that evidence:<sup>692</sup>*

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<sup>688</sup> DTJD, pp. 100–103; HUCA, 44, pp. 170f.

<sup>689</sup> See above Chap. XIV, p. 207, ns. 2 & 3.

<sup>690</sup> Suetonius, 5:45.

<sup>691</sup> Rolfe, Suet., i, pp. ix–xiv.

<sup>692</sup> The small variance of a few days between some of our sources is due to the way in which a particular historian calculated the rise to power of each monarch. Some considered the reign to start at the demise of his predecessor; some counted from the day he was recognized by the Senate; and a few when he was actually crowned or some other such event. In none of these cases does it change the basic result that Nero came to power in October of 54 C.E.

## Augustus Caesar reigned:

- 56 years, 4 months, 1 day.<sup>693</sup>

*Josephus reports that Augustus “ruled for 57 years, 6 months, and 2 days” and observes that “Antony had shared authority with him for 14 years of this period.”*<sup>694</sup> *Augustus Caesar died, according to Suetonius, “in the consulship of the two Sextuses, Pompeius and Appuleius, on the 14th day before the Kalends of September at the 9th hour, just 35 days before his 76th birthday”;*<sup>695</sup> *i.e., on August 19, 14 C.E. (see Chart H for the list of Consuls).*

*Dio writes that Augustus died “when Sextus Apuleius and Sextus Pompeius were consuls” and that, “on the 19th day of August, the day on which he had first become consul, he passed away, having lived 75 years, 10 months, and 26 days (he had been born on the 23rd of September), and having been sole ruler, from the time of his victory at Actium, 44 years, lacking 13 days.”*<sup>696</sup>

*This evidence proves that Augustus’ reign of 56 years and 4 months (43 years, 11 months, 17 days of sole reign) ended on August 19, 14 C.E. This date serves as our primordium, and from this firmly established date we shall examine the reigns of the following Roman kings. Augustus was followed by Tiberius.*

## Tiberius reigned:

- 22 years, 6 months, 26 days.<sup>697</sup>
- 22 years, 5 months (var. 6 mons.), 3 days.<sup>698</sup>
- 22 years, 6 months, 28 days.<sup>699</sup>

*Suetonius tells us that Tiberius died “in the 78th year of his age and the 23rd of his reign, on the 17th day before the Kalends of April,*

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<sup>693</sup> Theophilus, 3:27.

<sup>694</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:2:2, and Wars, 2:9:1. Josephus is including a short overlap with the reign allotted to Julius Caesar as part of his total reign for Augustus, reckoning as his beginning the date when Julius Caesar became dictator perpetuus on Feb. 17, 44 B.C.E.

<sup>695</sup> Suetonius, 2:100.

<sup>696</sup> Dio, 56:29, 30. The battle of Actium was won on Sept. 2, 31 B.C.E. Therefore, we again arrive at the date Aug. 19, 14 C.E. for the death of Augustus.

<sup>697</sup> Theophilus, 3:27.

<sup>698</sup> Jos., Antiq., 18:6:10, Wars, 2:9:5.

<sup>699</sup> Feldman, Jos., ix, pp. 136f, n. b. Tacitus, Dial., 17, gives the round figure of “23 years for Tiberius.” Tacitus, Ann., 6:51, states, “virtually 23 years.”

*in the consulship of Gnaeus Acerronius Proculus and Gaius Pontius Nigrinus,*<sup>700</sup> i.e., on March 16, 37 C.E.

*Dio states that Tiberius died “on the (1)6th day of March.”<sup>701</sup> He had lived 77 years, 4 months, and 9 days, of which time he had been emperor 22 years, 7 months, and 7 days.*<sup>702</sup>

*This evidence proves that Tiberius died in March of 37 C.E. He was followed by Gaius Caligula.*

### **Gaius Caligula reigned:**

- 3 years, 10 months, 7 days.<sup>703</sup>
- 3 years, 10 months, 8 days.<sup>704</sup>
- “After a reign of 3 years and 8 months” and “for 4 years lacking 4 months.”<sup>705</sup>
- “3 years, 9 months, 28 days.”<sup>706</sup>

*Suetonius reports that Gaius Caligula died “on the 9th day before the Kalends of February at about the 7th hour,”<sup>707</sup> i.e., January 24, 41 C.E. Suetonius also adds that Caligula was assassinated during the celebration of the Ludi Palatini, established by Livia in honor of Augustus just after his death in 14 C.E.<sup>708</sup> This event started on January 17 and culminated with theatrical exhibitions from the 21st to 23rd of January.<sup>709</sup> In the year that Caligula was assassinated, Caligula added extra days to the exhibitions.<sup>710</sup> Josephus places the assassination on the 3rd day of these exhibitions, apparently not counting the opening day but the 2nd day as its real beginning.<sup>711</sup>*

*This evidence proves that Caligula died on January 24 of 41 C.E. He was succeeded by Claudius.*

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<sup>700</sup> Suetonius, 3:73. Cf. Chart H. Likewise, Tacitus, Ann., 6:51, places the death of Tiberius on March 16th, when the emperor was 78 years old.

<sup>701</sup> The “26th day of March” in Dio’s text is most certainly a scribal error for the “16th day of March,” the date given by most ancient writers.

<sup>702</sup> Dio, 58:28.

<sup>703</sup> Theophilus, 3:27.

<sup>704</sup> Suetonius, 4:59.

<sup>705</sup> Jos., Wars, 2:11:1, Antiq., 19:2:5.

<sup>706</sup> Dio, 59:30.

<sup>707</sup> Suetonius, 4:58.

<sup>708</sup> Suetonius, 4:56.

<sup>709</sup> Dio, 56:46:5, 59:16:10; Tacitus, Ann., 1:73.

<sup>710</sup> Dio, 49:29:5.

<sup>711</sup> Jos., Antiq., 19:1:11–16.

## **Claudius reigned:**

- 13 years, 8 months, 20 days.<sup>712</sup>
- 13 years, 8 months.<sup>713</sup>

*Suetonius informs us:*

*He died on the 3rd day before the Ides of October in the consulship of Asinius Marcellus and Acilius Aviola, in the 64th year of his age and the 14th of his reign (i.e., Oct. 13, 54 C.E.).<sup>714</sup>*

*Dio confirms Suetonius, reporting:*

*It was the 13th of October, and he had lived 63 years, 2 months, and 13 days, having been emperor 13 years, 8 months, and 20 days.<sup>715</sup>*

*These facts prove that emperor Claudius died on October 13, 54 C.E. He was succeeded by Nero.*

## **Nero reigned:**

- 13 years, 7 months, 27 days.<sup>716</sup>
- 13 years, 7 months, 28 days.<sup>717</sup>

*Suetonius writes that, "Nero was born at Antium 9 months after the death of Tiberius, on the 18th day before the Kalends of January" (i.e., Dec. 15, 37 C.E.). He became emperor when he was "17 years old" (i.e., in 54 C.E.), and, "He met his death in the 32nd year of his age, on the anniversary of the murder of Octavia."<sup>718</sup> Therefore, he died in the year 68 C.E.*

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<sup>712</sup> Theophilus, 3:27; Jos., Antiq., 20:8:1, Wars, 2:12:8.

<sup>713</sup> Eusebius, H.E., 2:19.

<sup>714</sup> Suetonius, 5:45. Cf. Chart H.

<sup>715</sup> Dio, 60:34.

<sup>716</sup> Theophilus, 3:27.

<sup>717</sup> Jerome, Euseb. Chron., 263F. This figure is probably meant in a corrupt passage from Jos., Wars, 4:9:2, i.e., 13 yrs., [7 mons., 2]8 days (but see comments in Thackeray, Jos., iii, p. 146, n. a).

<sup>718</sup> Suetonius, 6:6, 8, 57, cf. 6:35. Octavia, the daughter of Emperor Claudius and the wife of Nero, was murdered by Nero.



*Dio also reports that Nero was “17 years of age when he began to rule.”<sup>719</sup> “He had lived 30 years and 9 months, out of which he had ruled 13 years and 8 months.”<sup>720</sup>*

*Tacitus states that Nero succeeded to the throne in “the consulate of Marcus Asinius and Manius Acilius” (i.e., 54 C.E.), “on the 13th of October.”<sup>721</sup>*

*Zonaras reports:*

*So he died in this manner in the month of July (June?),<sup>722</sup> having lived 30 years, 5 months and 20 days, out of which he had ruled 13 years and 8 months, lacking 2 days.<sup>723</sup>*

*This evidence reveals that Nero died in June of 68 C.E. He was succeeded by Galba.*

### **Galba reigned:**

- 7 months, 6 days.<sup>724</sup>

- 7 months, 7 days.<sup>725</sup>

*Galba, according to Suetonius, “was born in the consulship of Marcus Valerius Messala and Gnaeus Lentulus, on the 9th day before the Kalends of January” (i.e., Dec. 24, 3 B.C.E.) and, “He met his end in the 73rd year of his age and the 7th month of his reign,”<sup>726</sup> that is, he died in the year 69 C.E.*

*Tacitus states that Galba died shortly after Otho was declared king on January 15, in the “second consulship of Servius Galba (Galva), when Titus Vinus was his colleague” (i.e., 69 C.E.).<sup>727</sup>*

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<sup>719</sup> Dio, 61:3.

<sup>720</sup> Dio, 63:29.

<sup>721</sup> Tacitus, Ann., 12:64–69. Cf. Chart H

<sup>722</sup> Nero was born Dec. 15, 37 C.E., and perished about June 9th, 68 C.E. Zonaras’ estimate of the length of his reign will then be correct, counting (inclusively) from Oct. 13, 54.

<sup>723</sup> Zonaras, Hist., 11:13.

<sup>724</sup> Theophilus, 3:27.

<sup>725</sup> Jos., Wars, 4:9:2.

<sup>726</sup> Suetonius, 7:4, 23. Cf. Chart H.

<sup>727</sup> Tacitus, Hist., 1:1–49, esp. 1:1, 27. Cf. Chart H.

*Dio reports, “Galba had lived 72 years and 23 days, out of which he ruled 9 months and 13 days.”<sup>728</sup>*

*This evidence proves that Galba lost power in mid-January of 69 C.E. He was succeeded by Otho.*

### **Otho reigned:**

- 3 months, 5 days.<sup>729</sup>

- 3 months, 2 days.<sup>730</sup>

*Otho “was born on the 4th day before the Kalends of May in the consulate of Camillus Arruntius and Domitius Ahenobarbus” (i.e., April 28, 32 C.E.) and he died “in the 38th year of his age and on the 95th day of his reign.”<sup>731</sup>*

*Tacitus reports that an election for emperor was held on January 10;<sup>732</sup> he then states that Otho was declared emperor on January 15 and Galba was executed shortly thereafter.<sup>733</sup> Tacitus also notes that Otho died during the Festival of Ceres (April 12–19).<sup>734</sup>*

*Dio says that Otho died “after he had lived 37 years, lacking 11 days, and had reigned 90 days.”<sup>735</sup>*

*This evidence shows that Otho lost power in mid-April of 69 C.E. He was succeeded by Vitellius.*

### **Vitellius reigned:**

- 8 months, 2 days.<sup>736</sup>

- Eusebius counts the whole period from Galba to Vitellius as “a year and 6 months.”<sup>737</sup>

*Vitellius “was born on the 8th day before the Kalends of October, or according to some, on the 7th day before the Ides of September, in the consulship of Drusus Caesar and Norbanus Flaccus” (i.e., Sept.*

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<sup>728</sup> Dio, 63:6. Dio’s dates for Galba overlap partially with his predecessor and his successor. This was due to the civil war that was raging in those years which allowed different kings to be reigning at the same time.

<sup>729</sup> Theophilus, 3:27.

<sup>730</sup> Jos., Wars, 4:9:9.

<sup>731</sup> Suetonius, 7:2, 11. Cf. Chart H.

<sup>732</sup> Tacitus, Hist., 1:18.

<sup>733</sup> Tacitus, Hist., 1:12–49.

<sup>734</sup> Tacitus, Hist., 2:47–55.

<sup>735</sup> Dio, 63:15.

<sup>736</sup> Theophilus, 3:27.

<sup>737</sup> Eusebius, H.E., 3:5.

24th or the 7th, 15 C.E.) but after “8 months” he “withdrew” from the kingship and later died “in the 57th year of his age.”<sup>738</sup>

Dio remarks that Vitellius “had lived 54 years and 89 days, and had reigned for a year lacking 10 days.”<sup>739</sup>

Josephus importantly writes that Vitellius “reigned 8 months and 5 days” and was killed “on the 3rd of the month of Apellaios,”<sup>740</sup> i.e., on December 20 of 69 C.E.

This evidence reveals that Vitellius ruled until mid-December of 69 C.E. The statement given by Eusebius, that from Galba to the end of the reign of Vitellius was “a year and 6 months,” is thereby confirmed. Galba began in June of 68 C.E. and ruled 7 months; Otho reigned 3 months, and Vitellius was leader for 8 months: a total of 18 months, ending in December of 69 C.E. Vitellius was succeeded by Vespasian.

### **Vespasian reigned:**

- 9 years, 11 months, 22 days.<sup>741</sup>

Vespasian was born “on the evening of the 15th day before the Kalends of December, in the consulate of Quintus Sulpicius Camerinus and Gaius Poppaeus Sabinus, 5 years before the death of Augustus” (i.e., on Nov. 17, 9 C.E.) and he died “in his 9th consulship” on the “9th day before the Kalends of July, at the age of 69 years, 1 month and 7 days.”<sup>742</sup> Therefore, Vespasian died on June 23, 79 C.E.

The 9 years, 11 months, and 22 days of his reign reported by Theophilus, accordingly, began on the 2nd of July, 69 C.E., which is about the date that Vespasian would have first heard of the death of Otho. Dio further clarifies this issue, stating:

*He (Vespasian) had lived 69 years and 8 months, and had reigned 10 years lacking 6 days. From this it results that FROM THE DEATH OF NERO TO THE BEGINNING OF VESPASIAN’S RULE ONE YEAR AND 22 DAYS ELAPSED.*

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<sup>738</sup> Suetonius, 7:3, 15, 18. Cf. Chart H.

<sup>739</sup> Dio, 64:22. Dio includes as part of the reign of Vitellius some of the time before Galba died, while the civil war was still in progress.

<sup>740</sup> Jos., Wars, 4:11:4.

<sup>741</sup> Suetonius, 8:2, 24. Cf. Chart H.

<sup>742</sup> Suetonius, 8:2, 24. Cf. Chart J.

*I make this statement in order to prevent any misapprehension on the part of such as might estimate the time with reference to the men who held the sovereignty. For they did not succeed one another legitimately, but each of them, even while his rival was alive and still ruling, believed himself to be emperor from the moment that he even got a glimpse of the throne. Hence one must not add together all the days of their several reigns as if those periods had followed one another in orderly succession, but must reckon once for all with the exact time that actually elapsed, as I have stated it.*<sup>743</sup>

Nero died on June 9, 68 C.E. One year and 22 days later brings us to July 1, 69 C.E. Dio also makes the important observation that following the death of Vitellius, Vespasian “was declared emperor by the Senate also, and Titus and Domitian were given the title of Caesars. The consular office was assumed by Vespasian and Titus while the former was in Egypt and the latter in Palestine.”<sup>744</sup> **The consul year named is for 70 C.E., showing that Vespasian was recognized as emperor by the Senate on the 1st day of the year, at which time Vespasian also assumed the role of consul.**

**Tacitus supports Dio and adds that after the 1st of January, “At the beginning of that same year,” Titus was sent to “complete the subjugation of Judaea.”**<sup>745</sup> **The accession to power of Vespasian in mid-69 C.E. and then becoming consul on January 1, 70 C.E., therefore, becomes our coupling point to which all the succeeding dates up until our present time are attached and which are well established.**<sup>746</sup> Finally, when we consult the ancient Roman Consul lists we find that there were exactly 57 consul years from the year Augustus Caesar died (when Sextus Apuleius and Sextus Pompeius were consuls) until the year that Jerusalem fell (when Vespasian and Titus were consuls).<sup>747</sup> This number of years fits exactly with the calculations we have presented.

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<sup>743</sup> Dio, 66:17.

<sup>744</sup> Dio, 65:1.

<sup>745</sup> Tacitus, Hist., 4:39–5:1.

<sup>746</sup> All of this is important to establishing the date when Titus was sent to siege Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E.

<sup>747</sup> Senator, Chron., ∞. 614–695; MGH, 11, pp. 136–138; HBC, pp. 96f. Also see Chart H.

*The simple addition of the lengths of all these various reigns, supported by the consul lists, proves that Nero began to govern in October of 54 C.E. Milik's speculation that it was in October of 53 C.E.<sup>748</sup> is based upon his "need" to make the Note of Indebtedness on the papyrus of Wadi Murabba 'at 18, as cited at the beginning of this chapter, conform with System "B." Nevertheless, his speculation is totally unfounded.*

## **"Year 12" of Nero in Judaea**

*Our next problem must be to determine how the Judaeans correlated Nero's reign with events in Judaea. Our first indications come from the 1st century C.E. Jewish priest Josephus and the early Christian historian Eusebius of Caesarea (c.265–c. 340 C.E.), who like Josephus was born in Palestine.*

*Josephus dates the beginning of the First Revolt of the Jews against Rome to the 12th year of Nero.*

*The war in fact began in the 2nd year of the procuratorship of Florus and in THE 12TH YEAR OF NERO'S REIGN.<sup>749</sup>*

*The present work contains the recorded history, from man's creation up to the 12TH YEAR OF NERO, of the events that befell us Jews in Egypt, in Syria, and in Palestine.<sup>750</sup>*

*. . . and it was now that the war opened, in the TWELFTH YEAR OF THE PRINCIPATE OF NERO, and the 17TH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF AGRIPPA, in the month of Artemisius.<sup>751</sup>*

*The Macedonian month "Artemisius" is by Josephus made equivalent to the 2nd Hebrew month, the month of Iyyar (April/May).<sup>752</sup>*

*The equation that year 12 of Nero is the same as year 17 of Agrippa is verified by Agrippa's coins, bearing the imperial effigy,*

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<sup>748</sup> DTJD, pp. 102, 103.

<sup>749</sup> Jos., Antiq., 20:11:1.

<sup>750</sup> Jos., Antiq., 20:12:1.

<sup>751</sup> Jos., Wars, 2:14:4.

<sup>752</sup> Jos., Antiq., 8:3:1.

which begin with one that gives the name and likeness of Nero, dated year 6 = year 11.<sup>753</sup>

Eusebius agrees with Josephus, summarizing him by stating how Josephus “explains exactly how many thousand Jews of high rank in Jerusalem itself were outraged, scourged, and crucified by Florus, and that he was procurator of Judaea when it happened that the beginning of the war blazed up in the 12TH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF NERO.”<sup>754</sup>

Josephus, therefore, is Eusebius’ primary source yet Eusebius is supporting his determination.

## Conclusion

In our search to discover the date for “Year 2 of Nero Caesar” in the Judaeian Note of Indebtedness found in one of the caves of Wadi Murabba‘at, we have confirmed two vital points. First, the reign of Nero lasted from October 13, 54 until June 9, 68 C.E. Second, Josephus, supported by Eusebius, reports that the 12th year of Nero was in progress during the 1st year of the Judaeian revolt against Rome, which began in the 2nd Jewish month (Iyyar) of that year. It now behooves us to coordinate these two facts and uncover the reckoning of Nero’s reign by the Judaeans.

## Part II of the Sabbath Year of 56/57 C.E.

According<sup>755</sup> to the advocates of Systems “B” and “C,” there are four ways other than a Nisan (March/April) year by which Nero’s 2nd year could have been judged in the works of Josephus and Eusebius.

- The reign of Nero could have been reckoned by the Roman dies imperii which calculates the regnal year from the day the king achieved power to his anniversary date in the next year: i.e., from October 13 until October 13 of each year for Nero. His 1st year, therefore, would be from October 13, 54 to October 12, 55 C.E., his 2nd from October 13, 55 to October 12, 56 C.E.

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<sup>753</sup> IEJ, 12.1, p. 34.

<sup>754</sup> Eusebius, H.E., 2:26.

<sup>755</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press, Chapter XXVII Nero’s “Year 2” in Judaea Part II of the Sabbath Year of 56/57 C.E. <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-27Chap.pdf>

- *The reign of Nero could have been counted by the Macedonian Seleucid method, from the 1st of Tishri, which again gives us roughly an October to October year.*

- *His reign could have been determined on the basis of the Greek Macedonian Olympiad calendar, which would have begun on Dius 1. The result would be the first of Dius (Oct./Nov.), 54 until the 1st of Dius, 55 C.E. for Nero's 1st year. His 2nd year would be Dius 1, 55 until Dius 1, 56 C.E.*

- *Nero's reign could have been dated from January 1st, the beginning of the Roman year since 8 B.C.E.,<sup>756</sup> the year Augustus Caesar changed the starting point of the Roman calendar. Year 1 would be January 1, 55 until January 1, 56 C.E.; Year 2 would be January 1, 56 until January 1, 57 C.E.*

## **Nisan 1 Regnal Years used by Josephus for Nero**

*These theories must be rejected on the grounds that there is not one shred of evidence that during this period the Jews of Judaea ever utilized any of these methods to register the reign of a king over the land of Judaea.*

*Both Josephus and Philo observe that the year in Judaea began with Nisan and the spring.<sup>757</sup> At no time does any writer from this period say that a king's reign listed on Judaeian documents and contracts written between Jews was normally dated from an era used by foreign kings.*

*Even as late as the beginning of the 3rd century C.E. the Mishnah tells us that "on the 1st of Nisan is the New Year for kings."<sup>758</sup>*

*If a Jew of Judaea during the period of Nero was dating a contract by the name and year of a king it would seem only logical that he would do so by the traditional Jewish method.*

*This method, which was used in Judaea during the 1st century C.E., would begin to change after the Jews lost their homeland with the collapse of the First Revolt, thereby forfeiting their right to make such determinations. Yet even as late as the Bar Kochba revolt (133–135 B.C.E.), the Jews were still known to be using a Nisan beginning*

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<sup>756</sup> See above Chap. XXIII, p. 315, n. 15.

<sup>757</sup> Jos., Antiq., 1:3:3, 2:14:6, 3:8:4, 3:10:5, 11:4:8; Philo, Spec., 1:35 §181, 2:27–28.

<sup>758</sup> R.Sh., 1:1.

for their year.<sup>759</sup> After the Bar Kochba revolt, the Jews were scattered about the world and under the total dominance of foreign kings. A foreign reckoning would naturally follow. Yet in the time of Nero (October, 54–June, 68 C.E.) Judaea still existed as a country with its own Jewish rulers, an established Jewish priesthood, and Jewish customs. Its people had no reason to use a foreign reckoning on internal Jewish documents.

The works of Josephus are reflective of this custom. Josephus, writing to a Greek-speaking audience, never dated events by the Macedonian-Olympiad system or by Roman consulships unless he specifically stated that he was doing so. In the relevant passages about Nero's reign, Josephus never referred to an Olympiad or consul year. That Josephus would date Nero by the Macedonian Olympiad or a consulship beginning on the 1st of January, yet not define it as such, is highly implausible.

Another important factor in this investigation is that Josephus—the primary source for the history of the First Revolt—was a Judean who lived in his homeland at the time of Nero; and his work reflects that the 1st of the year for Nero's reign began sometime after Marheshuan (Oct./Nov.) 1, yet before Iyyar (April/May) 1. This fact is demonstrated by his dating of events in the First Revolt. Josephus' sequence is as follows (cf. Chart B):

- The “war opened, in the 12th year of the principate of Nero, and the 17th of the reign of Agrippa, in the month of Artemisius (Iyyar; April/May)” (Jos., Wars, 2:14:4). This statement shows that Nero's 12th year was in progress during this 2nd Jewish month. Agrippa, by the way, was a Jewish ruler. Josephus would naturally date Agrippa's reign based upon the Jewish method. In this passage Josephus importantly equates Agrippa's 17th year in Judaea with the 12th year of Nero, strongly indicating that the same method of dating was used for both.

- Riots broke out in Jerusalem “on the 16th of the month Artemisius” (Iyyar)” (Jos., Wars, 2:15:2).

- On the “15th of the month Lous (Ab; July/Aug.)” an assault was made upon Antonia and the garrison was besieged (Jos., Wars, 2:17:7).

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<sup>759</sup> IEJ, 21.1, pp. 39–46.



• On the “6th of the month Gorpiaeus (Elul; Aug./Sept.)” the king’s palace at Jerusalem was captured (Jos., Wars, 2:17:8).

• On the “30th of the month Hyperberetaeus (Tishri; Sept./Oct.)” Cestius made an assault upon Jerusalem (Jos., Wars, 2:19:4).

• On “the 8th of the month of Dius (Marheshuan; Oct./Nov.), in the 12th year of Nero’s principate,” the defeat of Cestius took place (Jos., Wars, 2:19:9).

We have now passed beyond the months of August and October, as well as beyond the 1st day of Dius (Marheshuan), yet it is still the 12th year of Nero. This detail proves that Josephus did not use the Roman *dies imperii* for Nero, which would start his year in October; nor did he use the October Seleucid year or the Macedonian-Olympiad year, which started with the 1st of Dius, in determining the regnal years of Nero.

• On the “21st of the month Artemisius (Iyyar; April/May)” Josephus came from Tiberias and went to Jotapata (Jos., Wars, 3:7:3). This detail reveals that we have now passed by the month of Nisan (Abib) and have entered into a new Jewish year.

• On the “20th of the month Daesius (Siwan; May/June)” the first assault was made upon Jotapata, also called Japha (Jos., Wars, 3:7:29).

• On the “25th of the month Daesius” Japha was captured (Jos., Wars, 3:7:31).

• On the “27th of the month Daesius” Gerizim was captured (Jos., Wars, 3:7:32).

• The city of Jotapata was taken by the Romans “in the 13th year of the principate of Nero, on the new moon of Panemus (Tammuz; June/July)” (Jos., Wars, 3:7:36). We have now arrived at the 1st day of the 4th Jewish month, and we find ourselves in “Year 13” of Nero.

Since it was still “Year 12” of Nero on the 8th of Dius (Marheshuan; Oct./Nov.) of the previous year, it is clear that a new year began between the month of Dius (Marheshuan, the 8th Jewish month) and the following Panemus (Tammuz, the 4th Jewish month; June/July).

Josephus’ dating of Nero is further narrowed by the fact that the 12th year of Nero was still in progress during the month of Artemisius (Iyyar), the 2nd Jewish month.<sup>760</sup> The 13th year, therefore, had to be

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<sup>760</sup> Jos., Wars, 2:14:4.

*in effect during Artemisius (Iyyar; April/May) of the following year. This fact, in turn, shows that there was a change in year between the end of Marheshuan, the 8th month, and the beginning of Iyyar, the 2nd month (Chart B).*

*This information demonstrates that Josephus must have been using a Nisan year for the Roman emperors. It is true that a January 1st year is also possible; but, since Josephus does not label Nero's reign by a consulship or refer to a Roman year, this supposition is weak. Furthermore, Josephus determined the consul years by the 1st of March and not by the 1st of January.<sup>761</sup>*

*The last time Josephus used an Olympiad to date any event was for the year that Herod completed his building of Caesarea Sebaste, which took place in the 192nd Olympiad (11/10 B.C.E., Dios [Oct./Nov.] Macedonian reckoning), being the 28th year of Herod (i.e., 10/9 B.C.E., Nisan Jewish reckoning). The last consulship used for dating an event was that of Marcus Agrippa and Caninius Gallus (37/36 B.C.E., March 1 to March 1 reckoning). These dates importantly all fall prior to the changes made for the beginning month of the Roman calendar by Augustus Caesar, who in 8 B.C.E. altered the beginning of the year from March 1st to January 1st.*

*Nowhere else in the works of Josephus can it be demonstrated that he used a January 1 year to date anything, which casts a dark shadow of doubt that he did so with Nero (or for that matter any of the other Roman emperors).*

*It is also known from ancient coins that during the First Revolt (66–70 C.E.) the Jewish year began with the month of Nisan.<sup>762</sup> This detail adds even more weight to the fact that the Jews of Nero's time observed a 1st of Nisan beginning for their regnal years, and counted from this month in their internal documents. Furthermore, we have two sources (the coins of the First Revolt and the early 3rd century C.E. Mishnah) proving that the Jews of Judaea during the period of Nero and for some time afterwards determined the beginning of the year for their kings by the month of Nisan.*

*Therefore, we must conclude that in the entire body of the works of Josephus, unless he specifically labels it as not applying, he used a Nisan beginning for his year. In the list of events during the 12th and*

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<sup>761</sup> See Chap. XX, pp. 287–289, and cf. Chaps. XXI–XXIII.

<sup>762</sup> IEJ, 21.1, p. 40 and n. 11, p. 42; BA, 26.2, pp. 57–59.

*13th years of Nero, Josephus does not label the years as an exception to his normal Nisan reckoning. He shows that a year of Nero included the 2nd through 8th Jewish months (Iyyar through Marheshuan; roughly May through November). Indeed, the very fact that Josephus couples the 12th and 13th years of Nero with Macedonian month names, which he clearly equates throughout his work with the Jewish months, is a strong indication that he has reckoned Nero's reign based upon a 1st of Nisan New Year.*

*The weight of the evidence, as a result, points to the fact that the other Jews of Judaea, during the days of Nero, would have also dated Nero's reign by a Nisan year. We will not overlook the remote possibility that Josephus used a January 1 reckoning for Nero; but, as we shall demonstrate, it will not change the final result.*

## **Dating the First Revolt**

*Our attention must now turn towards determining which year represents the 2nd year of Nero in Judaea. This detail is gleaned from the information dealing with the length of the First Revolt and which year it started.*

*Historical evidence proves that the First Revolt, which began in the 12th year of Nero, raged for 5 years. Jewish coins produced during this revolt, for example, bear only the dates from "Year 1" to "Year 5."<sup>763</sup> In Josephus' history about the First Revolt, he clearly sets forth that the war lasted until the 5th year (using a Nisan 1 regnal reckoning but counting the length of the war from the time it started in Iyyar [April/May]). The flow of events in his history of the war with Rome is as follows (cf. Chart B):*

### **YEAR 1 (66 C.E.)**

- *The war began in the 12th year of Nero in the month of Artemisius (Iyyar; April/May) (Jos., Wars, 2:14:4, 2:15:2).*
- *The Festival of Tabernacles observed (Tishri; Sept./Oct.) (Jos., Wars, 2:19:1).*
- *Events in the "month of Dios (Marheshuan; Oct./Nov.) in the 12th year of Nero's principate" (Jos., Wars, 2:19:9).*

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<sup>763</sup> AJ, pp. 28–33, 57–59; AJC, pp. 259–263.

## YEAR 2 (67 C.E.)

- *Events in the month of Artemisius (April/May) (Jos., Wars, 3:7:3).*
- *Events in the month of Daesius (May/June) (Jos., Wars, 3:7:29).*
- *Events in the month of Gorpiaeus (Aug./Sept.) (Jos., Wars, 3:10:10).*
- *Events in the month of Hyperberetaeus (Sept./Oct.) (Jos., Wars, 4:1:9–10).*
- *Events in the month of Dystrus (Feb./March) (Jos., Wars, 4:7:3).*

## YEAR 3 (68 C.E.)

- *Events in the month of Daesius (May/June) (Jos., Wars, 4:8:1, 4:9:9).*

## YEAR 4 (69 C.E.)

- *Simon became master of Jerusalem “in the 3rd year of the war, in the month of Xanthicus (March/April)” (Jos., Wars, 4:9:12). Counting the years from the month the war began, i.e., from the month of Artemisius (April/May) of 66 C.E., the 4th year of the war began in Iyyar (April/May) of 69 C.E.*
- *Events in the month of Apellaios (Nov./Dec.) (Jos., Wars, 4:11:4).*
- *Winter (Jos., Wars, 4:11:5).*

## YEAR 5 (70 C.E.)

- *Events of the month of Xanthicus (March/April) (Wars, 5:3:1).*
- *Events of the month of Artemisius (April/May) (Jos., Wars, 5:7:2, 5:11:4).*
- *The destruction of the Temple by Titus on the 10th day of Lous (July/ Aug., i.e., the Hebrew month of Ab) “in the 2nd year of Vespasian’s reign” (Jos., Wars, 6:4:5, 8).*

*Tacitus also reveals that the Judaeen revolt lasted 5 years.<sup>764</sup> He writes that in the 1st year of the revolt Cestius Gallus, governor of Syria, tried to stop it, but “he suffered varied fortunes and met defeat*

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<sup>764</sup> Tacitus, Hist., 4:39–5:13.

more often than he gained victory.”<sup>765</sup> Cestius endured a great defeat at the hands of the Jews “on the 8th of the month Dius (Nov.) in the 12th year of Nero’s principate.” On the death of Gallus, Tacitus continues:

. . . Nero sent out Vespasian, who aided by his good fortune and reputation as well by his excellent subordinates, within TWO SUMMERS occupied with his victorious army the whole of the level country and all the cities except Jerusalem. THE NEXT YEAR was taken up with the civil war, and thus was passed in inactivity so far as the Jews were concerned. When peace had been secured throughout Italy, foreign troubles began again; and the fact that the Jews alone had failed to surrender increased our resentment; at the same time, having regard to all the possibilities and hazards of a new reign, it seemed expedient for Titus to remain with the army. Therefore, as I have said above, Titus pitched his camp before the walls of Jerusalem and displayed his legions in battle array. (Tacitus, Hist., 5:9–10)

When Tacitus states, “as I have said above,” he is making reference to the fact that after “the 1st of January”<sup>766</sup> of the year that Vespasian assumed the consular office,<sup>767</sup> i.e., 70 C.E., “At the beginning of that same year,” Titus, the son of Vespasian, was “selected by his father to complete the subjugation of Judaea.”<sup>768</sup> Later that same year, Jerusalem fell into his hands. The words of Tacitus reveal the following:

## YEAR 1

The revolt (which started in May) found success for the Jews in November of that year when they defeated Cestius.

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<sup>765</sup> Tacitus, Hist., 5:10.

<sup>766</sup> Tacitus, Hist., 4:39.

<sup>767</sup> Cf. Dio, 66:1.

<sup>768</sup> Tacitus, Hist., 5:1.

## YEARS 2 & 3

*After the defeat of Cestius, Nero appoints Vespasian to the war, who “within two summers” occupies all the cities of Judaea except Jerusalem. This sequence perfectly matches what Josephus says on the matter.<sup>769</sup> Vespasian makes his first attack on the Jewish rebels at the city of Jotapata a few days after “the 21st of the month of Artemisius (Iyyar; May)” and takes the city “on the 13th year of the principate of Nero, on the new moon of Panemus (Tammuz; June/July).”<sup>770</sup>*

## YEAR 4

*This year was taken up with the civil war at Rome, which saw the quick succession of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius. As has been demonstrated in our last chapter, this civil war consumed the year 69 C.E. The Judaeen war was inactive as far as Roman involvement was concerned.*

## YEAR 5

*In the year after the civil war at Rome, after the first of January, Titus was sent to capture the city of Jerusalem. The 1st year of the revolt is determined by the following facts:*

- *The war ended in the 2nd year of Vespasian,<sup>771</sup> with the destruction of the Temple on the 10th of Lous (Ab; July/Aug.).<sup>772</sup> As shown above in our section on the reign of Vespasian, Vespasian became emperor in the latter half of 69 C.E., recognizing himself as emperor in July of that year while he was in Judaea. The 2nd year of Vespasian, the 5th year of the war, therefore, is the year 70 C.E., the year that Vespasian was first elected consular and the year he sent Titus to capture Jerusalem.*

- *The revolt began in the 12th year of Nero, in the month of Artemisius (Iyyar; April/May), the 2nd month of the Jewish year.<sup>773</sup>*

- *Since the year 70/71 C.E., Nisan reckoning, was the final year of the war, we must count back to the 1st year from this point.*

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<sup>769</sup> Jos., Wars, 2:19:9–3:1:3.

<sup>770</sup> Jos., Wars, 3:7:3–36.

<sup>771</sup> Jos., Wars, 6:10:1; Eusebius, H.E., 3:7.

<sup>772</sup> Jos., Wars, 6:4:5.

<sup>773</sup> Jos., Wars, 2:14:4, Antiq., 20:11:1, 20:12:1.

*Therefore, the revolt began in the 2nd Jewish month, Iyyar, of the year 66/67 C.E., being the 12th year of Nero. Further, the 12th year of Nero was still in progress during the 8th Jewish month of Marheshuan (Oct./Nov.) of that same year.<sup>774</sup>*

*This evidence compels us to equate the 12th year of Nero, as recorded by the Jewish priest Josephus and supported by Eusebius, with the year 66/67 C.E., Nisan reckoning. In the 2nd Jewish month of that year (Iyyar; April/ May) the revolt in Judaea began.*

## **Dating “Year 2” of Nero**

*The 2nd year of Nero, counted by the Judaeans of the 1st century C.E., is derived as follows:*

*Counting backwards from 66/67 C.E., Nisan reckoning, “Year 1” of Nero in Josephus is equal to the year 55/56 C.E., Nisan reckoning. “Year 2,” as a result, is 56/57 C.E., Nisan reckoning.*

*This dating is also confirmed by the aforementioned coins of Agrippa, governor of Judaea, when the First Revolt broke out. His coins bear the imperial effigy. They begin with one that gives the name and likeness of Nero and is dated “Year 6” = “Year 11,”<sup>775</sup> i.e., the 6th year of Nero = the 11th year of Agrippa. These coins, being Judaeans, are therefore based upon a 1st of Nisan year. Josephus, meanwhile, specifically tells us that the 12th year of Nero was the same as the 17th year of Agrippa, and that in turn this year was the year that the First Revolt began,<sup>776</sup> i.e., 66/67 C.E., Nisan reckoning.*

*“Year 2” of Nero in Judaea, therefore, is the year 56/57 C.E., Nisan reckoning. This date perfectly matches the Sabbath-cycle sequence of System “A.” Yet for the sake of argument, let us also grant the possibility of an October, November, or January system for the Note of Indebtedness at question. The 1st year of Nero, accordingly, would either be October, 54 until October, 55 C.E.; November, 54 until November, 55 C.E.; or a January 1, 55 until January 1, 56 C.E. year.*

*With any of these systems the last 6 or more months of a year belonging to Nero would fall within the first 6 or more months of the Jewish year. The Jewish revolt would still fall in the month of Iyyar in*

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<sup>774</sup> Jos., Wars, 2:19:9.

<sup>775</sup> IEJ, 12.1, p. 34.

<sup>776</sup> Jos., Wars, 2:14:4.

*the 12th year of Nero, i.e., the spring of 66 C.E., and for the Jews of Judaea, like Josephus, this 12th year continued beyond Marheshuan (Oct./Nov.) of this same year.*

*The Jewish year would still begin with the spring and a king's year in Judaea would still have been counted from that time. The greater part of Nero's 2nd year would include the Sabbath year of 56/57 C.E., Nisan reckoning.*

## **Conclusion**

*It is clear from this evidence that the 2nd year of Nero, mentioned in the Judaeian Note of Indebtedness found in the cave at Wadi Murabba'at, must have begun with the month of Nisan in the year 56/57 C.E. This year, according to that same document, was a Sabbath year.*

*Even using the variant arrangements of an October, November, or January year, System "B" is eliminated from consideration because it requires a Sabbath year from Tishri (Sept./Oct.) of 54 until Tishri of 55 C.E. This year would have been the 1st for Nero not his 2nd.*

*System "C," which demands a Sabbath year from Tishri, 55 until Tishri, 56 C.E., is still faced with the evidence that the Sabbath years during this period began with the month of Abib (Nisan). For this reason it also falls out of consideration.*

*System "D," which would have a Sabbath year from Nisan, 55 until Nisan, 56 C.E., is lacking since it would place the 2nd year of Nero in the year before its proper Jewish reckoning. It must likewise deal with the problem that previous years in its cycle have already been eliminated as possibilities.*

*The only viable solution is the System "A" Sabbath cycle. The Sabbath year represented by Nero's 2nd year over Judaea has provided us with one more item of proof confirming the cycle already demonstrated by the known Sabbath years from the 15th year of Hezekiah until the 2nd year of King Herod over Jerusalem (see Chart C).*



## Chapter 24 | Sabbatical Year 70 C.E. Destruction of the Temple

We have now come to a very important chapter in our chronology. Qadesh La Yahweh Press has done a lot of the heavy lifting thus far. Allow me to remind you of three important points that we have already mentioned in previous chapters.

In our discussion about the Sabbatical year of 162 B.C., and the siege of Bethzur, we had the following statement:

*First, there is no evidence at all that any ancient nation using the Seleucid calendar, especially Judaea, never counted their Seleucid year in this fashion. **In fact, the Jews themselves pronounced that the 381st Seleucid year occurred with the year that the Second Temple was destroyed (i.e., in Ab [July/Aug.] of 70/71 C.E., Nisan reckoning).***<sup>777</sup> *This and other details, as we have already demonstrated in our last chapter, prove that the Jews of this period counted the Seleucid era from 311/310 B.C.E., Nisan reckoning.*<sup>778</sup>

In the last chapter, we have shared the chronology of the Emperors of Rome in our search for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Nero. In that discussion we learned that Vespasian became Emperor in the year 69 C.E. after the civil war in Rome. It was only after this date in January 70 C.E., that Titus was sent to Jerusalem where he destroyed the Temple in the month of Ab in 70 C.E. Here are two key statements testifying to these facts:

*Nero died on June 9, 68 C.E. One year and 22 days later brings us to July 1, 69 C.E. Dio also makes the important observation that following the death of Vitellius, Vespasian “was declared emperor by the Senate also, and Titus and Domitian were given the title of Caesars. The consular office was assumed by Vespasian and Titus while the former was in Egypt and the latter in Palestine.”*<sup>779</sup> ***The consul year named is for 70 C.E., showing that Vespasian was recognized as emperor by the Senate on the 1st day of the year, at which time Vespasian also assumed the role of consul.***

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<sup>777</sup> TSCJ, p. 48; HBC, p. 124.

<sup>778</sup> See above Chap. XV, pp. 227f.

<sup>779</sup> Dio, 65:1.

*Tacitus supports Dio and adds that after the 1st of January, “At the beginning of that same year,” Titus was sent to “complete the subjugation of Judaea.”<sup>780</sup> The accession to power of Vespasian in mid-69 C.E. and then becoming consul on January 1, 70 C.E., therefore, becomes our coupling point to which all the succeeding dates up until our present time are attached and which are well established.<sup>781</sup> Finally, when we consult the ancient Roman Consul lists we find that there were exactly 57 consul years from the year Augustus Caesar died (when Sextus Apuleius and Sextus Pompeius were consuls) until the year that Jerusalem fell (when Vespasian and Titus were consuls).<sup>782</sup> This number of years fits exactly with the calculations we have presented.*

*• The war ended in the 2nd year of Vespasian,<sup>783</sup> with the destruction of the Temple on the 10th of Lous (Ab; July/Aug.).<sup>784</sup> As shown above in our section on the reign of Vespasian, Vespasian became emperor in the latter half of 69 C.E., recognizing himself as emperor in July of that year while he was in Judaea. The 2nd year of Vespasian, the 5th year of the war, therefore, is the year 70 C.E., the year that Vespasian was first elected consular and the year he sent Titus to capture Jerusalem.*

Throughout this book, whenever I am quoting Qadesh La Yahweh Press, they have consistently shown how the chronologies of Zuckermann, Schürer, Marcus and Wacholder have not lined up with each and every Sabbatical and Jubilee year throughout history. Those that do not match they leave out of their studies. Wacholder also looked at some of the tombstones being discovered during his lifetime and dismissed them because they did not match his chronology. They had not yet been discovered when Benjamin Zuckermann wrote *A treatise of the Sabbatical cycle and the Jubilee* in 1857 C.E. Qadesh La Yahweh Press has not looked at the tombstones of Zoar, but has repeatedly demonstrated all the historical dates, compared from each

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<sup>780</sup> Tacitus, Hist., 4:39–5:1.

<sup>781</sup> All of this is important to establishing the date when Titus was sent to siege Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E.

<sup>782</sup> Senator, Chron., ∞. 614–695; MGH, 11, pp. 136–138; HBC, pp. 96f. Also see Chart H.

<sup>783</sup> Jos., Wars, 6:10:1; Eusebius, H.E., 3:7.

<sup>784</sup> Jos., Wars, 6:4:5.

of the four systems when examined, point to only one possible chronology, which they call system “A.”

## **The Four Systems**

*There are four possible Sabbath-cycle systems we must consider. For simplification purposes, this study shall utilize the following labels for these four systems. Our “key” or “example” date will be the Sabbath year determined in each system that either lies with or nearest to the year that Jerusalem and Herod’s Temple (the Second Temple of Yahweh) were destroyed (the summer of 70 C.E.).*

*System “A”: Abib (March/April) 1, 70 C.E. until Abib 1, 71 C.E. The month of Abib was later called Nisan. System “A” is advocated by this study.*

*System “B”: Tishri (Sept./Oct.) 1, 68 C.E. until Tishri 1, 69 C.E. The Zuckermann-Schürer system.*

*System “C”: Tishri 1, 69 C.E. until Tishri 1, 70 C.E. The Marcus-Wacholder theory.*

*System “D”: Abib 1, 69 C.E. until Abib 1, 70 C.E. A possibility based upon the evidence of an Abib 1 beginning for the year coupled with the claim of Rabbi Jose and some other Talmudic writers that the year (possibly part of the year) before the fall of Jerusalem was a Sabbath year.*

*Today the most popular of these theories is System “B.” Both Systems “B” and “C” arise from a late Jewish interpretation that makes the Sabbath year begin with Tishri 1.*

One of the reasons we published **The Stones Cry Out Part 1** was to look at what happened leading up to the change of the year from Abib to Tishri, and how starting the Sabbatical year from the 1<sup>st</sup> of Abib was changed to the 1<sup>st</sup> of Tishri. It all came down to the records found in the Mishnah and from Rabbi Jose who wrote the Seder Olam.

*Yet these two views differ as to application of the evidence regarding how the Sabbath year relates to the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E. The supporting documents they use begin with the Seder Olam (c.160 C.E.), the Mishnah (composed near the end*

of the 2nd century C.E.), and other Jewish writings made during the Talmudic period.

More precisely, the debate between Systems “B” and “C” arises from a difference of opinion regarding the phrase “it was the מוצאי (mutzai) of the Sabbatical year” when the Second Temple was destroyed. Those advocating System “B” argue that the term מוצאי (mutzai) should be interpreted to mean “immediately after,” i.e., the Temple was destroyed in the year “immediately after” the Sabbatical year (Tishri 1st reckoning). System “C,” on the other hand, understands the term מוצאי (mutzai) to mean that the destruction occurred at the “going-out” of the Sabbath year, i.e., in the last half of a Sabbath year (Tishri 1 reckoning). System “C” has been advocated since the time of the Gemara portion of the written Talmud,<sup>785</sup> but it has become the lesser sister to the more recently developed System “B.” Nevertheless, System “C” has again gained some popularity in recent years due to the work of Ralph Marcus and Ben Zion Wacholder.

System “B” fails in that its advocates incorrectly interpret the term מוצאי (mutzai) to mean “immediately after” rather than its correct rendering “at the going-out” of the Sabbath year.<sup>786</sup> It also uses the late Jewish interpretation that the Sabbath and Jubilee years begin with Tishri 1. They then anachronistically applied their new view to previous historical events. As we shall demonstrate throughout our investigation, this interpretation is not only late but completely wrong. Originally, the Sabbath and Jubilee years began in the spring with the month of Abib (later called Nisan).

System “C” takes into account that the year Jerusalem fell to the Romans (70 C.E.) was a Sabbath year, correctly understanding the term מוצאי (mutzai) to mean that the destruction of Jerusalem occurred during the “going-out” of the Sabbath year. Yet its advocates err in that they continued the late and, what we shall

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<sup>785</sup> For the purposes of our study, Talmudic times, which essentially represent Pharisaic traditions and interpretations of Scriptural laws, can be divided into three phases. First is the halakoth or oral laws period (mid-2nd century B.C.E. until the last years of the 2nd century C.E.). Second is the period when these oral laws were codified in written form. This event took place in about 200 C.E. with the composition of the Mishnah. It continued until about 500 C.E. with the Gemara, comments by the Rabbis on the Mishnah. The post-Gemara era is also called the post-Talmudic period. It represents the third phase of Talmudic times. Jewish scholars during this phase advocated the earlier codified Talmudic laws and traditions.

<sup>786</sup> See our discussion below in Chap. XXVIII.

*prove to be, false practice of reckoning the beginning of a Sabbath year from Tishri 1.*

*System “D” is merely a modified form of System “B” in that it incorrectly interprets the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. as occurring in the year “immediately after” the Sabbatical year. Yet it differs from System “B” in that it takes notice of the fact that the earlier Israelites actually began their Sabbath year in the spring with Abib and not in the autumn with Tishri 1.*

Systems “B,” “C,” and “D” have taken the false assumption that the year began with the 7<sup>th</sup> month. Using this as their starting understanding, they have sought to prove this position correct. System “A,” which we at Sightedmoon.com also adhere to, just looks at the evidence—and the evidence alone—to determine when the year begins and the Sabbatical and Jubilee years.

*System “A,” on the other hand, is based upon the in-depth research into the ancient evidence provided in this study. In reality, System “A” has merely allowed the evidence to present its own case. Under the System “A” construct, the year in which the Second Temple at Jerusalem was destroyed was a Sabbath year based upon a Nisan 1 reckoning. With so much disruption and upheaval of the Jewish kingdom during the last half of the 1st century C.E. and the first half of the 2nd century C.E., many of the rabbis, beginning in the mid-2nd century C.E., lost touch with an accurate chronology of Israelite history. This loss of information was compounded by the adoption of the Greek year system by the rabbis, which began the year in the autumn with Tishri 1 rather than the spring. As a result, they incorrectly calculated the Sabbath year as beginning with Tishri 1 and then anachronistically applied their interpretation to previous historical events.*

*All three alternate Systems (“B,” “C,” and “D”) are faced with important obstacles. Advocates of these various theories have often been forced to harshly criticize ancient records, such as provided by the books of Maccabees and Josephus, because the historical data is inconsistent with their present theories. Robert North, for example, takes Josephus to task by challenging his historical year as exhibiting “internal inconsistencies which invalidate their use for chronology.” North concludes, “It should be abundantly clear that*

*the sabbath year dates of Josephus are either palpably incommensurate, or else insolubly obscure.”<sup>787</sup>*

*This study disagrees. It is not Josephus or any other pre-2nd century C.E. ancient report that is the source for the confusion. Indeed, we find them all remarkably accurate. Rather, it is the attempt to force these ancient records to conform with one of the three erroneous Sabbath-cycle theories, thereby creating an illusion of historical error. System “A” does not start from the premise of a prevalent theory, as the other three systems do. It is not built upon the interpretation of one or two historical events or an acceptance of a late Jewish tradition. Instead, it allows the evidence to build its own structure. The results of this method reveal that the ancient sources are in perfect harmony and reflect an entirely different Sabbath and Jubilee cycle than heretofore presented. As is to be expected, the fact that System “A” is a new and radical departure from the three alternate theories demands that it must submit in every detail to very close scrutiny. Yet there is no doubt that System “A” not only survives meticulous scrutiny but its solution is compelling.*

This chapter about 70 C.E. being a Sabbatical year is critical for our research. We have already established a long list of Sabbatical and Jubilee years that are all in sync with one another. I could leave you with just that evidence and what I have already provided above about the Roman Emperor chronology but must remove any and all criticisms or doubts. At first glance, this task is not as easy as I would hope.

## **No Direct Testimony**

*It is unfortunate, indeed, that we possess no direct testimony<sup>788</sup> by any contemporary historian or other similar record that can testify directly as to whether or not a Sabbath year was in progress during the period that Jerusalem was captured by the Romans (i.e., in the summer of 70 C.E.). Such documentation would end all speculation on the issue and would settle the question once and for all.*

*Nevertheless, Josephus, who was contemporary with that event, goes a long way towards proving that 70/71 C.E., Nisan reckoning, was a Sabbath year. In his history of the First Revolt, Josephus*

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<sup>787</sup> Biblica, 34.4, pp. 503, 511.

<sup>788</sup> Qadesh La Yahweh Press, Chapter XXVIII The Sabbath Year of 70/71 C.E., <https://www.yahweh.org/publications/sjc/sj-28Chap.pdf>

*mentions an invasion of Judaeen Idumaea by Simon ben Gioras in the winter of 68/69 C.E. The fields of Idumaea, we are told, were cultivated at that time. This detail is important because the Idumaeans living in this region and during that period were Jewish by religion and would not have cultivated their fields in the few months prior to a Sabbath year or during a Sabbath year. Therefore, the evidence from Josephus strongly indicates that the Sabbath year could not have taken place until the next year (70/71 C.E., Nisan reckoning).*

*In addition, rabbis beginning from the mid-2nd century C.E. and forward provide us with important information regarding the Sabbath year at the time of the destruction of the Temple of Yahweh in the summer of 70 C.E. According to their records, the Romans began to destroy the Temple of Yahweh on a Sabbath day during a Sabbath year. As a result, when we combine these items of evidence, it proves that 70/71 C.E., Nisan reckoning, was a Sabbath year.*

## **Chronology of Simon's Invasion**

*The sequence of events for Simon's invasion of Idumaea are as follows: Vespasian, the Roman general, was in Caesarea preparing to march against Jerusalem when word arrived of the death of Emperor Nero.<sup>789</sup> Nero died on or about June 9, 68 C.E. Since it was early summer, it would have taken approximately 3 weeks for news to arrive from Rome to Palestine (this being a reasonable estimate due to the urgency of the message of the emperor's death). Vespasian must have heard of Nero's death on or about the beginning of July, which is supported by comparing the statements of Theophilus and Dio.<sup>790</sup>*

*Vespasian, after hearing of Nero's death and the civil war that ensued, deferred his expedition against Jerusalem, "anxiously waiting to see upon whom the empire would devolve after Nero's death; nor when he subsequently heard that Galba was emperor would he undertake anything, until he had received further instructions from him concerning the war."<sup>791</sup>*

*In response, Vespasian sent his son Titus to the new emperor for instructions. Yet before Titus could arrive in Rome, while he was still*

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<sup>789</sup> Jos., Wars, 4:9:2.

<sup>790</sup> Theophilus, 3:27; Dio, 65:1, 66:17; also see above Chap. XXVI, pp. 349f.

<sup>791</sup> Jos., Wars, 4:9:2.

*sailing in vessels of war around Achaëa, it being the winter season, “Galba was assassinated” and Otho succeeded to the crown.*<sup>792</sup>

*Titus then sailed back from Greece to Syria and hastened to rejoin his father at Caesarea. “The two (Vespasian and Titus), being in suspense on these momentous matters, when the Roman Empire itself was reeling, neglected the invasion of Judaea, regarding an attack on a foreign country as unseasonable, while in such anxiety concerning their own.”*<sup>793</sup>

*Otho had ascended to the throne on January 15, 69 C.E. It would have taken about 14 to 21 days for news of Galba’s death to reach Greece where Titus was. Therefore, Titus must have started back for Syria in mid-February and rejoined his father at Caesarea in late February or early March of 69 C.E.*

*“But another war WAS NOW IMPENDING over Jerusalem.”*<sup>794</sup> *At this point Josephus backs up a little to tell the story of how the Jewish factional leader Simon ben Gioras came to lay siege against Jerusalem. The context of his discussion is that the siege of Simon ben Gioras against Jerusalem was about to occur at the same time that Titus made his return trip from Greece.*

*In the months before the siege Simon had collected a strong force and had overrun not only the province of Acrabetene but the whole district extending to the border of Idumaea. He then fortified himself in a city called Nain where “he laid up his spoils of corn” and “where most of his troops were quartered.” Here he began training his men “for an attack upon Jerusalem.”*<sup>795</sup>

*The Jewish Zealots, who were allied with and had many members from the Idumaeans, fearing an attack by Simon, made an expedition against him (unthinkable in a Sabbath year), but they lost the contest. In turn, Simon “resolved first to subdue Idumaea” and forthwith marched to the borders of that country. A battle was fought but no one was the victor. Each side returned home.*<sup>796</sup> *“Not long after,” Simon invaded that country again with a larger force. This time he took control of the fortress at Herodion (Herodium). Through a bit of*

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<sup>792</sup> Ibid.

<sup>793</sup> Ibid.

<sup>794</sup> Jos., Wars, 4:9:3.

<sup>795</sup> Jos., Wars, 4:9:3f, cf. 2:22:2.

<sup>796</sup> Jos., Wars, 4:9:5.



*trickery, Simon was able to convince the Idumaeans that he possessed a force far too great for them to thwart. The Idumaeans unexpectedly broke ranks and fled.*<sup>797</sup>

*Simon, thus, “marched into Idumaea without bloodshed,” captured Hebron, “where he gained abundant booty and laid hands on vast supplies of corn,” and then “pursued his march through the whole of Idumaea.”*<sup>798</sup> *On his march through Idumaea, Simon made “havoc also of the country, since provisions proved insufficient for such a multitude; for, exclusive of his troops, he had 40,000 followers.” His cruelty and animosity against the nation “contributed to complete the devastation of Idumaea.”*<sup>799</sup>

*Just as a forest in the wake of locusts can be seen stripped quite bare, so in the rear of Simon’s army nothing remained but a desert. Some places they burnt, others they razed to the ground; ALL VEGETATION throughout the country vanished, either trodden under foot or consumed; while the tramp of their march rendered ενεργον γη (CULTIVATED LAND) harder than the barren soil. In short, nothing touched by their ravages left any sign of its having ever existed.*<sup>800</sup>

*The land was ενεργον (energon), i.e., “cultivated,” “productive,” “active.”*<sup>801</sup> *This evidence proves that the land in Idumaea was at the time planted with crops. It also places Simon’s invasion in the months after Khisleu (Nov./ Dec.), when the fields are first sown. The Jews under Simon were also harvesting all consumable vegetation, something not done during a Sabbath year.*

*In turn the Zealots captured Simon’s wife and triumphantly entered the city of Jerusalem as if Simon himself had been captured. In response Simon laid siege to Jerusalem (which he would not have done in a Sabbath year), causing a great terror among the people there. Out of fear the citizens allowed Simon to recover his wife,<sup>802</sup> but he was not yet able to take the city.*

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<sup>797</sup> Jos., Wars, 4:9:5f.

<sup>798</sup> Jos., Wars, 4:9:7.

<sup>799</sup> Ibid.

<sup>800</sup> Jos., Wars, 4:9:7.

<sup>801</sup> GEL, p. 261; SEC, Gk. #1753–1756.

<sup>802</sup> Jos., Wars, 4:9:8.

*Josephus then backtracks to report the events occurring in Rome at that time. Galba was murdered (Jan., 69 C.E.), Otho succeeded to power, and Vitellius was elected emperor by his soldiers. The contest between Otho and Vitellius ensued, after which Otho died, having ruled 3 months and 2 days.<sup>803</sup> Otho's death took place in April of 69 C.E.<sup>804</sup>*

*This evidence demonstrates, since aggressive war was committed and crops were in production during the winter of 68/69 C.E., that System "B," which would have the Sabbath year begin in Tishri of 68 C.E., is eliminated as a possibility. Also, since the Jews by custom did not plant crops during the six months prior to the beginning of a Sabbath year, System "D," which would begin a Sabbath year in the spring of 69 C.E., must also be dismissed.*

## **The Edomite Jews**

*Those who hold to Systems "B" and "D" object to our conclusion. They cannot deny the clear statements of Josephus. Instead, they argue, as Solomon Zeitlin does, that "the laws of the sabbatical year affected only the lands of Palestine, and had no application in Edom or in any other country that was annexed to Palestine."<sup>805</sup> Though this interpretation may at first seem reasonable, the attempt by the advocates of Systems "B" and "D" to circumvent the words of Josephus about the events during the winter of 68/69 C.E. cannot bear up against close scrutiny.*

*First, one must not confuse the original country of Edom (Greek "Idumaea") with the country of Idumaea of the 1st century C.E. The Edomites had originally settled in the Khorite country of Seir, located southeast of the Dead Sea.<sup>806</sup> The people of Edom are descendants of Esau, who was later called Edom (Red) because he sold his birthright to his brother, Jacob Israel, for a bowl of red soup.<sup>807</sup> Before the death of Isaak, the father of both Israel and Edom, Edom migrated and settled in the Kanaani land of Seir the Khorite, located in the mountains southeast of the Dead Sea. Edom made this settlement*

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<sup>803</sup> Jos., Wars, 4:9:9.

<sup>804</sup> Tacitus, Hist., 2:47–55.

<sup>805</sup> JQR, 9.1/2, pp. 90, 101.

<sup>806</sup> Deut., 2:5, 12, 22; Jos., Antiq., 1:20:3, 2:1:1; Yashar, 28:20, 29:12–13, 36:15–37, 47:1, 30–32, 56:46f, 57:4–38, 84:5; cf. Gen., 36:20.

<sup>807</sup> Gen., 25:19–34, 36:1–43.

*permanent after Isaak's death. Later, the Edomite nation killed off the Seiri and became the dominant tribe in that land.*<sup>808</sup>

*In the days of Moses the country bordering south of Edom was Qadesh Barnea,<sup>809</sup> properly identified by Josephus,<sup>810</sup> Jerome, and Eusebius with the district near Petra.<sup>811</sup> On Edom's north side lay Moab,<sup>812</sup> their borders touching at the Zered River: the modern Wadi el-Hasa.<sup>813</sup> Through Edom's territory ran the famous King's Highway, the main highway that today extends from the Gulf of Aqabah to Al Karak.<sup>814</sup> The ancient capital city of Edom was Bozrah.<sup>815</sup> It was located about 30 miles southeast of the Dead Sea in the mountains east of the Arabah (the long valley located south of the Dead Sea and on the west side of the Seir mountains).<sup>816</sup>*

*At the time the Israelites divided up their shares of the Promised Land, Judah's portion included the Arabah. Judah's lot also retained Qadesh Barnea, which bordered on the south of Edom and extended southward towards the Gulf of Aqabah (Red Sea).<sup>817</sup> Importantly, the Israelites were not permitted to take any part of the land of Edom in their conquest.<sup>818</sup> After the Exodus, when the Israelites left the southern border of Edom in an effort to encompass that land so that they might gain access to the King's Highway without having to pass through Edom's territory, they went by way of the Arabah south of the Dead Sea.<sup>819</sup>*

*On their way north from the Gulf of Aqabah, the Israelites stopped off at Punon,<sup>820</sup> identified with modern Feinan, an Edomite border district on Edom's western side, located on the east side of the*

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<sup>808</sup> Gen., 32:3; Num., 24:18; Deut., 2:12, 22; Yashar, 47:1, 57:13–38.

<sup>809</sup> Num., 20:16.

<sup>810</sup> Jos., Antiq., 4:4:7.

<sup>811</sup> Jerome, Onom., p. 108, "Cades"; Eusebius, Onom., p. 233, no. 103:3, "Βαρνηα."

<sup>812</sup> Deut., 2:1–5, 8–18; cf. Num., 21:10–12; Judg., 11:16–18.

<sup>813</sup> DB, p. 763; NBD, p. 1359; WHAB, p. 39a.

<sup>814</sup> Num., 20:14–21; cf. 21:21f; also see MBA, maps 9, 10, 52, 104, 126, 208; WHAB, p. 41, 65b; NBD, p. 700.

<sup>815</sup> Gen., 36:33; Isa., 34:6, 63:1; Jer., 49:13, 22; Amos, 1:12; Mic., 2:12.

<sup>816</sup> NBD, p. 165; MBA, maps 52, 104, 155.

<sup>817</sup> Josh., 10:16, 15:1–3, 18:18; Num., 34:3f.

<sup>818</sup> Deut., 2:4–5.

<sup>819</sup> Deut., 2:8; cf. Num. 21:21ff; Yashar, 85:14.

<sup>820</sup> Num., 21:4–11; cf. 33:42ff.

*Arabah about 25 miles south of the Dead Sea.<sup>821</sup> This evidence proves that the original country of Edom Proper laid north of Petra, east of the Arabah, and south of the Zered River (Wadi el-Hasa).*

*The Edomite families remaining in their original homeland were, by the beginning of the reign of King Darius I of Persia (521 B.C.E.), driven out of their country by the Nabataean Arabs. These exiled Edomites, in turn, resettled in southern Palestine (cf. 1 Esdras, 4:45–50). The historian Strabo writes:*

*The Idumaeans (Edomites) are Nabataeans, but owing to sedition they were banished from there, (and) joined the Judaeans.<sup>822</sup>*

*The Nabataeans were an Arab tribe named after Nebaioth, the son of Ishmael, the brother-in-law of Edom.<sup>823</sup> In the post-exilic period this tribe came to dominate the ancient Edomite country on the southeast side of the Dead Sea. They made their capital the ancient city of Petra.<sup>824</sup>*

*The Edomi were not actually Nabataeans. Nevertheless, after they and their original homeland came under the dominance of the Nabataeans during the late Babylonian period, the Greeks began to identify these Edomi with the latter. Strabo, accordingly, identified the Idumaeans with their kinsmen tribe because they had once dwelt with the Nabataeans in part of the land presently known to him as Nabataea.*

*The territory occupied by the Edomites in the 1st century C.E., on the other hand, was located in the southern half of Judaea and was part of the Holy Land. Josephus states that the land of Idumaea that existed from the 2nd century B.C.E. until the 1st century C.E. laid in “the latitude of Gaza” and was “conterminous with” the territory then held by the Jews.<sup>825</sup> Its cities included Hebron (formally an important Jewish city in the inheritance of Judah);<sup>826</sup> Adora (located 5 miles southwest of Hebron); Rhesa (8 miles south of Hebron);*

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<sup>821</sup> Jerome, Onom., p. 123, “Fenon”; Eusebius, Onom., p. 199, no. 123:9, “Finwvn”; MBA, p. 182, map. 52; ATB, p. 160.

<sup>822</sup> Strabo, 16:1:34.

<sup>823</sup> Gen., 25:13, 28:9; Jos., Antiq., 1:12:4.

<sup>824</sup> Strabo, 16:4:21.

<sup>825</sup> Jos., Apion., 2:9.

<sup>826</sup> E.g., see Josh., 21:9–11, 11:21, 15:1–14, 14:6–15.

*Marisa (1 mile south of Bit Jibrin); Thekoue (5 miles south of Bethlehem); Herodion (3 miles northeast of Thekoue); and Alurus (4 miles north of Hebron).*<sup>827</sup>

*Josephus makes Idumaea one of the 11 districts of Judaea.*<sup>828</sup> *In his book on the Jewish Wars, Josephus reports a defection “in many parts of Idumaea, where Machaeras was rebuilding the walls of the fortress called Gittha.”*<sup>829</sup> *In another version of this story, Josephus states it was “a good part of Judaea” that revolted when Machaeras fortified the place called Gittha.*<sup>830</sup> *Therefore, the 1st century C.E. country of Idumaea is interchangeably used as part of Judaea.*

*In pointing out how the Holy Land was divided up amongst the 12 tribes of Israel in the days of Joshua the son of Nun (1394 B.C.E.), Josephus uses the place names of cities and regions in his own day (the 1st century C.E.). In the allotments that came to the Israelite tribes of Judah and Simeon (Simeon obtaining a share of Judah’s territory),*<sup>831</sup> *Josephus gives the following description:*

*When, then, he had cast lots, that of Judah obtained for its lot the WHOLE OF UPPER IDUMAEA, extending (in length) to Jerusalem and in breadth reaching over to the lake of Sodom (Dead Sea); within this allotment were the cities of Ashkelon and Gaza. That of Simeon, being the second, obtained the portion OF IDUMAEA bordering on Egypt and Arabia.*<sup>832</sup>

*Diodorus of Sicily states that the Dead Sea extends along the middle of the satrapy of Idumaea*<sup>833</sup> *(i.e., the Dead Sea laid on the eastern side of Idumaea about half way down the country of Idumaea). Pliny points out that “Idumaea and Judaea” were part of the “seacoast of Syria,”*<sup>834</sup> *i.e., they both border upon the Mediterranean Sea. He adds that Palestine begins with the region of Idumaea “at the*

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<sup>827</sup> Jos., Wars, 1:2:6, 1:13:8, 4:9:4–7, Antiq., 13:9:1, 14:13:9; and so forth.

<sup>828</sup> Jos., Wars, 3:3:5.

<sup>829</sup> Jos., Wars, 1:17:2.

<sup>830</sup> Jos., Antiq., 14:15:10.

<sup>831</sup> For the location of the inheritance of Judah and Simeon, see Josh., 15:1–63, 19:1–9. The tribe of Simeon took its portion out of the land allotted to Judah, see Josh., 19:1.

<sup>832</sup> Jos., Antiq., 5:1:22.

<sup>833</sup> Diodorus, 19:98.

<sup>834</sup> Pliny, 5:13.

point where the Serbonian Lake comes into view.”<sup>835</sup> The Serbonian Lake is located along the Mediterranean Sea, forming the northeastern sector of the Sinai Peninsula. Pliny also makes Judaea proper lie between Idumaea and Samaria.<sup>836</sup>

Strabo notes, “As for Judaea, its western extremities towards Casius are occupied by the Idumaeans and by the lake (Serbonia).”<sup>837</sup> The famous 2nd century C.E. geographer Ptolemy makes Idumaea one of the districts of greater “Palestina or Judaea.” He writes that “all” of Idumaea lies “west of the Jordan River.” Ptolemy describes and defines Idumaea and its cities as that district lying immediately south of Judaea proper.<sup>838</sup>

This geographical data proves beyond any doubt that the country of Idumaea which existed during the 1st century C.E. occupied a portion of the Promised Land that had formally been given by allotment to the Israelite tribes of Judah and Simeon. The land they possessed, therefore, was part of the Holy Land. More specifically, it was part of greater Judah (Simeon’s portion being extracted out of Judah’s share). It stands to reason that if part of the Holy Land is occupied by those professing the Jewish faith, in the eyes of the Jews, it certainly would be subject to the Laws of Moses.

What then of the Idumaeen religious beliefs? In the reign of John Hyrcanus (134/133–105/104 B.C.E.), the Jews conquered the country of Idumaea.<sup>839</sup>

*Hyrcanus also captured the Idumaeen cities of Adora and Marisa, and after subduing all the Idumaeans, PERMITTED THEM TO REMAIN in the country SO LONG AS they had themselves circumcised and WERE WILLING TO OBSERVE THE LAWS OF THE JEWS. And so, out of attachment to the land of their fathers, they submitted to circumcision and to making their manner of life conform in all other respects to that of the Jews. AND FROM THAT TIME ON THEY HAVE CONTINUED TO BE JEWS.*<sup>840</sup>

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<sup>835</sup> Pliny, 5:14.

<sup>836</sup> Pliny, 5:15.

<sup>837</sup> Strabo, 16:2:34.

<sup>838</sup> Ptolemy, Geog., 5:16 §1–10, Map 4 of Asia.

<sup>839</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:9:1, Wars, 1:2:6.

<sup>840</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:9:1.

*No other neighboring countries located outside of the lands anciently inhabited by the Israelites and conquered by the Jews in the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C.E. were forced to meet the requirements of either becoming Jewish by religion and practice or suffer under the threat of being forced to vacate their land. Nevertheless, there are two extremely important questions that have not been asked in reference to this above cited passage: First, "Is this exemption true for those people living on territories anciently inhabited by the Israelites?" Second, "Why would the Jews demand compliance from these Idumaeans?"*

*The answers are easily unveiled. When the Jews dominated Samaria and the Trans-Jordan districts, once inhabited by the house of Israel, Jewish customs were also demanded. The Samaritans, for instance, had long practiced a form of Judaism and, for the Jews, were not an issue.<sup>841</sup> The Ituraean Arabs also provide us an excellent example. A tribe of Ituraeans lived in a Trans-Jordan district once inhabited by the Israelite tribe of Manasseh. When a portion of them were conquered by the Jewish king Aristobulus (104/103 B.C.E.), and their territory annexed, they were joined to the Jews "by the bond of circumcision."<sup>842</sup>*

*The Idumaeans, meanwhile, were living in that part of the Holy Land which historically belonged to the Jews, who had occupied it centuries before the Jewish exile to Babylonia during the 6th century B.C.E. The Jews identified themselves with their own heritage in Judah yet they still saw reasons to require the conversion of the foreign nations now occupying the territory that had once belonged to the house of Israel. This requirement was even more stringent within territory traditionally considered Judahite. In the Torah, aliens dwelling with the Israelites were required to observe the Sabbath year.<sup>843</sup> As a result, either the Edomites, who were living in Judah proper and not just in greater Israelite territory, had to conform to Jewish law or they had to leave. The Idumaeans chose to stay in the land, "And from that time on they have continued to be Jews!"*

*In the days of King Herod the Great of Judaea an Idumaean named Costobarus was appointed governor of Idumaea and Gaza.*

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<sup>841</sup> Cf. 2 Kings, 17:24–28; Jos., Antiq., 9:14:1–3.

<sup>842</sup> Jos., Antiq., 13:11:3.

<sup>843</sup> E.g., Lev., 25:2–7.

*Costobarus held the belief that the Idumaeans should not have adopted the customs of the Jews, so he sent to Cleopatra of Egypt in an attempt to have Idumaea stripped from Judaea as a possession. The attempt failed, but in discussing this issue Josephus also comments that in earlier times the Jewish priest "Hyrcanus had altered their (the Idumaeans') way of life and made them adopt THE CUSTOMS AND LAWS OF THE JEWS."*<sup>844</sup> Strabo writes:

*The Idumaeans are Nabataeans, but owing to a sedition they were banished from there, joined the Judaeans, and SHARED IN THE SAME CUSTOMS WITH THEM.*<sup>845</sup>

*Antipater, the father of Herod the Judaeen king (37–4 B.C.E.), was an Idumaeen held in high esteem among the Idumaeen people.*<sup>846</sup> *Although Herod's father was Edomite, the Jews themselves proclaimed that he "was a Jew."*<sup>847</sup> *Four of Herod's wives (Doris, Mariamme the daughter of Alexander, Mariamme the daughter of Simon, and Cleopatra) are known to be Jewish.*<sup>848</sup> *In fact, Mariamme the daughter of Alexander was the granddaughter of the Jewish high priest named Hyrcanus and the other Mariamme was the daughter of the high priest named Simon Boethus.*<sup>849</sup>

*It would not have been possible for Herod to have retained the Judaeen crown if he had not himself been Jewish by religion. Therefore, the king of Judaea, at the time that Yahushua the messiah was born, although Edomite by descent, was Jewish by religion. This fact symbolizes the general merger of the Jews of Judaea and Edomites of Idumaea during this and subsequent periods. Though up*

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<sup>844</sup> Jos., Antiq., 15:7:9.

<sup>845</sup> Strabo 16:2:34.

<sup>846</sup> Jos., Wars, 1:6:2, 1:13:7, 2:4:1, Antiq., 14:1:3, 14:7:3, 14:15:2.

<sup>847</sup> Jos., Wars, 2:13:7.

<sup>848</sup> Doris was of Herod's "own nation," i.e., an Edomite (Jos., Antiq., 14:12:1), yet she is said to be "a native of Jerusalem" (Jos., Wars, 1:22:1) and "a Jewess of some standing" (Jos., Wars, 12:3). Mariamme, the daughter of Alexander, the son of Aristobulus, was the granddaughter of the high priest Hyrcanus (Jos., Wars, 1:12:3, 1:17:8, Antiq., 14:12:1, 14:15:14). The second Mariamme was the "daughter of Simon the high priest" (Jos., Antiq., 15:9:3, 18:5:4). Cleopatra is also called "a native of Jerusalem." Regarding the 10 wives of Herod the Great, see Jos., Antiq., 17:1:1–3; Wars, 1:24:2, 1:28:4; HJP, 1, pp. 320f.

<sup>849</sup> Ibid.



*until the 1st century C.E. the Judahites and Edomites could distinguish between themselves, foreigners classed them all as Jews. In time even their own ability to distinguish one from the other had passed away.*

*In religious matters the Idumaeans were generally in alliance with the Zealots, one of the strictest religious sects in ancient Judaism.<sup>850</sup> The Idumaeen Jews attended the major religious festivals at Jerusalem and were also a bulwark in the First Revolt against the Romans (66–70 C.E.).<sup>851</sup>*

## **Second Temple Destroyed in a Sabbath Year**

*There is no contemporary record referring to the Sabbath year of 70/71 C.E., Nisan reckoning (or, for that matter, any other year around this time). Yet 70/71 C.E. was an important year for the Jews. It was during this year that the Romans captured Jerusalem and destroyed the Second Temple of Yahweh. For this reason, the destruction of the Second Temple was still painfully remembered by the mid-2nd century C.E. rabbis. In addition, only a few decades after the destruction of the Second Temple, the Judaeen nation again heavily suffered from another devastating defeat by the Romans. This calamity came as the result of the Bar Kochba revolt against Rome, which ended in 135 C.E.<sup>852</sup> At this time the Romans carried off and enslaved thousands of Jews, exiling many more. Those that remained in Judaea fell under the iron boot of the Romans and were forbidden to even come near the district surrounding the city of Jerusalem.<sup>853</sup> From this time forward, the Romans no longer allowed the Jews to keep the Sabbath years. These dire straits forced the remaining Judaeen population to accommodate to their new circumstances. For example, **it was after the collapse of the Jewish kingdom in 135 C.E. that the rabbis created a new reckoning for the Sabbath year, one that began both the Sabbath and Jubilee years with Tishri 1 rather than with Nisan 1.**<sup>854</sup>*

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<sup>850</sup> E.g., Jos., Antiq., 4:4:1–4:5:2.

<sup>851</sup> E.g., Jos., Antiq., 17:10:2, Wars, 2:3:2, 5:6:1, 6:8:2.

<sup>852</sup> See a detailed discussion below in Chaps. XXIX–XXXII.

<sup>853</sup> Eusebius, H.E., 4:6.

<sup>854</sup> See above Chap. II.

Unfortunately, when the rabbis living in the mid-2nd century C.E. and beyond took it upon themselves to discuss past events in Jewish history, they anachronistically superimposed their new interpretation of when to begin the Sabbath year upon these historical events—a rather self-serving effort meant to justify their new reckoning. Nevertheless, once we take into account this anachronism, the late rabbinic interpretation actually proves that a Sabbath year took place in 70/71 C.E., Nisan reckoning. The rabbinic version of the Sabbath year, for example, reckoned a Sabbath year from Tishri 1 of 69 until the beginning of Tishri 1 of 70 C.E. (System “C”) rather than by the scriptural method by using Nisan 1 of 70 until the beginning of Nisan 1 of 71 C.E. (System “A”).

**As previously demonstrated, the rabbis first lengthened their Sabbath year by adding 6 months prior to the beginning of the actual Sabbath year.** They were encouraged to make this adjustment by their own self-imposed requirement that they must build a fence around the Torah.<sup>855</sup> After the Bar Kochba revolt, the Jews of Judaea were oppressed by the prolonged observance of their contrived version of the Sabbath year and by their Roman overlords, who forced the Jews to work their fields during a Sabbath year. **As a result, the rabbis were forced to shorten their observance of the Sabbath year from 1½ years to 1 year by adopting the Greek system of beginning the year with the month of Hyperberetaeus, called Tishri in Hebrew.** Thus, these rabbis created the Tishri 1 year system for every year, calling Tishri 1 “Rosh ha-Shanah (Head of the Year),” a definition that is nowhere found in Scriptures. The reckoning of the Tishri 1 year system remains for those practicing Judaism until this day.

At the same time, Rabbinic records agreed with Josephus and other historical sources that the date for the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Second Temple of Yahweh occurred on the 9th of Ab (July/Aug.). They also calculated that the destruction of both the First and Second Temples occurred on a Sabbath day during a Sabbath year. The reckoning of Ab 9 is true for the year 70 C.E.,

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<sup>855</sup> Ab., 1:1, “the men of the great assembly” said “make a fence round the Torah”; cf. B. Pes., 2b, “The Rabbis erected a safeguard for a Scriptural law”; B. Sanh., 46a, “not with the intention of disregarding the Torah but to make a fence around it”; B. Ab., 3:13, “tradition is a fence to the Torah.” Also see TNTB, p. 140.

whether utilizing System “C” or System “A.” Systems “B” and “D,” on the other hand, are both eliminated since both calculations would have finished their version of the Sabbath year well before Ab 9 of 70 C.E. At the same time, these mid-2nd century C.E. rabbis erred in their chronology when they tried to force an interpretation that the First Temple—the destruction of which took place on Ab 9 and 10 but in the year 587 B.C.E.—like the Second Temple, fell on a Sabbath day during a Sabbath year. It did not.<sup>856</sup> They even misdated the fall of the First Temple by 165 years.<sup>857</sup> Nevertheless, the template upon which they built their false chronology and conclusions was the destruction of the Second Temple, about which they were much more familiar. Recognizing that the reference to the destruction of the First Temple was believed to be a duplicate of the destruction of the Second Temple, we possess strong evidence that the Sabbath year was ongoing in the summer of 70 C.E. To begin with, we read in the Seder Olam (160 C.E.):

*Rabbi Yose used to say: Propitiousness is assigned to a propitious day and calamity to a calamitous day. As it is found said, When the Temple was destroyed the first time, that day the Sabbath (day) was מוצאי (mutzai; going-out),<sup>858</sup> and it was the מוצאי (mutzai; going-out) of the Sabbatical year. It was (during the service of) the priestly division of Jehoiarib, and it was the 9th day of Ab; ALSO IT HAPPENED THE SECOND TIME (that the Temple was destroyed). In this one and that one (i.e., the two Temple destructions) the Levites stood upon their platform and recited a song.<sup>859</sup>*

*The date of Ab 9 for the beginning of the destruction of the second Temple is supported by other Jewish writers. In both the Mishnah (c.200 C.E.) and the Babylonian Talmud, for example, we read:*

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<sup>856</sup> A Sabbath year occurred in the 9th year of King Zedekiah of Judah, but the First Temple was destroyed in the 11th year of King Zedekiah, see above Chap. XIII.

<sup>857</sup> See our discussion above in Chap. I, pp. 14–17. The Jews of the post-Bar Kochba period wildly misdated the destruction of the First Temple to the year 421 B.C.E.

<sup>858</sup> HCLLOT, p. 458, “a going out . . . that which goes out”; NBDBG, p. 425, 1, “c. way out, exit . . . 2. that which goes forth”; CHAL, p. 187, “what comes out (of lips, mouth) . . . going out”; SEC, Heb. #4161, “a going forth, i.e. (the act) an egress, or (the place) an exit; . . . outgoing, proceeded out”; SHL, p. 341, “a coming or going forth, exit”; HEL, pp. 141, “go out, go forth.”

<sup>859</sup> S.O., 30.

*On the 9th of Ab . . . the Temple was destroyed the first and second time.*<sup>860</sup>

*For these writers, the destruction of both the First and Second Temples were connected with the 9th of Ab, when their respective fires were started, although the final destruction in each case is said to have occurred on the 10th of Ab. The Babylonian Talmud, as another example, states that “the second time” that the Temple was destroyed, like the first, occurred on Ab 9.<sup>861</sup> The Chronicles of Jerahmeel also correctly informs us that the 9th of Ab during the year that the Second Temple was destroyed (70 C.E.) was a Sabbath day during a Sabbath year:*

*The banishment brought about by Titus, Vespasian, and Hadrian occurred on the ARAB (AFTERNOON) OF THE 9TH OF AB, ON THE OUTGOING OF THE SABBATH (DAY) AND THE SABBATICAL YEAR. The Levites were then occupied with their ministrations, and, with their harps in their hands, were singing their hymns. Yet Scriptures state, “He has brought upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own evil.” The words, “He shall cut them off,” were not yet fully uttered before their enemies came upon them, slaughtered many of them, and sent the rest into exile.*<sup>862</sup>

*By saying that Ab 9 occurred during the מוצאי (mutzai; going-out) of the Sabbatical year rather than at the “return of the year,” that is to say, the first half of the year,<sup>863</sup> it is clear that these rabbis were placing their own later interpretation of the Tishri 1 year upon the historical records. Nevertheless, in combination with all of the*

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<sup>860</sup> Taan., 4:6; B. Taan., 26b.

<sup>861</sup> B. Taan., 29a.

<sup>862</sup> Chron. Jerah., 61:1.

<sup>863</sup> Cf. 1 Kings, 20:22, 26; and see NBD, p. 178, “The observation of the autumnal equinox, i.e. ‘the going out of the year’ (see Ex. xxiii. 16) and the spring or vernal equinox, called ‘the return of the year’ (1 Ki. xx. 26; 2 Ch. xxxvi. 10) was important for controlling the calendar and consequently the festivals. Thus the year began with the new moon nearest to the vernal equinox when the sun was in Aries (Jos., Ant. iii., 8. 4), and the Passover on the fourteenth day of Nisan coincided with the first full moon (Ex. xii. 2–6).” Also see THP, p. 116, n. 5.

other evidence we have presented, it is also clear that they merely retained the information that Ab 9 of that year fell during a Sabbath year. In this case, Ab 9 of 70 C.E. fully accommodates the original Nisan 1 Sabbath year reckoning (System “A”). Some recent authors, like Benedict Zuckermann and Chaim Joseph Milikowsky (System “B”),<sup>864</sup> in an effort to force an interpretation in order to support their own version of the Sabbath-year cycle (making it fall a year before the construct that was even advocated by the early rabbis) translated the phrase, “When the Temple was destroyed the first time, that day the Sabbath was going-out, and it was the going-out of the Sabbath year” to instead read, “When the Temple was destroyed, the first time, that day was immediately after the Sabbath, it was immediately after the Sabbatical year.”<sup>865</sup>

Heinrich W. Guggenheimer and Ben Zion Wacholder, on the other hand, would strongly disagree.<sup>866</sup> The interpretation of Zuckermann and those following him is not only strained but has absolutely no historical or linguistic support. Rodger C. Young, for example, correctly assessed the term מוצאי (mutzai; going out), as found in the above passage from the Seder Olam, by stating:

*Motsa (plural construct motsae) is the participial form of the common verb yatsa, which has the basic meaning “to go out, to go forth.” A literal rendering of motsa is therefore “the going-out” or “the going forth.” This understanding definitely favors Guggenheimer’s translation, since it is easy to see how the “goings-out” of a year or a day could express the latter part of the time-period, but a time still within the period. The only way that the meaning “after” would be justified would be if there were some idiomatic usage that could be found which suggested this meaning.*<sup>867</sup>

Rodger C. Young then continues by providing various items of evidence which prove the correctness of the “going-out” view.

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<sup>864</sup> USUJ, pp. 28–30; SORC, 2, p. 547.

<sup>865</sup> E.g., SORC, 2, p. 547.

<sup>866</sup> RVBC; HUCA, 44, pp. 153–196.

<sup>867</sup> JBQ, 34.3, p. 177.

## Conclusion

*There can be no doubt. The year 70/71 C.E., Nisan reckoning, was a Sabbath year. First, the Idumaeans of the 1st century C.E. were not only Jews by religion but were living in the Holy Land—and not in just any part of the Holy Land but in that portion which had historically belonged to the tribe of Judah. Under Jewish domination they were required to adhere to the Jewish faith or else be forced to abandon the country. At the same time, the Idumaeans were in close alliance with the Zealots, a strict Jewish sect, and demonstrated their loyalty to their faith in the Jewish war against Rome that ended in 70 C.E. With these details we are compelled to the conclusion that the Edomites living in southern Judaea were strict adherents to Jewish law. If they had not been, an alliance with the Zealots would have been impossible and the other Jews would have found grounds to expel them from the country.*

*These facts force us to conclude that when Simon invaded the country of Idumaea in the winter of 68/69 C.E.—an act of war which was not committed during a Sabbath year—there was no possible way that these Idumaeans would have avoided the Sabbath-year laws. Yet since they did cultivate their fields, we are presented with clear evidence that the winter of 68/69 B.C.E. was not part of a Sabbath year. In addition, since the crops of this planting season would normally be harvested after the beginning of the next year (69/70 C.E., Nisan reckoning), we have evidence that this next year was also not a Sabbath. The attack upon Jerusalem by the Jewish factional leader Simon ben Gioras and the crops grown in Idumaea during the winter of 68/69 C.E. eliminates the cycles of both Systems “B” and “D” from consideration (see Chart A). System “C” retains the problem of beginning with a Tishri year.*

*Finally, the evidence shows that the rabbis of the mid-2nd century C.E. devised a new year-system which began the year with Tishri 1. They then anachronistically imposed this year-system on earlier historical records. Nevertheless, they still confirmed that Ab 9 of the year that the Second Temple was destroyed (70 C.E.), fell during a Sabbath year. Since they began their new reckoning by pushing the beginning of the Sabbath year from Nisan 1 back to Tishri 1, it proves that we only need to return the beginning of the year to its proper place on Nisan 1. Since the later rabbis calculated the beginning of*

*the year on Tishri 1, they wrote that Ab 9 occurred in the “going-out” of the year. Yet the evidence shows that during this period the Jews still determined the beginning of the year with Nisan 1. Ab 9 accordingly actually occurred during the return of the year. Therefore, by default, the Sabbath-year cycle once again conforms to System “A.” We are left with the conclusion that 70/71 C.E., Nisan reckoning, the year that Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, was a Sabbath year (see Charts A & C).*

## **Summary of the Years 68, 69 and 70 C.E.**

Having now stated the history of these three years, let’s summarize them before the facts get lost in all the details. We have no documents that outright prove that 70 C.E. was the Sabbatical year—the same year as the destruction of the Temple, but we do have Rabbi Yose in the Seder Olam stating the Temple was destroyed at the going out of the Sabbatical year. We have shown you what that expression means and where it comes from.

Josephus records a detailed history of events that prove that the year the Temple was destroyed was a Sabbatical year and that it was 70 C.E. Chronologists try to malign Josephus’ reporting as wrong because it does not confirm their own theories. Josephus’s reporting is very accurate and proves the chronologies of Zuckermann and Wacholder to be deficient. Most modern chronologies follow in the errors of Wacholder and Zuckermann.

In the winter of 68-69 C.E., Simon ben Giora invaded Judaeen Idumaea. The fields at this time were cultivated.

In March of 69 C.E., Simon ben Giora fortified himself in Nain and stocked up the crops of corn. Jewish Zealots attacked him in Nain—something they did not do in a Sabbatical year. Notice he stocked up crops in the year 69 C.E. You do not harvest and stock up crops if it is the Sabbatical year. And they would never have attacked in the Sabbatical year. It was forbidden. These are zealots.

Then in late Summer of 69 C.E., Simon ben Giora took Hebron and all of Idumaea and all the crops. This statement shows you that all the land was cultivated and with crops. It was summer of 69 C.E. They were also at war, something that was not done in a Sabbatical year by zealous fighters. With the recorded fighting and the recorded crops growing in both the years 68 C.E. and 69 C.E. by Josephus, we can conclude that it was not a Sabbatical year during those two years.

We have also dated the events of Titus through Roman history and the chronology of the Emperors of Rome.

Prior to becoming Emperor, Titus gained renown as a military commander, serving under his father in Judaea during the First Jewish-Roman War. The campaign came to a brief halt with the death of Emperor Nero in 68 C.E., launching Vespasian's bid for the imperial power during the Year of the Four Emperors. Although Vespasian was declared Emperor on July 1, 69 C.E. by the legions of Egypt, it was not until December 21, of 69 C.E., that Vespasian was declared Emperor by the Roman Senate. The Senate acknowledged Vespasian as emperor on the day after Vitellius was killed. It was December 21, 69 C.E., the year that had begun with Galba on the throne.

The Year of the Four Emperors was a year in the history of the Roman Empire, in which four emperors ruled in succession.

The suicide of Emperor Nero, in 68 C.E., was followed by a brief period of civil war. Between June of 68 C.E. and December of 69 C.E., Rome witnessed the successive rise and fall of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, until the final accession of Vespasian.

## Chronology

### 68 C.E.

- *April – Galba, governor of Hispania Tarraconensis, and Vindex, governor of Gallia Lugdunensis rebel against Nero.*
- *May – The Rhine legions defeat and kill Vindex in Gaul*
- *June – Nero is declared a public enemy (hostis) by the Senate (8 June) and commits suicide (9 June); Galba is recognised emperor.*
- *November – Vitellius nominated governor of Germania Inferior.*

### 69 C.E.

- *January – The Rhine legions refuse to swear loyalty to Galba.*
- *2 January – Vitellius acclaimed emperor by the Rhine*
- *15 January – Galba killed by the Praetorian Guard; in the same day, the Senate recognizes Otho as emperor*
- *14 April – Vitellius defeats Otho.*



- 16 April – Otho commits suicide; Vitellius recognised emperor.
- 1 July – Vespasian, commander of the Roman army in Judaea, proclaimed emperor by the legions of Egypt under Tiberius Julius Alexander.
- August–The Danubian legions announce support to Vespasian (in Syria) and invade Italy in September on his behalf.
- October–The Danubian army defeats Vitellius and Vespasian occupies Egypt.
- 20 December – Vitellius killed by soldiers in the Imperial Palace.
- 21 December – Vespasian recognized emperor.<sup>868</sup>

## The First Jewish–Roman War (66–73 CE)

With the dates of Roman Emperors chronicled, let us now document the events in Judaea, leading up to the time when Vespasian entered these historical records, concluding with his son Titus after Vespasian was summoned back to Rome. All of this confirms that the actual year when the Temple was destroyed was a Sabbatical year—that year being 70 C.E. We must do this to remove the ambiguity left by the comments of Rabbi Yose in the Seder Olam, and the confusion that has crept in during the writing of the Mishnah, as explained in *The Stones Cry Out Part 1*.

*The First Jewish–Roman War in 66–73 C.E. sometimes called The Great Revolt (Hebrew: המרד הגדול, ha-Mered Ha-Gadol), was the first of three major rebellions by the Jews of the Judaeen Province (Iudaea) against the Roman Empire. The second was the Kitos War in 115–117 C.E., which took place mainly in the diaspora, and the third was Bar Kokhba's revolt of 132–135 C.E.<sup>869</sup>*

*The Great Revolt began in the year 66 C.E., during the twelfth year of the reign of Nero.*

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<sup>868</sup> Year of the Four Emperors

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Year\\_of\\_the\\_Four\\_Emerors](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Year_of_the_Four_Emerors)

<sup>869</sup> First Jewish–Roman War

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First\\_Jewish%E2%80%93Roman\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Jewish%E2%80%93Roman_War)

## Outbreak of the Rebellion

*According to Josephus,<sup>870</sup> the violence which began at Caesarea in 66 was provoked by Greeks of a certain merchant house sacrificing birds in front of a local synagogue. In reaction, one of the Jewish Temple clerks, Eleazar ben Hanania, ceased prayers and sacrifices for the Roman Emperor at the Temple. Protests over taxation joined the list of grievances and random attacks on Roman citizens and perceived 'traitors' occurred in Jerusalem. The Jewish Temple was then breached by Roman troops at the order of the procurator Gessius Florus, who had seventeen talents removed from the treasury of the Temple, claiming the money was for the emperor. In response to this action, the city fell into unrest and some of the Jewish population began to openly mock Florus by passing a basket around to collect money as if Florus was poor. Florus reacted to the unrest by sending soldiers into Jerusalem the next day to raid the city and arrest a number of the city leaders, who were later whipped and crucified, despite many of them being Roman citizens. Shortly, outraged Judean nationalist factions took up arms and the Roman military garrison of Jerusalem was quickly overrun by rebels. Fearing the worst, the pro-Roman king Herod Agrippa II and his sister Berenice fled Jerusalem to Galilee. Judean militias later moved upon Roman citizens of Judaea and pro-Roman officials, cleansing the country of any Roman symbols. Among other events, the Sicarii rebel faction surprised the Roman garrison of Masada and took over the fortress.*

*Initially, the outbreak of violence had been an internal factional conflict between the Jews who were in favour of rebellion, and those who were not. A huge loss of life occurred, including that of the former High Priest Ananias. The Roman garrison on Jerusalem's western border became besieged and was unable to assist those who opposed rebellion. Eventually, led by their commander Metilius, the garrison surrendered in exchange for unhindered passage from the city, but, led by Eliezar, the Jewish rebels slaughtered all the surrendered soldiers, except for Metilius, who was forced to convert to Judaism.<sup>[32]</sup>*

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<sup>870</sup> Ibid.

*According to fourth-century church fathers Eusebius and Epiphanius of Salamis, Jerusalem's Christians fled to Pella before the beginning of the war.<sup>[33]</sup>*

## **Gallus' Campaign-Battle of Beth Horon 66 C.E.**

*As a result of the unrest in Judaea, Cestius Gallus, the legate of Syria, assembled the Syrian legion XII Fulminata, reinforced with units of III Gallica, IV Scythica, and VI Ferrata, plus auxiliaries and allies – a total of approximately 30,000–36,000 troops, in order to restore order in the neighbouring province. The Syrian legion captured Nabata and also took Sepphoris, which surrendered without a fight. The Judean rebels, who withdrew from Sepphoris, took refuge at Atzmon hill, but were defeated following a short siege. Gallus later reached Acre in Western Galilee, and then marched on Caesarea and Jaffa, where he massacred some 8,400 people. Continuing his military campaign, Gallus took Lydda and Afek (Antipatris) and engaged Jerusalemite rebels in Geva, where he lost nearly 500 Roman troops to Judean rebels led by Simon bar Giora, reinforced by allied volunteers from Adiabene.*

*The Syrian legion then invested Jerusalem, but for uncertain reasons and despite initial gains withdrew back towards the coast, where it was ambushed and defeated by Judean rebels at the Battle of Beth Horon, a result which shocked the Imperial leadership. The defeat of the Romans in Beth Horon is considered one of the worst military defeats of the Roman Empire by a rebel province throughout its history. Some 6,000 Roman troops were killed and many more wounded in the battle, with Legio XII Fulminata losing its aquila, as Gallus abandoned his troops in disarray, fleeing to Syria. Victorious Judean militias included Sadducee and Pharisee factions, with a major role also played by the peasantry led by Simon Bar Giora, Zealot faction led by Eleazar ben Simon, as well as elements of the Sicarii.*

*Victorious Judean troops then took an initiative and attempted to expand their control to the Hellenistic city of Ascalon, assembling an army commanded by Niger the Perean, Yohanan the Issean, and Shila the Babylonian and laying siege to the city. Despite the pillage of Ascalon's countryside, the campaign was a disaster for the Judeans, who failed to take the city and lost some 8,000 militia men to the small defending Roman garrison. Many Jewish residents of Ascalon were*

*butchered by their Greco-Syrian and Roman neighbours as well in the aftermath. The failure to take Ascalon changed the tactics of rebel Judean forces from open engagement to fortified warfare.*

## **Judean Provisional Government 66 C.E.–68 C.E.**

*Following the defeat of Gallus in Beth Horon, the People's Assembly was called under the spiritual guidance of Simeon ben Gamliel and thus the Judean provisional government was formed in Jerusalem. Former High Priest Ananus ben Ananus (Hanan ben Hanan) was appointed one of the government heads and began reinforcing the city, with other prominent figure of Joseph ben Gurion, with Joshua ben Gamla taking a leading role. **Josephus Matthias (Yosef ben Matityahu)**<sup>871</sup> was appointed the commander in Galilee and Golan, while Josephus Simon (Yosef ben Shimon) was appointed commander of Jericho, John the Issene (Yohanan Issean) commander of Jaffa, Lydda, Ammeus-Nikopolis and the whole Tamna area. Elazar Ananias (Eliezar ben Hananiya) the joint commander in Edom together with Jesus ben Sapphas (Joshua ben Zafia), with Niger the Perean the war hero during the Gallus campaign under their command. Menasseh was appointed for Perea and John Ananias (Yohanan ben Hananiya) to Gophna and Acrabetta*

*Later, in Jerusalem, an attempt by Menahem ben Yehuda, leader of the Sicarii, to take control of the city failed. He was executed, and the remaining Sicarii were ejected from the city to their stronghold Masada, previously taken from a Roman garrison. Headquartered in Masada, the Sicarii notably terrorized nearby Judean villages such as Ein Gedi. Simon bar Giora, a charismatic and radical peasant leader, was also expelled from Jerusalem by the new government. The faction of the ousted Bar Giora took refuge in Masada as well and stayed there until the winter of 67–68.*

## **Vespasian's Galilee Campaign**

*Emperor Nero sent the general Vespasian to crush the rebellion. Vespasian, along with legions X Fretensis and V Macedonica, landed at Ptolemais in April 67. There he was joined by his son Titus, who arrived from Alexandria at the head of Legio XV Apollinaris, as well*

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<sup>871</sup> This is the Josephus from whom we have gathered so much timely information. He was not just a historian; he was involved in those historical events.

*as by the armies of various local allies including that of king Agrippa II. Fielding more than 60,000 soldiers, Vespasian began operations by subjugating Galilee. Judean rebels in Galilee were divided into two camps, with forces loyal to the central government in Jerusalem commanded by Josephus and representing the wealthy and priesthood classes, whereas local Zealot militias were largely packed with the poor fishermen, farmers and refugees from Roman Syria. Many towns associated with the Jewish elite gave up without a fight – including Sepphoris and Tiberias, although others had to be taken by force. Of these, Josephus provides detailed accounts of the sieges of Tarichaea, Yodfat (Jotapata) and Gamla; Gischala, the stronghold of Zealots, was also taken by force, as Zealot leaders abandoned it in the midst of the siege, heading with the bulk of their force for Jerusalem.*

*By the year 68, Jewish resistance in the north had been crushed, and Vespasian made Caesarea Maritima his headquarters and methodically proceeded to cleanse the coastline of the country, avoiding direct confrontation with the rebels at Jerusalem. Based on questionable numbers from Josephus, it has been estimated that the Roman vanquishing of Galilee resulted in 100,000 Jews killed or sold into slavery.*

## **Judean Regrouping and Civil War**

*Vespasian remained camped at Caesarea Maritima until spring 68, preparing for another campaign in the Judean and Samarian highlands. The Jews, who were driven out of Galilee, rebuilt Joppa (Jaffa), which had been destroyed earlier by Cestius Gallus. Surrounded by the Romans, they rebuilt the city walls, and used a light flotilla to demoralize commerce and interrupt the grain supply to Rome from Alexandria.*

*In his **The Jewish War**, Josephus wrote:*

*They also built themselves a great many piratical ships, and turned pirates upon the seas near to Syria, and Phoenicia, and Egypt, and made those seas unnavigable to all men.<sup>872</sup>*

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<sup>872</sup> Josephus. BJ. 3.9.2.

*Zealot leaders of the collapsed Northern revolt, headed by John of Giscala, managed to escape from Galilee to Jerusalem with the bulk of their forces. Packed with militants of many factions, including remains of forces loyal to the Judean provisional government and significant Zealot militia headed by Eleazar ben Simon, and largely cut off by Roman forces, Jerusalem quickly descended into anarchy, with the radical Zealots taking control of large parts of the fortified city. A brutal civil war then erupted, with the Zealots and the fanatical Sicarii executing anyone advocating surrender.*

*Following a false message that the Judean provisional government had come to terms with the Roman Army, delivered by the Zealots to the Idumeans, a major force of some 20,000 armed Idumeans arrived to Jerusalem. It was allowed in by the Zealots and thus, with Idumeans entering Jerusalem and fighting by the side of the Zealots, the heads of the Judean provisional government, Ananus ben Ananus and Joseph ben Gurion, were killed with severe civilian casualties in the notorious Zealot Temple Siege, where Josephus reported 12,000 dead. Receiving the news of the carnage in Jerusalem, Simon bar Giora left Masada and began pillaging Idumea with his loyal troops, setting his headquarters in Na'an; he met little resistance and joined forces with Idumean leaders, including Jacob ben Susa.*

## **Judea Campaign and New Emperor**

*In the spring of 68, Vespasian began a systematic campaign to subdue various rebel-held strongholds in Judea proper, recapturing Afeq, Lydda, Javneh, and Jaffa that spring. He later continued into Idumea and Perea, and eventually to the Judean and Samaritan highlands, where Bar Giora's faction was causing major concern to the Romans. The Roman Army took Gophna, Akrabta, Bet-El, Ephraim and Hebron by July 69.*

*While the war in Judea was in progress, great events were occurring in Rome. In the middle of 68, the emperor Nero's increasingly erratic behavior finally lost him all support for his position. The Roman Senate, the Praetorian Guard and several prominent army commanders conspired for his removal. When the senate declared Nero an enemy of the people, he fled Rome and committed suicide with the help of a secretary. The newly installed emperor, the former Governor of Spain, Galba, was murdered after*

*just a few months by his rival, Otho, triggering a civil war that came to be known as the Year of the Four Emperors. In 69, though previously uninvolved, the popular Vespasian was also hailed emperor by the legions under his command. He decided, upon gaining further widespread support, to leave his son Titus to finish the war in Judea, while he returned to Rome to claim the throne from the usurper Vitellius, who had already deposed Otho.*

*Titus advanced his Roman legions on Jerusalem, capital of the rebellious province, conquering towns and creating a wave of Judean refugees. The Judean rebels avoided direct confrontation and were mostly interested in their own control and survival. The Zealot factions were weakened by civil war within the city but could still field significant troops. John, a Zealot leader, assassinated Eleazar and began a despotic rule over the city. Simon bar Giora, a leader of a major force, was invited into Jerusalem to stand against the Zealot faction of John and quickly took control of much of the city. Infighting between the factions of Bar-Giora and John followed through the year 69.*

## **Siege of Jerusalem 70 C.E.**

*The siege of Jerusalem, the fortified capital city of the province, quickly turned into a stalemate. Unable to breach the city's defenses, Roman armies established a permanent camp just outside the city, digging a trench around the circumference of its walls and building a wall as high as the city walls themselves around Jerusalem. Anyone caught in the trench attempting to flee the city would be captured and crucified in lines on top of the dirt wall facing into Jerusalem, with as many as five hundred crucifixions occurring in a day. The two Zealot leaders, John of Gischala and Simon Bar Giora, only ceased hostilities and joined forces to defend the city when the Romans began to construct ramparts for the siege.*

*During the infighting inside the city walls, a stockpiled supply of dry food was intentionally burned by the Zealots to induce the defenders to fight against the siege, instead of negotiating peace; as a result many city dwellers and soldiers died of starvation during the siege. Tacitus, a contemporary historian, notes that those who were besieged in Jerusalem amounted to no fewer than six hundred thousand, that men and women alike and every age engaged in armed resistance, that everyone who could pick up a weapon did, and that*

*both sexes showed equal determination, preferring death to a life that involved expulsion from their country. Josephus puts the number of the besieged at near 1 million. Many pilgrims from the Jewish diaspora who, undeterred by the war, had trekked to Jerusalem to be present at the Temple during Passover 70 C.E., became trapped in Jerusalem during the siege and perished.*

*In the summer of 70, following a seven-month siege, Titus eventually used the collapse of several of the city walls to breach Jerusalem, ransacking and burning nearly the entire city. The Romans began by attacking the weakest spot: the third wall. It was built shortly before the siege so it did not have as much time invested in its protection. They succeeded towards the end of May and shortly afterwards broke through the more important second wall. During the final stages of the Roman attack, Zealots under John of Giscala still held the Temple, while the Sicarii, led by Simon Bar Giora, held the upper city. **The Second Temple (the renovated Herod's Temple), one of the last fortified bastions of the rebellion, was destroyed on Tisha B'Av (29 or 30 July 70 C.E.).***

*All three walls of Jerusalem were eventually destroyed as well as the Temple and the citadels; the city was then put to the torch, with most survivors taken into slavery; some of those overturned stones and their place of impact can still be seen. John of Giscala surrendered at Agrippa II's fortress of Jotapata while Simon Bar Giora surrendered at the site where the Temple once stood.*

*The Temple of Jerusalem's treasures, including the Menorah and the Table of the Bread of God's Presence, which had previously only ever been seen by the High Priest of the Temple, were paraded through the streets of Rome during Titus' triumphal procession, along with some 700 Judean prisoners who were paraded in chains, among them John of Giscala and Simon Bar Giora. John of Giscala was sentenced to life imprisonment while Simon Bar Giora was executed. The triumph was commemorated with the Arch of Titus, which depicts the Temple's treasures being paraded. With the fall of Jerusalem, some insurrection still continued in isolated locations in Judea, lasting as long as 73 C.E.*

*We have now conclusively shown from multiple sources that the Temple was destroyed in the year 70 C.E. and it was a Sabbatical year. These facts are also confirmed by our charts with all the other Sabbatical and Jubilee years aligning with these facts.*



It is marked in this chart as the 5<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year of the 80<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle. This is the last Jubilee cycle in the 4<sup>th</sup> millennial day.

							117	81
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle		
111	224	217	210	203	196	189		
110	223	216	209	202	195	188		
109	222	215	208	201	194	187		
108	221	214	207	200	193	186		
107	220	213	206	199	192	185		
106	219	212	205	198	191	184		
105	218	211	204	197	190	183		
							112	82
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle		
102	175	168	161	154	147	140		
101	174	167	160	153	146	139		
100	173	166	159	152	145	138		
99	172	165	158	151	144	137		
98	171	164	157	150	143	136		
97	170	163	156	149	142	135		
96	169	162	155	148	141	134		
							113	83
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle		
103	126	119	112	105	98	91		
102	125	118	111	104	97	90		
101	124	117	110	103	96	89		
100	123	116	109	102	95	88		
99	122	115	108	101	94	87		
98	121	114	107	100	93	86		
97	120	113	106	99	92	85		
							114	84
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle		
84	77	70	63	56	49	42		
83	76	69	62	55	48	41		
82	75	68	61	54	47	40		
81	74	67	60	53	46	39		
80	73	66	59	52	45	38		
79	72	65	58	51	44	37		
78	71	64	57	50	43	36		
							115	85
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	10th Cycle	11th Cycle	12th Cycle	13th Cycle		
59	28	21	14	7	-1	-8		
58	27	20	13	6	-2	-9		
57	26	19	12	5	-3	-10		
56	25	18	11	4	-4	-11		
55	24	17	10	3	-5	-12		
54	23	16	9	2	-6	-13		
53	22	15	8	1	-7	-14		
B.C.E. corrected for no new year.							116	86

The only reason people suspect it might be the year 69 C.E., or even 68 C.E., is all due to the vague wording in the Mishnah, which was redacted about 180 C.E. Rabbi Yehuda included in the Mishnah the works of Rabbi Yose, who wrote the Seder Olam about 160 C.E. It was during this period that the start of the year was combined with

the Greeks who began the year in the fall. It made an easy fit with fencing in the Sabbatical year by stopping all farming six months before the year begins—and the misunderstanding just spiraled down from this point onward.

## Chapter 25 | The Tombstones of Zoar

It is with a great sense of pride that I can now present to you the Tombstones of Zoar. As I said earlier, Zuckermann did not have access to them, and Wacholder dismissed the few he had access to as they did not align with his chronology. Most people dismiss them altogether because they cannot figure out the dating system, and that is because many of the tombstones do not line up with the Hillel calendar known today, while others do. Most people assume the calendar used by the Jews has always been the same. *The Stones Cry Out Part 1* has shown you when and how the calendar was changed.

When I first discovered Qadesh La Yahweh Press in 2005, they had just 11 Sabbatical and Jubilee years to go by. After reading Qadesh's work, I was able to prove the Jubilee year of Leviticus 25:2, and then connect the chronology of Genesis to their work and our modern chronology. From 2005 until 2013, I only had these 12 Sabbatical and Jubilee years to go by.

I was presenting these findings and showing how the Jubilee cycles revealed end-time prophecy at Sukkot in Fall Creek Falls, Tennessee, in 2013. It was the first time I would be able to present all my teachings about this subject every day for the entirety of the Feast. This is when we decided to record these teachings, so that they would be available to others as well. On one of the first few days of the Feast, this couple, Chad and Marilyn Wilhelm, asked me about these two tombstones they had pictures of from the Israel museum called the Shrine of the Book. They asked if I could compare them to what I was presenting. Right there in front of everyone, we brought them up on the stage to see if they matched or not.

The only other time I did something like this—checking out a date in front of a live audience before confirming it privately myself—was when I did an interview<sup>873</sup> with Nehemia Gordon, whom we have quoted many times in our book *The Stones Cry Out Part 1*. Nehemia quoted Moses ben Maimon (1138–1204), commonly known as Maimonides, and also called Rambam, who stated in the Mishneh Torah there was a Sabbatical year at a very specific date. In front of

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<sup>873</sup> Hebrew Voices #95 – 2300 Days of Hell, Posted on May 22, 2019, by Nehemia Gordon. <https://www.nehemiaswall.com/2300-days-hell>

live audiences in both cases, our chronology was confirmed by Rambam and by the two tombstones of Zoar.

When I was presented with these two tombstones in 2013, it was the first time I had heard of them. Then I heard Nehemia mention them on one of his video shows, and I began to search for more of them. By 2018, I had 21 different Sabbatical and Jubilee proofs, eight of which were the tombstones of Zoar. We then discovered Naveh's list of 16 more tombstones and, at about this same time, another document about seven more tombstones, and a footnote about even more. I then got busy with many things and never got back to that footnote.

In the fall of 2022, an elderly lady by the name of Ella Morgan asked if she could help in some way. I had no idea how she could help. I then thought of the footnote and just gave it to her and told her to see what she could discover, if there were any more tombstones out there. I did not expect to hear back from her for a very long time. Within about three weeks, she wrote me to let me know she was tracking down about 100 more tombstones. I could not believe it and we were all so excited. By this time, Adam Parker, Eileen Espinoza, and Janet Chappell were also looking and helping to organize what Ella had already discovered.

Here is the article I gave to Ella to begin her search along with the footnotes. The article was titled ***Yet Another Jewish Tombstone from Late Antique Zoar/Zoora: The Funerary Marker of Hannah Daughter of Levi***,<sup>874</sup> written by Jacob Bitton, Nathan Dweck and Steven Fine at Yeshiva University for Bruce Zuckerman:

*The first Zoar Aramaic tombstone was discovered in Ghor es-Safi by John Philby, an officer of the British mandatory government in Transjordan, who created a rubbing of the text and later entrusted his notes to Oxford semiticist A.E. Cowley for publication. Philby*

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<sup>874</sup> Many thanks to Shlomo Moussaieff for permission to publish this artifact, and to Steven Bowman, Ben Zion Rosenfeld, Shalom Sabar and Sasha Stern for their valuable comments. The study of this inscription took place within the context of Steven Fine's graduate seminar in Talmudic Archaeology, conducted at Yeshiva University, Spring 2009.

wrote that the inscription was discovered in secondary use among the “masonry ruins” of “a small settlement.”<sup>875</sup> Since Cowley’s 1925 note in the *Palestine Exploration Society Quarterly Statement*, thirty more tombstones have appeared in scholarly publications<sup>876</sup> and many others await scholarly treatment—according to one report, up to one hundred.<sup>877</sup> Jewish tombstones make up approximately one-tenth of the more than four hundred inscriptions found in secondary use at Ghor es-Safi, Byzantine Zoara (or Zoara), the remainder of which are of Christian origin.<sup>878</sup> The tombstones seem to stem from a single large cemetery, where Jewish stones are grouped together. None of the Jewish stones published thus far, however, were found in controlled excavations or surveys.<sup>879</sup> Like the Christian tombstones, Jewish exempla were painted or incised on small slabs of local limestone that measure around 40×20 cm. All of the Christian inscriptions were composed in Greek, and the Jewish inscriptions mainly in

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<sup>875</sup> A.E. Cowley, “A Jewish Tombstone,” *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement* (1925): 207–210. with additional information in E.L. Sukenik, “Jewish Tomb-Stones from Zoar (Ghor es-Safi),” *Kedem* 2 (1945): 83 [Hebr.].

<sup>876</sup> Following are the primary publications and evaluations of these inscriptions, which Joseph Naveh began with his “Another Jewish Tombstone from Zoar,” *HUCA* 66 (1985): 103–116; idem, “Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar,” *Tarbiz* 64 (1995): 477–497 [Hebr.]; idem, “More on the Tombstones from Zoar,” *Tarbiz* 68 (1999): 581–586 [Hebr.]; idem, “Seven New Epitaphs from Zoar,” *Tarbiz* 69 (2000): 619–635 [Hebr.]; idem, “Two Tombstones from Zoar in the Hecht Museum Collection—The Aramaic Inscription,” *Michmanim* 15 (2001): 5–9 [Hebr.]; H. Cotton and J. Price, “A Bilingual Funerary Monument from Zoar in the Hecht Museum Collection—The Greek Inscription,” *Michmanim* 15 (2001): 10–12 [Hebr.]; S. Stern, “New Tombstones from Zoar (Moussaie Collection),” *Tarbiz* 68 (1999): 175–185; S. Stern and H. Misgav, “Four Additional Tombstones from Zoar,” *Tarbiz* 74 (2004): 137–151 [Hebr.]. A useful summary of the evidence, bibliography and the publication of two additional tombstones in English is provided by H. Misgav, “Two Jewish Tombstones from Zoar,” *Israel Museum Studies in Archaeology* 5 (2006): 35–46. Numeration of the tombstones follows Misgav, 45–46.

<sup>877</sup> We are aware of approximately nine further unpublished stones. Misgav (*n* 4): 35 reports that in 2003, Y. Meimaris estimated that extant Jewish tombstones number “close to one hundred.” Prof. Stern informs us that a comprehensive catalog of all of the Aramaic Zoar inscriptions is being prepared by S. Brock.

<sup>878</sup> Y. Meimaris and K. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou, *Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia 1a, The Greek Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi* (National Hellenic Research Foundation; Paris: Diffusion de Boccard, 2005).

<sup>879</sup> *Ibid.*, 3–6

*Jewish Palestinian Aramaic. One Jewish exemplar is an Aramaic and Greek bilingual, and a second wholly Greek inscription memorializes an archisynagogos.<sup>880</sup> The Jewish inscriptions tell us much about a small Jewish community on the once-vibrant Dead Sea region. These Jews shared much both with the largely Christian inhabitants of Byzantine Zoara, and with their more numerous co-religionists to the north and west.<sup>881</sup> This essay, the result of the type of student-faculty collaboration that Bruce Zuckerman so loves, presents yet another exemplar, this one from the collection of Shlomo Moussaieff, and makes some comments regarding its historical context.*

At that same time, I was busy trying to get the *Elijah Trilogy* series of books written and published and could not organise the tombstone findings as I had wanted to and had to set them aside until I completed those other projects first.

Those other projects are now done, but as I began this project, I quickly realized I had to explain the calendar issues first so that everyone could understand how the dating on the tombstones demonstrated the changes in the calendar that was being implemented at this time. It was amazing to discover those changes—the tombstones did not change the calendars; they recorded them—our understanding of the calendar is what was changed.

I know I have utilized much of the work of Qadesh La Yahweh Press, and I am proud to include their work in this presentation.

It was, and is, my desire to have all the facts about how to prove when the Sabbatical and Jubilee years are all in one place so that this huge cloud of confusion about when to keep the Sabbatical years will now be dispelled. The facts already presented here are proofs as to when the Sabbatical and Jubilee years are to be kept—from Aviv to Aviv—and we now know for sure when the Sabbatical years are. The tombstones of Zoar are the overwhelming proof from Jewish sources of when the Sabbatical years are. As you are about to discover, they

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<sup>880</sup> Ibid., 3–6

<sup>881</sup> For rabbinic sources on the Jews of Zoar, see P. Neaman, *Encyclopedia of Talmudic Geography* (Tel Aviv: Joshua Chachik, 1971): 2.340–342[Hebr.]. On the Jews of the largest Jewish settlement in this region during late antiquity, Yizhar Hirschfeld, *Ein Gedi: A Very Large Village of Jews* (Haifa: Hecht Museum, Univ. of Haifa, 2006). A history of the Dead Sea region during late antiquity, and particularly of Jewish history in this regional system, is a desideratum.

contain some other gems—proving when to keep Passover and whether the equinox is a factor in determining the start of the year.

My joy right now is that anyone and everyone will know the truth about the calendar and the Sabbatical years and be able to back it up with historical facts when sharing this with others.

While I work on this book, I found still more potential places to discover other artefacts that would confirm the Sabbatical and Jubilee years. I was researching an article in *The New York Times* which gave up this gem for all of us to research:

*But the students could date the stone, based on the parallel dating systems inscribed on it. One referred to the Temple in Jerusalem, destroyed by the Romans in the year 70. (That system was used by Jews in Greece until World War II, Dr. Fine said; the last place the system was used, he said, was Corfu, before the Nazis rounded up the Jews who lived there and sent them to Auschwitz.) The other system was based on the number seven. By comparing the two systems, they could say with certainty that she died 362 years after the destruction of the temple.*<sup>882</sup>

I also have an addendum to the book from which I am quoting most of the tombstones. In the book titled, *Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora)*, by Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou; in collaboration with Sebastian Brock; on page 88 they state the following:

*Four more dated inscriptions, kept at the storehouse of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan at Nuweijis near Amman, are going to be published by Professor Omar al-Ghul of Yarmouk University at Irbid, Jordan. According to him, another illegible inscription is in the possession of the “Museum of the Ahli Bank for Numismatics” in Amman.*

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<sup>882</sup> Chasing 5th-Century Clues From a Woman’s Tombstone by James Barron December 13, 2013, Article about the tombstone of Martah researched by professor, Steven Fine, director of Yeshiva’s Center for Israel Studies, <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/15/nyregion/chasing-5th-century-clues-from-a-womans-tombstone.html>

For me to be a part of this awesome research and discovery is humbling and stunning. I am truly honoured by Yehovah for being allowed to discover these truths and to be able to present these findings alongside those which Qadesh La Yahweh Press has already presented to you.

*2 The glory of God is to hide a thing; but the honor of kings is to search out a matter. (Proverbs 25:2)*

## **Bela or Zoar—Being Meeked**

Before we begin the section about the tombstones of Zoar, I want to share an article adapted from Chad and Marilyn Wilhelm who were the two people who first presented me with those first two tombstones. This article will give you some background about this city of Zoar.

Here is the story:

*1 And it happened in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations, 2 they made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar. 3 All these were joined together in the valley of Siddim, which is the Salt Sea. 4 They served Chedorlaomer twelve years, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled. 5 And in the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him came and struck the giants in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzim in Ham, and the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim, 6 and the Horites in their Mount Seir, as far as the oak of Paran, which is by the wilderness. 7 And they returned, and came to En-mishpat, which is Kadesh, and struck all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who lived in Hazazon-tamar. 8 And the king of Sodom went out, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboim, and the king of Bela (which is Zoar). And they joined battle with them in the valley of Siddim; 9 with Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, and with Tidal the king of nations, and Amraphel the king of Shinar, and Arioch the king of Ellasar, four kings with five. 10 And the valley of Siddim was full of asphalt pits. And the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain. 11 And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their food, and went their way. 12 And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who lived in Sodom, and all his goods, and went away. (Genesis 14:1-12)*



For brevity's sake, let me just state that Chedorlaomer, Amraphel and Tidal are known in the Bible as Cush, Nimrod and Asshur. Nimrod was a hunter of "MEN." His father, Cush, who in mythology is known as "Kaos" or "Chaos," was the leading personality of the rebellion against Yehovah. Together, Cush and Nimrod are defeating all who will not submit to their authority as they formed the very first ruling Empire.

*8 And Cush fathered Nimrod. He began to be a mighty one in the earth. 9 He was a mighty hunter before Jehovah. Therefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before Jehovah. (Genesis 10:8-9)*

There were five cities who rebelled and fought against the kings of the north: Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Bela (which is Zoar). I also want you to notice the name of the King of Zeboim. His name is made up of two names put together: Shem and Eber. When I read the verse, I read it as Shem Eber king over both the cities of Zeboim and Bela. We know Shem is Melchizedek King of Jerusalem. Are these two the same person?

2 they made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and **Shemeber** king of Zeboim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar. (Genesis 14:2)

When we look up the meaning of each of the cities, we get a glimpse of what they represented:

1) Sodom: H5467 סְדוֹם *s'edôm sed-ome'*

*From an unused root meaning to scorch; burnt (that is, volcanic or bituminous) district; Sedom, a place near the Dead Sea: – Sodom.*

2) Gomorrah H6017 עֲמֹרָה *amôrâh am-o-law'*

*From H6014; a (ruined) heap; Amorah, a place in Palestine: – Gomorrah.*

3) Admah H126 אֲדָמָה *'admâh ad-maw'*

*Contracted for H127; earthy; Admah, a place near the Dead Sea: – Admah.*

H127 אֲדָמָה *adâmâh ad-aw-maw'*

From H119; soil (from its general redness): – country, earth, ground, husband [-man] (-ry), land.

H119 אָדָם 'âdam aw-dam'

To show blood (in the face), that is, flush or turn rosy: – be (dyed, made) red (ruddy).

4) Zeboiim H6636 צְבוֹיִם צְבוֹיִים צְבוֹיִם  
ts<sup>e</sup>bô'??ym tseb??y??ym tseb??yim tseb-o-eem', tseb-ee-yeem', tseb-ee-yeem'

Plural of H6643; gazelles; Tseboim or Tsebijim, a place in Palestine: – Zeboiim, Zeboim.

H6643 צְבִי ts<sup>e</sup>b??y tseb-ee'

From H6638 in the sense of prominence; splendor (as conspicuous); also a gazelle (as beautiful): – beautiful (-ty), glorious (-ry), goodly, pleasant, roe (-buck).

H6638 צָבָה tsâbâh tsaw-baw'

A primitive root; to amass, that is, grow turgid; specifically to array an army against: – fight, swell. (Pride)

5) Bela H1106 בֶּלַע bela? beh'-lah

The same as H1105; Bela, the name of a place, also of an Edomite and of two Israelites: – Bela.

H1105 בֶּלַע bela? beh'-lah

From H1104; a gulp; figuratively destruction: – devouring, that which he hath swallowed up.

H1104 בָּלַע bâla? baw-lah'

A primitive root; to make away with (specifically by swallowing); generally to destroy: – cover, destroy, devour, eat up, be at end, spend up, swallow down (up).

Combining the meaning of all these cities paints an interesting picture: Scorch/Burnt, Ruined Heap, Earthy/Worldly, Fight/Pride... and then Bela means Destruction. But we are told Bela changed its name to Zoar: "...Bela, which is Zoar." So, what is the meaning of Zoar?

Zoar H6820 צָעַר tsô?ar tso'-ar

From H6819; little; Tsoar, a place East of the Jordan: – Zoar.

H6819 צָעַר tsâ?ar tsaw-ar'

A primitive root; to be small, that is, (figuratively) ignoble: – be brought low, little one, be small. \*TO BE HUMBLE

Bela was one of the cities that were to be destroyed, and it was spared because Lot asked if he could escape to Zoar (formerly called Bela):

*18 And Lot said to them, Oh no, Lord, 19 please now, Your servant has found grace in Your sight, and You have magnified Your mercy, which You have shown to me in saving my life. And I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me and I die. 20 Behold now, this city is near to flee to, and it is a little one. Oh let me escape there (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live. 21 And He said to him, See, I have accepted you concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city for which you have spoken. 22 Hurry and escape there! For I cannot do anything till you have come there. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar. (mitsar, from tso 'ar, from tsa 'ar, a play on words to mean 'Little') 23 The sun had risen upon the earth, and Lot entered into Zoar. 24 Then Jehovah rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire, from Jehovah out of the heavens. 25 And He overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. (Genesis 19:18-25)*

As I write this, it is the year 2024. We have now begun the final 10 years of judgment from Aviv, 2024, to the Day of Atonement in 2033. We are about to begin to study the tombstones from Zoar in the following chapters. I had written about ***The Prophecies of Abraham*** back in 2010. One of those prophetic messages to us today comes from understanding the meaning of what Luke spoke about:

*26 And as it was in the days of Noah, so it also shall be in the days of the Son of Man. 27 They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark; and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 So also as it was in the days of Lot: they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29 but the day Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from the heaven and destroyed them all. (Luke 17:26-29)*

Lot went out of Sodom during the time of Passover in the year 1790 B.C. Noah went into the ark in the year 2181 B.C., but at the second Passover. The destruction of Sodom and the other cities took place in the 3rd year of the 6th Sabbatical cycle, while the time of the

Flood took place in the 4th year of the 6th Sabbatical cycle. Both of these events were times of judgment on mankind. This same time period of final judgment will be the year 2033 C.E., and again in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the 6<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle in the last Jubilee cycle of the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium. This is one of those understandings gained from the Sabbatical and Jubilee charts.

From the time of the rebellion of Cush and the tower of Babel in 1824 B.C., until these five cities broke away in 1811 B.C., was 13 years.<sup>883</sup> Abram would rescue them the same year when they were captured by the kings of the north in 1810 B.C.

Then Nimrod would be tried by Shem starting in the year 1799 B.C., going through the entire court system of Egypt until the final verdict and execution of Nimrod, who is also known as Osiris, was executed and his body then torn apart. Shem is also known as Typho by the Egyptians, as well as Set—one of the gods of Egypt.

At this same time of judgment that was being meted out to Nimrod/Osiris, who is torn apart and his body parts sent to the rest of the kingdoms as a warning, the destruction of the cities of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim also took place in the year 1790 B.C.

Why was Bela spared?<sup>884</sup>

Twice we read about the shame of Moab crying all the way to Zoar in both Isaiah 15:5 and Jeremiah 48:20-34. The question is: Has this prophecy already taken place, or is it yet future?

When Abram rescued his nephew Lot and defeated the northern kings, he also rescued and returned the people of Sodom, as well as those from the other four cities (including their wealth) that were captured by the northern kings. One of the cities that was also looted was Jerusalem. Abram did not accept anything back from the king of Sodom, but he did accept 10% back from the king of Salem:

*16 And he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, and the women also, and the people.*

*17 And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer and of the kings with him, at the*

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<sup>883</sup> 4 They served Chedorlaomer twelve years, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled. (Genesis 14:4)

<sup>884</sup> The Prophecies of Abraham By Joseph F Dumond

<https://www.authorhouse.com/en/bookstore/bookdetails/286642-the-prophecies-of-abraham>

*valley of Shaveh, which is the king's valley. 18 And Melchizedek the king of Salem brought forth bread and wine. And he was the priest of the most high God. 19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of Heaven and earth. 20 And blessed be the most high God, who has delivered your enemies into your hand. And he gave him tithes of all. 21 And the king of Sodom said to Abram, Give me the people and take the goods for yourself. 22 And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lifted up my hand to Jehovah, the most high God, the possessor of Heaven and earth, 23 that I will take from all that is yours, not from a thread even to a shoestring, lest you say, I have made Abram rich. 24 Nothing for me, only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion. (Genesis 14:16-24)*

I believe the reason Abram refused has something to do with this verse in Deuteronomy:

*17 There shall be no harlot of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel. 18 You shall not bring the hire of a harlot, or the price of a dog, into the house of Jehovah your God for any vow. For even both these are hateful to Jehovah your God. (Deuteronomy 23:17-18)*

Was it only Abram, Aner, Eshcol, Mamre and his 318 men who saved all the people, or do you think that Yehovah had something to do with this? Melchizedek had it correct:

*20 And blessed be the most high God, who has delivered your enemies into your hand... (Genesis 14:20)*

It was Yehovah who redeemed all these people. Yehovah did it through Abram. These people were REDEEMED by Yehovah. Now the testing of the redeemed was to take place. Over the next 20 years from 1810 B.C. to 1790 B.C., Yehovah would watch to see if Sodom, Gomorrah, and the other cities that were redeemed would change their ways.

In Genesis 18, we read how Abraham and Yehovah are discussing the destruction that was about to come upon these cities:

17 And Jehovah said, Shall I hide from Abraham the thing which I do, 18 And Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the persons of the earth shall be blessed in him? 19 For I know him, that he will command his sons and his house after him, and they shall keep the way of Jehovah, to do justice and judgment, that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham that which He has spoken of him. 20 And Jehovah said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, 21 I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which has come to Me. And if not, I will know. 22 And the men turned their faces away from there, and went toward Sodom. But Abraham still stood before Jehovah. 23 And Abraham drew near and said, Will You also destroy the righteous with the wicked? 24 Perhaps there are fifty righteous within the city. Will You also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are in it? 25 Far be it from You to act in this manner, to kill the righteous with the wicked. And far be it from You, that the righteous should be as the wicked. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? 26 And Jehovah said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. 27 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak to Jehovah, who am but dust and ashes. 28 Perhaps there will be five lacking from the fifty righteous. Will You destroy all the city for lack of five? And He said, If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy it. 29 And he spoke to Him yet again, and said, Perhaps there shall be forty found there. And He said, I will not do it for forty's sake. 30 And he said, Oh let not Jehovah be angry, and I will speak. Perhaps there shall be thirty found there. And He said, I will not do it if I find thirty there. 31 And he said, Lo now, I have taken upon me to speak to Jehovah. Perhaps there shall be twenty found there. And He said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake. 32 And he said, Oh do not let Jehovah be angry, and I will speak only once more. Perhaps ten shall be found there. And He said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake. 33 And Jehovah went His way as soon as He had left off talking with Abraham. And Abraham returned to his place. (Genesis 18:17-33)

After being rescued and redeemed from the northern armies, these cities went back to idolatry and their wicked ways:

20 And Jehovah said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, (Genesis 18:20)

If the blood of the Lamb has redeemed us, are we going to go back to our old ways? We are about to enter the time when the king of the north is going to overrun Israel. And it will be Yehovah who will redeem us, as we can read in Isaiah, as we are rescued from the coming captivity:

*1 For Jehovah will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel and set them in their own land; and the stranger shall be joined with them, and they shall cling to the house of Jacob. 2 And the peoples shall take them and bring them to their place; and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of Jehovah for slaves and slave girls. And they shall be captives of their captors; and they shall rule over their oppressors. 3 And it shall be in the day that Jehovah shall give you rest from your sorrow, and from your fear, and from the hard bondage which was pressed on you, 4 you shall take up this song against the king of Babylon and say, How the exacter, the gold gatherer has ceased! 5 Jehovah has broken the staff of the wicked, the scepter of the rulers 6 who struck peoples in wrath, a blow without turning away, ruling the nations in anger, a persecution without restraint. 7 All the earth is at rest and is quiet; they break out into singing. 8 Yea, the fir trees rejoice at you, the cedars of Lebanon, saying, Since you have fallen, no woodcutter will come up against us. 9 Hell from below is moved for you, to meet you at your coming. It stirs up the dead for you, all the he-goats of the earth. It has raised from their thrones all the kings of the nations. 10 All of them shall speak and say to you, Are you also as weak as we? Are you like us? 11 Your pride is brought down to the grave, and the noise of your harps. The maggot is spread under you, and the worms cover you. 12 How you are fallen from the heavens, O shining star, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! 13 For you have said in your heart, I will go up to the heavens, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. 14 I will go up above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High. 15 Yet you shall be brought down to hell, to the sides of the Pit. 16 Those who see you shall stare and closely watch you, saying, Is this the man who made the earth to tremble; who shook kingdoms; 17 who made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed its cities; who did not open the house for his prisoners? 18 All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every*

one in his own house. 19 But you are cast out of your grave like a hateful branch, and like the clothing of those who are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; like a dead body trampled under foot. 20 You shall not be joined with them in burial, because you ruined your land and killed your people; the seed of evildoers shall never be famous. 21 Prepare slaughter for his sons, because of the iniquity of their fathers, so that they do not rise, nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities. 22 For I will rise up against them, says Jehovah of Hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name and remnant, and son, and grandson, says Jehovah. 23 I will also make it a possession of the hedgehog, and pools of water; and I will sweep it with the broom of ruin, says Jehovah of Hosts. 24 Jehovah of Hosts has sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so it shall come to pass; and as I have purposed, it shall stand; 25 to break Assyria in My land, and on My mountains, trample him under foot. Then his yoke shall be removed from them, and his burden shall be taken off their shoulders. 26 This is the purpose that is purposed on all the earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out on all the nations. 27 For Jehovah of Hosts has purposed, and who shall reverse it? And His hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back? 28 This burden was in the year that King Ahaz died: 29 Rejoice not, O Philistia, all of you, that the rod of your striking is broken. For a viper comes forth from the root of a snake, and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent. 30 And the first-born of the poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie down in safety; and I will kill your root with famine, and he shall slay your remnant. 31 Howl, O gate! Cry, O city! O Philistia, all of you, are melted away; for from the north a smoke comes, and no straggler in his ranks. 32 What shall one then answer the messengers of the nation? That Jehovah has founded Zion, and the poor of His people shall trust in it. (Isaiah 14:1-32)

In Genesis 14, Yehovah redeemed the peoples of these five cities. He then wanted to see if the people would CHANGE for the better and turn from their wicked ways. Today, Yehovah has blessed the nations of Israel more than all the other nations of the world, and what have we done with it?

We now deny there is a God and remove all those things that relate to the commandments from our public buildings. We teach our children in schools that the homosexual lifestyle is normal and that there are no absolutes.



We are now 40 Jubilee cycles (or two millennial days) since Yehshua redeemed us all from sin. We have done the same as Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, and degenerated further than we were before.

*17 And you have seen their abominations and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which were among them) 18 lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turns away today from Jehovah our God, to go serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that bears gall and wormwood, 19 and it happens when he hears the words of this curse, that he shall bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart, to snatch away the drunken with the thirsty. 20 Jehovah will not be willing to forgive him, but then the anger of Jehovah and His jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie on him, and Jehovah shall blot out his name from under heavens. 21 And Jehovah shall set him apart to evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this book of the Law; 22 so that the generation to come of your sons that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say (when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which Jehovah has laid on it) 23 the whole land shall be burned with brimstone, and salt; it shall not be sown; nor shall it sprout; nor shall there be any grass in it. It shall be like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which Jehovah overthrew in His anger, and in His wrath, 24 even all nations shall say, Why has Jehovah done this to this land? For what is the heat of this great anger? 25 Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of Jehovah, the God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them forth out of the land of Egypt. 26 For they went and served other gods, and worshiped them, gods whom they did not know, and who had not given to them any portion. 27 And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against this land, to bring on it all the curses that are written in this book. 28 And Jehovah rooted them out of their land in anger and wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is today. 29 The secret things belong to Jehovah our God, but the revealed things belong to us and to our sons forever, so that we may do all the words of this Law. (Deuteronomy 29:17-29)*

Four cities were destroyed—but one repented and changed their ways. Sodom was not destroyed. Instead, they were brought low; they humbled themselves and turned away from the evil way they pursued—and in so doing, they saved their city from destruction.

Have you “soared” yourself yet? Have you “meeked” yourself yet? Have you submitted to Yehovah, or are there areas you will not change? Once the fire and sulphur start to fall, it will be too late. Do it now while you can.

## Chapter 26 | Tombstones With Not Enough Information

In this chapter I am going to list all those tombstones which we collected, but do not have enough information with which we can determine a Sabbatical or Jubilee year.

I am including all of these in case more information is uncovered in the future and can then be added to the information here. Each tombstone will be listed according to the number of years since the destruction, then a dash and the Common Era year so they can be referenced either way. If I have other information such as other researchers and published papers, or where I discovered the tombstone information, then I will list it as well in the information below. I am not going to post the pictures of each tombstone. I will give the plate number, which you can look up in the back of the book, *Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora)*.

I am also going to give each tombstone a subtitle by the name of the deceased—again for ease in identifying each tombstone.

### 282—352 C.E. Domitiana, Son of Hartah

282 years since the destruction of the Temple; Domitiana, son of Hartah—282 + 70 = 352 C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis in Amman in May 1997, inv. No. Z-253. Present location: Private Collection in Amman. Plate I*

*Bibli.: Naveh 1995, pp. 484-485, no. 6 (with drawing and photo); Beyer 2004, pp. 302-303 no. \*yyZO 6. For date see Stern 2001, p. 90 table 2.2.<sup>885</sup>*

*Of Domitiana Son of of Hartah Who died (lit. "gathered") On the year two hundred 80 Two To the destruction Of the temple*

This is another translation of the same tombstone:

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<sup>885</sup> *Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora)*.

Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 40

*This is the tombstone of Domitianus, son of Hareta, who was gathered (in) the year two hundred (and) 80 and two years of the destruction of the Sanctuary.*

Commentary: This tombstone gives us the date as being 282 years since the destruction of the Temple. We then add 70 years to this to arrive at 352 C.E. Because there is no reference to the Sabbatical cycle, we are not able to use this information to determine when a Sabbatical year occurred, but 352 C.E. is the 2nd year of the 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle. This stone is showing us that they kept an accurate record of the Sabbatical years counting from the year the Temple was destroyed in 70 C.E., as we have proven earlier in this book.

### **286—356 C.E. Yohannah, Daughter of QWQS**

286 years since the destruction of the Temple; Yohannah, daughter of QWQS— $286 + 70 = 356$  C.E.

*The stone came to our knowledge through a colour photograph handed to K.D. Politis in February 1998m inv. Z-293. Present location unknown. Plate I*

*Bibl.: Naveh 2000, pp.619-620, no. 19 (photo; drawing on p.629); Beyer 2004, p. 307, no. \*yyZO 19. For date see Stern 2001, p. 90 table 2.2.<sup>886</sup>*

*This is the tombstone of Yohannah, daughter of QWQS, who died the year two hundred and eighty-six years of the destruction of the Sanctuary.*

Commentary: This tombstone gives us the date as being 286 years since the destruction of the Temple. Adding 70 years to this gives us the year as 356 C.E., which is the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle, but the tombstone does not give us any information about which year in the Sabbatical cycle it is. So, we cannot use this tombstone to confirm a Sabbatical year.

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<sup>886</sup> Ibid. p. 40-41

## **288—358 C.E. Miryam, Daughter of Abudamah**

288 years since the destruction of the Temple; Miryam, daughter of Abudamah— $288 + 70 = 358$  C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis at Safi in March 1996, inv. No. Z-134. Present location: Department of Antiquities Jordan, storehouse Nuweijis near Amman. Plate I*

*Bibli.: Unpublished (For date see Stern 2001, p. 90 table 2.2).<sup>887</sup>*

*This is the tombstone of Miryam, daughter of Abudamah, who died the year 288 years of the destruction of the [Sanctuary].*

Commentary: This tombstone gives us the date as being 288 years since the destruction of the Temple. Adding 70 years to this is the year 358 C.E., which is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 5<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle. We do not have any information from the tombstone itself to confirm when the Sabbatical year is. So, we cannot use this tombstone to confirm a Sabbatical year.

## **291—361 C.E. Mehirshah, Daughter of Shmu'el**

291 years since the destruction of the Temple; Mehirshah, daughter of Shmu'el— $291 + 70 = 361$  C.E.

*Present location unknown.*

*Bibli.: Stern and Misgav 2004, pp 137-141, no. 26 (photo and drawing included) Plate II.<sup>888</sup>*

*This is the tombstone of Mehirshah, daughter of Shmu'el, who died the year 291 years of the destruction of the Sanctuary.*

Commentary: This tombstone gives us the date as being 291 years since the destruction of the Temple. Adding 70 years to this is the year 361 C.E., which is the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 5<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle. We do not have any information from the tombstone itself to confirm when the Sabbatical year is. So, we cannot use this tombstone to confirm a Sabbatical year.

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<sup>887</sup> Ibid. p 41. No. 3.

<sup>888</sup> Ibid. p. 43. No 5.

## 295—365 C.E. Hillel, Son of Unknown

295 years since the destruction of the Temple; Hillel, son of unknown— $295 + 70 = 365$  C.E.

*The stele came to our knowledge through a colour photograph handed to Y.E. Meiraris by K.D. Politis in 2008. Present location unknown.*<sup>889</sup>

*This is the tombstone of Hillel, son of [... who died?] the year two hundred ninety-five years of the destruction of the Sanctuary.*

Commentary: This tombstone gives us the date as being 295 years since the destruction of the Temple. Adding 70 years to this is the year 365 C.E., which is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 6<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle. We do not have any information from the tombstone itself to confirm when the Sabbatical year is. So, we cannot use this tombstone to confirm a Sabbatical year.

## 300-370 C.E. Theodora, Daughter of Myyrh

300 years since the destruction of the Temple; Theodora, daughter of Myyrh— $300 + 70 = 370$  C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis at Safi in June 1996, inv. no. Z-186. Present location: Department of Antiquities of Jordan, storehouse at Neweijis near Amman. Plate III*  
*Bibl.: Unpublished.*<sup>890</sup>

*This is the tombstone of Theodora, daughter of MYYRH, who died (on day) 1 in the week (=Sunday), 7 days in the month Tammuz ... in the first year of the seven-year cycle, in the year 300 years of the destruction of the [Sanctuary].*

Commentary: This tombstone is giving us the year as 370 C.E. When I look at Torahcalendar.com at the 4<sup>th</sup> month of Tammuz for the year 370 C.E., I am not able to find the Sunday as the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the month.

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<sup>889</sup> Ibid. p. 44. No. 6

<sup>890</sup> Ibid. P. 44-45, no. 7.

The year 370 C.E. is the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle, yet this stone claims it is the 1<sup>st</sup> year.

If I assume the tombstone is correct in stating it is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle, but they have misread the year as 300 instead of being 302 years since the destruction, I could then look at 372 C.E. on Torahcalendar.com. Doing so, I would discover the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the 3<sup>rd</sup> month is on Sunday as the tombstone claims.

We have discovered through the dating of the tombstones that Torahcalendar.com is very accurate using the crescent moon to begin the month, but almost always they are one or two months late, which you will discover as we look at all of the dates on the tombstones.

From this information, I would say the tombstone has been misread and should be 302 years since the destruction, based on the fact that the 7<sup>th</sup> day of Tammuz does land on the Sunday when you use the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of Torahcalendar.com. This is using the crescent moon to begin each month.

If 372 C.E. is the proper reading for the year, instead of 370 C.E., then this means Passover was March 8, 372 C.E., before the equinox, but I am speculating because currently this tombstone is not able to be confirmed correct.

At this time, other than my reasoning above, I do not have an explanation as to why there is a two-year discrepancy between this date being 370 and the 1<sup>st</sup> year, when our Jubilee charts demonstrate that it is the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle. For this reason, we cannot count this as one of our proofs.

### **305—375 C.E. Omar, Wife of Yeshu'a**

305 years since the destruction of the Temple; Umar, wife of Yeshu'a— $305 + 70 = 375$  C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis in London in July 1998, inv. no. Z-307. Present location: Moussaieff Collection in London. Plate IV*

*Bibl.: Stern 1999, pp. 177-178, no. 13 (with photo); Beyer 2004, p. 305, no. \*yyZO 13. For the date see Stern 2001, p. 90, table 2.2; p. 94.<sup>891</sup>*

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<sup>891</sup> Ibid. P. 46, no. 10.

*This is the memorial of Oma(r) wife of Yeshu'a who died on the twentieth day of Adar, year 300 and five years*

*This is the tombstone of 'Umar, wife of Yeshua', who died on the twentieth day of Adar, the year 300 {hundred} (and) 5 years of the destruction.*

Commentary: This tombstone gives us the date as being 305 years since the destruction of the Temple. Adding 70 years to this is the year 375 C.E., which is the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 7<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle. We do not have any information from the tombstone itself to confirm when the Sabbatical year is. So, we cannot use this tombstone to confirm a Sabbatical year. But we include it here so you will have all of the stones that we have recorded.

### **300+—370+ C.E. Haninah, Son of Ya'aqob**

300+ years since the destruction of the Temple; Haninah, son of Ya'aqob.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis at Safi, in spring of 1996, inv. no. Z-159. Present location unknown. Plate XIII  
Bibl.: Unpublished.<sup>892</sup>*

*Rested be the soul of Haninah?, son of Ya'aqob. , who died on the fifth day ..... in the seventh year which is the sabbatical year, the year three hundred [.....] of the destruction of the Sanctuary. May he rest and be awakened to the voice of the announcer of peace. Peace upon Israel.*

Commentary: Since only the hundred's figure of the era year is preserved, the date could range from between 3[01] and 3[99] E.D.S., that is 370 C.E. - 469 C.E. However, on stylistic and palaeographical grounds the inscription could be placed after 450 C.E. The most possible candidates, compatible with the Sabbatical year, are the years 455/456 C.E., 462/463 C.E., or 469/470 C.E. Although we are told it was a Sabbatical year, we are not able to determine which year, and as a result we are not able to use this tombstone as one of our witnesses.

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<sup>892</sup> Ibid. P. 59-60, no. 28.



## 318—388 C.E. Zym, Daughter of Shilah

318 years since the destruction of the Temple; Zym, daughter of Shilah— $318 + 70 = 388$  C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis in Amman in May 1997, inv. no. Z-254. Present location: Now kept at the Living Torah Museum, Brooklyn, New York.*

*([http://www.torahmuseum.com/viewer\\_torah/torah88\\_tombstone.html](http://www.torahmuseum.com/viewer_torah/torah88_tombstone.html))( <https://www.livingtorahmuseum.com/>) Plate V*

*Bibl.: Unpublished (for the date see Stern 2001, p. 89; p. 90, table 2.2 p.91).<sup>893</sup>*

*This is the tombstone of (Z)ym, daughter of Shilah, who died in the second year of the seven-year cycle, on the 16th day of the month Tebet, the y[ear] three hundred (and) 18 years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace, peace. L.*

Commentary: The month of Tebet is the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the year. The year 388 C.E. is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle, not the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle as this tombstone states. I do not have a day of the week to compare this date with on Torahcalendar.com.

I do not have an explanation for this tombstone and cannot confirm this date with our charts, so we cannot use it as a proof.

## 326—396 C.E. Ya'aqob

326 years since the destruction of the Temple; Ya'aqob— $326 + 70 = 396$  C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis at Safi in April 1996, inv. no. Z-158. Present location: Unknown. Plate VI*

*Bibl.: Unpublished (For the date see Stern 2001, p. 90, table 2.2).<sup>894</sup>*

*This is the tombstone of Ya'aqob who was gathered in the year 300 {hundred} (and) 26 years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace.*

Commentary: This tombstone gives us the date as being 326 years since the destruction of the Temple. Adding 70 years to this is the year

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<sup>893</sup> Ibid. P. 46-47, no. 11.

<sup>894</sup> Ibid. p. 48, no. 13.

396 C.E., which is the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sabbatical cycle. We do not have any information from the tombstone itself to confirm when the Sabbatical year is. So, we cannot use this tombstone to confirm the Shmitah.

**372—442 C.E. Unknown**

372 years since the destruction of the Temple; Unknown—372 + 70 = 442 C.E.<sup>895</sup>

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis at Safi, in June 1996, inv. no. Z-183. Present location unknown. Plate XI.  
Bibl.; Unpublished.*

..... year.....  
..... year .. ..... seven-year cycle [300 or three] hundred  
(and) 72 ..... [Pea]ce, peace. Peace, peace.

Commentary: The hundred's figure of the era year numeral has been restored as 372, since this tombstone presents close affinities to those dated in the second quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D. (cf. e.g. nos. 21, 23, 25). We do not have any information from the tombstone itself to confirm when the Sabbatical year is. So, we cannot use this tombstone to confirm the Shmitah.

**393—463 C.E. Yehudah the Priest, Son of Yishaq**

393 years since the destruction of the Temple; Yehudah the Priest, son of Yishaq—393 + 70 = 463 C.E.<sup>896</sup>

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis at Safi, in April 1998, inv. no. Z-298. Present location: Unknown. Plate XIV.  
Bibl.; Unpublished.*

*May there rest the soul of Yehudah the priest, son of Yiṣḥaq, who died (on the) fourth? [day] in? ..... year?  
..... in the year? three hundred and ninety  
and three years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Let his reposing be for rest. Peace, peace.*

<sup>895</sup> Ibid p. 56-57, n. 24.

<sup>896</sup> Ibid p. 64, n. 33.

Commentary: This tombstone gives us the date as being 393 years since the destruction of the Temple. Adding 70 years to this is the year 463 C.E., which is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 6<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle. We do not have any information from the tombstone itself to confirm when the Sabbatical year is. So, we cannot use this tombstone to confirm the Shmitah.

### **400+—470+ C.E. M.**

400+ years since the destruction of the Temple; M.—400 + 70 = 470+ C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis in London in July 1998, inv. no. Z-308. Present location: Moussaieff Collection in London. Plate XVI*

*Bibl.: Stern 1999, p. 179, no. 15 (with photo); Beyer 2004, p. 305, no. yyZO 15. For the date see Stern 2001, p. 89, 90.<sup>897</sup>*

*May the spirit rest who died on the 5th (day), the sixth of Nissan, on the seventh-year year four hundred to the destruction of the temple ...peace on...*

We have another translation of this same tombstone:

*Let the soul be rested of M ? who died on the 5<sup>th</sup> day (Thursday), on the sixth <day of the month> Nisan, in the seventh year <of the seven-year cycle>, the year four hundred{s} < years> of the destruction of the Sanctuary. .... Peace, peace upon Israel.*

Commentary: This tombstone is giving us the day of the week as well as the day of the month. It is stating he or she died on Thursday, which was the 6<sup>th</sup> day of Aviv, the first month. The tombstone also states that this year was the 7<sup>th</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle. The year 470 C.E. is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle not the 7<sup>th</sup> as the tombstone states.

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<sup>897</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora).

Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 67, no. 37.

I suspect there may be some missing information after the 400 wording. As it is now I am not able to match this tombstone with our Jubilee charts, and for this reason I cannot use this stone as one of our proofs.

### **Missing Information Not Dateable**

There are another 19 tombstones which do not have enough information on them for our purposes. They all come from the Inscriptions from Palaestina<sup>898</sup> work. They all have very little information on them and it is pointless for me to post them here, so I refer you to their work for further study.

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<sup>898</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora).  
Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock.

## Chapter 27 | Tombstones Identifying Sabbatical Years

In this chapter I am going to list all those tombstones which we have collected, containing enough information from which we can determine a Sabbatical or Jubilee year. I have already used one tombstone from this section in Chapter 4 to prove a Jubilee year. I will include as much information as I can about this first tombstone so you can appreciate the amount of work that has gone into studying each tombstone. After this first one, I will cut right to the pertinent facts we need to prove the Sabbatical and Jubilee years.

### 290—360 C.E. Mousis, Son of Marsa

290 years since the destruction of the Temple; Mousis, son of Marsa— $290 + 70 = 360$  C.E.

*As K.D. Politis was informed in 1999 in Amman, the tombstone is said to have come from the area of Ghor es-Safi, though its exact provenance is not known. Inv. No. Z-292. It was later acquired by in Switzerland by Reuben and Edith Hecht Museum of the University of Haifa, where it is now kept under the inv. no. H-3029. Plate II Bibli.: Naveh 2001, pp. 7-8, no. 18, fig. 2 on p. 8 (ed. pr.); Cotton and Price 2001, pp. 10-12; Ia. Pp. 110-112, no 18 (Aramaic text in English translation);<sup>899</sup> colour pl. II. For the date see Naveh 199, p. 586, no 18; Stern 2001, p. 90 table 2.2.<sup>900</sup>*

*“This is the grave of Mousis (Moshe) son of Marsa who died in year three of the Sabbatical cycle, in the month of Kislev, on the twenty-seventh day of it, which is the year 290 after the destruction of the Temple.”*

Aramaic text:

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<sup>899</sup> JOURNAL ARTICLE, A Bilingual Tombstone from Zo'ar (Arabia) (Hecht Museum, Haifa, Inv. No. H-3029, Naveh's List No. 18), by Hannah M. Cotton and Jonathan J. Price, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*. Bd. 134 (2001), pp. 277-283. Published by: Dr. Rudolf Habelt GmbH. Stable

URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20190821>

<sup>900</sup> *Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia*. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora).

Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 41-43.

*This is the tombstone of Mousis, son of Marsah, who died in the year three of the seven-year cycle, in the month of Kislev, on the twenty-seventh day of it, which is the year 290 years of the destruction of the Sanctuary.*

Greek text:

*Monument of Mousi(s), (son) of Marsos, who was born in (the) year 235 (and) died in (the) year 253. May his lot be good.*

I have marked on the following chart the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the 5<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle in yellow so you can see exactly how this tombstone confirms the Sabbatical cycles at that time of death. This was the year 360 C.E., in the 86<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle.

							85
Sabbatical	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	85
475	489	495	501	507	513	519	
476	490	496	502	508	514	520	
477	491	497	503	509	515	521	
478	492	498	504	510	516	522	
479	493	499	505	511	517	523	
480	494	500	506	512	518	524	
481	495	501	507	513	519	525	
482	496	502	508	514	520	526	
							86
Sabbatical	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	86
487	509	515	521	527	533	539	
488	510	516	522	528	534	540	
489	511	517	523	529	535	541	
490	512	518	524	530	536	542	
491	513	519	525	531	537	543	
492	514	520	526	532	538	544	
493	515	521	527	533	539	545	
							87
Sabbatical	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	87
505	525	531	537	543	549	555	
506	526	532	538	544	550	556	
507	527	533	539	545	551	557	
508	528	534	540	546	552	558	
509	529	535	541	547	553	559	
510	530	536	542	548	554	560	
511	531	537	543	549	555	561	
							88
Sabbatical	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	88
517	537	543	549	555	561	567	
518	538	544	550	556	562	568	
519	539	545	551	557	563	569	
520	540	546	552	558	564	570	
521	541	547	553	559	565	571	
522	542	548	554	560	566	572	
523	543	549	555	561	567	573	
							89
Sabbatical	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	89
529	549	555	561	567	573	579	
530	550	556	562	568	574	580	
531	551	557	563	569	575	581	
532	552	558	564	570	576	582	
533	553	559	565	571	577	583	
534	554	560	566	572	578	584	
535	555	561	567	573	579	585	
							90
Sabbatical	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	90
541	559	565	571	577	583	589	
542	560	566	572	578	584	590	
543	561	567	573	579	585	591	
544	562	568	574	580	586	592	
545	563	569	575	581	587	593	
546	564	570	576	582	588	594	
547	565	571	577	583	589	595	
							91
Sabbatical	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	91
553	569	575	581	587	593	599	
554	570	576	582	588	594	600	
555	571	577	583	589	595	601	
556	572	578	584	590	596	602	
557	573	579	585	591	597	603	
558	574	580	586	592	598	604	
559	575	581	587	593	599	605	
							92
Sabbatical	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	92
565	579	585	591	597	603	609	
566	580	586	592	598	604	610	
567	581	587	593	599	605	611	
568	582	588	594	600	606	612	
569	583	589	595	601	607	613	
570	584	590	596	602	608	614	
571	585	591	597	603	609	615	
							93
Sabbatical	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	93
577	587	593	599	605	611	617	
578	588	594	600	606	612	618	
579	589	595	601	607	613	619	
580	590	596	602	608	614	620	
581	591	597	603	609	615	621	
582	592	598	604	610	616	622	
583	593	599	605	611	617	623	
							94
Sabbatical	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	94
589	595	601	607	613	619	625	
590	596	602	608	614	620	626	
591	597	603	609	615	621	627	
592	598	604	610	616	622	628	
593	599	605	611	617	623	629	
594	600	606	612	618	624	630	
595	601	607	613	619	625	631	
							95
Sabbatical	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	95
595	601	607	613	619	625	631	
596	602	608	614	620	626	632	
597	603	609	615	621	627	633	
598	604	610	616	622	628	634	
599	605	611	617	623	629	635	
600	606	612	618	624	630	636	
601	607	613	619	625	631	637	
							96
Sabbatical	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	96
607	613	619	625	631	637	643	
608	614	620	626	632	638	644	
609	615	621	627	633	639	645	
610	616	622	628	634	640	646	
611	617	623	629	635	641	647	
612	618	624	630	636	642	648	
613	619	625	631	637	643	649	
							97
Sabbatical	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	97
619	625	631	637	643	649	655	
620	626	632	638	644	650	656	
621	627	633	639	645	651	657	
622	628	634	640	646	652	658	
623	629	635	641	647	653	659	
624	630	636	642	648	654	660	
625	631	637	643	649	655	661	
							98
Sabbatical	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	98
625	631	637	643	649	655	661	
626	632	638	644	650	656	662	
627	633	639	645	651	657	663	
628	634	640	646	652	658	664	
629	635	641	647	653	659	665	
630	636	642	648	654	660	666	
631	637	643	649	655	661	667	
							99
Sabbatical	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	99
637	643	649	655	661	667	673	
638	644	650	656	662	668	674	
639	645	651	657	663	669	675	
640	646	652	658	664	670	676	
641	647	653	659	665	671	677	
642	648	654	660	666	672	678	
643	649	655	661	667	673	679	
							100
Sabbatical	4th Cycle	5th Cycle	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	100
649	655	661	667	673	679	685	
650	656	662	668	674	680	686	
651	657	663	669	675	681	687	
652	658	664	670	676	682	688	
653	659	665	671	677	683	689	
654	660	666	672	678	684	690	
655	661	667	673	679	685	691	

In addition to telling us it was the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle, this tombstone also gives us the day and the month. Some tombstones will even give us the day of the week, and with that we can do some additional research.

It is going to be necessary to know when each of the Hebrew months are in relation to the month of Nisan and the Gregorian calendar. The original calendar began with the first month as Aviv, or Nisan. Only after the Mishnah was written in about 200 C.E., did the 7<sup>th</sup> month become the first month. The Sabbatical and Jubilee years change to this system of reckoning over the next 200 years; it was not all done in 200 C.E. We will be referring to this next chart often.

Kislev, or Chislev (Hebrew: כִּסְלִי, Standard Kīslav Tiberian Kīsl ēw), also Chisleu in the King James (authorized English) Bible, is the third month of the civil year and the ninth month of the ecclesiastical year on the Hebrew calendar. The ecclesiastical year is the original year that all Hebrew dates were associated with. Things only got confused after the Mishnah changed the start of the year from Aviv to Rosh Hashanah, the 7<sup>th</sup> month.

Month & Number		
Ecclesiastical/ biblical	Civil	Hebrew Month
1	7	Aviv or Nisan
2	8	Iyar
3	9	Sivan
4	10	Tammuz
5	11	Av
6	12	Elul
7	1	Tishrei
8	2	Cheshvan or Marcheshvan
9	3	Kislev
10	4	Tevet
11	5	Shevat
12	6	Adar 1 Only in Leap Years
12	6	Adar 2 in Leap Years

Another source we are going to utilize as we examine these tombstones is Torahcalendar.com.<sup>901</sup> They have a data base for 7000 years using the new crescent moon to begin each month. I have found them extremely accurate with the new moon settings. My only fault with them is that they use the equinox to determine the start of the year; but knowing this, we can easily confirm our tombstone dates given to us to determine when the year actually began in the life of the deceased. The tombstones themselves will demonstrate to us whether or not you should be using the equinox to start the year.



<sup>901</sup> TorahCalendar.com The Creation Calendar shows Hebrew Months which begin at each new moon. <https://torahcalendar.com>



With the information from the tombstone of Mousis, the son of Marsa, who died 290 years after the destruction of the Temple, we go to Torahcalendar.com and look at the year for 360 C.E.— $290 + 70 = 360$  C.E. The 27<sup>th</sup> day is Thursday, November 23, but we were not told the day of the week he died in this case.

The Greek dating of this tombstone is explained in the article from Hecht Museum, Haifa, Inv. No. H-3029.<sup>902</sup> Here once again, the evidence of when the Temple was destroyed is being told to us right here in our very first tombstone once you understand the Greek method of dating. Do take special note of the footnotes containing references to many other articles about other tombstones.



*The authors are acquainted with twenty-six tombstones from Zo'ar—a village located on the southern shore of the Dead Sea—*

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<sup>902</sup> A Bilingual Tombstone from Zo'ar (Arabia) (Hecht Museum, Haifa, Inv. No. H-3029, Naveh's List No. 18) [Hannah M. Cotton, Jonathan J. Price, Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik](#), Bd. 134 (2001), pp. 277-283 (8 pages) <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20190821?seq=1>

Cotton, Hannah M., and Jonathan J. Price. "A Bilingual Tombstone from Zo'ar (Arabia) (Hecht Museum, Haifa, Inv. No. H-3029, Naveh's List No. 18)." *Zeitschrift Für Papyrologie Und Epigraphik*, vol. 134, 2001, pp. 277–83. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20190821>. Accessed 15 Oct. 2024.

*already published or to be published soon. There are many more.<sup>903</sup> Twenty-four tombstones in Naveh's list<sup>904</sup> are written in Aramaic.<sup>905</sup> A tombstone written in Greek was published by J. C. Duncan in PEFQSt 1924, 35ff. and reproduced in CIJ1209 (= G in Naveh's list). The one discussed here is the only bilingual tombstone on Naveh's list.<sup>906</sup>*

*The stone (PL I) contains two texts, one above the other, inside a red frame; its upper part is decorated with red menorahs. The back is undressed. Five lines of Greek text are followed by 4 lines of the Aramaic text. Red colour is preserved inside the letters. There are five deeply carved horizontal guidelines in the Aramaic inscription, but none in the Greek inscription.*

*The Greek text seems to have been created first. At a later stage the epitaph was made over into its Aramaic version: the red frame was painted together with the menorahs, and probably at the same time the Aramaic text with its incised guidelines was carved underneath the area of the Greek text.*

*This hypothesis is supported by the fact that the last letter of the first line of the Greek text extends beyond the right-hand boundary of the*

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<sup>903</sup> Dr. Konstantinos Politis informs us that 350 inscribed tombstones from Ghor es-Safi are currently being studied by himself and Dr. Yannis Meimaris and Dr. Sebastian Brock; cf. K. D. Politis, Survey and Rescue Collections in the Ghawr as Safi, ADAJ42, 1998, 630-31 : '300-plus funerary stelae ... Approximately 90% ... in Greek, the remainder ... in Aramaic'.

<sup>904</sup> All the numbers in the present article and in the Table refer to a handlist given to the authors by Professor Joseph Naveh. The Greek tombstone, CIJ1209, does not have a number in Naveh's list, and is designated G(reek).

<sup>905</sup> The first one was published by A. E. Cowley in PEFQSt 1925, 207-10 and reproduced in CIJ 1208 (no. 1 in Naveh's list); Y. Ben-Zvi in Yedi'ot 10, 1944, 35-8 (Hebrew) and A. L. Sukenik in Qedem 2, 1944, 83-8 (Hebrew) published the same two texts (nos. 2-3 in Naveh's list); J. Naveh published two more tombstones in HUCA 56, 1985, 103-16 and in Liber Annuus 37, 1987, 369-71 (Naveh's nos. 4-5). Nos. 1-5 were republished, in the order in which they had first appeared, together with seven new ones by Naveh in Tarbiz 64, 1995, All-91 (Hebrew), who assigned them the numbers 1-12 (no. 12 appears in an Appendix on pp. 496-7); Y. Stern published nos. 13-16 in Tarbiz 68, 1999, 185-77 (Hebrew); no. 17 (with some corrections of Stern's reading of nos. 13-16) was published by Naveh in Tarbiz 68, 1999, 581-6 (Hebrew); no. 18, republished here, was published for the first time by Naveh and the authors in Michmanim, 15, 2001, 7-12 (Hebrew); no. 10 was republished by Naveh in Michmanim 15, 2001, 5-7 (Hebrew, English abstracts on pp. 60-61). Seven more tombstones, nos. 19-25, will be published by Naveh in the near future.

<sup>906</sup> Dr. Politis tells us that his no. Z-292 is also a bilingual tombstone.

red-painted frame and the area beneath the first line on the right hand side of the Greek text is badly effaced. It seems to have been deliberately sanded down in order to create a surface for painting the menorahs. Most of the Greek is still legible: obviously there was no attempt to obliterate the Greek text. It was simply incorporated into the decoration of the Aramaic text with the consequent damage to the letters. The ordinatio of the Greek inscription resembles that of the Aramaic one in that the last line in both texts (l. 5 in the Greek text and l. 4 in the Aramaic text) is centered.

Stone measurements: height 35.5 cm; width 33 cm; thickness ca. 3 cm; the red-painted frame measures 24.2 x 26.5 cm. Letter height in Greek inscription: ca. 1.7 cm and in the Aramaic inscription ca. 1.4 cm.

Autopsy: 5 January 2000.<sup>907</sup>

#### The Greek text:

ΜΗΝΗΜΟΝ ΜΗΤΕΡΩ	Memoriae Memoriae
ΜΑΡΤΩΤΗ .ΝΗΛΕΥΤΩ	Μάρτυρος .ΝΗΛεύτου
ΕΥΘΥ .ΓΕΩΡ .Α/Α/Α Ε.ΤΗΤΗ ΓΑΝΩΝ	Εὐθύ .Γεωργίου Α/Α/Α Ε.Τητή Γανών
ΤΩ ΕΤ'ΕΝΤ	τῶ Εἰρηαι' ἐν' (= 253)
ΕΥΝΟΠΙΤΩ	εὐνοπίτῳ

#### Comments on the transcription of the Greek text:

L. 2 The seventh legible letter is either a nu or an eta.

L. 3 The left-hand hasta of the tau is missing, making it look like a gamma. The sixth letter which can be read in this line is either a sigma or an epsilon or an omikron or a theta; it is followed by a lamda or an alpha or a ?fe/ta. The two vertical lines following the upsilon may be an eta or ?pi now missing the horizontal hasta.

L. 5 The tau seems to have an extra vertical stroke.

#### The Aramaic text:<sup>908</sup>

This is the grave of Mousios son of	ܡܘܨܝܘܫ ܒܢ ܡܘܨܝܘܫ ܒܢ ܡܘܨܝܘܫ	1
Maria who died in year three of the	ܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܘܨܝܘܫ ܒܢ ܡܘܨܝܘܫ ܒܢ ܡܘܨܝܘܫ	2
Sabbatical cycle, in the month of	ܒܚܕܠܐ ܕܡܘܨܝܘܫ ܒܢ ܡܘܨܝܘܫ ܒܢ ܡܘܨܝܘܫ	3
Kislev, on the twenty second day of	ܒܚܕܠܐ ܕܡܘܨܝܘܫ ܒܢ ܡܘܨܝܘܫ ܒܢ ܡܘܨܝܘܫ	4
it, which is the year 290 after the		
destruction of the Temple.		

<sup>907</sup> The authors wish to thank Werner Eck for his assistance on that stormy day.

<sup>908</sup> We reproduce J. Naveh's text and translation with his kind permission.

*This is the grave of Mousios son of Marsa who died in year three of the Sabbatical cycle, in the month of Kislev, on the twenty seventh day of it, which is the year 290 after the destruction of the Temple.*

*Lines 1-2 Mouclou - Mousios renders the Hebrew name Moshe (nt?o). The name was used, albeit not frequently, by Jews in the Graeco-Roman period. In addition to the instances cited by Margaret H. Williams,<sup>909</sup> one should mention Mooaf| (genitive) in a Greek papyrus from Wadi Murabba'at (DJDII, no. 91, col. II, 1. 2).<sup>910</sup> We should note furthermore that the Aramaic transcription of the name on this tombstone, namely: מושׁשׁ (MWSYS), reveals that the local pronunciation of the Hebrew name 'Moshe' at the time followed the Greek form; incidentally this strengthens Williams' suggestion that Mousaios/Museus, while not etymologically related to the Hebrew name Moshe, were used as its equivalent.*

*M?pcou is the genitive of the name Marsas (nono MRS<sup>H</sup>). The name is also found on tombstone no.10.<sup>911</sup> So far as we can tell the name is not precisely attested anywhere else. Naveh tentatively suggests that the name is of Arabic origin, like some other names on the tombstones from Zo'ar.<sup>912</sup>*

*Lines 2-4: the 4 or 5 letters preceding ?vtoc in line 2 are badly effaced. The fact that touc in line 3 is not abbreviated - in contrast to er ' in line 4 - implies that it is not a dating formula. One would expect to find here the age of the deceased, but this is normally expressed by the genitive plural toov followed by the number of years indicated by letters, as in CIJ 1209 (G in the list of inscriptions from Zo'ar): ?toov ctt '. There does not seem to be a horizontal line indicating a numeral above any of the letters following Ztovc in line 3. Nevertheless, one may tentatively suggest a reference to the age of the man at death, with the numeral fully spelled out, to be taken together with Jevroc and etouc.<sup>913</sup> The only verb we have discovered*

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<sup>909</sup> Jewish Use of Moses as a Personal Name in Graeco-Roman Antiquity - A Note, ZPE 118, 1997, 274, answering T. Derda, Did the Jews use the Name of Moses in Antiquity? ZPE 115, 1997, 257ff.

<sup>910</sup> Although undated, it probably belongs to the 2nd century CE; cf. H. M. Cotton, W. Cockle and F. Millar, The Papyrology of the Roman Near East: A Survey, JRS 85, 1995, no. 345.

<sup>911</sup> See n. 3 for publication place.

<sup>912</sup> Naveh, Michmanim 2001, 7.

<sup>913</sup> It is also possible that something like d<sup>^</sup>evToc ctouc i.e. "of the Sabbatical year" preceded by y, now effaced, stood here: i.e. to? y dc<sup>^</sup>?vToc ?touc, but this is

which yields anything meaningful when combined with <etoc is ttl|ittXti|il. We thus propose to read TrXr|a0?vToc <etouc. This suggestion receives support from an inscription from Cyrenaica, which reads: ... E?mp?awoc e-n\r\oer tt| v' rai ?Tr?lGlave (eTouc) 8' etc. (SEGXXXIII 1458).<sup>914</sup>

Line 3 is badly damaged in the centre. We tentatively restored aTTO0av?v/Toc, which is much more common than the simple form 0(iv?v/toc;<sup>915</sup> admittedly, the necessary letters cannot be securely read.

Line 5: for the form e?iioip? see IChrUR 3,7243, a, 1: e?|ir|pi TTeTpoc\* ou8i<c ?>0?vaToc. ??r)cev err] v?'; CIG IV 9137 = Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania, ed. J. M. Reynolds - J. B. Ward Perkins, Rome 1952, no 256a, 1: [e?|ioupLTo]<sup>916</sup> cEXXa8ioc. ??r|C en v [?rX?ov ?Xcnfriov |rf|Mec y] f|i?pac [SerairevTe. co XptcT?c \iera t(o)?] TTve?[[iaT?c c(o)u. eTkXe??Ticev |ii]vi TTauvi [e?oo]|j,L kol(t<i) to?jc "Ac(p(o)uc (Lepcis Magna 337-350 CE). The verb is found many times in Jewish inscriptions, written in different ways. E?|i?jpi is frequently attested in Beth She'arim, see Beth Shearim II: The Greek Inscriptions, nos. 2 (CIJ 1013), 3 (= 1014), 5 (= 1016), 7 (= 1018), 9 (= 1021), 26 (= 999) 27 (= 1000), 33 (= 1044), 47 (= 1060), 52 (= 1063), 56 (= 1004); 57 (= 1067), 69 (= 1086), 130, 187.

We suggest the following reconstruction and translation of the Greek text:

1.	Μάρκος Μάρκος	The grave of Marcus
2.	Μάρκος ἰσχυροτέρως	Son of Marcus, who, having completed
3.	ἔτετος ... ἡμετέρας	the year n of his life, died
4.	τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ αὐτοῦ	in the year 213 (of the province of Arabia).
5.	ἔστω αὐτῷ	Let him fare well!

*The date:*

*The most intriguing feature of this as well as of the other tombstones from Zo'ar is the presence of several systems of dating in the same monument. In the Aramaic tombstones there are generally two, but*

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less likely since the use of the era of the province of Arabia for marking the date of death could hardly lead us to anticipate an additional reference to the sabbatical year in the Greek text.

<sup>914</sup> Cf. also Griechische Versinschriften I, 842,1. 3 (ii-i BCE): Tpiacr?v ?t't' eiKOOT?k 7TXf|cra? ctos.

<sup>915</sup> It is to be noted that the inscription from Cyrenaica, too, first gives the age using the verb m|rrr(r)u.i and then the year of death using the verb aTTO0vT?aK?j.

<sup>916</sup> The verb could still be read when the inscription was published in CIG, but now only the right-hand side of the inscription is preserved.

*in our bilingual inscription there are three such systems. **One is reminded immediately of the three systems of dating in Aramaic, Nabataean and Greek papyri written by Jews from Mahoza (Mahoz 'Eglatain), a village in the district of Zo'ar, in the first half of the second century CE: the emperor's regnal year, the Roman consular year and the era of the province of Arabia.***<sup>917</sup> *The use of the era of Arabia*<sup>918</sup> *continued in this area, as we know from the Nessana papyri, even after it became part of the province of Palaestina in the Tetrarchic period - to become in the middle of the fourth century part of Palaestina Tertia.*

*However, it seems that for the Jews attested on the tombstones from Zo'ar the language of the text seems to have determined the system of dating. In G (CIJ 1209) only Greek is used, and only the era of Arabia is mentioned:*

Μνημῖον Αἰνίου Ἰουδαίου, πεντάκαιστος ἔτην ἐπ' ἐν ἔτ. αὐτῷ πρὸς Αἰδουνίου 5'. Θάρσι  
οὐδὲς ἀθάνατος.

***The grave of Ainius the Jew, who died 86 years old, in the year 283 (to the era of the province of Arabia) on the 4th day of the month of Audounios. Courage! No one is immortal.***

***The era of Arabia started on 22 March 106.***<sup>919</sup> *In Arabia the 4th day of the month of Audounios fell on the 20th of December.*<sup>920</sup> *Thus the man died on 20 December 388 CE.*<sup>921</sup>

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<sup>917</sup> See N. Lewis, The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters: Greek Papyri, 1989, 27 with H. M. Cotton, The Calendar: Dating Formulas, in H. M. Cotton and A. Yardeni, Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek Texts from Nahal Hever and Other Sites with an Appendix Containing Alleged Qumran Texts {The Seiy?l Collection II}. Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XXVII, 1997, 146f.

<sup>918</sup> The Bostran era (also called the era of Bostra, the Arabian era or provincial era) was a calendar era (year numbering) with an epoch (start date) corresponding to 22 March 106 AD. It was the official era of the Roman province of Arabia Petraea, introduced to replace dating by regnal years after the Roman annexation of the Nabataean Kingdom. It is named after the city of Bostra, which became the headquarters of the Sixth Legion stationed in the province.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bostran\\_era](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bostran_era)

<sup>919</sup> See R. E. Br?nnow and A. von Domaszewski, Die Provincia Arabia III, 1909, 303; G. W. Bowersock, The Annexation and Initial Garrison of Arabia, ZPE 5, 1970, 39; idem, A Report on Arabia Provincia, JRS 61, 1971, 231.

<sup>920</sup> See A. E. Samuel, Greek and Roman Chronology, Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft, vol. 1.7, 1972, 177.

<sup>921</sup> The civil year is calculated as follows: 22 March to 1 January = 106 + era of Arabia - 1; 1 January to 21 March = 106 + era of Arabia.

*The year 253 in line 4 of the Greek part of our bilingual inscription refers also to the era of the province of Arabia. The absence of month and day to follow the year number is disturbing in view of the common practice attested also in Zo'ar in G (CIJ 1209, quoted above), but there are two examples of the omission of the day and the month in the Aramaic tombstones (nos. 6 and 19). The 27 of Kislev,<sup>922</sup> the day and month given in the Aramaic text on our tombstone, of the year 253 of the era of the province of Arabia is most likely to have fallen in December of the Julian year 358 - or, if the end of the month of Kislev fell quite late that year,<sup>923</sup> in early January 359. The year in the Greek part of Mousios' tombstone taken together with the day and month mentioned in the Aramaic part establishes his year of death as late 358 or early 359 CE. However, two other systems of reckoning are used in the Aramaic part of the inscription: the era from the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem, and the year in the seven-year sabbatical cycle.*

*The destruction of the Second Temple is known to have taken place on 9 Ab (July/August) of the year 70 CE.<sup>924</sup>*

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<sup>922</sup> The month of Kislev corresponds roughly to November/December, but the last day of Kislev fell on 1 January in 1949, 1968 and 1987. Further delays could have taken place before the fixed lunisolar Jewish calendar was introduced at some unknown date in late antiquity - perhaps in 359 CE (cf. The Jewish Encyclopedia, s.v. 'calendar', vol. 3, 1910, 503), perhaps as late as 860 CE; see A. Wasserstein, Calendric Indications of Fourth-Century Jewish Inscription from Sicily, SCI 11, 1991/2, 162ff. See in general The Hebrew Encyclopedia, s.v. 'Calendar' (nt>), vol. 22, 1988, 342ff. (Hebrew).

<sup>923</sup> There is no compelling reason though to believe that the month of Kislev in this document is a mere conventional translation of the Macedonian month Apellaios which in Arabia began on 17 November and ended on 16 December. However, it is worth pointing out that in P.Yadin 27 of 132 CE, written in Mahoza in the district of Zo'ar on 19 August 132, the Jewish months are no more than conventional translations of the Macedonian months. Thus we find that the span of time between the first of Panemos and the thirtieth of Gorpaios is equated with that between the first of Tammuz and the thirtieth of Elul, see H. M. Cotton and J. C. Greenfield, Babatha's Property and the Law of Succession in the Babatha Archive, ZPE 104, 1994, n. 24 and R. Katsoff and B. M. Schreiber, Week and Sabbath in Judaean Desert Documents, SCI 17, 1998, 107f. with n. 34.

<sup>924</sup> Jos. BJ 6.250 who gives it as 10 Loos. Although he uses the Macedonian name Loos, Josephus means the corresponding Jewish month of Ab, see E. Schürer, G. Vermes, and F. Millar, The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ, 175B.C.-A.D.135, I, 1973, 596; cf. J. J. Price, Jerusalem under Siege: The Collapse of the Jewish State 66-70 CE., 1992, App. 4, 21 Off.

Just when you think you have found all that you need for evidence, then we come across this. The remainder of this document is now going to try and disprove the facts they just showed you in favour of trying to make this fit in with Wacholder's theory, which we have just shown to be in error because he has followed the error of Rabbi Yose in the Mishnah. But we have already proven this with the abundance of evidence to this point. So now read and watch how they try to make this fit their theory. Also note the author is speaking about Julian years. Because there is no year zero in the Gregorian years, to state it as a Julian year obfuscates the information by one year, i.e. Julian year 359 is Gregorian year 360 C.E. The year this tombstone is identifying is from Aviv 360 C.E. to Aviv 361 C.E.

*However, there is still the question of how we should reckon the first year of the destruction: should we reckon the first year from 1 Tishri (September/October) 69, i.e. the beginning of the Jewish year in which the destruction occurred,<sup>925</sup> to the last day of Elul (August/September) 70, i.e. the end of the Jewish year? Or should we reckon the first year from 9 Ab 70 to 8 Ab 71?<sup>926</sup> By the first reckoning, year 290 of the destruction of the Temple, given in the Aramaic part of our document, began in the autumn of the Julian year 358 and ended in the autumn of the Julian year 359.<sup>927</sup> By the second reckoning, however, the year 290 of the destruction of the Temple began in the summer of the Julian year 359 and ended in the summer of the Julian year 360.<sup>928</sup> Thus 27 Kislev of 'the year 290 of*

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<sup>925</sup> For the first of the month of Tishri (September/October), rather than the first of Nisan (March/April), as the beginning of the Jewish year see M. D. Herr, *The Calendar, The Jewish People in the First Century II*, eds. S. Safrai and M. Stern, 1976, 843f. It is true, but irrelevant, that the coins of the First and Second Revolts reckoned the year from the first of Nisan: see B. Kanael, *Notes on Dates Used during the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, IJES 21, 1971, 39ff; cf. F. Millar, *The Roman Near East 31 BC - AD 337*, 1993, Appendix B, 546f.

<sup>926</sup> Sometimes the era of the destruction is reckoned from 1 Tishri of the year following the destruction of the Temple, i.e. from 1 Tishri 70 to end of Elul 71, cf. B. Wacholder, *The Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles during the Second Temple and the Early Rabbinic Period*, HUCA 44, 1973, 183, n. 108.

<sup>927</sup> The civil year is calculated as follows: Tishri to January = 69 + era of destruction - 1; January to end of Elul = 69 + era of destruction.

<sup>928</sup> The civil year is calculated as follows: 9 Ab to January = 70 + era of destruction - 1; January to 8 Ab = 70 + era of destruction.



*the destruction of the Temple' falls in December of the year 358 or in early January 359 according to the first reckoning, but in December of the year 359 or in early January of the year 360 according to the second reckoning.*

*The era of Arabia in the Greek text therefore offers support for assuming that the first year of the destruction of the Temple started on 1 Tishri 69, and not on 9 Ab 70.*

*However, as observed above, the Aramaic text contains yet another system of reckoning, that which gives the designation of the year in the (seven-year) sabbatical cycle. Mousios son of Marsa 'died in year 3 of the sabbatical cycle'.<sup>929</sup>*

*There seems to be no agreement about the calendar of sabbatical years.<sup>930</sup> Rabbinic sources tell us that the year of the destruction of the Second Temple was a post-sabbatical year (rvjrnt? ^in),<sup>931</sup> which is commonly taken to mean the first year in the sabbatical cycle.<sup>932</sup> The year of the sabbatical cycle always starts on the first of Tishri.<sup>933</sup> But was it Tishri of the year 69 or Tishri of the year 70? In other words either 69/70 or 70/71 could be the first year of the sabbatical cycle (and in consequence either 68/69 or 69/70 would be a sabbatical year). In the latter case, the first two months minus 8 days (9 Ab to end of Elul 70) still belonged to the sabbatical year which began in Tishri 69, and not to the first year of the sabbatical cycle which began on the first of Tishri 70.<sup>934</sup>*

*The information contained in the rabbinic sources that 'the year of the destruction of the Second Temple was a post-sabbatical year' leads us nowhere, since it is subject to the same uncertainties*

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<sup>929</sup> The sabbatical cycle cannot be used independently of another system of reckoning since the cycles themselves are not numbered. In this it resembles the system of indictions in the later Roman period.

<sup>930</sup> See the Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles in Wachholder, 'The Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles' (n. 23), 185ff. M. Friedman, *Jewish Marriage in Palestine I*, 1980, 103 thinks Wachholder's calculations are off by one year, and the calendar of the sabbatical years should be set one year earlier. However, Wachholder's calculations are now supported by archaeological evidence from Scythopolis, see Y. Tsafirir and G. Foerster, 'The Dating of the "Earthquake of the Sabbatical Year" in 749 CE.', *BSOAS* 55, 1992, 231-5.

<sup>931</sup> See above all *Seder Olam Rabbah* 30, 74a-75a (ed. Ratner).

<sup>932</sup> The translation of rwnit? 'Wft? (MWSAY SWY'YT) as post-sabbatical year is based for example on the use of the term e.g. in *mShebiit* 6.4; literally it means 'the going out of the sabbatical year'.

<sup>933</sup> *mRosh ha-Shanah* 1.1; cf. Wachholder, 'The Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles' (n. 23), 154-5.

<sup>934</sup> See Wachholder (n. 21), 171ff.

*encountered in determining the year of the destruction itself: should it be counted from the first of Tishri preceding the destruction or from the first of Tishri following the destruction? Only external evidence can tell us whether 69/70 or 70/71 was a post-sabbatical year (and hence whether 68/69 or 69/70 was a sabbatical year).*

*Such evidence, as Wacholder points out,<sup>935</sup> might be found in Mur 18. It attests that year two of the emperor Nero's reign was a sabbatical year.<sup>936</sup> There is no consensus amongst historians as to whether Nero's regnal years started on 13 October 54, i.e. his dies imperil, or on 4 December of that year, when his comitia tribuniciae potestatis took place.<sup>937</sup> Nonetheless, we may tentatively infer that the sabbatical year in the document is 55/56: for if Nero's second year was reckoned from 13 October 55, then there is a space of only a few days in which this year does not coincide with a sabbatical year in 55/56; and even if Nero's second year was reckoned from 4 December 55, this space of time would still be only a few weeks.<sup>938</sup> Thus Mur 18 probably yields the year 55/56 as the sabbatical year referred to in the papyrus, and 69/70 as a subsequent sabbatical year.*

*Assuming there was no discontinuity in sabbatical cycles between 69/70 and the time in which our document was written, year 3 of the sabbatical cycle in our document fell in 359/360 CE. This would only fit an era of the destruction of the Temple which starts on 9 Ab 70 CE (or 1 Tishri 70); it would not fit an era which starts on 1 Tishri 69.<sup>939</sup>*

*The sabbatical year in most - but not all<sup>940</sup> - of the tombstones from Zo'ar fits an era of the destruction of the Temple which starts on 9*

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<sup>935</sup> Above, n. 23, 169ff.

<sup>936</sup> Cf. Mur 18, l. 1: 'year 2 to Nero Caesar', and l. 7: 'in this year of release (no-m? SMYTH)...'. Milik (DJDI, ad loc.) is wrong to take the latter as a conditional phrase.

<sup>937</sup> See D. Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle* 1996, 97. See most recently B. Lőrincz, *Zur Chronologie der Regierungsjahre des Kaisers Nero*, *Hungarian Polis Studies* 2, 1997, 161ff.

<sup>938</sup> Altogether it seems likely that in Judaea Nero's regnal years were calculated from his dies imperil. Aramaic and Nabataean documents from the province of Arabia from the time of Hadrian, when there was a clear discrepancy between regnal years and tribunician years, suggest that only regnal years, i.e. the date on which the emperor assumed the Imperium, were relevant in this area, see H. M. Cotton, 'Roman Dates in the Papyri from the Judaean Desert', forthcoming.

<sup>939</sup> See table in Wacholder, *The Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles* (n. 23), 191-195 for synchronization between the civil years and the years in the sabbatical cycles.

<sup>940</sup> See Naveh, *Tarbiz* 64, 1995, *Stern*, *Tarbiz* 68, 1999 and Naveh, *Tarbiz* 68, 1999 for the discrepancies.

Table

	Number no.	Temple era	This Julian year of Temple era beginning in Tishri 69	This Julian year of Temple era beginning in Ab 70	Year of subablical cycle + the Julian year	Analysis era	CE
1	6	242	---	---	---	---	---
10	19	246	---	---	---	---	---
10	181	280	21 Kisle 334/335 <sup>1</sup> ---	21 Kisle 336/340 <sup>2</sup> d	3 = 339/340	313	338/339
10	17	303	30 Adar 374 ---	30 Adar 375 ---	---	---	---
9	43	---	4 Avadrum	---	---	---	---
14	7	323	3 Tammuz 352 ---	3 Tammuz 353 v	1 = 352/353	---	---
14	9	336	33 Shevat 407 ---	33 Shevat 408 v	2 = 352/353	---	---
14	2	340	7 Shevat 413 ---	7 Shevat 414 d	3 = 413/414	---	---
17	20	340	10 Shevat 413 ---	10 Shevat 414 v	3 = 413/414	---	---
9	12	346	28 Adar A 419 ---	28 Adar A 418 d	3 = 413/414	---	---
11	3	377	28 Nisan 426 ---	28 Nisan 427 v	7 = 426/427	---	---
11	17	382	17 Elul 431 v	17 Elul 432 ---	4 = 431/432	---	---
14	9	384	1 Heshvan 437 ---	1 Heshvan 437 ---	1 = 436/437	---	---
14	21	379	3 Adar A 433 ---	3 Adar A 433 v	1 = 433/434	---	---
14	22	383	3 Adar 434 ---	3 Adar 434 v	7 = 433/434	---	---
14	4	389	23 Tammuz 439 ---	23 Tammuz 439 v	1 = 433/434	---	---
14	23	391	20 v Kisle 439/440 <sup>3</sup> ---	20 v Kisle 439 ---	3 = 439/440	---	---
14	14	399	20 Elul 447 d	20 Elul 448 ---	5 = 447/448	---	---
14	11	399	3 Kisle 448 ---	3 Kisle 447 d	6 = 447/448	---	---
14	19	400	6 Nisan 449 v	6 Nisan 479 ---	7 = 448/449	---	---
14	18	404	18 Heshvan 474 ---	18 Heshvan 475 ---	1 = 474/477	---	---
14	17	413	10 Nisan 512 ---	10 Nisan 513 v	8 = 512/513	---	---
14	2	429	11 Elul 564 v	11 Elul 565 ---	7 = 564/565	---	---
14	22	433	10 Nisan 574 ---	10 Nisan 575 d	1 = 574/575	---	---
14	9	3172 <sup>4</sup>	13 Shevat 424 <sup>5</sup> ---	13 Shevat 424 <sup>5</sup> ---	3	---	---
14	24	14011 <sup>5</sup>	29 Tammuz 469	29 Tammuz 470	1 = 469/470	---	---

--- = date not synchronization with year of subablical cycle

v = synchronizations with year of subablical cycle

<sup>1</sup> The inscription discussed in this article

<sup>2</sup> Late Kisle could fall in early January and therefore either 335 or 339 CE, see above n. 19.

<sup>3</sup> See previous note.

<sup>4</sup> This synchronism should come in fact between Naveh no. 23 and 14. We put it here because of the incorrect reading.

<sup>5</sup> See above n. 38

Ab 70 CE. However, in four cases it can be reconciled only with an era which starts on 1 Tishri 69 (nos. 3, 10, 14, 15 in Naveh's list),<sup>941</sup>

<sup>941</sup> But Naveh (Tarbiz 64, 1995, 494f.) following H. Y. Bornstein (Dates in Israel, Hatekufah 8, 1920-21, 338, Hebrew), points out that the reason for the discrepancy between the sabbatical cycle and the era of the destruction of the Temple which begins on 9 Ab 70 in nos. 3 and 10 is probably due to the fact that both tombstones

*and in two cases it cannot be reconciled with either (nos. 1 and 16).<sup>942</sup>*

*The evidence so far cannot help us in explaining the lack of synchronization in the present tombstone between the era of Arabia and the era of the destruction of the Temple which starts on 9 Ab 70 and which fits the sabbatical era in most of the tombstones from Zo'ar.*

*Jerusalem*

*Tel Aviv*

*Hannah M. Cotton*

*Jonathan J. Price*

I am going to disagree with the conclusions of this paper about not being able to synchronize the tombstone date of 253 Arabia or the Bostran era with an epoch (start date) corresponding to 22 March 106 C.E., and the 290 years of the destruction. In the work *The Annexation and Initial Garrison of Arabia* by G. W. Bowersock,<sup>943</sup> mentioned by Cotton and Price, the assertion that the epoch is 106 C.E. was also asserted to be 105 C.E. prior. According to Bowersock the legions setting up in Petra took place in 106, but he mentions 107 C.E. as well. When we add up 107 C.E. with the 253 Arabia, the sum is 360, corresponding to our Aramaic text of 290 years after the destruction from 70 C.E. While there is disagreement about the epoch of the Arabia calendar start date, I am going to assume those living in 360 C.E. knew the proper epoch while chronologists, 1700 years after the fact, might not have all their facts correct.

I wanted to show you how much research is done on each of the stones and by multiple researchers. I am not going to do so going

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were written in Elul (August/September) of their respective years. Year 7 of the sabbatical cycle mentioned in no. 3 was 503/504 CE; 11 Elul of the year 435 of the destruction in the reckoning which starts on 9 Ab 70 belonged formally to year 1 of the sabbatical cycle which in fact began, three weeks later, on 1 Tishri 504 CE. When the document was written it was still year 7 of the sabbatical cycle. The same explains the discrepancy in no. 14. One could expect the same to have happened in no. 24 written 29 Tammuz (July/August) where 400 is restored by Naveh - perhaps wrongly.

<sup>942</sup> See Table.

<sup>943</sup> Bowersock, G. W. "The Annexation and Initial Garrison of Arabia." *Zeitschrift Für Papyrologie Und Epigraphik*, vol. 5, 1970, pp. 37–47.

forward. I will use only the tombstones themselves tell us the dates and we can then figure them out after that.

### **303—373 C.E. Unknown, Daughter of Petrah**

303 years since the destruction of the Temple; Unknown, daughter of Petrah— $303 + 70 = 373$  C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis at Safi in September 1995, inv. no. Z-99. Present location: Unknown. Plate III*  
*Bibl.: Unpublished (for the date see Stern 2001, p. 90, table 2.2; p. 93, n. 134 and table 2.3, n. a).<sup>944</sup>*

*This is the tombstone of [...], daughter of Peṭrah, who died on the sixteenth day in the month fir[st] Adar, the second year [of] the seven-year cycle, the year three hundred and three years of the destruction of the [S]anctuary.*

The year 373 C.E. does match our charts as the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle. Although we are given the 16<sup>th</sup> day of the month of Adar, it does not give us the weekday, and we are not able to double check Torahcalendar.com to confirm the start of the year. But it does match our charts, so we count this as one of our proofs.

### **303—373 C.E. Deliah the Priest, Son of Yehoshua**

303 years since the destruction of the Temple; Deliah the Priest, son of Yehoshua— $303 + 70 = 373$  C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis at Safi in March 1996, inv. no. Z-138. Present location: Department of Antiquities of Jordan, in storage at the Museum at the Lowest Place on Earth, Safi, Jordan. Plate IV*  
*Bibl.: Unpublished (for the date see Stern 2001, p. 90, table 2.2).<sup>945</sup>*

*On the thirteenth of the month Iyyar, in the second year of the seven-year cycle, in the year three hundred and three years there died*

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<sup>944</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 45, no. 8.

<sup>945</sup> Ibid. P. 45-46, no. 9.

*Deliah the priest, son of Yehoshua', from Beth Sharon in the buund[ary of] Sepphoris. May his repose be in peace and his rising speedily, amen.*

Commentary: The village Beth Sharon in the vicinity of Sepphoris is mentioned for the first time in the An-Naq' inscriptions. Sepphoris, an important urban centre, became the seat of the Sanhedrin under Judah ha-Nasi around 200 C.E. (Magness 2012, p. 194).

The year 373 C.E. does match our charts as the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle. Although we are given the 13<sup>th</sup> day of the month of Iyyar, the 2<sup>nd</sup> month, it does not give us the weekday, and we are not able to double check Torahcalendar.com to confirm the start of the year. But it does match our charts, so we count this as one of our proofs.

### **323—393 C.E. Jacob, Son of Samul—Crescent Moon—Barley**

323 years since the destruction of the Temple; Jacob, son of Samul— $323 + 70 = 393$  C.E.

*Seen and photographed by R. Schick in Amman in September 1993. Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis in Amman in May 1997, inv. no. Z-69. Present location: Private Collection in Amman. Plate V*

*Bibl.: Naveh 1995, p. 486, no. 7 (with drawing and photo); Beyer 2004, p. 303, no. \*yyZO 7. For the date see Stern 2001, p. 90, table 2.2 pp.147-148, table 3.3.<sup>946</sup>*

*This is the tombstone of Jacob Son of Samul, who died on The second day (Monday), forty years old, on the third day of the month of Iyar (2nd month), on the first year of the Shemitah year three hundred and twenty three to the destruction of the temple*

*This is the tombstone of Ya'aqob, son of Shmu'el, who died on the second day (Monday), aged forty years, on the third day of the month Iyyar, in the first year of the seven-year cycle, the year three hundred and twenty-three years of the destruction of the Sanctuary.*

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<sup>946</sup> Ibid. P. 47-48, no. 12.

Commentary: I asked Yoel Halevi to translate this article at Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar<sup>947</sup> for me and later discovered it in the source I am citing for most of the tombstones.

The year 323 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 393 C.E., which is the first year of the Sabbatical cycle as the tombstone claims.

Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 393 C.E., and the 2<sup>nd</sup> month of Iyar. Click: view calendar. Check to see if the 3<sup>rd</sup> day is a Monday. The 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the month of Iyar is indeed Monday. So, this is a solid match synchronizing with our charts. By doing this exercise, we discover that this tombstone is using the crescent moon to determine the month.

### **338—408 C.E. Saul, Son of Jacob**

338 years since the destruction of the Temple; Saul, son of Jacob—338 + 70 = 408 C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis in Amman in May 1997, inv. no. Z-259. Formerly in a Private Collection in Amman. As we were recently informed by Professor Steven Fine, the tombstone is now in the George Blumenthal Collection in New York. Plate VI*  
*Bibl.: Naveh 1995, pp. 488-489, no. 9 (with drawing and photo); Beyer 2004, p. 303, no. \*yyZO 9. For the date see Stern 2001, p. 90, table 2.2.*<sup>948</sup>

*This tombstone belongs to Saul son of Jacob who died on the 25th day of the month of Shevat (11th month) in the second year of the Shemitah year three hundred 38 to the destruction of the temple.*  
*Shalom Shalom Shalom*

Commentary: This tombstone gives us the date as being 338 years since the destruction of the Temple. Adding 70 years to this is the year 408 C.E., which is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the 5<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle. The tombstone states it was the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Shemitah and is once again

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<sup>947</sup> Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar, Naveh, J., & Leibner, U. Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar / מצבות צוֹר. Tarbiz / תרביץ, 477-497.

<sup>948</sup> Ibid. p. 48-49 no. 14.

in sync with our Sabbatical and Jubilee charts. It does not give us a weekday to check with Torahcalendar.com.

### **346—416 C.E. Esther, Daughter of 'Adayo**

346 years since the destruction of the Temple; Esther, daughter of 'Adayo— $346 + 70 = 416$  C.E.

*Present location: Archeological Museum in Amman (Naveh 1985, p. 105). Plate VII*

*Bibl.: Ben-Zevi 1943, p. 37 (ed. pr.); Sukenik 1945, pp. 85-86, no. 2, fig 2; Cassuto 1945, pp. 90-91; Akavya 1945, p. 92 and p. 95, n. 3; Driver 1953, pp 64-65, pl. VIII, 5; Wacholder 1973, pp. 180-184; Fitzmyer and Harrington 1978, pp. 271-272; Beyer 1984, p. 369, no. yyZO 1 (also Beyer 1994, p. 240, no. yyZO 1); Naveh 1985, pp. 105, 112-113, no. B, pl. 3 on p. 107; Naveh 1995, p. 479, no. 2 (with drawing and photo). For the date see Stern 2001, p. 90, table 2.2.<sup>949</sup>*

*This is the tombstone of Esther, daughter of 'Adayo, who died in the month Shebat, of the 3rd year of the seven-year cycle, the year three hundred (and) 46 years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace upon her, peace.*

Commentary: I asked Yoel Halevi to translate this article at Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar<sup>950</sup> for me and later discovered it in the source I am citing for most of the tombstones. The year 346 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 416 C.E., which is the third year of the Sabbatical cycle as the tombstone claims. This is another match synchronizing with our charts.

We are not given a day, the week, or the day of the month to compare with Torahcalendar.com.

### **346—416 C.E. Jacob, Son of Shem'o—Crescent Moon—Barley**

346 years since the destruction of the Temple; Jacob, son of Shemo— $346 + 70 = 416$  C.E.

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<sup>949</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 49-50, no. 15.

<sup>950</sup> Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar, Naveh, J., & Leibner, U. Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar / מצבות צוער / תרביץ, 477-497.



*Present location: Unknown.*

*Bibl.: Naveh 2000, pp. 620-621, no. 20 (photo; drawing on p. 630);  
Beyer 2004, p. 307, no. yyZO 20.<sup>951</sup>*

*May rest the soul of Jacob, the son of Shem'o who died on the second day, the 10th day of the month Shebat, in the 3rd year of the Sabbatical cycle, the years 300 hundred and 46 years after the destruction of the Temple. May he be awakened to the voice of the announcer of peace.<sup>952</sup>*

*Rested be the soul of Ya'aqob, son of Shem'o, who died on the 2nd day (Monday), on the 10th day of month Shebat, in the 3rd year of the seven-year cycle, the year 300 {hundreds} (and) 46 years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. May he be awakened to the voice of the announcer of peace.*

Commentary: The year 346 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 416 C.E., which is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle as the tombstone claims. This is another match synchronizing

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<sup>951</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 50, no. 16.

<sup>952</sup> Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar and Jewish Conceptions of the Afterlife1, Yael Wilf and Duke University, Department of Religion, 118 Gray Building, Box 90964, Durham, NC 27708, USA [yael.wilfand@duke.edu](mailto:yael.wilfand@duke.edu), Page 516, [file:///Users/josephdumond/Downloads/Aramaic\\_Tombstones\\_from\\_Zoar\\_and\\_Jewish.pdf](file:///Users/josephdumond/Downloads/Aramaic_Tombstones_from_Zoar_and_Jewish.pdf)

Look up these other references:

24) The dating of the tombstones in this paper is approximate within a one-year range. For the calculation see Cotton and Price, "Bilingual Funerary Monument," 11; Meimaris and Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou, Inscriptions, 112. 25) Naveh, "Seven New Epitaphs," 620. 26) I followed Naveh's translation into English of מְקֻדָּשׁ בֵּית לְחָרְבָן as being "after the destruction of the temple." Naveh translated three tombstones in Naveh, "Another," 103-16. Compare Stern, Calendar and Community, 88, who suggests "from the destruction of the Temple." However, Lucas Van Rompay suggests a different reading here: "of the destruction of the temple" since the word "after" does not appear in the tombstone inscriptions. His translation changes the meaning of the expression, since the destruction of the temple is not only an historical event in the past, but also an event that determines the quality of the time within which the people of Zoar lived, from their perspective: the time of destruction.

with our charts. The 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month of Shebat was also on the Monday as the tombstone stated.

Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 416 C.E., and the 11<sup>th</sup> month of Shebat. Click: view calendar. Check to see if the 10<sup>th</sup> day is a Monday. The 11<sup>th</sup> month does have the 10<sup>th</sup> day as a Monday using the crescent moon calendar. Passover would have been on March 31, 416 C.E.

So, this is a solid match synchronizing with our charts.

### **346—416 C.E. Yudah, Son of Amram**

346 years since the destruction of the Temple; Yudah, son of Amran—346 + 70 = 416 C.E.

*Seen and photographed by R. Schick in Amman in September 1993.  
Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis in Kerak in May 1997,  
inv. no. Z-67. Present location: Private Collection in Amman. Plate VIII*

*Bibl.: Naveh 1995, pp. 496-497, no. 12 (with drawing and photo);  
Beyer 2004, p. 304, no. yyZO 12. For the date see Stern 2001, p. 90,  
table 2.2; p. 93, table 2.3.<sup>953</sup>*

*This is the memorial of Yudan the Hazzan Son of Amram, who dies  
on the eighth day of the month of first Adar of year 3 to the Shemitah,  
year three hundred and 46 to the destruction of the temple. Shalom  
Shalom Shalom*

*This is the tombstone of Yudah the sexton, son of 'Amram, who died  
on the 8th day in the month of first Adar, of the 3rd year of the seven-  
year cycle, the year three hundred (and) 46 years of the destruction  
of the Sanctuary. Peace, peace, peace.*

Commentary: I asked Yoel Halevi to translate this article at Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar<sup>954</sup> for me and later discovered it in the source I am citing for most of the tombstones.

Joseph Naveh noted:

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<sup>953</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 51, no. 17.

<sup>954</sup> Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar, Naveh, J., & Leibner, U. Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar / מצבות צוער. Tarbiz / תרביץ, 477-497.

*Yudah passed away a month after Ester daughter of 'dyo (stone 2). The account of the years is identical: third year to the Shemitah, year 346 to the destruction. The notation "first month of Adar" indicates it was a leap year. This can be compared to stone 11 from the year 398 to the destruction.*

The year 346 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 416 C.E., which is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle as the tombstone claims. The 8<sup>th</sup> day of the month of Adar does not give us a weekday to fix it to in Torahcalendar.com. We are told there are two Adars that year and when we check Torahcalendar.com for the 13<sup>th</sup> month, they do not record one. This demonstrates that the start of the year was not determined by the equinox. So, this is a solid match synchronizing with our charts.

### **353—423 C.E. Martah?, Daughter of Shmu'el**

353 years since the destruction of the Temple; Martah?, daughter of Shmu'el—353 + 70 = 423 C.E.

*Steven Fine of Yeshiva University, New York has this stone and as of 2016, was to publish his finding at a later date. A quick search and I was not able to find anything published on it. Present location: Yeshiva University, New York. Plate XXVII  
Bibl.: Unpublished.<sup>955</sup>*

*This is the tombstone of Martah?, daughter dšm(wl) [.....] of Shmu'(el) ..... who died in the month Marheshwan in the third year of the seven-year cycle, the year three hundred and fifty and three years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. May he[sic!] be rested [in peace] on her (funerary) couch*

Commentary: The year 353 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 423 C.E., which is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the 7<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle, and confirms once again our Sabbatical and Jubilee charts.

We are not given any dates to continue our search further.

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<sup>955</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 89, Appendix no. 1.

## 357—427 C.E. X, Son or Daughter of Y

357 years since the destruction of the Temple; X, son/daughter of Y— $357 + 70 = 427$  C.E.

*Seen and photographed by the later Father M. Piccirilla at Ghor es-Safi in the autumn of 1984. Present location: Private Collection in Italy. Plate VIII*

*Bibl.: Naveh 1987, pp. 369-371, no. E pl. 53, photo 1, pl. 54, fig. 1: Beyer 1994, p. 241, no. \*yyZO 5; Naveh 1995, p. 483, no. 5 (with drawing and photo); Beyer 2004, p. 302, no. yyZO 5. For the date see Stern 2001, p. 90, table 2.2, n.c.<sup>956</sup>*

*[this tombstone of X] [son/daughter of Y who died] [on the ... day Z (of the Sabbatical)] 26 days in the month of Nisan (1st month) in the year of the Shemitah, year 3 hundred 57 years to the destruction of the temple Shalom Shalom*

*[This is the tombstone of ...?] [son/daughter of..., who died on?] [the ... day (of the week), on?] the 26th day of the month Nisan, in the sabbatical year, the year 3 hundred (and) 57 years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace, peace.*

Commentary: I asked Yoel Halevi to translate this article at Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar<sup>957</sup> for me and later discovered it in the source I am citing for most of the tombstones.

The year 357 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 427 C.E., which is the Sabbatical year as the tombstone claims (*in the sabbatical year*). The tombstone does not give us a weekday to fix it to a date in Torahcalendar.com. So, this is a solid match synchronizing with our charts.

## 360—430 C.E. Miryam, Daughter of ...th

360 years since the destruction of the Temple; Miryam, daughter of ...th— $360 + 70 = 430$  C.E.

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<sup>956</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoara). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 51-52, no. 18.

<sup>957</sup> Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar, Naveh, J., & Leibner, U. Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar / מצבות צוער. Tarbiz / תרביץ, 477-497.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis in Amman in May 1997, inv. no. Z-257. Present location: Private Collection Amman. Plate IX*

*Bibl.: Naveh 1995, pp. 487-488, no. 8 (with drawing and photo); Beyer 2004, p. 303, no. yyZO 8. For the date see Misgav 2006, appendix p. 46.<sup>958</sup>*

*This is the resting place of Miryam, daughter of ..., who died on the 15th day of the month Shebat, in the third year of the seven-year cycle, year three hundred (and) [si]xty years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace, p[ea]ce].*

Commentary: I asked Yoel Halevi to translate this article at Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar<sup>959</sup> for me and later discovered it in the source I am citing for most of the tombstones.

The year 360 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 430 C.E., which is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the 1<sup>st</sup> Sabbatical cycle as the tombstone claims. So, this is a solid match synchronizing with our charts.

Joseph Naveh recorded this date as 300 and 82:

*This is the lying place of Miriam daughter of..., who died on the 15th day on the month of Shevat (11th month) of the third year of the Shemitah year three hundred [80/10 and t]wo to the destruction of the temple. Shalom*

Naveh's rendition of this stone did not sync with our Sabbatical charts, and we were about to list it as not matching. But then we discovered that Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia, Vol Ic did record it, but they had it as 300 and 60 years, which does match our Sabbatical year charts. Joseph Naveh also noted the error in his charts.

The tombstone does not give us a weekday to fix it to a date in Torahcalendar.com.

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<sup>958</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoara). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 52-53, no. 19.

<sup>959</sup> Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar, Naveh, J., & Leibner, U. Aramaic Tombstones from Zoar / מצבות צוֹר. Tarbiz / תרביץ, 477-497. <https://doi.org/23599945>

### 360—430 C.E Sarah, Daughter of Hunan

360 years since the destruction of the Temple; Sarah, daughter of Hunan— $360 + 70 = 430$  C.E.

*Steven Fine of Yeshiva University, New York has this stone and as of 2016, was to publish his finding at a later date. A quick search and I was not able to find anything published on it. Present location: Yeshiva University, New York. Plate XXVII  
Bibl.: Unpublished.<sup>960</sup>*

*May the soul of Sarah rest, daughter of Hunan, [who] died (on) the eleventh day in the month second (Ad)ar of the year three of the seven-year cycle, the year three hundred and si[xy] years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. May she rest upon her (funerary) couch. Peace.*

Commentary: The year 360 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 430 C.E., which is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the 1<sup>st</sup> Sabbatical cycle as the tombstone claims. The tombstone does not give us a weekday to fix it to a date in Torahcalendar.com. So, this is a solid match synchronizing with our charts.

### 364—434 C.E. Saul, Son of Shalat—Start of Year Moved to Tishri

364 years since the destruction of the Temple; Saul, son of Shalat— $364 + 70 = 434$  C.E.

*The stone was shown to Mr. H.St.J.B. Philby in 1925, by people of Safi who told him that “it was found among the masonry ruins of Qasr al-Tuba” (Cowley 1925, p. 207). It is known only from the rubbing of its inscription made by Philby. Plate X  
Bibl.: Cowley 1925, pp. 207-210, pls. I-II (ed. pr.); Daiches 1926, pp. 31-32; Vincent 1927, pp. 404-407; Reinach 1928, pp. 1-6; Marmorstein 1928, p. 47; Ben-Zevi 1943, p.35; Sukenik 1945, pp. 83-85, no. 1, fig. 1; Cassuto 1945, pp. 90-91; Akavya 1945, pp. 92-98; CIJ II, p. 243, no. 1208; Wacholder 1973, pp. 180-184; Fitzmyer*

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<sup>960</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 89, Appendix no. 2.

*and Harrington 1978, pp. 271-272; Beyer 1984, p. 369, no. yyZO 2; Naveh 1985, pp. 103, 105, 109, 112, no. A, pl. 2 on p. 106; Naveh 1995, p. 478, no. 1 (with facsimile-drawing). For the date see Stern 2001, p. 90, table 2.2, p. 91.<sup>961</sup>*

*May rest the soul of Saul the son of ..., who died on the first day of the month Marheshwan of the first year of the Sabbatical cycle, the year three hundred sixty-four after the destruction of the Temple. Peace!*

*May the soul rest of Sha'ul, son of [Sh]alat, who died on the first day of the month Marheshvan of the first year of the sabbatical year, the year three hundred and sixty-four years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace.*

Commentary: The year 364 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 434 C.E., which is the 7<sup>th</sup> year of the 1<sup>st</sup> Sabbatical cycle, but the tombstone claims it is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle.

We have explained in **The Stones Cry Out Part 1** how the Mishnah moved the start of the year from Aviv back six months to now begin with the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month, Tishri.

Here in this tombstone is the first evidence we can find of those changes actually manifesting in real life. The Sabbatical year would have been from Aviv to Aviv, but having moved it back by six months, the Sabbatical year would then end at the start of Tishri. Marcheshvan is the 8<sup>th</sup> month and would then be counted in the new year, or the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the next Sabbatical cycle as the tombstone states. By understanding how the start of the year was changed by the Mishnah, we can then claim this tombstone is a solid match synchronizing with our charts.

The tombstone does not give a weekday to go by, so we cannot compare it to a date in Torahcalendar.com.

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<sup>961</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 55, no. 22.

## 374—444 C.E. Shmu'el, Son of Unknown—Crescent Moon—Barley

374 years since the destruction of the Temple; Shmu'el, son of Unknown— $374 + 70 = 444$  C.E.

*The stone came to our knowledge through a photograph taken by F. Zayadine at Kerak and handed by him to Y.E. Meimaris in May 2006. Present location: Department of Antiquities of Jordan, storehouse at Nuweijis near Amman. Plate XII*

*Bibl.: Unpublished.*<sup>962</sup>

*[This is] (the tombstone of) Shmu[’el] son ..... Ist [da]y of the month N[isan], in the year three [off] the seven-year cycle, the year three hund[red] (and) 74 years of the [destruction of the] Sanctuary. May he rest ... on his (funerary) couch ..... Peace, peace. Peace.*

Commentary: The year 374 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 444 C.E., which is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sabbatical cycle.

The tombstone does not give a weekday to go by, so we cannot compare it to a date in Torahcalendar.com.

## 374—444 C.E. Hananyah the Priest, Son of Pinhis—Crescent Moon—Barley

374 years since the destruction of the Temple; Hananyah the Priest, son of Pinhis— $374 + 70 = 444$  C.E.

*Present location unknown. Plate XI*

*Bibl.: Stern and Misgav 2004, pp. 144-147, no. 28 (photo and drawing included).*<sup>963</sup>

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<sup>962</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 59-58, no. 26.

<sup>963</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 57-58, no. 25.



*This is the tombstone of Hananyah the priest, son of Pinhis, who died on the fifth day (Thursday), on the 5th day of the month Tebet, in the second year of the seven-year cycle, which is the year 300 {hundred} (and) 74 years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace, peace. Peace.*

Commentary: The year 374 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 444 C.E., which is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sabbatical cycle, but the tombstone claims it is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle.

I do not have an explanation for this stone claiming it is year two of the Sabbatical cycle. The previous stone for Shmu'el is for the month of Nisan of the same year and it claims it is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Was this an error on the part of the person inscribing the stone?

The tombstone does give a weekday to go by, so we can compare it to a date in Torahcalendar.com. The 5<sup>th</sup> day of the month of Tebet, the 10<sup>th</sup> month, was on a Thursday.

Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 444 C.E., and the 10<sup>th</sup> month of Tebet. Click: view calendar. Check to see if the 5<sup>th</sup> day is a Thursday. Torahcalendar.com has the 5<sup>th</sup> day as Saturday.

If we use the Conjunction moon charts at NASA with this URL: <https://astropixels.com/ephemeris/phasescat/phases0401.html>, the conjunction moon for this same month was on November 25, at 18:53. Because the conjunction is at 6:53 P.M., we can start the count on November 26. When we do this, the 5<sup>th</sup> day is on a Thursday as the tombstone states.

With the previous tombstone stating this year of 444 is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle, and the fact that we have match the month and day using the Hillel conjunction for the 10<sup>th</sup> month, I will conclude there is an error in claiming this is year two of the cycle. It may come down to the interpreters making an error as well.

### **379—449 C.E. Martah, Daughter of Pitholah**

379 years since the destruction of the Temple; Martah, daughter of Pitholah—379 + 70 = 449 C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis in Kerak in May 1997, inv. no. Z-246. Now kept at the Living Torah Museum, Brooklyn New York. (<https://www.livingtorahmuseum.com/>) Plate XII*

*Bibl.: Naveh 2000, p. 621, no. 21 (photo, drawing on p. 631); Beyer 2004, pp. 307-308, no. \*yyZO 21.<sup>964</sup>*

*May the soul of Martah daughter of Pitlah, aged 70, who died on the fifth day {of Adar} on the first Adar of the first year to the Shemitah, which was a leap year, year three hundred and seventy nine year of the temple [may it be built]*

*May the soul rest of Martah, daughter of Pithola(os) aged 7(5?), who died on the fifth day {of Adar}, of first Adar, in the first year of the seven-year cycle, which is a year of leap-year, the year three hundred and seventy-nine years of the (destruction) of the Sanctuary. May it be rebuilt?*

Commentary: The year 379 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 449 C.E., which is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle and syncretizes with our Jubilee charts, making another match.

The fact that it states it is the first Adar indicates that this year of 449 C.E. was a leap year having a 13<sup>th</sup> month added to it. Toracalendar.com did have an Adar Bet for this year, matching up with the tombstone. It does not give us a weekday to compare with Torahcalendar.com. Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 449 C.E. to check for the leap year.

### **385—455 C.E. Rabbi Simon Binabi—Hillel Calendar**

385 years since the destruction of the Temple; Rabbi Simon—  
385 + 70 = 455 C.E.

*According to Naveh the stone was in the David Sofer Collection in London. Not See. Plate XIII*

*Bibl.: Naveh 2000, p. 622, no. 22 (photo; drawing on p. 632); Beyer 2004, pp. 308, no. \*yyZO 22.<sup>965</sup>*

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<sup>964</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 59, no. 27.

<sup>965</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 60-61, no. 29.

*May rest the soul of Rabbi Simon Binabi, who died the fourth day (Wednesday) the third day of the month Adar in the seventh year three hundred and eighty and five years after the destruction of the Temple. May he rest a sage in peace. May he wake up to the voice of the announcer of peace.*

*May the soul rest of Rabbi Simon birabbi, who died (on) the fourth day (Wednesday), on the third day of the month Adar, in the sabbatical year, which is the year three hundred and eighty-five years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. May he rest (as) a sage in peace. May he wake up to the voice of the announcer of peace.*

Commentary: The title “binabi” is a sign of respect for a son of a Rabbi, or the house of a Rabbi, or of a very learned Rabbi.

The year 385 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 455 C.E., which is the 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year and syncretizes with our Jubilee charts, making another match.

The fact that it states it is Wednesday, the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Adar (12<sup>th</sup> month), helps us to figure out what calendar this Rabbi is now using.

Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 455 C.E., and the 12<sup>th</sup> month of Adar. Click: view calendar. Check to see if the 3<sup>rd</sup> day is a Wednesday. Torahcalendar.com has the 3<sup>rd</sup> day as Friday.

If we go to NASA to look for the conjunction of the moon at <https://astropixels.com/ephemeris/phasescat/phases0401.html>, the moon is in conjunction on January 23<sup>rd</sup> at 07:18. You must look in the calendar year of 456 C.E., due to the civil year changing on December 31<sup>st</sup> at NASA, but the Hebrew did not end until Aviv which is about March the following year.

Counting from January 23<sup>rd</sup> as the 1<sup>st</sup> day of Adar gives us Wednesday as the 3<sup>rd</sup> day matching the description on the tombstone.

Because this is a Rabbi’s tombstone—and we have already found proof of the start of the year being switched to Tishri with the tombstone of 364—434 *Saul, son of Shalat*—we have proven this stone is now using the Hillel calendar and is now going by the calculated calendar created in 358 C.E. This is about 97 years after the year Hillel is credited with creating the calculated calendar.

We have another date that syncretizes with our Jubilee cycles.

### 390—460 C.E. Yehuda the Priest, Son of Ab...mah

390 years since the destruction of the Temple; Yehuda the Priest, son of Ab...mah—390 + 70 = 460 C.E.

*According to Naveh the stone was in the David Sofer Collection in London. Not seen. Plate XIV*

*Bibl.: Naveh 2000, p. 623, no. 23 (photo; drawing on p. 633); Beyer 2004, p. 308, no. \*yyZO 23.<sup>966</sup>*

*May rest the soul of Yehuda the priest. The son of Ab...ma who died the third day of the month of Kislev. In the fifth year of the Sabbatical cycle which is the year 300 hundred and 90 years after the destruction of the Temple. May he hold the altar and wake up to the voice of the announcer of peace. Peace Peace Peace*

*May there rest the soul of Yehudah the priest, son of Abdi[.]mah, who was gathered (on) the third day of the month Kislev, in the fifth year of the seven-year cycle, which is the year 300 {hundred} (and) 90 years {years} of the destruction of the Sanctuary. May he hold the altar and wake up to the voice of the announcer of peace. Peace, peace, peace.*

Commentary: The year 390 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 460 C.E., which is the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the 5<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle and syncretizes with our Jubilee charts, making another match.

The tombstone does not give a day of the week for us to compare to the records at [Torahcalendar.com](http://Torahcalendar.com).

### 391—461 C.E. Unknown, Son/Daughter of Unknown

391 years since the destruction of the Temple; Unknown, son/daughter of Unknown—391 + 70 = 461 C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis at Safi in September 1995, inv. no. Z-100. Present location: Department of Antiquities of Jordan, in the storage at the Museum at the Lowest Place on Earth, Safi, Jordan. Plate XIV*

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<sup>966</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 62-63, no. 31.

*Bibl.: Unpublished.*<sup>967</sup>

*This is the tombstone . . . . . Died . Days in the month Ab? in the [six]th year of the seven-year cycle, the year three [hund]red [and n]inety one years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace.*

Commentary: The year 391 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 461 C.E., which is the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the 5<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle and syncretizes with our Jubilee charts, making yet another match.

The tombstone does not give a day of the week for us to compare to the records at Torahcalendar.com.

### **407—477 C.E. Sarah, Daughter of Papah—Start of Year Moved to Tishri—Jubilee Year**

407 years since the destruction of the Temple; Sarah, daughter of Papah—407 + 70 = 477 C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis at Safi in April 1996, inv. no. Z-149. Present location: unknown. Plate XVIII  
Bibl.: Unpublished. (for date see Stern 2001, p. 90, table 2.2).*<sup>968</sup>

*May the soul be rested of Sarah, daughter of Papah, who died at the beginning of the month Kislev, in the second year of the seven-year cycle, the year four hundred and seven years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. May she rest in peace, upon her be peace.*

Commentary: The year 407 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 477 C.E., which is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 1<sup>st</sup> Sabbatical cycle, and it is also a Jubilee year. The tombstone states it is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Sabbatical year.

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<sup>967</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 63-64, no. 32.

<sup>968</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 72, no. 43.

To solve this, we note that the month is Kislev, or the 9<sup>th</sup> month. We have explained how the Rabbis had changed the start of the year from Aviv to Tishri, the 7<sup>th</sup> month. During this Jubilee year, Kislev, the 9<sup>th</sup> month is after the 7<sup>th</sup> month, so they would have changed the year to the 2nd year as this tombstone declares.

Once again, we have confirmation that our understanding of the Jubilee cycles in our charts is correct and another Jubilee year identified.

## 408—478 C.E. ...ty?, Son of Unknown

408 years since the destruction of the Temple; ....ty, son of Unknown—408 + 70 = 478 C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis at Safi in September 1995, inv. no. Z-101. Present location: Unknown. Plate XVII  
Bibl.: Unpublished (for date see Stern 2001, p. 90, table 2.2; p. 93, n. 138 and table 2.3).<sup>969</sup>*

*May the soul be rested of .....ty son .... who died ... in the month ... year .... [se]cond of the seven-year cycle, which is ..... leap year, the year [fo]ur hundred and eight years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace.*

*May the soul be rested of .....ty  
..... son ..... who died  
..... in the month  
..... year  
.... [se]cond of the seven-year cycle, which is ..... leap year, the year  
[fo]ur hundred and eight years of the destruction of the  
Sanctuary. Peace.*

Commentary: The year 408 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 478 C.E., which is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the 1<sup>st</sup> Sabbatical cycle and syncretizes with our Jubilee charts, making yet another match.

The tombstone does not give a day of the week for us to compare to the records at Torahcalendar.com.

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<sup>969</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 71-72, no. 42.

Now having this tombstone to compare to the tombstones of 477 C.E. (of Unknown, Son/Daughter of Nikodemos) and 476 C.E. (of Ya'akov, son of 'awid), (both of these are found in *Chapter 28 | Tombstones Testifying to Passover Before the Equinox*), I am going to state that what the inscription in 477 C.E. (this is the tombstone of Unknown, Son/Daughter of Nikodemos) called a Sabbatical rest year was actually a Jubilee land rest year. Because the year of 478 C.E. (...ty, son of Unknown) is called the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in the cycle, this differs from the counting method we showed you in *Chapter 4 | 362—432 C.E Tombstone of Mehirshah Daughter of Marsah—Jubilee*. This tombstone of Mehirshah counted only those years they could harvest. Forty-six years later they are now counting all the years in the Sabbatical cycle.

### 433—503 C.E. 'Amran, Son of Yudan

433 years since the destruction of the Temple; "Amran, son of Yudan—433 + 70 = 503 C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis at Safi in April 1997, inv. no. Z-323. Present location: Unknown. Plate XVIII  
Bibl.: Naveh 1999, p. 582, no. 17 (with photo); Beyer 2004, p. 306, no. \*yyZO 17. For date see Stern 2001, p. 90, table 2.2.<sup>970</sup>*

*May the spirit of 'amran son of Yudan rest who died on the month of Nisan (1 st month), on the tenth day of the month on the sixth year of the Sehmitah, which is year four hundred thirty-three to the destruction of the temple Peace on Israel*

*Rested be the soul of 'Amran, son of Yudan, / who died in the month of Nisan, on the tenth day of the month, in the sixth year of the seven-year cycle which is the year four hundred and thirty-three years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace upon Israel.*

Commentary: The year 433 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 503 C.E., which is the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical

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<sup>970</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 72-73, no. 44.

cycle and syncretizes with our Jubilee charts, making yet another match.

The tombstone does not give a day of the week for us to compare to the records at [Torahcalendar.com](http://Torahcalendar.com).

### **435—505 C.E. Shema'ayah, Son of Yitzhaq**

435 years since the destruction of the Temple; Shema'ayah, son of Yitzhaq— $435 + 70 = 505$  C.E.

*Present location: Unknown. Plate XIX*

*Bibl.: Naveh 2000, pp. 626-627, no. 25 (photo drawing on p. 635).<sup>971</sup>*

*May this soul rest Of Shema'ayah son of Yitzhaq who dies on the twentieth day of the month of Nisan, on the first year of the Shemitah, which is year four hundred and thirty five years to the destruction of the temple, may it be built. May he rest in peace on his resting place Shalom*

*Rested be this soul of Shema'yah, son of Yiṣḥaq, who died on the tenth (day) of the month Nisan, in the first year of the seven-year cycle, which is the year four hundred and thirty-five years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. May it be (God's) will that it (the Sanctuary) will be rebuilt. May he rest in peace on his (funerary) couch.*

Commentary: The year 435 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 505 C.E., which is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 5<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle and syncretizes with our Jubilee charts, making yet another match. It confirms that the year 505 C.E. is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle, which was the question being raised about tombstone 435—505 C.E. Haifu, Daughter of Unknown (Chapter 28 | Tombstones Testifying to Passover Before the Equinox), which Naveh said:

*It seems to me that we have to read here Xבש, i.e. the shin that serves as an abbreviation for שנה was followed by another letter representing a numeral, just as in the coins of the First*

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<sup>971</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimarīs, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 74-75, no. 46.



*and Second Revolts. If so, I would suggest reading in lines 4-5 דשמטסה (8) בש "in the (1st) year of the sabbatical cycle".*

This tombstone confirms that the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle is the year 505 C.E., once again aligning perfectly with our Sabbatical and Jubilee charts.

The tombstone does not give a day of the week for us to compare to the records at [Torahcalendar.com](http://Torahcalendar.com). This is disappointing, as I was hoping to learn if we are correct in understanding that [Torahcalendar.com](http://Torahcalendar.com) is off by two months for this year.

### **444—514 C.E. Sabah, Son of WM? The Elder—Crescent Moon**

444 years since the destruction of the Temple; Sabah, son of ...WM—444 + 70 = 514 C.E.

*The stone came to our attention through a photograph taken by F. Zayadine at Kerak and handed by him to Y.E. Meimaris in May 2006. Present location: Department of Antiquities of Jordan, storehouse at Nuweijis near Amman. Plate XIX  
Bibl.: Unpublished.<sup>972</sup>*

*[Rested be] the soul of Sabah? [son ..]wm? (the Elder) who died on the 5th? [on] the fifth [day] (Thursday), on the twentieth [d]ay of the month E(lul), in the third year of the seven-year cycle which is the year four hundred and forty-four years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace upon Israel. Peace.*

Comments: This tombstone confirms that the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle is the year 514 C.E., once again aligning perfectly with our Sabbatical and Jubilee charts.

The tombstone tells us Thursday will be the 20<sup>th</sup> day of Elul, the 6<sup>th</sup> month.

Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 514 C.E., and the 6<sup>th</sup> month of Elul. Click: view calendar. Check to see if the 20<sup>th</sup> day is a Thursday. The 6<sup>th</sup> month does not have the 20<sup>th</sup> day as a

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<sup>972</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 75, no. 47.

Thursday, but as a Wednesday. Checking the 5<sup>th</sup> month, I see it was a 29-day month, so if the moon was not seen, then a 30-day month would be declared. This then makes the 20<sup>th</sup> day land on the Thursday. Counting this date as the 6<sup>th</sup> month, then Passover would have been on March 28, 514 C.E.

But we have noted that the Hillel calendar was being used by earlier tombstones, so we should be using the conjunction moon to begin the month by this date.

If I enter the 5<sup>th</sup> month and look for the conjunction date at <https://astropixels.com/ephemeris/phasescat/phases0501.html>, I see the conjunction was on July 8, 514 C.E., at 01:23 am. Counting from this date causes the 20<sup>th</sup> day to land on Sunday, July 27, 514 C.E.

Repeating this process for the 4<sup>th</sup> month of Torahcalendar.com, the conjunction date is June 8, 514 C.E., at 18:17. Counting from June 8, 514 C.E., gives the 20<sup>th</sup> day as Friday, June 27, 514 C.E.

If I go the other way and add a month to Torahcalendar.com, so that their 7<sup>th</sup> month is the 6<sup>th</sup> month in question, then using the crescent moon calendar I can get Thursday to be the 20<sup>th</sup> day. We have been consistently discovering the use of the Hillel calendar for those tombstones during the 5<sup>th</sup> century. It seems highly unlikely they reverted back at this late date in time, but the evidence seems to indicate that this stone is using the crescent moon to determine the monthly dates, and it is the 6<sup>th</sup> month. The tombstone itself is not 100% sure it reads the 5<sup>th</sup> day because they marked it with a question mark.

## **509—579 C.E. Unknown, Son of Aaron**

509 years since the destruction of the Temple; Unknown, son of Aaron—509 + 70 = 579 C.E.

*Present location: Unknown. Plate XX*

*Bibl.: Stern and Misgav 2004, pp. 148-150, no. 29 (photo and drawing included).<sup>973</sup>*

*This is the tombstone [of ...], son [of] Aaron(?), who died on the tenth day of the month Kislev, in the fifth year of the seven-year*

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<sup>973</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 76-77, no. 49.

*cycle, which is the year five hundred and nine years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. May it (the Sanctuary) be (re)built in our days. May his resting place be in peace.*

Comments: This tombstone confirms that the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle is the year 579 C.E., once again aligning perfectly with our Sabbatical and Jubilee charts.

The tombstone also tells us they died on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Kislev but does not give us a weekday to check with Torahcalendar.com.

## **768—838 C.E. Rabbi Moses, Son of Elijah**

768 years since the destruction of the Temple; Rabbi Moses, son of Elijah—768 + 70 = 838 C.E.

*The Baalbek inscription in Lebanon was discovered in an orchard near the city of B'albek, Lebanon. On April 15, 1987, Dr. M. Amhaz head of Archaeology of Lebanon University showed a picture of this tombstone to Albet F. Naccach who examined it three days later. It measures 35X18X5.<sup>974</sup>*

This tombstone is known as the Baalbek inscription in Lebanon.

*Upon your name, the blessed memory of righteousness this is the burial sight of Rabbi Moses son of Elijah, who died (lit. gathered) from this world on the sixth year of the Shemitah which is the seven hundred and sixty eighth year to the destruction of The House, He (The Holy One-May He be blessed) will build it and will awaken the sleepers of his people, Amen*

Commentary: The year 768 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 838 C.E., which is the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sabbatical cycle. The tombstone states it is the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle. This most likely means he was buried after Tishri 1, when the year changed from the 5<sup>th</sup> year to the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the cycle. But we do not have the month on the tombstone to confirm our suspicion. The tombstone does not give a day of the week for us to compare to the records at Torahcalendar.com. I am going to include this stone as confirmation of our Sabbatical cycles based on the year changing at

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<sup>974</sup> Naccach, A. F. A Ninth Century A.D. Judeo-Aramaic Epitaph from B'albak on JSTOR. *Orientalia*, 243.

Tishri. You may not agree with me and can remove it as one of our proofs.

Here are the charts with all the Sabbatical and Jubilee years marked in yellow for this chapter and the next for you to check as you study these years out.

							967	98
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
966	959	952	945	938	931	924		
965	958	951	944	937	930	923		
964	957	950	943	936	929	922		
963	956	949	942	935	928	921		
962	955	948	941	934	927	920		
961	954	947	940	933	926	919		
960	953	946	939	932	925	918		
							973	97
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
972	965	958	951	944	937	930		
971	964	957	950	943	936	929		
970	963	956	949	942	935	928		
969	962	955	948	941	934	927		
968	961	954	947	940	933	926		
967	960	953	946	939	932	925		
966	959	952	945	938	931	924		
							980	96
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
979	972	965	958	951	944	937		
978	971	964	957	950	943	936		
977	970	963	956	949	942	935		
976	969	962	955	948	941	934		
975	968	961	954	947	940	933		
974	967	960	953	946	939	932		
973	966	959	952	945	938	931		
							986	95
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
985	978	971	964	957	950	943		
984	977	970	963	956	949	942		
983	976	969	962	955	948	941		
982	975	968	961	954	947	940		
981	974	967	960	953	946	939		
980	973	966	959	952	945	938		
979	972	965	958	951	944	937		
							992	94
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
991	984	977	970	963	956	949		
990	983	976	969	962	955	948		
989	982	975	968	961	954	947		
988	981	974	967	960	953	946		
987	980	973	966	959	952	945		
986	979	972	965	958	951	944		
985	978	971	964	957	950	943		
							998	93
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
997	990	983	976	969	962	955		
996	989	982	975	968	961	954		
995	988	981	974	967	960	953		
994	987	980	973	966	959	952		
993	986	979	972	965	958	951		
992	985	978	971	964	957	950		
991	984	977	970	963	956	949		
							1004	92
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
1003	996	989	982	975	968	961		
1002	995	988	981	974	967	960		
1001	994	987	980	973	966	959		
1000	993	986	979	972	965	958		
999	992	985	978	971	964	957		
998	991	984	977	970	963	956		
997	990	983	976	969	962	955		
							1010	91
Sabbath	8th Cycle	9th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
1007	1000	993	986	979	972	965		
1006	999	992	985	978	971	964		
1005	998	991	984	977	970	963		
1004	997	990	983	976	969	962		
1003	996	989	982	975	968	961		
1002	995	988	981	974	967	960		
1001	994	987	980	973	966	959		

							721	91
Subtotal	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
721	714	707	700	693	686	679		
720	713	706	699	692	685	678		
719	712	705	698	691	684	677		
718	711	704	697	690	683	676		
717	710	703	696	689	682	675		
716	709	702	695	688	681	674		
715	708	701	694	687	680	673		
							722	92
Subtotal	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
722	665	658	651	644	637	630		
721	664	657	650	643	636	629		
720	663	656	649	642	635	628		
719	662	655	648	641	634	627		
718	661	654	647	640	633	626		
717	660	653	646	639	632	625		
716	659	652	645	638	631	624		
							723	93
Subtotal	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
723	616	609	602	595	588	581		
722	615	608	601	594	587	580		
721	614	607	600	593	586	579		
720	613	606	599	592	585	578		
719	612	605	598	591	584	577		
718	611	604	597	590	583	576		
717	610	603	596	589	582	575		
							724	94
Subtotal	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
724	567	560	553	546	539	532		
723	566	559	552	545	538	531		
722	565	558	551	544	537	530		
721	564	557	550	543	536	529		
720	563	556	549	542	535	528		
719	562	555	548	541	534	527		
718	561	554	547	540	533	526		
							725	95
Subtotal	6th Cycle	5th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
725	518	511	504	497	490	483		
724	517	510	503	496	489	482		
723	516	509	502	495	488	481		
722	515	508	501	494	487	480		
721	514	507	500	493	486	479		
720	513	506	499	492	485	478		
719	512	505	498	491	484	477		
							726	96

							431	86
Subhash	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle	8 4 3 2 1 Exhibition	
476	469	462	455	448	441	434		
475	468	461	454	447	440	433		
474	467	460	453	446	439	432		
473	466	459	452	445	438	431		
472	465	458	451	444	437	430		
471	464	457	450	443	436	429		
470	463	456	449	442	435	428		
							430	87
Subhash	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
427	420	413	406	399	392	385		
426	419	412	405	398	391	384		
425	418	411	404	397	390	383		
424	417	410	403	396	389	382		
423	416	409	402	395	388	381		
422	415	408	401	394	387	380		
421	414	407	400	393	386	379		
							429	88
Subhash	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
378	371	364	357	350	343	336		
377	370	363	356	349	342	335		
376	369	362	355	348	341	334		
375	368	361	354	347	340	333		
374	367	360	353	346	339	332		
373	366	359	352	345	338	331		
372	365	358	351	344	337	330		
							428	89
Subhash	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
329	322	315	308	301	294	287		
328	321	314	307	300	293	286		
327	320	313	306	299	292	285		
326	319	312	305	298	291	284		
325	318	311	304	297	290	283		
324	317	310	303	296	289	282		
323	316	309	302	295	288	281		
							427	90
Subhash	6th Cycle	7th Cycle	4th Cycle	3rd Cycle	2nd Cycle	1st Cycle		
280	273	266	259	252	245	238		
279	272	265	258	251	244	237		
278	271	264	257	250	243	236		
277	270	263	256	249	242	235		
276	269	262	255	248	241	234		
275	268	261	254	247	240	233		
274	267	260	253	246	239	232		
							426	91

## Chapter 28 | Tombstones Testifying to Passover Before the Equinox

There are many modern-day groups who believe you cannot keep Passover before the equinox. They use the March 19-22 equinox date to determine when Passover will be, instead of relying on the barley to determine the start of the year.

In this section we are going to place all the tombstones that testify to Passover being kept before the equinox. You will also see the first use of when the Hillel calendar began to be used that we have detected. It was about 73 years after 358 C.E., based on what we can determine.

### 361—431 C.E. Julius, Son of Gedolah—Conjunction Moon—Hillel—Barley

361 years since the destruction of the Temple; Julius, son of Gedolah— $361 + 70 = 431$  C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis at Safi in March 1996, inv. no. Z-144. Present location: unknown. Plate IX*

*Bibl.: Unpublished (for the date see Stern 2001, p. 90, table 2.2).<sup>975</sup>*

*Let the resting place be rested(!) of YWLYS (Julius), head of the sons of Isra'el, son of Gedolah, who died on Friday, on the sixteenth day of the month Tebet, in the fourth year of the seven-year cycle, the year 3 hundred and sixty-one years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace, peace. May he rest on his (funerary) couch. Peace, peace.*

Commentary: The year 361 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 431 C.E., which is the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 1<sup>st</sup> Sabbatical cycle as the tombstone claims. The tombstone also gives us a day of the week, Friday the 16<sup>th</sup> day of Tebet (the 10<sup>th</sup> month), so we can compare it to a date in Torahcalendar.com.

Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 431 C.E., and the 10<sup>th</sup> month of Tebet. Click: view calendar. Check to see if the 16<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>975</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 53, no. 20.



day is a Friday. The 10<sup>th</sup> month does not have the 16<sup>th</sup> day as a Friday, but as a Wednesday. Checking the 9<sup>th</sup> month, it also does not have the 16<sup>th</sup> as a Friday, but as a Tuesday. Checking the 8<sup>th</sup> month, the 16<sup>th</sup> is on Monday.

Use the Conjunction moon charts at NASA with this URL: <https://astropixels.com/ephemeris/phasescat/phases0401.html>. The conjunction of the moon was three days earlier on October 22, 431 C.E., at 9:27.

Now count from October 22, 431 C.E.; you will get the 16<sup>th</sup> day of this month on the Friday as the Tombstone declares. You have now matched this tombstone to the calendar, thus proving they were using the conjunction to begin each month, and in this case, they were two months before what Torahcalendar.com claims. Torahcalendar.com goes by the equinox to determine the beginning of the year. Find the conjunction for the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> months to check if the 16<sup>th</sup> will end up on a Friday. When I did, the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> month did not match up, only the 8<sup>th</sup> month did.

With this information, we can determine the 10<sup>th</sup> month was two months before what Torahcalendar.com states. We can count back to when Passover was. Passover was on February 14, 431 C.E., which is again before the equinox, proving you do not go by the equinox to determine the year.

Although they are using the barley to begin the year, they are using the Hillel calendar to begin the month.

So, this is a solid match synchronizing with our charts.

### **369—439 C.E. Hannah, Daughter of Haniel the Priest—Sabbath on the 15th—Passover—Crescent Moon—Barley**

369 years since the destruction of the Temple; Hannah, daughter of Haniel— $369 + 70 = 439$  C.E.

*Recorded by K.D. Politis in Zurich in November 1989, inv. no. Z-305. Present location: The Israel Museum Collection (gift of Max Ratner, Cleveland, Ohio, to America Friends of the Museum), reg. no. IMJ 90.30.68. Plate X*



*Bibl.: Misgav 2006, pp. 36-39, no. XXX, fig. 1 on p. 35, fig. 2 on p. 37.*<sup>976</sup>

*"This is the tombstone of Hannah, daughter of Ha[niel] the priest, who died on the Sabbath, the first festival of Passover, on the fifteenth day of the month of Nisan, in the fifth year of the sabbatical cycle, which is the year three hundred and sixty-nine years after the destruction of the Temple. Peace. May her soul rest. Peace"*

*This is the tombstone of Hannah, daughter of Han[ie]l the priest, who died on the day of Sabbath, the first festival day of Passover, on the fifteenth day of the month of Nisan, in the fifth year of the seven-year cycle, which is the year three hundred and sixty-nine years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace.*

Commentary: The year 369 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 439 C.E., which is the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sabbatical cycle. This tombstone synchronizes perfectly with our charts.

This Tombstone proves a few other very important things that you need to note. This is a very important tombstone.

1<sup>st</sup>: The Passover sacrifice was eaten on the 15<sup>th</sup>, the first day of the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread:

*8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roasted with fire, and unleavened bread. They shall eat it with bitter herbs. (Exodus 12:8)*

The Passover sacrifice was killed on the 14<sup>th</sup> in the late afternoon and then eaten on the 15<sup>th</sup>, not on the 14<sup>th</sup> as many today claim. The Jews in the year 439 C.E. are declaring that Passover is on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan.<sup>977</sup>

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<sup>976</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 56, no. 23.

<sup>977</sup> Nehemia Gordon: If you aren't confused yet, I need to throw in one more complication and that has to do with the definition of the word "Passover". In every language, the meanings of words change over times. A great example in English is the word "computer". In the 1910s the English word "computer" referred to a person (usually a woman) whose job it was to sit with a pen, paper, and a slide rule computing complex calculations for banks, astronomers, and the military. A hundred years later "computer" refers to an inanimate machine that does everything

2<sup>nd</sup>: When you check the calendars, the only way you can have a Passover on a Saturday in that year is if you go by the Crescent moon to begin the month. The 12<sup>th</sup> month would have been a 30-day month. Torahcalendar.com adds a 13<sup>th</sup> month, which this tombstone is showing us was not added, but was in fact the 1<sup>st</sup> month. Understanding this, then the date for Passover that year was March 16, 439 C.E., which is before the equinox. This stone proves the equinox is not a factor in determining when to keep Passover.

3<sup>rd</sup>: The only way you can have a Passover on a Saturday is to go by the crescent moon. The Biblical calendar that goes by the barley to start the year and then by the crescent moon to begin each month has been used by all the tombstones up until this date thus far, with the tombstone for the year 431 C.E. being the one lone exception.

Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 439 C.E., and the 1<sup>st</sup> month of Nisan, or Aviv. Click: view calendar. Check to see if the 15<sup>th</sup> day is a Saturday. Torahcalendar.com has the 15<sup>th</sup> day as Sunday. If we use the Conjunction moon charts at NASA with this URL: <https://astropixels.com/ephemeris/phasescat/phases0401.html>, the conjunction moon for this same month was on March 30, at 20:13. Notice that the conjunction time is 8:13 P.M., so your count begins with March 31<sup>st</sup> and you end up with the 15<sup>th</sup> on a Friday and not the Sabbath.

Using the crescent moon or the Hillel calendar conjunction moon, does not work for this month Torahcalendar.com calls the 1<sup>st</sup> month in the year 439 C.E.

Checking the month before, we must go to the previous year of 438 C.E. and check the 13<sup>th</sup> month at Torahcalendar.com if they had one. Doing so shows us Torahcalendar.com declares it was a 30-day

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from taking photographs to running the word processor on which I am writing this message. In the Torah, Pessach or "Passover" refers to a sacrifice and the holiday is called Chag HaMatzot (Feast of Unleavened Bread). However, in late Second Temple times the name "Passover" took on a new meaning and was used to refer not only to the sacrifice, but to the holiday that followed the sacrifice. If you said to King David you are "doing Pessach" he would know you are offering a sacrifice. If you said the same thing to a 1st century CE Jew, he might think you were observing the Feast of Unleavened Bread or maybe offering a sacrifice. He wouldn't know and might have to ask you. If you said to most Jews today you are "doing Pessach" they would immediately know you meant the Feast of Unleavened Bread and not a sacrifice. <https://www.nehemiaswall.com/when-is-passover>

month, so we cannot add another day in case they did not see the moon.

On the home page of Torahcalendar.com, scroll down to the purple chart titled New Moon Sightings, and click on it. Now enter the year 439 C.E. and the 1<sup>st</sup> month and click enter. You will see the moon was easily visible on April 1<sup>st</sup> that year. This will cause the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month to land on Sunday.

On the same page you can then check to see whether or not the moon might have been seen the day before. Enter the year 439 C.E. and the first month. Now click on the “day before” and then “view” buttons, and you will see the moon is right on the margin of when it would not be seen. If the moon was seen, and at that point, it is difficult but not impossible, then this moves our dates back by one day and the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month would be on Saturday as the tombstone states.

If we continue to follow the pattern of Torahcalendar.com being one or two months off from the tombstones, checking the 13<sup>th</sup> month of the year 438 C.E. as our 1<sup>st</sup> month for 439 C.E. shows us that the 15<sup>th</sup> was on a Friday using the crescent moon calendar. Checking the month before, the 15<sup>th</sup> is Friday the day before the Sabbath, but we do see it was a 29-day month. This means if it was overcast, the month could have had a 30-day month and pushed the next month ahead by one day. This would make the 15<sup>th</sup> on Shabbat as the tombstone states.

If I use the conjunction moon, then in both these cases it does not give us the 15<sup>th</sup> on the Sabbath.

I must conclude they were using the crescent moon to begin the month. Passover was on March 18, 439 C.E., which is before the equinox and that Passover was on the 15<sup>th</sup> and not the 14<sup>th</sup>, as this tombstone clearly states.

### **386—456 C.E. Yudah, Son of Miles—Hillel Calendar**

386 years since the destruction of the Temple; Yudah, son of Miles— $386 + 70 = 456$  C.E.

*Found at Safi and brought to the attention of J. Naveh in 1985.*

*Present location unknown. Plate XIII*

*Bibl.: Naveh 1985, pp. 105, 108-109, no. D, pl. 1 on p. 104; Beyer 1994, pp. 240-241, no. \*yyZO 4; Naveh 1995, pp. 481-482, no. 4*

(with drawing and photo); Beyer 2004, p. 302, no. \*yyZO 4. For the date see Stern 2001, p. 90, table 2.2; pp. 147, 148 and n.i.<sup>978</sup>

*This is the tombstone of Yudah, son of Miles, who died (on) Friday, on the twenty-fifth day of the month Tebet, in the first year of the seven-year cycle, the year three hundred and eighty-six years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace, peace upon Israel.*

Commentary: The year 386 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 456 C.E., which is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 5<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle and syncretizes with our Jubilee charts, giving us another match.

This tombstone of Yudah along with the tombstone of 385—455 C.E. Rabbi Simon Binabi confirms our suspicion that there was no leap year in 455 C.E., which Torahcalendar.com has added.

Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 456 C.E., and the 10<sup>th</sup> month of Tebet. Click: view calendar. Check to see if the 25<sup>th</sup> day is a Friday. Torahcalendar.com has the 25<sup>th</sup> day as Tuesday.

If we go to NASA to look for the conjunction of the moon at <https://astropixels.com/ephemeris/phasescat/phases0401.html>, the moon is in conjunction on December 13<sup>th</sup> at 11:52. This then makes the 25<sup>th</sup> day land on Sunday and not the Friday we are looking for.

If we go to Torahcalendar.com's 9<sup>th</sup> month and look at the conjunction date of November 13<sup>th</sup> at 23:54, and then begin to count to the 25<sup>th</sup>, it does land on the Friday as the tombstone states.

This then means that Passover was kept on March 9, 456 C.E., long before the equinox.

The next tombstone of Unknown, son of Megalos, states that in the 10<sup>th</sup> month the Sabbath was the 25<sup>th</sup> and not Friday as this tombstone claims. I believe there is a mistranslation by Naveh contributing to this confusion, which I will now explain.

### **386—456 C.E. Unknown, Son of Megalos—Duplicate Stone of Yudah—Does not Count**

386 years since the destruction of the Temple; Unknown, son of Megalos— $386 + 70 = 456$  C.E.

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<sup>978</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 61-62, no. 30.

*Bibl.: Naveh 1985, pp. 103-116, no. 4, p. 104, Pl.1 Epitaph D. Photographed by Vivienne Silver, Jerusalem. Present Location: Israel Museum, Jerusalem.*<sup>979</sup>

*This is the Tombstone of....Son of Megalos (?) who died on the Sabbath, the twenty-fifth day on the month Tevet, in the 1st year of the sabbatical cycle, 386 years after the destruction of the Temple.*

Commentary: The year 386 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 456 C.E., which is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 5<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle and syncrizes with our Jubilee charts, making another match.

He died on the Sabbath on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of Tevet, the 10<sup>th</sup> month.

Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 456 C.E., and the 10<sup>th</sup> month of Tebet. Click: view calendar. Check to see if the 25<sup>th</sup> day is a Saturday. Torahcalendar.com has the 25<sup>th</sup> day as Tuesday.

If we go to NASA to look for the conjunction of the moon at <https://astropixels.com/ephemeris/phasescat/phases0401.html>, the moon is in conjunction on December 13<sup>th</sup> at 11:52. This then makes the 25<sup>th</sup> day land on Sunday and not the Saturday we are looking for.

If we go to Torahcalendar.com's 9<sup>th</sup> month and look at the conjunction date of November 13<sup>th</sup> at 23:54, and then begin to count to the 25<sup>th</sup>, it lands on the Friday but not on the Saturday as this tombstone states. But because the conjunction takes place well after sunset, it is now part of the next day, so we should begin our count from the 14<sup>th</sup> and then we end up with the 25<sup>th</sup> on the Saturday as the tombstone states. This now presents us with two interpretations. One states Friday and the other states it was Saturday for the same stone.

The only way I can explain this discrepancy is by the following:

This tombstone of 386—456 C.E. *Unknown, Son of Megalos* was the 4<sup>th</sup> tombstone Joseph Naveh came across and wrote about in his publication *Another Jewish Aramaic Tombstone From Zoar* in 1985, included in the footnote below.

At that time these tombstones were very rare, and little knowledge was known about them.

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<sup>979</sup> JOURNAL ARTICLE, *Another Jewish Aramaic Tombstone From Zoar*, JOSEPH NAVEH, Hebrew Union College Annual, Vol. 56 (1985), pp. 103-116, Published by: Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion, Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23507649>

I have taken Naveh's translation at first and accepted it as creditable. Beyer seems to have found more information when he examined the stone. It is his translation that is the tombstone of Yudah, the son of Miles, and not the unknown son of Megalos.

Upon further investigation, the article *Another Jewish Aramaic Tombstone From Zoar* does have a picture of the tombstone labeled *Plate 1—Epitaph D Photograph by Vivienne Silver, Jerusalem* on page 104. When compared to the picture for Yudah son of Miles, in the *Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic*, Plate XIII does have a drawing by Y.E. Meimaris (adapted from Naveh 1985, p. 104, pl.1).

Both the picture and the description match. So, these two tombstones are the same but have two different translations.

I will leave this here in case someone finds Naveh's work but is not aware of the Beyer's work, so that they can know.



### **398—468 C.E. Mattai, Son of Sa'bah—Hillel Calendar—Start of Year Moved to Tishri**

398 years since the destruction of the Temple; Mattai, son of Sa'bah— $398 + 70 = 468$  C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis at Safi in May 1996,  
inv. no. Z-177. Present location: Moussaieff Collection in London.  
Plate XV*

*Bibl.: Stern 1999, pp. 178-179, no. 14 (with photo); Beyer 2004, p. 305, no. \*yyZO 14. For the date see Stern 2001, p. 89 and table 2.2 on p. 90; p. 91.<sup>980</sup>*

*This memorial of the deceased Mati (son of) Sabah, who died on the fifth day, twentieth of the month of Elul on the fifth year of the Shemitah year three hundred and ninety eight to the destruction of the temple May he rest in peace*

*This is the tombstone of the late Mattai, son of Sa'bah, who died on the fifth day (Thursday), on the twentieth day of the month Elul, in the fifth year of the seven-year cycle, the year three hundred and ninety-eight years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. May he be rested in peace.*

Commentary: The year 398 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 468 C.E., which is the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the 6<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle. But the tombstone claims this is the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle.

We have explained how the Mishnah changed the start of the year from Aviv to Tishri. We have another tombstone listed next as 398—468 C.E. *Ester, daughter of Babah*. We have shown in that tombstone of Ester how the 9<sup>th</sup> month in which she died used the Hillel calendar to arrive at her death day on Friday, the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Kislev. The tombstone of Ester matched our Sabbatical and Jubilee cycles for the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the cycle being 468.

However, this tombstone of Mattai is just three months earlier in the 6<sup>th</sup> month of the same year, and yet it is stated as being the year before, i.e. the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle. When the Rabbis moved the start time from Aviv to Tishri, they went back by six months. This is a clear demonstration that they are now using Tishri 1 as the demarcation day from one year to the next—and not Aviv.

Mattai died in the 6<sup>th</sup> month of Elul, at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> year, right before the 6<sup>th</sup> year began the next month on Tishri 1. Then Ester dies two months later in the 9<sup>th</sup> month of Kislev, which is now the 6<sup>th</sup> year. This is why the tombstone of Mattai is stated as the 5<sup>th</sup> year of

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<sup>980</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 64-65, no. 34.

the Sabbatical cycle and then after Tishri 1, Ester's tombstone in the 9<sup>th</sup> month is stated in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the same Sabbatical cycle.

With the tombstone of Ester, we demonstrated they were using the Hillel calendar, and this month was one month earlier than Torahcalendar.com states. So, this 6<sup>th</sup> month on this tombstone should be the 5<sup>th</sup> month as reported by Torahcalendar.com and not the 6<sup>th</sup> month for the same year.

Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 468 C.E., and the 6<sup>th</sup> month of Elul. Click: view calendar. Check to see if the 20<sup>th</sup> day is a Thursday. Torahcalendar.com has the 20<sup>th</sup> day as Sunday.

If we go to NASA to look for the conjunction of the moon at <https://astropixels.com/ephemeris/phasescat/phases0401.html> The moon is in conjunction on August 4<sup>th</sup> at 03:09. This then makes the 20<sup>th</sup> day land on Friday and not the Thursday we are looking for.

If we go to Torahcalendar.com's 5<sup>th</sup> month and look at the conjunction date of July 5<sup>th</sup> at 17:45 and then begin to count to the 20<sup>th</sup> day, it lands on the Wednesday.

The conjunction for the month is on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July in 468 C.E. for this month according to NASA, but the conjunction takes place at 17:45 in the evening. Each day begins at sunset. This makes the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month on July 6, 468 C.E. Counting from this date using the Hillel calendar, you end up with the 20<sup>th</sup> day of Elul on Thursday (July 25<sup>th</sup>), exactly as the tombstone states.

This tombstone, once again, now syncretizes with our Sabbatical and Jubilee charts once you understand the Hillel calendar. This tombstone also confirms that Passover was kept on February 26, 468 C.E., well before the equinox.

### **398—468 C.E. Ester, Daughter of Babah—Hillel Calendar—Start of Year Moved to Tishri**

398 years since the destruction of the Temple; Ester, daughter of Babah— $398 + 70 = 468$  C.E.

*Seen and photographed by R. Schick in Amman in September 1993.  
Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis in Kerak in May 1997.  
Inv. no. Z-68. Present location: Department of Antiquities of  
Jordan, storehouse at Nuweijis near Amman. Plate XV*



*Bibl.: Naveh 1995, p. 492, no. 11 (with drawing and photo); Beyer 2004, p. 304, no. \*yyZO 11. For the date see Stern 2001, p. 90 and table 2.2; p. 93 and table 2.3; pp. 94-95.<sup>981</sup>*

*May the spirit {of Est} of Ester daughter of Babah, who died of the sixth day (Friday) on the third day of the month of Kislev (9<sup>th</sup> month) in the sixth year of the Shemitah, which was a leap year, year three hundred and ninety-eight to the destruction of the temple*

*May there be rested the soul {of Est}/ of Esther, daughter of Babah, who died on Friday, on the third day of the month Kislev, in the sixth year of the seven-year cycle, which is a year of leap-year, the year three hundred and ninety-eight years of the destruction of the Sanctuary.*

Commentary: The year 398 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 468 C.E., which is the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the 6<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle and syncretizes with our Jubilee charts, making yet another match.

Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 468 C.E., and the 9<sup>th</sup> month of Kislev. Click: view calendar. Check to see if the 3<sup>rd</sup> day is a Friday. Torahcalendar.com has the 3<sup>rd</sup> day as Tuesday.

If we go to NASA to look for the conjunction of the moon at <https://astropixels.com/ephemeris/phasescat/phases0401.html>, the moon is in conjunction on November 1<sup>st</sup> at 00:46. This then makes the 3<sup>rd</sup> day land on Sunday and not the Friday we are looking for.

If we go to Torahcalendar.com's 8<sup>th</sup> month and look at the conjunction date of October 2<sup>nd</sup> at 06:27, and then begin to count to the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, it lands on the Friday.

This demonstrates that this tombstone is now using the Hillel calendar to reckon time. This tombstone also shows us when we look to the first month, that Passover would have been kept on February 26, 468 C.E., well before the equinox.

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<sup>981</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 65-66, no. 35.

## 399—469 C.E. Severianus, Son of Hananyah—Hillel Calendar

399 years since the destruction of the Temple; Severianus, son of Hananyah— $399 + 70 = 469$  C.E.

*Seen and photographed by Y.E. Meimaris at Kerak in June 1995, inv. no. Z-88. Present location: Department of Antiquities of Jordan, storehouse at Nuweijis near Amman. Plate XV*

*Bibl.: Unpublished (for date see Stern 2001, p. 90, table 2.2).<sup>982</sup>*

*This is the tombstone of Severi(a)nus, son of Hananyah, who died on the third day (Tuesday) on the twenty-first day of the month Tebet, in the Sabbatical year, the year three hundred and ninety-nine years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. May he rest on his (funerary) couch. Peace.*

Commentary: The year 399 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 469 C.E., which is the 7<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical year of the 88<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cycle and syncretizes with our Jubilee charts, making yet another match.

Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 469 C.E., and the 10<sup>th</sup> month of Tebet. Click: view calendar. Check to see if the 21<sup>st</sup> day is a Tuesday. Torahcalendar.com has the 21<sup>st</sup> day as Saturday.

I will look at the 9<sup>th</sup> month on Torahcalendar.com. The 21<sup>st</sup> day is now reported on Friday. Remember, Torahcalendar.com is using the crescent moon to begin each month.

If we go to NASA to look for the conjunction of the moon at <https://astropixels.com/ephemeris/phasescat/phases0401.html>, the moon is in conjunction on November 19<sup>th</sup> at 20:11. Counting from November 19<sup>th</sup> as our 1<sup>st</sup> day causes the 21<sup>st</sup> day to land on Tuesday as stated in the tombstone, confirming they were using the Hillel calculated calendar but were not using the equinox to begin the year.

Once again by checking these dates with Torahcalendar.com, we can count back to the 1<sup>st</sup> month and see that Passover would have been

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<sup>982</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 66, no. 36.

kept this year on March 16, 469 C.E., which is before the equinox date of March 19-22.

In all of my dates, the day begins with sunset the evening before.

## **400—470 C.E. Yosah, Son of Upi—Hillel Calendar**

400 years since the destruction of the Temple; Yosah, son of Upi—400 + 70 = 470 C.E.

*According to the original editor the stone was kept in the David Sofer Collection in London. Plate XVI*

*Bibl.: Naveh 2000, pp. 624-626, no. 24 (photo: drawing on p. 634).<sup>983</sup>*

*May the soul of Yoseh son of Ofi who died in the city of Tefar in the land of Heymar and left to the land of Israel and buried on the sixth day the twenty sixth of the month of Tamuz on the first year of the Shemitah, which is identical to the year [400] to the destruction of the temple Shalom Peace on you in your resting place*

*Rested be the soul of Yosah, son of 'Upi, who passed away in the town of Tifar, in the land of the Himyarites, and was brought (lit. "departed") to the land of Israel and was buried on Friday, on the twenty-ninth day of the month Tammuz, in the first year of the seven-year cycle which is the year [400?] of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace. Peace upon you on your resting place.*

**Commentary: Although the era year numeral is missing, it could be restored as 400 on stylistic and palaeographical grounds.**

Although the researchers interpret the year as 400 years from the destruction of the Temple, they are not 100% sure. When I apply the 29<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz (4<sup>th</sup> month) as a Friday, using Torahcalendar.com for the year 470, I have difficulty matching the dates. We agree it is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle, but I am not able to make the 4<sup>th</sup> or the 3<sup>rd</sup> month line up with Friday the 29<sup>th</sup>. I was only able to do so according to Torahcalendar.com's 2<sup>nd</sup> month using the Hillel calendar.

If we go to NASA to look for the conjunction of the moon at <https://astropixels.com/ephemeris/phasescat/phases0401.html>, the

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<sup>983</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 68, no. 38.

moon is in conjunction on April 17<sup>th</sup> at 09:01. Counting from April 17<sup>th</sup> as our 1<sup>st</sup> day causes the 29<sup>th</sup> day to land on Friday as stated in the tombstone, confirming they were using the calculated calendar but were not using the equinox to begin the year.

If it is indeed two months off, then Passover for this year of 470 C.E. would have been kept on February 3, 470 C.E.

I am going to claim this tombstone as one of our proofs based on the researcher's views. We do have another year 432 C.E., where Torahcalendar.com is two months off as well.

I do know the first years of each Sabbatical cycle in the 400 range are 470, 477, 484, 491, and 498. Checking with Torahcalendar.com in each year for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> months, I was able to discover for the year 498 C.E., using the conjunction of June 5<sup>th</sup>, at 21:08, caused the 29<sup>th</sup> day to land on the Friday. I agree this stone remains questionable.

## **402—472 C.E. Hannah, Daughter of Levi—Hillel Calendar**

402 years since the destruction of the Temple; Hannah, daughter of Levi— $402 + 70 = 472$  C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by K.D. Politis (inv. no. Z-312) in July 1998 at the Moussaieff Collection in London. Plate XVI*

*Bibl.: Britton, Dwerk and Fine 2012, pp. 7-12, fig. 1; Fine 2012, pp. 56-57 (for the date see Stern 2001, p. 90, table 2.2).<sup>984</sup>*

*This is the tombstone of Hannah, daughter of Levi, who died on Thursday on the 19th day of the month of Sivan, in the third year of the Sabbatical year, four hundred and two years since the destruction of the Temple. Peace upon Israel Peace.*

Commentary: The year 402 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 472 C.E., which is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the 7<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle and syncretizes with our Jubilee charts, making yet another match.

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<sup>984</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 68-69, no. 39.

Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 472 C.E., and the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of Sivan. Click: view calendar. Check to see if the 19<sup>th</sup> day is a Thursday. Torahcalendar.com has the 19<sup>th</sup> day as Tuesday.

Now I will look at the 2<sup>nd</sup> month on Torahcalendar.com. The 19<sup>th</sup> day is now reported on Sunday. Remember Torahcalendar.com is using the crescent moon to begin each month.

If we go to NASA to look for the conjunction of the moon at <https://astropixels.com/ephemeris/phasescat/phases0401.html>, the moon is in conjunction on April 24<sup>th</sup> at 07:46. Counting from April 24<sup>th</sup> as our 1<sup>st</sup> day causes the 19<sup>th</sup> day to land on Friday which is one day later than the tombstones states. I am not able to explain this at this time. Is it possible that they had begun to change dates according to the Dehiyyot or postponement rules which had not yet been fully developed? At this juncture I do not know.

With this information, I can then check for the 1<sup>st</sup> month and discover that Passover would have been kept on March 12, 472 C.E., again before the equinox date. In all of my dates, the day begins with sunset the evening before.

## **406—476 C.E. Ya'akov, Son of 'awid—Hillel Calendar—Start of Year Moved to Tishri**

406 years since the destruction of the Temple; Ya'akov, son of 'awid—406 + 70 = 476 C.E.

*Recorded and photographed by S. Stern in London in April 1998.  
Recorded by K.D. Politis (inv. no. Z-306) in June 1998 in Moussaieff  
Collection, London. Plate XVI*

*Bibl.: Stern 1999, pp. 179-180, no. 16 (with photo); Beyer 2004, p.  
306, no \*yyZO 16. For date see Stern 2001, p. 90, table 2.2; p 91.<sup>985</sup>*

- 1) *This is the memorial of Ya'akov (Jacob) son of 'awid who died  
on the 2<sup>nd</sup> (day), on the 10<sup>th</sup> days of... Marcheshvan (8<sup>th</sup>  
month), on the first year of the Shemitah which is the year four  
hundred and six to the destruction of the temple. May he rest in  
peace. Shalom Shalom Shalom*

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<sup>985</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 69-70, no. 40.

- 2) *This is the tombstone of Ya'aqob, son of 'Awid, who died on the 2nd day (Monday), on the 10th day of Adar, at a great age, in the first year of the seven-year cycle, which is the year four hundred and six years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Let his sleeping be for rest. Peace, peace, peace.*

Commentary: I have the first record of the inscription as above as Joseph Naveh's #16 in my newsletter<sup>986</sup> as the month of Marcheshvan. I went back and double checked the picture of the tombstone to confirm it was the same one being written about in the inscription recorded in the book *Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia*, and they are both the same tombstone. But they are not recorded the same. I will compare results for both inscriptions below to determine which one is accurate.

The year 406 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 476 C.E., which is the 7th year of the 7<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle, but the tombstone says it is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle.

The month of Marcheshvan is the 8<sup>th</sup> month, and the month of Adar is the 12<sup>th</sup> month. They have begun the new year starting with the 1<sup>st</sup> of the 7<sup>th</sup> month, so the 8<sup>th</sup> month is now in the next year. This once again syncretizes with our Jubilee charts, making yet another match.

Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 476 C.E., and the 8<sup>th</sup> month of Marcheshvan. Click: view calendar. Check to see if the 10<sup>th</sup> day is a Monday. Torahcalendar.com has the 10<sup>th</sup> day as Friday. If we go to NASA to look for the conjunction of the moon at <https://astropixels.com/ephemeris/phasescat/phases0401.html>, the conjunction is on October 4<sup>th</sup> at 00:50, showing us the 10<sup>th</sup> day is Wednesday.

If I do this again for the 7<sup>th</sup> month, Torahcalendar.com has the 10<sup>th</sup> day as a Wednesday. If we again go to NASA to look for the conjunction of the moon on September 4<sup>th</sup> at 07:31, we can now begin our count, and we arrive on the 10<sup>th</sup> day as a Monday as the tombstone states.

I am now going to repeat this process for the month of Adar and see what it shows us.

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<sup>986</sup> Newsletter 5855-049 <https://sightedmoon.com/waiting-on-yehovah/>

Looking at the 12<sup>th</sup> month of Adar, I see the 10<sup>th</sup> day as a Friday. I am not going to check the conjunction for this date as it would not bring me four days closer to Monday.

Checking now with the 11<sup>th</sup> month, Torahcalendar.com has the 10<sup>th</sup> day as Wednesday.

If we go to NASA to look for the conjunction of the moon at <https://astropixels.com/ephemeris/phasescat/phases0401.html>, I must use the year 477 C.E. because NASA changes the year December 31<sup>st</sup> and not at Aviv. The moon is in conjunction on January 1<sup>st</sup> at 08:14. Counting from January 1<sup>st</sup>, our 10<sup>th</sup> day lands on Monday as the tombstones states.

I am not able to discern whether the tombstone should be Adar or Marcheshvan, as both dates work if we go one month earlier than what Torahcalendar.com states using the conjunction moon to begin the month. One interpretation of the month is not correct, but I am not able to determine which one.

With this information, I can then check for the 1<sup>st</sup> month and discover that Passover would have been kept on February 27, 476 C.E., again before the equinox date.

### **407—477 C.E. Unknown, Son/Daughter of Nikodemos—Jubilee Year—Hillel Calendar**

407 years since the destruction of the Temple; Unknown, son/daughter of Nikodemos— $407 + 70 = 477$  C.E.

*The stone came to our knowledge through a photograph taken by F. Zayadine at Kerak and handed by him to Y.E. Meimaris in May 2006. Present location: Department of Antiquities of Jordan, storehouse at Nuweijis near Amman. Plate XVII  
Bibl.: Unpublished.<sup>987</sup>*

*May the so[ul re]st [of ....] of ... Nikod[em(os) ? who died] on the sixth day of the month Nisan, in the seventh [year] of the seven-year cycle which is [the year] four hundred and 7 of the destruction of the [Sanct-] uary.... May it be rebuilt in our days, year {400} four hundred and seven; and he lived {55} fifty –five years. Pray*

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<sup>987</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 70-71, no. 41.

*concerning his resting place ... and in peace? ..... Peace upon Israel, peace.*

*May the so[ul re]st [of .... ] of ... Nikod[em(os)? who died] on the sixth day of the month Nisan, in the seventh [year] of the seven-year cycle which is [the year] four hundred and 7 of the destruction of the [Sanct-] uary.... May it be rebuilt in our days, year {400} four hundred and seven; and he lived {55} fifty –five years. Pray concerning his resting place ... and in peace? ..... Peace upon Israel, peace.*

Commentary: The year 407 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 477 C.E., which is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 1<sup>st</sup> Sabbatical cycle, and it is also a Jubilee year. The tombstone states it is the 7<sup>th</sup> year Sabbatical year.

The tombstone does not give a day of the week for us to compare to the records at Torahcalendar.com. With the current information, I have no way of confirming which year is being spoken of. At this time, they have begun the year six months earlier at Tishri. The Sabbatical year would have been completed at Tishri in 476 C.E., and the Jubilee would have begun at this same time and completed in 477 C.E. at Tishri. I am not saying this method is correct—just acknowledging how they counted time.

Would they have called the Jubilee year a 7<sup>th</sup> year?

Considering the previous tombstone of Ya'akov, son of "awid, 406 years from the destruction and 476 C.E., it stated that the 8<sup>th</sup> month was in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Sabbatical cycle. This stone of the child of Nikodemus is also in that same "1<sup>st</sup> year" just four months later at Nisan, yet it claims to be a Sabbatical year.

Combining the information from both stones, it is indeed the 1<sup>st</sup> year, and it is also a Sabbatical year, but this Sabbatical is the Yovel, or Jubilee year. I was about to place this tombstone in the unknown category because I felt I did not have enough information to claim it as a proof. Then when I began to work on documenting 408—478 C.E. ...ty? *Son of Unknown*, which is in the previous chapter, it states that the year 478 C.E. is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in the Sabbatical cycle. Now I have the proof I needed to conclude they called the Jubilee year a Sabbatical year but not a Yovel.



## 435—505 C.E. Haifu, Daughter of Unknown—Hillel Calendar

435 years since the destruction of the Temple; Haifu, daughter of Unknown— $435 + 70 = 505$  C.E.

*The stele was found at Safi in 1944 by the late M. Novomeisky, then director of the potash plant at Sedom, and transferred to the Department of Antiquities and Museums of Israel where it was registered as no. IDAM 80-788 (Sussman 1983, p 231 and nn. 1-2). Present location: The Israel museum, Jerusalem. Plate XVIII*  
*Bibl.: Ben Zevi 1943, pp. 90-91; Sukenik 1945, pp. 86-87, no. 3, fig. 3; Fraenkel 1945, p. 89; Cassuto 1945, pp. 90-91; Akavya 1945, pp. 92-98; Goodenough III, fig. 96; Wacholder 1973, pp. 180-184; Fitzmyer and Harrington 1978, pp. 271-272; Sussman 1983, pp. 231-234, pl. 29; Beyer 1984, pp. 369-370, no. \*yyZO 3; Naveh 1985, pp. 113-114, no. C, pls. 4-5 on pp. 110-111; Naveh 1995, pp. 480-481, no. 3 (with drawing and photo). For date see Stern 2001, p. 89, table 2.2; p. 91.<sup>988</sup>*

*May rest the soul of Haifu the daughter of ..., who died on Tuesday, the eleventh day of Elul, in the ...year of the Sabbatical cycle that is the year four hundred thirty-five after the destruction of the Temple. Peace Peace Upon Israel, Peace!*

Commentary: The year 435 years after the destruction of the Temple is the year 505 C.E., which is the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 5<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical cycle and syncretizes with our Jubilee charts, making yet another match. The tombstone gives a day of the week for us to compare to the records at Torahcalendar.com.

Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 505 C.E., and the 6<sup>th</sup> month of Elul. Click: view calendar. Check to see if the 11<sup>th</sup> day is a Tuesday. Torahcalendar.com has the 11<sup>th</sup> day as Saturday. If we go to NASA to look for the conjunction of the moon at <https://astropixels.com/ephemeris/phasescat/phases0501.html>, the conjunction is on August 15<sup>th</sup> at 08:24, showing us the 11<sup>th</sup> day is Thursday.

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<sup>988</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 73-74, no. 45.

If I do this again for the 5<sup>th</sup> month, Torahcalendar.com has the 11<sup>th</sup> day as a Friday using the crescent moon to begin the month. If we again go to NASA to look for the conjunction of the moon on July 17<sup>th</sup> at 01:03, we can now begin our count, and we arrive on the 11<sup>th</sup> day as a Wednesday.

Repeating this process now for the 4<sup>th</sup> month according to Torahcalendar.com, the conjunction is June 17<sup>th</sup> at 18:11. Because the conjunction is after sunset on the 17<sup>th</sup>, the first then begins with the 18<sup>th</sup> of June. Counting from this date I arrive on Tuesday as the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the month.

Although I used Torahcalendars.com's 6<sup>th</sup> month (Elul) and 5<sup>th</sup> month using the conjunction dates from NASA, I could not get the 11<sup>th</sup> to be on Tuesday. It was only when I used the 4<sup>th</sup> month according to Torahcalendar.com and the conjunction moon as the Hillel calendar does, that the 11<sup>th</sup> day landed on a Tuesday.

If this is correct, then the year 505 C.E. began two months earlier than what Torahcalendar.com shows us. This would mean Passover would be on February 6, 505 C.E. This would be one of the earliest Passover dates I have recorded. In all of my dates, the day begins with sunset the evening before.

On this tombstone the year of the Sabbatical cycle is missing. Joseph Naveh, along with Wacholder, suspected that the missing information based on the shin that precedes it, just like the first century coins, is "the *first* year of the Sabbatical Cycle".

You will note that in the following quote from Naveh, the scholars are predisposed to the position that the Temple was destroyed in 69 C.E., and they argue to prove this position instead of letting the facts dictate the results, as we have shown with each and every one of the proofs we have presented to you.

*At the end of line 4 the generally accepted reading בִּשְׁח. Sukenik, followed by Cassuto and Akavya, translated דְּבִשְׁמִטָּה / בִּשְׁח as "in the sabbatical year." Ben-Zvi thought that after the בִּשְׁח there is an additional letter and thus emended the reading to דְּבִשְׁמִטָּה / בִּשְׁח ב "i.e. in the year 2 of the shemitta (sabbatical cycle)." Thus also does Wacholder. Assis rejects this emendation, saying that on the photograph the taw almost touches the margin line and there is no space for an additional letter. He believes that בִּשְׁח is an abbreviated writing for*

דשמטחה בשח.<sup>989</sup> Wacholder noted that "the construction of דשמטחה בשח in lines 4-5 of C, implies a missing date of the Sabbatical cycle. If the intended meaning were 'in the year of Shemitah' it would have said either בשמיטחה or to בשמיטחה without the 7." <sup>990</sup>

Wacholder is right in questioning the construction דשמטחה בשח. Moreover, as the regular construct form שנת appears in each of the four epitaphs, שח does not seem plausible in this context.<sup>991</sup> The suggestion of Assis that בשח stands for בשחה would have been reasonable if there were a clear taw at the end of line 4. But as far as I could see, the taw that was read by all scholars (and drawn by Sukenik) is not clear enough, and it is difficult to decide what the letter at the end of line 4 is. **It seems to me that we have to read here Xשב, i.e. the shin that serves as an abbreviation for שחה was followed by another letter representing a numeral, just as in the coins of the First and Second Revolts. If so, I would suggest reading in lines 4-5 דשמטחה (א) בש "in the (1st) year of the sabbatical cycle".** Although some strokes of a possible alef may be traced in the photograph, this reading should nevertheless be considered merely as another emendation.<sup>992</sup>

The year 505 C.E. is indeed the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle, showing that Naveh and Wacholder made a correct interpretation of the **בש** as the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year.

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<sup>989</sup> Assis, op. cit. (n. 18), pp. 171-172. See also Beyer, op. cit. (n. 1), p. 370 who read תשב (ה) התטמשד

<sup>990</sup> Wacholder, op. cit. (n. 17), p. 182, n. 104.

<sup>991</sup> As far as I know, תשב as a construct state in place of תנשב appears in Jewish Aramaic only in another doubtful reading of Sukenik, i.e. in the main dedicatory inscription in the Dura Europos synagogue, line 9 (copied by Naveh, op. cit., n. 3, No. 88); there the reading התשב [ת]שד[ת] suggested by J. Obermann, "Inscribed Tiles from the Synagogue of Dura," Berytus 7 (1942), p. 97.

<sup>992</sup> NAVEH, J. Another Jewish Aramaic Tombstone From Zoar. Hebrew Union College Annual, 56, 103-116. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23507649>

## 445—515 C.E. Hassidah the Priest, Son of Domitianus—Hillel

445 years since the destruction of the Temple; Hassidah the Priest, Son of Domitianus— $445 + 70 = 515$  C.E.

*Recorded by K.D. Politis in Zurich in November 1989, inv. no. Z-304. Present location: The Israel Museum Collection (Gift of Max Ratner, Cleveland, Ohio, to American Friends of the Israel Museum), reg. no. IMJ 90.26-12. Plate XIX*

*Bibl.: Misgav 2006, pp. 39-41, no. XXXI, figs. 3-4 on p. 40.<sup>993</sup>*

*“May the soul of Hasadiah the Priest son of Dematin rest, who died on Thursday, the fifth of Av, in the fourth year of the Sabbatical cycle, which is the year four hundred and forty-five after the destruction of the Temple. Peace on Israel. Peace.”*

*Rested be the soul of Hassidah the priest, son of Domitianus, who died on the fifth day of Av / in the fifth day of it, in the fourth year of the seven-year cycle, which is the year four [hundred and] forty-five [years] of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace upon Israel, peace.*

Comments: This tombstone confirms that the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the Sabbatical cycle is the year 515 C.E., once again aligning perfectly with our Sabbatical and Jubilee charts.

Go to <https://torahcalendar.com> and enter the year 515 C.E., and the 5<sup>th</sup> month of Av. Click: view calendar. Check to see if the 5<sup>th</sup> day is a Thursday.

Torahcalendar.com has the 5<sup>th</sup> day as Sunday.

If I enter the 5<sup>th</sup> month and look for the conjunction date at <https://astropixels.com/ephemeris/phasescat/phases0501.html>, I see the conjunction was on July 27, 515 C.E. at 01:15. Counting from this date causes the 5<sup>th</sup> of Av to land on Friday, July 31, 515 C.E.

If I repeat this process for the 4<sup>th</sup> month on Torahcalendar.com, then the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the month is a Wednesday, July 1, 515 C.E. According to NASA, the conjunction is June 27<sup>th</sup> at 17:21. If they

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<sup>993</sup> Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia. Vol. Ic: The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora). Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou. In collaboration with Sebastian Brock. P. 75-76, no. 48.

moved the conjunction to June, 28<sup>th</sup>, then the 5<sup>th</sup> day would be on the Thursday as the tombstone claims. The day changes at sunset.

The reason I am saying this is because of the 2<sup>nd</sup> postponement rule:

Rule #2:

*If the New Moon (molad) of Tishri (the 7th month) occurs at noon or later, New Moon (Rosh Hodesh) is declared to be the following day. Thus, if the molad (new moon) is Monday at noon or later, Tuesday is declared to be Rosh Hodesh (New Moon). The reason is that if the molad (new moon) is before noon, it is certain that the new crescent will be visible in some part of the world before sunset of the same day. If however, the new moon (molad) occurs after midday, the new crescent will not be visible before sunset of the same day. If the following day is Sunday, Wednesday, or Friday on which the first day of Tishri may not occur, it is further postponed to the next following day, so that the first of Tishri is the third day counting from, and including, the day of the molad (new moon).*

These postponement rules<sup>994</sup> were in the process of being developed—precisely when, we are not sure. If the conjunction was

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<sup>994</sup> So when did these man-made rules come into place? Did Hillel II institute them in 358/359 C.E. when he published the, up till then, “secret” astronomical information which had been used by the Sanhedrin to determine if the witnesses who came to testify of their sighting of the fresh crescent were lying or not?

*“The plain fact is that, as seen by recent scholars, the system of the fixed calendar was not developed until fully three or four centuries after the close of the Talmudic period, about A.D. 485. [therefore, around the eighth or ninth century C.E.] ...Nor can anything be found in the Talmud about the weighty calendaric matters as the regulated succession of full and defective months within the year, the four postponements of New Year's Day, the 19-year cycle, or the number and succession of intercalated years in this or any cycle.” (The Code of Maimonides, Book Three Treatise Eight SANCTIFICATION OF THE MOON, translated from the Hebrew by Solomon Ganz; Introduction by Julian Obermann, Astronomical Commentary by Otto Neugebauer, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956, p xli-xlii) “There is...unimpeachable evidence from the works of writers with expert knowledge of the calendar that the present ordo intercalationis [sequence of intercalations—the 19 year cycle] and epochal molad were not intrinsic parts of the calendar of Hillel II, these being seen still side by side with other styles of the ordo intercalationis and the molad as late as the 11th century. Also the four dehiyyot [postponement rules] developed gradually. ...By the tenth century the Jewish calendar was exactly*

going to be after 18 hours, then they began the count the next day. This would help to explain why I have been off by one day on a number of Hillel tombstones.

And to make sure you understand why they made these rules, rule number two tells you. The molad is the time of the "birth" of the new moon (i.e. when the moon has moved far enough away from the line of sight of the Sun to become visible again). They did not want the moon to be sighted in another part of the world before it was sighted in Israel.

The conjunction or postponement rules were at first created to help keep track of when the moon would be sighted, not to switch from sighting the moon to going by conjunction. It was a method to know when the moon would be visible in Israel while the Jews were in Diaspora around the world.

This means that Passover was March 17, 515 C.E., which is before the equinox. Once again, the evidence shows us that they were using the Hillel calendar, and this matches the tombstone the year before.

## **Do We Need the Equinox to Determine Passover?**

By this point you should have a good understanding that the equinox has nothing to do with the calendar. It does not determine when the year is to begin. According to Yehovah you are to use the first fruits of barley to start the year.

The entire Passover story revolves around the month of Aviv.

*2 This month shall be to you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year to you. (Exodus 12:2)*

The Exodus story begins in the month of Aviv:

*4 You are going out this day in the month Abib. (Exodus 13:4)*

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*the same as today.*" (Cecil Roth, editor, Encyclopaedia Judaica, Vol. 5, p.50, article: Calendar) <https://sightedmoon.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Dehioth-Rules-The-Metonic-19-Year-Cycles.pdf>

Yehovah tells us to keep the Feast Days of Unleavened Bread (Chag HaMatzot) in the month of Aviv. He never once said to wait until after the equinox to keep Passover.

*I Observe the month Abib, and keep the Passover to Jehovah your God. For in the month of Abib, Jehovah your God brought you forth out of Egypt by night. (Deuteronomy 16:1)*

*15 You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. You shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, in the time appointed of the month Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. And no one shall appear before Me empty. (Exodus 23:15)*

*18 You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. You shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, in the time of the month Abib. For in the month Abib you came out from Egypt. (Exodus 34:18)*

What does the word Aviv mean? Aviv means:

B) אֲבִיב (אֲבִיב ABB) ac: ? co: **Grain** ab: ?

b<sup>m</sup>) אֲבִיב (אֲבִיב A-BYB) - **Green Grain**: The new green ears of growing grain as the parent seeds attached to the stalk (pole) of the next generation of crops. Also Abib, the name of a month in the Hebrew calendar. [freq. 8] |k|jv: abib, corn| {H24}

Aviv describes a stage of ripeness and means the month when the grains of barley are out of the boot and green. They are not golden brown, but they are in the process of filling out with dough and near the stage of turning brown, but they are still green, hence the term “Green Ears.”

*31 And the flax and the barley were stricken, for the barley was in the head, and the flax was in bud. 32 But the wheat and the rye were not stricken, for they had not grown up. (Exodus 9:31-32)*

*And the flax and the barley were smitten, because the barley was Aviv and the flax was Giv'ol. And the wheat and the spelt were not smitten because they were dark (Afilot).*

Exodus 9:31 is telling us the stage of growth for the flax was *giv'ol* which means it was in the bud stage of growth. The wheat and spelt were *afilot* which means they were dark green or not grown up yet. They were still in the boot stage of growth.

The flax and the barley were both destroyed by the hail because they were top heavy due to the growth stage they were in (after day 61 on the Zadok scale). The flax was developing a head, and the barley was developing starch and a grain in the head. When the hail hit, they were both broken off due to their weight. The wheat and the rye were not stricken because they were more flexible and develop their heads much later on.

In all of this, Yehovah has not once mentioned or spoken about looking for the equinox.

I have now shown you the tombstones of Zoar, demonstrating the Jews in the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> century C.E., never used the equinox to calculate the start of the year even though they began to use the conjunction moon to begin each month.

Theses tombstones have written on them the day of the week, the date of the month, the year, and how many years after the Temple was destroyed in 70 C.E. All I have to do is look at them and with a little work, I will know which month was the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the year by consulting Torahcalendar.com and looking at the conjunction dates from NASA. I can see if they kept Passover before or after the equinox.

We have 13 tombstones testifying that they kept the Passover well before the equinox. Not one of them mentions the use of the equinox. Six of the tombstones can be proven to have used the barley to begin the year and the crescent moon to begin the month. Eleven of them can be proven to have been using the Hillel calculated calendar, which only had just been developed in 358 C.E. These tombstones began to use the Hillel calendar or the conjunction moon about 76 years after the fact according to our observations, but neither method ever used the equinox to determine when the year began.

*2 The glory of God is to hide a thing; but the honor of kings is to search out a matter. (Proverbs 25:2)*

Nehemia Gordon began to keep the Barley and Crescent moon calendar after about 1996. I learned from him and began to follow the



Barley and Crescent moon calendar in 2005. These are the New Moon dates of the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the year, and Passover would be 14 days later:

2000: 1st New Moon visible Wednesday, April 5  
2001: 1st New Moon visible Monday, March 26  
2002: 1st New Moon visible Friday, March 15  
2003: 1st New Moon visible Friday, April 3  
2004: 1st New Moon visible Monday, March 22  
2005: 1st New Moon visible Friday, March 11\*  
2006: 1st New Moon visible Thursday, March 30  
2007: 1st New Moon visible Wednesday, March 20  
2008: 1st New Moon visible Monday, April 7\*  
2009: 1st New Moon visible Friday, March 27  
2010: 1st New Moon visible Wednesday, March 17  
2011: 1st New Moon visible Monday, April 4  
2012: 1st New Moon visible Friday, March 23  
2013: 1st New Moon visible Wednesday, March 13  
2014: 1st New Moon visible Monday, March 31  
2015: 1st New Moon visible Saturday, March 21  
2016: 1st New Moon visible Thursday, March 10\*  
2017: 1st New Moon visible Wednesday, March 29  
2018: 1st New Moon visible Sunday, March 18  
2019: 1st New Moon visible Friday, March 8\*  
2020: 1st New Moon visible Tuesday, February 25\*  
2021: 1st New Moon visible Saturday, February 13\*  
2022: 1st New Moon visible Friday, March 4\*  
2023: 1st New Moon visible Tuesday, February 21\*  
2024: 1st New Moon visible Sunday, February 11\*  
2025: 1st New Moon visible \_\_\_\_\_ .

*The years above marked with an asterisk are years of split views between the four groups of Aviv inspectors.*

*\* In 2005, there was debate over the start in the Aviv camps. The date in the chart is derived from the Karaite Korner crew, whereas Abibofgod.com declared a 13th month and began the year with the 1st New Moon visible Sunday, April 11, 2005.*

*\* In 2008, the Karaites and Abibofgod.com both declared a 13th month and began the year with the New Moon sighted the evening of April 7, thus an April 21st afternoon Passover sacrifice.*

*The folks at Torahcalendar.com declared that the barley was ready for March 8, 2008, to begin the year:*

*[https://torahcalendar.com/PDF/2008\\_Abib.pdf](https://torahcalendar.com/PDF/2008_Abib.pdf)*

*\* In 2016, the Karaite group declared a 13th month, and thus their day of Passover sacrifice on April 23. (There was a split amongst the groups this year, some not adding a 13th month.) Sightedmoon.com was one of those who split away from the Karaites. Devorah Gordon took over the search for Nehemia.*

*\* In 2019, the Karaite group declared a 13th month, making their Passover sacrifice occur the afternoon of April 20. (There was a split amongst the groups this year, some not adding a 13th month.) Sightedmoon.com was one of those who split away from the Karaites. From this time forward, Sightedmoon.com was always one month ahead of the Karaites.*

*\* In 2020, Sightedmoon.com was one month before the Karaite groups.*

*\* In 2021, Sightedmoon.com was one month before the Karaite groups.*

*\* In 2022, Devorah Gordon declared an Adar Bet. Sightedmoon.com was now two months before Devorah. The Karaite groups did not add an Adar Bet and we remained just one month ahead of them.*

*\* In 2023, all the Karaite groups declared an Adar Bet. Sightedmoon.com remained two months before the Karaite groups.*

Let me share my experience here, now that I have this record above. My first year keeping the Holy Days using the barley to begin the year and the crescent moon to begin the month was in 2005, and we kept the Passover via the Karaite view 30 days before the Hebrew calendar. We followed the Karaites until 2016. In 2016 with much debate, Sightedmoon.com kept Passover earlier than the Karaite view which added a 13<sup>th</sup> month that year. We did not. In 2019, once again sightedmoon.com kept Passover 30 days before the Karaite groups with much debate and scorn. In both instances, Nehemia and I remained friends and still do to this day. And in both instances, sadly others stopped following us and talking with us. So, we are well aware of the divisiveness of this subject and the controversies it brings forth. From 2020-2021, we were one month ahead of the Karaite groups. In 2022, Devorah declared an Adar Bet with most of the other Karaite

groups disagreeing with her. They did not add an Adar Bet. Sightedmoon.com was now two months before Devorah and the Hillel calendar groups, and one month before most other Karaite groups. In 2023, Sightedmoon.com was one month before all the Karaite groups. In 2024, Sightedmoon.com was once again two months before all the other groups. As we go to publish this book in 2025, it looks like we will be for sure one month ahead of most other groups and possibly two. We do not know at this time though.

We have now proven beyond all doubt the equinox is not a factor in determining the calendar of Yehovah. It is the ripeness of the barley—and it alone. This is where all these groups differ on: What is the proper stage of ripeness?

Once again, we are being shown this parable Yehshua spoke which is a Hebrew idiom:

*36 But of that day and hour no one knows, no, not the angels of Heaven, but only My Father. (Matthew 24:36)*

You *must* keep the Holy Days to understand this Hebraism. Not only is it talking about the Feast of Trumpets, but it is also talking about the ripeness of the barley. Only Yehovah knows when that will be. And as we have just demonstrated, the tombstones reveal that the start of the year does not depend on the equinox—it was dependent upon the ripeness of the barley.

The differences between the six known groups today, who search for the barley each year in order to keep the Holy Days according to Yehovah's decrees, is each groups determination as to what constitutes ripe barley.

Can You Have Passover Before the Equinox? Absolutely, Yes You Can!

## Chapter 29 | 749 C.E. The Earthquake of the Sabbatical Year

In my research for the Sabbatical and Jubilee years, I came across this one record called “Ra’ash shvi’it”, which means in English “earthquake of the seventh year”. Here is what Wikipedia states about this quake:

*A devastating earthquake<sup>995</sup> known in the scientific literature as the Earthquake of 749 struck on January 18, 749 in areas of the Umayyad Caliphate, the worst affected being parts of Palestine and western Transjordan. The cities of Tiberias, Beit She’an, Hippos and Pella were largely destroyed while many other cities across the Levant were heavily damaged. The casualties numbered in the tens of thousands.*

*According to historical sources, supported by archaeological findings, Scythopolis (Beit She’an), Tiberius, Caperaum, Hippos (Sussita), Jerash and Pella, suffered widespread damage. A Coptic priest from Alexandria reported that support beams had shifted in houses in Egypt and a Syrian priest wrote that a village near Mount Tabor had “moved a distance of four miles.” Other sources reported a tsunami in the Mediterranean Sea, several days of aftershocks in Damascus, and towns swallowed up in the earth. In the town of Umm el Kanatirand, its ancient synagogue was destroyed.*

*Historical sources describe how the death toll in Jerusalem numbered in the thousands. Many buildings, among them the Al-Aqsa Mosque, were severely damaged.*

*Agapius of Hierapolis claimed the number of casualties exceeded 100,000, while in the Chronicle of 1234, there were 800 casualties in the fortress of Beit Cubaya, Damascus. In the cities of Judea, Samaria and Galilee, nearly 600 villages altogether were severely affected. A tsunami-like event was reported in the Dead Sea and probable inundation occurred in its southern basin.*

*“Ra’ash shvi’it” is mentioned in piyyutim (Jewish liturgical poems). Some rabbis believe the earthquake struck in a Sabbatical year, in which case, the translation of the term would be “earthquake of the seventh year”.*

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<sup>995</sup> Galilee Earthquake 749 C.E.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/749\\_Galilee\\_earthquake](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/749_Galilee_earthquake)

In Jewish sources this earthquake is known, in Hebrew, as Ra'ash Shevi'it, literally "seventh noise", interpreted by scholars to mean "The Earthquake of the Sabbatical Year", because 749 was a Sabbatical year, literally "the seventh year" in the Jewish calendar.

Many of you will have read right over this and not questioned it. You were just told that this earthquake took place in January and that it was Shmitah year 749 C.E., again matching our Sabbatical and Jubilee charts. But our year begins at Aviv, and each Sabbatical and each Jubilee year begins and ends at Aviv 1 as Exodus 12:2 says, speaking of the month of Aviv:

*2 "This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. (Exodus 12:2)*

What you have here is a clear example of the "fencing in" that Judah has done about the Shmitah. To make sure it was not broken, they moved the start of it back to Tishri 1, which was six months earlier to begin and then to end. This earthquake took place in January about the 11th month of the year, before the actual Shmitah began in Aviv just over a month later.

It is absolutely imperative that we understand how the calendars were changed and when and by whom over the ages in order to be able to properly identify Yehovah's Sabbatical and Jubilee years accurately. This is why we explained with a vast amount of detail how the Mishnah came about in *The Stones Cry Out Part 1*. Today, everyone is trying to figure out the Sabbatical and Jubilee years using the current Hebrew calendar, which is impossible to do. And when they can't figure them out, they discard them as not important.

Now that you understand how these things were changed and when, you can also understand all the dates we have just explained about the tombstones and now this earthquake of 749 C.E. According to the Jewish method of dating, the year began at Tishri 1, 748 C.E. January 749 C.E. was part of that year. But the true year did not start until Aviv 1, 749 C.E. This earthquake of the Sabbatical year took place a few months before the actual Sabbatical year began on Aviv 1, 749 C.E.

There is more to be learned about this quake in this article written in Hebrew.<sup>996</sup>

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<sup>996</sup> TSAFRIR, Y., & FOERSTER, G. (1994). THE EARTHQUAKE OF 749 C.E. / על 'רעש שביעית' בשנת 749. *Cathedra: For the History of Eretz Israel and Its Yishuv* / קתדרה: לתולדות ארץ ישראל ויישובה, 179-180. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23403561>

## Chapter 30 | 1177 Rambam Maimonides Confirms the Shmitah Year

At Sukkot in 2018, I met with Nehemia Gordon in Israel to do a podcast<sup>997</sup> about the Sabbatical and Jubilee years. During that interview Nehemia wanted to check a date he knew about, written in the Mishneh Torah. The Mishneh Torah is a 14-volume set of books written by Moses ben Maimon (1138–1204), a Sephardic rabbi and philosopher, commonly known as Maimonides and referred to by the Hebrew acronym Rambam. We expounded about this work in *The Stones Cry Out Part 1*. He became one of the most prolific and influential Torah scholars of the Middle Ages.

Maimonides is acknowledged as among the foremost rabbinical arbiters and philosophers in Jewish history, and his copious work comprises a cornerstone of Jewish scholarship. His Mishneh Torah still carries significant canonical authority as a codification of Talmudic law. He is sometimes known as “ha Neshet ha Gadol” (the great eagle) in recognition of his outstanding status as a bona fide exponent of the Oral Torah.

I was unaware of this date the Rambam was talking about, and Nehemia and I agreed to compare his date with my charts—live on the air.

Rambam gave a date in relation to when the Temple was destroyed. Right there live on the podcast, I was doing my happy dance. Let me say that again. Right there with Nehemia Gordon giving me what could be a date that does not work and therefore proves that we cannot know when the Sabbatical years are, I confirm to Nehemia that Rambam was, in fact, recording the proper Shmita that matches all the other ones we have been promoting. I was doing a very happy dance at that moment—and for the rest of the day.

So here is the information and another Sabbatical year to add to our growing list that comes from not just any old Rabbi, but from one of the leading Rabbis of all Jewish sages.

Not only does Rambam himself give us this year, but Nehemia also read this part where Rambam says, and I am paraphrasing it now from memory, that the Sabbatical year is the year 1107 from the destruction of the Temple but we keep the traditional one from the

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<sup>997</sup> <https://www.nehemiaswall.com/2300-days-hell>

year before. Rambam not only wrote the Mishneh Torah, but he also edited it himself to make sure everything he said was correct. Even this section we are about to read was edited by him, so we know absolutely 100% that what he said is correct and was not changed or edited by a scribal error. Rambam is giving us the proper Shmita, and then says that the traditional one that everyone is keeping is a year before the proper Sabbatical year. This is the very thing we at Sightedmoon.com are saying.

Allow me to now quote in Maimonides' own words from the Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Shemitah Ve-Yovel 10:5–6. I have boldened the section I want you to pay attention to:

*[5] However, all the Geonim said that they have a tradition, from one man to another, that during the 70 years between the destruction of the First Temple and the building of the Second Temple they only counted Shemitahs without Jubilees. So too when the latter [Temple] was destroyed, they did not count the 50th year but only multiples of 7 from the beginning of the year of the destruction. This calculation, which is a tradition, appears in the Talmud tractate of Avodah Zarah.*

*[6] The year of the Shemitah is known and famous among the Geonim and the people of the Land of Israel. They all counted only the years of the destruction in multiples of seven. **According to this calculation, this year which is 1107 Year of Destruction is the year following a Shemitah.** We rely on this and we teach this calculation for matters of tithes, produce, and loans. Tradition and precedent (ma'aseh) are great pillars in instruction and it is appropriate to rely on them. [NG]*

When I add the year the Temple was destroyed in 70 C.E. to 1107, I get the year 1177 C.E., which is according to my charts the 1<sup>st</sup> year after the Shmitah, just as Rambam is saying.

Let me say it once again so it sinks in. Rambam, one of the foremost rabbinical arbiters and philosophers in Jewish history, with his copious work comprises a cornerstone of Jewish scholarship. His 14-volume Mishneh Torah still carries significant canonical authority as a codification of Talmudic law. He is sometimes known as “ha Neshet ha Gadol” (the great eagle) in recognition of his outstanding status as a bona fide exponent of the Oral Torah. He is one of the most



influential of Jewish sages in history. Rambam has confirmed that our calculations about the Sabbatical and Jubilee years are in fact correct.

Here is the original quote in Hebrew for those of you who want to read it for yourself:

רמב"ם, משנה תורה, הלכות שמיטה  
ויובל, י:ה-ו  
[ה] אבל כל הגאונים אמרו שמסורת  
היא בדיהם איש מפי איש שלא מנו  
באותן השבעים שנה שבין חרבן בית  
ראשון ובנין בית שני אלא שמטות בלבד  
בלא יובל, וכן משחרב באחרונה לא מנו  
שנת החמשים אלא שבע שבע בלבד  
מתחלת שנת החרבן וכן עולה בגמרא  
ע[בודה] ז[רה] חשבון זה שהוא קבלה.  
[ו] ושנת השמטה ידועה היא ומפורסמת  
אצל הגאונים ואנשי א"י, וכולן לא מנו  
אלא לשני חורבן משליכין אותן שבע  
שבע, ולפי חשבון זה תהי שנה זו שהיא  
שנת שבע ומאה ואלף לחרבן מוצאי  
שביעית, ועל זה אנו סומכין, וכפי  
החשבון זה אנו מורין לענין מעשרות  
ושביעית והשמטת כספים שהקבלה  
והמעשה עמודים גדולים בהוראה ובהן  
ראוי להתלות.

## Keeping the Shmita Outside the Land of Israel

All of the tombstones have been found outside the Land of Israel. These tombstones are from Zoar with the exception of one. Zoar is part of the land of Moab and today is to be found in the nation of Jordan. Israel was not to possess the land of Moab:

*9 And Jehovah said to me, Do not besiege Moab, nor fight with them in battle. For I will not give you any of their land for a possession.*

*Because I have given Ar to the sons of Lot for a possession.*  
(Deuteronomy 2:9)

The other tombstone that was found was from Baalbek, dated to the year 838 C.E., and is from the area north of Damascus which at this time was not controlled by the nation Israel. Although it was in the area promised to Israel. So, you can contend this one.

Moses ben Maimon, commonly known as Maimonides and also referred to by the acronym Rambam, lived in Spain and Egypt outside the Land of Israel. He was accurately counting the Shmita cycles and as noted above, claimed that the year 1107 was the first year in the Shmita cycle.

Let me quote him one more time. This is so cool:

*The year of the Shemitah is known and famous among the Geonim and the people of the Land of Israel. They all counted only the years of the destruction in multiples of seven. According to this calculation, this year which is 1107 Year of Destruction is the year following a Shemitah.*

The Temple was destroyed in 70 C.E., so when you add  $70 + 1107$  you get 1177 which, when you check our charts, is the first year of the Shmita cycles, EXACTLY as this highly regarded Rabbi said.

This most distinguished sage confirms that 1177 was indeed the first year of the Shmita cycle, proving that the Sabbatical and Jubilee cycles that we have been telling you about since 2005 are indeed correct and are synced with 68 other historical Sabbatical and Jubilee years, including this one mentioned by Rambam.

Many argue that the Sabbatical and Jubilee years are just for the Jews in the Land of Israel. And what does Rambam, the foremost Rabbi throughout the ages, say? Does he say this law only applies to those in the Land of Israel?

He is in the land of Spain and later, in the land of Egypt. NOT ISRAEL!!

Rambam says:

*We rely on this and we teach this calculation for matters of tithes, produce, and loans.*

The Shmita was used for matters of tithes, that is the third tithe year, and the year when they do not tithe in the 7th year. Rambam said they kept track of the Shmitah for produce as well. That can only mean they were watching when the 7th year was so as not to plant and not to harvest produce. And the part about loans, well in the Sabbatical year you are to forgive loans:

*1 At the end of every seven years you shall make a release.<sup>998</sup> 2 And this is the manner of the release. Every man who has a loan to his neighbor shall release it. He shall not exact it from his neighbor, or from his brother, because it is called Jehovah's release. (Deuteronomy 15:1-2)*

If this was just for when they are in the Land, why are they concerned about knowing when the Shmita is? The Jews in the Middle Ages were in the Diaspora and spread all over the world. They needed to know when the Shmitah years were so they could forgive debts and take care of the widows in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> years. They also needed to know so they wouldn't plant or harvest in the land they were in during the Sabbatical year.

The Sabbatical and Jubilee year laws are to be kept around the world, not just when the Jews are in the Land of Israel.

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<sup>998</sup> This is the word for shemittah:

H8059 (Ancient Hebrew)

H8059 = AHLB# 2849 (N1)

2849) Ums% (Ums% ShMTh) ac: Shake co: ? ab: ?: A letting go or throwing down by shaking loose. [from: ms - destruction]

V) Ums% (Ums% Sh-MTh) - Shake: To shake to throw off, loosen or release.

[freq. 9] (vf: Paal, Niphal, Hiphil) |kjav: release, throw, shake, stumble, discontinue, overthrow| {H8058}

Nf1) Eums% (Eums% ShM-ThH) - Release: As shaken off. [freq. 5] |kjav: release| {H8059}

H8059 (Brown-Driver-Briggs)

šmīṭāh

shemittāh

BDB Definition:

1) letting drop of exactions, (temporary) remitting, release (from debt)

Part of Speech: noun feminine

A Related Word by BDB/Strong's Number: from H8058

## Conclusions

Based upon our findings using all the tombstones at our disposal, we have concluded that the ancient community of Jews in the town of Zoar, in the land of Moab, never used the equinox to determine when Passover would fall. They used the crescent moon and the barley to begin the year in the early years. The earliest tombstone we have indicates that about 432 C.E., they then began to use the conjunction moon, today known as the Hillel calendar, to govern the Holy Days and months of the year.

Out of 39 useable tombstones, we had 12 with the weekday, as well as the day of the month (one for the Jubilee in Chapter 4, 26 in Chapter 27, and 12 in Chapter 28). Using these 12 tombstones, we were able to check each one to see if they kept the Passover before the equinox.

Of those 39 tombstones, we had six we could prove were using the barley and the crescent moon to begin the month. There were also 13 tombstones using the Hillel calendar, which had only been published about 76 years earlier than our first tombstone we discovered using it in 434 C.E. These 13 tombstones using the Hillel calculations also kept Passover before the equinox.

There are another 26 tombstones which did not provide a day of the week for us to check the calendar dates to determine if they kept Passover before the equinox, but they did confirm and match our Sabbatical year dates.

All of this proves the use of the equinox to determine the start of the year is a modern invention not supported by any of these tombstones—not one.

In addition to the tombstone with the earliest use of the Hillel calendar in 431 C.E., we also discovered a tombstone in the year 434 C.E. using Tishri to begin the year, instead of the month of Aviv. We also know that in the year 444 C.E. was our latest date for the barley and crescent moon calendar use. I suspect the community of Zoar was changing over to the Hillel calendar system approximately 434 C.E., about 76 years after Hillel published the calculated calendar, and the change was completed by 444 C.E.

We also discovered 13 other tombstones without enough information on them to determine when a Sabbatical year was. There

were an additional 19 tombstones with next to no information due to damage and being unreadable.

We examined a total of 72 tombstones, from Zoar, with 39 of them revealing Sabbatical and Jubilee years. In addition to the tombstones, we have also recorded 29 other Sabbatical and Jubilee years utilizing 42 historical and Biblical references to those years. All of our resources have revealed 68 Sabbatical and Jubilee years using a total of 84 various proofs.

One tombstone had dual dating using the years from the destruction along with the Arabic calendar. Both confirmed our findings when you use the epoch date of 107 C.E. for the Arabic calendar. The epoch for the Arabic calendar was believed to be 105 C.E., then changed to 106 C.E., with some believing it is to be 107 C.E. This tombstone confirms 107 C.E.

In my research I examined 80 tombstones from Ghor Es Safi<sup>999</sup> of Greek extraction, but did not find any dating from the destruction of the Temple. I also examined approximately 341 Greek (Christian) tombstones<sup>1000</sup> from the Zoar area which did not record Sabbatical year dates. I went so far as to check out the 200 inscriptions found in the book, *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe Volume 1, Italy (excluding the City of Rome), Spain and Gaul*, 629 inscriptions from the catacombs of Rome and vicinity, and 156 inscriptions from the area around Egypt. All of these were between the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C. and the 6<sup>th</sup> century C.E.

With all of our research, we have read through:

- 341 tombstones from the book *Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia Vol 1a, The Greek Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora)* by Y. Meimaris and K. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou, (National Hellenic Research Foundation Athens Greece 2005). This book included inscriptions from the 4<sup>th</sup>– 6<sup>th</sup> century C.E. in the area of

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<sup>999</sup> Inscriptions From Palaestina Tertia, Vol 1b, The Greek Inscriptions from Ghor Es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora), (Supplement). Khirbet Qazone and Feinan Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou, Athens 2008.

<sup>1000</sup> Inscriptions From Palaestina Tertia, Vol 1a, The Greek Inscriptions from Ghor Es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora), Yiannis E. Meimaris, Kalliope I. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou, Athens 2005.

Zoar. Most of them were Byzantine Christian or Greek tombstones and were not Jewish.

- 80 tombstones from the book *Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia Vol 1b, The Greek Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora)* (Supplement). Khirbet Qazone and Feinan, by Y. Meimaris and K. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou, (National Hellenic Research Foundation Athens Greece 2008). This book included inscriptions from the 4<sup>th</sup>– 6<sup>th</sup> century C.E. in the area of Zoar. Most of them were Byzantine Christian or Greek tombstones and were not Jewish.
- 71 tombstones from the book *Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia Vol 1c, The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora)* by Y. Meimaris and K. Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou, In collaboration with Sebastian P. Brock (National Hellenic Research Foundation Athens Greece 2016). This book included inscriptions from the 3<sup>rd</sup>– 6<sup>th</sup> century C.E. in the area of Zoar. Most of these were Jewish tombstones recording the time since the destruction of the Temple.
- 200 inscriptions found in the book *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe Volume 1, Italy (excluding the City of Rome), Spain and Gaul* by David Noy.<sup>1001</sup> This book included inscriptions from the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C. to the 7<sup>th</sup> century C.E. They also included 75 inscriptions from the catacombs of Venosa in Italy, of which we had read a footnote stating there was discovered dual dating using the Churban. Churban means from the destruction of the Temple. We were hoping to discover more tombstones using this method of dating to add to our extensive list above. Unfortunately, most of the tombstones only gave the names of those who had died and many of them children. It was sad to see so many young people die.
- 629 inscriptions found in the second book David Noy wrote, *The Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe, The*

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<sup>1001</sup> Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe: Volume 1, Italy (excluding the City of Rome), Spain and Gaul by David Noy (2005-03-07) Amazon. ASIN: B01JPP5MP8

*City of Rome.*<sup>1002</sup> This book concentrated on the catacombs of Rome and other burial sites around that city from the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C. to the 6<sup>th</sup> century C.E. We found no tombstones that were dated from the destruction of the Temple in this book.

- 156 inscriptions found in another book co-authored by Noy named *Jewish inscriptions of Graeco-Roman Egypt* by William Horbury & David Noy,<sup>1003</sup> Published October 30, 1992. This book collects all known Jewish inscriptions in Egypt between the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. and the 6<sup>th</sup> century C.E.

Although these books are very expensive, we ordered them nonetheless so we could leave no stone unturned in our search for further evidence confirming the Sabbatical and Jubilee years. I have for many years wondered if the Italian catacombs held any secrets recording time from the destruction of the Temple, the Churban, and now I know. We have now examined 1477 tombstones and discovered 39 of them showing when a Sabbatical or Jubilee year was.

It has not escaped my attention that during this time while I wrote this book, my mother passed away just as I finished it. And at the same time as I search through over 1000 tombstones from the past, in all these publications, I was at the same time picking out the tombstone that would mark my mother's grave for centuries or a millennium.

It is with a great sense of humility that I present this work to you. May it be a blessing to you as you grow closer to our King, and our Saviour, Yehovah. May all our names and the names of those who left these tombstones behind, awaken at that Last Trumpet and find all our names written in The Book of Life.

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<sup>1002</sup> Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe, The City of Rome Volume 2: The City of Rome, by David Noy, University of Wales, Lampeter. Publisher: Cambridge; University Illustrated, March 7 2005, ISBN-10: 0521619785, ISBN-13: 978-0521619783, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511520631>

<sup>1003</sup> Jewish inscriptions of Graeco-Roman Egypt, by William Horbury & David Noy ISBN-10 : 0521418704, ISBN-13 : 978-0521418706  
<https://www.amazon.com/Jewish-Inscriptions-Graeco-Roman-William-Horbury/dp/0521418704>

## Catalogue of Each Proof

### *Jubilee Years*

1. 1337 B.C. A Jubilee Year is Recorded in Lev 25:2
2. 700 B.C. A Jubilee Year is Recorded in 2 Kings 19:29, Isaiah 37 & 2 Chronicles 32. These are the only 2 Jubilee years mentioned in the entire Bible.
3. 133 C.E. The Bar Kochba Revolt.
4. 432 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh's # 10 None  
"This is the grave of Mehirshah daughter of Marsa, the fellow who died on Thursday, the 17th day of the month Elul, in the fourth year of the Sabbatical cycle, the year 3 hundred sixty 2 after the destruction of the Temple. May there come peace and may it rest on her resting place. Peace Peace"  
 $362 + 70 = 432$
5. 477 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar.  
May the so[ul re]st [of .... ] of ... Nikod[em(os) ? who died] on the sixth day of the month Nisan, in the seventh [year] of the seven-year cycle which is [the year] four hundred and 7 of the destruction of the [Sanct-] uary.... May it be rebuilt in our days, year {400} four hundred and seven; and he lived {55} fifty-five years. Pray concerning his resting place ... and in peace? ..... Peace upon Israel, peace.  $407 + 70 = 477$

### *Sabbatical Years*

6. 869 B.C. A Sabbatical Year is Recorded in 2 Chronicles 17:7-9 The third year of Jehoshaphat. He co-reigned with his father starting in 872 B.C.
7. 701 B.C. A Sabbatical Year is Recorded in 2 Kings 19:29, Isaiah 37 & 2 Chronicles 32.
8. 624 B.C. Sabbatical Year in the 18th year of Josiah (2 Kings 22 and 23).
9. 589 B.C. A Sabbatical Year – Zedekiah's release of slaves, described in Jeremiah 34:8-10, would likely have been done in a Sabbatical year. Jeremiah 34:1-22.



10. 561 B.C. Babylonian records state that Amel-Marduk (the Biblical Evil-Merodach) began to reign in October 562 BCE, and 2 Kings 25:27 says that it was in the twelfth month of this accession year (Adar, 561 BCE) and in Jehoiachin's 37th year of captivity that Jehoiachin was released from prison. 561 B.C. was a Sabbatical Year. The year of release.
11. 456 B.C. A Sabbatical Year is Recorded in Nehemiah 8:18.
12. 330 B.C. A Sabbatical Year is Recorded in Josephus Antiquities 11:8:4-5 Alexander the Great Tax Exemption.
13. 162 B.C. A Sabbatical Year is Recorded in 1 Maccabees 6:53, Josephus Antiquities 12:9:5 Antiochus Eupator's Siege of Beth-Zur.
14. 134 B.C. A Sabbatical Year John Hyrcanus's siege of Ptolemy in the fortress of Dagon; Josephus (13.8.1/235; War of the Jews 1.2.4/59-60) and 1 Maccabees (16:14-16).
15. 78 B.C. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of King Alexander Jannaeus, he minted dated coins on the Sabbatical Year. Year 25 prutot and leptas known as "widow's mites", by far the most abundant Jewish coin in antiquity, were minted during a sabbatical year: 78 BCE. In this case, the star and the diadem are on opposite sides of the coin.
16. 43 B.C. A Sabbatical Year Tax Exemption. A decree issued by Gaius Julius Caesar and published by Josephus in his work entitled, The Antiquities of the Jews 14:10:5.
17. 36 B.C. Herod the Great was appointed King over Judea by Augustus in 40 BCE. However, it was not until 36 B.C. that he managed to take Jerusalem by siege and to oust Antigonus from his throne. According to Josephus, the siege was during a Sabbatical year, utilizing the city's foodstuffs for his troops, which added to the plight of the people of that city. His bronze coinage no doubt signified

*his victory but also would have been intended to alleviate the financial crisis that prevailed in the city. Josephus Antiquities (14:16:2, 15:1:2).*

18. 36 B.C. Herod Minted Shmitah Coins.
19. 29 B.C. Herod Minted Shmitah Coins.
20. 22 B.C. Crops harvested in year 15 and 17 of Herod's reign but not the 16th Josephus Antiquities (15:9:1).
21. 22 B.C. Herod minted Shmitah Coins for this year.
22. 15 B.C. Herod Minted Shmitah Coins.
23. 8 B.C. Herod Minted Shmitah Coins.
24. 1 B.C. Herod Archelaus Minted Shmitah Coins.
25. 7 C.E. Herod Archelaus Minted Shmitah Coins.
26. 28 C.E. Yehshua reads the Isaiah Scroll "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Luke 4:16-20.
27. 42 C.E. Mishna Sota 7:8 A – Herod Agrippa Reads the Torah during the Shmitah year.
28. 42 C.E. Herod minted Shmitah coins at this time.
29. 42 C.E. Gaius Caligula Caesar events leading up to 42 C.E. Josephus Antiquities 18.
30. 56 C.E. A note of Indebtedness in Nero's 2nd year as Caesar.
31. 70 C.E. Sabbatical year in the year the Temple was destroyed. Arakin 12b.9. The 9<sup>th</sup> of Av was on a Sunday in 70 C.E. Geulah-year 4 of the First Revolt, " geulat Tsion
32. 133 C.E. 12 Rental contracts for the 5 years of farming between the Jubilee year of 134 C.E and the next Sabbatical year of 140 C.E. Written 2nd year of the 2nd A representative contract, Mur 24 E, in part reads thus: [On the twentieth of She]vat of the year tw[o] of the Redemption of [I]srael by Shimeon ben K[os]ba, the prince of [Is]rael. . . . This land I have rented from you from today until

*the end of the eve of Shemitah, which are years full, [fi]scal years, five, of tenancy; [that I wi]ll deliver to you in [Her]odium: wheat . . . . (p. 177) Note there are only 5 years between the Jubilee year of 134 C.E. and the next Sabbatical year of 140 C.E. We have 12 different contracts like this.*

33. Ditto 2<sup>nd</sup> contract.
34. Ditto 3<sup>rd</sup> contract.
35. Ditto 4<sup>th</sup> contract.
36. Ditto 5<sup>th</sup> contract.
37. Ditto 6<sup>th</sup> contract.
38. Ditto 7<sup>th</sup> contract.
39. Ditto 8<sup>th</sup> contract.
40. Ditto 9<sup>th</sup> contract.
41. Ditto 10<sup>th</sup> contract.
42. 133 C.E. Le Geulat Coins minted for Shmitah year of the first year of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Revolt.
43. 134 C.E. 11<sup>th</sup> contract. A Jubilee Year-12 Rental contracts for the 5 years of farming between the Jubilee year of 134 C.E and the next Sabbatical year of 140 C.E. They were not for 6 years.
44. 140 C.E. 12<sup>th</sup> contract. 12 Rental contracts for the 5 years of farming between the Jubilee year of 134 C.E and the next Sabbatical year of 140 C.E.
45. 360 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh's #18  
*"This is the grave of Mousis (Moshe) son of Marsa who died in year three of the Sabbatical cycle, in the month of Kislev, on the twenty-seventh day of it, which is the year 290 after the destruction of the Temple."  $290 + 70 = 360$*
46. 373 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar.  
*"This is the tombstone of [...], daughter of Petrah, who died on the sixteenth day in the month fir[st] Adar, the second year [of] the seven-year cycle, the year three hundred and three years of the destruction of the [S]anctuary."  $303 + 70 = 373$*
47. 373 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar.  
*"On the thirteenth of the month Iyyar, in the second year of the seven-year cycle, in the year three*

*hundred and three years there died Deliah the priest, son of Yehoshua', from Beth Sharon in the buund[ary of] Sepphoris. May his repose be in peace and his rising speedily, amen."* 303 + 70 = 373

48. 393 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh's # 7

*"This is the tombstone of Jacob Son of Samul, who died on the second day (Monday), forty years old, on the third day of the month of Iyar (2nd month), on the first year of the Shemitah year three hundred and twenty three to the destruction of the temple"* 323 + 70 = 393

49. 408 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar.

*"This tombstone belongs to Saul son of Jacob who died on the 25th day of the month of Shevat (11th month) in the second year of the Shemitah year three hundred 38 to the destruction of the temple. Shalom Shalom Shalom"* 338 + 70 = 408

50. 416 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh's # 2

*"This is the tombstone of Esther the daughter of Adayo, who died in the month of Shebat of the 3rd year of the Sabbatical cycle, the year three hundred 46 years after the destruction of the Temple. Peace. Peace. Upon her."* 346 + 70 = 416

51. 416 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh's # 12

*"This is the memorial of Yudan the Hazzan Son of Amram, who dies on the eighth day of the month of first Adar of year 3 to the Shemitah, year three hundred and 46 to the destruction of the temple. Shalom Shalom Shalom"* 346 + 70 = 416

52. 416 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh's # 20

*"May rest the soul of Jacob, the son of Shem'o who died on the second day, the 10th day of the month Shebat, in the 3rd year of the Sabbatical cycle, the years 300 hundred and 46 years after the destruction of the Temple. May he wake up to the voice of the announcer of peace."* 346 + 70 = 416

53. 423 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar.

*“This is the tombstone of Martah?, daughter dšm(wl) [.....] of Shmu’(el) ..... who died in the month Marheshwan in the third year of the seven-year cycle, the year three hundred and fifty and three years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. May he[sic!] be rested [in peace] on her (funerary) couch.” 353 + 70 = 423*

54. 427 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh’s # 5

*“[this tombstone of X] [son/daughter of Y who died] [on day Z (of the Sabbatical)] 26 days in the month of Nissan (1st month) in the year of the Shemitah, year 3 hundred 57 years to the destruction of the temple Shalom Shalom.” 357 + 70 = 427*

55. 430 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar.

*This is the resting place of Miryam, daughter of ..., who died on the 15th day of the month Shebat, in the third year of the seven-year cycle, year three hundred (and) [si]xty years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace, p[ea]ce]. 360 + 70 = 430*

56. 430 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar.

*May the soul of Sarah rest, daughter of Hunan, [who] died (on) the eleventh day in the month second (Ad)ar of the year three of the seven-year cycle, the year three hundred and si[xty] years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. May she rest upon her (funerary) couch. Peace. 360 + 70 = 430*

57. 431 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar.

*Let the resting place be rested(!) of YWLYS (Julius), head of the sons of Isra’el, son of Gedolah, who died on Friday, on the sixteenth day of the month Tebet, in the fourth year of the seven-year cycle, the year 3 hundred and sixty-one years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace, peace. May he rest on his (funerary) couch. Peace, peace. 361 + 70 = 431*

58. 434 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh’s # 1

*“May rest the soul of Saul the son of Shalat, who died on the first day of the month Marheshwan of*

*the first year of the Sabbatical cycle, the year three hundred sixty-four after the destruction of the Temple. Peace!" 364 + 70 = 434*

59. 439 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh's # None  
*"This is the tombstone of Hannah, daughter of Ha[niel] the priest, who died on the Sabbath, the first festival of Passover, on the fifteenth day of the month of Nisan, in the fifth year of the sabbatical cycle, which is the year three hundred and sixty-nine years after the destruction of the Temple. Peace. May her soul rest. Peace" 369 + 70 = 439*

60. 444 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar.  
*"[This is] (the tombstone of) Shmu[el] son ..... 1st [da]y of the month N[isan], in the year three [of] the seven-year cycle, the year three hund[red] (and) 74 years of the [destruction of the] Sanctuary. May he rest ... on his (funerary) couch ..... Peace, peace. Peace." 374 + 70 = 444*

61. 444 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar.  
*This is the tombstone of Hananyah the priest, son of Pinhis, who died on the fifth day (Thursday), on the 5th day of the month Tebet, in the second year of the seven-year cycle, which is the year 300 {hundred} (and) 74 years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace, peace. Peace. 374 + 70 = 444*

62. 449 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh's # 21  
*"May the soul of Martah daughter of Pitlah, aged 70, who died on the fifth day {of Adar} on the first Adar of the first year to the Shemitah, which was a leap year, year three hundred and seventy nine year of the temple [may it be built]" 379 + 70 = 449*

63. 455 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh's # 22  
*"May rest the soul of Rabbi Simon Binabi, who died the fourth day (Wednesday) the third day of the month Adar in the seventh year three hundred and eighty and five years after the destruction of the Temple. May he rest a sage in peace. May he*

*wake up to the voice of the announcer of peace.”*  
 $385 + 70 = 455$

64. 456 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar.

65. *This is the tombstone of Yudah, son of Miles, who died (on) Friday, on the twenty-fifth day of the month Tebet, in the first year of the seven-year cycle, the year three hundred and eighty-six years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace, peace upon Israel.*  $386 + 70 = 456$

*Duplicate stone of the one above.*

456 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh's # 4

*“This is the Tombstone of....Son of Megalos (?) who died on the Sabbath, the twenty-fifth day on the month Tevet, in the 1st year of the sabbatical cycle, 386 years after the destruction of the Temple.”*  $386 + 70 = 456$

66. 460 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh's # 23

*“May rest the soul of Yehuda the priest. The son of Ab...ma who died the third day of the month of Kislev. In the fifth year of the Sabbatical cycle which is the year 300 hundred and 90 years after the destruction of the Temple. May he hold the altar and wake up to the voice of the announcer of peace. Peace Peace Peace.”*  $390 + 70 = 460$

67. 461 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar.

*“This is the tombstone . . . . . Died. Days in the month Ab? in the [six]th year of the seven-year cycle, the year three [hund]red [and n]inety one years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace.”*  $391 + 70 = 461$

68. 468 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh's # 11

*“May the spirit {of Est} of Ester daughter of Babah, who died of the sixth day (Friday) on the third day of the month of Kislev (9th month) in the sixth year of the Shemitah, which was a leap year, year three hundred and ninety-eight to the destruction of the temple”*  $398 + 70 = 468$

69. 468 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh's # 14

*“This memorial of the deceased Mati (son of) Sabah, who died on the fifth day, twentieth of the month of Elul on the fifth year of the Shemitah year three hundred and ninety-eight to the destruction of the temple May he rest in peace” 398 + 70 = 468*

70. 469 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar.

*“This is the tombstone of Severi(a)nus, son of Hananyah, who died on the third day (Tuesday) on the twenty-first day of the month Tebet, in the Sabbatical year, the year three hundred and ninety-nine years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. May he rest on his (funerary) couch. Peace.” 399 + 70 = 469*

71. 470 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh’s # 24

*“May the soul of Yoseh son of Ofi who died in the city of Tefar in the land of Heymar and left to the land of Israel and buried on the sixth day the twenty sixth of the month of Tamuz on the first year of the Shemitah, which is identical to the year [400] to the destruction of the temple Shalom Peace on you in your resting place” 400 + 70 = 470*

72. 472 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh’s # None

*“This is the tombstone of Hannah, daughter of Levi, who died on Thursday on the 19th day of the month of Sivan, in the third year of the Sabbatical year, four hundred and two years since the destruction of the Temple. Peace upon Israel Peace.” 402 + 70 = 472*

73. 476 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh’s # 16

*This is the memorial of Ya’akov (Jacob) son of ‘awid who died on the 2nd (day), on the 10th day of... Marcheshvan (8th month), on the first year of the Shemitah which is the year four hundred and six to the destruction of the temple. May he rest in peace. Shalom Shalom Shalom 406 + 70 = 476*

74. 477 C.E. Tombstone of Zoar—Unpublished—Start of Year Moved to Tishri

*May the soul be rested of Sarah, daughter of Papah, who died at the beginning of the month*



*Kislev, in the second year of the seven-year cycle, the year four hundred and seven years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. May she rest in peace, upon her be peace.*

75. 478 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar.

*May the soul be rested of .....ty son .... who died ... in the month ... year .... [se]cond of the seven-year cycle, which is ..... leap year, the year [fo]ur hundred and eight years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace.  $408 + 70 = 478$*

76. 503 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh's # 17

*"May the spirit of 'amran son of Yodan rest who died on the month of Nissan (1st month), on the tenth day of the month on the sixth year of the Shemitah, which is year four hundred thirty-three to the destruction of the temple Peace on Israel"*  
 $433 + 70 = 503$

77. 505 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh's # 25

*May this soul rest Of Shema'ayah son of Yitzhaq who dies on the twentieth day of the month of Nisan, on the first year of the Shemitah, which is year four hundred and thirty five years to the destruction of the temple, may it be built. May he rest in peace on his resting place Shalom Shalom*  
 $435 + 70 = 505$

78. 505 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh's # 3

*"May rest the soul of Haifu the daughter of ..., who died on Tuesday, the eleventh day of Elul, in the ...year of the Sabbatical cycle that is the year four hundred thirty-five after the destruction of the Temple. Peace Peace Upon Israel, Peace!"*  
 $435 + 70 = 505$

79. 514 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar.

*[Rested be] the soul of Sabah? [son ..]wm? (the Elder) who died on the 5th? [on] the fifth [day](Thursday), on the twentieth [d]ay of the month E(lul), in the third year of the seven-year cycle which is the year four hundred and forty-four*

*years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. Peace upon Israel. Peace.  $444 + 70 = 514$*

80. 515 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar – Naveh's # None  
*"May the soul of Hasadiah the Priest son of Dematin rest, who died on Thursday, the fifth of Av, in the fourth year of the Sabbatical cycle, which is the year four hundred and forty-five after the destruction of the Temple. Peace on Israel. Peace."  $445 + 70 = 515$*

81. 579 C.E. Tombstones of Zoar.

*This is the tombstone [of ...], son [of] Aaron(?), who died on the tenth day of the month Kislev, in the fifth year of the seven-year cycle, which is the year five hundred and nine years of the destruction of the Sanctuary. May it (the Sanctuary) be (re)built in our days. May his resting place be in peace.  $509 + 70 = 579$*

82. 749 C.E. The Earthquake of the Sabbatical Year.

83. 838 C.E. Baalbek tombstone.

*Upon your name, the blessed memory of righteousness this is the burial sight of Rabbi Moses son of Elijah, who died (lit. gathered) from this world on the sixth year of the Shemithah which is the seven hundred and sixty eighth year to the destruction of The House, He (The Holy One-May He be blessed) will build it and will awaken the sleepers of his people, Amen.  $768 + 70 = 838$*

84. 1177 C.E. Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Shemithah Ve-Yovel 10:5–6 *"The year of the Shemithah is known and famous among the Geonim and the people of the Land of Israel. They all counted only the years of the destruction in multiples of seven. According to this calculation, this year which is 1107 Year of Destruction is the year following a Shemithah."  $1107 + 70 = 1177$*

*We have now recorded 84 Biblical & historical Records recording 63 Sabbatical years and 5 Jubilee Years from the 14<sup>th</sup> century B.C. to the 12<sup>th</sup> century C.E.*

*In other words, we have now recorded 2514 years of history from 1337 B.C. to 1177 C.E., revealing 68 Sabbatical and Jubilee years.*