

SUKKOT SPECIAL 2019!
(Volume 1-Days 1 and 2; Shabbat Chol Ha-Moed and Hoshanna Rabbah)
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Prayer for Blessing the Scriptures

Barchu et-Yahweh hamvorach
(*Cong.* Baruch Yahweh hamvorach lay-oh-lam va-ed)
Baruch Yahweh hamvorach lay-oh-lam va-ed
Baruch ata Yah-weh, Elo-hay-nu Melech Ha-Olam
Asher bachar banu michol ha-ah-meem
Ve-nah-tan lanu et-torah tow
Baruch ata Yah-weh no-tayn ha-Torah (ve'breet chah-dash-ah)

ALL READ IN UNISON IN ENGLISH:

Bless Yahweh, Who is to be blessed
Blessed is Yahweh, Who is to be blessed forever and ever
Blessed are You, Yahweh our Elohim, King of the Universe,
Who chose us from all the peoples and gave to us the Torah (and the Renewed Covenant Scriptures)

Special Program Note:

This year Sukkot is commencing at sunset on Friday night, September 13th. As such, it supersedes Ha'azinu, but since we must recycle our readings back to Genesis the Shabbat after Sukkot ends (September 28th), this means these two sections need to be treated as a Double Parsha, and yet because it is still within the time of Sukkot it must have content related to that Great Feast. To many of you I suspect calling this a Double Parsha or Sukkot Special 2 is a distinction without a difference, but I wanted all of you to know my intention behind this decision is to give reverence and do justice to all these individual Chag and Parsha parts.

And finally, I wanted to explain a little bit about our last three videos (#3-#5). There we begin a detailed discussion about linking the Nativity of Yeshua the Messiah to Sukkot.

Part 1 (#3) proves the timing of the actual ministry years based on Daniel 9 and from there that gives us the proper range for the birth.

Part 2 (#4) explores in detail the evidence for the certain identity and timing of the Star of Bethlehem, with eight special historical anchors taken from the Gospels. ***Please review the recap of all that data at the start of Part Five before watching these earlier videos.***

And finally, Part 3 (#5), begins with a brief recap of all the evidence—it takes less than seven minutes—and there is a written recap in that place in the notes. Next up though we have a series of announcements relating to the very special alignments for *this particular Sukkot*.

Very Special Program Note about this Sukkot:

You may recall we talked around Yom Teruah time how the generational clock changed over with the start of this feast season and how there was special significance relating to alignments on the Rabbinic and Christian calendars.

This year however there is an even more beautiful alignment to celebrate: *This year Sukkot hits the exact same day of the week (Friday night) and solar calendar date (September 13th) that Messiah was born on!*

In Hebrew terms however, Yeshua was born at the start of 14 Tishri, the previous evening, not the start of the feast because there was no room at the inn. Still, this is important in another sense because the number 7 lines up on all systems! Check this out:

- It's Friday night, the start of the seventh day.
- It's the 14th day of the month, a double seven.
- It's the seventh month of the year, Tishri.
- And it is just at the beginning of the 28th Jubilee from the Israelites entering Canaan (6 BCE) at the start of its Year 1 (5 BCE)¹.

Jubilee Count from the Entrance into Canaan:

Exodus: BCE 1447 (1 Kings 6:1, 2 Chronicles 3:1-2)
Israelites leave Sinai and 40-year wandering begins: 1445
Moshe dies: 1406
Joshua attacks Jericho/Israel enters Canaan: 1405 (spring)

First series of Land Sabbaths (Shemittahs): 1399²-1398, 1392-1391, 1385-1384, 1378-1377, 1371-1370, 1364-1363, 1357-1356. **Fall of 1356 is when the Jubilee is announced, at Yom Kippur, and it runs to fall of 1355, when Israel is permitted to sow barley for the next spring. Jubilees are counted from when they are announced. I may have said 27 Jubilees complete when speaking quickly, but it's the same timing as starting at Jubilee 28.**

28 Jubilees from Joshua to Yeshua (BCE years ending in -56 or -06):

1356 (#1, death of Joshua), 1306 (#2), 1256 (#3), 1206 (#4), 1156 (#5), 1106 (#6), 1056 (#7), 1006 (#8, King David's time), 956 (#9, Temple has been dedicated and running

¹ Because the Jubilee will run from the fall of 6 BCE to the fall of 5 BCE, at which time Israel may sow barley seed for the following spring. The fall of 5 BCE had the Hebrew year change at Yom Teruah, Shabbat on the sunset of August 31st Gregorian time. Yeshua's birth is two weeks later, at the time of a full moon and a spectacular lunar eclipse happening the night of September 13th, the beginning of 14 Tishri.

² Although the technical time for the Shemittah or Land Sabbath is spring to spring, the procedure begins in the previous fall when no barley seed is grown so that no sown seed can produce that following spring's crop. As a result, the Shemittah rules begin in the previous fall and end the next fall, when it is permissible to sow barley seed for the following spring, unless it's the 49th year with the Jubilee following after it.

only four years), **906 (#10)**, **856 (#11)**, **806 (#12)**, **756 (#13)**, **706 (#14)**, time of Hezekiah), **656 (#15)**, **606 (#16)**, time of Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel), **556 (#17)**, **506 (#18)**, **456 (#19)**, Daniel's 70-week count began two years earlier, **406 (#20)**, close to the probable deaths of Nehemiah³, Ezra and Malachi), **356 (#21)**, **306 (#22)**, close to the establishment of the Great Assembly, the death of Shimon the Righteous I and the decision to ban the Name of Yahweh), **256 (#23)**, very curious that 22 refers to the number of Hebrew letters and this is the moment the Torah translation into Greek known as the Septuagint is completed), **206 (#24)**, **156 (#25)**, **106 (#26)**, not kept on time due to Sadducean influence changing the count to 49 years), **56 (#27)**, not kept on time for same reasons as #25), **06 BCE (#28)**. Yeshua is born in it's Year 1 (Fall of 5 BCE).

Oftentimes ETC timings like this will focus on the end of a numerical cycle rather than its beginning. The birth of the Messiah though is different because his birth at the start of 28th Jubilee guarantees his entire life, death, resurrection and ascension will happen during that special time and not after, under the timing of four times seven. Similarly, the 29th Jubilee beginning in 45 CE is removed from that perfect alignment and therefore will be the Jubilee that witnesses the destruction of Jerusalem and her Second Temple.

In any case the overall point is this: When the number seven lines up across the board, it means it is a time Yahweh delivers His people. I call that a Deliverance Code for that very reason.

2019 Fall Feast Schedule!

(If there are any variations between this schedule on what is on the published 2019 ETC, this schedule has the final word. **High Shabbats where no work is allowed until the following sunset are in bold.** **Special programming is in red.**)

Thursday, September 12th → Sukkot Special Complete

Friday, September 13th (sunset) → Sukkot begins

Thursday, September 19th → Ha'azinu-Ve-Zot Ha Baracha Parsha

Friday, September 20th (sunset) → Shemini Etzeret (also Simchat Torah if outside of Israel)

Saturday, September 21st → Simchat Torah (in Israel only)

Thursday, September 27th → Recycle back to Bereshit (for the Shabbat beginning Friday night, September 28th)

Some teachings unique to this Special include: 1) Teaching the 70 weeks of Daniel 9, 2) showing the precise timing of the Nativity and the identity of the "Star of Bethlehem and 3) firm apologetics against secular critics who say the Nativity accounts are unreliable!

1) Origins of the Feast of Ingathering (from Genesis and Exodus)

³ Nehemiah's death is Daniel's prophetic 7th week that he counts separately from the remaining sixty-two weeks, counting fall to fall: 1) 458-451, 2) 451-444, 3) 444-437, 4) 437-430, 5) 430-423, 6) 423-416, 7) 416-409. Nehemiah's successor Bagoas takes over in 409 BCE, meaning Nehemiah died shortly before this.

Our first hint of Sukkot is here, in Genesis:

So that day Esau turned back towards Seir, **but Jacob made his way to Succoth, where he built himself a house and made shelters (*sukkot*) for his livestock;** that is why the place was given the name of **Succoth**. Jacob arrived safely at the town of Shechem in Canaanite territory, on his return from Paddan-Aram. He encamped opposite the town and for one hundred pieces of silver he bought from the sons of Hamor father of Shechem the piece of land on which he had pitched his tent. There he erected an altar which he called 'El, Elohim of Israel'. (Genesis 33:16-20 NJB)

This word for “shelters” are actually “mangers” or “feeding troughs” for animals but the same word in Hebrew-*sukkot*—is used here. If that foreshadowing is as direct as I think it could be, then Esau may have forgiven Jacob on Yom Kippur and Jacob in turn could be building his “booths” on what will be Sukkot! The linkages to the NT on this point are of course profound, but we will deal with those later.

Meanwhile, another interesting Messianic allusion that links to Yeshua and Sukkot is at the end of Genesis:

“You, Yehudah, your brothers praise you; your hand is on the neck of your enemies; your father’s children bow down before you. Yehudah is a lion’s cub; from the prey you have gone up, my son! He bowed down, he crouched like a lion. And like a lion, who does rouse him? The scepter shall not turn aside from Yehudah, nor a Lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, and to Him is the obedience of peoples. Binding his donkey to the vine, and his donkey’s colt to the choice vine, he washed his garments in wine, and his robes in the blood of grapes. His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk”. (Genesis 49:8-12, The Scriptures 1998)

Getting back to Genesis 33 for just a moment though, Sukkot also makes sense particularly to be foreshadowed by Jacob. Commemorating the wandering in the wilderness of the Israelites, there could not be a greater wandering patriarch than Jacob (Deuteronomy 26:5)! Jacob “wandered” more than 20 years, as compared with Israel, the nation named after him, who did so for 40 years.

The Hebrew moedim as a rule though were mostly meant to follow the agricultural cycles of harvests throughout the year. (Barley = Pesach; Wheat harvest completion and first fruits for of corn = Shavuot; Grapes = Sukkot.) The start and ends of the agricultural year were each by the Full Moon, and science has shown that the full moons of spring and fall are the ideal time to seed and harvest. That is why, for example, the old name for Sukkot was “the Feast of Ingathering” (Exodus 34:22) because that was when the final harvest of the year would be “brought in” at the turn of the year, or fall equinox.

Such is the case, linking these feasts to the solar year, when we read Genesis 8:22 that “seedtime and harvest, summer and winter, shall not cease”. As I have said a lot lately,

those terms are clearly linked by two Hebrew words (*tekuwfa* and *teshuvah*) to equinoxes just as “summer and winter” in Hebrew are referring to solstices.

Sukkot though was probably also sanctified because it represents the seventh Full Moon of the year, just as Yom Teruah was sanctified as the seventh New Moon of the year. The sanctification of the 7th day (Shabbat), the 7th week (Omer count), the 7th year (Shemittah/Land Sabbath) and 7 x 7th year (year 49 of a 50 year Jubilee cycle), more than justifies seeing the 7th New and 7th Full Moons also sanctified in Torah.

However, what may be surprising to some is this: What follows from that logic is the proof that the Hebrews kept solar months as well as lunar months and the solar month count would have to be fixed to ensure that Passover is in month 1 and Tabernacles is in month 7, thus explaining those “turns” of the year that Scripture exclusives links to spring and fall.

Sukkot is also a major part of an even larger moed structure that is the entire seventh month. Once Yom Teruah and Yom Kippur is concluded, there are quite a few important days packed in and around this feast. Specifically, the first and second days are of high importance, with day 1 an Annual (or High) Shabbat. Of course the Shabbat during this 8 day feast is also very important, after which we get to a kind of double occasion, known as Shemini Atzeret or Simchat Torah.

These last two occasions are usually celebrated together on the last day of the feast. The word SHEMINI refers to the 8th day after Sukkot starts and is called “the greatest day of the Feast” in the Gospel of Yochanan. While Israelis usually do both occasions—each with a lot of Torah reading and liturgy, they separate Simchat Torah for the 23rd. Diaspora Jews however put Simchat Torah on the 22nd of Tishri. Either way, both occasions, whether on one day or two, are dealt with separately and that is how I will deal with them here.

2) Sukkot and the Wilderness Years

"But on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the produce of the land, you will celebrate the feast of Yahweh for seven days. The first and eighth days will be days of rest. On the first day you will take choice fruit, palm branches, boughs of leafy trees and flowering shrubs from the river bank, and for seven days enjoy yourselves before Yahweh your Elohim. You will celebrate a feast for Yahweh in this way for seven days every year. This is a perpetual law for your descendants. "You will keep this feast in the seventh month. For seven days you will live in shelters: all the citizens of Israel will live in shelters, **so that your descendants may know that I made the Israelites live in shelters when I brought them out of Egypt, I, Yahweh your Elohim.**" ' **Moses then promulgated Yahweh's solemn festivals to the Israelites.** (Leviticus 23:39-44 NJB)

This verse in Leviticus is actually not quite what it appears to be on first glance--it's almost being less than forthcoming to us in this sense: Almost all Jewish sources will

quote this as “proof” that Sukkot at this time was used to commemorate the 40 years in the wilderness, but the fact is, this is not correct.

Yes, it is true that it mentions the Israelites living in shelters when they were brought out of Egypt, but Leviticus takes place in the first two years from Exodus, not during the official 40 year period of wandering that commences in Numbers 13 and 14, because the Israelites don't leave Sinai until Numbers 10-11. Therefore, the reference could only refer to either the 2 years at Sinai or the 42 year total wandering time, but not 40 years.

3) Sukkot and the First Temple (1 Kings 8:1-66)→extemporaneous commentary

Sukkot was also when the Temples were dedicated, starting with Solomon!

4) Linkage to Hanukkah

Hanukkah often became a kind of “backup Sukkot”. After Hanukkah was instituted in 164 BCE and the Hasmonean Royal line made secure completely some years later, it became common for Israeli soldiers who could not be in Jerusalem for the feast because of their duties, to do much the same rituals at Hanukkah that they missed at Sukkot. In particular, there was a fire ritual done on Shemini Atzeret that was modified for Hanukkah! And in a way, the original dedication process for the Second Temple would begin during Sukkot and end just before Hanukkah as we read here in Haggai:

On the twenty-first day of the seventh month, the word of Yahweh was addressed to the prophet Haggai as follows: Speak to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel governor of Judah, to Yeshua son of Yehozadak the high priest and to the remnant of the people. Say this, "Is there anyone left among you who saw this Temple in its former glory? And how does it look to you now? Does it not seem as though there is nothing there? But take courage now, Zerubbabel!-Yahweh declares. Courage, Yeshua son of Yehozadak high priest! Courage, all you people of the country!-Yahweh declares. To work! I am with you -- Yahweh Sabaoth declares-⁵ and my spirit is present among you. Do not be afraid! For Yahweh Sabaoth says this: A little while now, and I shall shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. I shall shake all the nations, and the treasures of all the nations will flow in, and I shall fill this Temple with glory, says Yahweh Sabaoth. Mine is the silver, mine the gold!-Yahweh Sabaoth declares. The glory of this new Temple will surpass that of the old, says Yahweh Sabaoth, and in this place I shall give peace -- Yahweh Sabaoth declares." '

On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of Yahweh was addressed to the prophet Haggai as follows, 'Yahweh Sabaoth says this, "Ask the priests to give a ruling on this: If someone is carrying consecrated meat in the fold of his gown and allows the fold to touch bread, broth, wine, oil or food of any kind, will that become holy?" ' The priests replied, 'No.' Haggai then said, 'If anyone rendered unclean by contact with a corpse touches any of these things, will that become unclean?' The priests replied, 'It will become unclean.' Haggai then spoke out. 'It is the same with this people,' he said, 'the same with this

nation, in my view -- Yahweh declares -- the same with everything they turn their hands to; and whatever they offer here is unclean.

'So now think carefully, today and henceforth: before one stone had been laid on another in the sanctuary of Yahweh, what state were you in? You would come to a twenty-measure heap and find only ten; you would come to a vat to draw fifty measures and find only twenty. Everything you turned your hands to, I struck with wind-blast, mildew and hail, and still you would not return to me -- Yahweh declares. So think carefully, today and henceforth (from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day the foundation of the sanctuary of Yahweh was laid, think carefully) 'if seed-corn is still short in the barn, and if vine and fig tree, pomegranate and olive tree still bear no fruit. 'From today onwards I intend to bless you.'

On the twenty-fourth day of the month the word of Yahweh was addressed a second time to Haggai, as follows, 'Speak to Zerubbabel governor of Judah. Say this, "I am going to shake the heavens and the earth. I shall overturn the thrones of kingdoms and destroy the power of the kings of the nations. I shall overthrow the chariots and their crews; horses and their riders will fall, everyone to the sword of his comrade. When that day comes -- Yahweh Sabaoth declares -- I shall take you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel my servant -- Yahweh declares -- and make you like a signet ring. For I have chosen you -- Yahweh Sabaoth declares." '(Haggai 2:1-23 NJB)

5) Renewed Covenant instances of Sukkot.

Sukkot only has one direct mention in the Renewed Covenant, with Yeshua observing it in all of Yochanan 7 and 8. As a result, this is the core source of our NT readings throughout this 8 day period.

It does however seem to have been alluded to in Matthew 17. It seems that Peter thought they would all tarry in Galilee for Sukkot, which is why he suggested building booths for Yeshua and his friends who stopped by for the Transfiguration—Moshe and Eliyahu! But the text says “he did not know what he was saying” because Peter should have known this feast can only be done in Jerusalem.

However, the most important event associated with Sukkot—by far—is that this is the actual time of the Nativity. Yeshua is actually born the night before Sukkot, or the 14th of Tishri, which translates to Friday, September 13th, 5 BCE.

This has been the heart of my research two decades now, and the reasoning for this time will be shown shortly.

Fausset’s Bible Dictionary:

The feast of tabernacles is referred to in John 7:2,37, 8:12. Yeshua alludes to the custom of drawing water from Siloam in a golden goblet and pouring it into one of the two silver

basins adjoining the western side of the altar, and wine into the other, while the words of Isa. 12:3 were repeated, in commemoration of the water drawn from the rock in the desert; the choir sang the great *hallel*, and waved palms at different parts of Ps. 118, , namely, verses 1,25,29.

Virtually Yeshua said, I am the living Rock of the living water. Coming next day at daybreak to the temple court as they were extinguishing the artificial lights, two colossal golden candlesticks in the center of the temple court, recalling the pillar of fire in the wilderness, Yeshua said, "I am the Light of the world" (John 8:1,2,12). As the sun by natural light was eclipsing the artificial lights, so Yeshua implies, I, the Sun of righteousness, am superseding your typical light. "The last great day of the feast" is the *'atsereth*, though the drawing of water was on previous days not omitted. Joy was the prominent feature, from whence the proverb, "he who has never seen the rejoicing at the pouring out of the water of Siloam has never seen joy in his life" (Succah 5:1).

My commentary:

While this is a very interesting suggestion, I should point out that Yochanan 7:37 says this was "the last and greatest day of the feast" and 8:2 talks about the woman in adultery being brought to Yeshua "the next morning". So if Yochanan 7:53-8:11 is historical, this "light of the world" speech would actually be the day AFTER Sukkot, or 23 Tishri. However, today in Israel, some assemblies celebrate Simchat Torah on this very day and don't combine this with the 8th day, so perhaps this means such was also done in Israel in Yeshua's time?

On the other hand, this story of the woman taken in adultery is NOT in the 4 earliest GREEK manuscripts of John nor in any of the Eastern Aramaic manuscripts in the Peshitta family. It was only added to later Aramaic manuscripts in the 7th century onwards VIA TRANSLATION from late Greek sources.

Please note this does not necessarily mean the story of the adulteress did not happen; it may only mean it was not preserved in the written record until later, by which time it is also possible that some of the events were over simplified. For example, they should have also brought the MAN to be stoned as well, if they really caught the woman in the act of illicit sex with him.

But getting back to the main point, if we remove 7:53-8:11 from Yochanan's timeline, then there is no "extra" day after Shemini Atzeret, and old Fausset's may end up being right in that the "light of the world" speech is relating to Shemini Atzeret after all.

Fausset's concludes: The feast was called Hosanna, "save we beseech Thee." Isa. 11 refers to the future restoration of Israel; the feast of tabernacles connected with chapter 12 doubtless will have its antitype in their restored possession of and rest in Canaan, after their long dispersion; just as the other two great feasts, Passover and Pentecost, have their antitype respectively in Messiah's sacrifice for us, and in His writing His new law on our hearts at Pentecost. Jewish tradition makes Gog and Magog about to be defeated on the

feast of tabernacles, or that the seven months' cleansing shall end at that feast (Ezek. 39:12). Rest after wanderings, lasting habitations after the life of wanderers, is the prominent thought of joy in the feast, alike in its former and in its future celebration.

6) Prophetic ramifications of Sukkot.

It is generally well understood that Yeshua fulfilled the spring feasts during his First Coming, such as by dying during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. As a result, many believers also accept the idea that Yeshua will return the 2nd time during the Fall feasts—whether that is Yom Teruah, Yom Kippur or Sukkot is a matter of personal preference and debate. The advantage of Sukkot however is that Yeshua was born just prior to the start of this feast, so it makes sense he would return at that time as well.

Now let's read and discuss the relevant Torah, Haftorah and Renewed Covenant portions with extemporaneous commentary Please note that readings which are repeated on more than one day of the feast are read only once.

END PART 1

PART TWO: SCRIPTURE READINGS

Torah:

1) Leviticus 22:26-23:44 (first 2 days)

SEH (22:28) = sheep or goat. The Hebrew word can refer to either animal. This is also a deep *remez* (hint) about us, because Scripture talks about sheep and goats being separated as an image of judging the righteous and the wicked (Matthew 25:32).

MELEKETH AVODAH (23:7) = service work. We talked recently about the general prohibition of “expanding kingdom/domain” on a Shabbat. Here though this term is well defined as any work that is not necessary for the preparation of food.

OMER (23:10) = 1/10th of an ephah (see Exodus 16:36). It was also the daily measure for manna and for a meal offering (see Leviticus 5:11, 6:13 and Numbers 15:4). The omer included barley and had a weight of approximately a half a gallon.

Note on 23:11: While there has been much debate about the Torah term “morrow after the Shabbat” over the centuries, Targum Onkelos attempts to settle the matter by stating in the Aramaic *mibetar yoma tava*, or “from after the yom tov”, which Rabbi Israel Drazin translates as ‘after the holiday’. The reference to a *yom tov* is a technical one that designates an annual Shabbat, so this means “the day after the 15th” which is to say, the 16th of Abib, as the start of the omer count. See: *Onkelos on the Torah: Understanding the Bible Text (Leviticus)*, p. 187.

This is also similar to a reading in the Aramaic Peshitta Tanakh which is “on the day after” without inclusion of the word “Shabbat”, as it appears Jews in Babylon were also trying to clarify the Hebrew there as well. The Greek translation too, called the Septuagint, also tweaks its language to say “morrow after the first day”—with “first day” referring to the Feast of Unleavened Bread and therefore “morrow” is once again the 16th. When combined with testimony from the 1st C Jewish historian Josephus (Antiquities, 3:250) that clearly said first fruits of the barley were offered both “on the second day of unleavened bread” and “the sixteenth day of that month”, this is the overwhelming weight of evidence proving how the term “morrow of the Sabbath” was meant to be understood. The vague references (Samaritan Pentateuch, Dead Sea Scrolls and Masoretic Text) are in no way contradicted by the more specific ancient witnesses as to what the intended meaning was, By contrast the Karaites are almost completely alone in their belief to the contrary.

CHUKAT OLAM BECHOL MOSHVOTEYCHEM LEDOROTEYCHEM (23:21) = an eternal statute for all generations, wherever you live. Perhaps one of the clearest statements of these Feasts applying outside of Israel and regardless as to whether a Temple or priesthood is functioning within her.

ZICHRON (23:24) = remembrance. Others though think a secondary meaning, as “sounding” is intended. Still others use both, “a sounding of remembrance”, which in my view is the best choice.

MELECHA (23:28) = work. This word appears by itself without the clarification of “service work” (*meleketh avodah*) because even food preparation is banned on Yom Kippur.

SUKKOT (23:34) = thatched huts in this context as opposed to just “shelters” or “booths” which are a bit too general a description.

2) Numbers 29:12-16 (first 2 days)

CHAG (29:12) = festival or feast, another description of the appointed time (moed) that is Sukkot. Obviously not all MOEDIM are CHAGIM (feasts).

Haftorah:

3) First Day: Zechariah 14:1-21 (extemporaneous commentary)

VEASAFTI ET-KOL HA-GOYIM EL-YERUSHALYIM LAMILCHAMA (14:2) = For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem. As Revelation teaches, the armies mass at Har Megiddo (Armageddon) but the battle is for Jerusalem. Revelation though never shows the battle take place but merely declares YHWH will win it for us.

KEYOM HILACHAMU BEYOM KERAV (14:3) = as He (YHWH) fights on a day of war. This may be a reference to the battle Abba YHWH (or Yeshua) will fight for us in the End Times.

VEAMDU RAGLAV BAYOM HAHU AL HAR HAZEYTIM (14:4) = and on that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. Perhaps a reference to Yeshua's return. Various authorities talk about Messiah returning to the Mount of Olives first.

MAYIM CHAYIM (14:8) = living waters. The general pattern in this part of Zechariah is that a great supernatural event where there is neither day nor night will be followed by the living waters coming back to Jerusalem. While the details between this and Revelation have some differences, I can't help but wonder why these are the only two books that talk about 4 horsemen of the apocalypse and at the end Yeshua says, "Let he who thirsts come and drink of the living water freely" (Revelation 22:17).

In general it seems that Zechariah 14 is describing the battle that Revelation omits, where the armies muster at Har Megiddo. In particular 14:12 bears a creepy resemblance to 2 Peter 3:10. If this is so, then again we are confronted with the prophetic ramifications of Sukkot which seems to be tied not just to Yeshua's actual return but to the final battle as well. It is this idea that seems confirmed also in this part of Zechariah.

The Haftorah for the 2nd day of Sukkot, 1 Kings 8:2-21 has already been read, so it won't be repeated here.

4) Exodus 33:12-34:26 (Shabbat during Sukkot)

VAYOMAR PANAY YELECHU VAHANICHOTI LACH (33:14) = My Presence will go before you. Now the Messenger (Yeshua) is withdrawn and Abba YHWH Himself is going before Moshe directly.

VAYOMER YAHWEH EL MOSHE PSOL-LECHA SHNEY LUCHOT AVANIM KARISHONIM VECHATAVTI AL-HALUCHOT ET-HADEVARIM ASHER HAYU AL-HALUCHOT ET-HADEVARIM ASHER HAYU AL-HALUCHOT HARISHONIM SHIBARTA (34:1) = Yahweh said to Moses, 'Carve out two tablets for yourself, just like the first ones. I will write on those tablets the same words that were on the first tablets that you broke. The Rabbis believe that this was on 1 Elul. 40 days and 40 nights on the mountain later and Moshe comes down 10 Tishri, Yom Kippur. See Seder Olam 6, Exodus 34:28 and Deuteronomy 10:10.

VECHAG HA'ASIF TKUFAT HASHANA (34:22) = Literally: and the Feast of the Harvest that is just after the Turning of the Year. The word TKUFAT (turn) therefore also means "fall equinox" since Sukkot is designed to happen at this time, but also "turning" in the sense that the Hebrew lunar year also turned over at the end of Elul.

RESHIT BIKUREY ADMATECHA TAVI BEYT YAHWEH ELOHEYCHA LO-TEVASHEL GEDI BACHALEV IMO (34:26) = Bring the first fruits of your land to

the Temple of Yahweh your Elohim. Do not [eat] goat's meat cooked in milk of its own mother. Notice the prohibition is only with respect to goat's meat, not all forms of meat. The chances of any meat though being boiled in the same milk of its mother today is almost impossible for those of us who buy food at supermarkets. The Rabbis ignore the fact that Abraham served milk and meat to YHWH and two messengers in Genesis 18 and there is no way around the fact that Abraham brought both the milk and the meat at the same time. Bible.ort.org deliberately ignored GEDI (goat) in their translation to make it sound that all meat could not be prepared in this manner.

5) Ezekiel 38:18-39:16 (Haftorah for Shabbat during Sukkot)→extemporaneous commentary

END PART 1

PART TWO: OTHER SUKKOT READINGS AND HOSHANNA RABBAH

6) Yochanan 1:1-14; 7:1-36 (1st and 2nd days, Shabbat Chol Ha Moed⁴)→extemporaneous commentary.

7) Hoshana Rabbah (7th day of Sukkot)

The seventh day of the Jewish holiday of Sukkot, the 21st day of Tishri is known as **Hoshana Rabbah** (Aramaic: **הוישענא רבא**, "Great Supplication"). This day is marked by a special synagogue service, the Hoshana Rabbah, in which seven circuits are made by the worshippers with their lulav and etrog while the congregation recites *Hoshanot*. It is customary for the scrolls of the Torah to be removed from the ark during this procession. In a few communities a *shofar* is sounded after each circuit.

Hoshana Rabbah is known as the last of the Days of Judgment which began on Rosh Hashanna. The Zohar says that while the judgment for the new year is sealed on Yom Kippur, it is not "delivered" until the end of Sukkot (i.e., Hoshana Rabbah, the last day of Sukkot), during which time one can still alter their verdict and decree for the new year.

Consequently, an Aramaic blessing which Jews give each other on Hoshana Rabbah, **פתקא טבא** (*pitka tava* or *piska tava*), which in Yiddish is "*A guten kvitel*", or "A good note", is a wish that the verdict will be positive.

In this spirit, it is a custom in many congregations that the cantor wears a kittel (long sleeved linen robe with a linen sash—AGR) as on the High Holidays. Since Hoshana Rabbah blends elements of the High Holy Days, Chol HaMoed, and Yom Tov, in the Ashkenazic tradition, the cantor recites the service using High Holiday, Festival, Weekday, and Sabbath melodies interchangeably.

Among Sephardi Jews, prayers known as Selichot (forgiveness) are recited before the regular morning service (these are the same prayers recited before Rosh Hashanah). In the different prayers of this day, Syrian Jews pray in the same maqam (melody) as on the

⁴ Shabbat Chol Ha-Moed reads from Yochanan 7:14-36, but since Yochanan 7:1-36 is already accounted for as readings on Days 1 and 2, there is no need to repeat these lines for Shabbat Chol Ha-Moed, which reads from Yochanan 7:14-36.

high holidays. In Amsterdam and in a few places in England, America, and elsewhere, the shofar is also sounded in connection with the processions. The latter practice reflects the idea that Hoshana Rabbah is the end of the High Holy Day season, when the world is judged for the coming year. Because Hoshana Rabbah is also linked to the high holidays as well as being a joy filled day some Hasidic communities such as Satmar have the custom of having Birkhat Kohanim/Priestly Blessing recited during the Musaf service. Some communities such as Bobov will only do this if it is on Friday. However this practice is not generally done.

It is customary to read the whole of Tehillim (Psalms) on Hoshana Rabbah eve. There is also a custom to read the book of Deuteronomy on the night of Hoshana Rabbah.

Seven Hoshanot

The modern-day observance of the rituals of Hoshana Rabbah are reminiscent of the practices that existed in the times of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. During Sukkot, the four species are taken in a circuit around (inscribing the perimeter, not circumscribing the actual building) the synagogue once daily. On Hoshana Rabbah, there are seven circuits.

Making a circuit around the reading desk on Sukkot while each person holds the four species in his hands has its origin in the Temple service, as recorded in the Mishnah: "It was customary to make one procession around the altar on each day of Sukkot, and seven on the seventh day" (Sukkah 4:5). The priests carried the palm branches or willows in their hands. The entire ceremony is to demonstrate rejoicing and gratitude for a blessed and fruitful year. Moreover, it serves to tear down the iron wall that separates us from our Father in Heaven, as the wall of Jericho was encompassed "and the wall fell down flat" (Joshua 6:20). Furthermore, the seven circuits correspond to the seven words in the verse: *Erhatz benikayon kappay, va'asovevah et mizbahakha Yahweh* - "I wash my hands in purity and circle around Your altar, O Yahweh" (Psalms 26:6).

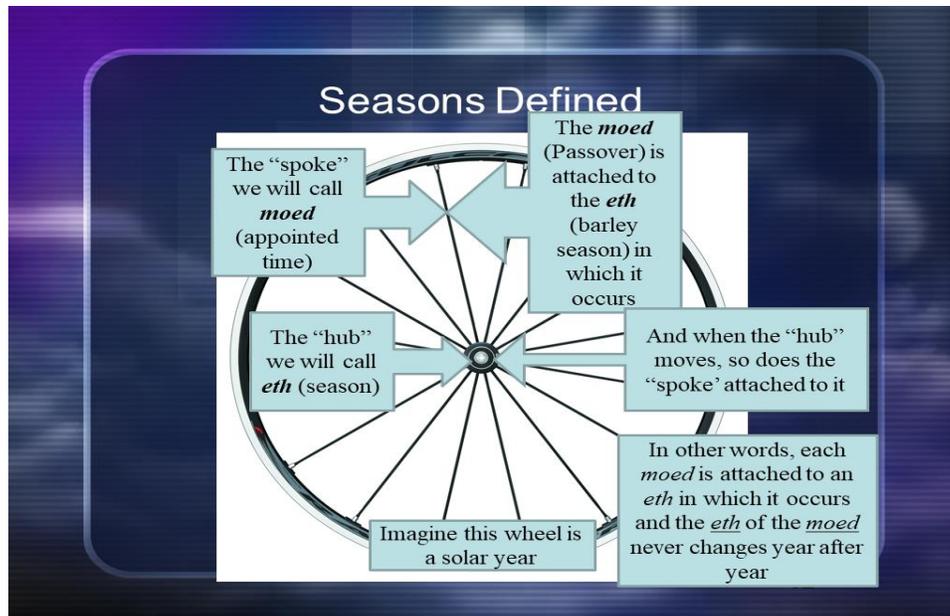
Each "hoshana" is done in honor of a patriarch. (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moshe, Aaron and David)

Five willow branches

At the conclusion of a number of *Piyyutim* (liturgical poems), five willow branches are beaten on the ground or other surface to symbolize the elimination of sin. This is also symbolic as a prayer for rain and success in agriculture.

Prayers for Messiah

The hoshanot are accompanied by a series of liturgical verses climaxing with, "*Kol mevasser, mevasser ve-omer*" (The voice of the Herald [Elijah] heralds and says)—expressing hope for the speedy coming of the Messiah. (Wikipedia)



END PART 2

PART THREE: Confirming the Nativity of Yeshua Ha-Mashiyach at Sukkot, Part 1

Note: It will probably be helpful to open your Bibles to Daniel 9:24 and read while I comment. I will also do a point by point commentary for this last prophecy as well.

24 Seventy weeks are determined upon your people and upon your Set-Apart city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Set-Apart.

Comments: Our first step is to determine how Daniel is counting time and exactly how much time total is being referred to here. In answering the first part, Daniel hints at his schedule earlier in this chapter, verse 15-16:

¹⁵ And now, O Adonai our Elohim, who has brought your people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and has gotten for yourself renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly. ¹⁶ O Adonai, according to all your righteousness, I beseech you, let your anger and your fury be turned away from your city Jerusalem, your Set-Apart mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and your people have become a reproach to all that are about us.

By referencing the Exodus, Daniel is telling us how he will count time and that said counting of time relates to the ultimate prophetic condition of Jerusalem. In Numbers 13-14, ten spies come back from Canaan with a false report after scouting its surroundings for forty days. Accordingly, Father Yah punished the nation for succumbing to this false report to wander in the wilderness for forty years, one year for every day of their expedition. As a result, Daniel is counting time the same way, where a “day” of prophecy

equals a year of actual time. Daniel's contemporary Ezekiel, also in Babylon, counts prophetic time the same way (Ezekiel 4:4).

The other important clue in 9:24 is that the total time is for "seventy weeks," meaning a total of 490 years for the entire prophetic framework. While each "week" equals seven years, they are not in any way linked to Land Sabbaths or *Shemittah* years when the land must lay fallow nor to the wider 50-year Jubilee cycle that contains seven of these per period⁵. As a result, the "seven plus sixty-two weeks" Daniel will soon describe yields 483 years from the start of his clock to the public debut of Messiah.

25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troubled times.

Comments: Now we get to the important events within the total 490 year structure. His clock begins with the going forth of the decree to rebuild all Jerusalem. There were a total of three relevant decrees given by Persian kings regarding the restoration of the Jews to their homeland. Two of them, those from Cyrus and Darius (Ezra 1:1-2, 6:7-11), only specifically mentioned rebuilding the Temple itself, not the rest of the city.

This vagueness led to a dispute between Jewish and Persian residents. The former said permission to rebuilding the Temple was tantamount to also restoring the whole city so that proper access to it could be restored as beautifully as possible while the latter stuck to the letter of decrees and attempted to stop the rebuilding of various walls and other supporting structures surrounding the Temple.

In the end Emperor Artaxerxes was called on to make the final call, so in Ezra 7:1-26 he specifically authorizes the reconstruction of Jerusalem with any leftover funds (verse 18) which leads to the Jews being given "the House of our Elohim, to raise up its ruins and be given a wall in Judah and Jerusalem" (Ezra 9:9-10). Since we know that this decree was given in Artaxerxes' seventh year, the start of Daniel's clock must be from the fall of 458 BCE⁶

However, the curious phrasing of "seven weeks and then sixty-two weeks" has created some confusion amongst scholars. Why not simply say sixty-nine weeks? The fairly simple solution may just be the bifurcating of two separate events. While the Scripture

⁵ In fact, the commencement of Daniel's clock in the fall of 458 BCE is two years prior to the start of a Jubilee. Based on the timings from the Exodus itself from 1447 BCE (1 Kings 6:1, 2 Chronicles 3:1-2), a total of ninety-two years elapses from that event to Jubilee 1 (2 years at Mount Sinai + 40 additional wandering years + 50 years to the first Jubilee in Canaan = 92). This means all BCE Jubilees are in years ending in -56 or -06 in our modern Gregorian calendar, so 456 BCE was a Jubilee year and therefore not related to Daniel's overall timing.

⁶ Artaxerxes ascended the throne in September-October of 465 BCE, about three weeks after his father was assassinated in August (not by his hand). Daniel is counting his years from the fall (Tishri), specifically from Sukkot full moon as we will see later on, so the seventh year is the fall of 458 BCE.

does not specifically tell us when Nehemiah died, Egyptian papyri make it clear that his replacement as Persian governor (Bagoas) began ruling no later than 407 BCE⁷.

Therefore, if Nehemiah served as governor right up until the time he died, which seems likely given other statements by Josephus⁸, seven weeks or forty-nine years from 458 BCE very conveniently brings us to 409 BCE the year after Bagoas took over Nehemiah's position. As a result, this "seven week period" is showing the completion of Nehemiah's service just before he died, with the remaining sixty-two weeks dealing with events from that point to the debut of Messiah.

26 And after sixty-two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end of it shall be with a flood, and to the end of the war desolations are determined.

At the risk then at sounding a bit redundant, this phrase "after sixty-two weeks" means after sixty-nine weeks, or 483 years from when the count began (fall of 458 BCE). Accounting then for the fact that our current Gregorian calendar has no year zero, this brings us to the fall of 26 CE (458 - 1 BCE = 457 years + 26 = 483). Yeshua's actual ministry will count from the start of the fall feasts that commence the civil year and end 3 ½ years later with him being "cut off," but Daniel is also quick to add "but not for himself", meaning he is voluntarily laying down his life (Yochanan 10).

However, at this point there is a minor interpretive challenge to deal with. And that's the phrase "the people of the prince shall come and destroy the city and the sanctuary." Obviously this cannot be Messiah or the Jewish people who destroy Jerusalem, so it should read instead, "the people of *another* prince shall come to destroy the city," since Titus who did the destruction was a prince of Rome.

This answer though raises yet another question to deal with: Why does it seem then that Daniel breaks his own way of counting here? I ask this because we just saw how Daniel's last week points to a time between 26 and 33 CE. How then can we then talk about

⁷ At Elephantine island in Egypt, there once stood a Jewish Temple to YHWH, which may have been active as early as 586 BCE, when the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed. Jewish groups in Egypt were rebuked by Jeremiah and Ezekiel for combining pagan and YHWH-based worship, and this is exactly how the Jewish community at Elephantine functioned. That Temple's Aramaic archives were found and began getting catalogued and deciphered in 1907. Among these documents was the Letter to Bagoas, with Bagoas being the Persian governor of Judea who also ruled Egypt at that time. Dated 407 BCE, Bagoas is being asked by Jewish leaders in Egypt to repair the Temple of YHWH that had been badly damaged; a request to which he eventually agreed. Bagoas then was also the successor to Nehemiah, so if Bagoas is in charge in 407 BCE it must be because Nehemiah died a short time earlier. Josephus specifically says Nehemiah "died in a good old age" which makes sense because he could not have been much younger than about twenty-five when he began his service as the royal winetaster. A contemporary of Ezra, Nehemiah was already a powerful representative of the Persian king when he went to Jerusalem in 445 BCE to repair the city. The last dated reference to Nehemiah in his 13th chapter brings us only to the 37th year of this king (429 BCE), but there is no reason to suppose that as proof that he died at that moment. Josephus reference to Nehemiah's old age suggests in fact that he continued long past Artaxerxes' death even though all the biblical events attached to him "happened during the time of Artaxerxes." The data then suggests Nehemiah's birth was around 470 BCE, or it could have been even earlier if he was older upon entering the king's service, since starting his story around age twenty-five brings him to about 61 years of age in 409 BCE. Alternatively, 409 BCE could simply be when Nehemiah retired from public life, dying at some later time.

⁸ Antiquities 11:297-298.

another prince who comes to destroy Jerusalem forty years after the resurrection? Why does it seem that Daniel counts right up to his last week, then goes forty years into the future from that point, only to come right back and complete the week he so abruptly interrupted? This problem vexed me for many years until I found what I believe to be a very satisfactory solution.

In essence, Daniel got caught up in what I can only describe as a prophetic feedback loop. What I mean by that is this: Daniel predicted the time of Yeshua's ministry, from beginning to end. Then, when Yeshua does come on the scene, he predicts the same exact event, the destruction of the Temple, that Daniel did.

In other words, Daniel is not just seeing his own visions but the visions about the same event from the man he is predicting. As a result, he then caught a glimpse of what Yeshua predicted in Matthew 24, which took him out of his own counting for a moment before he was able to resume his own prophecy!

²⁷ And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the offering to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

Before getting into deciphering this last piece, I should point out that Daniel counts his prophetic times by several different methods. Sometimes this count is by a given number of whole days (e.g. "2,300 evenings and mornings" in chapter 8) and other times, as here in chapter 9, it is by a particular feast.

Specifically, when Daniel talks about Messiah being "cut off in the middle of that week", this tells us Yeshua's death date is in the exact mid-point of that seven year cycle. Since we know the exact day Yeshua died, 15 Abib and that the day is also timed to the first full moon of spring, this gives us the entire length and breadth of the last prophetic week.

Put simply, if the mid-point of the cycle is the full moon of Passover, it stands to reason the week began with the full moon of Sukkot or Tabernacles 3 ½ years earlier, again the fall of 26 CE (Full Moon: October 13th). From there the mid-point, Yeshua's death day, would be April 5th, 30 CE and the final week would close out in Sukkot in the year 33 (September 25th).

Another important point is that, paralleling a similar statement in Daniel 12, Yeshua's death "puts an end to sacrifice and offering" by giving us the ultimate atonement! Daniel says so!

Binding Tie to Daniel 12

And finally, there is one more deep connection to Yeshua's ministry revealed by Daniel, but in his twelfth chapter. We saw just now one counting method, with Daniel counting seven years starting and ending with the full moon of the start of Tabernacles. At the

same time, we also referred to a second counting method of whole days that he does in chapter 8. Now here, in Daniel’s last chapter, we see him return to the whole day count once more.

⁹ And he said, Go your way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. ¹⁰ Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. ¹¹ **And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that makes desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.** ¹² **Blessed is he that waits, and comes to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.** ¹³ But go your way till the end be: for you shall rest and stand in your lot at the end of the days. (Daniel 12:9-13)

These numbers of 1,290 and 1,335 days have long baffled scholars and to be sure, trying to use them to apply to our prophetic future is very difficult to do. However, the good news is these prophetic numerical patterns were already partially fulfilled in relating also to the time of Yeshua’s ministry.

Here’s how. Instead of counting from festival full moons, Daniel is beginning a new count from the start of the Hebrew year of Yeshua’s first ministry year, which he refers to as “from the time the daily sacrifice is taken away”, or becomes unnecessary, because Messiah brings as just indicated above that ultimate sacrifice. In Hebrew terms, that “new year’s day” or 1 Tishri began on Sunday, September 27th, 26 CE. When we start counting from there, we need to end at when “the abomination that makes desolate is set up.” That moment is April 8th, 30 CE, the day after the resurrection, when the Jewish and Roman authorities conspire to lie and cover that blessed event up. Now let’s add up the time:

From September 27 th , 26 CE to September 26 th , 27 CE	→365 days
From September 27 th , 27 CE to September 26 th , 28 CE	→366 days (leap year)
From September 27 th , 28 CE to September 26 th , 29 CE	→365 days
From September 27 th -30 th , 29 CE	→ 4
All of October, 29 CE	→ 31
All of November, 29 CE	→ 30
All of December, 29 CE	→ 31
All of January, 30 CE	→ 31
All of February, 30 CE	→ 28
All of March, 30 CE	→ 31
April 1-8, 30 CE	→ 8
TOTAL	→ 1,290 days

And that abomination does cause desolation because denying the resurrection of Messiah denies us also eternal life.

However, what about that last figure of 1,335 days? It’s rather simple, because when we add another forty-five days to the count it brings us exactly to the miracle of the tongues

in Acts 2. In other words, it's Shavuot (Pentecost)! **END PART THREE AND VOLUME 1**

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PART FOUR: Confirming the Nativity of Yeshua Ha-Mashiyach at Sukkot, Part 2

The Eight Historical Anchors of the Nativity

Note: Please review the recap of this data at the start of the Part Five notes to get a good idea of how this data I am about to go over in detail actually fits together.

#1: The Triple Conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in the constellation Pisces (May 29th though December 4th in 7 BCE)

First we need to figure out what the Star of Bethlehem actually was. While I will give details later to support this, here is my conclusion in advance: The Star of Bethlehem moved in a way that only a planet could and in ancient reckoning planets were also considered stars. The movement of this celestial body as described by Matthew would classify it as something different than fixed stars. They were called *planes aster* (wandering stars) which got shortened to the word *planete*, from which we get the term *planet*. However, it was just as common to call everything, wandering or not, simply a “star” or “stars”, so we have to look at details Matthew gives us to figure out the rest, and this a topic for a little later on.

For now we need to understand that the Magi began to be intrigued because something special happened with what they call “the King’s Star” and that is a term that can only refer to Jupiter, the King’s Planet named after the chief Greek deity. Seeing Jupiter somewhere in the east though would not have in and of itself imparted a message for them to head to Israel, but seeing Jupiter in relationship to other planets would and in this time, what astronomers call a triple conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn happened three time within five months in the constellation of Pisces.

We need then to understand that such celestial events as these were in effect a headline news show Abba YHWH was putting on for the Magi, trained astronomer-priests from Babylon. How these events would have been interpreted by them in cultural context is key to this whole discussion. The Magi would have seen the triple conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in Pisces this way:

- Jupiter: Largest object in the sky; King’s planet. To the ancients, planets were “moving stars” or *planes aster*, that was shortened to *planete*. So Jupiter is the “king’s star” the Magi told Herod they were tracking.
- Saturn: Shabbat planet, from where we get “Saturn’s Day” (Saturday). Saturn was also known as the “Savior Planet” and was linked to Jews because of the Shabbat.

- Pisces: Geographically this sign generally represented Syria and Israel, but specifically came to be known as the Zodiac sign for the Jews because of Jonah being swallowed and saved from a great fish.

So, with just that data, we now have a message: *King Savior of the Jews coming soon to a manger near you!* To have three conjunctions in five months (May 29-December 4, 7 BCE) in the same constellation was extremely rare, happening only once about every 1,400 years.

However, to have each conjunction hit on significant days of the Hebrew calendar as well, made each of these events a multiple billion to one shot—and that has not happened since!

May 29th: 3rd of Sivan, the very day Father Yah descended to Mount Sinai in fire to announce His Ten Commandments were coming (Exodus 19).

October 1st: Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

December 4th: The full moon before Hanukkah, the time when the sky is brightest before the Festival of Lights that marks the conception of the Light of the World.

#2: The death of Herod the Great (March 25th-April 2nd, 4 BCE)

And when Yeshua was born in Beth-Lekhem of Yehuda, in the days of Herodus, the king, Magoshi came from the east to Urishlim. (Matthew 2:1- AENT)

In the days of Herodus the king of Yehuda, there was a certain priest whose name was Zakharyah, from the order of the house of Awiya and his wife from the descended daughters of Ahron. Elishwa was her name. (Luke 1:5- AENT)

So these two references tell us that Yeshua was born during the time of Herod the Great. The historian Josephus then tells us that Herod died sometime between March 25th and April 2nd, 4 BCE, because we know Herod's son Archelaus mourned his father's death seven days before Passover (The Jewish War, 2:1-9) in that year. For 95% of Biblical historians, there is absolutely no doubt that this year is 4 BCE. This date is not only well-attested to by Josephus, but also other historians from the period such as Suetonius and Tacitus.

Certain western Christian traditions though put Herod's death three years later, 1 BCE, because it agrees with their Julian calendar. In more recent years, due to certain astronomical events that happened in 3 and 2 BCE, the old 1 BCE date has been given a bit of a boost—so that these events can be their Star of Bethlehem.

The fact of the matter though remains that 4 BCE is the accepted date by nearly all historians for very good reasons. 1 BCE proponents have tried to suggest our copies of Josephus didn't originally read as they do now, but not one of them has presented a shred of manuscript evidence supporting their theory and the burden is clearly on them to do so.

It would also require a massive and highly unlikely cover up to support a 1 BCE nativity date because not only Josephus' writings would be suspect, but also ALL the copies of nearly a half a dozen other historians for this period of time—all of whom support a 4 BCE date.

I conclude this point with a little assistance from Biblical Archaeology Review. In this case, the discussion begins by talking about why a lunar eclipse in 4 BCE better matches the data for the timing of Herod's death than one in late December of 1 BCE:

There are three principal reasons why the 4 B.C. date has prevailed over 1 B.C. These reasons were articulated by Emil Schürer in *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ*, also published in the 19th century. First, Josephus informs us that Herod died shortly before a Passover (*Antiquities* 17.9.3, *The Jewish War* 2.1.3), making a lunar eclipse in March (the time of the 4 B.C. eclipse) much more likely than one in December.

Second, Josephus writes that Herod reigned for 37 years from the time of his appointment in 40 B.C. and 34 years from his conquest of Jerusalem in 37 B.C.

(*Antiquities* 17.8.1, *War* 1.33.8). Using so-called inclusive counting, this, too, places Herod's death in 4 B.C. Third, we know that the reign over Samaria and Judea of Herod's son and successor Archelaus began in 4 B.C., based on the fact that he was deposed by Caesar in A.U.C. (*Anno Urbis Conditae* [in the year the city was founded]) 759, or A.D. 6, in the tenth year of his reign (Dio Cassius, *Roman History* 55.27.6; Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.13.2). Counting backward his reign began in 4 B.C.

In addition, from Herod the Great's son and successor Herod Antipas, who ruled over Galilee until 39 A.D., who ordered the execution of John the Baptist (Mark 6:14–29) and who had a supporting role in Jesus' trial (Luke 23:7–12), we have coins that make reference to the 43rd year of his rule, placing its beginning in 4 B.C. at the latest (see Morten Hørning Jensen, "Antipas—The Herod Jesus Knew," **BAR**, September/October 2012).

Thus, Schürer concluded that "Herod died at Jericho in B.C. 4, unwept by those of his own house, and hated by all the people." Jeroen H.C. Tempelman. [Q&C, BAR, January/February 2014](#)

#3: The six-week purification period for Maryam

Then when eight days had passed so that the boy could be circumcised, they called his name Yeshua, as the Messenger had called him before he was conceived in the womb. And when the days of their purification were fulfilled according to the instruction of Moshe, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him before Master YHWH. (Luke 2:21-22-AENT)

The Instruction of Moshe, or the Torah, commanded circumcision happen on the eighth day (Genesis 17) plus another thirty-three days of purification for the birth of a male

child (Leviticus 12), so our third anchor is this nearly six week purification period where Joseph and Mary had to stay in Israel! Another clue about this same period is what we saw in Matthew 2:2: The Magi said the child had already been born when they came to Herod. *But this fact leads us to another line that often confuses even scholars.*

And when they heard from the king, they departed, and behold the star which they saw in the East was going before them until it came and stood from over where the **boy** was. (Matthew 2:9-AENT)

This line, and the one coming up where it says the Magi went into a “house”, have led scholars to believe the Magi came years after the shepherds did—but this isn’t true! Both Greek and Aramaic versions of the NT use terms (*paidon* and *taliah* respectively) that can mean “toddler” or “child.”

However, there is one exception to the rule, when an infant could be called “male” (Hebrew: *zakar*) rather than a baby or infant, and it is in Genesis 17, when Abba YHWH commands all “males” get circumcised!

As for the matter of the Magi going into “the house”, it is quite possibly a literal reference because, as we will see, the Magi did not come to Yeshua at the same time as the shepherds did. When the shepherds met Yeshua, he had literally just been born, and was in a “manger-sukkah”. But by the time the Magi arrive, it was after the feast was over.

Since the sukkahs would be torn down right after the end of the feast and since Joseph knew he and Mary needed to stay close to Jerusalem for the duration of Mary’s purification period, he had to find some kind of temporary lodging for his wife and newborn son. This may be why we have very early Christian folk tradition that the Magi met the Set-apart family in a cave in Bethlehem—the best he could do.

And it happened on the eighth day they came to circumcise the boy (παίδιον/אֶלֶף) and they were calling him by the name of his father Zakharyah. (Luke 1:59-AENT)

So here we see that both Yochanan the Immerser and Yeshua were called *paidon/taliah* when they were 8 days old. That means that when the Magi came to see the “child” Yeshua, he did not have to be a toddler but more likely the text simply means the Magi met the Set-apart family after Yeshua was circumcised, but before the six-week purification period was concluded.

However, this clue must be combined with the following one to get more chronological data:

#4: The timing of the Flight into Egypt

Our next anchor though may be one of the most difficult of them all to precisely date, but it is extremely important as a puzzle piece in the overall scheme of the chronology. It is well known that shepherds do not “abide in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks by

night” (Luke 2:8) after the advent of the early rains (end of October to maybe mid-November). *Here’s one reason why nearly everyone agrees on this:*

Then all the men of Yehudah and Binyamin gathered at Yerushalayim within three days. It was the 9th month, on the 20th of the month. And all the people sat in the open space of the House of Elohim, trembling because of the matter and because of showers of rain. (Ezra 10:9 TS 1998)

After the Feast of Sukkot, the first rains begin around late October. If the grapes are not harvested by then, the crop is ruined. The rains will then intensify over the next several months, so that by the 9th month “rainy season” has become particularly unpleasant—certainly too unpleasant to keep watch over sheep all night in the open.

This reference in Ezra 10 is actually only a few days before the Feast of Hanukkah, which hits late November to late December in our calendar. Of course, this is one reason why we know the Nativity itself cannot be on December 25th, but that’s not the main point of this discussion. Rather, the point is the birth couldn’t happen after mid-November.

That being the case, the six weeks of purification after the birth had to conclude no later than the end of December, and we know Joseph and Family are in Egypt when Herod dies, in early April of 4 BCE (Matthew 2:19). Then Matthew 2:22-23 says that Joseph did not settle back in Nazareth before Archelaus gained rule over Judea, and we know when this happened too.

In Josephus’ “Jewish War”, (2:1-117) the circumstances behind Archelaus’ grab for power are given in great detail. First, one week before Passover (April 2nd, 4 BCE), Herod dies and Archelaus begins mourning him seven days.

Then during the Passover feast, due to persistent accusations being yelled at him, Archelaus loses patience and kills 3,000 people doing Temple sacrifices. Afterwards, Archelaus apparently tries to seize power over all his late father’s territory, knowing full well this was not Herod’s wish.

This defiant act forces his two brothers, Antipas and Phillip, to sail to Rome to protest the move to the Emperor Augustus. Archelaus soon follows suit and all parties begin extensive litigation on the matter.

In the midst of the negotiations though, Archelaus hears his mother is about to die and has to return home. When he does, the Feast of Weeks happens (May 30th) and widespread riots hit Jerusalem against Rome and Archelaus personally. Rome burns part of the Temple complex, before riots break out a half dozen other places, also needing to be put down.

How long these riots go on for precisely is not known. However, the Feast of Weeks is only a day long and the riots and thousands of crucifixions mentioned by Josephus had to take place over a longer period of time.

But when the parties resume the legal case, another “festival” came to Jerusalem where Jews were “forced” to let in the masses (Jewish War, 2:73). It is the only remaining festival that required the participation of all Jewish men was that of Tabernacles, or Sukkot, which ran that year October 2-10.

Sometime after this date, Augustus decides to give Archelaus the title of “ethnarch” and ½ of his father’s kingdom, while the two brothers each split the remaining ½ together as “tetrarchs”. From here, it takes about another 3 weeks for the negotiations to formally conclude and for Archelaus, Antipas and Phillip to return from Rome to Judea to set up their respective kingdoms.

Therefore, the earliest that Yeshua’s father Joseph could have heard that Archelaus was reigning “in Yehuda” would be early November of 4 BCE, and he doesn’t leave Egypt before.

The point of all this research is that the Egypt stay had to be a minimum of 11 ½ months. However, the absolute longest possible stay in Egypt for the Set-apart family would be five years and here’s why:

And the boy would grow up and become strong in spirit and was filled with wisdom, and the grace of Elohim was upon him. (Luke 2:40 AENT)

The clue the child grew seems a consistent reference to weaning being completed at age 5 (Genesis 21:8; Exodus 2:9-10 comp. to Leviticus 27:5-6 and Luke 2:40) tells us Yeshua was back in Nazareth no later than age five.

There are two reasons for this. First, the 430-year prophecy (Exodus 12:40) only makes sense counting from when Isaac turns 5 ($400 + 25 + 5 = 430$)! And second, the valuation of male infants jumps to five shekels when they turn five years old, which makes sense because after being weaned the boys are considered stronger and more mature. So we have a minimum of one year and a maximum of five years for the Egypt stay, but beyond this, it is impossible to be more precise at this moment. However, I believe later astronomical signs point to three years.

#5: Magi track the “King’s Star” for two years

Then, when Herodus saw that the Magoshi mocked him, he was angry and sent (and killed all the boys of Beth-Lekhem and of all from its borders **two years and under, according to the time that he inquired from the Magoshi.** (Matthew 2:16-AENT)

While this seems shocking to some, Josephus tells us Herod killed several sons and his favorite wife on the mere hint of disloyalty. Given that track record, killing a few dozen infants (who were not related to him) in Bethlehem would hardly be a problem for Herod

the Great if he thought it would preserve his throne. And being as paranoid he was, he timed that killing to infants “two years old and under” after “inquiring of the Magi the exact time the star appeared”. This little detail tells us a great deal: The Magi were tracking the “star” for at least two years.

Since the first conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in Pisces happened May 29th, 7 BCE, this means the Magi could not have come to Jerusalem before the second anniversary from that point, May 29th, 5 BCE! We have just cut our window for Messiah’s birth by two-thirds: From late May 5 BCE to early April 4 BCE.

Our first important series of data to consider is that from the ancient point of view planets are a kind of star. Specifically, the Magi refer to a durability of viewing and specific kinds of motion that tell us this star was in fact a planet.

First of all, all attempts to suggest the Star of Bethlehem was a comet, a nova or falling star or even a meteor shower have failed because these could not be tracked for two years. While comets like Halley’s do have a regular return cycle that can result in visibility for a few months, a comet was always seen as a bad omen and not as a harbinger for heralding the birth of a great king. Comets like Halley’s also would not have been seen for two years straight either. Interestingly enough though, Halley’s did return close to the time of Yeshua’s birth—in 10 BCE—but that’s not close enough.

Since the Greek and Aramaic terms carry the same exact meanings, I will focus on the more familiar Greek terms. The term in question, (ἀνατολή), has two possible meanings. One is the simple daily rising of any star, but this makes no sense contextually.

Reason being, stars like our sun rise and set every day and no one knows that better than our professional astronomers here. Therefore, what is so special about the daily rising and setting of this or any other star? On the other hand, if this were the other kind of star, a wandering star like a planet that, unlike fixed stars, could be tracked for two years, that would be more special. After all, there were only seven of these wandering stars by ancient reckoning: sun, moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. Seeing any of them “rise in the east” was rarer and therefore more interesting to the Magi.

Next important clue is that they mention “we have seen it in the east” and this has proved a very challenging phrase for scholars not versed in astronomy to understand. For one thing, the Magi lived east of Jerusalem and therefore would always see the night sky from the “east” of Jerusalem. Herod knew who the Magi were and where they were from since they are the “magicians” mentioned from Daniel’s time. All that was a given, so why the special treatment by both the Magi and Herod?

For another, stars including our sun always rose in the east too, so same question, why is that eastern rising of that star so special? If you tracked it every day for two years, what was so special about its normal rising on one day as opposed to all the others? In other words, what is it about this “rising in the east” that makes the Magi grab the frankincense and go? The answer must be a very special and even spectacular kind of “rising in the

east” that they do not normally see. It is also a rare event that happens after they have long since singled out this star from being special, so what is that?

When all the data then is sorted out, there is only one kind of eastern rising that fits the bill: The heliacal rising of a planet, and in all the time the Magi are tracking this star there is only one time this happens in the entirety of their journey.

This special planet, Jupiter disappeared, going behind the sun after the Magi had been tracking it for many months. After more than a year of being hidden though, this planet heliacally rose from the east, i.e. it rose apart and away from the sun just before sunrise on Sunday, May 27th, 5 BCE. This was spectacular as it was the first time Jupiter was seen in more than a year and it triumphantly emerged apart from the sun and, in what seemed an act of defiance, turned speedily westwards toward Israel. But, while regular stars like Sirius can also heliacally rise, this next detail can only apply to a planet:

...and behold the star which they saw in the East **was going before them until it came and stood from over where the boy was.** (Matt. 2:9 AENT)

There is a perfectly natural explanation for this, as the professional astronomers who were tracking this star knew quite well, and it is a phenomenon that only happens with planets. It's called *retrograde motion* and it means that a planet, from our perspective on the earth, appears to go backwards from our position. For four months, the Earth slowed down, which made another planet appear dash ahead. That “dash” began when it emerged from behind the sun in its heliacal eastern rising. It raced ahead with great speed westwards—straight to Israel from the Magi’s position from Babylon.

Then, four months later, specifically September 19th, 5 BCE, the Earth caught up with it and now that same planet appeared to “pause” over the Jerusalem-Bethlehem area, but only for a week. At the end of September 26th, this sign was no more, so we know at a minimum the very week the Magi had to rejoice at the star just before they found the Messiah.

This is why the Star of Bethlehem can only be a planet, again only planet Jupiter can be the “King’s Star” of the Magi.

#6: The Return of the “King’s Star in the rising” and the four-month Route of the Magi (May 27th-September 26th in 5 BCE)

Our fifth anchor though will confirm this timing. Observing Jupiter rise in the east in late May of 5 BCE. Since this is the sign that caused the Magi to leave Babylon for Israel, we need to factor in how long the journey would have taken them along well-known travel routes from these locations that people of an elite rank actually used. This is where Tanakh helps!

Ezra arrived in Jerusalem in the fifth month, in the seventh year of the king's reign;
for he had ordered the departure from Babylon on the first day of the first

month, and he arrived in Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month, since the kindly hand of his Elohim was over him. (Ezra 7:8-9 NJB)

Ezra, travelling under the protection of the king, would have taken the same travel routes and travelled in the same high style as these Magi did about 450 years later. And the text directly says it took EXACTLY four months to take this route from Babylon to Jerusalem.

Since the Magi would have left for Israel when they saw Jupiter rise in the east the date of this event matters: May 27th, 5 BCE (Gregorian). Their arrival to see Herod though is just after the birth of Yeshua because they proclaim, in past tense, “Where is he **who has been born** King of the Jews”. I will deal with that timing issue more precisely in a moment. For now, just understand that the Magi are with Herod after the ‘star’ has spent 3+ months moving west, and it is still moving. They are therefore seeing Herod in mid-September, around the 17th. This matches the journey of Ezra almost perfectly.

In Hebrew terms, Ezra’s journey from the 1st day of Abib to the 1st day of Ab is precisely 118 days (29 left for Abib + 29 for Iyar + 30 for Sivan + 29 for Tammuz + 1 for Ab = 118). The Magi were prepared for months in advance to leave Babylon for Israel,. Then upon seeing the heliacal rising of Jupiter would have been ready to depart later that same day they saw it, May 27th, at sunrise, so let’s add up the Magi’s time:

- 1) 5 days left in May (27-31)
- 2) 30 days for June
- 3) 31 days for July
- 4) 31 days for August
- 5) 17 days until September 17th

TOTAL → 114 days

Therefore, the Magi come to see Herod only four days shy of how long it took Ezra to return to Jerusalem, from the same Babylon road. And Ezra definitely rested on Shabbat, so his “real travel days” are probably considerably less than the Magi’s, possibly around seventeen days less. But even if the Magi kept Shabbat and rested, the trip is extremely doable for them.

#7: Timing the Census of Quirinius

Since we very recently went over how to recover the truth about Luke’s account of the census and Quirinius, let me just highlight my conclusions:

- In 7 BCE, Herod the Great was caught lying to Emperor Augustus who punished him by revoking Herod’s tax-free status. Herod would now have to pay both back taxes and new taxes moving forward.
- The purpose of a census was to register property that had just become taxable either through imperial decree, as is the case here, or by newly acquired lands

seized in war. Because a major census in Apamea Syria was going on at that very moment, the military governor of Syria, Quirinius, was asked to extend his census to next door Judea.

- Quirinius had experience and full power to do this. He will eventually count 117,000 citizens in Apamea Syria so counting tiny Judea was nothing to him, especially since Luke said all that was needed was to register, that is record one's name and the value of their property.
- Census rules in the region at the time, including Egypt, clearly required people to return to their ancestral homes to be counted, just like Joseph and Mary did.
- Even though the registration was just local, in Herod's territory and Syria, an Empire wide payment occasion came up in 2 BCE, which was Augustus' Jubilee Year and Rome's 750th anniversary. All provinces sent *tributum*, literally "tax payments" at that time. Luke simply linked those Empire-wide payments with the local registration that began in 6 BCE, as this was a normal interval between registration and payment.

#8: No Room at the Inn!

But our eighth and final anchor has to do with the fact that as Luke 2:7 said, "for there was no room at the inn". We now know for certain that Yosip and Maryam are in Bethlehem during the 7th month, or September.

But when they get there, the inns are completely stuffed full of people—there's nowhere to go but a "manger". The inn is crowded because pious Jews are gearing up for the fall sacred season and the Romans have scheduled their registration to coincide with when people would be on the road anyway to get to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles, or Sukkot.

But during Sukkot no Jews would be at the inn—they would live OUTSIDE! Therefore, Yeshua had to be born in the 7th month but just prior to the start of Tabernacles. **Thus the 2 week window I spoke of earlier would be September 1st through 13th, 5 BCE.** However, the retrograde motion of Jupiter will narrow the time further. When Matthew 2:9 says "the star went out before them", this refers to a specific astronomical event:

As the Earth moves through space, the outer planets the Magi are watching appear to "speed up" or "slow down" in their daily motion. So when Jupiter emerged from the sun, it appears to "race ahead", as it did from May to September in 5 BCE. Now it's time for astronomy and other evidence.

But on September 18th, after four months of going ahead of the Earth, the Earth caught up to Jupiter and for the next week, Jupiter's motion appeared to "pause" over Bethlehem (19-26). This would have to be the time that the Magi saw Yeshua, but we are also missing a critical fact still: Yeshua was born well before this!

The reason, as we already discussed before, concerns what the Magi said to Herod: "Where is he who has been born King of the Jews"! We should also bear in mind booths

for Sukkot were set up no earlier than 2 Tishri, or 13 days before the Feast (Nehemiah 8:13) and, as we also saw before, Yeshua was circumcised on his 8th day before the Magi found him.

Since we know the Set-apart family stayed in the Jerusalem area for the six weeks of purification, the Magi's arrival at Yeshua's circumcision meant the wise men stuck around for a few weeks (end of September to the end of October).

Then immediately after the Magi left, so did the family, bound for Egypt, for Herod could not be deceived any longer.

The bottom line though is this: The 'star' had been *going out before the Magi* up until September 18th, and it is Jupiter's pausing, not its motion, that leads the Magi to Yeshua. In other words, the movement of Jupiter westward from the Magi's original position in Babylon brought them to the right area, but the 'star' was actually paused over that entire city.

As the Magi continued walking through Bethlehem, Jupiter remained overhead, until they got to the place the infant Yeshua was. But a super literal reading of Matthew 2:9 says: "and behold the star...was going before them until it came and stood over where the child was"—implies that the moment of the "pause" was the moment the Magi arrived. If that's the case, then we have a very interesting situation. The moment of Jupiter's pausing was on the evening of September 19th (also Tishri 19), so if the Magi arrived just after Yeshua was circumcised it raises the possibility that Yeshua was born on or just hours after the Day of Atonement ended, as eight days earlier brings us to the end of Tishri 10 and start of Tishri 11.

But in actual fact, what this really does in my opinion is simply tell us that the earliest possible day for Yeshua's birth was in the early hours of the night of September 11th, and therefore the latest possible birth time (8 days before the 26th, the last day Jupiter paused) was September 18th. But this brings us back again to "no room at the inn."

With range now cut to from September 11th to the 18th "no room at the inn" will eliminate the first half of the Sukkot feast when the Jews would be living outside. Therefore, September 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th are gone from contention, and this leaves only September 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th of 5 BCE as possible days for the birth of Messiah! From there we can speak of a fantastic lunar eclipse that happened on one of those evenings—Friday, September 13th in 5 BCE. My science advisor who has two physics degrees, worked on classified satellites for the DOD and builds telescopes from scratch in his spare time, explains about this critical lunar eclipse:

On the night of September 13th, 5 BCE, there is a well-placed total Lunar Eclipse. By "well placed", I mean that the moon rose that night, well before Jupiter, and was of course, nearly full. The eclipse began at about 8:30 PM, with the moon 35 degrees high – perfectly placed from Jerusalem to see the entire eclipse. At totality, at about 9:30 pm, Jupiter was rising but just barely above the

horizon... This means that as the total lunar eclipse ended, about 11 PM, Jupiter was itself now prominently placed, 20 degrees above the horizon, a little north of due east. The fullness of the moon, would not have lessened the visibility of Jupiter that night and it would be easy each night from now on to tell Jupiter was dramatically slowing down in its nightly motion against the stars.

This absolutely stunning lunar eclipse marks not just the day of the birth, but I believe also the very moment of his birth—between 8:30-11:00 PM on Friday, Sept 13/Tishri 14, 5 BCE!

Please see the notes and the video recap of these details in our fifth and final video!

END PART 4

PART 5: Recapping Nativity Astronomy and Shemini Etzeret and Simchat Torah Readings

Astronomical and Scriptural Recap for the Star of Bethlehem and Nativity Timing

- *The initial range for the Nativity begins at 2 years and 10 months.* The Magi began observing the King's Star (Jupiter) in a series of three conjunctions over a five-month period, from May 29th to December 4th in 7 BCE. The Gospels however tell us that Yeshua must be born before Herod the Great dies, and the latest possible date for that is April 2nd, 4 BCE. **Thus our range is from May 29th, 7 BCE to April 2nd, 4 BCE.**
- *From the time the Magi began tracking the King's Star (May 29th, 7 BCE), they cannot leave for Israel until May 27th, 5 BCE.* When the last conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in the constellation of Pisces ends it is December 4th, which is the heart of the rainy season and thus not a good time for 600+ mile trip from Babylon to Israel. Shortly after this time comets are seen going near Israel and these are almost always bad omens so the Magi would not travel then either. And finally, the King's Star itself disappears behind the sun for more than a year, telling the Magi that king is not ready to born yet. However, in the pre-dawn hours of Sunday, May 27th, 5 BCE, the King's Star "rises in the east" by literally emerging from behind the sun and defiantly heading away from it with great speed towards Israel. This is what they meant by "For we have seen [the King's Star] in the east [in its heliacal rising in the east] and have come to pay him homage." **Since the Magi don't leave before May 27th, 5 BCE, the Nativity range is cut to under a year, from May 27th, 5 BCE to the death of Herod no later than April 2nd, 4 BCE.**
- *The Magi would have traveled on the same trade routes that Ezra did some four centuries earlier and in the same elite style as Ezra going with the permission of the emperor of Persia. The Tanakh tells us this took Ezra exactly four months.* Therefore, once on the road from late May, they will arrive in Jerusalem in early

September, which also matches astronomical data. **Now the range for the birth is from September of 5 BCE to April 2nd of 4 BCE.**

- *As Matthew 2:9 says, the Magi found that “the star that they had seen in the east went out before them until it came and stood over the place where the child was”, this is a particular moment in astronomical time that can be tracked with precision. On May 27th, as already explained, Jupiter began racing ahead of the earth and moving west towards Israel. On the night of September 18th, Jupiter caught up with the earth and for the next week it appeared to stand still over the Bethlehem-Jerusalem area. This is the time the Magi see Herod and leave him behind to shortly find the Messiah, but when they see Herod they also tell him the Messiah has already been born.*
- *The use of the term “child” in no way proves Yeshua was a toddler by the time the Magi find him. Both him and the Baptist are called a “child” when they are circumcised on the eighth day of their lives. Therefore the Magi simply see Yeshua after he has been circumcised. The use of the term “cave” proves that the Magi saw the infant Messiah after Sukkot ended, but not very long after.*
- *So if Yeshua is born on or before September 18th as the Magi state, this is where the detail “no room at the inn” really helps us. Because Sukkot requires everyone to live outside for that week, this eliminates the 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th of September from contention. Scripture tells us the sukkah are set up no earlier than the 2nd day of Tishri (September 2nd), **so now our range is under two weeks (September 2-13, 5 BCE).** However, the “star” Jupiter is only over Bethlehem until September 26th, and then it starts moving again, so they must see the Messiah on or before that time, and at that time Yeshua must be circumcised.*
- *The earliest possible day for Yeshua’s birth was in the early hours of the night of September 11th, and therefore the latest possible birth time (eight days before the 26th, the last day Jupiter paused) was September 18th. **Because we have already eliminated at the back end September 14th-18th, the only days that remain for the birth are September 11th, 12th and 13th. Even if we wanted to really stretch it back to the previous day, the 10th, that was Yom Kippur which only ended that night, so the other activities of Joseph and Mary make no sense on that day when they could just as easily done what was needed either just before or just after the fast.***
- *Of the three days then remaining for the birth of the Messiah, only the night of Friday the 13th has an amazing astronomical event to mark the birth: A spectacular 2 ½ hour lunar eclipse happens that night, from 8:30 PM to 11:00 PM.*

1) Numbers 29:35-30:1 (Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah)

SHEMINI ATZERET TIHYEH LACHEM (29:35) = eighth day of retreat, so this is also known as a “retreat festival”.

'On the eighth day you shall have a solemn assembly; you shall do no laborious work. 'But you shall present a burnt offering, an offering by fire, as a soothing aroma to YHWH: one bull, one ram, seven male lambs one year old without defect; their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bull, for the ram and for the lambs, by their number according to the ordinance; and one male goat for a sin offering, besides the continual burnt offering and its grain offering and its drink offering. 'You shall present these to YHWH at your appointed times, besides your ¹votive offerings and your freewill offerings, for your burnt offerings and for your grain offerings and for your drink offerings and for your peace offerings.'" Moses spoke to the sons of Israel in accordance with all that YHWH had commanded Moses. Then Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of the sons of Israel, saying, "This is the word which YHWH has commanded. (Numbers 29:35-30:1 NAU)

2) Deuteronomy 14:21-16:17 (Shemini Atzeret)

GER (14:21) = stranger. Rabbis make an interesting comment (Stone Chumash, p. 1013) that in this context GER does not mean proselyte, because they perceive there could be another class of GER that lives among the Jews but only observes the Noachide laws and does not have to abstain from unkosher meat. They further point out that if PROSELYTE was meant here, the unkosher meat would be prohibited to him as well as any other Jew. While on the surface this appears to solve some problems, I maintain that there is one Torah for the Jew and for the foreigner in their midst and that Noachide laws are a rabbinic illusion. It's not that those rules aren't in the Torah—it's their misapplication that is at issue here. Rather, the regulation seems to be meant to not let food go to waste that is unfit for the altar but that can in other ways extend human life.

SHEMITTAH (15:1) = letting drop, or a temporary remission of debts.

QARA (15:9) = cry out against you. The word can also mean to “proclaim publicly, read”, which has a sense that the poor man could embarrass you publicly if you bend the shemmitah law to avoid paying him back.

TIKAPHETZ ET-YADKHA (15:7) = draw together or close your fist. This command follows the phrase “harden your heart”—a rebuke given against Pharaoh—to show that bad mental attitudes lay the foundation for bad actions. Yeshua's halacha though went further than just opening one's hand to help the poor. Instead, he wanted an open hand that was HIDDEN from public view, i.e. “don't let your left hand know what your right is doing”.

16:1-2 from Bibleort.org:

Safeguard

Adjusting the lunar calendar so that Nissan remains in the spring (*Rosh HaShanah* 21a;

Yad, Kiddush HaChodesh 1:1).

along with other sheep and cattle

(Ramban). Or, 'sacrifice sheep as the Passover offering, along with the cattle' (Targum; *Sifri*; Rashi). The other animals are the special festival offering, known as the Chagigah. This consisted of a peace offering (*Yad, Chagiga 1:1*).

NOTE: Deuteronomy 33:1-34:12/Ve-Zot Ha-Barachah, which is done at Simchat Torah, is being treated as the second part of a Double Parsha with Ha'azinu next week, so that will be discussed at the time.

3) Genesis 1:1-2:3 (Simchat Torah)

BERESHIT (1:1) = in the beginning. Onkelos Targum says BKADMIN (in the eternities/beginnings) indicating ancient understanding of more than one creation event happening at the same time. Within the word BERESHIT is also the first Messianic prophecy:

BAR = son (Aramaic)

BARA = created

RESH = head/chief/beginning

SHET = (the) six (Aramaic)

So the Son is created BEFORE the 6 days of creation!

VAYOMER ELOHIM YEHI RAKIA (1:5) = and said Elohim: Let there be a SKY. This "sky"(rakia) is usually translated as "firmament" but literally means "expanse", indicating a separation between SHMAYIM (heavens) and the waters. It is a different kind of sky from SHMAYIM, or the universe. In other places, RAKIA can also denote matter.

VAYA'AS ELOHIM (1:16) = and made Elohim. Tense indicates these luminaries were made on the fourth day, meaning neither the sun nor the moon can be used to count days for the 7 day Shabbat cycle. YHWH didn't count from day 4 for Creation week and therefore neither should we. The 7 day count is independent of the sun, moon and stars.

VAYOMER ELOHIM HA ADAM BETZALMANU (1:26) = and said Elohim, Let US make man in OUR image. Recalling the fact that multiple creations happened and that within BERESHIT is proof that the Son/Word was the first thing YHWH created, we need to further confirm this through Psalm 33:6 and Yochanan 1:1-5. YHWH sent the Word out of His Mouth and the Word created the heavens and the earth, "by him, for him and through his hands" as the Aramaic of Yochanan reads. Since it is Yeshua who made these things as the Word, the US and OUR are YHWH talking with His Son "whom He loved from when time began" (Yochanan 17) since the Messiah has "goings forth that have been from the eternities" (Micah 5) from which a throne in heaven was set up for him to have eternal and universal dominion (Daniel 7).

U'MIL'U ET-HA'ARETS VECHIVESHUHA (1:28) = fill the earth up and conquer it. In order to do this command, man must endeavor to understand the inner workings of the earth, which he can only do through disciplined observation of the planet. The method of this observation is given in 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22, test everything, hold on to the good and avoid all evil.

SHAVAT (2:3) = rested, but not because Abba YHWH was tired because He never tires. Rather YHWH completed His work and stopped doing it. This is confirmed in 2:4 with ASAH (made) in past tense, denoting completion. Later Jewish sources though will speculate that certain events, like the building of the Temple, also in their way complete creation.

END PART 5

PART SIX

Historical Commentary on Sukkot 1 (Josephus)

Upon the fifteenth day of the same month, when the season of the year is changing to winter, the law enjoins us to pitch tabernacles in every one of our houses, so that we preserve ourselves from the cold of that time of the year; as also that when we should arrive at our own country, and come to that city which we should have then for our metropolis, because of the temple therein to be built, and keep a festival for eight days, and offer burnt offerings, and sacrifice thank offerings, that we should then carry in our hands a branch of myrtle, and willow, and a bough of the palm tree, with the addition of the pome citron.

That the burnt offering on the first of those days was to be a sacrifice of thirteen bulls, and fourteen lambs, and fifteen rams, with the addition of a kid of the goats, as an expiation for sins: and on the following days the same number of lambs, and of rams, with the kids of the goats; but abating one of the bulls every day till they amounted to seven only.

On the eighth day all work was laid aside, and then, as we said before, they sacrificed to Elohim a bullock, a ram, and seven lambs, with a kid of the goats, for an expiation of sins. And this is the accustomed solemnity of the Hebrews, when they pitch their tabernacles. (Josephus, Antiquities 3:244-247)

“When the multitude are assembled together to the holy city for sacrificing, every seventh year, at the feast of tabernacles, let the high priest stand upon a high desk, where he may be heard, and let him read the laws to all the people; and let neither the women nor the children be hindered from hearing, no, nor the servants either; for it is a good thing that those laws should be engraved in their souls, and preserved in their memories, that so it may not be possible to blot them out; for by this means they will not be guilty of sin, when they cannot plead ignorance of what the laws have enjoined them.

“The laws also will have a greater authority among them, as foretelling what they will suffer if they break them: and imprinting in their souls by this hearing what they command them to do, that so there may always be within their minds that intention of the laws which they have despised and broken, and have thereby been the causes of their own mischief. Let the children also learn the laws, as the first thing they are taught, which will be the best thing they can be taught, and will be the cause of their future felicity.”

“Let everyone commemorate before Elohim the benefits which he bestowed upon them at their deliverance out of the land of Egypt, and this twice every day, both when the day begins and when the hour of sleep comes on, gratitude being in its own nature a just thing, and serving not only by way of return for past, but also by way of invitation of future favors.

“They are also to inscribe the principal blessings they have received from Elohim upon their doors, and show the same remembrance of them upon their arms; as also they are to bear on their forehead and their arm those wonders which declare the power of Elohim, and his goodwill toward them, that Elohim's readiness to bless them may appear everywhere conspicuous about them.” (Josephus, Antiquities, 4:209-213)

(About 152 BCE) **When Jonathan had received this letter, he put on the high priest's robe at the time of the feast of tabernacles**, four years after the death of his brother Judas, for at that time no high priest had been made. So he raised great forces, and had abundance of armor prepared.

This greatly grieved Demetrius, when he heard of it, and made him blame himself for his slowness, that he had not anticipated Alexander, and got the goodwill of Jonathan, but had given him time so to do. However, he also himself wrote a letter to Jonathan, and to the people, the contents whereof are these:—“King Demetrius to Jonathan, and to the nation of the Jews, sends greetings. Since you have preserved your friendship for us, and when you have been tempted by our enemies, you have not joined yourselves to them; I both commend you for your fidelity, and exhort you to continue in the same disposition; for which you shall be repaid, and receive rewards from us; **for I will free you from the greatest part of the tributes and taxes which you formerly paid to the kings my predecessors, and to myself**; and I do now set you free from those tributes which you have ever paid; and besides, I forgive you the tax upon salt, and the value of the crowns which you used to offer to me: and instead of the third part of the fruits of the field, and the half of the fruits of the trees, I relinquish my part of them from this day: ⁵⁰ and as to the poll money, which ought to be given me for every head of the inhabitants of Judea, and of the three toparchies that adjoin to Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, and Perea, that I relinquish to you for this time, and for all time to come. (Josephus, Antiquities 13:46-50)

And after that they heard a sound as of a great multitude, saying, “We are departing from here.” But, what is still more terrible, **there was one Yeshua bar Khanan-Yah, a common man and a husbandman**, who, four years before the war began (62 CE, Jewish War started in the year 66—AGR), and at a time when the city was in very

great peace and prosperity, came to that feast whereon it is our custom for everyone to make tabernacles to Elohim in the temple, began suddenly to cry aloud, ``A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the holy house, a voice against the bridegroom and the bride, and a voice against this whole people!" This was his cry, as he went about by day and by night, in all the lanes of the city.

However, certain of the most eminent among the populace had great indignation at this dire cry of his, and took up the man, and gave him a great number of severe stripes; yet he did not either say anything for himself, or anything peculiar to those who chastised him, but still went on with the same words which he cried before.

Hereupon our rulers supposing, as the case proved to be, that this was a sort of divine fury in the man, brought him to the Roman procurator; where he was whipped till his bones were laid bare; yet he did not make any supplication for himself, nor shed any tears, but turning his voice to the most lamentable tone possible, at every stroke of the whip his answer was, ``Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" (The Jewish War, 6:300-304)

Historical Commentary on Sukkot 2 (Philo)

And this number is consecrated and dedicated to Elohim when the perfect fruits of the soul are offered up. For, on the feast of tabernacles, besides all other sacrifices, it is ordered that the priest should offer up seventy heifers for a burnt offering. Again, it is in accordance with the computation of seventy that the phials of the princes are provided, for each of them is of the weight of seventy shekels; since whatever things are associated and confederate together in the soul, and dear to one another, have a power which is truly attractive, namely, the sacred computation of seventy, which Egypt, the nature which hates virtue, and loves to indulge the passions, is introduced as lamenting; for mourning among them is computed at seventy days. [Genesis 1. 8.]

This number, therefore, as I have said before, is familiar to Moses, but the number of the five outward senses is familiar to him who embraces the body and external things, which it is customary to call Joseph; for he pays such attention to those things, that he presents his own uterine brother, [Genesis xlv. 22], the offspring of the outward sense, for he had no acquaintance at all with those who were only his brothers as sons of the same father, with five exceedingly beautiful garments, thinking the outward senses things of exceeding beauty, and worthy of being adorned and honored by him. (Philo, The Migrations of Abraham 1:202-203)

The last of all the annual festivals is that which is called the feast of tabernacles, which is fixed for the season of the autumnal equinox. And by this festival the lawgiver teaches two lessons, both that it is necessary to honor equality, the first principle and beginning of justice, the principle akin to un-shadowed light; and that it is becoming also, after witnessing the perfection of all the fruits of the year, to give thanks to that Being who has made them perfect.

For the autumn (*metoporon*), as its very name shows is the season which comes after ('meta') the fruits of the year (ten *oporan*) are now gathered into the granaries, on account of the providence of nature which loves the living creatures upon the earth.

And, indeed, the people are commanded to pass the whole period of the feast under tents, either because there is no longer any necessity for remaining in the open air laboring at the cultivation of the land, since there is nothing left in the land, but all is stored up in the barns, on account of the injuries which otherwise might be likely to visit it from the burning of the sun or the violence of the rains. It is also intended as a commemoration of the long journeying of their ancestors, while making which through the desert they lodged in numerous tents for many years, while stopping at each halting place. And it is proper in the time of riches to remember one's poverty, and in an hour of glory to recollect the days of one's disgrace, and at a season of peace to think upon the dangers that are past.

Again, the beginning of this festival is appointed for the fifteenth day of the month, on account of the reason which has already been mentioned respecting the spring season, also that the world may be full, not by day only but also by night, of the most beautiful light, the sun and moon on their rising opposite to one another with uninterrupted light, without any darkness interposing itself between so as to divide them.

And after the festival has lasted seven days, he adds an eighth as a seal, calling it a kind of crowning feast, not only as it would seem to this festival, but also to all the feasts of the year which we have enumerated; for it is the last feast of the year, and is a very stable and holy sort of conclusion, befitting men who have now received all the produce from the land, and who are no longer in perplexity and apprehension respecting any barrenness or scarcity. (Philo, *The Special Laws*, 2:204-211)

Haftorah for Simchat Torah: Joshua 1:1-18

When Moses, servant of Yahweh, was dead, Yahweh spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' adjutant. He said, 'Moses my servant is dead; go now and cross this Jordan, you and this whole people, into the country which I am giving to them (the Israelites). Every place you tread with the soles of your feet I shall give you, as I declared to Moses that I would. From the desert and the Lebanon, to the Great River, the Euphrates (the entire country of the Hittites), and as far as the Great Sea to westward, is to be your territory.

As long as you live, no one will be able to resist you; I shall be with you as I was with Moses; I shall not fail you or desert you. 'Be strong and stand firm, for you are the man to give this people possession of the land which I swore to their ancestors that I would give them. Only be strong and stand very firm and be careful to keep the whole Torah which my servant Moses laid down for you. Do not swerve from this either to right or to left, and then you will succeed wherever you go.

Have the book of this Torah always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may carefully keep everything that is written in it. Then your undertakings will prosper, then you will have success. Have I not told you: Be strong and stand firm? Be fearless and undaunted, for go where you may, Yahweh your Elohim is with you.' Joshua then gave the people's officials this instruction:

'Go through the camp and give the people this order, "Make provisions ready, for in three days' time you will cross this Jordan and go on to take possession of the land which Yahweh your Elohim is giving you as your own." '

Joshua then said to the Reubenites and Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, 'Remember the order given you by Moses, servant of Yahweh: Yahweh your Elohim, in bringing you to rest, has given you the land where we are. Your wives, your little ones and your cattle must stay in the country given you by Moses beyond the Jordan. But all you fighting men must cross in battle formation at the head of your brothers and help them, until Yahweh grants rest to your brothers and you alike, when they too have taken possession of the land which Yahweh your Elohim is giving to them. Then you may go back and take possession of the land which belongs to you and which Moses, servant of Yahweh, has given you on the eastern side of the Jordan.'

They answered Joshua, 'We will do whatever you order us, and wherever you send us we will go. We obeyed Moses in everything, and now we will obey you. Only may Yahweh your Elohim be with you as he was with Moses! If anyone rebels against your orders or will not listen to your commands, let him be put to death. Only be strong and stand firm.' (Joshua 1:1-18 NJB)

Yochanan 7:37-8:59 (Shemini Atzeret only)→This year I will leave reading this part to the viewer.

Special Note: The events in Yochanan 9:1-41, where Yeshua heals another blind man, is on the Shabbat following the end of Sukkot, or Saturday, October 20th in 29 CE (Gregorian time). Ironically this is the time when Jews in Babylon would have recycled back to Genesis 1, even as we do here today, though Israel at this time was on a triennial cycle. Still, I find it very interesting that the blind man gets a new lease on life with new sight at the very moment nearly all Jews over the past 1700 years would have been recycling their time too!

Shemini Etzeret ends up being the most thoroughly documented feast day, second only perhaps to Pesach itself, but who knew it stretched across parts of a whopping two chapters in Yochanan??? But, there is one more reference to Sukkot that we have not yet seen until now:

Here is the patience of the Set Apart believers who keep the commandments of Elohim, and the faith of Yeshua. And I heard a voice from heaven, saying: "Write, 'Blessed are the dead that die in Master YHWH from now on.' 'Yes,' says

the Spirit, 'that they may rest from their toils; for their deeds do accompany them.'" And I looked, and lo, a white cloud; and upon the cloud sat one who was like the Son of man; and on his head was a crown of gold, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another Messenger came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud. And he thrust his sickle over the earth; and the earth was reaped.

And another Messenger came out of the temple that is in heaven, having also a sharp sickle. And another Messenger came out from the altar, having authority over fire. And he cried with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying: "Thrust in your sickle which is sharp, and gather the clusters of the vineyard of the earth, because the grapes of the earth are ripe." And the Messenger thrust in his sickle on the earth and gathered the vintage of the earth, and cast (it) into the wine-press of the wrath of the great Elohim. And the wine-press was trodden, up to the horses' bridles, for a thousand and six hundred furlongs. (Revelation 14:12-20 AENT)

So it seems that we have come full circle from looking at the Sukkot patterns from Genesis! We now I believe can see that Yeshua's Second Coming is at least broadly linked to the Fall Feast season which, as it is also a Day of Master YHWH, is also a time for Him to cut down our enemies and re-purify the world, even as He also purified the First Temple at that time!

Our harvest then is unto eternal life in Mashiyach as time resets again into the Millennial Age. What better time to do this than at Sukkot? And, perhaps this is also why, we have this reading:

And I saw new heavens and a new earth: for the former heaven and the former earth had passed away; and the sea was no more. And I saw the Set Apart city, the New Urishlim, descending from Elohim out of heaven, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. **And I heard a great voice from heaven, which said: "Behold, the tabernacle of Elohim is with men; and he dwells with them:** they will be his people; and Elohim will be with them, an Elohim to them. And every tear will be wiped from their eyes; and there will no more be death, nor mourning, nor wailing; nor will pain be any more; because the former things are passed away." (Revelation 21:1-4-AENT)

And:

"I am Alap and the Taw, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the Completion. Blessed are they who do His (Master YHWH's) Mitzvot that they may have a right to the tree of life and may enter through the gates into the city. Without (will be) dogs and sorcerers, and sexual sinners and manslayers and idolaters, and everyone that loves and does falsehood. I Yeshua have sent my Messenger to testify to you these things before the assemblies. I am the root and offspring of Dawid: like the splendid star of the morning. **And the Spirit and the bride say, 'You come.' And let him that hears, say, 'You come.' And let him**

who thirsts, come; and he that is inclined, let him take the living water freely." (Revelation 22:13-17-AENT)

So the first passage tells us to wait for the return of the ultimate Tabernacle while the second one tells of a feast whose elements include a great wedding and eternal life for all. I'm ready for *that chag!* How about the rest of you? And with all that said and done, only one thing remains:

*CHAG SAMEYACH! Peace and blessings,
Andrew Gabriel Roth, September 12th, 2019*

Next week, we will be exploring our last two Torah portions, Ha'azinu (giver ear) and Ve-Zot Ha-Baracha (the blessing of the tribes) with special end of Sukkot content. Stay tuned!