

**The Truth
About
*The Star!***



David Blanton Ford

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THE TRUTH

ABOUT

THE STAR!



David Blanton Ford

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Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptures are taken from the New King James Bible and revised with Hebrew names (NKJV).

ISBN-13: 978-0-578-40168-3 (e-book)

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Many thanks to my sister Marilyn for her help in finding the cover image (and others), as well as providing her proofreading expertise!

DEDICATED TO YESHUA HAMASHIACH



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INTRODUCTION



The Birth of the Messiah is probably the most beloved story ever told. Every year plays and re-enactments portray this manger scene of baby Yeshua with His parents Joseph and Miriam and the nearby shepherds, who were notified by an angel that that very day a Savior was born who was the Messiah.



The Birth of Yeshua – Carl Heinrich Bloch (~1870)¹

And an integral part of this story is always included – the appearing of Wise Men from the East and a mysterious STAR which led them to the scene.

An amazing fact is that the story of this Star is only recorded once – in the book of Matthew. No other sources mention the Wise Men or the Star. Why?

Our modern version of the Star narrative portrays it as a spectacular event which startled the masses. Incredibly, such an event is recorded as having actually occurred in the year 65 CE!² But why was this Star not seen earlier?

And what about the actual birth date of the Messiah? How can we have such a renowned historical figure, whose birth and death are recognized worldwide, yet we don't have any consensus on the actual dates of His birth or death?

Are these two events just unsolvable conundrums? If only we could pinpoint the date of one of these events, then we would automatically know the date of the other!

Fortunately, there is a solution to this age-old dilemma. The answer lies in the stars! Apparently, one of the main purposes that they were created – was for signs!

Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for **signs**" – Genesis 1:14

Unfortunately, for most of man's existence these signs in the stars have been reserved for the few who diligently observe them and happen to live at the right time and location. But this seems to exclude everyone else who fail to look outside at the right time or live in another era. What about them? This is the vast majority of humanity! Are the stars really signs for them?

For the most part of history, the signs in the stars have only been of limited value to the generation which actually witnessed the event. However, in 1605 everything changed when Johannes Kepler³ developed his first law of planetary motion and published *Astronomia Nova*.⁴ Kepler, using Tycho Brahe's detailed observations of Mars, concluded that all planets move in ellipses with the Sun at one focus. This revelation has allowed future generations to accurately calculate both the past and future positions of the planets. We can now look back in time and see exactly what the signs were and where they were located!

The secrets that had been hidden in the stars have now been unlocked for this final generation. And now we can fully understand this bold declaration:

The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. – Psalm 19:1

Now, let's look back in time and see what REALLY happened!

FOOTNOTES

1. Some have recognized [Carl Heinrich Bloch](#) (Danish, 1834-1890) as the greatest artist ever to interpret the life and death of the Messiah. He was commissioned to produce 23 paintings from the life of Yeshua for the Chapel at Frederiksborg Palace. The originals, painted between 1865 and 1879, are still located in the Palace.
2. W.S. Tsu, "[The Observations of Halley's Comet in Chinese History](#)," *Popular Astronomy*, Vol 42, p.194.
3. [Johannes Kepler](#) was a devout Christian and attempted to calculate the time of the Star of Bethlehem in his 1614 book titled [De Vero Anno \(Latin\)](#). He reasoned that a Jupiter/Saturn conjunction in October of 7 BCE triggered the Star's appearance. He came to this conclusion after witnessing a brilliant supernova near Saturn, Jupiter and Mars on October 11, 1604. Jupiter/Saturn conjunctions occur every 20 years and move around the zodiac in an 800-year cycle. Therefore, he reasoned that the time of Jesus' birth would have been around another of these conjunctions, two 800-year cycles earlier.
4. [Astronomia Nova](#) (New Astronomy)

CHAPTER 1

FOLLOWING THE WRONG STAR



The Jewish Historian Josephus writes about a prophecy of a coming ruler from Israel and the excitement of the Jews when they saw a comet – apparently thinking it was the prophesied star.

We know today that this was the comet Josephus referred to – Comet 1P/Halley. The 1P stands for the first periodic comet ever discovered. This comet makes a pass by the Earth about every 75 years. The Chinese were the first to record its appearance in 240 BCE.



Comet 1P/Halley (1986)¹

This photo is of Comet Halley's last fly-by in 1986. Its appearance then was not as spectacular as it was in ancient times – when it startled the masses. What is very interesting, is that this comet made a close-approach to Earth in the years 65 to 66 CE.

Here is what the Chinese recorded:

In the 8th year of Yung Ping, the 6th month, a comet appeared in Hydra and **passed through Leo**, visible for 56 days . . . In the 12th month, on the day Ou Tse, **a new star appeared in the East sky**.

– *The Annal of Late Han*²

The comet was first seen from late July to mid October 65 CE. After Halley's Comet passed around the Sun, it re-appeared again as a new star on January 31, 66 C.E., five days after perihelion.

Note that it was visible over a six-month period and then had reappeared to be visible for even longer. And most importantly, the comet passed through the constellation of Leo the Lion and re-appeared in the East. As we will see, this was exactly what the Jews were looking for!

Now let's look at Josephus' account of this same comet that the Chinese documented:

Thus there was a star resembling a sword, which stood over the city, and a comet, that continued a whole year.

But now, **what did the most elevate them in undertaking this war**, was an **ambiguous oracle** that was also found in their sacred writings, how,

"about that time, one from their country should become governor of the habitable earth."

– Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews* 6.5.3-4

Josephus is saying that an ambiguous prophecy about a coming ruler from Israel was the main reason for the Jewish rebellion against the Romans!

But why did they rebel at this time? This prophecy had been around for 1,400 years! As we will see, this prophecy not only mentions a coming king from Israel, but it also mentions a STAR! And not just a STAR, but a Star that rises out of a Lion!

The Jews thought that Comet Halley was a sign of their coming Messiah!

They started revolting the year the comet appeared and continued on for three more years. And what did the Romans do?

Josephus states that the Romans leveled both the Temple and Jerusalem to the dirt.

Caesar gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and temple,
... it was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited.

– Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews* 7.1.1

He goes on to say that the Romans even dug up every tree for a 10-mile radius!³

Jerusalem was now a complete desert. The only thing the Romans left was part of the Western wall around the city for their army to camp by and a few towers to show others how strongly fortified Jerusalem used to be. And, of course, they left intact their own Fortress Antonia, which housed the 10th legion – about 5,000 soldiers.⁴



The Destruction of Jerusalem – David Roberts (1850)

Here is what Yeshua had prophesied thirty-eight years earlier:

"For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, **and level you, and your children within you, to the ground;** and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, **because you did not know the time of your visitation.**"

– Luke 19:43-44

Yeshua prophesied exactly what Josephus described – the city was going to be leveled to the ground!

And Why? Because they did not know the time of their visitation.

It was a timing issue. Their timing was off. The Jews had missed the real star that signaled Yeshua's birth sixty-six years earlier, and now they mistook Halley's Comet for the star of the Messiah. Historically comets have never been viewed as signs of kings; comets have always been seen as signs of destruction!

Think about it, this whole tragedy was caused by a comet!

This proves that the star that appeared at Yeshua's birth could NOT have been a spectacular event. If it were, the masses would have revolted sixty-six years earlier! And the Romans would have destroyed Jerusalem sixty-six years earlier, leaving no Temple and no place for the Messiah to minister and be crucified. It would have negated God's whole redemption plan!

God had to make the Star of the Messiah a covert operation!

The reason that we have only the one account in Matthew of the Star and Wise Men is because it was not a well-known event. In fact, the Magi were the only ones to see the star! To everyone else the sky appeared perfectly normal with nothing out of the ordinary. Only the well-trained eye of the avid astronomers could detect the subtle differences that had happened.

FOOTNOTES

1. [Comet 1P/Halley](#) as taken March 8, 1986, by W. Liller, Easter Island, part of the International Halley Watch (IHW) Large Scale Phenomena Network.

2. W.S. Tsu, *"The Observations of Halley's Comet in Chinese History,"* *Popular Astronomy*, Vol 42, p.194.

3. Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews* 6.1.1, They had cut down all the trees that were in the country that adjoined to the city, and that for ninety furlongs round about (10 miles), as I have already related. And truly the very view itself of the country was a melancholy thing; for those places which were before adorned with trees and pleasant gardens were now become a desolate country every way, and its trees were all cut down: nor could any foreigner that had formerly seen Judea and the most beautiful suburbs of the city, and now saw it as a desert, but lament and mourn sadly at so great a change: for the war had laid all the signs of beauty quite waste: nor if any one that had known the place before, had come on a sudden to it now, would he have known it again; but though he were at the city itself, yet would he have inquired for it notwithstanding.

4. Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews* 7.1.1-2, Caesar gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and temple, but should leave as many of the towers standing as were of the greatest eminency; that is, Phasaelus, and Hippicus, and Mariamne; and so much of the wall as enclosed the city on the west side. This wall was spared, in order to afford a camp for such as were to lie in garrison, as were the towers also spared, in order to demonstrate to posterity what kind of city it was, and how well fortified, which the Roman valor had subdued; but for all the rest of the wall, it was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited. . . . But Caesar resolved to leave there, as a guard, the tenth legion, with certain troops of horsemen, and companies of footmen.

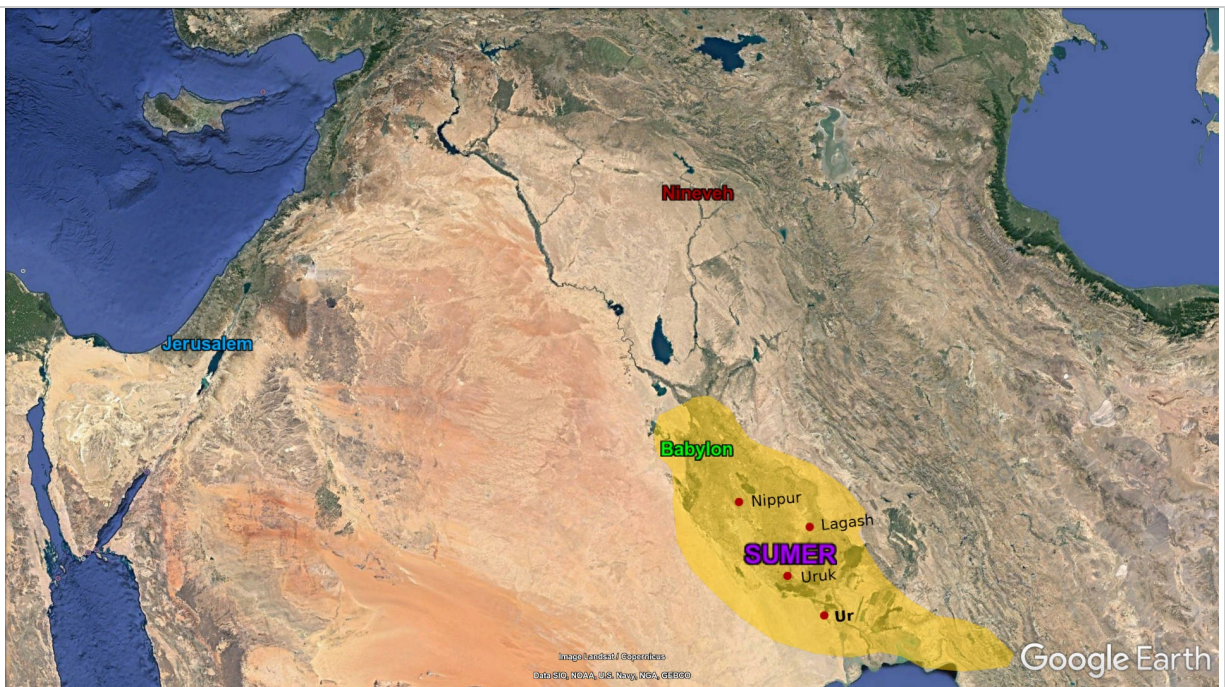
CHAPTER 2

THE WISE MEN



BABYLONIA

The Wise Men had to come from the region of Babylonia. This region is the same area called ancient Sumer. Here we find the earliest cities of civilization. Not only is this area due East of Jerusalem, but it has a well-documented history of producing the world's first astronomers. This area was also very familiar with the Hebrew people. Nebuchadnezzar had taken the entire Israeli nation here as captives 600 years earlier.



Babylonia (Sumer) and the Mid-East

The Wise Men showed that they were familiar with the Messianic prophecy, which they had to have learned from the Jews. It is entirely possible that the Magi could have been Jews themselves. A lot of the Jews remained in Babylon after the captivity and never returned.

The Magi used Babylonian astronomy methods, which could only have come from that area. For example, a star rising with the Sun in the East was of paramount importance to the Babylonian astronomers. The Wise Men could not have been Chinese. The Chinese used different techniques and concentrated on monitoring circumpolar stars – stars that revolve around the North Star. They were not interested in a star's rising with the Sun.¹

And finally, residents in this region were familiar with the God of Israel – Yehovah.² Their first encounter came around 2100 BCE at the tower of Babel, where Yehovah decided to break up their “One World Government” by mixing up their languages.



The Construction of the Tower of Babel – Hendrick van Cleve III (~1575)³

NINEVEH

And 1,300 years later, God asked the prophet Jonah⁴ to go to the area. Jonah was reluctant to go at first, but after spending three days inside a great fish, he had a change of attitude.



(Left) The Prophet Jonah – James Tissot (~1890)

Yehovah sent Jonah specifically to Nineveh, the largest city in the world, located two hundred miles to the north of Babylon on the Eastern bank of the Tigris River. Nineveh was the capital of the Neo-Assyrian Empire – the largest empire in the world at that time.

Jonah was now highly motivated to preach with great fervor.

Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three-day journey in extent. And Jonah began to enter the city **on the first day's walk**. Then he cried out and said, "**Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!**"

– Jonah 3:3-4

Jonah had ventured only one-third of the way across Nineveh. The following day just before noon, Nineveh experienced a Total Solar Eclipse!



The Total Solar Eclipse of Nineveh – June 15, 763 BCE⁵

This must have absolutely terrified the people!

Documenting the exact time of ancient eclipses is not an exact science. NASA's data estimates that the Earth's rotation today has slowed down by about 6 hours from 2,700 years ago. This estimate could easily be off by an hour, which would shift the eclipse shadow right on top of Nineveh. But even as it is pictured, Nineveh would still have had a 99% eclipse, being only 30 miles away from the total eclipse shadow.

So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, **Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God;** yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?

– Jonah 3:5-9

This shows the degree of panic that had engulfed the people. Even the animals had to fast! Nowhere else has such a dramatic response been recorded. These guys were serious! And terrified! It also shows the degree of respect that they had towards Yehovah and His power to destroy them.

Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

– Jonah 3:10

This gave Nineveh a 150-year reprieve and allowed King Ashurbanipal, one hundred years later, to collect more than 30,000 clay tablets from all over Mesopotamia into the world's first modern library. The library's cuneiform tablets were cataloged by subject and stored in separate reading rooms, which became the pattern for future libraries.⁶

DANIEL INTERPRETS NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM

In 612 BCE Nineveh was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar II's father Nabopolassar⁷ with a confederation of Medes, Persians and Babylonians. The capital of this Neo-Babylonian Empire was moved two hundred miles south, to Babylon, located on the banks of the Euphrates River.

Nebuchadnezzar II ascended to the throne in 605 BCE. Shortly thereafter he made his first siege of Jerusalem and took Daniel and his friends back to Babylon. Daniel was soon faced with the impossible task of interpreting a dream that Nebuchadnezzar couldn't even remember himself – or face death with all

the other wise men of Babylon!



Daniel Interprets Nebuchadnezzar's Dream – Grant Romney Clawson

"You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king.

You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of Heaven has given you a

YOU, O KING, are a KING OF KINGS. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all – you are this head of gold.

But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.

And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.

Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.

And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile.

As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, **they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another,**⁸ just as iron does not mix with clay.

And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold – the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure."

Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should present an offering and incense to him.

The king answered Daniel, and said, **"Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret."**

Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts; **and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon.**

Also Daniel petitioned the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.

– Daniel 2:31-49

THE FIERY FURNACE

However, Daniel's three friends Hananiah (Shadrach), Mishael (Meshach), and Azariah (Abed-Nego) soon got into trouble with the arrogant Nebuchadnezzar when they refused to worship a ninety-foot-tall gold statue – they were thrown into a furnace!

Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up?

Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, good! But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?"

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up."

Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and

commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated.

And he commanded certain mighty men of valor who were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, and cast them into the burning fiery furnace. Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

Therefore, because the king's command was urgent, and the furnace exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.



Three Men in the Fiery Furnace – William Maughan

Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?"

They answered and said to the king, "True, O king."

"Look!" he answered, **"I see four men loose, walking in the midst of**

the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and spoke, saying, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here." Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego came from the midst of the fire.

And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king's counselors gathered together, and they saw these men on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them.

Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God!"

"Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who can deliver like this."

Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.

– Daniel 3:14-30

THE DEN OF LIONS

When Daniel was about eighty years old, a new king Darius became ruler. Darius was tricked into making a law that no one could worship any other god for thirty days.

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.

Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. And they went before the king, and spoke concerning the king's decree: **"Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?"** The king answered and said, "The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter."

So they answered and said before the king, "That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, does not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day."

And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

Then these men approached the king, and said to the king, "Know, O king, that it is the law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed."

So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you."



Daniel in the Lion's Den – Briton Rivière (1872)⁹

Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed.

Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him.

Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?"



Daniel's Answer to the King – Briton Rivière (1890)

Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever!

My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you."

Then the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God.

And the king gave the command, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions – them, their children, and their wives; and the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den.

Then King Darius wrote: To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you.

I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the living God, And steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed, And His dominion shall endure to the end.

He delivers and rescues, And He works signs and wonders In heaven and on earth, Who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.

So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

– Daniel 6:18-28

Daniel stayed in positions of high authority all his life. He was the chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon. Future astronomers would certainly have learned about him and the prophecies of his God.

FOOTNOTES

1. [Ancient Chinese Astronomy](#), The first Chinese records of astronomy are from about 3000 BC, and they used the [circumpolar stars](#) as their reference point for the heavens, unlike the Indo-Europeans who used observations based upon the rising and setting of celestial bodies on the ecliptic and the horizon. In order to mark the passage of time and the seasons, the Chinese primarily used the orientation of the Big Dipper constellation relative to the pole star in early evening. The Chinese were meticulous in recording other astronomical phenomena, such as comets, sunspots, novas, and solar flares, long before any other culture made any such observations.

2. Nehemia Gordon, [Hebrew Voices #61 – 1,000 Manuscripts with Yehovah](#), Nehemia Gordon celebrates the incredible milestone of finding God's Holy Name with full vowels in over 1,000 Hebrew Bible manuscripts. [Hebrew Voices #47 – A Disastrous Misunderstanding of the Name Yehovah](#), Nehemia Gordon explains the meaning of Yehovah, the mistake people make thinking it has to do with “destruction”, and how Yahweh in Gnostic sources is the god of chaos. [The Mistake That Got It Right – PART 1: How Hebrew Scribes Accidentally Revealed the True Pronunciation of God’s Holy Name Yehovah](#).

3. In the 1500s there was a great interest among many to paint the tower of Babel but Hendrick van Cleve's ["Construction of the Tower of Babel"](#) is notably the best depiction of

them all. [Hendrick van Cleve III](#) (Flemish, 1525 - 1595) was known for his ability to paint landscapes as well as being a distinguished engraver. His pictures are distinguished by an uncommon lightness of touch and an excellent tone of color.

4. [Jonah](#) lived during the eighth century BCE, in the Northern Kingdom under the reign of Jeroboam II (793 - 753 BCE) (2 Kings 14:25). The Total Eclipse of 763 BCE fits perfectly during this period!

5. Solar Eclipse of 7-15-763 BCE, [View on Google Interactive Maps](#), View NASA's data (See: [Catalog #02937](#)), The Sun's altitude was 74 degrees high and the path width was 204 km (127 miles). The Eclipse only lasted 5 minutes. NASA admits to the [uncertainty](#) of the longitude shift by an error of 1.79 degrees or 120 miles in this case. Since the Total Eclipse Shadow is only 30 miles North of Nineveh it is very probable that Nineveh was in the direct shadow of the eclipse! Calculating ancient eclipses is not an exact science. Note that in this eclipse NASA has Delta T = 21,211 seconds = 5.89 hours. This is the ASSUMED time loss by the Earth slowing down its rotation over the last 2,780 years. Thus, nearly 6 hours are subtracted from the calculations for the position of this eclipse! We only have 400 years of accurate data since the invention of the telescope in 1608, so approximations of ancient eclipses earlier than 2000 BCE are essentially meaningless.

6. Among the works found in the Library of [Ashurbanipal](#) were the [Enuma Elish \(pdf\)](#) (audio) (the Babylonian Epic of Creation) and the great epic tale of [Gilgamesh \(pdf\)](#) (audio), the oldest adventure story extant, which includes a story about a Great Flood. The library's discovery has since been considered one of the greatest and most important archaeological finds in history. Ashurbanipal claimed to be able to read cuneiform script in both Akkadian and Sumerian and his collection of writings was vast.

7. [Nabopolassar](#) (658 BCE - 605 BCE)

8. This amazing statement implies that this final kingdom will be ruled by a race of beings who do not have the same DNA as normal men! This hybrid of beings with angelic-human DNA will control the fourth kingdom. The apparent plan will be for them to pull off this deception as an UFO invasion, claiming that they are the source of the human race. This is what Yeshua alluded to: **"Take heed that you not be deceived.** For many will come in My name, saying, **'I AM He,'** and, **'The time has drawn near.'** Therefore do not go after them." – Luke 21:8. This same scenario happened before the flood. "There were giants on the earth in those days, **and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them.** Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown." – Genesis 6:4. Yeshua said that history will repeat itself in the last days: "And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man" – Luke 17:26. See: [Vatican astronomers are searching for alien life, say authors](#). Brother Guy Consolmagno, who has also been called the papal astronomer, told the authors some astounding information during five interviews. **"He says without apology that very soon the nations of the world are going to look to the aliens for their salvation,"**- said Horn. Consolmagno also gave the authors private Vatican documents which reveal much of the

thinking of high-level theologians and astronomers within the Church. Horn said these documents show that they believe that we are soon to be visited by an alien savior from another world. See also: [Pope Francis says he would baptise aliens: 'Who are we to close doors?'](#) Pope Francis has said that he would be willing to baptise aliens if they came to the Vatican, asking “who are we to close doors” to anyone – even Martians. While Francis appears to have taken the argument to its logical extreme, this is not the first time that the Vatican has raised the prospect of baptising extra-terrestrial beings. Speaking at the British Science Festival in 2010, one of then-Pope Benedict XVI’s astronomers said he would baptise an alien “if they asked.” While he accepted that the chances of ever getting such an opportunity were slim, [Guy Consolmagno](#) said: “Any entity – no matter how many tentacles it has – has a soul.”

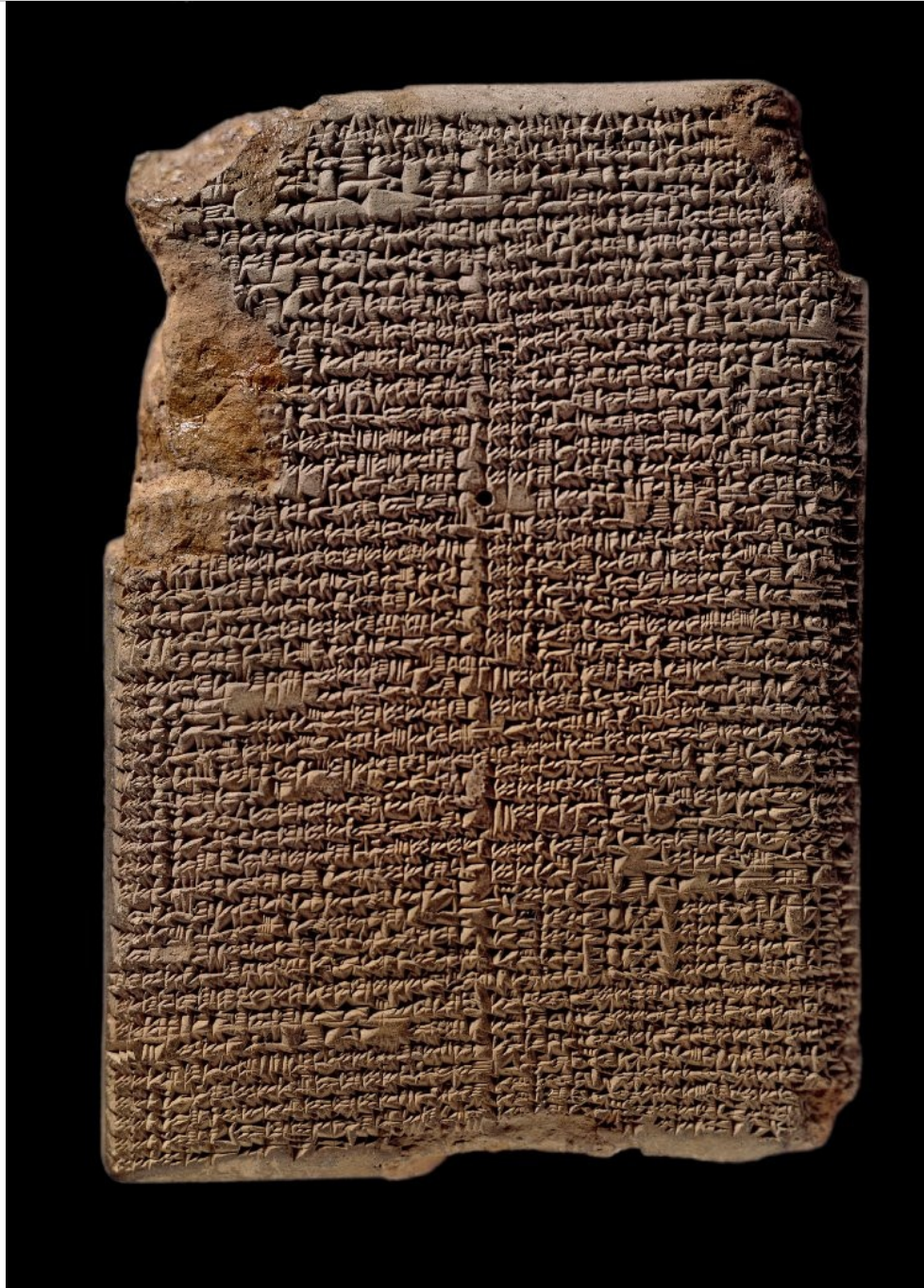
[9. Briton Rivière](#) (British, 1840 - 1920). Riviere is known best for his animal paintings which started in 1865, with *Sleeping Deerhound*, a series of paintings of animal-subjects and which occupied much of the rest of his life. In an August 4, 1897 interview titled "How I paint animals," Riviere explained, "The only way to paint wild animals is to gradually accumulate a large number of studies and a great knowledge of the animal itself, before you can paint its picture ... I paint from dead animals as well as from live ones. I have had the body of a fine lioness in my studio ... I have done a great deal of work in the dissecting rooms at the Zoological Gardens from time to time."

CHAPTER 3

THE MINDSET OF THE MAGI



THE BABYLONIAN STAR CATALOG



Babylonian Star Catalog Mul Apin (~1000 BCE) – British Museum¹

Cuneiform clay tablets have been discovered from the library of Ashurbanipal in Nineveh as well as this one from Southern Iraq which contain the most comprehensive Babylonian star and constellation catalog in existence. The information on these tablets is just about all that we have on the

knowledge of the early astronomers from 612 BCE – back to the beginning of Creation.

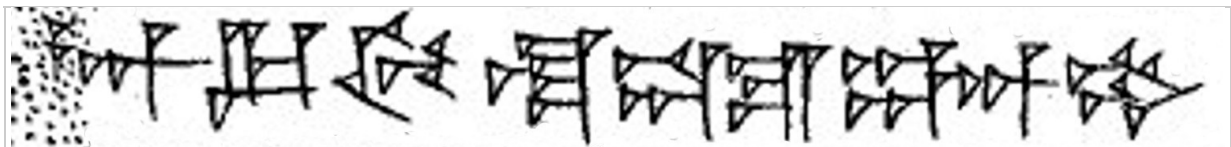
They are named the Mul Apin Tablets after the first two words which refer to the first star on their list – the Plow Star. This is referring to Triangulum which is shaped like a plow. And it is right above Aries, which today is considered the first constellation on the zodiac.

A closer look at this star catalog gives us some pertinent information on the mindset of the magi.^{2 3}

THE KING STAR

In the first column, line number nine, we find the mention of a King Star in front of the Lion.

CONSTELLATION – LION – FRONT – STAR – KING



Mul Apin – Column 1 Line 9

Which can be more easily translated as **“The KING STAR in front of the LION constellation.”**

The cuneiform symbols for King Star are pronounced MUL LUGAL.

MUL – meaning “sparkle” (i.e., a *STAR* or a *CONSTELLATION*)

LUGAL – (LU is “man” and GAL means “great”) – meaning “KING”



An interesting point about these symbols is that they are not Babylonian, but rather ancient Sumerian, meaning that this has been the name for the brightest star in the breast of the Lion since the beginning of civilization.

For the first 4,000 years everyone knew about the King Star!

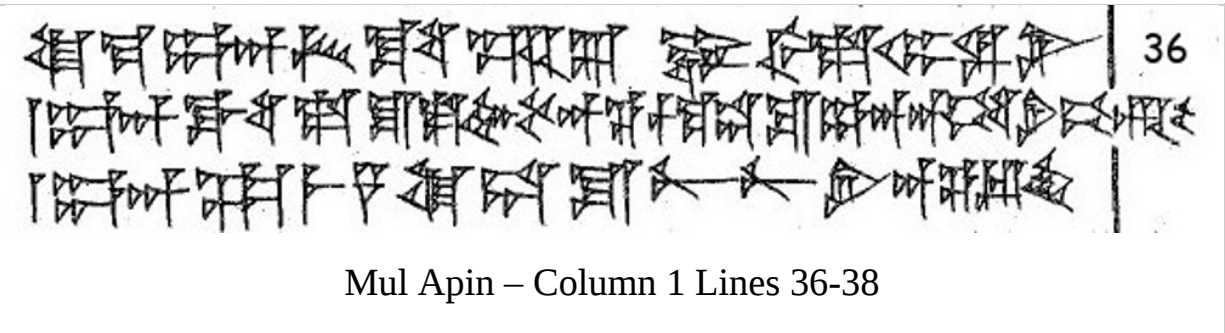
There really should be no question about what star the Wise Men were watching!

JUPITER THE STAR OF MARDUK

Continuing on with column one, lines 36-38, we find a reference to Jupiter as the Star of Marduk.

One big star – (although) its light is dim – divides the sky in half and stands there: (that is) the star of the god Marduk, at the crossing

point. Jupiter, (it) keeps changing its position and crosses the sky.



The cuneiform symbols for Jupiter (line 38) are SAG.ME.GAR.



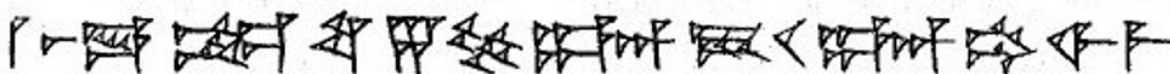
SAG means “head,” ME means “silence” and GAR means “place.” So they called Jupiter **“Head of the Silent Place.”** Interestingly, Marduk was Head of the Pantheon – The Temple for all the gods!

This shows that Jupiter was seen as Marduk.

DATES WHEN THE STARS RISE WITH THE SUN

Column 2, line 44, tells us when the King Star rises with the Sun.

**ON – ABU – 5 – STAR – BOW – AND – STAR –
KING – VISIBLE**



Mul Apin – Column 2 Line 44

In 1200 BCE, the King Star rose with the Sun on July 20 (Julian Calendar), which was the 5th of Av on the Hebrew Calendar, which is equal to Abu in Sumerian-Akkadian cuneiform. This gives us a rough idea of when this heliacal (pronounced ha-lie-a-cal) rising data was written – somewhere around 1200 BCE.

In 2018, The King Star rose with the Sun on August 23, which is the 12th of Elul on the Hebrew Calendar. So the rising has been delayed by more than a month over 3,000 years. Actually, on our current Gregorian calendar it equals to a 45-day difference.

In total there are four sections of the Mul Apin Catalog that deal with when the stars rise with the Sun.

CALCULATING A STAR'S RISING WITH THE SUN

- Mul Apin Section 4 – Day of the month that a star rises with the Sun
- Mul Apin Section 5 – Constellation positions when a star rises with the Sun
- Mul Apin Section 6 – The days between each star's rising with the Sun

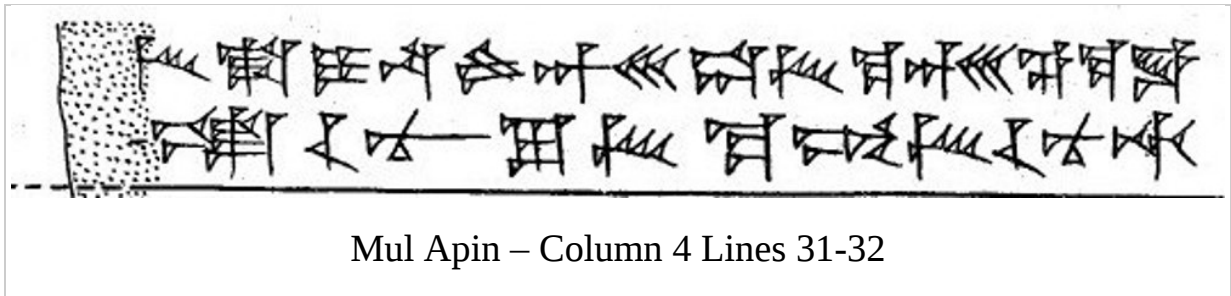
- Mul Apin Section 7 – Stars that are at the meridian when a star rises with the Sun

A Star's rising with the Sun was a very important part of Babylonian Astronomy!

STARS ON THE PATH OF THE MOON

Column 4, lines 31-32, read:

The gods which stand on the Path of the Moon god, through which the Moon passes in the course of a month and which it touches are:



Included in this list of gods (constellations) which are on the path of the Moon (god) is the Lion Constellation. Line 34 lists Mul UR.GU.LA.



UR means “dog” GU means “great” and LA means “display.” So, the great dog is a Lion!

This was another extremely important part of Babylonian Astronomy. The Moon god was their principal deity in the heavens.

MUL APIN STAR CATALOG SUMMARY

The Mul Apin Star Catalog defines the basics of Babylonian astronomy.

These tablets are the most comprehensive ancient star catalog in existence. They give us the following important information concerning the mindset of the Wise Men.

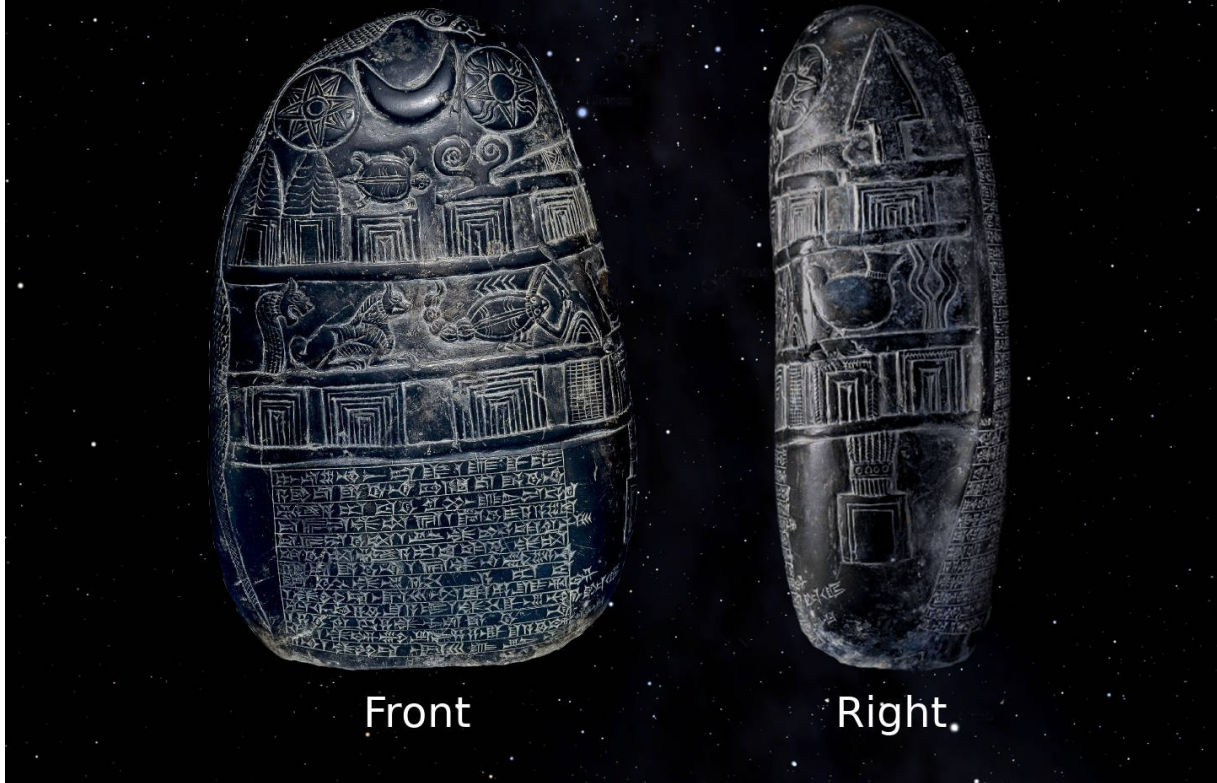
- The Moon is a god.

- Constellations are gods.
- Planets are gods.
- **It is very important to be on the path of the Moon.**
- **The Lion Constellation is on the path of the Moon!**
- It is very important which stars the Moon touches (eclipses).
- **It is very important when a Star rises with the Sun.**
- It is very important to be on the path of the Sun.
- **The brightest Star on the path of the Sun is called the King Star!**
- **The King Star is located in the Lion Constellation.**

THE KUDURRU BOUNDARY STONE

Another insight into the importance of the celestial bodies can be gleaned from a look at this boundary marker from a rich suburb in Southern Babylonia from around 1100 BCE.

Kudurru Boundary Stone - 1100 BCE



Kudurru Boundary Stone (1100 BCE) – British Museum⁴

Notice the eight-pointed star of Ishtar (Venus), the goddess of fertility and war on the left, the crescent of the Moon-god Sin in the center and the solar disc of the Sun-god Shamash on the right. You have to look on the right-hand side of the marker to see the triangular spade of Marduk (Jupiter). And to the left of Marduk is the wedge-shaped stylus of Nabu (Mercury), the god of writing.



The symbols of the important Mesopotamian gods are therefore the most prominent: **The star of Ishtar, the Crescent Moon and the Solar disc.** In Babylonian mythology, however, the Moon god is considered to be the father of both Ishtar and the Sun. **So the Moon really had the highest status of all!** This should not be surprising, since we today have one-fourth of the world's population who still worship the Crescent Moon god! And most of them live in this same geographical region!

This is perhaps the most important clue of all. The Magi were keenly watching the path of the Moon – their most important deity! If we want to know what they were all excited about, we have to take a look at the path of the Moon!

FOOTNOTES

1. [MUL APIN Tablet, British Museum](#), (Museum number 86378) Length: 3.25 inches, Width: 2.375 inches. Date (1000 BCE - 500 BCE), Clay tablet with two columns of inscription. Astronomical treatise, tablet 1 of the series Mul-Apin ("The Plough Star") which includes a list of the three divisions of the heavens, the dates (in the ideal 360-day year) of the rising of principal stars and of those which rise and set together, and the

constellations in the path of the Moon; nearly complete.

2. Translations of the Mul Apin Tablets, [Dr. Shepherd Simpson.](#), [Gary D. Thompson](#)

3. Cuneiform Resources, [Cuneiform Dictionary](#), [Unicode Cuneiform Fonts](#)

4. [Kudurru Boundary Stone](#), British Museum (Museum number 102485), Height: 14.25 inches, Length: 9 inches, Width: 5 inches. From: [Google Arts & Culture](#):The cuneiform inscription on this kudurru records the granting by Eanna-shum-iddina, the governor of the Sealand, of five gur of corn land in the district of Edina in south Babylonia to a man called Gula-eresh. The boundaries of the land are laid out; the surveyor is named as Amurru-bel-zeri and the transfer completed by two high officials who are also named. Nine gods are invoked to protect the monument, along with seventeen divine symbols. The symbols of the important Mesopotamian gods are most prominent: the solar disc of the Sun-god Shamash, the crescent of the Moon-god Sin and the eight-pointed star of Ishtar, goddess of fertility and war. The square boxes beneath these signs represent altars supporting the symbols of gods, including horned headdresses, the triangular spade of Marduk, and the wedge-shaped stylus of Nabu, the god of writing. A prominent snake is shown on many kudurru and may, like many of the symbols, be related to the constellations. The text ends with curses on anyone who removes, ignores or destroys the kudurru. The Sealand was one of the wealthiest regions of Babylonia.

CHAPTER 4

THE PROPHECY ABOUT A STAR



THE PROPHECY OF BALAAM

The Wise Men apparently had access to a prophecy in the Book of Numbers by a prophet called Balaam. This prophecy was so popular that it has been found in four different Dead Sea Scrolls.¹ This was also the same prophecy earlier mentioned by Josephus, which caused the revolt against the Romans.² But unlike the Jewish revolutionaries, the Magi were able to correctly interpret it!

The Moabite king Balak hired the prophet Balaam to curse Israel in 1407 BCE.³ This was the fortieth year of their wandering in the wilderness. This same year Israel would enter the promised land under a new leader, Joshua. And now, just before they were ready to gain the victory, a famous prophet is hired to curse them.

The name Balaam {bil-awm} means "**not of the people!**"

Balaam was not a Hebrew! However, he claimed that Yehovah was his God!

Then Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, "Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, **I could not go beyond the word of Yehovah my God**, to do less or more."

– Numbers 22:18

Balaam's reputation was noteworthy. Balak told him:

"Therefore please come at once. curse this people for me. for they are too

mighty for me. Perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land, for I know that he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed."

– Numbers 22:6

Balak took Balaam to three different locations, trying to find a good one from which to better curse Israel. At the second location, Mount Pisgah, Balaam started to prophesy about a king.

"Yehovah his God is with him (Israel), And the shout of a King is among them."

– Numbers 23:21

Seeing that this location was not working, and Balaam seemed to be blessing Israel – not cursing them – Balak took Balaam to the third and final vantage point, Mount Peor. This is where Balaam gave the most precise details of a coming Messiah.

And Balaam raised his eyes, and saw Israel encamped according to their tribes; and the Spirit of God came upon him.

"How lovely are your tents, O Jacob! Your dwellings, O Israel! . . . God brings him out of Egypt; He has strength like a wild ox; He shall consume the nations, his enemies; He shall break their bones And pierce them with his arrows."

'He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him?' (Genesis 49:9)

– Numbers 24:2-5, 8-9

The phrase "He bows down, he lies down as a lion: And as a lion, who shall rouse him?" is word for word the same blessing that Jacob gave to his fourth son, Judah! However, Balaam seems to be implying that this now applies to all of Israel.

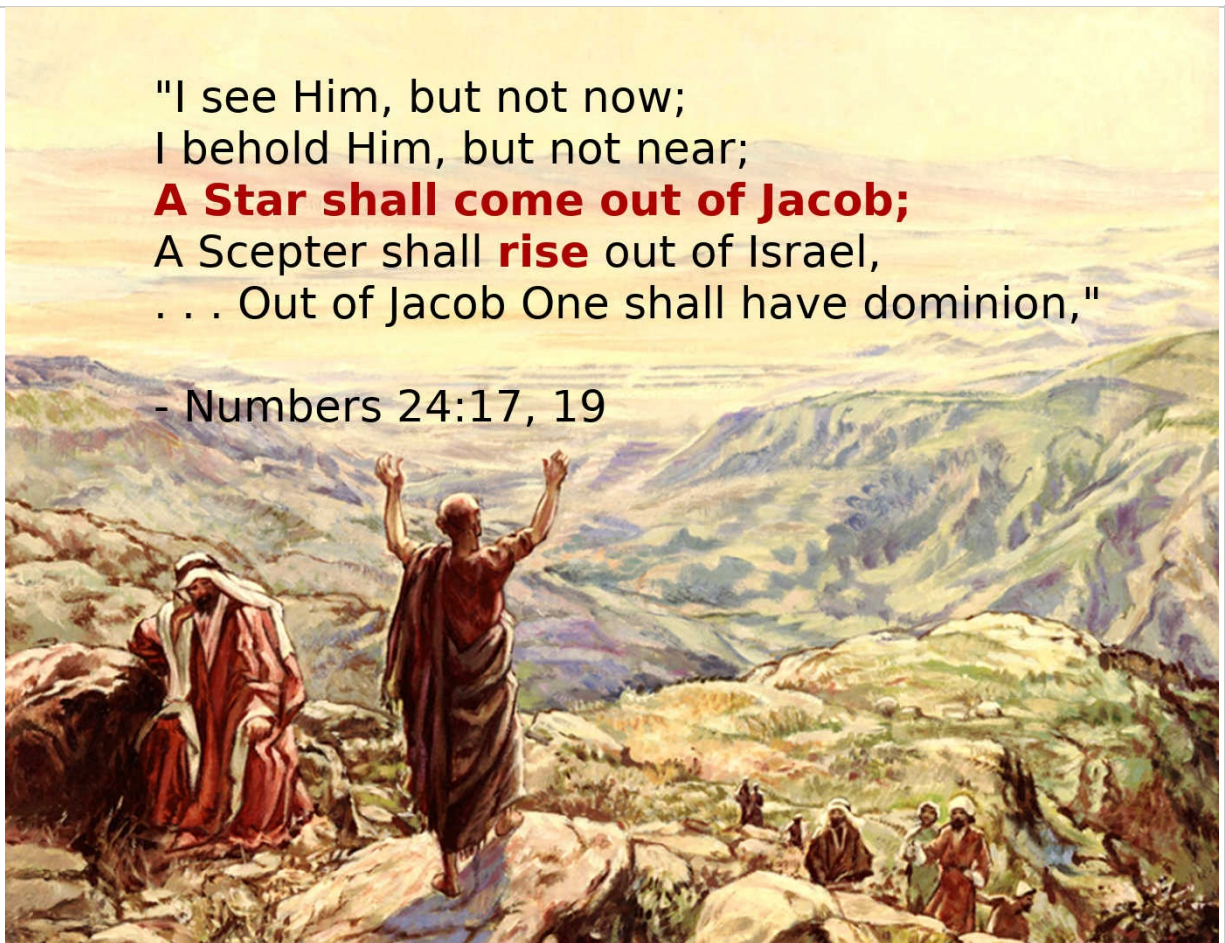
Balaam continues . . .

"Blessed is he who blesses you, And cursed is he who curses you."
(Genesis 12:3)

– Numbers 24:9

Balaam has just repeated the same prophecy verbatim for what God had said to Abram in Genesis!

Now Balaam gets to the part about a star . . .



King Balak dejectedly listens to Balaam prophesy

"I see Him, but not now;
I behold Him, but not near;
A Star shall come out of Jacob;
A Scepter shall **rise** out of Israel,

. . . Out of Jacob One shall have dominion."

– Numbers 24:17, 19

BALAAM PROPHESED THAT:

- **JACOB (ISRAEL) IS A CROUCHING LION**
- **A STAR SHALL COME OUT OF THE CROUCHING LION (JACOB)**
- **A FUTURE KING (SCEPTER) WILL RISE FROM ISRAEL (THE LION)**

Now if you were a Babylonian Astronomer, and you heard about a crouching Lion with a Star coming out of it which will be a King and it will rise – what would you think?



The Constellation Leo – from the 1690 atlas *Firmamentum Sobiescianum* ⁴

It would be obvious! **This prophecy is alluding to the Lion constellation, which is portrayed as a crouching Lion!** The Lion constellation also has the **King Star** which was mentioned. **And in Babylonian astronomy the most important time was when the King Star rises with the Sun – in the East!**

FOOTNOTES

1. [The Star Oracle of Balaam, Dead Sea Scrolls](#). It appears in the War Scroll (1QM 11.6-

17), the Damascus Document (CD 7.19-21), the Messianic Testimonia (4Q175 1:9-13), and the Priestly Blessings for the Last Days (1QSb 5:27). - Wise, Abegg and Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation*.

2. Thus there was a star resembling a sword, which stood over the city, and a comet, that continued a whole year. . . . But now, what did the most elevate them in undertaking this war, was an ambiguous oracle that was also found in their sacred writings, how, "about that time, one from their country should become governor of the habitable earth." - Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews* 6.5.3-4

3. Bible Timeline 1407 BC

4. This is a mirrored-image adaptation of Barry Lawrence Ruderman's [Leo \(Stars heightened in gold\)](#) - an enhancement of the constellation Leo from the 1690 atlas by Johannes Hevelius, *Firmamentum Sobiescianum*. The *Hevelius Firmamentum* was the first star atlas to rival Bayer's (1603) *Uranometria* in accuracy, utility, innovation, and influence. The star positions for the charts were derived from Hevelius's own star catalog, based on his own observations, which was first published along with the atlas. It is unique among the Grand Atlases in choosing to depict the constellations as they would appear on a globe, that is, from the outside looking in, rather than from a geocentric point of view. See also: [Uranographia](#) by Johannes Hevelius (1690) and [Uranometria](#) by Johann Bayer (1603.)

CHAPTER 5

THE KING STAR RISES!



On the morning of July 28, 3 BCE, the King Star rose with the Sun – in the East! It was deemed to be very important which other planets were near a star upon its heliacal rising.

This year Jupiter was only 9 degrees away from the King Star and Venus was close-by in the Crayfish (Cancer) constellation 24 degrees above it. These were two of the most prominent gods and it would have been considered very favorable for their close proximity to the King Star.

With the Sun, Jupiter and Venus all near the King Star – the only major god left was the Moon-god, and the astronomers must have been anxious to see what he would do. On August 9, 3 BCE, the Moon eclipsed the King Star with both Jupiter and Venus close-by (7° and 9° respectively)! Since the prophecy 1,400 years earlier, this was only the fifty-fifth time that the Moon had eclipsed the King Star upon its first pass after the star's rising with the Sun – and the only time that Jupiter and Venus were nearby too!¹

But the Moon was not finished showing off.

The following day the Moon eclipsed the Sun too! This Annular Solar Eclipse was not visible in the Mid-East since it occurred in the middle of the Pacific Ocean off the West coast of Mexico. However, it is likely that the Magi knew that it would happen since the Babylonians knew of the 223-synodic-month eclipse cycle.²

To the Babylonians – a Solar Eclipse meant the death of the king. And with it occurring in the Lion (Israel) – it signaled the impending death of King Herod!

Then two days later Venus converged with Jupiter – only one-fifteenth of a degree separated them! The gods seemed to be in agreement that something important was about to happen. As Jupiter approached the King Star, the Moon made another pass. On September 6, 3 BCE, the Moon eclipsed Jupiter!³

In only 28 days, the Moon had eclipsed the King Star, the Sun and now Jupiter. Additionally, Venus had converged with Jupiter too! This sequence of events had not happened in 1,400 years!

Eight days later, on September 14, 3 BCE, Jupiter made its closest approach to the King Star – only one-third of a degree away! Jupiter's closest approach to the King Star was visible from Babylon. It occurred at the same time that the King Star was rising in the East at 2 am. Now, all the major gods had blessed the King Star!



Jupiter's Closest Approach to the King Star – Stellarium ⁴

This is most likely the event that signaled the birth of the Messiah. Jupiter was seen as Marduk, head of the Pantheon, and in this way it outranked even the Moon-god. Additionally, Jupiter only passes through the Lion constellation once every twelve years – a fairly rare occurrence, and therefore very significant.

And, most importantly, we have to look for an event that repeats itself, as the Magi reportedly saw something connected with the King Star that occurred more than once! As we will see, Jupiter experiences retrograde motion every year, and from 3 BCE - 2 BCE it passed the King Star three times!

It is worth noting that twelve years earlier, in 15 BCE, Jupiter was also in the Lion constellation, and it made three similar passes by the King Star over an eight-month period – the first being on October 7! Why didn't the Wise Men go looking for the Messiah then? Obviously, it was all the other factors that were involved, especially the path of the Moon, and not just the motion of Jupiter.

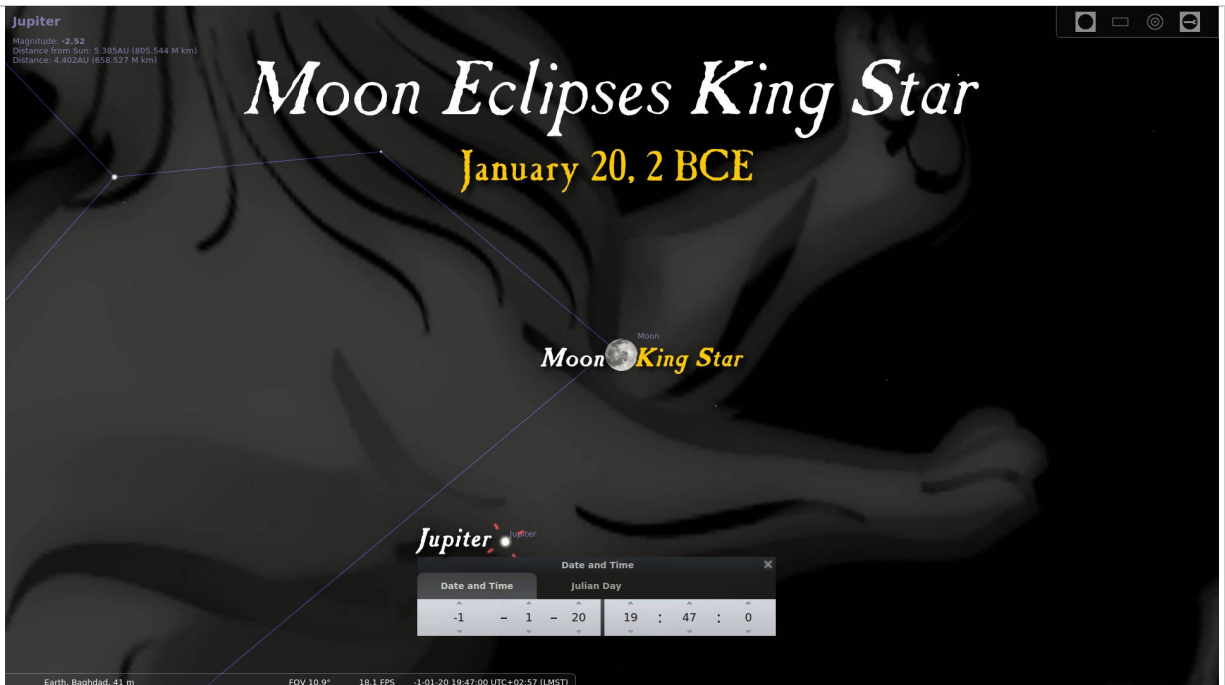
As if the Magi weren't excited enough, the drama continued to unfold as they watched the King Star in the months to come. On October 3, 3 BCE, the Moon eclipsed the King Star a second time!⁵ The Moon just missed the King Star on the following pass (October 30), but on November 27, 3 BCE, it eclipsed the King Star for a third time!

This was actually the first time that the Moon-King Star eclipse could be seen from Babylon as it occurred at midnight – three hours after rising in the East. If for any reason the Astronomers had not known about the other two Moon-King Star eclipses, they definitely had reason to be excited now!

The Moon missed the King Star the next month of December, but now it was obvious that Jupiter had entered retrograde motion and was headed back towards the King Star!

If the Wise Men had not already decided to make the journey to Jerusalem by now, the Moon's next pass would have changed their minds. On January 20, 2 BCE, two hours after the King Star had risen in the East, at 7:30 pm just after sunset – a full Moon eclipsed the King Star for the fourth time! And this time Jupiter was only 3 degrees away – and headed back towards the King Star! And to top it all off, the Moon had just experienced a partial lunar eclipse five hours before eclipsing the King Star.

This was the second time that a Moon-King Star eclipse was visible from Babylon and it most likely was the deciding factor to make the journey to Jerusalem. The Astronomers would later tell everyone about seeing the Star of the Messiah in the East. **This was now the second time that they had seen the King Star rising in the East under a full eclipse by the Moon!**⁶



The King Star Rising in the East Under an Eclipse by a Full Moon – Jupiter Nearby

FOOTNOTES

1. This eclipse of the King Star by the Moon was not visible in Babylon. They would have only been able to see the Moon eight degrees away from the King Star just before sunrise. The eclipse occurred at 11:30 pm after the King Star had already set in the West. This doesn't mean that the astronomers were not aware of what had happened as the trajectory of the Moon was probably obvious.

2. *Saros Cycle Dates and Related Babylonian Astronomical Texts*, A. Aaboe, J. P. Britton, J. A. Henderson, O. Neugebauer and A. J. Sachs: *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 81, No. 6 (1991), pp. 1-75. "The Saros Cycle texts include dates from thirteen 18-year cycles, which extend from 490 BCE to 257 BCE. The dates in each column, in all three texts, differ by a multiple of 223 months. These are obviously not observational records, since at a given location eclipses materialize at only a fraction of the eclipse possibilities. Such texts could have served to identify eclipse possibilities." See also: [Saros Astronomy](#), The saros is a period of 223 synodic months (approximately 6585.3211 days, or 18 years 11 days, 8 hours), that can be used to predict eclipses of the Sun and Moon. One saros period after an eclipse, the Sun, Earth, and Moon return to approximately the same

relative geometry, a near straight line, and a nearly identical eclipse will occur, in what is referred to as an eclipse cycle. A sar is one half of a saros.

3. This Moon-Jupiter eclipse was not visible in Babylon as it happened three hours before their rising in the East. However, it would have been obvious that it had occurred because when the Moon became visible, rising at 3 am, it was only one degree away from Jupiter and one-third of a degree away from the King Star!

4. [Stellarium](#) is a free open source planetarium for your computer. It shows a realistic sky in 3D, just like what you see with the naked eye, binoculars or a telescope.

5. Like the first Moon-King Star eclipse, this second eclipse was not visible in Babylon as it happened at noon.

6. **Four major events happened just as the King Star was rising in the East!** Both of the last two Moon eclipses of the King Star (as viewed from Babylon) occurred as the King Star had just risen in the East! (November 27, 3 BCE, at midnight and January 20, 2 BCE, at 7:30 pm). The King Star's initial rising with the Sun (July 28, 3 BCE) also happened in the East! Additionally, Jupiter's first Close Approach to the King Star (as viewed from Babylon) occurred just as the King Star had risen in the East at 2 am September 14, 3 BCE!

CHAPTER 6

THE ARRIVAL OF THE MAGI



A slow moving caravan can travel 25 miles per day at 2 mph. However, the Magi probably traveled faster than that.¹

The 550-mile trip from Babylonia to Jerusalem, mostly through the desert, would take 22 days.² If the Wise Men left on the 21st of January they would arrive at the latest on the 12th of February.



The Magi Journeying – James Tissot (~1890)³

And after Y'shua was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod

And when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold astrologers from the east arrived in Jerusalem saying,

**“Where is the One Who has been born King of the Jewish People?
For we saw His Star in the East and we came to pay homage to Him.”**



Herod – James Tissot (~1890)

And when King Herod heard, he was disturbed and all Jerusalem with him, and gathering all the high priests and scribes of the people he inquired from them where the Messiah was to be born. And they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it has been written through the prophet:

And you Bethlehem, country of Judea, you are by no means least among the princes of Judea: for out of you will come a ruler, who will shepherd My people Israel." (Micah 5:1)



The Magi in the House of Herod – James Tissot (~1890)

Then Herod, having secretly called the astrologers, ascertained from them the time of the revealing of the star, and sending them into Bethlehem he said, "When you go, you must inquire carefully concerning the child: as soon as you would find Him. you must report to me right

away, then when I come I shall pay homage to Him.”



The Star of Bethlehem – English School (2016) ⁴

And lo!

The star, which they saw in the east, led them forth, until it came and stood over where the child was.

And when they saw the star they rejoiced with extremely great joy.

– Matthew 2:1-10 One New Man Bible

This view from Jerusalem is what the Wise Men saw on February 16, 2 BCE, that got them so excited. The King Star had just risen in the East at sunset. And right beside it was Jupiter, which had just made its second Close Approach on this same day! Jupiter was just three-fourths of a degree away from the King Star! The Moon was there too, just 3.5 degrees above them!



The King Star Rising from the East at Sunset (as seen from Jerusalem)

The Wise Men waited until nightfall to make the 6-mile jaunt to Bethlehem – a trip that would take at most 3 hours. As they traveled due South they would have seen the King Star to their left, in the East, rising in an arc until it too was due South – in the same direction that they were going!

At 10:43 pm the Jupiter-King Star conjunction was due South, 79 degrees high. It would appear to be directly overhead. The star Zeta Leonis (Adhafera) in the lion's mane, WAS directly overhead at the apex of the sky.



The King Star as it Stood over Bethlehem

Then when they came into the house they saw the child with Miriam His mother, and having fallen to their knees they paid homage to Him, then having opened their treasure boxes, they brought gifts to Him, gold and frankincense and myrrh.



The Astronomers Arrive at the House! ⁵

And since they had been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they returned to their country by another way.

And after they went away, behold an angel of the Lord revealed to Joseph in a dream saying,

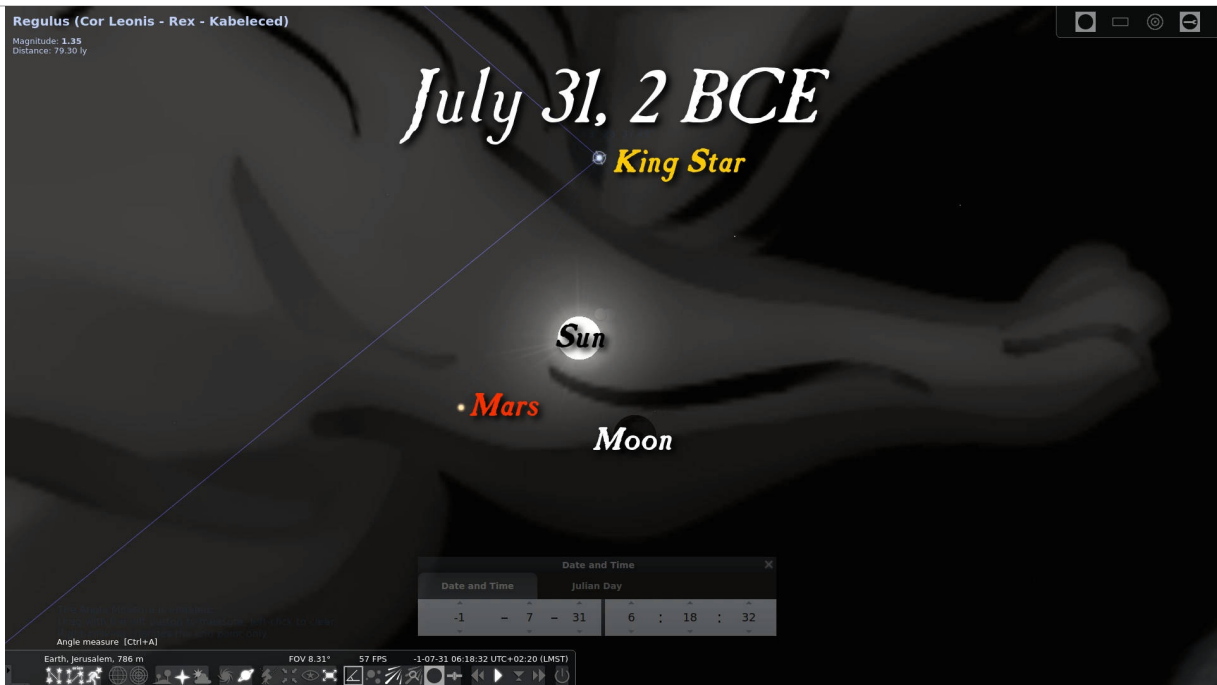
“When you get up, you must immediately take the child and His mother and flee into Egypt and you must be there until whenever I tell you: for Herod is going to seek the child to kill Him.”

Then after he got up he took the child and His mother in the night and went away into Egypt.

– Matthew 2:11-14 One New Man Bible

On July 29, 2 BCE, the King Star rose with the Sun again. But this time Mars was close-by, only 3.5 degrees away. The Wise Men would have deemed the presence of Mars as a bad omen. Two days later, the Moon caused a Hybrid Total Eclipse of the Sun right between the King Star and Mars! This eclipse occurred off the West coast of Australia and was not visible in Israel.

A solar eclipse signified the impending death of the King, and since this eclipse was in the Lion constellation and near the King Star – it meant the imminent death of baby Yeshua!



The Solar Eclipse Two Days After the King Star Rose with the Sun! ⁶

It had now been five months since the Astronomers had arrived in Bethlehem and ten months since Yeshua's birth.

Then after Herod saw that he was tricked by the astrologers he became exceedingly angry, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all the regions of it from two years old and below, according to the time which he ascertained from the astrologers.

- Matthew 2:16 One New Man Bible

FOOTNOTES

1. [10 Amazing Facts About Camels](#)

2. [Distance](#) from Baghdad to Jerusalem.

3. [James Tissot](#) (French, 1836-1902). While visiting the Church of St. Sulpice, James Tissot experienced a religious vision, after which he abandoned his former subjects and embarked

on an ambitious project to illustrate the New Testament. In preparation for the work, he made expeditions to the Middle East to record the landscape, architecture, costumes, and customs of the Holy Land and its people, which he recorded in photographs, notes, and sketches. Unlike earlier artists, who had often depicted biblical figures anachronistically, Tissot painted his many figures in costumes he believed to be historically authentic, carrying out his series with considerable archaeological exactitude. He produced over 400 watercolors of New Testament subjects, which were published in two volumes. First presented in Paris in 1894, the watercolors were received with great enthusiasm. In 1898 a highly publicized exhibition traveled to London and the United States, visiting Manhattan, [Brooklyn](#), Boston, Philadelphia, and Chicago which had a record 23,000 visitors in one day!

4. *The Star of Bethlehem* by English School

5. Note that Yeshua is now in a House - not a stable! This shows that there was a passage of time between Yeshua's birth and when the Wise Men arrived.

6. The reason the Moon is not directly in front of the Sun is because this view is from Jerusalem. If we were viewing from Australia, then we would see the eclipse.

CHAPTER 7

SEPTEMBER 14, 3 BCE



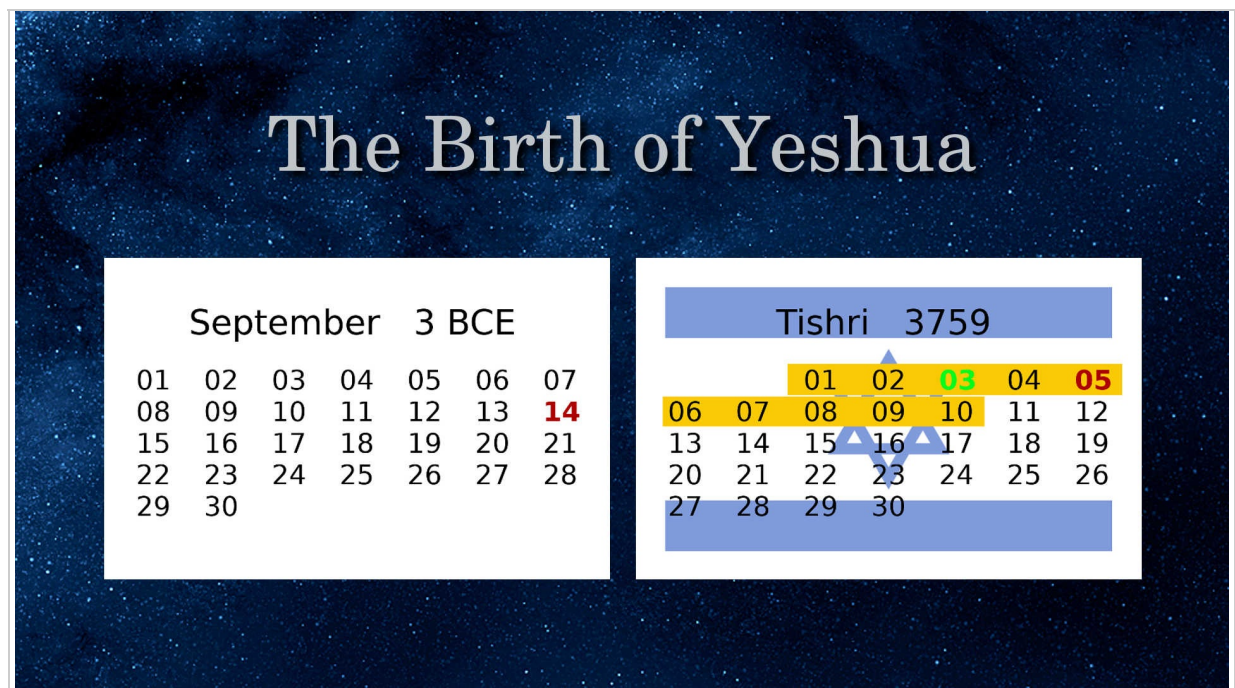
- SEPTEMBER 14, 3 BCE HAS A CONNECTION WITH THE **GATES OF HEAVEN!**
- SEPTEMBER 14, 3 BCE HAS A CONNECTION WITH **HANUKKAH!**

- **SEPTEMBER 14, 3 BCE HAS A CONNECTION WITH THE CROSS!**

THE OPEN GATES OF HEAVEN

September 14, 3 BCE, was when the first Jupiter-King Star conjunction occurred. This was the culmination of a sequence of events – all pointing to the King Star and the birth of the Messiah.

So, on the Julian calendar it was September 14, but on the Hebrew calendar it was the fifth day of Tishri – the seventh month.¹



However, this was not the calendar used by the Jews in ancient times. They based their months on observations of the New Moon, and not mathematical calculations, like today.

They could only have started the seventh month when the New Moon was

visible!



The New Moon Over Jerusalem on the first day of the 7th month (Yom Teruah) 2016 ²

The Moon has to be at least seven degrees above the horizon at sunset in order to see it with the naked eye and that is about what it was, two days earlier than this mathematical calendar for Tishri shows. So, at sunset on September 11, they MIGHT have started the new Hebrew month. Therefore, it is possible that the ancient calendar they were using showed September 14 as the third of Tishri.

Whatever day the Hebrew calendar back then said, it would have been during the first ten days of the month – known as the Days of Awe. The first day of the month is Yom Teruah (or Trumpets) when the gates of Heaven are opened. The tenth day is Yom Kippur when the gates are closed. It is fitting that the Messiah would be born during the period that Heaven's gates were open!

The concept of "Open Gates" can be seen from Isaiah:

Open the gates, That the **righteous nation which keeps the truth** may enter in.

. . . Come, my people, enter your chambers, And **shut your doors** behind you; Hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment, Until the indignation

is past.

– Isaiah 26:2, 20

NOTE THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS:

- Heaven's Gates are opened on Yom Teruah
- The righteous are gathered into chambers for safe hiding
- Heaven's Gates are then shut on Yom Kippur

Isaiah also mentions the dead being raised at this time, which apparently will happen on Yom Teruah – at the same time that the righteous are gathered into Heaven.

The Apostle John also talks about the first day of the seventh month and open gates!

After these things I looked, and behold, **a door standing open in heaven.**

And the first voice which I heard was like a **trumpet** speaking with me, saying, "**Come up here,**"

– Revelation 4:1

There is an open door (or gate) in Heaven. He hears a trumpet because it is Yom Teruah – the Feast of Trumpets. And then John is “caught up”! This is exactly the same thing that Isaiah told us except that John adds a sound of a trumpet showing that all this happens on Yom Teruah!

Yeshua alluded to this same ten-day period and open gates with this parable:

"And while they went to buy, **the bridegroom came**, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the **door was shut.**"

– Matthew 25:10

Yeshua gives us a hint that He will return during the ten Days of Awe as He says

“the Bridegroom came” – that is Yeshua! He is the Bridegroom! And get this . . . ONLY those who are READY get to go to the wedding in Heaven! This is not everyone! And this is not ALL Christians! It is only the ones He calls His Bride! The ones close to Him and the ones who are watching for Him! This agrees with what Isaiah said “only the righteous enter the gates.” And finally, Yeshua says the door (or gate) is shut, which would be on the tenth of the month – on Yom Kippur.

Yeshua’s birth would not have needed to be on the first day of the seventh month, on Yom Teruah, as He was not coming for His Bride back then. He was coming to be the Passover Lamb, lowly and meek. So it is entirely appropriate that He be born anytime during the time of an “Open Heaven.”

It is important to realize that Yeshua will return for His Bride during the SAME period that He came the first time! There is a pattern here!

HANUKKAH

Now if we look back on the Julian calendar at the Messiah’s birth on September 14, 3 BCE, and go back exactly nine months’ time, to allow for a normal term of pregnancy, we come to December 14, 4 BCE. Then, when we look up this date on the mathematical Hebrew calendar, we get the 25th of Kislev.

This just happens to be the first day of Hanukkah!

Hanukkah 4 BCE

Yeshua is Conceived

December 4 BCE

						01
02	03	04	05	06	07	08
09	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Kislev 3758

		01	02	03	04	05
06	07	08	09	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29				

Now we know why Hanukkah was so special to Yeshua! He even made a visit to the Temple in Jerusalem during Hanukkah. It was during this visit that the Jews asked Him to quit being vague and tell them who He really was!

Just look at what He told them during the eight days of Hanukkah:

"I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." – John 8:12

"Before Abraham was, I AM." – John 8:58

He almost got stoned for that statement!

"Do you believe in the Son of God?" – John 9:35

"I and My Father are one." – John 10:30

He almost got stoned a second time for saying that! Hanukkah was not an easy time for Yeshua!

"As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." – John 9:5

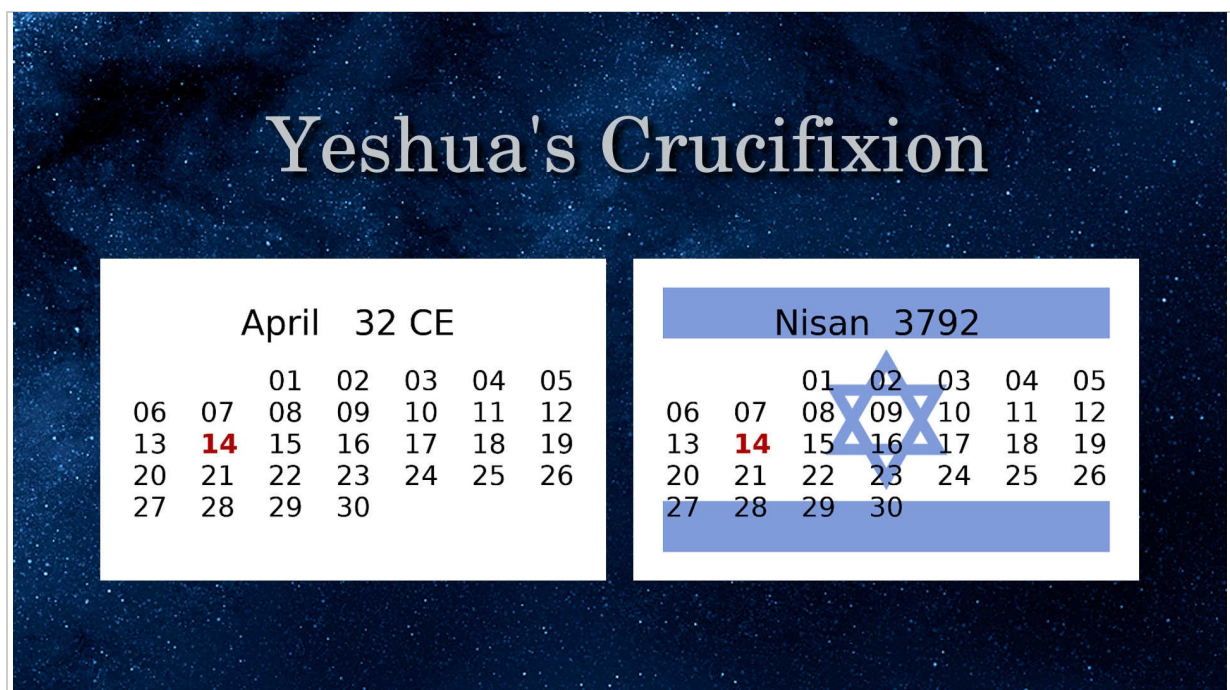
Yeshua said this because He was conceived on Hanukkah!

The “Light of the World” came into the world during the “Festival of Lights” – which is Hanukkah!

THE CROSS

Going back to Yeshua’s birth on September 14, 3 BCE, and counting forward the length of time He ministered, 33 years and 7 months, brings us to April 14, 32 CE, on the Julian calendar. Now, when we look up this date on the Hebrew calendar – it is exactly the same – the fourteenth.

The fourteenth of Nisan (the first month), is a very special date – it is Passover!



However, we know the Jews didn’t use this mathematical calendar back then – it was all by observation. So, let’s look at when the New Moon would have been first observed. On March 31 at sunset, the New Moon was 17 degrees above the horizon. This would have been the first day that you could see the New Moon and, therefore, the beginning of the first day of the month on the Hebrew calendar.



The New Moon Over Jerusalem on the First Day of April (Nisan) 32 CE ³

The first day of April, therefore, was also the first day of the first month on the Hebrew calendar! **So the first day of the month by the observational calendar was the same as our mathematical calendar.**

**THIS MEANS THAT THE FOURTEENTH OF NISAN
WOULD DEFINITELY HAVE BEEN THE ACTUAL DAY
THAT PASSOVER WAS OBSERVED!**

But there is one small problem. The mathematical rules that are currently used to calculate the Hebrew calendar don't ever allow for a feast day to be on Friday, the day before the Sabbath. These "modern" rules are supposedly to allow people time to properly prepare for the Sabbath.

However, we have to consider the four different eyewitness accounts of the Gospels, all which agree that the Feast of Unleavened Bread was indeed on a

Gospels, all which agree that the Feast of Unleavened Bread was indeed on a Friday, and not on a Tuesday as the mathematical calendar would indicate. These new, modern rules were not in effect back then.

This is what the Hebrew calendar would have looked like!

This is How the Calendar Should Look!

Nisan 3792 (April 32 CE)						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14 Passover 3 pm	15 Unleavened Bread 6 pm	16 Sabbath
17 First-Fruits 6 am	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

The Passover is still on the fourteenth, as it always is, but now the fourteenth is on a Thursday, instead of a Monday. A careful reading of the four Gospels shows that the Feast of Unleavened Bread was on the Day of Preparation, the day before the Sabbath.

And most importantly, we have Yeshua's own prophecy:

"For as Jonah was **three days and three nights** in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be **three days and three nights** in the heart of the earth."

— Matthew 12:40

The only way you can get three nights into the picture is to have Passover on Thursday!

There was no such thing as a "Good Friday!" The Crucifixion was on a Thursday!

Now it was the third hour (9 am), and they crucified Him.

– Mark 15:25



The Strike of the Lance – James Tissot (~1890)

Now from the sixth hour (12 pm) until the ninth hour (3 pm) there was darkness over all the land.

And about the ninth hour (3 pm) Yeshua cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

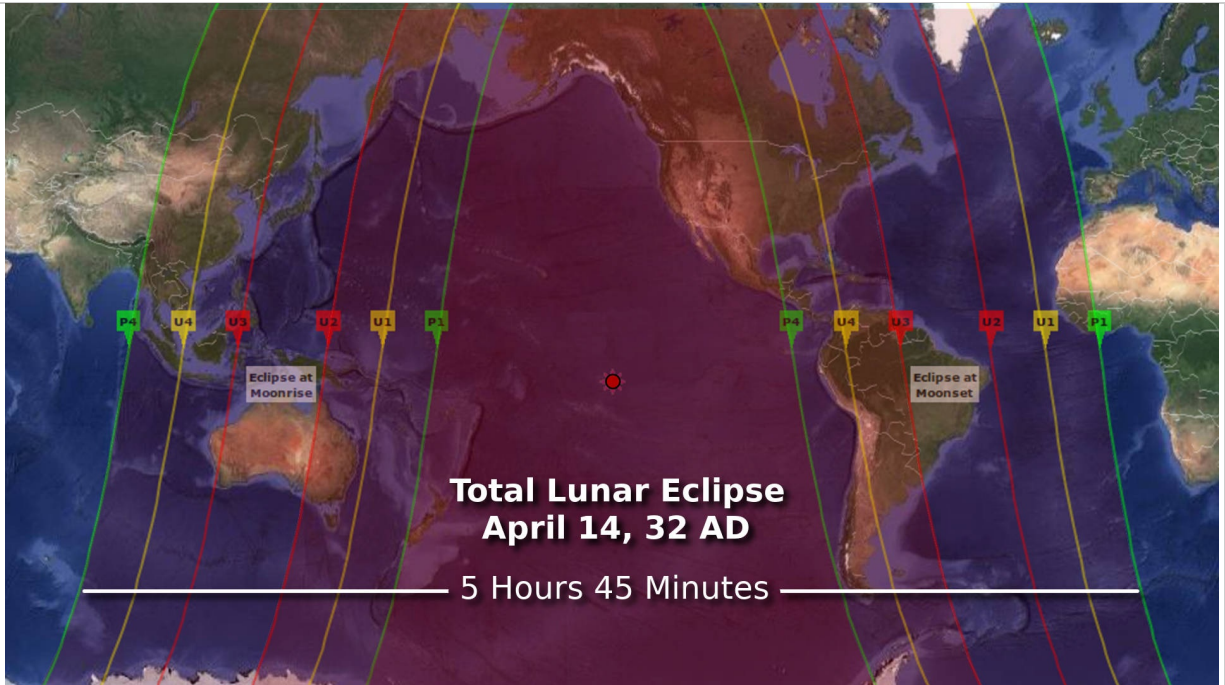
. . . And Yeshua cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.

– Matthew 27:45-46, 50

Yeshua was on the Cross for about six hours, from 9 am to 3 pm.

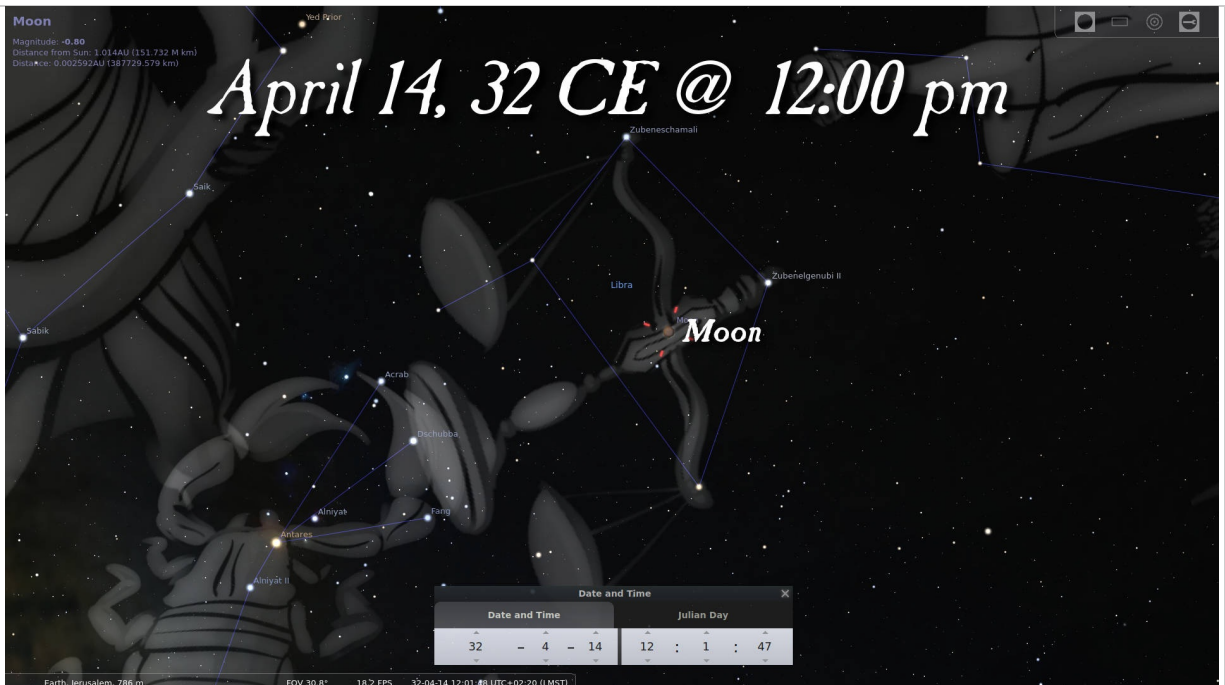
What is absolutely amazing, is that at this exact same time on the opposite side of the world there was a Total Lunar Eclipse! This eclipse was not seen in Israel because it happened over the Pacific Ocean. And look at the total length of time,

from the very beginning of the eclipse to the very end – five hours and forty-five minutes. The same length of time that Yeshua was on the Cross!



The Total Lunar Eclipse (Blood Moon) During Yeshua's Crucifixion ⁴

The Total Lunar Eclipse occurred in the constellation of Libra – the Scales of Justice! This is because the prince of this world was being weighed in the balance. Satan was about to commit an illegal act; he was going to take a righteous man into hell, a man who had a covenant with God! This would end up costing him his entire kingdom!



The Total Lunar Eclipse (Blood Moon) During Yeshua's Crucifixion

The Stellarium program shows the Total Lunar Eclipse beginning at 8:35 am Israeli time. At 12 pm the Moon is in the exact center of the Scales of Justice. This is when the balance tipped and darkness came over Israel. At 2:20 pm the eclipse ends.

Stellarium is only off by 40 minutes compared to the Biblical account. Reconstructing ancient eclipses is not an exact science. We have no precise data prior to the invention of the telescope in 1609. For this eclipse, an estimated adjustment of two hours and fifty minutes was subtracted from the calculation to account for a slowing of the Earth's rotation over 2,000 years. A forty-minute error shows that Stellarium's estimation differs from the Biblical account by 24 percent – they subtracted too much time! However, they are closer than NASA which shows a 32 percent estimation error! ⁵

FOOTNOTES

1. The [Rosetta Calendar](#), The Julian calendar is the predecessor of the Gregorian calendar. It

was created in 46 BC by Julius Caesar, but has a less accurate leap year rule and by 1582 it had drifted 10 days relative to the seasons. Note that the current accepted value for the tropical year is 365.242199 days, not 365.25 days. This led to an 11 day shift in the calendar with respect to the seasons by the 16th century when the Gregorian calendar was created to replace the Julian calendar. To correct this error in the length of the year and to bring the vernal equinox back to March 21, Pope Gregory XIII issued a papal bull declaring that Thursday October 4, 1582 would be followed by Friday October 15, 1582. The difference between the Julian and today's Gregorian calendar is that the Gregorian does not make centennial years leap years unless they are a multiple of 400, which leads to a year of 365.2425 days.

The Hebrew calendar is a lunar calendar which means its months begin and end at the new moon. As a result, leap days cannot simply be added to a month because it would get out of synch with the moon. Instead, a 13th month is periodically added. The Hebrew calendar is based on lunar as well as solar cycles. A month always starts on or near a new moon and has either 29 or 30 days (a lunar cycle is about 29 1/2 days). Twelve of these alternating 29-30 day months gives a year of 354 days, which is about 11 1/4 days short of a solar year. This 11 1/4 day difference cannot be overcome by adding days to a month as with the Gregorian calendar, so an entire month is periodically added to the year, making some years 13 months long. Leap years occur in a fixed pattern of 19 years called the metonic cycle. The 3rd, 6th, 8th, 11th, 14th, 17th and 19th years of this cycle are leap years. The first metonic cycle starts with Hebrew year 1, or 3761/60 B.C. This is believed to be the year of creation.

Reuven Herzog and Benjy Koslowe, [The Hebrew Calendar and Its Missing Years – Part One](#) The Hebrew calendar is not accurate in respect to the day of Creation. The *Seder Olam* records used to construct the current Hebrew calendar list the time between the destruction of the First and Second Temples as 490 years. However, secular history accurately records this time period as 655 years (from 586 BCE to 70 CE). So, just using this time period alone, the Hebrew calendar is off by 165 years. **Therefore, the year 2018 (5779 in Hebrew) is at least year 5944 (5779 + 165 = 5944).** We are very near the 6000 year mark since Creation!

2. [Yom Teruah New Moon Report by Nehemia Gordon](#), nehemia@nehemiaswall.com, The photo at the top of this message shows the New Moon of Yom Teruah looming large over the Israel Museum in Jerusalem at 7:02 pm on Sunday, October 2, 2016.

3. Occasionally both the mathematical calendar and the observational calendar agree with each other. Interestingly, on this critical date they are both in agreement!

4. Xavier Jubier, [Total Lunar Eclipse April 14, 32 AD](#), Lunar Eclipse data using Google Interactive maps.

5. NASA's data (see [Catalog #04902](#)) shows that $\Delta T = 10,212$ seconds or 2 hours 50 minutes. NASA's data predicts for this eclipse: Start Time = 6:14 am UT, End Time = 12:00 pm UT. Add two hours for Israeli time difference and we get **Start Time = 8:14 am, End Time = 2 pm**. The calculations are based upon $UT = TDT - \Delta T$ which equals $UT = 11:56 - 2:50$, So UT = 9:06 am for the greatest eclipse time, **which is 11:06 am Israeli time**. The Bible does not mention any eclipse at the Crucifixion. We are only looking at the Biblical account as a six-hour event, with its midpoint at noon. **Therefore the actual time of greatest eclipse according to the Bible would have been at 12 noon**. See: [Eclipse Predictions and Earth's Rotation](#) and [Delta T \(\$\Delta T\$ \) and Universal Time](#)

CHAPTER 8

THE TESTIMONY OF THE STARS



What can we make of all this amazing data that until now has been hidden in the orbits of the planets? Well, believe it or not, it was all there by design. Consider this incredible statement by the Apostle Paul.

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For "whoever calls on the name of Yehovah shall be saved." (Joel 3:5)

How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

... But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed:

"Their sound has gone out to all the earth, And their words to the ends of the world." (Psalms 19:4)

– Romans 10:12 -14, 18

Paul appears to be saying that everyone has heard about Yehovah, even in cases where no human preacher was ever sent to them. He says that everyone HAS heard because something has declared God to the whole world.

What is he talking about?

To find out, we need to reference the verse in Psalms that he quotes:

To the Chief Musician A Psalm of David

TO THE CHIEF MAGISTRATE, KING DAVID.

The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.

Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge.

There is no speech nor language Where their voice is not heard.

Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their words to the end of the world.

– Psalm 19:1-4

Both Paul and David are stating that the stars are revealing knowledge about God. Their testimony is as valid as if a human preacher were physically sent. The witness of the heavens is so accurate that the whole world will be held accountable for hearing about Yehovah through the message of the stars.

This is an incredible statement! So, what have we seen and heard?

Let's look at the Stellar Signs of a Newborn King in the year 3 BCE.

STELLAR SIGNS OF A NEWBORN KING

- July 28, 3 BCE – King Star Rises with the Sun **(in the EAST)** (Jupiter, Venus near)
- August 09, 3 BCE – Moon Eclipses the King Star
- August 10, 3 BCE – Moon Eclipses the Sun
- August 12, 3 BCE – Venus Conjunction with Jupiter
- September 06, 3 BCE – Moon Eclipses Jupiter
- September 14, 3 BCE – Jupiter/King Star Conjunction **(in the EAST at 2 am)**
- November 27, 3 BCE – Moon Eclipses the King Star **(in the EAST at 12 am)**

- January 20, 2 BCE – Moon Eclipses the King Star **(in the EAST at 7:30 pm)**
- February 16, 2 BCE – Jupiter/King Star Conjunction **(in the EAST at 6:30 pm)**

SEPTEMBER 14, 3 BCE, IS THE MOST LIKELY DATE FOR THE BIRTH OF YESHUA

+ **5 Months** = Wise Men arrive in Bethlehem just in time for Jupiter's second Close Approach to the King Star.

+ **10+ Months** = Herod kills the children in Bethlehem (Solar Eclipse in between the King Star and Mars).

- **9 Months** = First day of Hanukkah 4 BCE. The Light of the World is conceived on the first day of the Festival of Lights!

+ **33 Years 7 Months** (the known length of the Messiah's ministry) = Passover 32 CE. With a Total Lunar Eclipse occurring at the same time – and for the same duration that Yeshua was on the Cross!

WE HAVE SEEN THE HEAVENS DECLARING THE GLORY OF GOD!

The question now is, Will you believe the testimony of the stars?

CHAPTER 9

HISTORICAL VERIFICATION



There is ample historical evidence that supports the date of Yeshua's birth as being exactly as the stars have told us! Let's take a look at the three most striking examples.

THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

Luke describes the birth of John the Baptist in relation to the time of his father Zacharias' service in the Temple. If we can pinpoint when this occurred, then we can determine the approximate date of Yeshua's birth.

There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, **of the division of Abijah**. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

– Luke 1:5

David had divided the priests into 24 divisions. Zacharias belonged to the eighth division.

Then David with Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, divided them according to the schedule of their service.
... 10 the seventh to Hakkoz, **the eighth to Abijah**,

– 1 Chronicles 24:3, 10

There is no mention here of any order of service by these divisions but the tradition has been that they served in a weekly rotation system. Each division served for one week, twice a year, plus the three required festivals when all the priests had to serve simultaneously.¹

Let's assume that Zacharias was serving in the first half of the year. Starting at the beginning of the year (Nisan), the first two courses would have served until Passover, when all the courses served for the week of Unleavened Bread. The third course continued the fourth week after the Seven Days of Unleavened Bread.

So the eighth course would have served the ninth week of the year as well as the tenth week which would be Pentecost, when all the courses again served. Therefore, it was right before Pentecost when Zacharias was serving in the Temple.

So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense.

Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John."

— Luke 1:8-13

Zacharias would not have been able to get with his wife until after his Temple service ended sometime around the first week of June.

Therefore, we can reason that John the Baptist was conceived in the middle of June.

Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Miriam.

And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"

But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.

Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Miriam, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name YESHUA. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

Then Miriam said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the **sixth month** for her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible."

Then Miriam said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Now Miriam arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Miriam, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"

– Luke 1:26-43

During the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy Gabriel appeared to Miriam, who didn't know that her cousin Elizabeth was pregnant until Gabriel told her.

She immediately rushed to help Elizabeth during her pregnancy, which was already in the sixth month – about the second week of **December**.

When Elizabeth greeted Miriam she prophesied, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!" **This means that Miriam was already pregnant!** Miriam apparently became instantly pregnant as soon as she told Gabriel, "Let it be to me according to your word."

This places Miriam's conception in the middle of December – around Hanukkah! Counting nine months from Hanukkah brings us to the **second week of September** – agreeing with what we saw in the stars!

THE ROMAN CENSUS

And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Miriam, his betrothed wife, who was with child.

So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

– Luke 2:1-7

ROMAN CENSUS FIGURES

Year	Population
179/78 BCE	258,294
174/73 BCE	269,015
169/68 BCE	312,805
164/63 BCE	337,452
159/58 BCE	328,316
154/53 BCE	324,000
147/46 BCE	322,000
142/41 BCE	328,442
136/35 BCE	317,933
131/30 BCE	318,823
125/24 BCE	394,736
115/14 BCE	394,336
86/85 BCE	463,000
70/69 BCE	910,000
28 BCE (Augustus)	4,063,000
8 BCE (Augustus)	4,233,000
CE 14 (Augustus)	4,937,000
CE 47	6,944,000

Roman Census Data ²

Every five years there appears to have been a census. At least that is the pattern for the previous 200 years prior to Yeshua's birth.

There was a census in 8 BCE, so it is likely that another census would be in 3 BCE.

Caesar Augustus recorded in *The Deeds of Augustus* that he ordered three major censuses of Roman citizens, (28 BCE, 8 BCE and 14 CE), and that it had been a long time since any census had been held. ^{3 4}

"I conducted a **lustrum**, after a forty-one year gap." – Caesar Augustus

A lustrum (from Latin *lustrāre* to brighten, purify) was a ceremonial purification of Roman citizens after the census every five years. In fact, A "lustrum" also means a period of five years.⁵

Note that the time span between Augustus' first two major censuses is twenty years – a multiple of five!

It appears that Augustus' decree was not just a one-time event but rather a frequently scheduled tabulation with regional centers routinely taking censuses. Note how Luke mentions the decree, but then implies an ongoing process of census taking that started happening under Quirinius.

This census **first** took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. – Luke 2:2

Since this census had taken place before, Luke is describing a continuation of the SAME census governed by Augustus' initial decree.

THE TIMING OF HEROD'S DEATH

Josephus states that King Herod died between a lunar eclipse and Passover. If we can pinpoint which lunar eclipse this was, then we can verify the sequence of events that we have seen in the stars with another event in the heavens!

This was a very significant eclipse as it was the only one Josephus ever wrote about! Herod had two prominent Rabbis killed on the eve of this eclipse and he soon afterwards died himself.^{6 7 8}

Let's take a look at all the possible eclipses visible from Israel during the approximate time period of Yeshua's birth.

LUNAR ECLIPSES VISIBLE IN ISRAEL

Year	Description	Time Until Passover
7 BCE	No eclipses	
6 BCE	No eclipses	
5 BCE	March 23, Total Lunar Eclipse	29 days
5 BCE	September 15, Total Lunar Eclipse	7 months
4 BCE	March 13, Partial Lunar Eclipse	29 days
3 BCE	No eclipses	
2 BCE	No eclipses	
1 BCE	January 10, Total Lunar Eclipse	12.5 weeks

Lunar Eclipse Data ⁹

Up until now, most theologians have chosen the March 13, 4 BCE, Partial Lunar Eclipse as the one Josephus was referencing. That is why we frequently see Herod's death dated at this time. However, there are many problems with this date.

First, this partial eclipse only covered one-fourth of the Moon at most, a very unimpressive display, and not very memorable.¹⁰ But most importantly, if this was the correct eclipse, it leaves only twenty-nine days for a plethora of events to occur, including two 1,700-mile trips to and from Rome! There simply is insufficient time for three chapters of events to happen!^{11 12}

The January 10, 1 BCE, Total Lunar Eclipse is the only eclipse that allows enough time (3 months) for all of the events described by Josephus!¹³

A clue to the actual date of Herod's death might be found in the *Megillath Taanith* which has two days listed in which there can be no mourning – Kislev 7 (December 5) and Schebat 2 (January 28). No one seems to know exactly why these days had to be celebrated with a feast. It is very likely, however, that the January 28 day of joy was to celebrate Herod's death!¹⁴ Herod knew that the Jews would celebrate his death and took diabolical efforts to keep that from happening.¹⁵

The January 10, 1 BCE, eclipse occurred six months after Herod had killed the Bethlehem children, around July 31, 2 BCE, as we saw with the solar eclipse in between Mars and the King Star, only two days after the King Star had risen

with the Sun.

EVERYTHING FITS PERFECTLY!

- Yeshua is born September 14, 3 BCE
- The Wise Men arrive five months later on February 16, 2 BCE
- Herod kills the children five months later on July 31, 2 BCE
- Herod dies six months later on January 28, 1 BCE

Yeshua and His parents would have left for Egypt the night of February 16, 2 BCE, and returned around Passover in April of 1 BCE. Their total time in Egypt would have been about 12 months.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Three times a year all your males shall appear before Yehovah your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before Yehovah empty-handed." – Deuteronomy 16:16

2. John Paul Adams, California State University – Northridge, [Roman Census Figures](#).

3. Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus Augustus, [The Deeds of the Divine Augustus \(Res Gestae Divi Augusti\)](#). 8. When I was consul the fifth time (29 BC), I increased the number of patricians by order of the people and senate. I read the roll of the senate three times, and in my sixth consulate (28 BC) I made a census of the people with Marcus Agrippa as my colleague. I conducted a lustrum, after a forty-one year gap, in which lustrum were counted 4,063,000 heads of Roman citizens. Then again, with consular imperium I conducted a lustrum alone when Gaius Censorinus and Gaius Asinius were consuls (8 BC), in which lustrum were counted 4,233,000 heads of Roman citizens. And the third time, with consular imperium, I conducted a lustrum with my son Tiberius Caesar as colleague, when Sextus Pompeius and Sextus Appuleius were consuls (14 AD), in which lustrum were counted 4,937,000 of the heads of Roman citizens.

4. Tenney Frank, "[Roman Census Statistics from 225 to 28 B. C.](#)" *Classical Philology*, Vol.

19 (Oct. 1924), pp. 340-341. By interpreting the Augustan census figures in the same way as those of the republic we reach far different results. The 4,063,000 civium capita are, in fact, adult male citizens, of which we may safely assign 3,500,000 to Italy (including the Po Valley). To get the total population the only reasonable method is to multiply by 4, as does Dionysius (ix. 25). In his day the census was taken scientifically, the women and children were recorded on subsidiary lists, and the number of slaves appeared on the property list. Hence the total population was known. There is every reason to think that his method is based upon the Augustan registry, and that the total population of Italy was therefore about four times 3,500,000, or 14,000,000, that is, about 40 per cent of what it is today. To estimate the free population on the basis of the figures for males of seventeen years and over, the ratio of 100:35 seems to be normal. This gives a free population of 10,000,000, leaving 4,000,000 for slaves and foreigners.

5. [Lustrum](#), The Free Dictionary.

6. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 17.6.4 – But Herod deprived this Matthias of the high priesthood, and burnt the other Matthias, who had raised the sedition, with his companions, alive. **And that very night there was an eclipse of the moon.**

7. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 17.8.1 – When he had done these things, he died, the fifth day after he had caused Antipater to be slain; having reigned, since he had procured Antigonus to be slain, thirty-four years; but since he had been declared king by the Romans, thirty-seven. (11) A man he was of great barbarity towards all men equally, and a slave to his passion; but above the consideration of what was right; yet was he favored by fortune as much as any man ever was, for from a private man he became a king; and though he were encompassed with ten thousand dangers, he got clear of them all, and continued his life till a very old age. But then, as to the affairs of his family and children, in which indeed, according to his own opinion, he was also very fortunate, because he was able to conquer his enemies, yet, in my opinion, he was herein very unfortunate.

8. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 17.9.3 – (Here Josephus mentions Passover and the two Rabbis who were burnt alive by Herod on the eve of the total lunar eclipse) Now, upon the approach of that feast of unleavened bread, which the law of their fathers had appointed for the Jews at this time, which feast is called the Passover . . . the seditious lamented Judas and Matthias, those teachers of the laws, and kept together in the temple,

9. Ernest L. Martin, Ph.D., [Astronomy and the Death of King Herod](#). See also: NASA Eclipse Website, [Catalog of Lunar Eclipses \(100 BCE to 1 BCE\)](#).

10. NASA Eclipse Website, [March 13, 4 BCE Total Lunar Eclipse](#). Notice the image of the sequence of circles (moon) are only partially blocked by the earth (red circle). The light gray circle is the penumbral-eclipse region which gets a partial shadow.

11. Ernest L. Martin, Ph.D., [The Lunar Eclipse of Josephus](#). Complete Chapter [List](#)

12. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 17.6.4 (Lunar Eclipse is mentioned). In 17.8.1 Herod

dies. In 17.9.3 Passover is mentioned.

13. NASA Eclipse Website, [January 10, 1 BCE Total Lunar Eclipse](#). See also: January 10, 1 BCE Total Lunar Eclipse on [Google Interactive Maps](#).

14. Ernest L. Martin, Ph.D., [The Lunar Eclipse of Josephus](#). See also: [Megillat Taanit](#) (Scroll of Fasts) – [12](8) On the 28th thereof the glad tidings reached the Jews that they were not to be restrained from the study of the Law. It is not permitted to mourn thereon.

15. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* Book 17 Chapter 6.5 (Description of Herod's Plan) – and came again to Jericho, where he grew so choleric, that it brought him to do all things like a madman; and though he were near his death, he contrived the following wicked designs. He commanded that all the principal men of the entire Jewish nation, wheresoever they lived, should be called to him. Accordingly, they were a great number that came, because the whole nation was called, and all men heard of this call, and death was the penalty of such as should despise the epistles that were sent to call them. And now the king was in a wild rage against them all, the innocent as well as those that had afforded ground for accusations; and when they were come, **he ordered them to be all shut up in the hippodrome**, (9) and sent for his sister Salome, and her husband Alexas, and spake thus to them: "I shall die in a little time, so great are my pains; which death ought to be cheerfully borne, and to be welcomed by all men; **but what principally troubles me is this, that I shall die without being lamented**, and without such mourning as men usually expect at a king's death. For that he was not unacquainted with the temper of the Jews, **that his death would be a thing very desirable, and exceedingly acceptable to them**, because during his lifetime they were ready to revolt from him, and to abuse the donations he had dedicated to God that it therefore was their business to resolve to afford him some alleviation of his great sorrows on this occasion; for that if they do not refuse him their consent in what he desires, he shall have a great mourning at his funeral, and such as never had any king before him; for then the whole nation would mourn from their very soul, which otherwise would be done in sport and mockery only. He desired therefore, that as soon as they see he hath given up the ghost, they shall place soldiers round the hippodrome, while they do not know that he is dead; and that they shall not declare his death to the multitude till this is done, **but that they shall give orders to have those that are in custody shot with their darts; and that this slaughter of them all will cause that he shall not miss to rejoice on a double account**; that as he is dying, they will make him secure that his will shall be executed in what he charges them to do; and that he shall have the honor of a memorable mourning at his funeral. So he deplored his condition, with tears in his eyes, and obtested them by the kindness due from them, as of his kindred, and by the faith they owed to God, and begged of them that they would not hinder him of this honorable mourning at his funeral. So they promised him not to transgress his commands. **(Fortunately, Herod's sister did not carry out his diabolical plan)** Chapter 8:2. But then Salome and Alexas, before the king's death was made known, dismissed those that were shut up in the hippodrome, and told them that the king ordered them to go away to their own lands, and take care of their own affairs, which was esteemed by the nation a great benefit.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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