

**Pesach Special for 2021!**  
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**Prayer for Blessing the Scriptures**

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

**ALL READ IN UNISON IN ENGLISH:**

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

**Introduction**

Shalom and Chag Sameyach everyone! Welcome to the 2021 Pesach Special here on Scroll to Scroll. Winter has past and we now joyfully turn our attentions once more to blessing Abba Yahweh for preserving us, for keeping us alive and allowing us to reach this season.

Pesach is a wonderful time of year, not just for the descendants of the original Hebrew and other peoples who experienced the redemption from bondage in Egypt but also for all of us who love and follow Yeshua the Messiah, who used the Passover Seder to stamp his force and presence on the Great Feast forever, uniting it with his suffering, death and resurrection. Pesach is therefore not just the original “communion” but is in fact the only communion that apostles actually kept in their lifetimes. Pesach is, in other words, the essence of what all of us believe and hope for, both now and into the End of Days. It is impossible to tell the story of the Messiah without telling the story of Passover.

To that end, my job here is to do much more than just tell a familiar story to you. Instead, I want to show you through actual history and archaeology how Pesach has been critical to both Jewish and Gentile groups over the past three and half thousand years and how understanding its intricacies and deep connections can unite us all.

Part of that story then begins right now, as we see how the seeds of Pesach were deeply planted nearly eight hundred years before the Exodus. We are not just going back in time then to Abraham but to Noah himself as well. With those thoughts in mind, let’s begin!

## Pesach Timeline

- 1) Noah's Ark rests on the mountains of Ararat April 6<sup>th</sup>, **2244 BCE**, or the afternoon of what would have been the 14<sup>th</sup> of Abib. Very long story, but for more information on why I believe this please see:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vB0HoQ56ehc>
- 2) Abraham predicts the Passover, the very day of Exodus, 430 years in advance (Genesis 15:12-21): **1878 BCE**.
- 3) Lot serves his guests matzah (Genesis 19:1-3): **1852 BCE**.
- 4) Historical Exodus (Exodus 12-14): **1447 BCE**. For confirmation of this timing from mainstream archaeology see: Kitchen, Kenneth A. "How We Know When Solomon Ruled," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 27.5 (2001): 32–37, 58.
- 5) Second Passover in 14 Iyar instituted (Numbers 9:6-13): **1445 BCE**.
- 6) Jerusalem requirement for Pesach added (Deuteronomy 16:5-6): **1407 BCE**.
- 7) Joshua keeps Pesach in Gilgal before Jericho battle (Joshua 5:10-12): **1405 BCE**.
- 8) Pesach observance forgotten after Joshua's death (Judges 2:7-11): **1356 BCE**.
- 9) However King Saul keeps a "hidden Pesach." I say hidden because the text doesn't directly say he did, but it does tell us Pesach was not kept "since the days of Samuel the prophet" (2 Chronicles 23:18, compare with 2 Kings 23:22 and 2 Chronicles 35:18). Since we know they did not keep Pesach when Samuel was helping throughout the last years of the Judges period, the only time the Pesach could have been kept was during his eighteen years with King Saul: **1051-1033 BCE**.
- 10) Then David begins to set up infrastructure to bring Israel into official Torah observance, including that of Pesach where course 1 returns to serve as if there was not break, two years prior to his death (1 Chronicles 23 and 24), **in 973 BCE**.<sup>1</sup> David's reorganization is precisely 473 solar years to the day from the

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<sup>1</sup> As we recently discussed, I believe the Scripture tells us plainly that David set up the 24 courses of priests based on the instructions he had from Aaron in the last two years of his life (1 Chronicles 24). In 973 BCE, the exact solar anniversary of the priesthood (Friday March 28<sup>th</sup> Gregorian) coincided also with the day of the week it began (also a Friday afternoon) and this was the time David was making preparations for Aaron's instructions to be fulfilled—473 years to the day. The timing also ensured the calendar worked as if all 24 courses had been up and running from the time Aaron and Moshe inaugurated the priesthood. I truly believe this was the best day to do this, and the only modest tweak David would have to do is count his first priestly restoration year as the 6<sup>th</sup> year of a 12 year cycle the priests used. Then, when only 6 years passed, course 1 would be forced to return on the Friday on or after Vernal Equinox, and the 12 year cycle would continue from there unabated until the destruction of the Temple in 586 BCE. An important side note to the above is this: Aaron's instructions that passed to David (1 Chronicles 24:19) would have meant

birth of the priesthood and course 1 returns to serve at the upcoming Pesach on April 4<sup>th</sup>. 1 Abib in 1446 and 973 BCE was on Friday, March 28<sup>th</sup> in each year!

1 Abib, Mar 28, 1446 BCE

Then YHWH spoke to Moses, saying, "On the first day of the first month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the doorway of the tent of meeting and wash them with water. You shall put the holy garments on Aaron and anoint him and consecrate him, that he may minister as a priest to Me. You shall bring his sons and put tunics on them; and you shall anoint them even as you have anointed their father, that they may minister as priests to Me; and their anointing will qualify them for a perpetual priesthood throughout their generations." (Exodus 40:1-2, 12-15)

973 BCE

David organizes 24 courses very close to 473<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of priesthood's start.

Heb Yr	(No yr 0)	(Include year 0)	1447 BCE - 2445 CE							Day Week Count	Year Count of 12	Date of New moon	Astronomical NM (JT)	Sunset at Jerusalem	Date of VE	Astronomical time of VE (JT)	1 Abib begins at sunset (JT)
			S	M	T	W	T	F	S								
2788			3/30	3/31	4/1	4/2	4/3	4/4	4/5	24							
2789			4/6	4/7	4/8	4/9	4/10	4/11	4/12	1							
2790			4/13	4/14	4/15	4/16	4/17	4/18	4/19	2							
2791			4/20	4/21	4/22	4/23	4/24	4/25	4/26	3							

Course 1 set to recycle exactly at Pesach as if all 24 courses were running from the start!

David was familiar with where to count time from, that is to say, the very day, week, month and year of Exodus, and it is clear David passed that information down to his son Solomon who incorporated it in the construction of the Temple (1 Kings 6:1, 2 Chronicles 3:1-2).

- 11) King Solomon finished the Temple and mandated that Pesach be one of three mandated feasts for all Israelite men to visit the Temple (2 Chronicles 8:13): **960 BCE**.
- 12) Despite David and Solomon's efforts, Pesach observance wanes until the time of King Hezekiah<sup>2</sup>. Hezekiah ascended to the throne of Judah at the age of 25 (2 Chronicles 29:1). The Temple at this time was filthy and in shambles, because Hezekiah's father Ahaz was evil and defiled it and its objects (2 Chronicles 28:24-25). Hezekiah was disgusted at this and wanted to get Judah back to righteousness at once. But there was a problem: The time for Pesach had just passed when he took the throne, and even if it hadn't, there weren't enough clean priests and animals to sacrifice to do the job. So, he decided to follow the rules in Numbers 9 and instituted Pesach observance in the second month: **715 BCE**.
- 13) After a 55 year long evil reign of Manasseh, followed by 2 years of apostasy with Amon, it will take another 18 years for the boy king Josiah to consolidate power and conduct "The Great Pesach", a feast perfectly celebrated by everyone in Jerusalem and on 15 Abib this time: **622 BCE**.
- 14) After the Temple is destroyed (9 Ab/July 11<sup>th</sup>, 586 BCE Gregorian), the prophet Ezekiel predicts Pesach will return to Judah. **This prophecy is firmly dated to April 28<sup>th</sup>, 573 BCE** (Old Testament Survey, p. 465).
- 15) Pesach then returns with the dedication and opening of the Second Temple, on Friday 3 Adar/March 11<sup>th</sup> Gregorian (Ezra 6:15-22), followed by the actual feast itself being kept (April 15-22). Once restored, Pesach observance will never leave the Jewish people living in Judah again and will follow them throughout their own Diaspora and eventual return to the land. Date of dedication of Temple and restored Pesach service after the Babylonian Captivity: **515 BCE**.
- 16) Then Pesach is kept by a Jewish community in, of all places, Egypt, where they have a Temple dedicated to Father Yah (Elephantine Papyri): **419 BCE**. [Bonus teaching on this topic coming up shortly.]

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<sup>2</sup> 2 Kings 30:26 says of Hezekiah's Passover, "There was nothing like it since the days of Solomon, the son of David, the king of Israel," but this may not mean Passover was not done at all but rather, it was not conducted to the glorious extent and sincerity since the days of Solomon. Part of the reason why must be attributed to Solomon's son Rehoboam grossly mismanaging the kingdom and having it split apart in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of his reign. 2 Chronicles 30:18 records Hezekiah praying that the multitudes from Ephraim and Manasseh be pardoned because, though they kept the feast with joy, they did not purify themselves before doing so. Having the northern tribes participate in the Feast was definitely a rarity after Solomon. Taken together, the composite picture Scripture seems to paint is that smaller groups did celebrate the Passover between Solomon and Hezekiah, but not to the degree and scope that those kings inspired. Even so, because Hezekiah was compelled to do the feast in the second month due to the priests not being purified on time, his great-grandson Josiah will exceed even this high watermark in the Passover he celebrates in 622 BCE.

- 17) That same Temple to Father Yah is nearly destroyed to its foundations by native Egyptians. The Jews however complain to the Persians and it is promptly repaired. One famous line from the Letter of Bagoas states: *Already in the days of the kings of Egypt our fathers had built that Temple in the fortress of Yeb [Elephantine], and when Cambyses came into Egypt [525 BCE] he found that Temple built and the temples of the gods of Egypt, all of them he overthrew, but no one did any harm to that Temple [of Yahu].*- Arthur Cowley, Jewish Documents from the Time of Ezra, pp. 72-73. **409 BCE** (and again, there will be more on that history a bit later).
- 18) But, in about 360 BCE, that Temple is destroyed. However, the one that Yeshayahu predicted (Isaiah 19) would arise in Egypt in the district of Heliopolis is built by a man named Onias [Hebrew, *Honiah*] and Pesach is re-instituted in Egypt: **170 BCE**. For a full account see Josephus, *The Jewish War*, 7:422-443.
- 19) Pesach rules are passed into wider Jewish literature that is outside the Scripture, such as the Book of Jubilees reference: **ca. 160 BCE**.
- 20) Other Pesach rules are recorded by the Essenes and other desert sects who composed the Dead Sea Scrolls: **ca. 150 BCE**.
- 21) References to Moshe and Pesach make it into pagan historians' writings, such as Didorus and Strabo: **45 BCE to 17 CE**.
- 22) Yeshua the Messiah keeps Pesach/Feast of Unleavened Bread aged 12 in his "Father's House": **8 CE**.
- 23) Yeshua the Messiah dies and resurrects during the Feast of Unleavened Bread: **30 CE**.
- 24) As testimony about Yeshua spreads, the Apostle Paul teaches Pesach to the Corinthians: **56 CE**.
- 25) Pesach observance continues amongst both Jewish and Gentile Messianic believers: **ca. 56-325 CE**.
- 26) Polycarp, who was taught directly by the Apostle Yochanan, defends Pesach keeping by Gentile Christians before the bishop of Rome. It's the Roman who blinks in that showdown. **155 CE**.
- 27) Pesach Haggadah written; final form of seder without sacrifices, Temple or priesthood rendered by the rabbis. The Modern Seder is unchanged from this time: **ca. 170 CE**.
- 28) Pesach observance for Gentiles forbidden by Constantine: **325 CE**.

29) Bible translator William Tyndale coins the English word “Passover”, because of Father Yah passing over the houses with lamb’s blood on the doorposts. The term is not only carried over into nearly every English translation of the NT but is also adopted by many Jewish translations as well: **1525 CE.**

## **Conclusions**

And so, without Passover there is no Judaism and no Christianity, or at the very least the core of each of these faiths would have been irrevocably altered without it. For Jews, Passover is their Constitution that speaks them into existence, and their Declaration of Independence as well.

For Christians, Passover is the true beginning of their faith which, without belief in the resurrection of Yeshua, is useless (1 Corinthians 15:17). And even if some might argue that, and perhaps suggest that Shavuot (“Pentecost”) is “the birthday of the church”, the fact remains, you can’t get to Shavuot without Passover.

And for us, those who broadly count themselves as Hebrew Roots or Messianic Jewish believers in Yeshua, naturally we kind of have to pick up the best from both Judaism and Christianity and discard the rest. As I see it, both Moshe and Yeshua have become essential to the majesty Pesach, as Yeshua said:

And he said to them, "These are the words that I spoke with you while I was with you, **that it was necessary that all things that were written in the Torah of Moshe and in the prophets and in the Psalms concerning me be filled full with proper understanding.**" Then he opened their mind to understand the Scriptures. And he said to them that, "Thus it is written and thus it was right that the Mashiyach suffer and rise from the dead on the third day. (Luke 24:44-46 – The Apostolic Writings-TAW)

And Pelepos found Nathaniel and said to him, "**He concerning whom Moshe wrote in Torah and the prophets, we have found him! He is that Yeshua, the son of Yosip of Nazareth.**" (Yochanan 1:45 – The Apostolic Writings-TAW)

And, my personal favorite:

For if only you had believed in Moshe, you would also be believers in me, for Moshe wrote concerning me. **And, if you do not believe the writings of that man, how will you believe my words?**" (Yochanan 5:46-47 personal translation)

### **Torah readings for Pesach, Part 1**

- I. Exodus 12:21-51 (1<sup>st</sup> day), extemporaneous commentary
- II. Numbers 28:16-25 (1<sup>st</sup> day)

MALACHA AVODAH (28:18) = “Regular work; servant work”, which excludes from the ban the preparation of food. Contrast this with the other MALACHA that bans all manner of work including food prep because you are fasting on Yom Kippur. It is these specific definitions that really help us with halacha of observing Shabbat. Unfortunately there seem to be not as much discussion on these definitions in our faith walk, based on what I have seen.

## END PART 1

## PART TWO

### **Special “Hidden History” Bonus #1: The World’s Oldest Seder Instructions Outside of the Torah!**

Remember the Elephantine Papyri from the Temple of Father Yah in Elephantine Egypt that we talked about earlier? There is a famous “Passover letter” that was written there in 419 BCE by the Jewish leadership there. Isn’t it ironic that the one place outside of the Torah that should have such ancient testimony about how to do a seder is the place where the entire memorialization began in the first place—Egypt?

The letter was found in 1907 by German archaeologist Otto Reubensohn. It was first translated into English by Oxford Aramaicist Dr. Arthur Ernest Cowley in 1923 and further adapted in 2005 by K.C. Hanson; I refer to both in the final form shown here, along with images of the original document that are online.

The letter is written by Yehudean official name Hananiah, who was sent by the Persian Emperor Darius II to the Persian satrap in charge of Egypt. It is possible that this Hananiah is mentioned in Scripture. Nehemiah references four people with this name: 1) A perfumer who helped with restoring the walls (Nehemiah 3:8, 30); 2) a Levite who sealed the covenant with Nehemiah (Nehemiah 10:23); 3) a priest who helped dedicate the wall (Nehemiah 12:12, 41) and 4) a governor of the fortress praised for his piety (Nehemiah 7:2).

If one of these men is the same man who wrote the letter, the 4<sup>th</sup> one listed, the governor of the fortress, seems the most likely candidate. But if so, there is a bit of an irregularity that needs explanation. In line 2 of the letter he says, *the welfare of my brothers may the gods seek*. So why would a man praised for his devotion to Father Yah by Nehemiah be writing about “gods” blessing the Jews in Egypt?

First I considered the possibility of a scribal error that *Elohay* was missing a final meem that would have made the term *Elohim*, but there were two strong reasons against this idea. First, Aramaic did not use the plural form “Elohim” but preferred simplified-singular forms such as EL and ELOAH. And second, the verbs around the name determine true singularity or plurality. In this case the verb “seek” was in plural form.

That left the second and more disturbing possibility, that Hananiah knew the Jews in Egypt were not exclusively monotheists as we think of the term and that has been borne out in these very documents.

This group of Jews had been traumatized having completed recently captivity in Babylon and subject to their paganism. They were part of a group of exiles that subsequently went into Egypt against the counsel of Father Yah and they forced the prophet Jeremiah to go with them. Their syncretism appears to have been directly rebuked in Scripture:

The word that came to Yirmeyahu concerning all the Yehudim who were dwelling in the land of Mitsrayim – who were dwelling at Miḡdol, and at Taḥpanḥes, and at Noph, and in the land of Pathros, saying, “Thus said יהוה of hosts, the Elohim of Yisra’el, ‘You yourselves have seen all the evil that I have brought on Yerushalayim and on all the cities of Yehudah. And see, this day they are a ruin, and no one dwells in them, because of their evil which they have done to provoke Me, by going to burn incense by serving other mighty ones whom they did not know, they nor you nor your fathers.

‘And I sent to you all My servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, “Please do not do this abominable matter that I hate!” ‘But they did not listen or incline their ear, to turn from their evil, not to burn incense to other mighty ones. ‘So My wrath and My displeasure were poured out and burned in the cities of Yehudah and in the streets of Yerushalayim, and they became a ruin and a wasteland, as it is this day.’ “And now, thus said יהוה, the Elohim of hosts, the Elohim of Yisra’el, ‘Why are you doing this great evil against your lives, to cut off from you man and woman, child and infant, from the midst of Yehudah, leaving none to remain, by provoking Me with the works of your hands, by burning incense to other mighty ones in the land of Mitsrayim where you have gone to dwell, to cut yourselves off and be a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth?

‘Have you forgotten the evils of your fathers, and the evils of the sovereigns of Yehudah, and the evils of their wives, and your own evils, and the evils of your wives, which they have done in the land of Yehudah and in the streets of Yerushalayim? ‘To this day they have not been humbled, nor have they feared, nor have they walked in My Torah and in My laws that I set before you and your fathers.’ “Therefore thus said יהוה of hosts, the Elohim of Yisra’el, ‘See, I am setting My face against you for evil and for cutting off all Yehudah. (Jeremiah 44:1-11-The Scriptures 1998)

A few decades later, the prophet Ezekiel utters similar warnings against Jews in these areas but adds another location:

“Therefore see, I am against you and against your rivers, and shall make the land of Mitsrayim an utter waste and a desert, from Miḡdol to Sewēnēh, as far as the border of Kush. (Ezekiel 29:10 - The Scriptures 1998)

‘Thus said יהוה, “Those who lean on Mitsrayim shall fall, and the pride of her power shall come down. From Miḡdol to Sewēnēh those within her shall fall by the sword,” declares the Master יהוה. (Ezekiel 30:6 - The Scriptures 1998)

The location *Seveneh* is better known in English as *Syene*, the Biblical name for the Jewish community at Elephantine. So Jeremiah and Ezekiel are both complaining of a kind of syncretism between Yahwistic worship and the incursion of Egyptian paganism around it that has infected the Jewish population there.

The Elephantine Papyri confirm this accusation from the mouths of the Jews themselves. They reveal a community whose Supreme Being is named YAHU, but due to Egyptian influence, they seem to have first spoken of YAHU in terms of a female aspect within Him called ANAT. This led to the hybridized ANAT-YAHU deity also said to be worshipped there, and it was common practice for Egyptians to fuse the names of two or more deities, like “Amun-Ra.” The Pesach document itself also references setting aside supplies for *Ishumbethel* and *Anatbethel* which scholars agree are deities worshipped alongside YAHU, ironically in what can be described as a kind of “trinity” (Arthur Cowley, *Jewish Documents from the Time of Ezra*, p. xiii, 59). Admittedly though, no one really knows the precise details of this divided worship, i.e. such as if these were some form of variant titles for YAHU Himself or titles for His aspects, if not out and out idolatry.

However, whatever the true theological extent of these Egyptian based Jews was, it is clear that Jews outside of Egypt viewed them with disdain and thought they were polytheists in Jewish clothing. Hananiah then may have been trying to gently encourage his “brethren” as he says to get back on the program of proper monotheism, so he blesses them through their gods. The purpose of the letter then seems to be to reintroduce these Jews, who probably knew of Pesach as some important occasion from their past, for how to make a seder to fit their circumstances back in Egypt.

From this point, precise details are few and sketchy, but we can draw a few reasonable inferences from the wider history. I believe this Pesach became a kind of spiritual revival among the Jews of Elephantine after they successfully held this seder, much like the ones done by Hezekiah and Josiah had a similar effect on another pagan influence Judahite populace.

But by this time the Egyptians had also built a temple to ram-headed creator god right next to YAHU’s Temple and tensions between the two groups of worshippers were inevitable.

However, in 404 BCE, the Egyptians took their country back from Persia and held it until 343 BCE, when the Persians returned and ruled for another eleven years before being conquered by Alexander the Great. From that time, native Egyptians would never have self-rule again, so it was in this last gasp of independence, from 404-343 BCE, that Egyptian nationalism was at its peak, and around 360 BCE, the temple to their ram god was expanded at the expense of the Temple of YAHU, and it was destroyed for good.

I believe then that backstory here was that the Jews became less syncretistic and more like pure monotheists dedicated to YAHU, which meant increased resistance to the paganism around them. Their need to sacrifice sheep for example would have angered the Egyptians who worshipped a ram god next door and declared sheep to sacred to eat or kill.

This situation then angered the Egyptians that foreigners would turn their noses up at their religion, and the military necessity that originally brought the Jews to Elephantine no longer applied, so it was only a matter of time before things boiled over the Jews were evicted—that is to say, for about 190 years—when their next temple which was predicted in Isaiah 19 would arise in Heliopolis. That however is another story.

Our focus though in telling this story is show how once more the Pesach observance became the galvanizing force against syncretism and overt paganism. The Pesach Letter of 419 BCE remains a critical document in showing how those Jews literally got back to their Hebrew Roots and so, with those thoughts in mind, let's look at what it said:

To my brethren Yedoniah and his colleagues at the Jewish garrison, your brother Hananiah. The welfare of my brethren may the gods seek. Now this year, the 5<sup>th</sup> year of King Darius [419 BCE], word was sent from the king to [the satrap] Arsames saying: In the [Egyptian] month of Tybi let there be a Passover for the Jewish garrison. Now you accordingly count fourteen days of the month Nisan and keep the Passover, and from the 15<sup>th</sup> day to the 21<sup>st</sup> day of Nisan [are] seven days of unleavened bread. Be clean and take heed. Do no work. On the 15<sup>th</sup> day and on the 21<sup>st</sup> day. Also drink no beer, and anything at all in which there is leaven. Do not eat, from the 15<sup>th</sup> day from sunset till the 21<sup>st</sup> day of Nisan, seven days, let it not be seen among you; do not bring (it) into your dwellings, but seal (it) up during those days. Let this be done as Darius the king commanded. To my brethren Yedoniah and his colleagues at the Jewish garrison, your brother Hananiah.- Arthur Cowley, Jewish Documents from the Time of Ezra, pp. 53-54.

Just ten years after the Pesach revival, YAHU's Temple was damaged by native Egyptians. The Jews then complained to the Persian officials who were in charge of Egypt, and the answer they got is here:

Memorandum from Bagoas and Delilah. They said to me: Let it be an instruction in Egypt for you to say: To [the satrap] Arsames about the altar house of the El of Heaven, which is built in the fortress of Yeb formerly before Cambyses which Waidrang, that reprobate, destroyed in the 14<sup>th</sup> year of Darius the king, to rebuild it as it was before. And they may offer the meal offering and the incense upon the altar, as it was formerly done. – Arthur Cowley, Jewish Documents from the Time of Ezra, p. 77.

And finally there is this interesting tie-in to Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks:

Know, then, and understand: From the going forth of the command to restore and build Yerushalayim until Messiah the Prince **is seven weeks and sixty-two weeks**. It shall be built again, with streets and a trench, but in times of affliction. (Daniel 9:25 – The Scriptures 1998)

We have talked about this prophecy in depth on many occasions, so allow me here to focus on the highlights, which are these:

- There were three decrees issued by Persian emperors that concerned the right of the Jews to return to Judah and rebuild their Temple in Jerusalem.
- Of these three, only the last one, given in the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Emperor Artaxerxes, specifically allowed the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem as well as the Temple.
- Therefore, only this last decree meets the strict criteria of Daniel 9:25. **The 7<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes began in the fall of 458 BCE, and this is the start of Daniel’s clock.**
- Our focus here though is Daniel’s bifurcation of “seven weeks and then sixty-two weeks.” What was happening at that time that made it important enough for Daniel to make it into a separate piece of prophetic time?
- The answer is these 49 years encompass the time from Ezra being sent to Jerusalem to the ministry and death of Nehemiah, who died in 409 BCE. So from BCE 458 to 409 is seven prophetic weeks or 49 years.
- The Elephantine Papyri help us date Nehemiah’s death, because in 409 BCE he had just been replaced by Bagoas, whom the Jews are writing to for help!

### **Special “Hidden History” Bonus #2: Did Ezekiel Mention Directly the Temple of Yahweh in Egypt?**

For more than a decade, I have been looking at general references in Scripture to the Jews who lived in Egypt in general and on Elephantine island in particular. Elephantine, which is its Greek name, is also equivalent to the Hebrew names *seveneh* and *Syene*<sup>3</sup>, while the Egyptians themselves called their island fortress *Yeb*.

We further know from the *Letter of Aristeas* that as many as 100,000 Jews took up residency on Elephantine to take shelter, probably from persecution of King Manasseh. In return for that shelter and protection, these Jews would help Pharaoh Psamtik I<sup>4</sup> guard his southern border to prevent Ethiopians from invading the country. Of course, in order for that Jewish community to stay there long term, they required at least an altar shrine of

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<sup>3</sup> “Syene” is how the Hebrew term is usually rendered in English. In Aramaic the same place is called *Sona* as the Peshitta Tanakh readings given later will attest to.

<sup>4</sup> The details in the Letter of Aristeas do not supply the motive for the Jewish soldiers moving to Elephantine. However, the clear data points from the Scripture tell us Manasseh’s persecution and the naming of the Pharaoh Psamtik I gives us a very good idea of the year this happened. It is also beyond dispute that a large contingent of priests left Jerusalem at this time and the persecutions of Manasseh provide an extremely compelling cause for them to do so. Otherwise, why would they abandon the Temple in Jerusalem to help establish another one in Egypt?

some kind and a priesthood to manage the required sacrifices. The Greek historian Herodotus also mentions this colony of Jews in Egypt in about 400 BCE.

In terms of the Scripture, we also have the broad contours of this history of Jews in Egypt as well. The prophet Isaiah (19:18-25) predicted that that five cities in Egypt would speak the language of Canaan and set up a pillar and an altar dedicated to Yahweh. One of these places he identified by name as “City of the Sun,” which is Heliopolis in Greek.

As for the temple itself, it is identified as being part of the overall fortress structure in the *Elephantine Papyri* and the *Letter of Aristeas*. In Hebrew the term for such a fortified place is *Migdol* which also can be translated as “tower.” Now there are two references in Ezekiel that demand our special attention:

‘Thus said יהוה, “Those who lean on Mitsrayim shall fall, and the pride of her power shall come down. From Miḡdol to Sewēnēh those within her shall fall by the sword,” declares the Master יהוה. (Ezekiel 30:6 – The Scriptures 1998)

Here the context seems to be that Migdol and Seweneh are two separate places along a given route, i.e. like we would say “From New York to Los Angeles.” However, when we look at the original Hebrew we notice something quite odd:

מִמִּגְדֹּל סוּנָה (Ezekiel 30:6 WTT)

If we were reading this literally it would be rendered “from the tower/fortress Syene, those within her shall fall by the sword.” In other words, there is no *to* which would be a letter l or lamed; this is one place, not two, and it is called the fortress of Syene. It also makes sense that warriors would fall by the sword inside a fort. Such a linkage is even clearer when we see the other instance Ezekiel refers to it:

Therefore see, I am against you and against your rivers, and shall make the land of Mitsrayim an utter waste and a desert, from Miḡdol to Sewēnēh, as far as the border of Kush. (Ezekiel 29:10 – The Scriptures 1998)

מִמִּגְדֹּל סוּנָה (Ezekiel 29:10 WTT)

So again, in spite of the usually amazing work of Scriptures 1998, we see once more their phrasing “from Migdol to Syene” without the phrase “to” in the Hebrew. This should therefore actually read: **From the Tower of Syene as far as the border of Kush**, which makes sense because the fortress at Syene (Elephantine) was established to be buffer between Kush (Ethiopia) and Egypt. Now look at this:

Behold, therefore I *am* against thee, and against thy rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste *and* desolate, **from the tower of Syene** even unto the border of Ethiopia. (Ezekiel 29:10 KJV)

Thus saith the LORD; They also that uphold Egypt shall fall; and the pride of her

power shall come down: **from the tower of Syene** shall they fall in it by the sword, saith the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 30:6 KJV)

In both cases, King James accurately renders the Hebrew as “from the tower of Syene” rather than “from Migdol (as a town) TO (the town of) Syene.” The same reading appears in the Aramaic Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel for the Prophets<sup>5</sup>:

מִמְּגִדּוֹל סוֹנֵי (Ezekiel 29:10 TAR)

מִמְּגִדּוֹל סוֹנֵה (Ezekiel 30:6 TAR)

And in the Aramaic Tanakh we get an even greater confirmation of this interpretation:

מִן מְגִדְלָא **סוֹנֵי**

(Ezekiel 29:10 LPEH)

מִן מְגִדְלָא **סוֹנֵה**

(Ezekiel 30:6 LPEH)

I have highlighted the *dalet* or letter D in both references above because its addition proves the Aramaic redactor understood the phrase only in the manner we are discussing. The dalet means “of” and so the reading is “from the fortress OF Syene” in both places. George Lamsa who, at this hour, is the only person to have translated the entirety of the Aramaic Tanakh into English, agrees, but renders “Syene” as “Sona” in its own dialect:

Therefore I am against you and against your river, and I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate **from the tower of Sona**<sup>6</sup> even to the border of Ethiopia. (Lamsa translation of Ezekiel 29:10)

Thus says the LORD God: Those also who help Egypt shall fall; and the strength of her greatness shall be broken; **from the tower of Sona** shall they fall in it by the sword, says the LORD God.

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<sup>5</sup> While the Aramaic reading is very clear, I find the rendering done by *Onkelos on the Torah: Understanding the Bible Text (Exodus)*, p. 287 very interesting. They render the phrase in Ezekiel 29:10 as “from Migdol-Seveinei until the border of Kush” which seems to be trying to have the best of both worlds. By suggesting the area itself was called “Migdol-Seveinei” they avoid the problem of a “to” not being present in between the terms while simultaneously not contradicting other scholars who believe it’s from Migdol the place to Syene the place. However, the Aramaic grammar that would allow such a reading does not support this conclusion, nor is there evidence from contemporaneous historical records that Ezekiel, the Egyptians or anyone else from that time referred to the region this way. Aramaic would surely have either a lamed proclitic or the term *lwat* if the first two terms were meant as separate locations.

<sup>6</sup> In the Aramaic tradition for these words, the letter waw is understood as a vowel, an “oh,” hence the reading “Sona” (samekh-waw-noon-aleph) by George Lamsa. The Hebrew tradition however looks upon the waw as a consonant, and so comes out as *Seweneh*. The Scriptures 1998 however is more influenced by post-Mishnaic rather than ancient Hebrew, and so renders the waw with a “v” sound. Ancient Hebrew is much more *wawish* than the Hebrew dialect most widely spoken today.

What then appears to have happened is that other references to this part of Egypt, such as those in Jeremiah, were talking about “Migdol” without regards to Syene and there was a town called “Migdol” in that same area, so the town name became confused with the fortress that Ezekiel is mentioning.

Here's why all this matters: There is no reason for the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel to care about a particular fortified city in Egypt but for the fact Jews were there who were engaging in a hybrid of Yahweh worship and paganism. The “fortress” was expanded to include their temple precisely so the Jewish garrison could stay there long term with their families and perform their function of guarding Egypt’s southern border.

This discovery then confirms what overwhelming evidence already broadly suggests: The temple to YHWH was built as part of the fortress for the exiles fleeing Manasseh’s wrath in around 650 BCE. It was then expanded six decades later when it received a large contingent of fleeing exiles from Nebuchadnezzar’s destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in July of 586 BCE.

And finally, we also have direct evidence from Josephus that the memory of the Elephantine fortress-temple endured when High Priest Honiah IV built the next temple to Yahweh predicted by Isaiah, in the City of the Sun:

**Honiah built a fortress and a temple, not like to that at Jerusalem, but such as resembled a tower.** He built it of large stones to the height of sixty cubits; he made the structure of the altar in imitation of that in our own country, and in like manner adorned with gifts, except for the menorah, for he did not make a lampstand, but had a [single] menorah hammered out of a piece of gold, which illuminated the place with its rays, and which he hung by a chain of gold; but the entire temple was surrounded with a wall of burnt brick, though it had gates of stone. The king also gave him a large country for a revenue in money, that both the priests might have a plentiful provision made for them, and that Elohim might have great abundance of what things were necessary for his worship. (Josephus, The Jewish War, 7:427-430)

So the answer to the question we began with is yes. Ezekiel is more than aware of and refers directly to the Temple built by the Jews of Elephantine, as well as that they suffered from impure worship with the mixture of the faith of Israel with that of a fertility goddess. Perhaps this is why that temple was not meant to endure, but at least we have a record that the world’s oldest Passover Haggadah came from that place which was, ironically, the very nation Israel was trying to get away from in the first place.

### **Haftorah readings for Pesach, Part 1:**

III. **Joshua 3:5-7, 5:2-6:1, then 6:27, with special focus on the calendar code (1<sup>st</sup> day).**

IV. **2 Kings 23:1-9, 21-25 (2<sup>nd</sup> day; extemporaneous commentary)**

**Renewed Covenant readings for Pesach, Part 1**

V. **Luke 2:41-52 (1<sup>st</sup> day)**

And every year his people would go to Yerushalayim during the feast of Paskha. Then when he was twelve years old they went up as they were accustomed to the feast. And after the days of the feast were completed, they returned. But the boy Yeshua remained in Yerushalayim and Yosip and his mother did not know, for they were hoping that he was with the people in their company. And after they had gone on a one day journey, they searched for him among their relatives and among anyone who knew them.

And they did not find him, and they returned to Yerushalayim and were seeking him. And after three days, they found him in the temple while sitting in the midst of the teachers. And he was listening to them and questioning them. All those who were listening to him were amazed by his wisdom and by his answers.

And when they saw him they were amazed and his mother said to him, "My son, why have you acted such towards us, for behold I and your father were searching for you with much anxiety?"

He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not realize it is necessary for me to be in the House of my Father?" But they did not understand the saying that he had told them.

And he went down with them and came to Nasrath and was subject to them. And his mother kept all these words in her heart. And Yeshua would grow in his stature and in his wisdom and in favor with Elohim and man. (Luke 2:41-52 – The Apostolic Writings-TAW)

**Special Review: Returning to Shabbat Basics**

So, in order to understand Pesach and its two Annual or High Sabbaths that start and end it, we need to also get back to the basic definition and halacha surrounding the weekly Shabbat. Most of us understand of course that the seventh day is sanctified or set-apart from the rest of the six days of the week and that such sanctification is marked by abstaining from work, but there have been other questions about the details.

For example, what exactly is “work” and what kind of work is banned on Shabbat if there is more than one kind? In Hebrew the word for “work” is *melecha*, and it is derived from *melech* which means “king.” This word was used in Torah because for six days we get to expand our kingdom by working and making a living. But on the Shabbat day we expand Father Yah’s kingdom by resting, studying and the like, and we will deal with other nuances of that rule later.

Meanwhile, one of the ways that I have found helpful in the way to discuss Shabbat halacha is to look at the Commandment as something analogous to our Constitution and the extra insights into how to perform the Shabbat according to the Prophets as resembling Amendments to that same Constitution. So let me lay this out step by step, starting with the overall Commandment or Constitution:

“Remember the Sabbath day, to set it apart. “Six days you labor, and shall do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of יהוה your Elohim. You do not do any work – you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. “For in six days יהוה made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore יהוה blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart. (Exodus 20:8-11 – The Scriptures 1998)

‘Guard the Sabbath day, to set it apart, as יהוה your Elohim commanded you. ‘Six days you labor, and shall do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of יהוה your Elohim. **You do not do any work – you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, so that your male servant and your female servant rest as you do.**

‘And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Mitsrayim, and that יהוה your Elohim brought you out from there by a strong hand and by an outstretched arm. Therefore יהוה your Elohim commanded you to observe the Sabbath day. (Deuteronomy 5:12-15 – The Scriptures 1998)

So in the forty years in between the reference given in Exodus 20 and the revised one in Deuteronomy 5 we see that Moshe himself has felt the need to issue some needed clarifications, such as that the entire family, servants and even animals rest on Shabbat. This was not, in other words, just meant for the heads of households and their spouses. When such clarifications and expansions are given though by folks other than Moshe, that is when I look at such additions as “amendments” to the Torah “Constitution.”

By my count then the Shabbat Constitution has been amended four times, each under the supervision of the Ruach Ha Kodesh. The four “amenders” are: 1) Amos, 2) Isaiah, 3) Nehemiah and 4) Yeshua the Messiah. Let’s look at these one at a time:

*The Amos Amendment-Planning to return to work immediately after Shabbat ends is, in itself, working on Shabbat.*

Hear this, you who are swallowing up the needy, to do away with the poor of the land, saying, “**When does the New Moon pass so that we sell grain, and the Sabbath so that we trade our wheat, to make the ĕphah small and the sheqel large, and to falsify the scales by deceit,** to buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals, and sell the chaff of the wheat?” יהוה has sworn by the

Excellency of Ya'aqob, "I shall never forget any of their works. (Amos 8:4-7 – The Scriptures 1998)

So picture this scenario: A man works in a marketplace and has a booth there. But the whole complex, the entire shopping center, closes on Shabbat. But because this man wants to get back to work ASAP, he loads his cart with supplies and treks from his home to the job site. If he can get in as a vendor, then he will set up his table, his wares and his prices. While Amos is complaining that such people he saw doing this were robbing the poor, the reality is also Amos knew they were also robbing Elohim, because their plans for what to do after Shabbat constituted doing work on the Shabbat. Our next example takes this idea a step further.

*The Isaiah Amendment: Whatever you do for six days, turn your foot away from it on Shabbat.*

**"If you do turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on My set-apart day, and shall call the Sabbath 'a delight,' the set-apart day of יהוה 'esteemed,' and shall esteem it, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words, then you shall delight yourself in יהוה. And I shall cause you to ride on the heights of the earth, and feed you with the inheritance of Ya'aqob your father. For the mouth of יהוה has spoken!"** (Isaiah 58:13-14 – The Scriptures 1998)

In Isaiah's case, he recognizes that work tasks to be banned on Shabbat will vary with the occupation of the person involved. So if I play guitar on Shabbat for my own enjoyment that's fine. But if I play the same exact song in a club and I'm getting tips for it, then I am in violation. So, in addition to all strenuous tasks being absolutely banned, other tasks may also be prohibited depending on the job the person does.

The brilliance of Isaiah here is in the metaphor "turn your foot away from your business" which is not just about what you do but where you are when you do it. Some years ago I went to a Shabbat gathering and there was a vendor at the synagogue! I asked him why he was working and he said back "I am not buying or selling, but only answering customer questions. I will not take their money until after sunset. Do you think that's wrong?"

Well, since he asked me, I was honest and said he was still violating Shabbat because he did not turn his foot away from his business. He simply took the items he had in his store, transported them prices and all to the synagogue and "worked" with his customers in every sense except taking their money.

The fact is, showing prices creates a transaction expectation which can also be a temptation for others to break the Shabbat, which is why pious Jews the world over cover their items in their store windows along with their prices, lest anyone coming to the locked display on a Saturday see those prices and be tempted. Besides, how can you call

the Shabbat a delight and really mean it if you are having the same conversations with customers that you had on the other six days?

And that is why Isaiah also adds not to speak of common things—i.e. selling your product in words—on the Shabbat! Next up though what has been implied for a thousand years in a variety of Scripture passages finally gets stated directly.

*The Nehemiah Amendment: Do not buy or sell anything on the Shabbat day—you know better!*

And the rest of the people, the priests, the Lēwites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the Nethinim, and all those who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands unto the Torah of Elohim, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, all who had knowledge and understanding, were joining with their brothers, their nobles, **and were entering into a curse and into an oath to walk in the Torah of Elohim, which was given by Mosheh the servant of Elohim, and to guard and do all the commands of יהוה our Master, and His right-rulings and His laws,** and that we would not give our daughters as wives to the peoples of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons, **and that if the peoples of the land bring wares or any grain to sell on the Sabbath day, we would not buy it from them on the Sabbath, or on a set-apart day,** and we would forego the seventh year and the interest of every hand. (Nehemiah 10:28-31 – The Scriptures 1998)

So up until now the focus has been on labor and not compensation for said labor. Nehemiah saw a kind of loophole that a person might attempt to “rest” on Shabbat by buying or selling something, but this brings us back to where we started with the word *melecha* because to buy or sell adds to your kingdom and you are supposed to add only to Father Yah’s kingdom on the Shabbat. So even if the transaction is “relaxing” it’s still working on the Shabbat or perhaps causing others to do that work for you, depending on the nature of the financial transaction.

In other words, Nehemiah applied the full and intended meaning of work to include commerce, but he just said it outright and emphasized what had been there all along. But next we get the one time that Yeshua amended the Shabbat, and that was not by abolishing it or transferring it to Sunday!

*The Yeshua Amendment: The Priestly Exception<sup>7</sup>*

**Or have you not read in Torah that the priests in the temple disregard the**

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<sup>7</sup> In other cases while Yeshua’s Shabbat halacha may have appeared unique or unprecedented to the Pharisees, it was not an “amendment” as much as it was a restoration of the original ruling as it was intended by Father Yah. For example, original Shabbat halacha allowed the plucking of grain so long as one did not gather the produce in a bucket, but Oral Law prohibited it as work. Yeshua also used his “priestly exception” to heal on Shabbat, especially those who were afflicted with leprosy or who were crippled and constantly faced ignorant opposition from leaders who really should have known better.

**Shabbat, yet they are without blame?** But I say to you that one greater than the temple is now here. (Matthew 12:5-6 – The Apostolic Writings-TAW)

So here we see that Yeshua is explaining a Torah principle to the Pharisees that he expects them to easily understand, and the fact that they never argue against this proves Messiah's assumption was of course correct.

What's more, the "priestly exception" as I term it was also well understood in Rabbinic Judaism as well. Think about the many times we have talked about how the Orthodox readily acknowledge that matters of life and death suspend Shabbat. The priests of the Temple performed a life and death function for the people—if they don't do the sacrifices right folks are literally going to die. The priests were also ordained over a period of eight consecutive days which, by definition, included the Shabbat, because they needed to do things right so others could live.

The other factor is that each priest doing service belongs to one of twenty-four divisions that sever Shabbat to Shabbat, so even though a particular priest is on duty on a Saturday, he will soon get 23 straight weeks off, except for the intervention of a Great Feast that requires all courses to serve at once.

So that kind of occasional Shabbat service still means the priests corporately, most of them, are resting each Shabbat. When this has come up in terms of medical personnel or healthcare workers or police then, there have been two ways to approach this:

- 1) An exception to Shabbat prohibition applies to every time they are required to save a human life.
- 2) Broadly speaking, whenever possible, such workers can make extra efforts to minimize the number of times they work without a break on Saturday. Like the priests, they can be off most Saturdays, shift times to Saturday night or Sunday often enough to preserve their overall work life balance. That however is a personal decision that I leave up to the individual to decide if it is appropriate or not.

There are of course other issues of Shabbat halacha that will be dealt with in due time as the need arises and some of those I will go over in the coming weeks, but that's the basic view of it. Hope this helps!

**END PART 2**

**PART 3**

**VI. Yochanan 18:28-40 (2<sup>nd</sup> day)**

And they brought Yeshua from the presence of Qayapa into the Praetorium, and it was morning and they did not enter into the Praetorium, that they not be defiled before they had eaten the Paskha.

And Peelatos went outside to them and said to them, "What accusation do you have against this man?" They answered and said to him, "If he was not a doer of evil, we would not even have delivered him to you." Peelatos said to them, "You take him and judge him according to your own Torah." The Yehudeans said to him, "It is not Lawful for us to kill a man." That the word might be fulfilled that Yeshua said when he made known by what death he was about to die.

Now Peelatos entered into the Praetorium and called Yeshua and said to him, "Are you their King, of the Yehudeans?" Yeshua said to him, "Have you yourself spoken this, or have others told you concerning me?" Peelatos said to him, "Why, am I a Yehudean? The sons of your people and the High Priest have delivered you to me. What have you done?"

Yeshua said to him, "My Kingdom is not of this world. This my Kingdom, if it was of the world, my servants would have fought or else I would be delivered to the Yehudeans now. But my Kingdom is not from here."

Peelatos said to him, "Therefore you are a King." Yeshua said to him, "You have said that I am a King. For this I was born and for this I have come into the world that I might testify concerning truth. Everyone who is of truth hears my voice."

Peelatos said to him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Yehudeans and said to them, "I do not find even one cause against him!" But you have a custom that I release one person to you during Paskha. Therefore, do you want me to release this King of the Yehudeans to you?" All of them cried out and said, "Not this man, but Bar Abba!" Now this Bar Abba was a robber. (Yochanan 18:28-40 - The Apostolic Writings-TAW)

### **More Torah readings for Pesach**

VII. **Leviticus 22:26-23:44 (2<sup>nd</sup> day of Pesach)**

**Please Note:** Numbers 28:16-25 is also read on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day, but since we read it for Day 1, no need to repeat those notes here!

VIII. Exodus 33:12-34:26 (Shabbat during the Middle of Pesach)

IX. Exodus 13:17-15:26 (7<sup>th</sup> day; extemporaneous commentary)

### **Text Highlight:**

Song of Moshe in Hebrew and English (15:1-3):

ASHIRA L'YAHWEH KI GA'OH GA'AH  
I will sing to Yahweh for His great victory

SUS VEROCHEVO RAMAH VAYAM  
The horse and the rider He has thrown into the sea

OZI VEZIMRAT YAH  
My strength and my song is Yah [proving Yah is interchangeable with Yahweh, the longer form of the Name]

VAYEHI-LI L'YESHU'AH  
And He has become this, my salvation

ZEH ELI VE'ANVEHU  
This is my El and I will praise Him

ELOHEY AVI VA'AROMEMENHU  
The El of my fathers and I will exalt Him

YAHWEH ISH MILCHAMAH YAHWEH SHEMO  
Yahweh is a Man of War, Yahweh is His Name

MI-CHAMOCA BA-ELIM YAHWEH (15:11) = Who is like unto You among the powers Yahweh. MI-CHAMOCA EL (Who is like unto You El?) is where the name Michael comes from, the messenger Daniel says is the protector of Israel.

It is the only Hebrew name I am aware of that is derived/shortened from the form of a question. It is little wonder that this great miracle and victor brings about this question, and that the question's phrasing is remembered in the name of a messenger.

Also angels can sometimes also be called "elohim", so this could be referencing angels as much as it is fake pagan gods.

X. **Deuteronomy 15:19-16:17 (Last Day; extemporaneous commentary)**

**Text Highlight:**

Chapter 16—Discussion on the Feasts.

“Verse 16:1 speaks of Pesach as being in the month of SPRINGTIME and admonishes the people that they must observe this month. From this, the Sages derive one of the primary rules of the Jewish calendar: The month of Nisan must fall in the spring and the Sanhedrin has the responsibility to add a thirteenth month to the year from time to time to prevent Nisan from moving up to the winter.” Stone Chumash, p. 1020.

Now of course the rabbis also have extensive justifications about how this leads to the Rabbinic calendar, but ultimately history proves that assertion wrong.

The 19 year cycle that is at the most ancient heart of their system was not discovered until 1000 years after Moshe died. But we can figure out, based on what we know about the ancient Egyptian civilization that Moshe grew up in for 40 years and other ancient testimonies that harmonize with Scripture.

### **Haftorah reading for Pesach, Part 2**

#### **XI. Ezekiel 36:37-37:14 (for Shabbat during the Middle Days, but included here as well)**

TZON (36:37) = is spelled similarly to TZIYON, so when Abba YHWH promises to increase the FLOCK (tzon) of His people Israel, it seems intentional that the place He will do that is in Tziyon.

BEN ADAM (37:3) = Son of Man. Obviously Ezekiel is not called this as Messiah-title, but, on the other hand, the Valley of Dry Bones is a great symbol for resurrection done by the Son of Man later! How interesting then the rabbis were inspired to read this at Pesach, the time Yeshua was resurrected. In fact, this is fixed to the MIDDLE SHABBAT readings, which is exactly when Yeshua rose. Pesach began Wednesday night at sunset and he rose Sunday AM, right at the half point of the week.

VAYOMER ELAY HINAVE EL-HARUACH HINAVE VEN-ADAM (37:9) = Then He said to me: Prophecy to the wind Son of Man. While the intention may be that of WIND, the word Ruach also can of course mean “spirit” and may suggest “prophesying TO/BY the spirit”.

#### **XII. 2 Samuel 22:1-51 (7<sup>th</sup> day)**

(My Bar Mitzvah Haftorah—the chanting of this first line burned into my head...)

VAYEDABER DAVID LUH’YAHWEH ET-DIVREY HASHIRAH HA ZOT BEYOM. HITSIL YAHWEH OTO. MIKAF KOL OYEVAV, UMEKAF SHA-OO-O-L (22:1) = And spoke David to Yahweh these words on the day when Elohim delivered him from the hands of his enemies, including the hand of Saul.

YHWH’s hand here is implied as being the same as what delivered Israel out of Egypt with a strong hand and an outstretched arm (Exodus 6:6). This is contrasted with the weakness and uncertainty of man’s arm.

SALI...MITZUDATI...PALATI...MAGINI (22:3-4) = My Rock, my Fortress, my Savior, my Shield. Each of these terms is special. SALI (my rock) is spelled the same at root level as SELAH—the line from the Psalms—which means “to exalt, lift up”. MITZUDATI (my fortress) is where we get the name MASADA, though that wasn’t built

in Tanakh times. PALATI (My Savior) is of course a synonym for YESHUATI from where we get Yeshua. MAGINI (My shield) is where we get “Magen David” or star/shield of David.

MINOGHA NEGDO BA’ARU GACHALEY-ESH (22:13) = through brightness before Him, the coals of fire were kindled. This word NOGHA, may be responsible for one of the biggest translation problems in the NT. The Hebrew here has a near-exclusive meaning of “brightness.”

TAMIM (22:31) = literally means “complete” but in this context means “His way is sound/blameless.”

MIGDOL YESHUAT MALKO (22:51) = He is a Tower of Salvation for His king. Beautiful imagery. YESHUAT = Yeshua, who is MALKA (king). As for “tower” that is the name of the place Mary Magdalene (of Migdol) is from.

### **XIII. Isaiah 10:32-12:6 (8<sup>th</sup> day)**

VENACHAH ALAV RUACH YAHWEH—RUACH CHOCHMAH, UVINAH RUACH ETSAH UGEVURAH, RUACH DA’AT YIRAT YAHWEH (11:2) = The Spirit of Yahweh will rest on him: A spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of counsel and might, a spirit of knowledge and fear of Yahweh.

Some of these “spirits” are masculine form and others feminine. This is the inspiration I think for Yochanan in his Aramaic to mix two masculine verbs with one feminine noun. This happens in 1:1, BERESHIT AYTOHI HWA MILTHA, in the beginning there was the Miltha (Word). The words for THERE and WAS are masculine verbs and MILTHA is a feminine noun. This makes no sense in Aramaic, unless we realize that Yochanan is thinking of this verse in Isaiah where masculine and feminine “spirits” that are from Yahweh and are Yahweh rest upon or inside Messiah!

HANA EL YESHUATI (12:1) = Behold El is My Salvation. El’s salvation is of course Yeshua, the same word and verb in Hebrew that becomes his proper name. The only difference is that his name is YAH is Salvation, as opposed to EL, but the name YAH is in the word for “salvation” even though it is El who is doing the saving.

## **Renewed Covenant readings for Pesach, Part 2**

### **XIV. Yeshua’s Last Seder Part I (Matthew 26:17-56)**

Now on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples drew near to Yeshua and said to him, "Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Paskha?" And he said to them, "Go to the city, to a certain man and say to him, 'Our master says my time it has arrived. With you I will perform the Paskha among my disciples.'" And his disciples did as he commanded them. And they prepared for Yeshua the Paskha.

When it was evening, he was reclining among his twelve disciples. And while they were dining he said, "Truly I say to you, that one of you will betray me." And it made them very sad and they began to say to him, each one of them, "Is it I my Master?" And he answered and said, "He who dips his hand with me in the dish, that one will betray me. And the Son of man will go just as it is written concerning him, but woe to the man by whose hand the Son of man is betrayed. It would have been better for him if he had not been born." Then the traitor said "Perhaps it is I, Rabbi?" Yeshua answered and said to him, "You have said it!"

And while they were dining, Yeshua took the bread and blessed it and broke it and gave it to his disciples and said, "Take eat. This is my body." And he took the cup and gave thanks and gave it to them and said, "Take drink from it all of you. This is my blood of the renewed covenant, which for the sake of many is shed for the forgiveness of sins.

And I say to you that I will not drink this fruit of the vine from now on until the day in which I drink it anew with you in the Kingdom of my Father, of Elohim." And they offered praise and went out to the Mount of Olives.

Then Yeshua said to them, "All of you will be offended by me in this night, for it is written, 'I will strike the Shepherd and the sheep of his flock will be scattered.' But after I have risen, I will be in Galeela before you."

Keefa answered and said to him, even if everyone is offended, I will never be offended by you. Yeshua said to him, "Truly I say to you, that in this night before the rooster crows you will deny me three times." Keefa said to him, "Even if it be necessary for me to die with you, I would not deny you, and all the disciples also said likewise.

Then Yeshua came with them to a place which is called Gadseman. And he said to his disciples, "Sit down here while I go and pray" And he took Keefa and the two sons of Zawdee and began to be sorrowful and wearied. And he said to them, "There is sadness to my soul to the point of death. Remain here and watch with me." He went a little further and fell upon his face and was praying and said, "My Father if it is possible, let this cup pass over me. Nevertheless, not as I will but as you will."

And he came to his disciples and found them while they were sleeping and said to Keefa, "So you were not able to watch with me one hour! Take heed and pray or else you enter into temptation. The spirit is ready, but the body is weak." <sup>42</sup>

He went again the second time and prayed and said, "My Father, if this cup cannot pass except I drink it, your will be done." Then he came again and found them while they were sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. And he left them and went away again and prayed for the third time and he said the same words.

Then he came to his disciples and said to them, "Sleep now therefore and get your rest, behold the hour has arrived and the Son of man will be delivered into the hand of sinners. Arise! Let us go. Behold he has arrived who has betrayed me."

And while he was speaking, behold Yehuda the traitor, one of the twelve, arrived and with him a great armed crowd with swords and staves before the chief priests and elders of the people. Yehuda the traitor had given them a sign and said, "To him who I kiss is he. Seize him."

And he immediately drew near to Yeshua and said to him, "Peace, Rabbi." And he kissed him. And Yeshua said to him, "Is it for this reason you have come my friend?" Then they drew near and placed their hands upon Yeshua and seized him.

And behold, one of those who was with Yeshua stretched out his hand and drew the sword and attacked a servant of the high priest and cut his ear off. Then Yeshua said to him, "Return the sword to its place, for all who take up swords will die by swords. Or don't you think that I am able to ask my Father to raise up twelve legions of Messengers? How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled? Thus say that it must be."

In that hour Yeshua said to the crowds, "As against a bandit you have come out with swords and staves to arrest me. Every day I was sitting among you in the temple and was teaching, and you did not arrest me. But this happened that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then the disciples all left him and fled.

(Matthew 26:17-56 – The Apostolic Writings-TAW)

#### **XV. Yeshua's Last Seder Part II (Yochanan 17:1-26)**

Yeshua spoke these things and he lifted up his eyes to Heaven and said, "My Father the hour has come. Glorify your Son so that your Son might glorify you. Just as you have given him authority over all flesh that whomever You have given him, he will give to him life that is eternal.

Now this is life that is eternal, that they might know You, that You are the Elohim of Truth, and he alone whom You have sent, the Mashiyach Yeshua. I have glorified You on earth. The work that You have given to me to do I have finished it. And now glorify me my Father with You in that glory that I had with You from before the world was.

I have made Your Name known to the sons of those men whom You had given to me from the world. They were Yours and You have given them to me, and they have kept Your Word. Now they have known that everything that you have given to me I have given to them and they received them.

And they know that I have truly proceeded from your presence, and they believe that You have sent me. And I plead for them. It is not for the world I plead; rather, for those whom you have given to me because they are Yours. And everything that is mine is Yours, and Yours is mine and I am glorified by them.

Henceforth, I will not be in the world, and these are in the world. And I am coming to Your presence. Kadosh Father, keep them by your Name, the same Name which you have given to me, that they may be one even as We are one.

I was with them while I was in the world. I have kept them in your Name; those whom you have given to me, I have kept. And not a man of them is lost except for the son of destruction, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

And now I come to Your presence, and these things I speak in the world that my joy may be full in them. I have given to them Your Word and the world hates them because they are not of the world as I am not of the world. It is not that I plead You take them from the world, but that You might keep evil from them.

For they are not from the world, as I am not from the world. Father sanctify them by your Truth, for Your Word is Truth. As you have sent me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And I fear for their sakes. I sanctify myself so that they may also be sanctified by Truth. And it is not only for the sake of these I plead, but also for the sake of those who will believe in me by their word.

That all of them may be One; as You my Father are in me and I in You, that they also may be One in Us, that the world may believe that You have sent me. And the glory that You have given to me I have given to them that they may be One as we are One.

I in them and You in me, that they may be perfected into One and that the world may know that You have sent me, and that You have loved them as also You have loved me. Father, those whom You have given to me, I desire that where I am they might also be with me that they might see my glory that You have given to me because You have loved me from before the foundations of the world.

My Just Father, the world has not known You, but I have known You. And these have known that You have sent me.

And I have made Your Name known to them. And I will confess it so that the love with which You have loved me might be in them, and I might be in them."

(Yochanan 17:1-26 – The Apostolic Writings-TAW)

#### **XVI. Luke 23:55-56 (Shabbat during the Middle of Pesach)**

And those women who came with him from Galeela were drawing near, and they saw the tomb, and how his body had been placed. And they returned and prepared spices and perfume and rested on the (weekly) Shabbat as was commanded.

(Luke 23:55-56 – The Apostolic Writings-TAW)

#### **XVII. Yochanan 20:26-31 (7<sup>th</sup> Day of Pesach)**

And after eight days the disciples were again inside. And Tooma was with them and Yeshua came while the doors were locked and stood in the midst and said to them, "Peace be with you."

And he said to Tooma, "Place your finger here and see my hands and place your hand and stretch it in my side and do not be an unbeliever, but a believer."

And Tooma answered and said to him, "My Master and my Elohim!" Yeshua said to him, "Now that you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who do not see me and believe."

Now Yeshua did many other miracles before his disciples that are not written in this book. Indeed, these things are but written that you might believe that Yeshua is the Mashiyach, the Son of Elohim, and when you believe you might have in his name life that is eternal.

(Yochanan 20:26-31– The Apostolic Writings-TAW)

#### **XVIII. Yochanan 21:1-25 (Last Day of Pesach)**

After these things Yeshua revealed himself again to his disciples by the sea of Tiberius. Now he appeared in this way: There were together Shimon Keefa and Tooma, who is called the Twin, and Nathaniel (Bar-Tulmay), who was from Qatneh of Galeela, and the sons of Zawdee, and two others of the disciples. Shimon Keefa said to them, "I go to catch fish." They said to him, "We will also come with you." And they departed and embarked into a ship. And during that night they did not catch anything.

And when it became morning, Yeshua stood at the edge of the sea, and the disciples did not realize that it was Yeshua. And Yeshua said to them, "Children, do you have something to eat?"

They said "No!" to him. He said to them, "Cast your net from the right side of the ship and you will find." And they cast it and they were not able to drag the net in from the multitude of fish that it had caught.

And that disciple whom Yeshua had loved said to Keefa, "This man is our Master!" And when Shimon heard that it was our Master, he took his garment and girded his loins, because he was naked, and threw himself into the sea that he might come to Yeshua.

But the other disciples came by boat for they were not very far from the land, only but about two hundred cubits, and they were dragging that net of fish.

When they had come up onto the land they saw burning coals, and placed fish and placed bread upon them. Yeshua said to them, "Bring some of those, now that you have caught fish!"

And Shimon Keefa embarked and dragged the net to land, being full of one hundred and fifty and three great fish. And with all this weight, that net was not torn. Yeshua said to them, "Come dine." Not one of the disciples did dare to ask him who he was, for they had known that he was our Master.

And Yeshua drew near and took the bread and fish and gave to them. This was the third time that Yeshua had appeared to his disciples after he had risen from the grave.

Now after they had dined, Yeshua said to Shimon Keefa, "Shimon, son of Yonah, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes my Master you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my lambs for me."

He said again to him the second time, "Shimon son of Yonah, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes my Master. You know that I love you." Yeshua said to him, "Tend my sheep for me."

He said the third time to him, "Shimon son of Yonah, do you love me?" And Keefa was sad that he said the third time to him, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "My Master, you understand everything. You know that I love you."

Yeshua said to him, "Tend my ewes for me. Amen, amen I say to you that when you were a boy, you had girded your loins yourself and had walked to wherever you wanted. But when you grow old, you stretch out your hands and another will dress you (as a servant), and will conduct you to where you do not want."

And this he said that he might show by what death he would glorify Elohim. And after he said these things to him, "Come follow me."

And Shimon Keefa turned and saw the disciple who followed him whom Yeshua had loved, the one who had fallen upon the breast of Yeshua during the supper, and said, "My Master, who will betray you?" This man he saw when Keefa said to Yeshua, "My Master, and what of this man?"

Yeshua said to him, "What is it to you if I desire that this man remain until I return? You come and follow me!" And this saying went out among the Brothers that that disciple would not die.

But Yeshua did not say that he would not die; rather, "If I desire that this man remain until I return, what is it to you?" This is the disciple who testified about all these things and wrote them and we know that his testimony is true.

And there are many other things that Yeshua did, which if those were written one by one, not even the world as I suppose would be sufficiently large enough for the books that would be written. (Yochanan 21:1-25 – The Apostolic Writings-TAW)

### **Special “Hidden History” Bonus #3: The Special Astronomy of 30 CE**

And finally, to wrap this entire Pesach Special up in a nice proverbial bow, there are the special astronomical occurrences in the year Yeshua died and resurrected to consider. In our previous Sukkot Specials, we looked at extremely rare and spectacular signs in the heavens that heralded Messiah’s birth for two years in advance and tracked his progress from Egypt to returning to Galilee three years later. We also looked at the true identity of the Star of Bethlehem as the planet Jupiter, literally the king’s star the Magi had to be tracking based on astronomical data in Matthew, and how it had three conjunctions with the planet Saturn in the constellation of Pisces in just under five months, with each one falling on significant dates of the Hebrew calendar. The second of these conjunctions for example hit at Yom Kippur in 7 BCE. The sign for his birth in September of 5 BCE involved the earth catching up with Jupiter so the latter appeared to pause for a week over the Jerusalem-Bethlehem area, marking precisely the nativity time also with an amazing and awesome lunar eclipse on top of it.

There were a total of 26 such astronomical signs during this period, and that is the same as the numerical value of his Heavenly Father’s True Name: Yahweh. Yeshua then literally came in the Name of his Father, just as he said. And also, the number seven was all over nearly every possible time cycle, which is something we call a Deliverance Code, because those patterns also happened at the time of the Exodus.

However, a very recent correspondence I just had reminded me of something I first discovered back when researching my book Wheel of Stars but have not talked about too much since, and that is the rare astronomical signs during Passion Week, in the spring of 30 CE. But when I first discovered it, I must admit, it seemed to initially give me nothing but grief! The reason was that I, like the Pharisees who knew Messiah almost 2000 years ago, were faced with an utterly unique “worst case scenario” for the New Moon just before Yeshua’s death.

This occurrence was in fact so rare it had only happened once before in all of the 4,000 years of biblical history, back in the time of the Judges. The difference was however, that previous occurrence did not have a significant impact of biblical events, but this one did. It was the month when all observational techniques for determining the New Moon failed. And, because of that failure, it has created confusion in all attempts to precisely date Passion Week in Hebrew terms that has filtered down the centuries to this present day.

So imagine being in my proverbial shoes for a moment. You have tracked consistently more than 8,000 years of time covering all of the biblical period and thousands of years into the future. The rules that the Torah revealed to you are perfect. They always work and they always add depth and insight to the biblical texts and events they are attached to.

And then you get to the most difficult piece of them all: Abib in 30 CE. Now all the scenarios that you carefully derived from Scripture directly refuse to work in this last

New Moon before the resurrection. You've always known there was a mathematical backup for something like this to theoretically lean back on but did it have to be at that moment? Did it have to make that critical event so hard to deal with?

So what exactly happened? Put simply the exact timing of the Vernal Equinox came extremely close to the time of the birth of Abib and the New Year in sacred terms. Ancient peoples could not track time to the minutes and seconds we do today. What they did was track time for astronomical cycles within about half an hour to an hour, depending on what we are talking about.

For example, when the Greek astronomer Hipparchus in 128 BCE was able to track an important astronomical cycle within about six minutes, it was considered cutting edge and unprecedented. For the rest of the ancient world, we are talking about realistically measuring most things as I said within about a half an hour which may be also reflected in Scripture (Revelation 8:1-2). Another important example is the nearly 2 hour proximity between the end of 19 solar years and 235 lunar months, otherwise known as the Metonic Cycle developed in about 432 BCE, and which is now at the heart of the current rabbinic calendar and part of why that calendar is losing time now.

In any case, here are two stats in Gregorian time:

**Time and date of lunar conjunction over Jerusalem skies:** March 20<sup>th</sup>, 19:47 (7:47 PM), 30 CE

**Time of sunset on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 30 CE:** 17:50 (5:50 PM)

These two are not the real problem yet, because there are two hours after sunset but before lunar conjunction. By the rule of math, the Pharisees know this means sunset the following evening, March 21<sup>st</sup>, should be Abib. But they would strongly prefer to have other witnesses to this, as they are accustomed to having every year. Next we continue with the following:

**Time of Vernal Equinox over Jerusalem skies:** March 21<sup>st</sup>, 00:36 (12:36 AM)

In solar terms, the Hebrew New Year is sunset after Vernal Equinox, which in this case again points to the following evening, March 21<sup>st</sup>, as Solar New Year. However, this is again with our modern technology. For the ancients, the Vernal Equinox was a complicated choreography played out in the angles of the rising and setting sun, as well as with important astronomical markers in the heavens such as the Pleiades cluster. The actual timing for them to play out could be from 24 to 36 hours to track all the relevant witnesses and compare them with the math, so here is the problem: **The New Moon itself could not be seen over Jerusalem skies for three straight evenings!**

This part of the story is complex but the easier way to think about conjunction is that it is the time that the earth, sun and moon form a straight line, and the light from the sun blocks our view of the moon, making it appear "dark" from our position on earth. Over a

normal period of about 14-38 hours, we can't see the moon until the sun's light retreats just enough to show a small crescent.

But if the timing and length of conjunction is particularly "bad" from an astronomical point of view, it can obscure the New Moon for several days, and yet the Pharisees have to make a quick and decisive judgment call in real time to tell everyone when Pesach is! The astronomical conditions, angles of observation and atmospheric conditions were just right, or perhaps I should say just wrong, enough to throw all the other techniques into chaos. They could not see the crescent and work backwards and the timing of conjunction was extreme and could not resolve the precise way to factor in the close timing of the Vernal Equinox, which was technically a higher ranking witness than the New Moon was for determining the precise timing of Abib 1. In other words, you had a very large "uncertainty zone" where none of the other conventional techniques applied, and it lasted for three days. If they take the latest timing, their Pesach full moon will be well past full and impotent looking, but if they go by math alone they might be a day too early. In astronomical terms, this is a train wreck.

So what did they do? If the normal rule of sunset after conjunction, which literally had worked 100% of the time over the past thousand years, did not yield a certain evening for them to call the month, especially if these viewing concerns were further hampered by cloudy conditions, which also seem likely, what tools were left to make the critical call for when Pesach would be?

One technique might have been checking the day lengths of the last few lunar months before this uncertain month. If for example the last two consecutive lunar months had been either both 29 or both 30 days long, the Pharisees knew there was a more than 95% probability the month in question would be other length. Two previous 30 day long months for example virtually guaranteed this month had to be 29 days long. But such was not the case, as the months before this were alternating times normally.

Also the same conditions that made the moon hard to see would have hampered observing the stars as well, so now there is an abnormal "wobble room" for Vernal Equinox as well, the timing of which they needed also to call the year and the start of Abib.

As I said, with our modern tools and software and technology, there is no question the evening of March 21<sup>st</sup> would have been the right call here, but for the Pharisees they were dealing with three separate zones of ambiguity hitting them all at once, with each one being more than a day in duration. Again, what could they do?

The best judgment call they could have made would literally be to split the difference within the zone of uncertainty to minimize the error, and that decision has created problems for all of us as biblical historians and astronomers ever since. Calculation alone favored the evening of March 21<sup>st</sup>, but that could not be confirmed through observation. But if they waited for the crescent, that would put the start as late as March 23<sup>rd</sup> at the

earliest, and possibly even to the evening of the 24<sup>th</sup> although I believe that last scenario to be unlikely, but still within the realm of possibility.

That left making the final call, not for the evening of March 21<sup>st</sup> as 1 Abib, but to move that 24 hours later to the evening of March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 30 CE, as 1 Abib. Once that was done, all the Gospel references to the crucifixion day being one of preparation, a Shabbat and a High Day all at the same time finally make sense and validate each other for 30 CE, which was the year determined by Daniel 9:24-27, Luke 3:1-2 and Yochanan 2:20-22. In other words, no other scenario takes into account all of these lines of evidence without doing violence to a single Scripture data point.

But a final question to answer after all this is simple: Why have this disaster from an astronomical perspective happen at this most important moment in all of human history? And my answer for that question is, that's kind of the point, because it goes thematically with what Yeshua said in two places. First here:

**And immediately after the suffering of those days, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not shine its light.** And the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven will be shaken. And then will be seen the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then all the tribes of the land mourn, when they will see the Son of man who comes upon the clouds of heaven with great power and glory. And he will send his Messengers with a large shofar, and they will gather his chosen ones from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other. (Matthew 24:29-31 – The Apostolic Writings - TAW)

While this is clearly a reference to our prophetic future, the template of it is mirrored in the timing of Passion Week, with the extended periods of darkness applying precisely and exclusively to the month of the resurrection. This is why Yeshua often referenced the lifting up of the Son of man to see the signs of the future, and the lifting up is talking about the crucifixion and then the resurrection (Yochanan 8:28, 12:31-37). But the second reference is here:

Then, men of the scribes and the Pharisees answered and said to him, "Teacher, we desire to see a sign from you. And he answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign, and a sign will not be given to it except the sign of Yonan the prophet. For as Yonan was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights, likewise will the Son of man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. (Matthew 12:38-40 – The Apostolic Writings - TAW)

One thing that is easy to forget is that while Yeshua is in the heart of the earth, like when Jonah is in the great fish, Messiah is actually still conscious and active, ministering to the souls in Sheol (1 Peter 3:18-20). In particular Keefa says, "he died in body but lived in spirit" during that precise time, which is why Yeshua is not talking about himself "being"—in the sense of consciousness—buried in the grave but rather in the heart of the earth.

As a result, I believe the whole point of Father Yah waiting for His Son's "time to come" was to have him undergo this died in the body but lived in the spirit interval at the very time, the first in a thousand plus years, when the sun, moon and stars in effect all did the same thing, throwing all the natural rules out of the window for the Pharisees in in the process. Something to think about as we renew our own hearts and minds at this same precious time of year!

Next week we will be exploring *Tazria-Metzora*, a double parsha, or Leviticus 12:1-13:59 and 14:1-15:33. Our Haftarah reading will be from 2 Kings 4:42-5:19 and 7:3-20, and our Renewed Covenant reading will be Matthew 8:1-4, Luke 17:11-19, Mark 5:24-34 and Colossians 2:11-23. Stay tuned.

*Chag Sameyach!*  
*Andrew Gabriel Roth*  
*April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021*