

**A Time for Judgment**

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In this study I would like to take another look at the Lunar eclipses that I first examined in 5755 (1995). This review was prompted by the fact that these past eclipses are virtually identical to the eclipses which we will see next year (we are now in 5773), in 5774[[1]](#footnote-1) - 5776. This suggests that there is a pattern that HaShem is using to get our attention. Since, as we shall see, an eclipse serves as an evil omen, it is important that we understand what we are to do in order to show that we have learned the lessons that the eclipses are coming to teach. Keep the following ‘to do’ list in mind as you study:

The first thing that we should do is to celebrate Pesach[[2]](#footnote-2) with all of our heart.

The second thing that we should do is to celebrate Succoth[[3]](#footnote-3) with all of our heart.

*(Note to the wise: Pay close attention to the footnotes. Many intiguing thoughts are intentionally hidden in the footnotes so that only the wise will understand.)*

We are also going to need to look at the eclipses of 1949, 1967, and 2014 because ONLY in these three times do we four total lunar eclipses which fall on Biblical festivals.

The whole point of studying celestial events is to learn to understand the message that The Creator is sending to His people. If we waste our time with foolish speculations, then we will be trampling upon a very precious gift from HaShem. Therefore, I hope to bring out the lesson that needs to be learned and the actions that need to be performed in light of these eclipses, these judgments from HaShem.

We know, from celestial geometry, that a lunar eclipse can only occur in the middle of the Biblical month, and that a solar eclipse can only occur at the beginning of a Biblical month (Rosh Chodesh – New Moon). A solar eclipse is by definition the physical molad,[[4]](#footnote-4) because there the moon passing the sun *can* be seen.

The first of every Biblical month is called Rosh Chodesh (new moon), and several of the festivals fall on the middle of the month (full moon). Thus the eclipses are poised to fall on Rosh Chodesh (solar) and the festivals. The fact that they come in groups, six months apart, is again related to celestial geometry.

According to NASA, there will in fact be an unusual series of four total lunar eclipses during 2014 and 2015. What is more, in each year the first eclipse occurs on the first night of Pesach and the second occurs on the first night of Succoth.[[5]](#footnote-5) Even more remarkable is that the total lunar eclipse of Pesach 2015 will be preceded by a total solar eclipse[[6]](#footnote-6) that will occur on Rosh ChodeshNisan, two weeks earlier. Hence we understand what we should do with this knowledge:

The first thing that we should do is to celebrate Pesach[[7]](#footnote-7) with all of our heart.

The second thing that we should do is to celebrate Succoth[[8]](#footnote-8) with all of our heart.

The following chart provides a summary of the two sets of eclipses that we will examine in this study:

**Eclipse Summary Chart**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 5755 - 5756 | 5774 - 5776 |
| Partial Lunar EclipseNisan 15, 5755(April 15, 1995)Pesach (Passover) | Lunar EclipseNisan 15, 5774(April 15, 2014) Pesach (Passover)[[9]](#footnote-9) |
| Penumbral Lunar EclipseTishri 14, 5756(October 8, 1995)Erev Succoth (Feast of Tabernacles eve) | Lunar EclipseTishri 14, 5775(October 8, 2014)Erev Succoth |
| **Solar Eclipse**Nisan 28, 5756(April 17, 1996)The 13th day of the Omer | **Solar Eclipse[[10]](#footnote-10)**Adar 29 / Nisan 1, 5775(March 20, 2015)The new year for Jewish kings. |
| Lunar EclipseNisan 15, 5756(April 3, 1996)Pesach (Passover) | Lunar EclipseNisan 15, 5775(April 4, 2015)Pesach(Passover)andShabbat (Sabbath) |
| Lunar EclipseTishri 15, 5757(September 27, 1996)Succoth (Feast of Tabernacles) | Lunar EclipseTishri 15, 5776(September 28, 2015) Succoth (Feast of Tabernacles) |
| Partial Lunar EclipseII Adar 15, 5757(March 24, 1997)Shushan Purim | Penumbral Lunar EclipseII Adar 13, 5776(March 23, 2016)Fast of Esther |

The lunar eclipse on II Adar 15, 5757 (March 24, 1997) is at the very end of the first triennial Torah cycle,[[11]](#footnote-11) which began Tishri of 5755. At this time we are three and a half (3½) years into the seven year Sabbatical (Shmita) cycle. Thus the series of eclipses that began in 1995 (5755) will be completed at the same time that Jews were completing the first triennial Torah cycle by reading the end of Devarim (Deuteronomy). We complete the Torah and the heavens complete their eclipse sequence!

The lunar eclipse on Tishri 15, 5776 (September 28, 2015)[[12]](#footnote-12) is the very end of the second triennial Torah cycle.[[13]](#footnote-13) At this time we have finished one Sabbatical (Shmita) cycle and we are ready to begin a new Sabbatical cycle and we are also beginning the first triennial Torah cycle, of three and a half years (3½). Thus the festival eclipse series, that started in 5774 (2014)[[14]](#footnote-14) will be completed at the same time that Jews are finishing the book of Devarim (Deuteronomy) in the second triennial Torah cycle. We see a picture of a complete Sabbatical cycle, of seven years, in these two eclipse sequences.

Thus we see that these two lunar eclipse cycles are ‘tuned’ to the Shmita (Sabbatical) year and the Triennial Torah cycle.

The coming eclipses, in 5774 (2014), begin in the middle of a triennial cycle and will complete in the first year of the next triennial cycle. They are part of two Shmita (Sabbatical) cycles and occur during the year of the Jubilee (Yovel[[15]](#footnote-15)). Now, since both the Shmita and the Yovel year provide us with extra time for Torah study, then we can begin to see the tikkun (correction) of the eclipses. If we study Torah then we will be less likely to fall into the sins which cause an eclipse.

**A Remarkable Time – Joel 3:3**

The timing of the solar eclipse, on Adar 29[[16]](#footnote-16) / Nisan 1, 5775, is remarkable because solar eclipses are not tied in with the phases of the moon and therefore not tied in with the Biblical festivals. That a solar eclipse should occur on Rosh Chodesh[[17]](#footnote-17) Nisan just two weeks before a total lunar eclipse occurs on Pesach[[18]](#footnote-18) is indeed interesting.

These predictions become even more intriguing when you factor in the prophecy from Joel:

***Yoel (Joel)[[19]](#footnote-19) 3:3*** *And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.* ***4*** *The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of HaShem come.[[20]](#footnote-20)*

Particularly because his language referring to “blood and fire and pillars of smoke”has been incorporated into the Haggada*,* which will be read on Pesach night of the predicted lunar eclipse and two weeks after the solar eclipse.[[21]](#footnote-21) The ArtScroll[[22]](#footnote-22) commentary, on the Haggada, notes the following:

“*Blood and fire and pillars of smoke*. This verse, quoted from Joel, speaks of the Messianic redemption rather than of the Exodus. It is cited here merely to show that the word מופת, wonder, is used to refer to the manifestation of blood. It is possibe, however, that blood, fire, and pillars of smoke appeared together in Egypt, too. The Ritva explains that at the first plague the blood of the Nile boiled like fire, and pillars of smoke rose from it. Another explanation points out that at the Exodus there was blood, the first plague, and fire and a cloud pillar when God led the Jews to the Sea of Reeds.”[[23]](#footnote-23)

It is no wonder that the obvious lessons to be learned are:

The first thing that we should do is to celebrate Pesach[[24]](#footnote-24) with all of our heart. As we say in the haggada: “Let all who are hungry come and eat!”

The second thing that we should do is to celebrate Succoth[[25]](#footnote-25) with all of our heart.

Further, we read Yoel (Joel) 3:3 – 4:6,16 on the third Shabbat of Heshvan in the second year of the septennial lectionary[[26]](#footnote-26) and on the fourth Shabbat of Nisan – on the first Shabbat AFTER Pesach - in the fifth year of the septennial lectionary. So, we last read this passage on Nisan 26, 5773 and we will next read this in Heshvan of 5777. The Torah portion for this Ashlamata[[27]](#footnote-27) is Shemot (Exodus) 7:8 - 8:15. This reading introduces Moshe’s miracle with his staff and the first three plagues (blood, frogs, and lice) in Mitzrayim.[[28]](#footnote-28)

The septennial cycle is prophetic in that it is prophesy about things to come. This is why they are arranged chronologically. This is why Melech David cared about the septennial cycle; it is the cycle of kings who need to understand the future in order to rule properly.

The Torah Anthology[[29]](#footnote-29) for sefer Yoel connects celestial signs with the Messianic redemption and the war of Gog and Magog:

*Here, Joel prophesies about the signs and wonders that will take place in the days of the war of Gog and Magog.[[30]](#footnote-30) The sun will be darkened and the moon will be crimson like blood.[[31]](#footnote-31)*

*According to the Rambam, the scripture alludes to the troubles and wars that will take place prior to the defeat of Gog and Magog. Many peoples will come to wage war against Jerusalem, and they will continue to fight until half the city is banished into exile, as the prophet Zechariah I foresaw.[[32]](#footnote-32) “For I will gather all nations in Jerusalem to battle; and the city will be taken, and the houses plundered, and the women ravished; and half of the city will go forth into captivity...”.[[33]](#footnote-33)*

*That is the “darkness” spoken of here,[[34]](#footnote-34) and about which it says, “There will not be light, but heavy cloud and thick darkness”.[[35]](#footnote-35)*

*However, it will only last a short time. As it says, “Hide yourself for a little moment, until the indignation be passed”.[[36]](#footnote-36)*

*Within the aforementioned interpretation, that the scripture speaks of three aspirations, aspirations that are to be realized in the future redemption, the prophet identifies the third as “wonders”. Those wonders will resemble the miracles and wonders of old, including that “in the heavens and on the earth” will be “blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke”. Undoubtedly, this refers to the war of Gog and Magog as depicted by the prophet Ezekiel. Thus it says, “I will cause to rain down upon him ... fire, and brimstone...”.[[37]](#footnote-37)*

*Similarly, David prophesied, “Upon the wicked He will rain down blazing coals, fire and brimstone and a scorching wind will be the portion of their cup”.[[38]](#footnote-38)*

*The wonders on earth will be “blood,” and the wonders in the heavens will be “fire, and pillars of smoke.” Thus pillars of smoke rise straight up ! into the sky.*

*According to the Ibn Ezra, the scripture here, Yoel 3:4, refers to a time when the heavenly orbs of light will actually dim, and this will portend the imminent onset of war.*

*In The Guide for the Perplexed, Maimonides explains that the scripture speaks figuratively, and the metaphor functions to convey the impending troubles.*

*According to the Abrabanel, the scripture alludes to the future war between the descendants of Esau - the Edom nations - and the descendants of Yishmael.[[39]](#footnote-39) The sun refers to the peoples of Edom, and the moon refers to the peoples of Yishmael.*

*Rashi explains: “The sun will be turned into darkness,” to bring a chill to those who prostrate themselves in worship to the sun.*

*“Before there comes the great and terrible day of the Lord.” The prophet anticipates the war and the retribution that will come prior to the redemption. On the one hand, the day of redemption for His people will be “great in deliverance”. On the other hand, it will be “terrible” for the enemies of Israel - a day of vengeance.*

*Egypt was afflicted by the plague of blood,[[40]](#footnote-40) and so will Edom - Rome - be beset by bloodletting. Edom will also be afflicted by other calamities, corresponding to the other plagues that befell the Egyptians.*

Micah the Prophet also associated the wonders in Egypt with the Messianic age:

***Micah 7:15****As in the days of thy coming forth out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him marvellous things.[[41]](#footnote-41)*

That these words refer to the Messianic rather than the Egyptian Redemption, makes them particularly relevant to events of today. Consider what the Midrash says:

***Pesikta De-Rab Kahana 7:11*** *R. Levi said in the name of R. Hama bar R. Hanina: With the very means by which He punished the former He will punish the latter. As He punished Egypt with blood, so, too, He will punish Edom-[Rome], for it is written I WILL SHOW WONDERS IN THE HEAVENS AND IN THE EARTH, BLOOD, AND FIRE, AND PILLARS OF SMOKE [OVER EDOM](Joel 3:3). As Egypt, frogs; so, too, Edom: THE SOUND OF AN UPROAR FROM THE CITY [OF ROME], AN UPROAR BECAUSE OF THE TEMPLE [WHICH ROME DESTROYED], AN UPROAR OF THE L-RD WHO RENDERETH RECOMPENSE TO HIS ENEMIES (Yeshayahu [Isaiah] 66: 6). As Egypt, gnats; so, too, Edom with gnats: THE STREAMS [OF BOZRAH] SHALL BE TURNED INTO PITCH, AND THE DUST THEREOF INTO BRIMSTONE, AND THE LAND THEREOF SHALL BECOME BURNING PITCH (Yeshayahu [Isaiah] 34:9); SMITE THE DUST OF THE EARTH, THAT IT MAY BECOME GNATS (Shemot [Exodus] 8:12). As Egypt, all kinds of wild beasts; so, too, Edom: THE PELICAN AND THE BITTERN SHALL POSSESS IT, etc. (Yeshayahu [Isaiah] 34:11). As Egypt, pestilence; so, too, Edom: I WILL PLEAD AGAINST [GOG] WITH PESTILENCE AND WITH BLOOD (Yehezekel [Ezekiel] 38:22). As Egypt, boils; so, too, Edom: THIS SHALL BE THE PLAGUE WHEREWITH THE L-RD WILL SMITE ALL THE PEOPLES THAT HAVE WARRED AGAINST JERUSALEM: THEIR FLESH SHALL CONSUME AWAY WHILE THEY STAND UPON THEIR FEET (Zechariah (Zechariah) 14:12). As Egypt, hail; so, too, EDOM: I WILL CAUSE TO RAIN UPON [GOG] . . . AN OVERFLOWING SHOWER AND GREAT HAILSTONES (Yehezekel [Ezekiel] 38:22). As Egypt, locusts; so, too, Edom: AND THOU, SON OF MAN, THUS SAITH THE L-RD G-D: SPEAK UNTO THE BIRDS OF EVERY SORT . . . THE FLESH OF THE MIGHTY SHALL YE EAT . . . BLOOD SHALL YE DRINK . . . YE SHALL EAT FAT TILL YE BE FULL, AND DRINK BLOOD TILL YE BE DRUNKEN (Yehezekel [Ezekiel] 39:17-19). As Egypt, darkness; so, too, Edom with darkness: HE SHALL STRETCH OVER [EDOM] THE LINE OF [DARK] CHAOS AND THE PLUMMET OF EMPTINESS (Yeshayahu [Isaiah] 34:11). As with Egypt He took each of the chiefest among them and slew them, so, too, with Edom: A GREAT SLAUGHTER IN THE LAND OF EDOM, AMONG THEM TO COME DOWN SHALL BE THE REMIM (Yeshayahu [Isaiah] 34:6-7), that is, as R. Meir expounded it-among those to come down shall be the Romans, [pre-eminent among all the peoples of Edom].*

Why would prophecies of cultural collapse be associated with Pesach and Succoth?

On Pesach,[[42]](#footnote-42) the overriding event is the fall of Egypt, which allowed the Bne Israel to escape slavery and march to Har Sinai. If the surrounding non-Jewish culture had not collapsed, we would have been unable to begin our national life as the people of HaShem and Torah. The collapse of the principal world culture at that time is crucial to the events of Pesach. This was the major historical event that facilitated the birth of the nation of Israel and the introduction of Torah into the world. (Other catastrophic collapses, like the Great Flood, the collapse of the Tower of Babel and the destruction of Sodom, were not directly linked to the creation of The Bne Israel and the acceptance of Torah, so the collapse of Egypt was different and crucial.)

How is Succoth linked to catastrophic events?

Succoth is directly connected to prophecies concerning the future collapse of the cultures of Ishmael and Esav at the time of Mashiach. We know this from the astounding haftarot we read on Succoth, describing the War of Gog and Magog, the climactic war involving all of civilization, that will occur at during a Succoth of the future.

On the first day of Succoth we read:[[43]](#footnote-43)

***Zechariah 14:1-3*** *Behold, a day of HaShem cometh, when thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.* ***2*** *For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, but the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.* ***3*** *Then shall HaShem go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fighteth in the day of battle.*

And on Shabbat Chol HaMoed Succoth[[44]](#footnote-44) we read:

***Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 38:18-23*** *And it shall come to pass in that day, when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord HaShem, that My fury shall arise up in My nostrils.* ***19*** *For in My jealousy and in the fire of My wrath have I spoken: Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel;* ***20*** *so that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field and all creeping things that creep upon the ground, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at My presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.* ***21*** *And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord HaShem; every man's sword shall be against his brother.* ***22*** *And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will cause to rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many peoples that are with him, an overflowing shower, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.* ***23*** *Thus will I magnify Myself, and sanctify Myself, and I will make Myself known in the eyes of many nations; and they shall know that I am HaShem.*

So Pesach and Succoth are directly linked to catastrophic events, one in the past and one predicted for the future. But it’s important to emphasize that we should not look upon these events with depression or fear. We see this clearly in the events of Pesach, because at that time, though the surrounding non-Jewish culture collapsed, the Bne Israel were released to perform the service of HaShem, which our nation was created for in the first place.

This was the greatest joy in the world, and future events predicted for Succoth should also be viewed in that light. Succoth is called “the season of our rejoicing”, because at that time the reign of falsehood will be ended forever and the complete redemption will occur with the coming of Mashiach ben David. The entire world will become filled with Torah and “HaShem will be One and His Name One”.

The challenge is that in order to be on the side of joy and victory, we have to attach ourselves to the culture of Torah, not the collapsing anti-Torah culture that rules the rest of the world. Thus, the Gemara in Succah that discusses the significance of eclipses ends with this remarkable passage:

***Succah 29a*** *However, when the Jews do the will of the Omnipresent they need not worry about all these omens, as it is stated: ‘Thus said HaShem: do not learn from the way of the nations. Do not be frightened by the signs of the heavens, though the nations are frightened by them.’ The idol worshipers shall be frightened [of celestial omens]; the Jews, [however], need not be frightened.[[45]](#footnote-45)*

Why would prophecies of cultural collapse be associated with Pesach and Succoth?

On Pesach, the overriding event is the fall of Egypt, which allowed the Bne Israel to escape slavery and march to Mt. Sinai. If the surrounding non-Jewish culture had not collapsed, we would have been unable to begin our national life as the people of HaShem and Torah. The collapse of the principal world culture at that time is crucial to the events of Pesach. This was the major historical event that facilitated the creation of the Bne Israel and the introduction of Torah into the world. Other catastrophic collapses, like the Great Flood, the collapse of the Tower of Babel and the destruction of Sodom, were not directly linked to the birth of the nation of Israel and the acceptance of Torah, so the collapse of Egypt was different and crucial.

How is Succoth linked to catastrophic events?

Succoth is directly connected to prophecies concerning the future collapse of the cultures of Ishmael and Esav at the time of Mashiach. We know this from the astounding haftarot[[46]](#footnote-46) we read on Succoth, describing the War of Gog and Magog, the climactic war involving all of civilization, that will occur at that season. This suggests that now is an opportune time to return to HaShem through teshuva because our behavior is crucial to our redemption.

**The Eclipses Are Related To Our Behavior**

If the eclipses fall at regular intervals, how can we relate them to our behavior and responsibilities? It would seem that they are just celestial events that are unrelated to our behavior. So, how can we KNOW that they are related to our behavior and that they are sent by HaShem to speak a specific message to us? The fact that they are a specific message from HaShem can be learned from the Torah:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 1:14-15*** *And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs,[[47]](#footnote-47) and for appointed times (festivals), and for days, and years: 15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.*

We know that these eclipses are related to our behavior from the oral Torah. We see this in Mekhilta to Parashat Bo (second chapter) as well as in the Talmud:[[48]](#footnote-48)

***Succah 29a*** *Our Rabbis taught, When the sun is in eclipse, it is a bad omen for the whole world. This may be illustrated by a parable. To what can this be compared? To a human being who made a banquet for his servants and put up for them a lamp. When he became wroth with them he said to his servant, ‘Take away the lamp from them, and let them sit in the dark’. It was taught: R. Meir said, Whenever the luminaries are in eclipse, it is a bad omen for Israel since they are inured to blows. This may be compared to a school teacher who comes to school with a strap in his hand. Who becomes apprehensive? He who is accustomed to be daily punished. Our Rabbis taught, When the sun is in eclipse it is a bad omen for idolaters; when the moon is in eclipse, it is a bad omen for Israel, since Israel reckons by the moon and idolaters by the sun. If it is in eclipse in the east, it is a bad omen for those who dwell in the east; if in the west, it is a bad omen for those who dwell in the west; if in the midst of heaven it is bad omen for the whole world. If its face is red as blood, [it is a sign that] the sword is coming to the world; if it is like sack-cloth, the arrows of famine are coming to the world; if it resembles both, the sword and the arrows of famine are coming to the world. If the eclipse is at sunset calamity will tarry in its coming; if at dawn, it hastens on its way: but some say the order is to be reversed. And there is no nation which is smitten that its gods are not smitten together with it, as it is said, And against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments. But when Israel fulfill the will of the Omnipresent, they need have no fear of all these [omens] as it is said, Thus saith the HaShem,’ Learn not the way of the nations, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the nations are dismayed at them, the idolaters will be dismayed, but Israel will not be dismayed. Our Rabbis taught, On account of four things is the sun in eclipse: On account of an Ab Beth din who died and was not mourned fittingly; on account of a betrothed maiden who cried out aloud in the city and there was none to save her; on account of sodomy, and on account of two brothers whose blood was shed at the same time. And on account of four things are the luminaries in eclipse: On account of those who perpetrate forgeries, on account of those who give false witness; on account of those who rear small cattle in the land of Israel; and on account of those who cut down good trees.[[49]](#footnote-49)*

Although eclipses can be described in natural terms and occur at set intervals, they nevertheless indicate that the period is one of Divine retribution for various sins.

The Talmud indicates that an eclipse of the sun[[50]](#footnote-50) occurs for the following four reasons: For not having eulogized a chief judge (a chief judge is comparable to the sun, for he enlightens and clarifies things for the community - Maharsha); for not having helped a betrothed maiden when she called for help (to save her from ill treatment); for committing adultery and for killing two brothers on the same day.

The Talmud indicates that an eclipse of the moon and stars is caused by four kinds of sin:

(1) forgery,

(2) false witness,

(3) breeding small cattle in Israel (for they spoil the land), and

(4) cutting down fruit-trees.

Thus we see that the behavior of the Children of Israel brings us judgment from HaShem in the form of an eclipse.

Do you find this idea to be difficult given that our Hakhamim can predict with great precision eclipses of both the moon and the sun? Does this mean that people engage in forgery, bearing false witness, etc., with the same clock-like regularity as the movements of the sun and the moon?

The answer is yes! Anyone who seriously evaluates his own behavior will discover that we habitually fall into the same sins on a very predictable basis. It is only the Tzadik, the righteous man, who is working on himself who can look back and see that he no longer repeats his sins. Most of us are not like this. We are complacent in our study and in our mussar.[[51]](#footnote-51) We do not work on ourselves.

In the final analysis, our behaviors cause the eclipse of the moon.[[52]](#footnote-52) Therefore, it behooves us to correct our behavior.

***Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 10:2*** *Be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.*

Jewish tradition explains that the sun represents the Gentile nations, so a *lunar* eclipse is regarded as a bad sign for the Jewish people because the moon is a metaphor for us. **However, there are exceptions to the rule that a full lunar eclipse is bad news for Jews; for two dates *only* in the Jewish calendar.**

The first is Pesach, the 15th of Nisan, the festival celebrating the exodus of the Jews from Egypt. The oral Torah states that there was a lunar eclipse on that night; the evil that the Egyptians wanted to do the Jews boomeranged against them and there was a civil war that night among the Egyptians. As a result this night is called, "Leil Shemurim" – a night of protection, of guardings,[[53]](#footnote-53) as we relate in the haggada.

The one other exception is on the other major festival: Succoth, that falls exactly six lunar months later on the 15th of Tishri. King David says, "Hide me in Your Succah on a day of evil".[[54]](#footnote-54) The festival tabernacle is a shelter on an evil, a lunar eclipse day.

**Calendar Analysis of 5776 (2016 – 2017)**

The year 5776 is year 19 of the nineteen year metonic[[55]](#footnote-55) cycle.

The year 5776 is a Yobel (jubilee) year according to some opinions.

The year 5776 is the first year of the Shmita cycle.

The year 5776 is the year when we begin reading the Torah, starting with Genesis, using the septennial or triennial Torah cyle lectionary.

**Was the eclipse visible?**

The Midrash also teaches us that our behavior is related to an eclipse:

***Midrash Rabbah - Leviticus XXXI:9*** *R. Levi said: Every day the Holy One, blessed be He, sits in judgment on the globes of the sun and the moon which are reluctant to go forth to shine upon the world. What reason do they give? People burn incense to us, people worship us. R. Justa b. Shunem said: What does the Holy One, blessed be He, do to them? He sits in judgment on them and they go forth and shine upon the world against their will. Hence it is written, Every morning doth He bring His right to light--lo ne’dar {Zeph. III, 5). What is the meaning of ‘lo ne’dar’? ‘It does not cease.’ But the unrighteous knoweth no shame (ib.). People are not ashamed but worship them. They see them being punished[[56]](#footnote-56) but are not ashamed.[[57]](#footnote-57)*

The Midrash is relating the fact that we pay undue attention to the celestial bodies. Because we do this, we fail to pay attention to the specific things that we can do to correct the eclipses in the first place. The Midrash specifically relates that we should be involved in Torah study so that we can properly worship and serve HaShem. Remember that if we are doing what we are supposed to be doing, then HaShem will rearrange the celestial bodies to show an improved future where we are no longer deserving of judgment. It behooves us to be doing the commands of HaShem that we learn through our Torah study.

The Shaloh[[58]](#footnote-58) tells us that seeing a lunar eclipse implies a bad sign. HaShem would ascertain that the Jews would see it if they were sinning. However, if they were not sinning, HaShem would darken the sky so that the eclipse would not be visible.

Jews are not limited by the boundaries of nature, including the celestial bodies. We have the power to change our mazal[[59]](#footnote-59) by doing mitzvot, good deeds. Our mazal, our out-flow, depends on our actions and our prayers. With our prayers we can change the celestial signs; we can move the sun, moon, and stars! This is what HaShem taught Avraham in:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 15:3-6*** *And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. 4 And, behold, the word of HaShem came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. 5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. 6 And he believed in HaShem; and he counted it to him for righteousness.*

Avraham was supposed to read the story that the stars were spelling out. From this, Avraham could see that HaShem had changed the stars to conform to the prophecy given to Avraham.

**The Saros Cycle**

Now I would like to look at these past eclipses as a contrast to the series of eclipses that will be visible in 5774 (2014). In this sequence of eclipses, there are five lunar eclipses and one solar eclipse.

These two *series* of eclipses (in 1995 and in 2014) are separated by slightly more than eighteen years. This period of time is called a *Saros* cycle.[[60]](#footnote-60) There are roughly 29 lunar and 41 solar eclipses in an 18 year 11 day Saros period. This means that one Saros, of eighteen years+, after an eclipse, the Sun, Earth, and Moon return to approximately the same relative geometry, and a nearly identical eclipse will occur. Thus we would expect that the eclipses six years from now should be nearly identical to the eclipses we experienced eleven years ago. This also suggests that there is a connection between these sets of eclipses.

Lunar and solar eclipses are possible only when the Moon is close to one of the nodes of its orbit (i.e. the points where the lunar orbit, which lies on a plane displaced by five degrees from the ecliptic plane, intersects the ecliptic plane, where the Earth orbit lies). Now the sequence of nodes repeats itself every Saros, implying that the Saros typically defines the interval between two successive lunar or solar eclipses in a given point of the Earth.

Thus the Saros cycles teaches us that the eclipses which began in 5755 are related to the eclipses that begin in 5774. The Saros cycles connects these two series.

**Future Eclipse Details**

The Biblical year 5774 will begin on Rosh HaShana, Tishri 1 (September 5, 2013). The tekufah of Tishri will fall twenty-two days later on the festival of Shemini Atzeret.[[61]](#footnote-61) This feast comes after the last and greatest day of the feast of Succoth (Tabernacles). It is "The eighth day". It marks the beginning of the rainy season in Israel. This feast is separate and distinct from Hag HaSuccoth, the Feast of Tabernacles, yet somehow connected to Hag HaSuccoth. This mysterious festival is not linked to an historical event or an agricultural event, as are all of the other festivals. The Torah and Haftarah readings, as well as the prayers and synagogue service, all focus in on The King and His people.

Six months after Shemini Atzeret there will be a total lunar eclipse[[62]](#footnote-62) on Tuesday, April 15, 2014 (Includes Israel). This is Nisan 15, 5774 on the Anno Mundi[[63]](#footnote-63) calendar, which will be Pesach,[[64]](#footnote-64) HaShem willing. This is year 17 of the 19 year cycle; it is a leap year (Full-leap). This is the sixth year of theShmita cycle. We will read the following Torah and Haphtarah[[65]](#footnote-65) on that day:

Shemot (Exodus) 12:21-51,

Bamidbar (Numbers) 28:16-25,

Yehoshua (Joshua) 5:2 – 6:1 + 27 (Sephardim[[66]](#footnote-66)),

Yehoshua (Joshua) 3:5-7;

Yehoshua (Joshua) 5:2 – 6:1 + 27 (Ashkenazim[[67]](#footnote-67)).

5774 will also see a very rare Torah reading, in the annual cycle, where we will separate the parashiyot of Matot and Masei. These two are only rarely separated, they are normally read together. After they are separated in 5774, they will not be separated again until 5795. I have written extensively on Masei (Bamidbar [Numbers] 33) in a study titled STAGES. Masei has very profound implications and is tied into the meaning of the number forty-two.

These prophetical readings will provide significant insights into the events of the week of the eclipse.

There will be another total lunar eclipse on Wednesday, October 8, 2014 (Includes Israel). This will be Tishri 14, 5775[[68]](#footnote-68) on the Anno Mundi calendar, which will beErev Succoth (the eve of the Feast of Tabernacles). This is year 18 of the 19 year cycle; it is not a leap year[[69]](#footnote-69) (Normal). **This will be a Shmita (a Sabbatical) year**. The Sabbatical year will begin on Tishri 1, 5775, just fourteen days before the eclipse. In a Sabbatical year, the fields are not planted and we end the triennial Torah lectionary cycle in this year. What makes this interesting is that the Sabbatical year is for the benefit of the Jew while the eclipse comes as a bad omen[[70]](#footnote-70) for the Jew. Additionally, the end of the lectionary cycle, which exactly corresponds to the Sabbatical cycle, has us reading Bamidbar (Numbers) and Devarim (Deuteronomy).[[71]](#footnote-71) We will complete the triennial Torah cycle in Adar of 5775.

The next eclipse will be a total solar eclipse on Friday, March 20, 2015 (Partial eclipse in Israel). This will be Adar 29, 5775 on the Anno Mundi calendar. **This is a Shmita (Sabbatical) year.** The next day will be the beginning of the New Year for Jewish kings. It is also a very special Shabbat (Sabbath). It will be one of four special Sabbaths that will be observed before Pesach (Passover). It is called Shabbat HaChodesh. We will read the following Torah and Haphtarah on this special Shabbat:

Shemot (Exodus) 11:1 – 12:28,

Yehezekel (Ezekiel) 45:18 - 46:15 (Sephardim),

Yehezekel (Ezekiel) 45:16-46:18 (Ashkenazim).

This Shabbat is also special because it is Shabbat Rosh Chodesh (New Moon). We will read the following Torah and Haphtarah for Rosh Chodesh:

Bamidbar (Numbers) 27:15 – 28:25,

Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 66:1-24.

**Please be aware that *all* *solar eclipses* occur immediately before, or on, Rosh Chodesh**.

The next eclipse will be a total lunar eclipse on Saturday, April 4, 2015 (Includes Israel). This is Nisan 15, 5775 on the Anno Mundi calendar, which will be Pesach (Passover) and Shabbat. This is year eighteen of the nineteen year cycle; it is not a leap year (Normal). We will read the following Torah and Haftarah on this day:

Shemot (Exodus) 12:21-51,

Bamidbar (Numbers) 28:16-25,

Yehoshua (Joshua) 5:2 – 6:1 + 27 (Sephardim),

and

Yehoshua (Joshua) 3:5-7;

Yehoshua (Joshua) 5:2 – 6:1 + 27 (Ashkenazim).

5776 AM (2016 CE) is a Yovel, or Yobel, (Jubilee) year according to Rabbi Yehuda + Rabbanan. (See yovel1) The Yovel begins on Tishri 1, 5776 (September 14, 2015). All Hebrew indentured servants go free during the Yovel year.

The next eclipse will be a total lunar eclipse on Monday, September 28, 2015 (Partial in Israel). This will be Tishri 15, 5776[[72]](#footnote-72) on the Anno Mundi calendar, which will be Succoth (Feast of Tabernacles). This is year nineteen of the nineteen year cycle; it is a leap year (Full-leap). **This is the first year of the Shmita cycle**. We will read the following Torah and Haphtarah on this day:

Vayikra (Leviticus) 22:26 - 23:44,

Bamidbar (Numbers) 29:12 - 29:16, and

Zechariah 14:1-21.

Finally, there will be lunar eclipse on Wednesday, March 23, 2016. This will be II Adar 13, 5776 on the anno Mundi calendar. This will be the Fast of Esther. This eclipse occurs on the day before Purim.

ONLY in the years 1949,[[73]](#footnote-73) 1967,[[74]](#footnote-74) and in 2014 have we had four total lunar eclipses on the Biblical festivals!

The following table illustrates the connections between the four sets of eclipses:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 4th | 5th | 5th | 5th | 6th | 6th | 6th |
| Passover eve | Tabernacles eve | New Year for festivals and for Jewish Kings | Passover | Rosh HaShanah &New year for Gentile Kings | Tabernacles eve | Fast of Esther(The day before Purim) |
| Description: Description: lunar eclipse | Description: Description: lunar eclipse |  | Description: Description: lunar eclipse |  | Description: Description: lunar eclipse |  |
| Nisan 14, 5709 | Tishri 14, 5710 | Nisan 1, 5710 | Nisan 15, 5710 | Tishri 1, 5711 | Tishri 15, 5711 | II Adar 13, 5711 |
| April 13, 1949 | October 7, 1949 | March 18, 1950 | April 2, 1950 | Sept. 12, 1950 | Sept. 26, 1950 | March 21, 1951 |
| **Total** lunar | **Total** lunar | **Annular** solar | **Total** lunar | Partial solar | **Total** lunar | Penumbral lunar |

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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1st | 2nd |  | 2nd |  | 3rd | 3rd |
| Passover eve | Tabernacles eve |  | Passover |  | Tabernacles eve | Passover eve |
| Description: Description: lunar eclipse | Description: Description: lunar eclipse |  | Description: Description: lunar eclipse |  | Description: Description: lunar eclipse |  |
| Nisan 14, 5727 | Tishri 14, 5728 |  | Nisan 15, 5728 |  | Tishri 14, 5729 | Nisan 14, 5729 |
| April 24, 1967 | Oct. 18, 1967 |  | April 13, 1968 |  | October 6, 1968 | April 2, 1969 |
| **Total** lunar | **Total** lunar |  | **Total** lunar |  | **Total** lunar | Penumbral lunar |

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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1st | 2nd |  | 2nd |  | 3rd | 3rd |
| Passover | Tabernacles eve |  | Passover &Sabbath |  | Tabernacles | Shushan Purim |
| partial lunar eclipse april 15, 1995 (Laos) |  |  | Description: Description: lunar eclipse |  | Description: Description: lunar eclipse |  |
| Nisan 15, 5755 | Tishri 14, 5756 |  | Nisan 15, 5756 |  | Tishri 15, 5757 | II Adar 15, 5757 |
| April 15, 1995 | October 8, 1995 |  | April 3, 1996 |  | Sept. 28, 1996 | March 23, 1997 |
| Partial lunar | Penumbral lunar |  | **Total** lunar |  | **Total** lunar | Partial lunar |

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|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **5775 is a Shmita Year** | **5776 is a Yovel (Jubilee) Year** |
| 6th | 7th | 7th | 7th | 7th | 1st | 1st |
| Passover | Tabernacles eve | New Year for festivals & for Jewish Kings | Passover &Sabbath | Rosh HaShana eve &New year for Gentile Kings | Tabernacles | Fast of Esther(The day before Purim) |
| Description: Description: lunar eclipse | Description: Description: lunar eclipse | Description: Description: solar eclipse | Description: Description: lunar eclipse |  | Description: Description: lunar eclipse |  |
| Nisan 15, 5774 | Tishri 14, 5775 | Adar 29, 5775 | Nisan 15, 5775 | Elul 29, 5775 | Tishri 15, 5776 | II Adar 13, 5776 |
| April 15, 2014 | October 8, 2014 | March 20, 2015 | April 4, 2015 | Sept. 13, 2015 | Sept. 28, 2015 | March 23, 2016 |
| **Total** lunar | **Total** lunar | **Total** solar[[75]](#footnote-75) | **Total** lunar | Partial solar | **Total** lunar | Penumbral lunar |

**Chart Observations:**

The first set of eclipses (1949) falls entirely within the Nisan triennial cycle – the second three and a half years of a septennate.

The second set of eclipses (1967) falls entirely within the Tishri triennial cycle – the first three and a half years of a septennate.

The third set of eclipses (1995) falls entirely within the Tishri triennial cycle – the first three and a half years of a septennate.

The last set of eclipses (2014) begin in the Nisan triennial cycle – the second three and a half years of a septennate, and finish in the Tishri cycle of the next septennate.

**October 8, 2014** (Tishri 14, 5775) is a full moon, a total lunar eclipse,[[76]](#footnote-76) Succoth, and the Draconids meteor shower.

**March 20, 2015** (Adar 29/ Nisan 1, 5775) is the vernal equinox (tekufat Nisan), Rosh Chodesh, and a total solar eclipse. It is the new year for Jewish kings.

|  |
| --- |
| **Events**:  |
| Mishkan assembled and disassembled – day 7. **BaMidbar Rabba, Chapter 13** |
| The Children of Israel used the manna which was in their vessels. **Kidushin 38a** |

**April 4, 2015** (Nisan 15/16, 5775) is a full moon and a total lunar eclipse.

**September 13, 2015** (Elul 29/Nisan 1, 5775) is Rosh Chodesh, a partial solar eclipse, and erev Rosh HaShana. It is the new year for Jewish kings.

**September 28, 2015** (Tishri 15/16, 5776) is a full moon, a total lunar eclipse, and Succoth.

**March 23, 2016** (II Adar 13/14, 5776) is a full moon, a penumbral lunar eclipse, and Purim.

I have built a chart of all the lunar eclipse (total or near total eclipses) from 1873 till 2043. This chart can be viewed here: eclipse1.html. This chart shows that ONLY in the years 1949,[[77]](#footnote-77) 1967,[[78]](#footnote-78) and in 2014 have we had four total lunar eclipses on the Biblical festivals!

Ok, so we have four *total* lunar eclipses *at six month* intervals, and we have five lunar eclipses all falling on Biblical festivals. Is that unusual?

I am glad you asked, because I had the same question myself. The short answer is: Yes![[79]](#footnote-79)

The long answer is that celestial mechanics are such that we see a fair number of lunar eclipses that happen at six month intervals, based on NASA data.[[80]](#footnote-80) However, it is only in the years 1884, 1902, 1949, 1967, and 2014 that we see *four* successive lunar eclipses on the Biblical festivals, according to my research.[[81]](#footnote-81) Additionally, looking forty years into the future (till 2054), I do not see any other times when we have four, total lunar eclipses falling on the Biblical feast days.

**What is a lunar eclipse, and why will the moon be red?**[[82]](#footnote-82)

The earth, lit by the sun, casts a long, conical shadow in space. At any point within that cone the light of the sun is wholly obscured. Surrounding the shadow cone, also called the umbra, is an area of partial shadow called the penumbra. The approximate mean length of the umbra is 1,379,200 km (857,000 mi); at a distance of 384,600 km (239,000 mi), the mean distance of the moon from the earth, it has a diameter of about 9170 km (about 5700 mi).

A total lunar eclipse occurs when the moon passes completely into the umbra. If it moves directly through the center, it is obscured for about two hours. If it does not pass through the center, the period of totality is less and may last for only an instant if the moon travels through the very edge of the umbra.

A partial lunar eclipse occurs when only a part of the moon enters the umbra and is obscured. The extent of a partial eclipse can range from near totality, when most of the moon is obscured, to a slight or minor eclipse, when only a small portion of the earth’s shadow is seen on the passing moon. Historically, the view of the earth’s circular shadow advancing across the face of the moon was the first indication of the shape of the earth.

Before the moon enters the umbra in either total or partial eclipse, it is within the penumbra and the surface becomes visibly darker. The portion that enters the umbra seems almost black, but during a total eclipse, the lunar disk is not completely dark; it is faintly illuminated with a red light refracted by the earth’s atmosphere, which filters out the blue rays. Occasionally a lunar eclipse occurs when the earth is covered with a heavy layer of clouds that prevent light refraction; the surface of the moon is invisible during totality.

**Eclipse Blessing?[[83]](#footnote-83)**

Is there a bracha, a blessing, for an eclipse? Jews have a blessing for everything that brings us benefit. This suggests that if there is no blessing for a significant event, then there is no benefit to the Jew. So, is there a bracha for an eclipse? No, we do not have a bracha and we do not say a bracha for an eclipse. The primary reason we do not say one, is that Chazal, our Sages, did not include eclipses on the list of Wonders of Nature upon which we say Berachot. Why did Chazal not include this phenomenon of nature on the “bracha list”? An eclipse is as much a WOW kind of experience as a shooting star or a rainbow. It certainly leads us to marvel at the Creator’s handiwork. The Hebrew term for eclipse gives the answer away: *Likui* = defect. The Talmud states, as we read earlier, that a *Likui* of the Sun is a bad sign for the world; a lunar *Likui* is a bad sign for Israel. Being associated with bad signs, the eclipse was not assigned a bracha.

HaRav Chaim David HaLevi[[84]](#footnote-84) raises the possibility that had eclipses been better understood in days of old, Chazal might have included them in the bracha (blessing) *oseh maasei bereshit* (who works the wonders of creation) with other natural phenomena.

It is probable, however, that Chazal were not relating to what eclipses actually are, but rather to what they appear to us to be. And this does not depend on the scientific details of the mechanics of an eclipse. During an eclipse, we witness the powerful, constant light and energy of the Sun being diminished, or the light of a full moon paling to a feeble glow. In both cases, we can read the chilling reminder that it is in HaShem’s hands as to whether we live in light or suffer in darkness. An eclipse might not be a bad sign of a particular event or time, but it still has the negative flavor that kept it off the bracha (blessing) list.

**Eclipse Analysis**

The eclipse sequence of 5774 – 5776 is striking in that it is the first time since Nisan 14, 5727 (April 24, 1967) that we have had *four* lunar eclipses that fell on Passover, Tabernacles, Passover, and Tabernacles – at six month intervals. This is the closest interval that a lunar eclipse can occur.

Why would prophecies of cultural collapse be associated with Pesach and Succoth?

On Pesach, the overriding event is the fall of Egypt, which allowed the Bne Israel to escape slavery and proceed to Mt. Sinai. If the surrounding non-Jewish culture had not collapsed, we would have been unable to begin our national life as the people of HaShem and Torah. The collapse of the principal world culture at that time is crucial to the events of Pesach. This was the major historical event that facilitated the creation of Bne Israel and the introduction of Torah into the world. (Other catastrophic collapses, like the Great Flood, the collapse of the Tower of Babel and the destruction of Sodom, were not directly linked to the creation of Bne Israel and the acceptance of Torah, so the collapse of Egypt was different and crucial.)

How is Succoth linked to catastrophic events?

Succoth is directly connected to prophecies concerning the future collapse of the cultures of Yishmael and Eisav at the time of Mashiach. We know this from the astounding haftaras we read on Succoth, describing the War of Gog and Magog, the climactic war involving all of civilization, that will occur at that season.

On the first day of Succoth we read:

***Zechariah 14:1-3*** *Behold, a day of the LORD cometh, when thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. 2 For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, but the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. 3 Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fighteth in the day of battle.*

And on ShabbatChol HaMoed Succoth we read:

***Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 38:18-23*** *And it shall come to pass in that day, when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, that My fury shall arise up in My nostrils.* ***19*** *For in My jealousy and in the fire of My wrath have I spoken: Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel;* ***20*** *so that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field and all creeping things that creep upon the ground, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at My presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.* ***21*** *And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD; every man's sword shall be against his brother.* ***22*** *And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will cause to rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many peoples that are with him, an overflowing shower, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.* ***23*** *Thus will I magnify Myself, and sanctify Myself, and I will make Myself known in the eyes of many nations; and they shall know that I am the LORD.*

So Pesach and Succoth are directly linked to catastrophic events, one in the past and one predicted for the future. But it’s important to emphasize that we should not look upon these events with depression or fear. We see this clearly in the events of Pesach, because at that time, though the surrounding non-Jewish culture collapsed, the Bne Israel were released to perform the service of HaShem, which our nation was created for in the first place.

This was the greatest joy in the world, and future events predicted for Succoth should also be viewed in that light. Succoth is called z’man joyteinu*…* the season of our *joy*, because at that time the reign of falsehood will be ended forever and the complete redemption will occur with the coming of Mashiach ben David. The entire world will become filled with Torah and “HaShem will be One and His Name One.”

The challenge is that in order to be on the side of joy and victory, we have to attach ourselves to the culture of Torah, not the collapsing anti-Torah culture that rules the rest of the world. Thus, the Gemara in Succah that discusses the significance of eclipses ends with this remarkable passage:

***Succah 29a*** *However, when the Jews do the will of the Omnipresent they need not worry about all these omens, as it is stated: ‘Thus said HaShem: do not learn from the way of the nations. Do not be frightened by the signs of the heavens, though the nations are frightened by them.’ The idol worshipers shall be frightened [of celestial omens]; the Jews, [however], need not be frightened.*

## The number four (4)

This begs the question: What is the meaning of the number *four*? Four is the value of the Hebrew letter dalet: ד, and the word ‘dalet’ means *door*.

The number four, more than any other digit, plays a significant part in the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles. Let’s start by looking at the role the number four has in our Passover celebration:

The Haggada is replete with things that number four:

✡ There are the four sons,

✡ four glasses of wine,

✡ four questions.

✡ Four mitzvot: Matza, maror, Haggada, and four cups.

✡ Three matzot which become four.

Pesach is preceded by four special Sabbaths: Shabbat Shekalim, Shabbat Zakhor, Shabbat Parah, and Shabbat HaChodesh.

The holiday itself even has four names: Chag HaPesach (the Festival of Passover), Chag Hamatzot (the Festival of Matza), Chag Ha’aviv (the Festival of Spring) and Z’man Cheiruteinu (the Time of our Freedom).

There are four categories of persons who must thank HaShem for deliverance from danger: sea voyagers, desert travelers, released prisoners and people who have recovered from sickness. The Gaon of Vilna indicates that the deliverance from Egypt symbolizes rescue from all these four hazards.

The Torah uses four expressions to describe our redemption from Egypt: HaShem said to the Jews in Egypt6:

***Shemot (Exodus) 6:6-7*** *Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I [am] HaShem, and*

*1. I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and*

*2. I will rid you out of their bondage, and*

*3. I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: And*

*4. I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I [am] HaShem your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.*

The number four signifies the completion of our exiles. The nation of Israel became full and complete upon the fulfillment of the fourth utterance of redemption, this fourth and final stage in their development.

Now, let’s see the role that four plays in the Feast of Tabernacles:

The holiday of the Feast of Tabernacles has many special commandments, one of these is to take four species, hold them together, and wave them. These species are:

Etrog - an unusual citrus fruit

Lulav - a frond from a date palm

Hadas - myrtle and

Arava - the water willow.

One of the rules concerning performance of the commandment to take four species is that all four are critical, meaning that even if one lacks only the lowly Arava, it is impossible to fulfill this commandment.

Succoth continues the motif of the number four when the Talmud tells us that the Feast of Tabernacles was one of the four times in the year when the earth is judged.

***Rosh HaShana 16a*** *MISHNAH. AT FOUR SEASONS [DIVINE] JUDGMENT IS PASSED ON THE WORLD:[[85]](#footnote-85) AT PASSOVER IN RESPECT OF PRODUCE; AT PENTECOST IN RESPECT OF FRUIT; AT NEW YEAR ALL CREATURES PASS BEFORE HIM [GOD] LIKE CHILDREN OF MARON,[[86]](#footnote-86) AS IT SAYS, ‘HE THAT FASHIONETH THE HEART OF THEM ALL, THAT CONSIDERETH ALL THEIR DOINGS’;[[87]](#footnote-87) AND ON TABERNACLES JUDGMENT IS PASSED IN RESPECT OF RAIN.*

From the above we learn that on Succoth the world is judged with respect to rain. During this festival HaShem determines how much rain the world (Israel) deserves.

During Succoth, in the Temple, we also saw another series of the number four, as we can see from the following Mishna:

***Sukkah 51a*** *MISHNAH. HE WHO HAS NOT SEEN THE REJOICING AT THE PLACE OF THE WATER-DRAWING HAS NEVER SEEN REJOICING IN HIS LIFE. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE FIRST FESTIVAL DAY OF TABERNACLES THEY[[88]](#footnote-88) DESCENDED[[89]](#footnote-89) TO THE COURT OF THE WOMEN WHERE THEY HAD MADE A GREAT ENACTMENT. THERE WERE THERE GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS WITH FOUR GOLDEN BOWLS ON THE TOP OF EACH OF THEM AND FOUR LADDERS TO EACH, AND FOUR YOUTHS DRAWN FROM THE PRIESTLY STOCK IN WHOSE HANDS WERE HELD JARS OF OIL CONTAINING ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY LOG WHICH THEY POURED INTO THE BOWLS.*

One final set of four is associated with both Pesach and Succoth. The year was divided into the four tekufoth or cycles of Tishri, Tebet, Nisan, and Tammuz, each of which commenced on a fixed date of the solar year. Most people know these tekufoth as the vernal equinox (Nisan – Pesach), the summer solstice (Tammuz), the autumnal equinox (Tishri – Succoth), and the winter solstice (Tebet). Of these four turning points of the year, one occurs very close to Pesach and one occurs very close to Succoth. In fact, Pesach always occurs on the first full moon after the vernal equinox.

Thus we see that not only are the four eclipses on Pesach (Passover) and Succoth (Feast of Tabernacles), but the number four is intimately associated with these two festivals and it hints to the mitzvot (actions commanded by HaShem) of these two festivals.

## The number five (5)

In 5774 we will see four lunar eclipses. We know from our study of the number four that there is always a fifth associated with the four. Therefore, with our four lunar eclipses we will see one solar eclipse between these four. Like the four fingers of the hand, the thumb is like the four, yet it is materially different having only one joint rather than two, and being opposable instead of inline. This teaches us that the solar eclipse is related to the lunar eclipses, yet it is materially different.

Now, let’s look at another relevant symbol to a lunar eclipse, the moon.

**What does the moon represent?**

The moon is associated with the children of Israel**.** Like the moon, the fortunes of Israel wax and wane; sometimes there will be darkness and sometimes Israel will shine bright.

Just as the moon reflects the light of the sun, so too are the Jewish people meant to reflect the light of HaShem. The idea of being a “light to nations” is really that of being a *reflector* to the nations. In other words, it is the Jewish nation’s role to reflect the light of Torah to every last corner on earth, and to not fulfill this function is to “eclipse” the world and leave it in darkness and chaos. This will result in periods of historical darkness, and usually worse: Terrible anti-Semitism.

Just as the moon waxes and wanes, so too does Israel go through stages of light and darkness with the constant knowledge that there *is* light at the end of the tunnel.

Our Sages[[90]](#footnote-90) associate the moon’s periodic rebirth with the ultimate renewal the Jewish people will experience in the Era of the Redemption for the Jews “calculate their calendar according to the moon and resemble the moon”.[[91]](#footnote-91) Just as the moon wanes and becomes concealed, for a certain time the Jewish people must endure the darkness of exile. The shining of the moon anew each month, however, reassures us of the coming of the ultimate rebirth, the redemption.

Thus the *moon* = *Israel*. An eclipse of the moon results when Israel is not being a light to the Gentiles.

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah 49:6*** *yea, he saith, It is too light a thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.*

## The Color Red

Now that we understand the symbol of the moon, let’s look at the meaning of the red color of an eclipsed moon. The red color that is often associated with a total lunar eclipse also has a meaning that can help us glean some insights into the meaning of a total lunar eclipse.

The color *red* comes from the Hebrew word אדום - adom. The Hebrew word *Adama* -אדמה (ground, soil, earth, land) derives from *adom*. This alludes to its original meaning the “red arable ground”. Adam is also connected to adom because he was a red color. From adom, we also get such words as *odem* אודם - lipstick, *maadim* מאדים - Mars (the red planet) and the nation of Edom.

Red typifies war, murder, and blood-thirstiness.

The Torah’s first use of the word Edom sets the word in the context of two brothers mourning the death of Avraham Avinu. One has just returned from a day of raping and murder, the other has spent the day mourning and preparing the traditional mourner’s meal of lentils. Both events center on the *color red*. Edom is shedding blood whilst Yaaqov is cooking red lentils. This is an important understanding.

The Torah repeats the association of Edom with Esau in:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 36:1*** *Now these [are] the generations of Esau, who [is] Edom.*

***Bereshit (Genesis) 36:8*** *Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir: Esau [is] Edom.*

***Bereshit (Genesis) 36:43*** *Duke Magdiel, duke Iram: these [be] the dukes of Edom, according to their habitations in the land of their possession: he [is] Esau the father of the Edomites.*

Now we know that when Torah repeats a matter it is to emphasize the connection. Thus Torah is connecting Esau to Edom.

This encounter shows that Esau is more concerned for this world than for the next world:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 25:32*** *Esau cried out, “Why do I need the birthright?”*

A Heavenly Voice echoed, “Why do you need the blessing?”[[92]](#footnote-92)

Blessings made the difference between living ONLYin this world and also living in the Olam HaBa, the World to Come:

Yitzchak avoided using HaShem’s Name in Esau’s blessing since the purpose of Esau’s blessing was to grant him his full reward in this world so that he should be excluded from the blessings of the World to Come.[[93]](#footnote-93) We have examined this issue in greater detail in the study titled: WICKED.

For, that is what Edom is all about, **THIS WORLD,** even at the cost of eternity. Thus, by extension, Galut Edom, the fourth and final exile of the Jewish people has been meant to endure in advance of Mashiach’s arrival, is one that eternalizes the temporal.

Red is the color that is associated with the sefirah of Gevurah (Strength/Might). This sefirah is associated with the virtue of *Yirah* (Fear of HaShem) and with the ministry of the Sheliach [Chazan/Bishop]. This sefirah is on the left and is the attribute associated with ‘withholding’ and with discipline. That is why when a father and son walk together, the son walks to his father’s left.

Chazal[[94]](#footnote-94) also teach that Gevurah is responsible for victory in war, because this involves bloodshed. The color red is also used to express hatred, anger, fury, and Divine judgment.[[95]](#footnote-95)

The color red is often associated with sin and impurity.

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 1:18*** *Come now, and let us reason together, saith HaShem: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*

Red - the color of unadulterated physicality.

Chazal[[96]](#footnote-96) were able to identify where in Tanakh[[97]](#footnote-97) the Roman Empire was spoken of based on the characteristics they saw in Rome. Rome displayed, it seemed, characteristics similar to Edom, the national enemy of the Jews of longstanding. Was it not an Edomi (Herod) who was a vassal to Rome? Wasn’t Rome’s imperial color red? Wasn’t Mars its *sar* (prince)?

We have a Halacha that the color red may not be worn, as it was the color that harlots wore.

## War?

Many will immediately think that lunar eclipses are related to war. After all, we had three lunar eclipses before the Israeli independence war, and before the six day war of 1967 in Israel. However this cannot be for several reasons:

1. The four lunar eclipses on Pesach, Succoth, Pesach, and Succoth in 1884 and 1885 had no Israeli war associated with them – There was no Israel.
2. There were no lunar eclipses in 1973 during/before the Yom Kippur war.
3. There were no lunar eclipses during the Gulf war.
4. HaShem does not want to warn His People about war. War is the outcome of their behavior. He cares about behavior – obedience to Torah!

So, what is going on? What does HaShem want to convey with a lunar eclipse? Let’s answer this question by going back to 1881 through 1885 and try to understand that sequence of eclipses.

In 1881 the Jewish Reform movement began at a conference in 1881. At this conference, a platform of principles was adopted that denied the validity of Jewish law (Halacha). As a result of this platform there was a split in 1885 that resulted in the formation of the Jewish Conservative movement. Both of these groups minimize Halacha and teach others to do so.

Thus we could get a glimmer that the lunar eclipses are HaShem’s way of showing His displeasure with those who deviate from His Torah. His chosen people have a responsibility to serve HaShem and to obey His Torah. If they do not, then HaShem brings them lessons to help them understand. His signs are always instructions to help His people draw closer to Him through the Torah. The Torah is the key to understanding His signs!

What happened in 1948 and 1949? I suspect that HaShem was a bit displeased that Israel was becoming a new nation of non-Torah observant people. The leaders were certainly not observant and the whole country would follow their lead.

When Joshua first conquered Israel, the home for HaShem’s chosen people, he populated it with Torah observant people. The same is true of the people who repopulated Israel after the Babylonian diaspora, in the days of Ezra.

Keep in mind that HaShem desires to reward us for loving and attaching ourselves to Him. When we deviate from the ways of pleasantness and peace, then He will bring us back. His celestial events and signs are designed to encourage us to return to His ways.

However, there is another way to look at these dates:

The moon represents Islam as well because their calendar is completely lunar based. This suggests that these eclipses are a message to Muslims. 1493 was indeed a big year for Islam. It was the year they lost Europe. So was 1949, the year the Muslims lost the war against Israel. They were still fighting in 1948. The armistice and defeat was in 1949. If the tetrad lunar eclipses signal something about Jews, it would have been 1948, but 1949 was the defeat of Islam in Israel, not the founding of the State. In 1967 they lost Jerusalem and it happened in 6 days, so that one was on the dot.

# Kiddush Lavanah with an Eclipse

Kiddush Lavanah, the blessing said after a new moon, cannot be said during or after an eclipse as the moon is already waning at that point.

There are two main significances of looking at the moon for the Kiddush Lavanah, one is the acknowledgement of a visual physical sign of HaShem’s miracles, which we rarely, if ever get the opportunity or have the ability to see. The second meaning is that the just as the moon waxes and wanes just as the Jewish people have low and high points we will too be like the full moon and a “Light unto the nations”.

Messiah is the head of the body called Israel. The moon symbolizes Israel because it waxes and wanes and reflects the glory of HaShem as the moon reflects the sun. Thus the moon symbolizes the Messiah as the head the Rosh of Israel. This helps us to understand that when we do the Kiddush Lavanah we say the following words:

דוד מלך ישראל, חי, חי וקיים

*David, King of Israel lives, lives and endures!*

When we celebrate the New Moon we prophecy. We prophecy the coming, the crowning, and the remembrance of Messiah. We prophecy about the restoration of the twelve tribes (one for each of the twelve new moons) that make up the body of Mashiach. We prophecy regarding the seven + three men of the sephirot that will crown the Mashiach. Thus we learn that the congregation (the 7 + 3 men) is responsible for bringing about this renewal. After all, *Rosh Chodesh* = *Chief renewal*, or the *renewal of the chief*, i.e. Mashiach. When the moon is eclipsed, Mashiach is eclipsed and Israel is eclipsed. Yet, even when we are eclipsed we are still visible and we still provide a sign for the Gentiles.

During Kiddush Lavanahabout the Jewish nation, “…In the future they will be renewed like the moon…”, during the geula (the redemption) that is about to happen. During the galut (the exile),the Jewish nation is tired and restless, but during the geulawe will all be renewed and all of our faults will be corrected. And this will happen before it is even possible to have an eclipse!

The full illuminating moon in the middle of the month refers to Mashiach after He did his job of taking the Jews out of galut (exile)and building the Beit HaMikdash (the Tabernacle). The small moon that doesn’t illuminate and is hardly recognizable at the beginning of the month refers to Mashiach at the beginning of his revelation when we are still in galut*,* but can recognize and identify the Melech (King)Mashiach*.* This in essence is the greatest revelation during the yemot HaMashiach (Days of The Messiah)*,* the revelation of Mashiach himself in all of his glory.

Thus we must not wait until a lunar eclipse to praise HaShem for renewing the moon.

**The Omer as a Pointer to the Yovel[[98]](#footnote-98)**

By the commandment of Counting the Omer, we see two seemingly contradicting commands:

**We are commanded to count 7 complete weeks**.[[99]](#footnote-99)

**We are commanded to count 50 days**.[[100]](#footnote-100)

For halachah, we count 49 days, and Shabuot is celebrated on the 50th day, without any counting. There is an idea of 49 days of our efforts from below, and then HaShem completes the 50 days for us from above.

If we consider from the time of Ezra that there are to be 49 yovel cycles of our own efforts, we stand today 3 years ahead (in 5773 – 2016) of the beginning of the 49th cycle, which begins in 5776 (2016). The 49th cycle is destined to be the completion of the efforts of the nation of Israel.

If we look at the original count as being 50 year cycles, and that our goal, even then, was to arrive at a yovel of yovel years, then we see an act of kindness from HaShem: Switching to 49 year cycles shortens the time of galut[[101]](#footnote-101) by decades. In our case, we are set to arrive at the 48th yovel a total of 39 years earlier than we would in a 50 year cycle count. That is because the first 9 yovel years are identical in the 2 sets, so 48 - 9 = 39 years. HaShem has mercy on us, and the end comes towards us.[[102]](#footnote-102)

Looking at the yovel cycles as parallel to the omer period, we also find parallels. To name a few:

3416-3765 is the period corresponding to the yovel “week” of Chesed, in which the Beit HaMikdash stood. The Chesed she’be’Chesed (the 1st “day”), 3416-3455, included the founding of the Great Assembly (HaKnesset HaGedolah), the last remnants of prophecy until the days of Mashiach.

3816-3865 is the period corresponding to Gevurah she’bi’Gevurah (the 8th yovel cycle), in which the 2nd Beit HaMikdash was destroyed. The 8th day of the Omer is the day after Isru Chag, full mourning customs begin at this point.

4992-5041 is the period corresponding to Hod she’be’Hod, which is Lag BaOmer, in which we celebrate the revelation of the Zohar. This Yovel cycle brought the publication of the Zohar.

5139-5482 is the period corresponding to the yovel "week" of Yesod. Revelations of the secrets of Torah are rooted in Yesod. The Arizal lived during this period.

5482-present is the period corresponding to the yovel “week” of Malchut. The geulah is rooted in the sefirah of Yesod, per Kabbalah. The 48th yovel cycle is Yesod she'be'Malchut. Malchut she'be'Malchut will see the return of the Malchut to Am Israel with the eternal end of exile.

I built a chart to help visualize this idea at: yovel1.

Finally, let us contrast the two mitzvot of counting sefirat ha'omer, the yearly counting of forty-nine days, and sefirat ha'yovelot, the counting of fifty-year cycles. The counting of the omer is done by every individual, while the counting of the yovelot is done only by the Beit Din Hagadol This is to teach you that the layperson is bound to look at the short term, whereas a spiritual leader must have a purview that spans fifty years at a time.

**The Yovel**

The Torah commands us to count seven times seven years and then celebrate the fiftieth year as a Yovel (Jubilee). We have written extensively about the Yovel in our study titled: Yovel. Proposed dates for the Yovel, from various sources, are detailed in our study titled: Yovel1. The student interested in the details should consult those studies.

The yovel is all about the freedom for the slave *and* the return of the land to its proper owner:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 25:10*** *And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.*

This suggests that we should see the return of the promised land to its rightful owners at every yovel, at every jubilee. Keep this in mind as we examine the yovel dates.

One of the most interesting Yovel calculations comes from those who combine the opinion of the Rabbanan and Hakham Yehoshua. This novel idea[[103]](#footnote-103) suggests that we count fifty years for the Yovel up until the destruction of the Temple. After the destruction of the Temple we revert to counting forty-nine years with the first year of the next cycle being the Yovel year.

Remember that the major purpose of the Jubilee was the freeing of slaves to serve HaShem rather than a terrestrial master, on their own land. This suggests that the events of the Yovel should be related to freedom and to a return to Eretz Israel.

This novel calculation shows the following Jubilees and their significance:

**Yovel Year 46 – 5678 (Gregorian - 1917)**

Shortly after the beginning of the 46th Yovel, the Balfour Declaration was ratified. Dated November 2, 1917 (17th Marcheshvan 5678), the Balfour Declaration is one of the biggest steps towards gaining international recognition for the Return to Eretz Israel.

**Yovel Year 47 – 5727 (Gregorian - 1967)**

The next Yovel year, according to this calculation, was in 5727. In Iyar 5727 (June of 1967), Yerushalayim, Yehuda, Shomron, the Golan, and Gaza came under Jewish control for the first time in centuries, and the move back to these areas, of Eretz Israel, began.

**Yovel Year 48 – 5776 (Gregorian - 2016)**

This coming Yovel, and its events, are yet to be seen. Never the less, we can learn what kinds of events to expect.

By combining Rabannan’s count and R. Yehuda’s count, we find that the last Yovel year was 5727 (1967 CE), the year of the Six Day War. This was the 48th Yovel year starting from the time of Ezra in 3416. The Yovel year which is 49 years later is 5776. Perhaps the year following would be a fitting time for the Sanhedrin to assume, or rather to resume, its role in counting of Shmita and Yovel years and to assume its role of leadership of Am Israel. This next Yovel would start the 49th Yovel period. Rather fitting that the Sanhedrin would count the last Yovel before the 50th Yovel, a Yovel of Yovels. Remember that only the Sanhedrin can count and sanctify the Yovel year.

**A Comet**

On Kislev 25, 5774 (November 28, 2013) – the first day of Chanukah,[[104]](#footnote-104) Comet C/2012 S1 (ISON) has the potential to become a striking object visible to the eye alone. Will Comet ISON become a legendary *comet of the century*? It might. But it might not. Comet ISON will come within 800,000 miles (1.2 million km) of our sun’s surface on November 28. That’s over 100 times closer to the sun than Earth.[[105]](#footnote-105)

***Berachoth 58b*** *OVER SHOOTING-STARS [ZIKIN]. What are ZIKIN? Shmuel (Samuel) said: A comet.[[106]](#footnote-106) Shmuel (Samuel) also said: I am as familiar with the paths of heaven as with the streets of Nehardea, with the exception of the comet, about which I am ignorant. There is a tradition that it never passes through the constellation of Orion, for if it did, the world would be destroyed. But we have seen it pass through? — Its brightness passed through, which made it appear as if it passed through itself. R. Huna the son of R. Yahoshua (Joshua) said: Wilon[[107]](#footnote-107) was torn asunder and rolled up,[[108]](#footnote-108) showing the brightness of Rakia.[[109]](#footnote-109) R. Ashi said: A star was removed from one side of Orion and a companion star appeared on the other side, and people were bewildered and thought the star had crossed over.[[110]](#footnote-110)*

In the final chapter of Tractate Berachot,[[111]](#footnote-111) we learn that when viewing zikin (comet) in the heavens one should recite the blessing: "*Blessed are You, HaShem, our G-d, King of the Universe, for His strength and His power fill the universe*". The Talmud[[112]](#footnote-112) clarifies: "What is zikin? A comet." (In the Aramaic: *kochava d'shavit*). This expression--*kochava d'shavit*--alludes clearly to the verse:

***Bamidbar (Numbers) 24:17*** *A star [kochav] shall go forth from Jacob and a staff [shevet] shall arise in Israel.*

Similarly, Rav Hai Gaon explains[[113]](#footnote-113) that the comet is called *kochava d'shavit* because "it stands as straight as a staff", just as the verse states, "a star shall go forth from Jacob and a staff shall arise in Israel".

It is thus suggested that the *kochava d'shavit* symbolizes the "comet", depicting the soul-root, of the King Mashiach that appears in the heavens in the month of Shevat.[[114]](#footnote-114) According to this explanation, we have a unification of seeming opposites: of the comet appearing above and the staff that arises from below, representing "in its appointed time" and "I will hasten it". Similarly, the *cloud* upon which Mashiach rides when descending from above[[115]](#footnote-115) is revealed, as is the *poor man*,[[116]](#footnote-116) in the secret of the prophet Elijah[[117]](#footnote-117) who prays, (I Kings 18:37), "Answer me [aneini], O G-d, answer me [aneini]" (aneini is cognate both to anan – *cloud*, and to ani *poor man*. Towards the end of the Book of Isaiah,[[118]](#footnote-118) the prophet prays that G-d will bring forth the redemption, "for Your servants' sake, the *tribes* (in Hebrew shivtei from shevet--staff) of Your inheritance"--"there (to Jerusalem) the tribes used to go up, the tribes of G-d",[[119]](#footnote-119) from "below to above," complimenting the revelation "from above" of the *kochava d'shavit*.

As is well known, a comet has a "tail" that trails it.[[120]](#footnote-120) This is the secret of "the footsteps of the Mashiach", the "traces" that are left by the King Mashiach on his way to redeem us. During the month of Shevat, the "footprints" of the Mashiach are enclothed in our consciousness, awakening within us the desire to search for him. We seek to connect with the essential quality of the King Mashiach, with the awareness that we are bound to him as Chava was to Adam before they were, as it were, sawn apart. In the month of Shevat, in which we celebrate "the New Year of the trees", it is important to rectify the blemish of the "severing of the sprouts" of faith, to join and re-unite the quality of Kingship[[121]](#footnote-121) with the Tzadik, foundation of the world",[[122]](#footnote-122) the King Mashiach.

**A Prophecy[[123]](#footnote-123)**

The following section was added with the intent to provide additional support for the previous section’s suggestion for the Yovel year. This section is not intended to predict or foretell, but only to support the previous section.

Ludwig Schneider of Israel Today magazine has translated Judah Ben Samuel work into English. This translation includes some very interesting perspectives vis-à-vis the Yovel years:

*Judah Ben Samuel[[124]](#footnote-124) published the results of his biblical calculations (Gematria) and astrological observations and summarized as follows: “When the Ottomans (Turks) – who were already a power to be reckoned with on the Bosporus in the time of Judah Ben Samuel – conquer Jerusalem they will rule over Jerusalem for eight jubilees. Afterwards Jerusalem will become no-man’s land for one jubilee, and then in the ninth jubilee it will once again come back into the possession of the Jewish nation – which would signify the beginning of the Messianic end time.”*

*One jubilee is 50 years (Leviticus 25). It is the 50th year after seven times seven years, the year in which each person should regain ownership of his or her land. Ben Samuel’s calculations were purely theoretical; there was absolutely no sign at that time of their being fulfilled. He himself was not able to experience their fulfillment, for it was only 300 years after his death that the first of his predictions were to come true.*

*The Mamluks, who had been reigning in Jerusalem since 1250, were conquered in 1517 by the Ottoman Turks. They remained for eight jubilees (8 x 50 = 400 years), that is to say they were in Jerusalem for 400 years. Exactly 400 years later, in 1917, the Ottoman Turks were conquered by the British. The League of Nations conferred the Mandate for the Holy Land and Jerusalem to the British. Thus, from 1917, under international law, Jerusalem was no-man’s land.*

*Then, when Israel captured Jerusalem in the Six Day War of 1967, exactly one jubilee (50 years) after 1917, Jerusalem reverted to Jewish-Israeli ownership once again. Thereby, according to the prophecies of Judah Ben Samuel, the Messianic End Times began.*

To recap the predictions: In *AD 1217* this scholarly and pious rabbi prophesied that the Ottoman Turks would rule over the holy city of Jerusalem for eight Jubilees. Now, keep in mind, he made this prediction *300 years* before the Ottoman Turks seized control of Jerusalem in 1517. If indeed 1217 and 1517 were jubilee years as Judah Ben Samuel believed, then his prophecy was exactly right, because exactly 400 years after the Turks took control of Jerusalem they were driven out of the city and the holy land in 1917 by the Allied forces under the command of General George Allenby – on Hanukkah, by the way.

*The rabbi also prophesied that during the ninth Jubilee Jerusalem would be a “no-man’s land.” This is exactly what happened from 1917 to 1967, due to the fact that the Holy Land was placed under British Mandate in 1917 by the League of Nations and literally “belonged” to no nation.*

Even after Israel’s war of independence in 1948-49, Jerusalem was still divided by a strip of land running right through the heart of the city, with Jordan controlling the eastern part of the city and Israel controlling the western part of the city. That strip of land was considered and even called “no-man’s land” by both the Israelis and the Jordanians.

It was not until the Six Day War in 1967 when the entire West Bank of the Holy Land was conquered by the Israeli army that the whole city of Jerusalem passed back into the possession of Israel. So once again the prophecy made by the rabbi 750 years previously was fulfilled to the letter.

Judah Ben Samuel also prophesied that during the 10th Jubilee Jerusalem would be under the control of the Jews and the Messianic “end times” would begin. If he’s right, the 10th Jubilee began in 1967 and will be concluded in 2016.

According to Rav Yehuda heHasid, 5727 (Six Day War in 1967) was a Yovel and the next Yovel is 5776 (Gregorian year: 2016).

**Mashiach in 5775?**

Another interesting aspect of the year 5775 is that Mashiach ben David will arrive at the end of *a* seven year Shmita cycle, according to Chazal in the Talmud:

***Sanhedrin 97a*** *‘Thus hath R. Johanan said: in the generation when the son of David [i.e., Mashiach] will come, scholars will be few in number, and as for the rest, their eyes will fail through sorrow and grief. Multitudes of trouble and evil decrees will be promulgated anew, each new evil coming with haste before the other has ended.’*

*Our Rabbis taught: in the seven year cycle at the end of which the son of David will come-in the first year, this verse will be fulfilled: And I will cause it to rain upon one city and cause it not to rain upon another city;[[125]](#footnote-125) in the second, the arrows of hunger will be sent forth;[[126]](#footnote-126) in the third, a great famine, in the course of which men, women, and children, pious men and saints[[127]](#footnote-127) will die, and the Torah will be forgotten by its students; in the fourth, partial plenty;[[128]](#footnote-128) in the fifth, great plenty, when men will eat, drink and rejoice, and the Torah will return to its disciples; in the sixth, [Heavenly] sounds;[[129]](#footnote-129) in the seventh, wars; and at the conclusion of the septennate the son of David will come* (the first year of the next Shmita cycle)*. R. Joseph demurred: But so many septennates have passed, yet has he not come! — Abaye retorted: Were there then [Heavenly] sounds in the sixth and wars in the seventh! Moreover, have they [sc. the troubles] been in this order![[130]](#footnote-130)*

Thus we might expect Mashiach ben David in a Yovel year. Please bear in mind that we do not know for certain when the next Yovel year will be. Further, Chazal have commanded us to expect Mashiach every day. Maimonides codifies this in Principle number twelve of his thirteen principles:

*Principle XII. The era of the Mashiach*

*And this is to believe that in truth that he will come and that you should be waiting for him even though he delays in coming. And you should not calculate times for him to come, or to look in the verses of Tanakh to see when he should come. The sages say: The wisdom of those who calculate times [of his coming] is small and that you should believe that he will be greater and more honored than all of the kings of Israel since the beginning of time as it is prophesied by all the prophets from Moses our teacher, peace be upon him, until Malachi, peace be upon him. And he who doubts or diminishes the greatness of the Mashiach is a denier in all the Torah for it testifies to the Mashiach explicitly in the portion of Bilaam and the portion of “You are gathered (towards the end of Deut)”. And part of this principle that there is no king of Israel except from the house of David and from the seed of Solomon alone. And anyone who disputes this regarding this family is a denier of the name of God and in all the words of the prophets.*

Finally, if the Geulah (the redemption) follows the order of prayer,[[131]](#footnote-131) we can have a sense of where we are and where we're going.

Psalms chapter 2:1 asks the following question: Why are the nations in an uproar?

Why is Israel front page news more often than all the other nations combined? Why are there four lunar eclipses and just one solar eclipse in this cycle?

Why does the UN focus on Israel to the exclusion of the other nations? Consider that as of 2013, Israel had been condemned in forty-five resolutions by United Nations Human Rights Council since its creation in 2006. The Council had resolved almost more resolutions condemning Israel than on the rest of the world combined. Why?

I believe that the answer to this question can be explained with a story.

As the parent of five children, I have been involved in coaxing, cajoling, exhorting, reproving, and punishing them on many occasions.

I have also had the opportunity to observe many other children misbehaving. Never the less I have never disciplined any of these children because they were not my children.

In the same way, HaShem uses the nations to discipline His firstborn son, Israel.[[132]](#footnote-132) The UN ignores many great atrocities in the many nations of the world in order to spend time reproving Israel for exceedingly mild transgressions. They are so mild that we must strain to get even a hint of the actual behavior in need of correcting.

Like Bilaam, the nations of the world curse and attempt to uproot then Jewish people. Had Bilaam succeeded, God forbid, he would have committed the worst crime in history. Yet, the nations attempt the same crime on a daily basis only to find that HaShem is using them to patiently move His people into the perfection that a parent wants for their children.

When we see the newspapers of the world with Israel on the front page, we should marvel at HaShem’s love for His people and we should thereby see the hand of God guiding His children into the proper path.

HaShem minimizes His discipline of the rest of the world because they are not ‘His’ children. It is also worth noting that the Jews are an example for the Gentiles.

Let us look **today** for Mashiach, and let His Majesty explain how the words of Chazal are reconciled at His coming, Amen V’Amen!

***Sanhedrin 97a*** *Our Rabbis taught: in the seven year cycle at the end of which the son of David will come:*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **First Year** | **Second Year** | **Third Year** | **Fourth Year** | **Fifth Year** | **Sixth Year** | **Seventh Year** |
| The tithe of the FIRST YEAR went to the Levites, who made distribution to themselves, the priest’s portion and the poor. | The tithe of the SECOND YEAR went entirely to the priests. | The tithe of the THIRD YEAR went entirely to charity for the poor, Levite, stranger, widows, fatherless, sojourners through the land of Israel. | The tithe of the FOURTH YEAR went to the Levites, who made distribution to themselves, the priest’s portion and the poor. | The tithe of the FIFTH YEAR went to the Levites, who made distribution to themselves, the priest’s portion and the poor. | The tithe of the SIXTH YEAR was set aside by the tither for his own pilgrimages to Jerusalem. | The tithe was not collected from agricultural products on the SEVENTH YEAR because the land was to lay fallow. |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *This verse will be fulfilled: And I will cause it to rain upon one city and cause it not to rain upon another city;[[133]](#footnote-133)* | *The arrows of hunger will be sent forth;[[134]](#footnote-134)* | *A great famine, in the course of which men, women, and children, pious men and saints[[135]](#footnote-135) will die, and the Torah will be forgotten by its students;* | *Partial plenty;[[136]](#footnote-136)* | *Great plenty, when men will eat, drink and rejoice, and the Torah will return to its disciples;* | *[Heavenly] sounds;[[137]](#footnote-137)* | *In the seventh, wars;* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

*At the conclusion of the septennate the son of David will come* (the first year of the next Shmita cycle)*.*

The conclusion of the septennate is potentially a Jubilee year.

History is ‘His story’ and it is unfolding with precision and direction from the Master Conductor in all its power in these eventful years, and we have a front row seat and an important leadership role in the next scene.

2015 (5776) has something else going for it. The Hebrew year will be תשעו, written fully התשעו, or rearranged תשועה, meaning “salvation”. That is 5776, starting in September 2015.

**\* \* \***

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From **Dov Bar-Leib:**

*When we cross over 6 million and get closer to 7 million Jew in Eretz Yisrael, it is likely because of massive assimilation in Chutz LaAretz we will not only have more than 6 million Jews here, but we will also have Rov Yehudim (majority of the Jews in the world) here in Eretz Yisrael. The halakhic consequences are monumental. All mitzvot that are dependent on Eretz Yisrael including Shmita, Terumot, and Ma'aserot which are Rabinically obligatory right now will switch over to being obligated by the Torah. So by the 6th year, 5774, there will be Kolot as in Kol mevaser mevaser v'omer, three times. This is the voice of prophesy starting with Eliyahu HaNavi. Likely this can only happen when Rov Yehudim are already in Eretz Yisrael. Then comes the war in the Shmita year, the big final war after Persia has already come up against the West (Rome) in three consecutive years. In the 7th year Persia expands its gains over the course of the entire year. Medrash Sefer Eliyahu then says 3 kings will come up from the West, etc.... And at this time Shmita will already be a Torah obligation, not just a Rabbinic obligation. So what is our merit now? Because of our abominable behavior in the area of common decency in 5765 (2005) by both the Erev Rav and the Erev Ze'ir, it is the merit of the 6 million who perished after being chased in 7 different directions over 1876 years from the destruction of the Temple until the end of the Shoah. Gilgulim, seven times over for each sefirah of the nefesh beheimah. It is why that all that was left at the end of the Shoah was Dry Bones. And Yechezkel prophesied on them dry bones so that those bones might live. All that suffering and all that wailing from the Ocean of Tears in Shamayim. That is our merit now.*

1. The year 5774 is a leap year in the Jewish calendar, meaning that it has an entire extra month added between Adar and Nisan in order to synchronize the solar and lunar cycles. It is also a complete year as the months Kislev and Cheshvan have 30 days, bringing the total number of days in the year to 385, the fullest year possible. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Passover [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Feast of Tabernacles [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. *Molad* is a Hebrew word meaning “birth” that also generically refers to the time at which the New Moon is “born”. There is a point in the moon's orbit in which it is positioned directly between the earth and the sun, making it invisible to anyone standing on earth's surface. The *molad* occurs when the moon has moved far enough from this position that a thin crescent of its illuminated surface becomes visible, marking the start of a new Jewish month. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. It commemorates the special protection given the Israelites during their 40 year wandering in the desert and recalls the little booths they built in the fields and lived in during the exodus and during the harvest. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The first eclipse falls on Rosh Chodesh Nisan. This date is regarded as the New Year for Jewish Kings, representing a transfer of Kingship from one phase to another and there is an opinion in the Talmud that it is the proper date for the Jewish New Year (bimodality). This year it falls on the 21st of March, 4 days after elections in Israel! Recall that the President of the mightiest nation on earth fought hard to prevent Netanyahu’s election. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Passover [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Feast of Tabernacles [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. It was publicized that the Americans gave 9 months for the peace talks, which will conclude on the seventh day of Pesach, 5774. The Gr"a, on Tikunei Zohar, said that the Redemption will come after there is distress for Talmidei Hakhamim for 9 months and together with this, the Kingdom of Rome will spread for 9 months. In the Gemara (Yoma 10a): "Rav Yehuda said in the name of Rav: [Mashiach] Ben David will not come until the Kingdom of Romi spreads over the entire world for 9 months." We see that that the evil kingdom = Romi = Edom = America and Europe of today, who are applying the pressure. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. The *molad* is at 12:43PM and 3 chalakim, Jerusalem time. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. The first triennial Torah cycle ends in Nisan 5757. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. 5775 is a Shmita or sabbatical year. Thus the Shmita cycle begins anew in Tishri of 5776. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The new cycle will begin on the non-festival Sabbath closest to Simchat Torah – Tishri 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. By July of 2014, Gaza attacked Israel with rockets and the "protective mechanism" of the 4 eclipse cycle was reflected in the physical world above our heads by an "Iron Dome" defensive rocket system that saved our cities from wanton destruction. This protection continues as the Ishmaelite nations around us, sworn enemies of the Jewish State, self-destruct. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Yovel of Yovelot – Jubilee of Jubilees. Apparently a calculation by Yehudah HaChassid almost 800 years ago concurs that 5776 is the Yovel of Yovelot. It will be 50 years after the reunification of Yerushalayim. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Yom Kippurim Katan (“little Yom Kippurim”) refers to the day before Rosh Chodesh, of each month, as this is likened to a beginning (Otzar Hatefillot; Seder Yom Kippurim Katan) and therefore, more of an opportunity to do teshuva (repentance or returning). Hakham Moshe Cordovero, Abraham Galante, called it Yom Kippurim Katan because on it the sins of the entire month are atoned for. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Rosh Chodesh = New Moon [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Pesach is the English transliteration of the Hebrew that is normally translated as Passover. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Rashi tells us that Joel was the son of Samuel and a contemporary of Elisha and Joel, Nahum and Habakkuk. All prophesied during the reign of Manasseh, king of Judah from 720 to 692 BCE. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. It is worth noting that the signs of Yoel occur *before* the Day of HaShem. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. The first actual sequence of solar eclipse, on Nisan 1 5775, followed by a lunar eclipse will be on Pesach 5775 of the Shmita year followed by one Erev Rosh HaShana 5776 followed by a blood moon on Succoth 5776. Since Yoel 3 seems to point to a solar eclipse (Molad for Nisan and Erev Rosh HaShana) followed by a blood moon on either Pesach 5775 or Succoth 5776. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Artscroll Mesorah Series - *The Haggadah*, by Rabbi Joseph Elias, Rabbi Nosson Scherman/Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz – General Editors. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Shemot (Exodus) 13:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Passover [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Feast of Tabernacles [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. MANN, Jacob. & SONNE, I.The Bible as read and preached in the Old Synagogue, volume I.• ISBN:87068-083-8, Author Published, 1940, New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc. 1971 / Cincinnati 1966. 2 volumes. xci, 574, 346 (Hebrew text): xli, 255, 239 (Hebrew text) [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. The name given to the readings from the Prophets in the septennial / triennial Torah lectionary. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Egypt [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. The Book of Trei-Asar (1), Me’am Lo’ez, The Twelve Prophets - Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, by Rabbi Shmuel Yerushalmi, Translated and adapted by Dr. Zvi Faier, page 301. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Yehezechel (Ezekiel) 38, 39. We read this portion from the Prophets on the intermediate Shabbat of Succoth. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. cf. Yoel (Joel) 34־ [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Zechariah 14 [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Yoel (Joel) 3:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Zechariah 14:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 26:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Yehezechel (Ezekiel) 38:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Tehillim (Psalms) 11:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Yoel (Joel) 4:19 [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Shemot (Exodus) 7 [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. We read this portion, along with Vayikra (Leviticus) 6:1-7:10 on The Shabbat after Chanukah and on the Shabbat before Tu B’Ab in the septennial lectionary. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Every year on Passover the same energy of the initial redemption comes into the universe. It is the energy of the revelation of the Torah that takes place on Shavuot. There is only one difference. On Pesach HaShem created a miracle and changed the natural rules of the universe. On Pesach the energy is *free*. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. The whole Haftarah reading is Zechariah 14:1-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. The whole reading is Ezekiel 38:18 – 39:16. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Rashi quotes this verse to prove that the problems are for the Gentiles, not the Jews: **and they shall be for signs** When the luminaries are eclipsed, it is an unfavorable omen for the world, as it is said (Jer. 10:2): “and from the signs of the heaven be not dismayed, etc.” When you perform the will of the Holy One, blessed be He, you need not fear retribution.-[from Succah 29a] - Rashi on Bereshit (Gen.) 1:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Yehezechel (Ezekiel) 38:18 – 39:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Rashi states that "signs" means eclipses. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Bear in mind that this Gemara was designed to be understood at the remez level and that any Peshat interpretation will fall short of the writer’s intended meaning. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. This interpretation is not satisfactory, for the Talmud states: "For the following reasons an eclipse occurs and not an eclipse is seen". The very occurrence of an eclipse is a consequence of the aforementioned sins and not the sight of the eclipse. Furthermore, in cloudless locations such as Egypt [see Rashi Vayigash 47:10 and Vaera 7:17] the Jews would always be capable of seeing the eclipse regardless of their behaviour. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. An eclipse of the sun happens when the moon moves in front of the earth in such a way that it blocks the sun’s light from reaching certain spots on the earth. Here, too, we see that it is path of the moon that has caused the eclipse. The sun and earth are insignificant players in a solar eclipse. The lesson learned from this gemara is that everything that happens in this world is, in some way, connected to Bne Israel. Despite our relatively insignificant size, like that of the moon to the sun, the world was created for us and continues to be governed according to our actions. This is not something to take advantage of but rather, a great responsibility that we must bear on our shoulders at all times. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. The Hebrew term *musar* is from the book of *Proverbs* *1:2* meaning instruction, discipline, or conduct. This term is commonly understood to apply to specific actions to correct specific behavior. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. An eclipse of the moon happens when the moon moves

into a position behind the earth such that the light of the sun cannot reach it. One might say that it is “the moon’s fault” that it was eclipsed. This is the way we must view calamities that befall us. We must search within for the causes and realize that it is our own deeds and actions that have brought them about. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Shemot (Exodus) 12:42. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Tehillim (Psalms) 27:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. The **Metonic cycle** is a period of very close to 19 years that is remarkable for being nearly a common multiple of the solar year and the synodic (lunar) month. The Greek astronomer Meton of Athens (fifth century BC) observed that a period of 19 years is almost exactly equal to 235 synodic months and, rounded to full days, counts 6,940 days. The difference between the two periods (of 19 years and 235 synodic months) is only a few hours, depending on the definition of the year. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Reference to an eclipse. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Continuing to worship them though given proof of the non-divine nature of the objects of their worship. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Noach p.274b [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Mazal is our out-flow of spiritual energy that flows through the stars. HaShem controls the stars which control us. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. The **Saros** is a period of 223 synodic months (approximately 6585.3213 days, or nearly 18 years 11 days), that can be used to predict eclipses of the Sun and Moon. One Saros after an eclipse, the Sun, Earth, and Moon return to approximately the same relative geometry, and a nearly identical eclipse will occur, in what is referred to as an eclipse cycle. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Shemini Atzeret, the Biblical festival that occurs on Tishrei 22, means *Eighth Assembly*. ***Vayikra (Leviticus) 23:34-44*** [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. In the constellation of Meoznaim (Scales - Libra). [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. **Anno Mundi** (Latin: “in the year of the world”), abbreviated as **AM** or**A.M.**, refers to a calendar era based on the biblical creation of the world. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Passover [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. The ***Haftarah*** (alt. **haphtarah**, Hebrew: **הפטרה**; “parting,” “taking leave”, plural *haftarot*) is a series of selections from the books of *Nevi’im* (“Prophets”) of the Hebrew Bible (*Tanach*) that is publicly read in the synagogue. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. **Sephardi Jews** are those Jews who are the descendants of Spanish and Portuguese Jews who lived or live in the Iberian Peninsula. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. *Y’hudey Ashkenaz*, “The Jews of Ashkenaz”, are an ethno-religious group who trace their origins to the indigenous Hebrew speaking peoples of Canaan in South Western Asia, and settled along the Rhine in Germany from Alsace in the south to the Rhineland in the north, probably during the early Middle Ages. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Seoul is approaching the Tzeit Kochavim line by leaving the Twilight Zone in 5775. Seoul is slightly less than 10 degrees from the Tzeit Kochavim line when the line (101.5 degrees east of Yerushalayim) began to move in 5751 at a pace of 2.5 years per degree. So to reach the point when Seoul enters Yom SheKulo Shabbat it takes slightly less than 25 years. That would bring us until 5775. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. A **leap year** (or **intercalary** or **bissextile year**) is a year containing one additional month, in the case of lunisolar calendar, in order to keep the calendar year synchronized with the astronomical or seasonal year. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Succah 29a [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. http://www.betemunah.org/shmitatc.html [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Some have suggested that this coming Hoshana Rabba 5776, the 7th day of Succoth, will most likely be the great and awesome day foretold in Yoel (Joel) chapter 3.  So it is best to prepare to view the astronomical events that precede that day. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. In 1949 the majority of the Yemenite Jews (Al-Qaeda land) flew to Israel "*on the wings of eagles*", just as is written in the Scriptures. In retrospect it is astounding that these avidly anti-Israeli states allowed their Jewish populations to resettle in the state that they all fought against only one year before, in 1948! [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. In 1967 Israel fought and won the Six day war which returned Jerusalem to Jewish control for the first time in nearly two thousand years. By June that year, the borders of Israel had dramatically expanded and the Temple Western Wall and Temple Mount were returned to the Jewish people after 2000 years of exile, in a truly miraculous fashion. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. The *molad* is at 12:43PM and 3 chalakim, Jerusalem time. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. In the constellation of Toleh. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. In 1949 the state of Israel became a nation. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. In 1967 Israel fought and won the Six day war which returned Jerusalem to Jewish control for the first time in nearly two thousand years. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. See the chart with the details at: ECLIPSE1 [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. NASA built a chart to allow us to look back in time. The chart is at: http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/SEsearch/SEsearch.php#searchresults. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. See the chart with the details at: ECLIPSE1 [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. “Eclipse,” Microsoft (R) Encarta. Copyright (c) 1994 Microsoft Corporation. Copyright (c) 1994 Funk & Wagnall’s Corporation. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Rav Mordechai Shakovitzky z”l said that *Oseh Maaseh Bereshit* is NOT said on an eclipse, neither of the sun nor of the moon, because it is a “siman ra” (evil sign). [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Sephardi Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv - Yafo; author of M’kor HaChayim and Assei L’cha Rav [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. In accordance with its actions during the preceding year. By the ‘world’ here is probably meant only the people of Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. The general sense of this obscure expression is ‘one by one’, ‘in single file’. Its precise meaning is discussed in the Gemara infra p. 18a q.v. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Tehillim (Psalms) 33:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. The priests and Levites. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. The fifteen steps (mentioned later in our Mishnah) that led from the Court of the Israelites. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Sanhedrin 42a [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Cf. Succah 29a, Shir HaShirim Rabbah 6:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Midrash HaGadol 25:32 [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Midrash Pliah [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Our Sages [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Moses Cordevero, Pardes Rimonim in JM, pp. 146-147. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Our Sages [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Tanach is a short hand way of saying: Torah (Law), Neviim (Prophets), and Ketuvim (writings). [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. A Yovel of Yovels,

https://sites.google.com/site/yovelgeulah/chapter-3 [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Vayikra (Leviticus) 23:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Vayikra (Leviticus) 23:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Exile [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Tehillim 102:14 per Kol HaTor chapter 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. גילוי at http://keitzmeguleh.blogspot.com and

https://sites.google.com/site/yovelgeulah/chapter-2 [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Chanukah is eight days long. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. From EARTH SKY, By Deborah Byrd, June 13, 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Kokeba di-Shabi Lit., ‘Star that draws’. What exactly is meant is a matter of dispute. Rashi explains as ‘shooting-stars’. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. The lowest of the seven firmaments, which is a kind of ‘Veil’ to the others. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Rashi and Tosaf. omit ‘and rolled up’. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Lit., ‘firmament’. The next of the seven firmaments. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. I.e., mere error of perspective, v. on the passage Brodetsky, Jewish Review July, 1909, p. 167 ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Berachot 54a [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. Berachot 58b [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Brought by the Aruch in his first interpretation of zik. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. A month known for the frequent appearance of comets and shooting stars by means of which we see the revelation that, "His strength and His power fill the universe" [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. *anan* in Hebrew. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. *ani* in Hebrew. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. The harbinger of the ultimate redemption. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 63:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Tehillim (Psalms) 122:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. The Rambam asserts this fact in his laws of blessings. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. The congregation of Israel, the aspect of Chava. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. Reflecting Adam, a contraction of Adam, David, and Mashiach. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Israel Today March 2008 [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Judah Ben Samuel, also known as Judah heHasid (Judah the Pious), lived and worked from the end of the 12th century until the beginning of the 13th century in Regensburg, authoring a number of books in the German language. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. Amos 4:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. I.e., not actual famine, but the first signs thereof, no one being completely satisfied. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. Lit., ‘men on whose behalf miracles occur.’ — Jast. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Lit., ‘plenty and no plenty’. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. Either Heavenly voices announcing the advent of Messiah, or the blasts of the great Shofar; cf. Isa. XXVII, 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Though troubles and evil decrees have come in abundance, they were not in the order prescribed. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. In the siddur. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. This would include the ger toshav, ger tzadik, and possibly the erev rav. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. Amos 4:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. I.e., not actual famine, but the first signs thereof, no one being completely satisfied. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. Lit., ‘men on whose behalf miracles occur.’ — Jast. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. Lit., ‘plenty and no plenty’. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. Either Heavenly voices announcing the advent of Messiah, or the blasts of the great Shofar; cf. Isa. 27:13. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)