

# The Date of John's Revelation and The Josephus Connection

By Scott Nelson 1/2015

## Introduction

Rarely does one who searches Scripture and history come across a connection between a Biblical account and a separate historical record as astounding as the one about to be shared with you. Indeed, when I originally made the connection, I was shaken to the core. Others with whom I have shared this have used terms like “unbelievable”, “awesome discovery”, and even an “I’m blown away”! My hope is that I can present this discovery in a manner that will have a similar impact on the reader when it is fully comprehended the astonishing significance of the connection between the timing of John’s vision, what he was told to do that day, and what Josephus recorded happened in and around Jerusalem on what had to have been the very same day.

Both of these sources tell a story that leaves one asking a number of questions for which the other just happens to have an answer. They fit together like two very complicated pieces of a jigsaw puzzle so well that it would be very difficult to believe they didn’t belong together. The only obstacle that has been in the way and keeping others from having made this discovery some time ago has been traditional assumptions originally intended to salvage the credibility of a beloved writer in the eyes of the “early church fathers”. I have written a separate article concerning this entitled: *Who were the false apostles Yeshua commended the Ephesian church for exposing as “liars”?* An important premise of my argument is the date of John’s visitation and writing of the book of Revelation.

Below is a portion of that article where I argue for an earlier authorship year for Revelation. The main focal point is that the Temple in Jerusalem had to have been standing based on information found in Revelation itself. Additionally, it is very difficult to imagine, considering that John himself had heard Yeshua predict Jerusalem’s destruction on the day of his triumphal entry, that such a tragic and apocalyptic event as the destruction of the Temple could have gone without John even alluding to it in any way if indeed it had already occurred.

Another compelling theory I put forth in that article that would further establish an early date for John’s Revelation was that a 42-month period of time mentioned by an angel should indicate that John had his vision early in the year 67 A.D.

Below is a segment from that article where I make the case for this earlier date.

## Establishing the Authorship Date of Revelation

One detail that must be established is the date of John’s visitation and the writing of the book of Revelation. It seems that the majority of scholars (but by no means all of them) have postulated a date of around 96 A.D. When it comes to this date that scholars point to, all of them must ultimately rest the entirety of their case on a single short and obscure statement made by Eusebius in the early fourth century where he quoted a lost, late second-century document of Irenaeus. Here are the supposed end-all-debate words of Eusebius and his quote of Irenaeus.

“In this persecution, it is handed down by tradition, that the apostle and evangelist John, who was yet living, in consequence of his testimony to the divine word, was condemned to dwell on the island of Patmos. Irenaeus, indeed, in his fifth book against the heresies, ...speaks in the following manner respecting him; ‘If, however, it were necessary to proclaim the name of the Anti-Christ, ... it would

have been declared by him who saw the revelation, for it is not long since it was seen, but almost in our own generation, at the close of Domitian's reign." (Eusebius, III, XVII)

It should be pointed out that there is uncertainty as to Eusebius's understanding of whom Irenaeus was referring to. Was it Domitian, or Domitius (Nero)? Even if Irenaeus *had* indicated that the Revelation was given to John later during Domitian's reign, one must ask how much doctrinal stock they want to put in a man who was known for making fantastic errors in dates and times. Irenaeus also taught, for example, that Yeshua was crucified at fifty years of age! (See *Irenaeus Against Heresies*, chapter 22)

Irenaeus' few words as quoted by Eusebius are all that exist for outside evidence that Revelation was written very late in the first century. That's it! Some scholars claim that *other* "early church father's", like Tertullian, Origen, Victorinus, and Jerome, confirm the later date of Domitian's reign as though "early" means they were as good as eye witnesses, yet these men wrote anywhere from 100-300 years *after* Irenaeus and were simply following his lead. Scholars and teachers who opt for the later date must ultimately rest the entirety of their case on these few obscure and unreliable words of Irenaeus.

There is however within the book of Revelation considerable evidence that clearly indicates it was written before the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. If recognized academic credentials are of any value to the reader, scholars who have argued for this earlier time period include; David E. Aune, Ph.D.<sup>1</sup>; A. Tholuck, D.D.<sup>2</sup>; and J.A.T. Robinson, Ph.D. just to name a few.

There is also internal evidence that can pinpoint the time of John's vision to early 67 A.D. In chapter 11, John is told to measure the temple of God.

Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, **for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will trample the holy city under foot—forty two months.**" Revelation 11:1-2

The temple that is spoken of here is without question the earthly temple in Jerusalem and not to be confused with the temple "in heaven" spoken of later. This should be obvious in light of the fact that "the holy city" (Jerusalem) was going to be "trampled". The one in heaven will never be "trampled".

Not only does this indicate that at the time of John's vision the temple had not yet been destroyed, but the interpretation of *when* the "forty-two months" would occur is open to debate. Did the angel mean that Jerusalem would be given to the Gentiles and trampled *for* a period of forty-two months? Most English translations interject the word "*for*" into the text, but this word is not found in the Greek manuscripts and it is the reason why some translations italicize it.

Or, could the angel have indicated that the city would fall *in* forty-two months time from the showing of the prophecy to John and *then* be trampled by the Gentiles for a much longer period of time? In this case I would contend the measuring of the temple that John was commanded to do was a prophetic act designed to *bring about* its destruction in 42 months! The fact that the temple and the altar were destroyed, but the court outside the temple is still there today would also support this interpretation.

This second interpretation where Jerusalem is predicted to fall in a given time and *then* is trampled for a much longer period of time dovetails perfectly with what Yeshua prophesied in Luke 21:20-24.

**"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.**

Then let those in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they will fall

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<sup>1</sup> See *Apopogetics Study Bible*, Ted Cabat, Ph.D. Editor

<sup>2</sup> See *Biblical Illustrator N.T.*

by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations, **and Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.**”

The facts of history are that Jerusalem fell and the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. Jerusalem was trampled by the Gentiles for at least 1,897 years until 1967 when it was retaken by Israel in the six day war. One could argue that Jerusalem is *still* being trampled by the Gentiles in light of the fact that Islamic mosques continue to occupy the temple site! Either way, the point is made. Jerusalem has been trampled for a very long time. And, considering the fact that there is no historical record of a short forty-two month long trampling of Jerusalem, we must conclude that the angel meant Jerusalem would fall in 42 months time *from* the time he spoke the time-frame to John. Jerusalem was besieged by Rome shortly after Passover in 70 A.D. and fell several months later. Forty-two months before then would have been early 67 A.D. ...right at the time of the Neronian persecution!

## **Back to the Connection with Josephus**

In that article, early 67 A.D. was all the closer to the authorship date of Revelation I needed to be to make the point I needed to make. I didn't need a specific day. Indeed, I didn't think an exact day could be known! So this date of early 67 A.D. for John's visitation on Patmos was in the back of my mind for some time when I came across the following passage from Josephus. Here, he gives accounts and dates of some strange signs that occurred in and around Jerusalem in the years preceding its destruction.

## **Josephus**

Wars Book VI Part 3

3. Thus were the miserable people persuaded by these deceivers, and such as belied God himself; while they did not attend nor give credit to the signs that were so evident, and did so plainly foretell their future desolation, but, like men infatuated, without either eyes to see or minds to consider, did not regard the denunciations that God made to them.

Thus there was a star resembling a sword, which stood over the city, and a comet, that continued a whole year. Thus also before the Jews' rebellion, and before those commotions which preceded the war, when the people were come in great crowds to the feast of unleavened bread, on the eighth day of the month Xanthicus, [Nisan,] and at the ninth hour of the night, so great a light shone round the altar and the holy house, that it appeared to be bright day time; which lasted for half an hour. This light seemed to be a good sign to the unskillful, but was so interpreted by the sacred scribes, as to portend those events that followed immediately upon it.

At the same festival also, a heifer, as she was led by the high priest to be sacrificed, brought forth a lamb in the midst of the temple. Moreover, the eastern gate of the inner [court of the] temple, which was of brass, and vastly heavy, and had been with difficulty shut by twenty men, and rested upon a basis armed with iron, and had bolts fastened very deep into the firm floor, which was there made of one entire stone, was seen to be opened of its own accord about the sixth hour of the night. Now those that kept watch in the temple came hereupon running to the captain of the temple, and told him of it; who then came up thither, and not without great difficulty was able to shut the gate again. This also appeared to the vulgar to be a very happy prodigy, as if God did thereby open them the gate of happiness. But the men of learning understood it, that the security of their holy house was dissolved of its own accord, and that the gate was opened for the advantage of their enemies. So these publicly declared that the signal foreshowed the desolation that was coming upon them.

Besides these, a few days after that feast, on the one and twentieth day of the month Artemisius, [Jyar,] a certain prodigious and incredible phenomenon appeared: I suppose the account of it would seem to be a fable, were it not related by those that saw it, and were not the events that followed it of so considerable a nature as to deserve such signals; for, before sun-setting, chariots and troops of soldiers in their armor were seen running about among the clouds, and surrounding of cities. Moreover, at that feast which we call Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner [court of the temple,] as their custom was, to

perform their sacred ministrations, they said that, in the first place, they felt a quaking, and heard a great noise, and after that they heard a sound as of a great multitude, saying, "Let us remove hence."

But, what is still more terrible, there was one Jesus, the son of Ananus, a plebeian and a husbandman, who, four years before the war began, and at a time when the city was in very great peace and prosperity, came to that feast whereon it is our custom for every one to make tabernacles to God in the temple, began on a sudden to cry aloud, "A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the holy house, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, and a voice against this whole people!" This was his cry, as he went about by day and by night, in all the lanes of the city. However, certain of the most eminent among the populace had great indignation at this dire cry of his, and took up the man, and gave him a great number of severe stripes; yet did not he either say any thing for himself, or any thing peculiar to those that chastised him, but still went on with the same words which he cried before. Hereupon our rulers, supposing, as the case proved to be, that this was a sort of divine fury in the man, brought him to the Roman procurator, where he was whipped till his bones were laid bare; yet he did not make any supplication for himself, nor shed any tears, but turning his voice to the most lamentable tone possible, at every stroke of the whip his answer was, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" And when Albinus (for he was then our procurator) asked him, Who he was? and whence he came? and why he uttered such words? he made no manner of reply to what he said, but still did not leave off his melancholy ditty, till Albinus took him to be a madman, and dismissed him. Now, during all the time that passed before the war began, this man did not go near any of the citizens, nor was seen by them while he said so; but he every day uttered these lamentable words, as if it were his premeditated vow, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" Nor did he give ill words to any of those that beat him every day, nor good words to those that gave him food; but this was his reply to all men, and indeed no other than a melancholy presage of what was to come. This cry of his was the loudest at the festivals; and he continued this ditty for seven years and five months, without growing hoarse, or being tired therewith, until the very time that he saw his presage in earnest fulfilled in our siege, when it ceased; for as he was going round upon the wall, he cried out with his utmost force, "Woe, woe to the city again, and to the people, and to the holy house!" And just as he added at the last, "Woe, woe to myself also!" there came a stone out of one of the engines, and smote him, and killed him immediately; and as he was uttering the very same presages he gave up the ghost.

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### **Josephus Mentions 7 Signs and Some Dates**

1. A comet that "continued" for a year.
2. A light that shown in the temple on the 8<sup>th</sup> of Nissan (the first month of the Hebrew calendar).
3. Shortly after, a heifer gives birth to a lamb in the Temple on Passover (Nissan 14<sup>th</sup>)
4. Same night a heavy brass gate opens of its own accord.
5. Chariots and troops of soldiers seen among the clouds the next month on Jyar 20<sup>th</sup>.
6. About two weeks later on Pentecost an earthquake and a multitude were heard saying, "Let us be gone from this place".
7. A prophet of doom proclaims "woe to Jerusalem" for over 7 years.

When I first read this there were a couple of things that caught my attention.

Even though Josephus didn't mention a year, I thought one might be calculated based on the sighting of the comet. A little research revealed that the comet Josephus mentioned was none other than Halley's Comet that passed by in early 66 A.D. Josephus appears to have said the comet was seen for a whole year! But other civilizations around the world recorded that the comet was seen for little more than two months. Modern astronomical calculations confirm that it could not have been seen for much more than a couple of months. Because of this, and the far-fetched thought of a heifer giving birth to a lamb, many Scholars have dismissed all of these signs as mere fables. But from my point of view, most of these signs not only seem plausible, the interpretations of them make them even more compelling.

When it comes to the issue of how long Haley's Comet was observed, I find it hard to believe someone like Josephus—who certainly wanted to maintain credibility amongst his peers—would have grossly exaggerate something that any observant individual would have known simply wasn't true! It is one thing to make a claim that can't be verified, but the length of time Haley's comet was observed would have been common knowledge. Therefore, I believe we have misunderstood Josephus on this ..or something has been lost in translation. It would make perfect sense if what Josephus meant when he said Haley's Comet "**continued** a whole year", was that it was "**followed up by** a whole year" until the next sign he mentioned. The historical record and science confirm that Haley's Comet was last seen on what would have been April 8 in 66 A.D. Josephus records that the very next sign occurred on Nissan the 8<sup>th</sup>, which in 67 A.D. would have fallen on April 12<sup>th</sup>! That length of time would be perfectly described by, "a whole year". It is also of significance that Josephus said the next four signs that followed the one of Nissan the 8<sup>th</sup> "*followed immediately upon it*". These five signs occurred in the time span of under 2 months. But he didn't say anything of the sort concerning what followed Haley's Comet, where, if it had occurred the same year as the other signs he could have said they *followed immediately* after it. But he didn't. Instead what we find is a "*whole year*" mentioned.

What's more, if the five signs that occurred within the span of two months occurred in 67 A.D. they fall perfectly into place with the know facts of history concerning the war between Israel and Rome. The Jewish revolt started in the Summer of 66 A.D. and in the autumn of that year General Gallus and Rome's twelfth legion advanced on Jerusalem but were defeated by the Judean fighters who pursued them all the way to Syria! This was nothing short of a miracle and everyone in Israel knew it! There is no possibility Israel could have won that war had not the angelic armies of Israel been fighting for them. For them, it was like back in the days of Joshua and Gideon!

It was these angelic forces that Yeshua saw and spoke of on the day of his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The following passage containing this reference is of incredible significance to this article and we will be coming back to it. But for now, please focus on the highlighted parts, and especially what is underlined.

Then, as he was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, saying: "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" And some of the Pharisees called to him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." But he answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out." Now as he drew near, he saw the city and wept over it, saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, **the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.** For the days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation." Luke 19:37-44

"The things" Yeshua was referring to here are the angelic forces stationed all around Jerusalem to protect it. Two of the signs Josephus records undoubtedly reference these angelic forces:

Besides these, a few days after that feast, on the one and twentieth day of the month Artemisius, [Jyar,] a certain prodigious and incredible phenomenon appeared: I suppose the account of it would seem to be a fable, were it not related by those that saw it, and were not the events that followed it of so considerable a nature as to deserve such signals; for, before sun-setting, **chariots and troops of soldiers in their armor were seen running about among the clouds, and surrounding of cities.** Moreover, at that feast which we call Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner [court of the temple,] as their custom was, to perform their sacred ministrations, they said that, in the first place, they felt a quaking, and **heard a great noise, and after that they heard a sound as of a great multitude, saying, "Let us remove hence."**

If these signs occurred in 66 A.D. and these angelic forces had left, there is no possibility Israel could have defeated Gallus and the twelfth Roman legion later that year. But if these signs occurred in 67 A.D. and these forces stationed to protect Israel didn't leave till then, they were still on duty late in 66 A.D. and responsible for the miraculous defeat of Gallus! After these forces remove themselves in early June of 67, Israel is doomed and never wins another battle. What's worse, later, in the autumn of that same year, Israel began fighting a *civil* war! (See timeline below)

# From Josephus

Wars, Book VI, Part 3  
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Chronology of events showing the signs of *light shining on the altar and temple*, and those that *“followed immediately after”* must have occurred in 67 rather than in 66. Events occurring at the blue arrows are those that are in question. Red arrow dates are well established.

**Nissan 8 (April 12 of 67)**  
At the 9<sup>th</sup> hour of the evening a light shown on the altar and the temple for ½ hour, “to portend those events **that followed immediately ...**”

**Passover (April 18)**  
A heifer gives birth to a lamb in the temple!  
The heavy brass gate opens of its own accord.

**Jyar 20 (May 24)**  
Chariots and troops of soldiers are seen running about among the clouds.

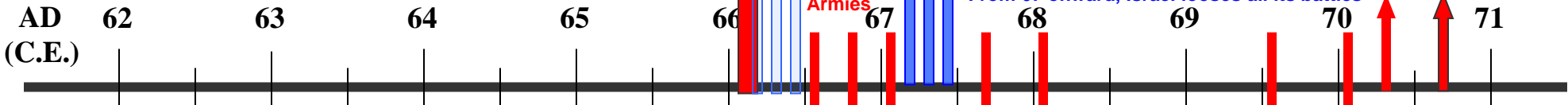
*Yeshua saw and was speaking of these angelic forces at his triumphal entry when he said to Jerusalem: “If you had known, even you, especially in this **your day**, the **things** that make for your peace. But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you to the ground. And they will not leave in you one stone upon another because you did not know the time of your visitation.” Israel could not have defeated Gallus when he came against Jerusalem in 66 if these protecting forces had departed before then. After they leave in 67, Jerusalem is doomed!*

**Haley’s Comet**  
A sign *“that continued a whole year”*?! Haley’s Comet was only seen for about 2 months ...from **Jan 31—April 8 in 66!** It is doubtful Josephus would have made such a fantastic error that could have been so easily debunked. By “continued”, he must have meant it was a sign that **was followed by** a whole year after it was last seen **until** the next sign. Also, had the following signs occurred **under** the sign of Haley’s Comet, it certainly would have been a fact worth noting.

**Pentecost (June 7)**  
Priests feel quaking and hear a great multitude saying, **“Let us be gone from this place.”**

**Passover**  
After Passover, on May 1<sup>st</sup>, Titus encamps outside Jerusalem beginning the siege.

**Sept. 8 of 70**  
Titus becomes master over what was left of the city and Jerusalem is officially under foot of the Gentiles.



## Prophet



**Prophet of Doom**  
“Woe, woe, to Jerusalem” for 7 years and 5 months, beginning at the time of the feast of tabernacles **“4 years before the war began”**, and ending at Jerusalem’s siege. This also would have been very close to the time Ananus ordered the death of James!

**Summer 66**  
Jewish revolt begins.

**Early Autumn 66**  
**Rome advances on Jerusalem**  
But General Gallus and the twelfth legion are defeated by the Judean fighters. He withdraws his forces and is pursued into Syria.

**Ananus**  
Just 4 years before this, as High Priest, Ananus ordered the death of James the brother of Yeshua ...an act for which he was deposed. Here in early 67 he regains power as revolutionary commander of Jerusalem.

**Autumn 67**  
Civil war breaks out throughout Judea. Factions fight among themselves as to whether they should continue to fight Rome and who should lead them if they do. Roman forces led by General Vespasian continue to advance through Galilee.

**Vespasian**  
Prepares for assault on Jerusalem but Nero commits suicide. Galba and Otho in turn become Emperor and are killed.  
  
July 69  
Vespasian’s legions proclaim him Emperor.

**Titus**  
January 70:  
Vespasian travels to Rome and puts his son Titus in command of the forces in Judea.

## “The Lord’s Day”

Have you ever wondered what day John was referring to in Revelation 1:10 when he said he was in the Spirit on the “Lord’s” day? This was the day John had his vision, and the significance of this day can hardly be overstated. This is where things begin to get exciting, fit together, and fall into place.

I wondered for many years about what John meant, and like most people I assumed it was a Sabbath. But there was something about the way John said it that seemed to indicate it wasn’t as common a day as the weekly Sabbath, but a special day of some kind . . . one that probably only came once a year. It is also important to note that when John used the word “Lord” as translated from Greek text,<sup>3</sup> he wasn’t referring to YHVH the Father the way His name is often rendered “The Lord” from Hebrew texts. It is far more likely John was referring to Yeshua. So, if there *were* a day of the year that would stick in John’s mind as Yeshua’s special day, what day would, or could that be? Many commentators suggest John was referring to the day of Yeshua’s resurrection. This theory also presupposes the phrase “the *Lord’s* day” is in reference to Yeshua. It is also a single day of the year. Of course Yeshua’s resurrection day would be special, but there is one other possibility that was of even greater prophetic significance than what was prophesied concerning his resurrection. Yeshua indicated as much in Luke’s account of it. It was the day of his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Here is the passage again.

Then, as he was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, saying: “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” And some of the Pharisees called to him from the crowd, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples.” But he answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.” Now as he drew near, he saw the city and wept over it, saying, “If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.” Luke 19:37-44

The disciples celebrated Yeshua’s entry into Jerusalem and the focus was without question on Yeshua as Israel’s Messiah. He was riding into Jerusalem on a donkey as was prophesied in Zechariah 9:9. Yeshua indicated that this day of his was so special, that if the disciples kept silent from praising him, the stones of Jerusalem would take over and do the job instead. He then spoke to Jerusalem and referred to that day as, “this **your** day”. It was only Jerusalem’s day because it was **his** day! John **was there**, and one of those who couldn’t refrain from praising and honoring Yeshua. Could not John consider that one day of the year “the Lord’s day” from that day forward? The significance of Jerusalem’s involvement on this particular day is very important to keep in mind, for it is also **the very day Yeshua spoke against it and prophesied of its coming destruction!**

Now here is where the connections start to become surreal.

Josephus records that the first of the five signs that occurred within two months of each other in what we now know was 67 A.D. occurred on Nissan the 8<sup>th</sup>. A person with knowledge of the Hebrew calendar and the Gospel record should recognize that this date is very near the day of Yeshua’s triumphal entry!

John 12:1 and 12:12 record that Yeshua came to Bethany, “6 days before the Passover”, and the Triumphal Entry occurred the very next day. Six days before Nissan the 14<sup>th</sup> was the 8<sup>th</sup>. The Triumphal Entry therefore occurred on the 9<sup>th</sup> of Nissan. Now it is a fact of history that determining the first day of each lunar month in antiquity was occasionally difficult and somewhat arbitrary. It would not have been unusual for there to be a

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<sup>3</sup> The Greek word translated “Lord’s” (Strong’s 2960, possessive version of 2962) literally means *lord* or *master*, and is used interchangeably in reference to Yehovah and Yeshua. The context in which it is used is the determining factor.



different understanding of what day of the month it was in records from different geographical locations. In other words, on the isle of Patmos, the day that John understood to be the 9<sup>th</sup> of Nissan and the anniversary of Yeshua's Triumphal Entry could easily have been on record as the 8<sup>th</sup> of Nissan in Jerusalem! The first day of a month was determined by the sighting of the thin crescent of the new moon near the Western horizon shortly after sunset. The evening on which it was seen was the first day of the month. Many times it was a close call as to whether the moon should be seen on a particular evening. If conditions were unfavorable for viewing because of haze or clouds ...even though theoretically the crescent could or should have been seen, the following evening was automatically deemed the first of the month. This happened fairly often. So, if in Jerusalem the priests were unable to see the new moon on a theoretically possible close-call evening, it was very possible that someone West of Jerusalem could have seen the new moon that same evening and started their first day of the month a day **before** Jerusalem! The isle of Patmos was located some 8 degrees West and 5 degrees North of Jerusalem. It regularly happened that someone West of Jerusalem saw the same day as one later than Jerusalem! Therefore, what John knew to be the 9<sup>th</sup> of Nissan and the anniversary of Yeshua's triumphal entry could easily have been on record as the 8<sup>th</sup> in Jerusalem. Interestingly, as you will see, the astronomical data for that month in 67 A.D. available from NASA shows that it would have indeed been a close call!

At any rate, one would be splitting hairs making an issue over a difference of one day in ancient records. There are other factors that could account for the difference as well. But when the following evidence is considered, you will see there is little doubt that these two records record events that occurred the very same day.

Now keep in mind that everything John saw in his vision and did that day on the isle of Patmos happened on this day that he referred to as "the Lord's Day." Remember also that early 67 A.D. was the year John had his vision based on the fact the angel said it would be 42 months from that day until Jerusalem fell. Now, take special notice of what the angel told John to do that day.

Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, **"Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there.** But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will trample the holy city under foot—forty two months." Revelation 11:1-2

When the angel said "Rise", I don't imagine John was sitting or lying down! The Greek word translated "Rise" in the NKJV is rather weak and a narrow translation. The RSV renders **"Come** and measure..." . This is closer, but still a bit narrow. The Greek word used is *egeiro* (Strong's 1453), and *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* says that among other things this word can be used to mean *"come appear before"*. This meaning would make much better sense in light of the fact that the command to measure "those who worship there" is rather abstract in concept compared to measuring a physical structure. How would one measure people? Here is a more accurate understanding of what the angel was saying to John:

**"Come appear** and measure **the temple of God and the altar before** those who worship there."

And the clear implication is... **"Let's do this NOW."**

With this picture in mind, take a closer look at the sign Josephus said occurred on what was undoubtedly the very same day.

"On the eighth day of the month Xanthicus, [Nissan,] and at the ninth hour of the night, **so great a light shone round THE ALTAR and THE HOLY HOUSE, that it appeared to be bright day time; which lasted for half an hour.** This light seemed to be a good sign to the unskillful, but was so interpreted by the sacred scribes, as to portend those events that followed immediately upon it.

So what do you suppose the bright light illuminating **the altar and the temple** that day was all about? Getting chills? It was undoubtedly the angel and John who were there that day measuring the altar and the temple for destruction! What's more, "those who worship there", the priests, were there that day to witness what happened and pass that information along to Josephus who recorded it!

But wait. It gets even better!



The real test now is to see if the time between Nissan the 8<sup>th</sup> 67 A.D. and the day Jerusalem came under the trampling foot of the Gentiles in 70 A.D. totals 42 months! 42 full months should pass and Jerusalem must come under foot of the Gentiles very shortly (if not immediately) thereafter to be able to call it a prophetic fulfillment.

First we need to establish an exact date on our calendar for Nissan the 8<sup>th</sup> in 67 A.D.

## Date of Nissan 8<sup>th</sup> 67 A.D. Anniversary of The Triumphal Entry

From <http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/phase/phases0001.html>

Year ΔT	New Moon		First Quarter		Full Moon		Last Quarter	
<b>67</b>	Jan	4 05:29	Jan	11 02:51	Jan	19 08:03	Jan	27 00:22
	Feb	2 15:59	Feb	9 20:49	Feb	18 01:00	Feb	25 08:57
	Mar	4 02:20	Mar	11 16:01	Mar	19 14:53	Mar	26 15:14
	<b>Apr</b>	<b>2 13:12</b>	Apr	10 10:51	<b>12</b>	Apr 18 01:55	Apr	24 20:24
	May	2 01:18	May	10 03:59	May	17 10:50	May	24 01:48
	May	31 14:56	Jun	8 18:50	Jun	15 18:23	Jun	22 08:53
	Jun	30 05:54	Jul	8 07:20	Jul	15 01:25	Jul	21 18:57
	Jul	29 21:34	Aug	6 17:47	Aug	13 08:53	Aug	20 08:49
	Aug	28 13:21	Sep	5 02:35	Sep	11 17:49	Sep	19 02:31
	Sep	27 04:47	Oct	4 10:17	Oct	11 05:12	Oct	18 23:03
	Oct	26 19:29	Nov	2 17:44	Nov	9 19:36	Nov	17 20:37
	Nov	25 09:05	Dec	2 01:59	Dec	9 12:42	Dec	17 17:15
	Dec	24 21:12	Dec	31 12:03				

At 1:12 PM Universal Time on April 2<sup>nd</sup> on our calendar is when the first conjunction of the New Moon after equinox occurred in 67 A.D. Here is where the astronomical data confirms that it would have been a very close call that month. The first visible crescent as seen from Jerusalem would have been very low on the horizon and barley visible under the best of viewing conditions on evening of the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Jerusalem undoubtedly recorded the evening of what we would call the 4<sup>th</sup> of April as being the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month Nissan. John, on the other hand, must have had great viewing conditions and saw the new moon on the evening of the 3<sup>rd</sup> thus having the correct day one day ahead of Jerusalem. The 8<sup>th</sup> of Nissan by Jerusalem's accounting, and the 9<sup>th</sup> by John's ...and the anniversary of Yeshua's triumphal entry would have been **April 12<sup>th</sup> 67 A.D.**

Now we need to establish an exact date for the fall of Jerusalem.

## The Date Jerusalem Came Under Foot of the Gentiles

From [http://www.livius.org/ja-jn/jewish\\_wars/jwar04.html](http://www.livius.org/ja-jn/jewish_wars/jwar04.html)

The Antonia was demolished. The stones were used to build a new dam, this time towards the Temple terrace. The Romans used the dam to set fire to the porticoes on the northern and western side of the terrace, but it was impossible to bash through the walls. **On the tenth of August, the Temple itself was**

**burning.** Six thousand women and children were taken prisoner at the Court of the Gentiles, while the legionaries sacrificed to their standards in the Holy of Holies.

During the next few days, the Romans destroyed the archives, the quarter immediately south of the Temple, and the building where the Sanhedrin convened. Then, they descended into the Old Town. Meanwhile, dams had been prepared to attack the palace; when Titus' men had taken it, the last defenders managed to hide themselves in the sewer system. John (not the apostle) was among them, and was among the first to surrender. Simon remained in hiding for some time, but finally made a dramatic appearance on the place where the Temple had stood, dressed in a white priestly tunic and his royal, purple mantle. **On 8 September, Titus was master of what was left of the city.**

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A quick calculation on our calendar between April 12<sup>th</sup> 67 A.D. and September 8<sup>th</sup> of 70 A.D. comes up short at only 40 ½ months. But, the Hebrew calendar months are lunar months!

The following chart from NASA lists the lunar cycles from 67 to 70 A.D. I have highlighted the time frame between the two dates and numbered the months on the left.

### Number of Lunar cycles from April 12<sup>th</sup> 67 AD to September 8<sup>th</sup> 70 AD

From <http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/phase/phases0001.html>

Year	New Moon		First Quarter		Full Moon		Last Quarter	
<u>67</u>								
	Jan	4 05:29	Jan	11 02:51	Jan	19 08:03	Jan	27 00:22
	Feb	2 15:59	Feb	9 20:49	Feb	18 01:00	Feb	25 08:57
	Mar	4 02:20	Mar	11 16:01	Mar	19 14:53	Mar	26 15:14
	Apr	2 13:12	Apr	10 10:51	12 Apr	18 01:55	Apr	24 20:24
<b>1</b>	May	2 01:18	May	10 03:59	May	17 10:50	May	24 01:48
<b>2</b>	May	31 14:56	Jun	8 18:50	Jun	15 18:23	Jun	22 08:53
<b>3</b>	Jun	30 05:54	Jul	8 07:20	Jul	15 01:25	Jul	21 18:57
<b>4</b>	Jul	29 21:34	Aug	6 17:47	Aug	13 08:53	Aug	20 08:49
<b>5</b>	Aug	28 13:21	Sep	5 02:35	Sep	11 17:49	Sep	19 02:31
<b>6</b>	Sep	27 04:47	Oct	4 10:17	Oct	11 05:12	Oct	18 23:03
<b>7</b>	Oct	26 19:29	Nov	2 17:44	Nov	9 19:36	Nov	17 20:37
<b>8</b>	Nov	25 09:05	Dec	2 01:59	Dec	9 12:42	Dec	17 17:15
<b>9</b>	Dec	24 21:12	Dec	31 12:03				

Year	New Moon		First Quarter		Full Moon		Last Quarter	
<u>68</u>								
<b>10</b>	Jan	23 07:44	Jan	30 00:30	Jan	8 07:21	Jan	16 11:12
<b>11</b>	Feb	21 17:02	Feb	28 15:14	Feb	7 02:00	Feb	15 01:18
<b>12</b>	Mar	22 01:48	Mar	29 07:36	Mar	7 19:20	Mar	15 11:21
<b>13</b>	Apr	20 10:52	Apr	28 00:44	Apr	6 10:31	Apr	13 18:02
<b>14</b>	May	19 20:58	May	27 17:58	May	5 23:12	May	12 22:41
<b>15</b>	Jun	18 08:39	Jun	26 10:40	Jun	4 09:31	Jun	11 02:56
<b>16</b>	Jul	17 22:12	Jul	26 02:16	Jul	3 18:00	Jul	10 08:26
<b>17</b>	Aug	16 13:43	Aug	24 16:11	Aug	2 01:39	Aug	8 16:35
<b>18</b>	Sep	15 06:53	Aug	23 04:02	Aug	31 09:33	Sep	7 04:20
<b>19</b>	Oct	15 00:49	Sep	22 13:56	Sep	29 18:45	Oct	6 20:04
<b>20</b>	Nov	13 18:09	Oct	20 22:27	Oct	29 05:51	Nov	5 15:22
<b>21</b>	Dec	13 09:35	Nov	20 06:31	Nov	27 18:59	Dec	5 13:02
			Dec	20 06:31	Dec	27 09:54		

Year	New Moon		First Quarter		Full Moon		Last Quarter	
<u>69</u>								
22	Jan	11 22:32	Jan	18 15:01	Jan	26 02:12	Jan	4 11:01
23	Feb	10 09:13	Feb	17 00:37	Feb	24 19:17	Mar	4 23:05
24	Mar	11 18:13	Mar	18 11:42	Mar	26 12:22	Apr	3 10:55
25	Apr	10 02:16	Apr	17 00:29	Apr	25 04:21	May	2 19:04
26	May	9 10:03	May	16 15:07	May	24 18:23	Jun	1 00:46
27	Jun	7 18:19	Jun	15 07:31	Jun	23 06:14	Jun	30 05:25
28	Jul	7 03:58	Jul	15 01:10	Jul	22 16:20	Jul	29 10:27
29	Aug	5 15:56	Aug	13 19:04	Aug	21 01:38	Aug	27 17:10
30	Sep	4 06:53	Sep	12 12:02	Sep	19 11:00	Sep	26 02:45
31	Oct	4 00:40	Oct	12 03:13	Oct	18 21:03	Oct	25 16:02
32	Nov	2 20:02	Nov	10 16:11	Nov	17 07:54	Nov	24 09:18
33	Dec	2 15:00	Dec	10 02:54	Dec	16 19:36	Dec	24 05:45

Year	New Moon		First Quarter		Full Moon		Last Quarter	
<u>70</u>								
34	Jan	1 07:59	Jan	8 11:44	Jan	15 08:14	Jan	23 03:26
35	Jan	30 22:15	Feb	6 19:15	Feb	13 22:05	Feb	21 23:56
36	Mar	1 09:54	Mar	8 02:22	Mar	15 13:10	Mar	23 17:29
37	Mar	30 19:18	Apr	6 10:08	Apr	14 04:58	Apr	22 07:28
38	Apr	29 03:03	May	5 19:33	May	13 20:38	May	21 18:06
39	May	28 09:53	Jun	4 07:27	Jun	12 11:24	Jun	20 02:03
40	Jun	26 16:51	Jul	3 22:11	Jul	12 00:59	Jul	19 08:13
41	Jul	26 01:10	Aug	2 15:25	Aug	10 13:32	Aug	17 13:41
42	Aug	24 12:02	Sep	1 10:19	8 Sep	9 01:22	Sep	15 19:44
	Sep	23 02:09	Oct	1 05:41	Oct	8 12:41	Oct	15 03:46
	Oct	22 19:23	Oct	31 00:13	Nov	6 23:37	Nov	13 14:57
	Nov	21 14:36	Nov	29 16:39	Dec	6 10:17	Dec	13 05:48

April 12<sup>th</sup> of 67 A.D. is 6 days before the full moon of that month, and September 8<sup>th</sup> of 70 A.D. is only 1 day before the full moon of that month. That means exactly 42 months and 5 days passed between these two dates. Considering Jerusalem's complete takeover was a process that took some time as recorded above, the exact date that men would declare something accomplished would also be somewhat arbitrary. So for us to be within only 5 days in 42 months is for all practical purposes a perfect fulfillment.

## Summary

Just try to comprehend the significance of all the connections here. Here we have a record of John traveling with the angel to measure the altar and the temple for its destruction on "the Lord's Day" where the angel tells him Jerusalem would be trampled by the Gentiles in 42 months time from then, and a separate record of Josephus stating that on what was undoubtedly the same day (the anniversary of Yeshua's triumphal entry into Jerusalem), a light shone on the altar and the temple foreboding its destruction which just happened to occur exactly 42 months later!

It was also at the Triumphal Entry where Yeshua spoke of seeing the angelic armies making for Jerusalem's peace, and then prophesied of Jerusalem's destruction clearly indicating the peace keepers would be leaving! Considering how perfectly well these records fit together, it is hard to imagine anyone would demand a better fit before accepting the obvious conclusions.

We should be able to assert with confidence that John was visited and given the Revelation on what our calendar would be April 12<sup>th</sup> of 67 A.D.

We can also assert that what John meant by “the Lord’s Day” was the anniversary of Yeshua’s Triumphal Entry.

And we can assert that the “42 months” the angel spoke of meant 42 months from that day until Jerusalem would fall and come under foot of the Gentiles.

### **The Elephant in the Room**

From the days of early Christianity to the present, scholars have argued for a later dating of Revelation for less than the purest of motives. The early “church fathers” were aware of an elephant in the room as are many theologians today. No one dares breathe a word of it for fear of drawing attention to the obvious. It is the glaring fact that Paul takes a devastating blow to his credibility as an apostle at the hand of his own words to Timothy if indeed Revelation was written in the year 67! It is not inconceivable that Irenaeus, a loyal fan of Paul, was aware of this problem and started the rumor of a later authorship date of Revelation in an effort to protect Paul.

I have written extensively concerning the many problems of Paul and his doctrines at my website [judaismvschristianity.com](http://judaismvschristianity.com). Among the many issues that point to Paul being a false apostle is one in particular that can’t be navigated around, denied or ignored. All of his unique doctrines, such as “faith alone”, “none are righteous”, and all his teaching against the Law of Moses, are founded on passages of Scripture that he removed from their context and gave a meaning that cannot be drawn from the context in which the original quote was made. In some cases, the context demands the very opposite interpretation of the one Paul extracts from it! This repeated blatant abuse of Scripture alone is more than enough to convict Paul of false impersonation an apostle of Yeshua. In light of this abuse, Paul’s words can’t possibly be God’s words ...or “inspired”. If you doubt any of these statements, please visit my website for documentation.

But now that it is evident that Revelation was indeed written in early 67 A.D., the final nail in Paul’s coffin is effectively driven home.

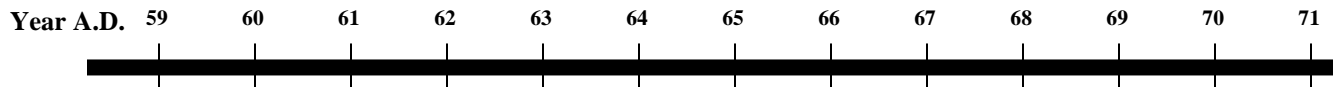
In chapter two of the book of Revelation, Yeshua addressed the Ephesian church, and in verse two gives the Ephesians a commending pat on the back for determining and exposing certain individuals as “liars” for having presumptuously taken to themselves the title of *apostle*. To the Ephesians, Yeshua said:

“I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil, and you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars.” Revelation 2:2

This is the elephant sized problem that Christian leaders sweep under the rug and quickly move past. This verse is treated as though: “There’s nothing to see here folks ...so move along!” In light of the well known facts concerning the Ephesians and who had claimed to be an apostle to them, the identity of these false apostles should have been as obvious to us as it was to the Ephesians and ALL the churches of Asia.

## Authorship Dates For Paul's Letters

Below is a timeline showing the broader timeframes in which it is believed Paul's letters to the Ephesians and Timothy, and John's messages to the churches of Asia in the book of Revelation were written. The yellow highlighted areas mark the timeframe in which each book was most likely written. Now read in chronological order the facts of the case concerning the supposed apostles to the Ephesians and see if you can come to any other conclusion than the obvious.



Ephesians

1 Timothy

Revelation

2 Timothy

Aside from Peter, Paul is the only person from that time period known to have claimed to be an apostle. John didn't even use the title that was rightfully his to identify himself in the book of Revelation! But Paul claimed the title many times, and introduces himself as such, again, to the Ephesians of Asia Minor.

*"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus..."*  
Ephesians 1:1

Later, when writing to Timothy in Ephesus, Paul orders his young apprentice to stay there, and deputizes him to police his exclusive doctrine there in his stead.

*"...remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine."*  
1 Timothy 1:3

In the same letter, Paul displays an unusual defensiveness of his *apostle* title in a manner that clearly suggests some there in Ephesus had accused him of lying about it!

*"...for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying..."* 1 Timothy 2:7

Question: Who is ever compelled to defend themselves with a statement like, "I am not lying", if they have never been accused of it? Paul's defensiveness speaks volumes. He had undoubtedly been accused by the Ephesians of lying about his apostleship!

Here, Yeshua tells John to write to all his church assemblies in Asia.

*"What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."*

Revelation 1:11

Yeshua commends the Ephesian assembly for exposing as "liars" some who have claimed to be apostles.

*"I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars;"*  
Revelation 2:2

Yeshua states that the truth he speaks to each church is good for all who are willing to listen.

*"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*  
Revelation 2:7,11,17, 29 & 3:6,13, 22

Because of the urgency of the prophecy and the obvious time-sensitive information of 2:10, the Revelation is immediately circulated to all the believing church assemblies in Asia as Yeshua commanded.

A year later, out of his own mouth, Paul complains to Timothy that not only the Ephesians, but ALL of Asia had rejected him!

*"This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me."*  
2 Timothy 1:15

Paul did not say Asia had turned away from Yeshua! Those who would try to defend Paul must believe that Paul would have placed a higher value on Asia believing in Yeshua than on his own personal acceptance there and therefore would have been more distressed by Asia's rejection of Yeshua had that been the case. But that's not what Paul's concern was. His was a *personal* complaint. Paul said Asia had rejected only him!

This should not come as a surprise in light of the fact that the believers in Asia had recently heard from Yeshua by letter from John and had heard that Yeshua commended the Ephesians for rejecting the one they all knew was Paul! They apparently had "*ears to hear*" what the Spirit had said to the Ephesians and went and did likewise!

Josephus mentioned 7 signs that appeared in the years preceding Jerusalem's destruction. At my first introduction to them I had no trouble accepting the validity of most of them. The interpretations of them made perfect sense and sounded like other things found in the Bible. But there was one sign Josephus mentioned that stood out as almost weird for which I was unable to think of any precedence. Sometime later it hit me. There **was** precedence. I have written a separate piece that deals with that sign. It's entitled, "***The prosecution of James and its possible connection to a strange sign in the Temple.***" You will find a link to that piece near the link you clicked on to receive this article.